

MARKET RESEARCH OR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

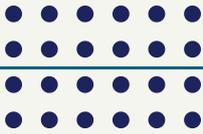


There are some key differences between market research and community engagement. However, they both use similar tools and processes but use different words to describe them. The key to understanding the differences comes back to the type of research or engagement questions you have.

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LET'S COMPARE MARKET RESEARCH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MARKET RESEARCH	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
<p>Market research is used for business planning, often in the “for profit” arena. The information collected is about customers’ preferences, what they consume/buy, where they live, their use of competing products or brands. It can be considered “recommended”, “desirable” but not mandatory.</p>	<p>Community engagement is used for informed decision making, often in the “not for profit” arena such as government or not-for-profit agencies. The information collected is about their stakeholders’ views on a particular issue or topic and how they respond to a specific proposal/set of options. In some cases it is mandatory to engage with the affected stakeholders.</p> 
<p>Market research involves collecting information about a customer and/or a product – it may not be immediately related to a decision.</p>	<p>Community engagement involves collecting feedback from stakeholders, about a pending decision that needs to be made. Stakeholders have an opportunity to shape the decisions or actions taken.</p>
<p>Market research is often a one-way relationship – the customer provides information to an organisation or company.</p>	<p>Community engagement is often a two-way relationship – the stakeholder is involved in a discussion, exchange of ideas, has opportunity to reflect and revise their feedback .</p>





LET'S LOOK AT THE DIFFERENT WORDS TO DESCRIBE SIMILAR THINGS

The person who provides the feedback or information?

- Called a customer in market research
- Called a stakeholder in community engagement

The environment where you ask for the feedback or information?

- Called “the market” in market research
- Called “the community” or “our stakeholders” community engagement

The ‘thing’ you’re giving feedback about or information?

- Called a “product” or “brand” in market research
- Is a place, a document, an idea in community engagement

The environment where you ask for the feedback or information?

- Called “the market” in market research
- Called “the community” or “our stakeholders” in community engagement

Market research and community engagement can use similar tools to get feedback – questionnaires, focus/discussion groups, personal interviews, intercept surveys – but they also have specialised tools and techniques.

Governments and not-for profit agencies often use the term “social research” instead of “market research” because their research questions are about people and not products, they commonly concern social issues or social policy not purchasing/consuming and they affect neighbourhoods or entire communities.

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