



***Increase Press Release
Readership 71% by Including Data***

***Empirical Evidence
&
How-To Manual***

White Paper
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O'Dwyer PR

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Increase Press Release Readership 71% by Including Data

Including statistical data will increase the readership and the effectiveness of your press releases.

Press releases often sound self-serving because they make claims that readers regard as supposition or unfounded assertion. Moreover, journalists are not interested in helping to promote businesses; they are looking for a fresh news story that their readers will find interesting.

The Challenge

Make otherwise dry, self serving press releases into the basis for timely, newsworthy stories that journalists want to write about and that your target audience wants to read.

The Solution

Include proprietary research data in your press releases to back up your claims.

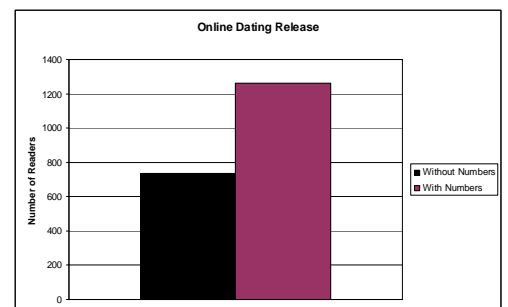
Proprietary research data in your press releases is effective because:

- New data makes press releases pertinent and authoritative.
- Writers often want to be first to disclose new numbers and identify new trends.
- Interesting data provides the skeleton around which writers can add their own commentary.
- Your client's organization becomes an authority and will be cited repeatedly as the source of the data.
- You can drive people to your client's website for a full report.

The Proof

Vizu found that press releases are read up to 71% more often when statistical data is included¹.

To measure the “lift” in readership for press releases that include data, Vizu conducted an experiment. In partnership with OkCupid, a free online dating service, Vizu put out two press releases simultaneously. One of these contained statistical information, while the other was identical, except it excluded the data. The press release that included the data generated 71% more readership than the one that did not.



*“Market research findings clearly lend credibility to press releases by grounding claims and backing up assertions with data.” - Dan Beltramo, CEO, Vizu**
**PRWeek Magazine, February 4, 2008*

To illustrate the compelling nature of numbers, compare these titles:

“One in Three to Shop More Online This Holiday Season”

Or

“More Online Shopping This Holiday Season”

“80% of US Customers Trust Peer Reviews When Making Purchase Decisions”

Or

“Customers Trust Peer Reviews When Making Purchasing Decisions”

"This research quantifies what we are already seeing through our work with national consumer media — numbers speak volumes and help to validate a company's message," said Dawn Sullivan, Account Director and member of Schwartz Communications' Consumer Practice Group. "For OkCupid, the ability to present relevant data in a compelling way has resulted in consistent coverage across national men's, women's, business and general interest media."

Case Studies:

◆ Bazaarvoice, a producer of social commerce applications, used Vizu to gain insight on the most important factor to consumers in establishing trust in a brand when they are shopping for products online. Bazaarvoice also compared US internet users to UK users on these points.

The findings were:

- 76% of shoppers consider it important to read consumer reviews before making a purchase
- Shoppers prefer peer reviews over expert reviews by a 6-to-1 margin
- Customer ratings and reviews were important for over 50% of online shoppers in the UK
- Privacy and security information was the most important trust factor with over one-third of UK shoppers

The above data was included as a portion of a press release that was picked up by ABC, AdAge, Media Post, WOMMA, BizReport, MarketingVox, etc. Additionally, every article about the release included data from the release and cited Bazaarvoice as the source.

◆ buySAFE, a trust and safety company for e-commerce transactions, used Vizu to gauge opinions of online shoppers at the start of the 2007 holiday shopping season.

The data revealed that:

- 34.7% of shoppers planned to do more shopping online this season compared to their normal retail patterns; 33% of respondents plan to do more online shopping this year than last year

“As a leader in eCommerce trust and safety, buySAFE felt it was important to deliver its message to a wide range of broadcast and print media during the online holiday shopping season. Using Vizu Answers, we were able to collect valid poll data almost overnight on questions of key importance to our audience of online retailers, and these data cleanly supported our message,” said Scott Morton, Senior Director of Partner Marketing at buySAFE, Inc.

- 50% of respondents report they have had one or more serious problems when making an online purchase
- Merchant performance is the #1 factor for shoppers when deciding which merchants to buy from online
- Over 48% of shoppers cite merchant performance (e.g., will the item arrive as promised; will the merchant honor stated policies) as the most important factor to them, followed by 37.5% citing price, 8.7% citing amount of selection, and 5.8% citing ease of transaction

Again, the above data was included as part of a press release and virtually all of the coverage mentioned the statistics and cited buySAFE as the source.

Obtaining Relevant, Proprietary Data

Clients are not always going to have interesting facts on hand. If they do, it will typically not be proprietary data which means that some other source will get the credit for providing the information.

Obtaining relevant, timely measurements is a key way for PR firms or departments to provide additional value to their clients.

With Vizu Answers, you can conduct [market research](#) for your clients within a matter of hours and for only a few hundred dollars. Numerous public relations firms have used Vizu to conduct research for their clients who needed a differentiated angle to get their stories circulated.

Conducting proprietary market research using Vizu is an easy three step process:

- 1) Create your questions with the assistance of Vizu's poll wizard
- 2) Select the type of audience you would like to target and the number of respondents needed

“We have used Vizu for a wide variety of press releases and programs. The ability to quickly poll an audience can create much greater relevance and impact for almost any PR campaign.” - Mark DiCello, GlobalFluency

3) Get your data

“Using [Vizu Answers](#), anyone from an independent PR consultant to a corporate Communications Manager at a Fortune 500 company can now easily conduct fast, inexpensive market research 24/7 on our do-it-yourself polling platform,” says Dan Beltramo, CEO of Vizu.

Experience in conducting market research is not necessary; [Vizu Answers](#) provides plenty of help along the way. Additionally, once you submit your poll question(s), you can elect to have a Vizu analyst review and optimize your question(s) for no extra cost.

Most market research takes days if not months, and can cost tens of thousands of dollars; however using Vizu to get your information is...

- Fast (2-6 hours on average)
- Affordable (\$100's instead of \$1000's)
- Easy (from anywhere 24/7)

Note that when citing data gathered using Vizu Answers, it is important to indicate that the research was conducted online. While online research is widely accepted as a valid way to collect data, it can introduce certain biases for some kinds of studies. For more on how the online population compares to the offline population see the Pew Internet and American Life Project, <http://www.pewinternet.org/trends.asp>.

Conclusion

Including statistical data will increase readership and effectiveness of press releases. Writers, reporters, journalists and bloggers all respond well to proprietary data. Not only does it pique their interest, it will help get your message read by your target audience.

Data can be obtained in a matter of hours and for only a few hundred dollars by utilizing the Vizu Answers network.

To learn more about this fast and effective market research tool, visit <http://answers.vizu.com/solutions/research/index.htm>. Or contact ServiceCenter@Vizu.com

Appendix I Data Quality

Data quality comes down to asking the right question of the right people.

Tips for Writing Quality Online Research:

- Keep the question short
- Keep answers short
- Be clear in your wording
- Minimize the number of answer choices
- Include “opt out” answers, such as “Unsure,” “I am unfamiliar with product X,” or “Other” for poll takers who do not know the answer
- Avoid adding rationale to answers
- Consider question or answer images, but be careful not to introduce biases
- Make sure your possible responses are mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. In other words, answer choices don’t share anything in common, and collectively represent all possible responses

Vizu Answers Advantages vs. Panel-Based Research

Despite significantly lower costs, Vizu Answers has been shown to produce data in line with many of the most prestigious and expensive research and polling institutions.

By using a network of 1000’s of websites to conduct market research, Vizu avoids many of the issues that plague expensive panel based research:

- Vizu Answers doesn't draw from the same, tired pool of "professional" panelists that many research companies use repeatedly.
- Respondents are not artificially motivated to answer questions in which they have limited knowledge or interest.
- Respondents are not motivated to fake their identities or habits to make money.
- Self selection bias is minimized by only asking one question at a time.

Appendix II Fielding Your Own Research

Vizu Answers guides you through the research process with its poll wizard:

Poll Creation:

Step 1: Edit Poll

Edit Poll Add Images Target Votes Pay & Launch

1 2 3 4

Enter your Question and Answers

You can have up to 10 possible answer choices and allow respondents to choose either a single or multiple answers.

What is your question? Characters Left: 150

Do you listen to music while you read?

What are your answers?

Answer 1:

Answer 2:

Add Answer:

What is the maximum number of answers a user can select when taking this poll?

Display the poll answers in: Random order
 The set order shown above

Allow a Vizu Research Expert to adjust the question and answer text of your poll to aid in readability and understanding. This may increase your vote results.

QUESTION & ANSWER TIPS

- Be concise. The fewer words you use the better.
- Be careful of "double barrel" questions that ask two or more things in the same sentence. Keep it simple and focused.
- Randomize answer order to ensure against bias. Every time your poll is shown the answers will be presented in a different order.
- If your answers are meant to span a range, make sure there is no overlap and that they are mutually exclusive. In this case, you may want to also use a set order instead of randomization.
- Vizu can help you refine your question if needed. Just check the option and we will contact you with our feedback.

- Enter your question and up to 10 possible responses
- Select the maximum number of responses one voter can choose
- Select whether you want the order of the responses to be randomized every time the poll is shown, or if the responses should remain in the set order (Vizu recommends randomizing the responses whenever possible)
- Keep the box checked to allow a Vizu Research Expert to review your question and answers before it's published on the network

Add Images:

Step 2: Add Images


Edit Poll **Add Images** Target Votes Pay & Launch

① ————— ② ————— ③ ————— ④

Add Images to your Poll

Images in your poll generally result in higher response rates. You are allowed one free image to associate with your question. Each answer image you add results in a 10% surcharge for your poll.

Do you listen to music while you read?



PLEASE SELECT 1 ANSWER

Yes

No

CAST YOUR VOTE

Remove this image

Add an image to answer 1

Add an image to answer 2

IMAGE TIPS

- Images substantially improve vote rates and help convey the meaning of your poll question and answers.
- You can use any GIF or JPEG image on your computer. Vizu's servers will ensure that your image is sized properly to fit into your poll.
- Or try one of the following image search engines to find an appropriate option:
 - [Google Images](#)
 - [Yahoo Images](#)
 - [Picsearch](#)

← Previous Next →

- Images help to quickly inform your audience of the nature of the question
- Images help draw attention to the poll and engage the audience to participate
- One image is available in the question area, and each response has an image area available to it

Things to consider when adding images:

- Be sure that the image does not introduce bias to the research
- If you have images in the response fields, be sure you have an image for every response
- Images set to a horizontal (landscape) orientation work best for the area associated with the question field

Select Audience Targeting and Number of Votes Needed:

Step 3: Target Votes

Select your Targeting Options

Vizu Answers can place your poll on thousands of sites. Use the dropdown menus below to select the targeting options that will get you the right number of responses from the right audience. As you update your targeting options, the cost of your poll is reflected.

1. Set the Number of Votes *
Indicate the number of responses you need to your question.
200 Votes

2. Select an Audience Category or Geographic Target
You can target your poll question to a specific category of Web sites in our network based on their site content or you can target your poll to users in a specific geography if so desired.
General/All (optional)
-- or --
Internet Sample (predominantly USA) (optional)

6 to 24 hours
Estimated Run Time **

\$ 199.00
Cost ***

Previous Next Send

TARGETING VOTES

- Vizu Answers allows you to target your poll to gather the number of votes you want from either a broad or specific audience. Choose the targeting options from the menus on the left
- You can always rerun your poll to gather more votes or target it to a different audience once it has completed
- If you need more specific targeting options than those listed in our selection options to the left, please use the form below to contact us for further assistance. We offer many additional custom targeting options that may suit your needs

QUESTIONS? LET US KNOW

- For the best balance of value and data stability, Vizu recommends selecting 200 votes.
- The more responses, the more accurate the data becomes, though after 200 responses the data stabilizes and the increases in accuracy per additional vote diminish.
- For PR purposes, it is sometimes valuable to survey 500 or 1000 people so that a large number can be cited to lend more credibility to the results.
- Below is a chart illustrating the margin of error by confidence level and number of respondents.

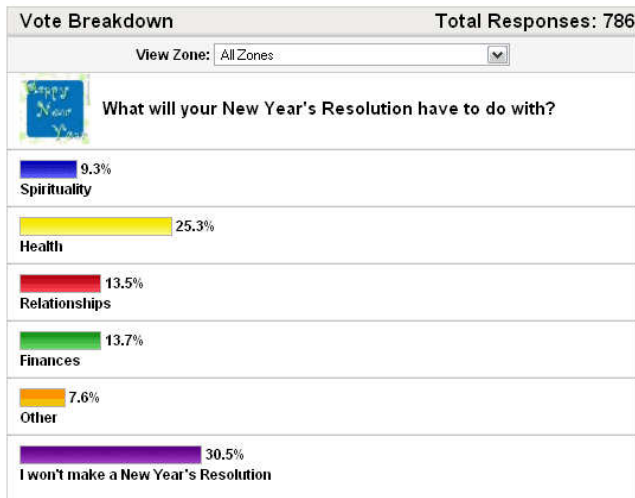
	95% Confidence	90% Confidence	80% Confidence
Survey Sample Size	Margin of Error	Margin of Error	Margin of Error
50	14	12	9
100	10	8	6
200	7	6	5
300	6	5	4
400	5	4	3
500	4	4	3
600	4	3	3
700	4	3	2
800	3	3	2
900	3	3	2

1,000	3	3	2
1,500	3	2	2
2,000	2	2	1

Note: This chart assumes a random sample and a normally distributed population. For more on margin of error by sample size see <http://www.isixsigma.com/library/content/c040607a.asp>.

View Your Data:

Your market research data is presented to you in real time as the responses arrive:



Answers are mapped to display where each response came from.



Appendix III Companies Mentioned

Bazaarvoice

Bazaarvoice offers outsourced technology, services, analytics, and expertise to help companies enhance the online shopping experience with social commerce applications that drive sales. Bazaarvoice Ratings & Reviews and Ask & Answer deliver immediate success by minimizing implementation risk and maximizing the strategic impact of user-generated review content through complete customization, deep integration, community management, advanced analytics, search engine optimization, and syndication across the Web and to offline channels.

buySAFE

buySAFE, Inc. is an expert at ensuring safe, reliable and virtually risk-free online shopping. buySAFE and its surety partners – Liberty Mutual®, Travelers®, and ACE® USA – certify online merchants to ensure they are trustworthy and reliable, monitor them continuously, and stand behind the certification by guaranteeing a shopper's purchase with a bond, up to \$25,000. buySAFE is the only company in the world that provides online merchants with an explicit third-party endorsement of their reliability and trustworthiness, backed by a bond guarantee.

GlobalFluency

GlobalFluency is a worldwide communications services firm offering its clients a distinctive combination of capabilities for shaping perceptions, developing and growing markets, expanding customer relationships, and building valued brands. With offices in over 50 countries throughout the Americas, EMEA and Asia, we provide the right resources to deliver effective, standout marketing campaigns anywhere in the world.

OkCupid

OkCupid (www.okcupid.com) is the fastest growing free, online dating company in the United States with more than two million monthly unique users and 500,000 active daters. Launched in 2004, OkCupid members take entertaining personality quizzes and answer compatibility questions to create their own customized matching algorithm. Unlike any other personals site, OkCupid's proprietary matching system uses these answers and advanced mathematical algorithms to recommend compatible users. To date, more than 150 million compatibility questions have been answered by OkCupid users and more than 100,000 new member accounts are created every month.

Schwartz Communications

Since 1990, Schwartz Communications has been helping technology and healthcare companies articulate compelling stories. In a media-driven world, Schwartz helps companies translate technical innovation into market advantage.

Leveraging the power of the media, Schwartz PR campaigns allow our clients to level the playing field against entrenched competition or to show how new technologies can mean a whole new ballgame.

Vizu

Vizu is the Internet's first self-serve market research network. The company combines an easy-to-use polling platform with a diverse network of websites to enable fast, affordable market research. Vizu also provides interactive content for websites through its Web Polls and Power Polls widgets.

References:

¹From PRWeb Statistics

PRWeek Magazine, February 4, 2008, Page 17
www.ODwyerPR.com, February 21, 2008

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