

Market research language services

For linguistically and culturally diverse research



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Fluent Communications

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Executive summary

The Global Lingo June 2021 “Market Research Language Services” report provides an overview of five main areas:

- How COVID-19 has affected the Market Research Industry
- The Shift to the Digital Landscape
- How to Compete Successfully in the Global Marketplace
- Market Research for International Expansion
- How Language Services Supports (and Enhances) Market Research

The report provides a wealth of benefits that market researchers and corporations alike stand to gain through professional transcription, translation, simultaneous interpreting (“simultaneous translation”), and in-language coding services, ensuring accurate and valuable consumer insights.

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How COVID-19 has affected the market research industry

While it is true that research has traditionally been the cornerstone of informed business decisions, the onset of COVID-19 almost brought the market research industry to a crashing halt, especially when it came to face-to-face research.

But the industry has proven resilient as well as resourceful. In spite of the challenges the pandemic has presented, the industry is learning to adapt, finding innovative ways to continue helping corporations make informed decisions.

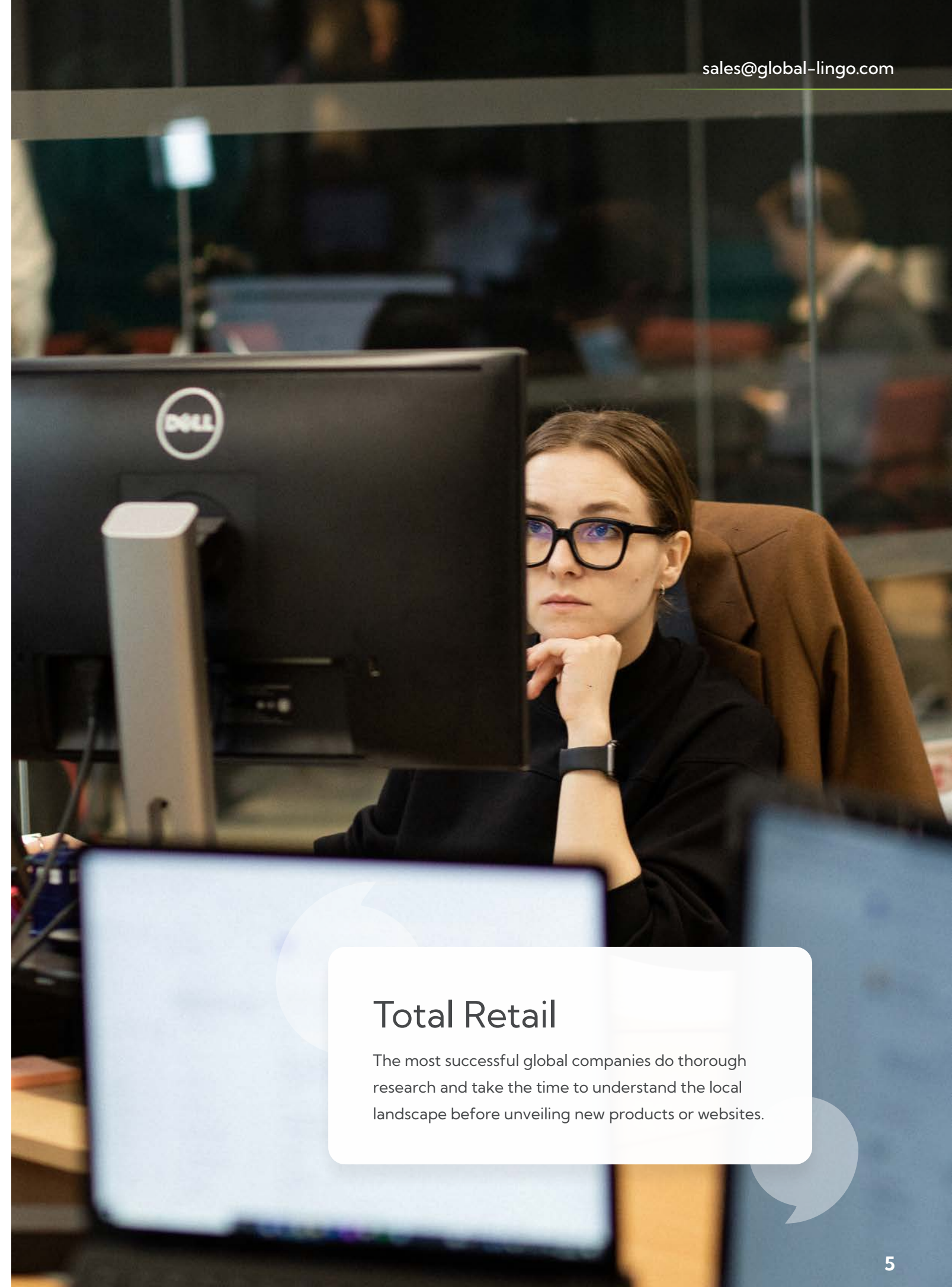
Impact on face-to-face research

As critical as it is in market research (especially when it comes to hearing hard-to-reach groups), face-to-face research has arguably been the most negatively affected sector of the market research industry due to social distancing and lockdown measures imposed during COVID-19. In fact, according to the latest MRS industry research, as of September 2020, "less than a quarter of face-to-face activities had resumed in August, with 69% still on hold, and 5% of businesses reporting they will no longer offer those services in the future."¹

In a powerful statement, MRS's CEO, Jane Frost CBE, stated that "[w]hile alternative methods and techniques have been utilised to great effect throughout this period, and we've seen a surge in online qualitative research and telephone research in particular, it is critical that in-person fieldwork is resumed and reprioritised once it is safe."² For now, however, the market research industry has had to pivot, and pivot quickly.

Shift to online research

According to MRS, "research businesses continue to report growth in online qualitative research. Two thirds of survey participants reported an increase in this type of activity in August, up from 39% in a similar survey; Analysis and reporting, data processing, online data collection and telephone data collection have also experienced an uplift since the early stages of the pandemic."³ At least for the foreseeable future, in-person interviews and face-to-face focus groups cannot resume at the same scale as they had enjoyed pre-pandemic. Market researchers and corporations that rely heavily on market research must follow the trends if they wish to overcome the current challenges — and these trends are definitely moving toward the world wide web.



Total Retail

The most successful global companies do thorough research and take the time to understand the local landscape before unveiling new products or websites.

The shift to the digital landscape

Consumer preference

Even as social distancing measures, curfews, and travel bans begin to relax in some corners of the world, we continue to see a digital acceleration in consumer behaviours from grocery delivery to virtual medical appointments. That being said, however, study after study also shows that in the United States and the United Kingdom alone, shoppers are mixed in their online/in-store shopping preferences.

As the fear of the pandemic gradually lessens, a certain percentage of consumers will likely return to brick-and-mortar shopping.

However, from safety and health concerns to an increased preference toward convenience, online shopping is undoubtedly here for the long haul, and is most definitely accelerating.

As these online consumer trends continue to weave themselves into the new normal across countries, business decision-makers require solid, unbiased, and fact-based evidence to help them determine the best way forward. By partnering with market research firms grounded in digital data collection, companies are able to once again connect and engage with their growing online consumers.

Market research automation

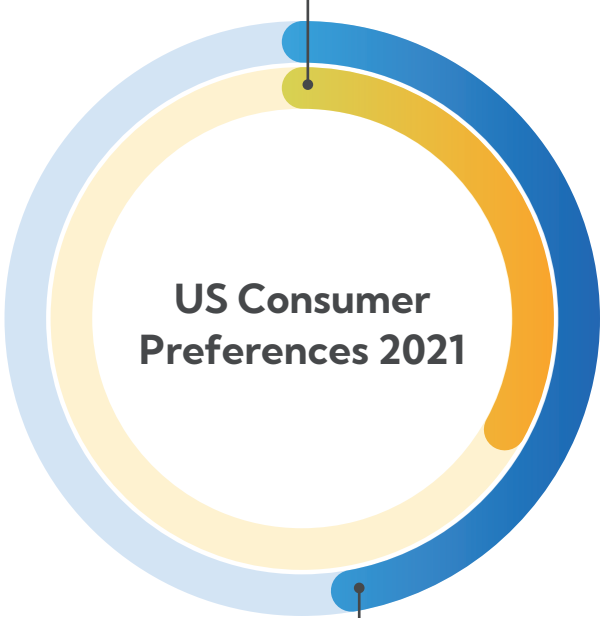
Market research firms pay close attention to these digital trends, which for many, has meant pivoting to innovative online methods for data collection. As Research Live puts it, "[e]mbracing digital has made it far easier to reach people in a way that doesn't feel intrusive. The ease of logging onto the native environment of an app or your laptop where you get a gamified and fun experience is likely to lead to more attentive, honest results and is ultimately far more intuitive as it incorporates our natural everyday behaviours."⁴

Adopting new digital tools in market research will prove critical to continued market research success in 2021 and beyond. By applying the responsible and practicable use of technology, along with the application of analytical skills,

market researchers will continue to develop a real understanding of consumer preferences and behaviours. "The shift to more electronic means of surveying consumers is beneficial in a number of ways... digital data collection is rapid, relatively error-free, and often fun for consumers."⁵

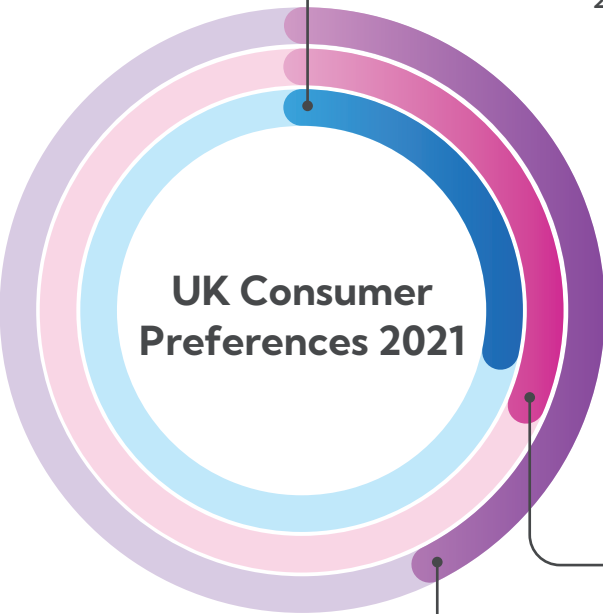
However, no matter how data is collected, the human element remains critically important to the overall data collection process. Market researchers "listen and strive to understand the views of consumers, and then interpret this information to guide brands, organisations, and governments to make informed decisions."⁶ The following are just a few of the many digital tools a growing number of market researchers now use to glean consumer insights.

Replaced the purchase of in-store products with online alternative
33%



Prefer shopping in-store
48%

All/Mostly Online
25%



About half in person, half online
33%

All/Mostly in physical shop
42%

Virtual focus groups

Focus groups can be the ideal market research tool when developing a new product or service, launching a new marketing approach, or striving to understand a communication gap between your business and your target audience. However, during (and even post) COVID-19, in-person focus groups might not be the most responsible approach. Virtual focus groups, however, are often a cost-effective and convenient alternative to traditional in-person data collection.

Virtual focus groups can also open up data collection on a global scale (allowing for a wider sampling) since participants only require a wifi connection to participate. And, since virtual focus groups do not require the reservation of a physical location in which to conduct the focus group sessions nor the coordination of participant travel, this method also saves you time and money.



Online research and community panels

A community panel consists of a group of consumers who actively participate in online market research on an ongoing basis. If constructed and moderated appropriately, these panels can serve up timely insights regarding your consumers' attitudes, behaviours, and decision-making processes ultimately helping you deepen your understanding and relationship with your target audience.

Whether you wish to collect consumer data of a thousand (or thousands of) participants or you are aiming at a more moderate data collection of a few hundred participants, online research and community panels might work best for you.

Online surveys

By allowing you to capture high-value, high-quality data for less money, online surveys have also become a popular online market research tool. Generally considered user-friendly and relatively quick to complete, online surveys are gaining popularity over traditional in-person (in-depth) interviews (IDIs). Online surveys are also more flexible than IDIs, allowing the respondents to access the questions and respond on their own time.

With a variety of online tools now available ranging from simple to more in-depth models, a growing number of companies are now investing in online surveys to collect meaningful, actionable data to help drive their business forward.





How to compete successfully in the global marketplace

Whether we realise it or not, we are all living and competing in a global marketplace. And while this presents new and growing opportunities, globalisation has also created unique challenges for corporations to overcome in order to survive in an increasingly competitive landscape.

The complexities of expanding into new markets cannot be overstated and have manifested in the need to reexamine one's expansion strategies, implementation processes, and overall business management. However, when corporations (and market researchers) partner with professional language services providers (LSPs), they take the guesswork out of international expansion and marketing. With an intimate knowledge of your target market's local customs, culture, and language, LSPs experienced in providing linguistic and cultural support for the market research industry can help you better pinpoint and cater to your consumers' unique needs.



Understanding your target market

Before you can successfully introduce your products and services into new markets, you must first gain an intimate understanding of the unique needs, behaviours, and preferences of your new audience.

Where and how are they satisfying these needs, and where and how might your competitors be missing the mark? Do you have the products and services to help your brand stand out from the crowd? For some markets, it is all about convenience shopping and making purchasing decisions that cater to a more balanced lifestyle.

Other markets, however, are more swayed by financial pressures or by innovative product and service solutions that save them time. Ascertaining a keen sense of these consumer behaviours and attitudes as well as your

customers' relationship with the brands with whom they interact will help you pave the way forward to begin building and maintaining strong customer relationships.

It is critical to a company's expansion efforts to gather and analyse this data and to recognise that these preferences are fluid and are therefore subject to change depending on the changing economic, political, and social conditions of any given region.

Investing in ongoing, valuable market research that involves close and regular examination of cross-lingual and cross-cultural consumer preferences will help to ensure you stay ahead of the curve and make informed decisions that benefit both your company and your consumers.

Most difficult markets for SMBs to break into



- Asia – 37%
- European Union – 30%
- Latin America – 24%
- Rest of Europe – 11%
- Africa – 10%
- Middle East – 6%
- North America – 6%
- Oceania – 6%

Benefits and challenges with international expansion

In 2016, the Foreign Exchange Services (OFX, formerly, USForex) published their Global Expansion Meets Domestic and International Challenges report and found that the main motivators for international expansion included:

- ▶ Access to higher quality suppliers/vendors
- ▶ Access to higher quality talent
- ▶ Access to more affordable suppliers/vendors
- ▶ Easier or less expensive customer acquisition
- ▶ Access to less expensive talent
- ▶ Less tax liability

But international expansion doesn't come without its many challenges. In their report, OFX listed the following regions as the most difficult markets to break into. As one survey respondent put it, "[t]he biggest challenge is being able to provide a uniform service across

several different regions, while also keeping our product and service in line with different cultures."

Despite these challenges, however (and despite how COVID-19 has negatively impacted business expansion around the world), SMBs by and large, have learned to adopt new technologies and practices, creating an optimistic outlook in the months and years ahead.

In fact, at the time of this report, "67% of small businesses expect conditions to continue to improve during the year ahead, up from...19% last March. In contrast, a worsening pace of economic growth was expected by just 12%, a fraction of last March's 41%." As global travel gradually returns and consumer confidence continues to strengthen, companies will once again be looking to expand overseas.

Market research for international expansion

Although there are a great many similarities among consumers that span the globe, there are likewise, a great many differences. A community's values, for instance, are largely influenced by their shared history, their politics, international relations, and certainly by their unique traditions and customs. All of these factors are expressed in a people's language and ultimately affect how consumers in various regions engage with your brand.

It is for this very reason that companies aiming to expand internationally might wish to modify their brand messaging — and might even consider modifying their products and services as well — in order to better connect with their target markets. A thoughtfully-designed, well-executed market research strategy coupled with market research language services is sure to reveal vital data direct from your target market.

In other words, when you include language services as part of your market research, you'll be in a much more informed position to redefine and reshape your messaging, and will be armed with accurate knowledge to know when, where, and how to grow your business. Simply stated, market research fused with linguistic and cultural support strengthens your chances of successful international expansion.



How language services supports and enhances market research

As technology continues to advance and consumers continue to gravitate to online purchases, corporations and market researchers will likewise be looking for innovative ways to gain as intimate an understanding of their target market as they can. With each passing year, the internet becomes more and more accessible to an increasing number of consumers worldwide. This has prompted a growing number of companies to develop a global mindset and has compelled a growing number of market researchers to create innovative ways to collect consumer data in multiple regions and in multiple languages.

If not handled with care, however, your market research can miss out on valuable insights or possibly even worse, lead to costly misunderstandings. By partnering with an LSP seasoned in linguistic and cultural support for the market research industry, market researchers will continue to help corporations tap into new and emerging markets and establish a successful international presence.

Market research translation and localisation

Although the world has become more connected, many consumers are still guided by their local customs, belief systems, and traditions. These powerful cultural connections often drive purchasing decisions and dictate which brands consumers will remain loyal to. And, as a growing number of traditionally marginalised communities now have access to technology, market researchers are better able to glean insights from a more diverse group of consumers.

Whether your corporation is looking to expand into new markets or your research firm requires multilingual support, market research translation and localisation will help you gather highly accurate results. When your market research includes translation and localisation, you'll gain insights into the purchasing preferences and behaviours of these marginalised populations and create meaningful connections. In short,

translation and localisation services will ensure the data you collect does not miss out on (or misunderstand) nuanced responses from your diverse target markets.

By localising and adapting your market research materials (surveys, questionnaires, stimuli, videos, etc), you will better — and more successfully — connect with your target market. Professional market research translators are particularly gifted at helping you create the necessary emotional connections with your consumers that help to strengthen trust.

And once you've gained your target market's trust, they are much more willing to actively engage and participate in your market research, and much more likely to remember and interact with your brand.

Focus group simultaneous interpreting

When conducting virtual focus groups, your market research might require real-time consumer insights from participants who hail from any number of geographical regions or who speak any number of different languages. By partnering with an LSP that offers simultaneous interpreting for focus groups or interview discussions, researchers will be able to seamlessly gather insights from all the participants, regardless of where they live or the language they speak. Even if conducting phone interviews, a two-channel audio will allow interpreters to interpret into — and from — the participants' preferred language.

Simultaneous interpreting is of particular importance for conveying the meaning and nuance in foreign-language focus group settings. For researchers (and corporations) watching foreign-language group discussions behind a one-way mirror, for instance, interpreters help to minimise misunderstandings and ensure that the message is accurately delivered.

Whether you are conducting a one-to-one interview or facilitating an intimate focus group for your market research, simultaneous interpreting can provide a great many benefits. Simply put, a simultaneous interpreter interprets for focus groups (or interview discussions) in real-time, allowing for a continuous, uninterrupted flow of information.

Transcription services

Whether you are monitoring online community panels, conducting online surveys, or moderating virtual focus groups, multilingual transcription can be an invaluable service. Transcripts of your market research help you clearly and accurately decipher the data collected, allowing you to unlock key insights that inform your business decisions. When you are armed with a complete understanding of all the data your research has collected, you might just be able to find the differentiators you need to rise above your competition.

Professional transcribers not only help to ensure the validity of your market research data but also help your small group discussions, 1-2-1 interviews, and even your vox pops flow smoothly. Knowing that the invaluable data you collect from your market research will be professionally transcribed, you'll be better able to focus on the research itself, gleaning in on important discoveries.

A written transcription of the data you collect will prove invaluable, allowing you to zero in on the key factors that impact your target market's purchasing decisions. With this critical information at your fingertips, you'll be able to recognise precise areas in which you can improve your products, services, and messaging. In other words, transcription services strengthen the accuracy of your data, keeping it free of bias.

In-language coding

Depending on the type of market research you are conducting, sometimes consumer responses can be long and detailed. This is especially true when using open-ended questions. And while these responses tend to be very beneficial — uncovering invaluable consumer insights — the length and general complexity of the responses can prove problematic.

A professional in-language coder, however, can sift through these answers, look for patterns and themes, analyse the content (regardless of the language), and ultimately deliver meaningful results. In-language coders build and/or modify your code frames to provide you with impeccable analysis. And when you partner with native-language coders, you will save measurable time and increase the likelihood of accurate results.





Global Lingo — Leading the way for market research language services

Multilingual support for international market research agencies

In today's global economy, a corporation's internal market research teams and market research agencies are often tasked with collecting insightful consumer data in multiple countries. Managing market research projects across the globe and facilitating both qualitative and quantitative research in several languages, however, requires multilingual support. In order to be known as a trusted source of quality, accurate, reliable data, you would fair well to partner with an LSP well versed in providing linguistic and cultural

support for your international market research. Global Lingo is one such LSP.

With years of experience providing multilingual support for market research projects across the globe, our professional linguists will confidently handle the language requirements while you focus on the research. From in-depth, multi-country interviews to multilingual focus groups, when your market research projects require multilingual capabilities, turn to Global Lingo.



Linguistic and cultural support for multinational corporations and market research firms

When conducting international consumer research, it is critical that the data you collect accurately reflects and represents the sentiments of your diverse target market. Global Lingo is honoured to partner directly with market research firms as well as small, medium, and large corporations looking to expand into new, international markets. We will work closely with you to ensure that you fully understand and are able to accurately interpret the invaluable consumer insights that your market research collects.

By partnering with Global Lingo, you'll be able to make powerful marketing decisions that propel you forward. No matter your intended audience, Global Lingo's market research language solutions are designed to help you succeed across international borders.

Unparalleled multi-language solutions

With five global offices, seven key sectors, and an extensive resource base that contains over 6,000 freelance native-language linguists working in more than 150 languages, Global Lingo has become a recognised and trusted name in market research language services. Our subject matter experts are well-versed in the complexities and subtleties of market research across industries, no matter the language, accent, or cultural background of your market research participants. As a fully certified LSP with unmatched flexibility, Global Lingo has conducted thousands of hours of market research transcription, translation, in-language coding, and simultaneous interpreting services.

Global Lingo offers dedicated account and project managers specialised in market research project workflows as well as professional language support for local, regional, and global market research. Catering to countless markets around the world, we offer professional localisation of your market research materials, back translation of open-ended responses, and professional interpreting for in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and much more. With ISO 9001 and 27001 certifications, Global Lingo is committed to providing you with the highest quality of service and security.

Ensure the validity and accuracy of your market research data. Partner with Global Lingo today.

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