



# Five Quick Tips

When Considering  
International Market Research

Part One: Customization

*If your customer research needs are global, you've probably experienced varying levels of success working with vendors here and abroad to successfully meet your objectives. As a boutique research firm with broad and carefully-culled international resources, we've come up with some quick but critical points to consider about customization when embarking on a global market research project:*

**1.**

**Don't fall for the mythology that "the U.S. way is the only or best way, so let's duplicate the methodology abroad."**

- Cultural and geographical differences exist inside and outside a country (China has widely varying dialects and languages, for example.)
- Door-to-Door/Face-to-Face interviews are more customary than phone or Internet in some cultures, especially in the Third World.
- Personal contact can be perceived differently across cultures.

**2.**

**Consider technological differences. Even though top-50 countries possess Internet penetration rates of 74-97%, the rest of the world averages 32%. (Source: Internet World Stats)**

**3.**

**Ensure that your sample sources and interviews (quotas) reflect your country targets.**

- Demography differences and population sizes vary from the US.
- A one-size-fits-all sampling frame will not make sense, given in-country differences.

**4.**

**Apply appropriate idioms, dialect and local language to your questionnaire instead of translating it literally.**

- Extensive expertise in language and local knowledge are key to understanding subtle distinctions.
- Sometimes, but not always, English terminology acronyms are accepted (e.g., PC is accepted for personal computer)
- Extended families/dwellings are common in some cultures. (e.g., what is meant by "head of household" in a particular country or demographic?)
- Self-administered surveys and logic need to be carefully considered across countries.
- Some countries read their languages from right to left.

**5.**

**Take into account cultural differences when drawing meaningful inferences from survey results.**

- In some countries, asking personal information such as ethnicity or income is sensitive and viewed as an intrusion.
- In some countries, asking questions about the government is frowned upon and can even be illegal.
- Ratings scales can be interpreted differently by country (some cultures rate lower on average than others).



## How Zeldis Implements the Critical Aspects of Customization

- We leverage local resources where appropriate to provide culturally relevant advice and to interpret findings in context.
- We apply methodology according to country customs. In particular, we pay close attention to Third World requirements.
- We help you overcome challenges as complex as cultural differences or as simple as conducting business in a country's local time, five or six time zones away.

The outcomes are: credible results, appropriate implications, and actionable recommendations.

## Think Global. Research Local.

Zeldis International Market Research provides extensive industry knowledge, methodological expertise, and meticulous coordination for your global research projects, large and small. Your dedicated Zeldis team expertly manages your project, executes fieldwork, checks quality, analyzes, interprets, and presents your research project results.

**Zeldis International Market Research: The global reach to make gathering information possible; the expertise to turn worldwide information into insight.**

To discuss your international research needs, contact:



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