



Brand Management

Discover the future

*"If you are not a brand,
you are a commodity."*

Philip Kotler

Branding plays a critical role in the success or failure of any business.

Iconic brands are instantly recognisable; able to convey powerful messaging with the simplest of images (such as the coca cola bottle or the Apple logo). Brand is the window on your organisation through which people discover who you are.

Getting your branding right will make all the difference between standing out from the crowd and being lost in the noise.

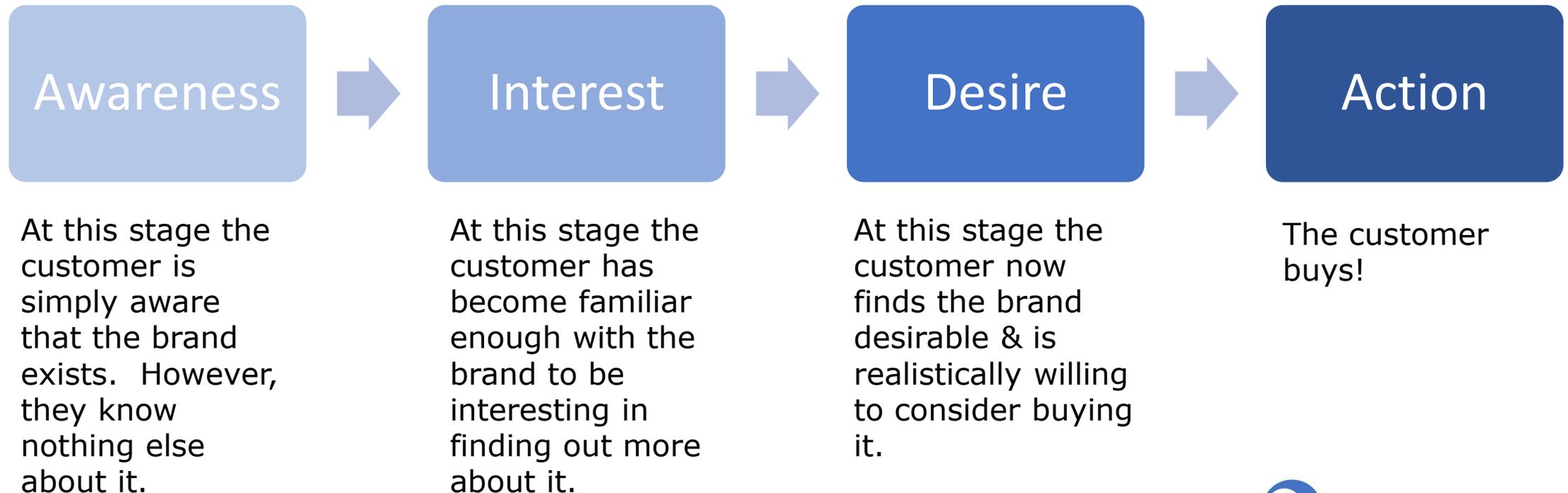
Understanding how your brand is viewed by the market provides the essential foundation for successful brand management.



Photo by Christofer Jenschke on Unsplash.com

How people buy

As long ago as 1898, a fellow by the name of Elias St. Elmo Lewis decided to model the emotional journey that customers take from the point when they become aware of a product to the point at which they actually buy it.



The purchase funnel

At any one time different people are likely to be at different stages in this journey. This creates what we call the purchase funnel.

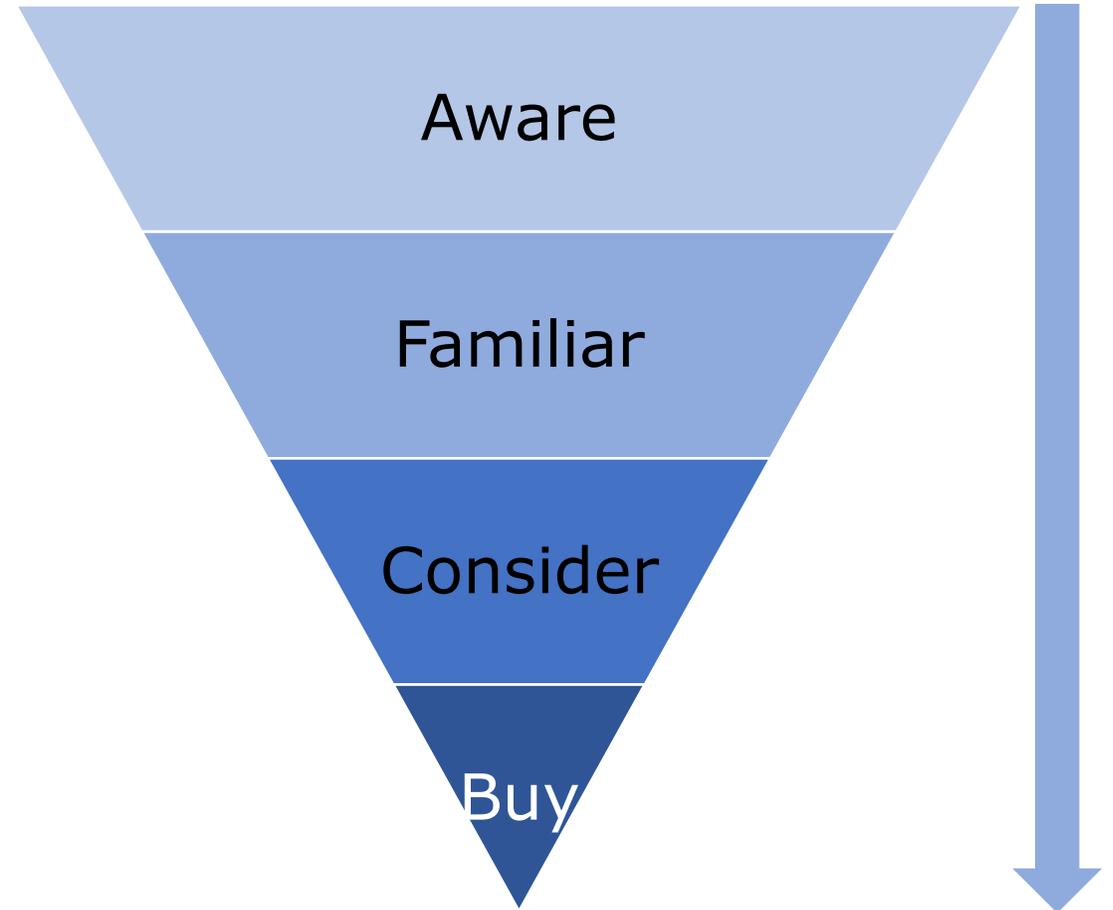
Aware: This includes everyone who has heard of the brand (whether or not they buy it).

Familiar: If we exclude people who have just heard the name but otherwise know nothing about it; we are left with a smaller group who are familiar with it.

Consider: If we further exclude those people who don't yet desire the brand, we are left with only those people willing to consider buying it.

Buy: If we then exclude those people who would consider a brand but have not yet bought it, we are left just with customers.

We can use market research to measure what proportion of your market sits at which stage.



Is the funnel still relevant in a digital age?

The purchase funnel theory has been around for a long time now.

Some have questioned the extent to which a model, originally applied to describing how brand image worked in an age where only traditional media existed, might still apply today.

Potential customers now have instant access to a huge amount of information about a wide variety of brands at their fingertips. This makes it possible to go from a state of total ignorance to making a purchase in just a few clicks.

To answer this question we need to consider how the purchase funnel worked before the internet and then look at how the digital age has changed things.



*Photo by
Gilles Lambert
on Unsplash.com*

Example:

How the purchase funnel might work pre-digital

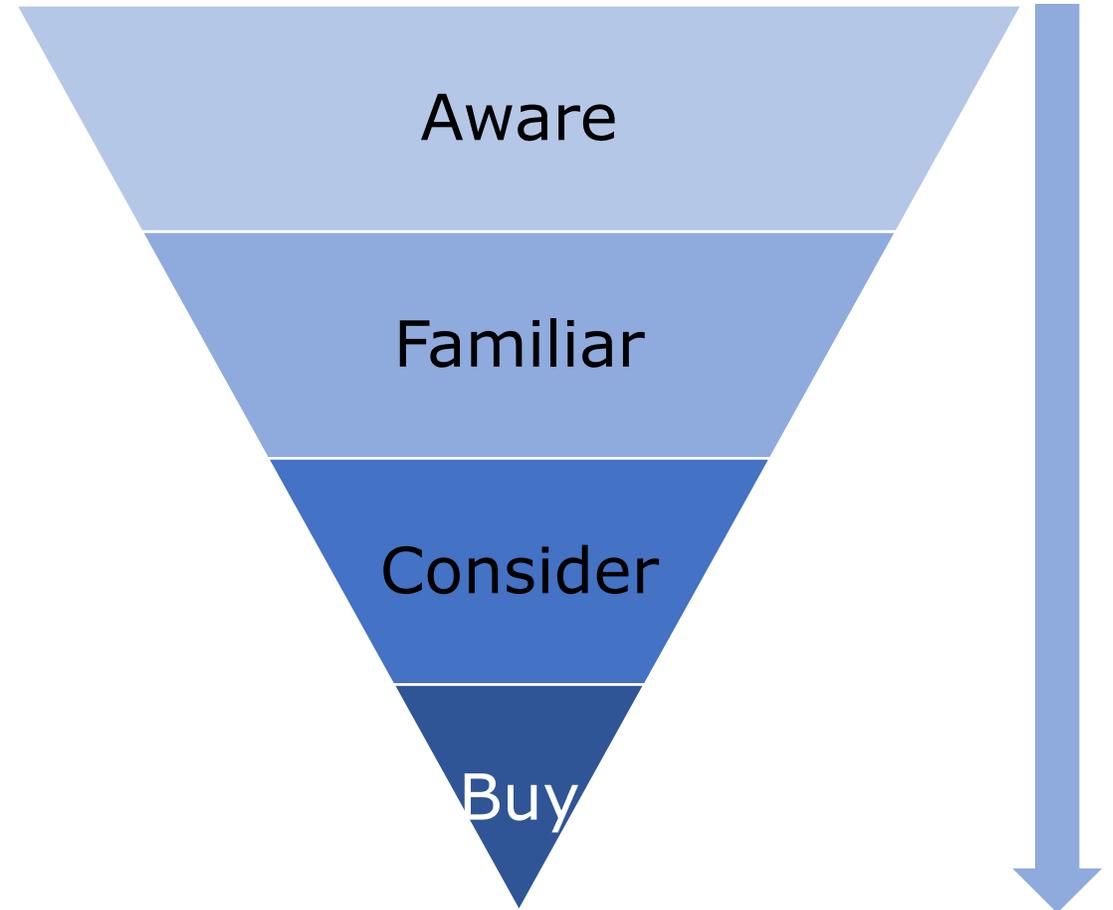
1. Someone is thinking about buying a new TV. One day they see a billboard add for our TV brand. They become aware of the brand.

2. Two weeks later they see a TV add for our brand. It contains more information and they now feel familiar with the brand.

3. A week later they see the add again and this prompts them to take a look in a shop to see the product first hand. They are now seriously considering a purchase.

4. A weeks later they return to the shop and buy it.

The whole process has taken 4 weeks.



Example:

How the purchase funnel might work today

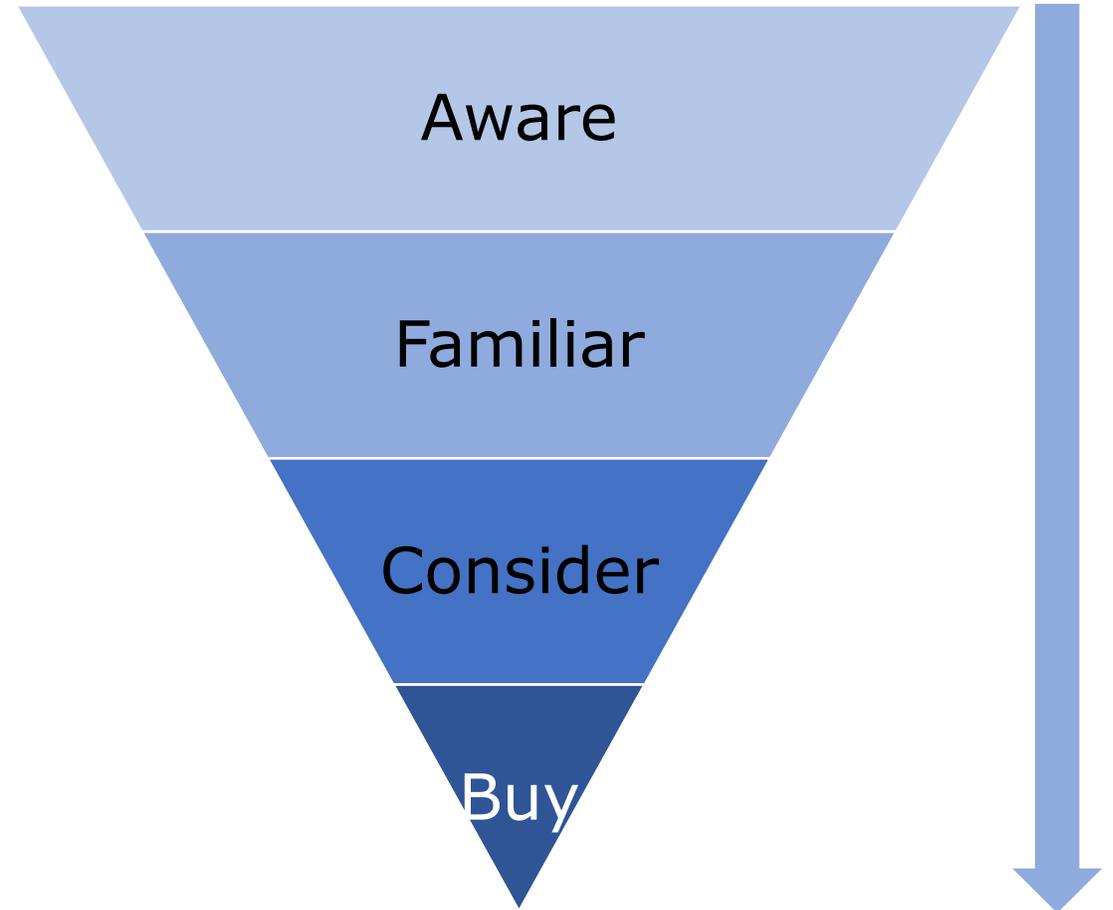
1. Someone is thinking about buying a new TV. One day they run a google search for TVs and find a list of brands. One of these is our brand. They are now aware of our brand.

2. They click on a few reviews and read more about our brand. After a few minutes they now feel they are familiar with our brand.

3. They next click through to a retail website and find out more and look at prices. They are now seriously considering a purchase.

4. After comparing prices at a few online stores they decide to buy the TV.

The whole process has taken only 30 minutes.



The same, yet different

In many fundamental ways the brand funnel works the same way now as it always had.

No one buys a brand they aren't aware of. Neither will they buy a brand they don't feel that they know enough about. Neither do people buy brands that they aren't willing to consider buying.

So, in that sense, the brand funnel works in exactly the same way that it always has. You have to move through the same emotional journey in order to become a customer.

What has changed, however, are the mechanisms and means by which you can take that journey.

The digital age has created some key new dimensions to how the brand funnel works:

- **Speed:** The Internet has made it much easier for a customer to travel through the brand funnel from end to end in a few minutes.
- **Omnichannel touch points:** All the traditional marketing channels still exist but we now also have many new digital ones. Customers can and do use these in combination – google searches, digital advertising, TV advertising, visits to shops etc. So we need an Omnichannel approach.
- **Advocacy:** Reviews, star ratings, friend's recommendations, YouTube "de-boxing". These are all powerful ways in which prospects come to learn about brands and make their buying decisions. Before the internet we used to call this "word of mouth". The difference now is that it is far more readily available and immediately accessible.

Promoting a brand in the digital age presents the same challenges that it always has...

Reaching the right audience

- The internet now provides many additional promotional opportunities.
- But we still need to get the balance right in terms of the specific channels we use.
- Tools like programmatic can help. But we still need to decide where to start and how much resource to devote to each channel in the initial instance.
- Digital channels can serve to raise awareness, build familiarity and instil desirability – even if they don't result in a sale straight away.
- Some people research products online and buy offline which makes it harder to measure impacts. Some people may see an ad but may not buy for days or even weeks later.
- So, the true, full, impact of digital marketing is not always immediately apparent.

... with the right messaging

- Getting your brand in front of the right people is only part of the challenge.
- You also need to get the right brand message in front of them and it needs to be memorable.
- Getting the messaging right makes all the difference between winning a customer and not.
- That means you need a brand with a strong image that is both memorable and promotes those brand qualities that the market values most highly – those qualities that inspire desirability.

Measuring brand qualities: it is important to identify and measure two key groups of qualities

Reputation

- A brand's reputation is a function of its perceived performance in the market.
- Examples would include whether a brand is perceived to be high or low quality; whether it is perceived to be good value or expensive.
- Such qualities either relate to or imply performance measurement and can be measured using scales.
- They can be the same kind of factors you might measure in a customer survey.
- They are however perceptions – which may or may not be based on real experiences.
- Nevertheless, having a very good or a very bad reputation will clearly impact sales.

Salience

- Salience factors represent aspects of your brand image that make your brand memorable.
- Examples include which categories your brand is associated with, how distinctive/noticeable your logo is, what situations and experiences your brand is associated with etc.
- Salience is not about performance (perceptions of how good or bad you are) – it is all about standing out from the crowd.
- Brands with strong brand salience are far more likely to come to mind when customers are looking to make a purchase.

Using market research to monitor brand performance

Market research can help you ...

Track performance over time

- Awareness.
- Familiarity.
- Desirability.
- Willingness to consider your brand.
- Levels of advocacy.

Discover the brand qualities for success

- Measure the key image qualities that drive reputation and salience.
- Measure your brand's performance vs. these qualities.
- Compare this with your competitors.
- Refine your messaging to enhance your brand image.

Measure the impact of your marketing

- Recall of promotions.
- Measure their impact on perceptions and awareness.
- Identify key media used by prospects.
- Measure both digital and offline marketing impacts.

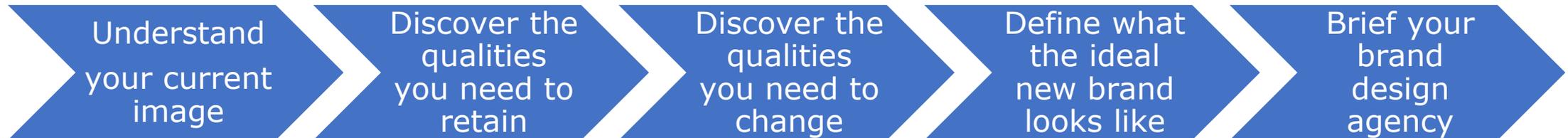
Improve brand advocacy

- Learn how to influence and enhance advocacy for your brand.
- Understand who the key advocates are and how to reach them.

Using market research to address specific brand management challenges

Rebranding

Whether you are looking to completely rebrand or simply refresh your brand, market research can help with that process. We can design a programme of research that helps you define and guide your strategy for any rebranding in a manner that is aligned to market needs:



Managing a portfolio of legacy brands



Photo by Hans-Peter Gaust on Unsplash.com

It is not unusual to inherit, either through organic growth, merger or acquisition, a portfolio of legacy brands. This can present unique challenges in terms of presenting a strong coherent brand message to the market.

We can help by designing a programme of market research that allows you to understand:

- Areas where legacy brands are competing with each other, rather than complimenting each other.
- Areas of confusion and overlap between different brands.
- Areas of brand strength & specific audiences where specific brands have a strong appeal.
- Thereby creating an optimal strategy for managing your portfolio in future.

Tailoring our solutions to fit your needs

One size does not fit all



Photo by Sin Arbrochar Unsplash.com

Whatever you want, we can tailor our approach to fit your specific business requirements and your budget.

- Perhaps you just want a simple measurement of awareness and basic perceptions?
- Or perhaps you have a number of complex and challenging brand management issues that require in-depth investigation?
- Or something in between?

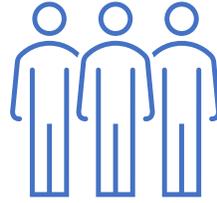
We are happy to talk it through with you and design a market research package that is best suited for the needs of your business.

Working with us

Our design approach

We always start by getting to fully understand your needs:

- It's important to ensure we get a full brief from your key people.
- So that we understand what you need to discover about the market.
- And we can make full use of existing knowledge in your organisation.
- And ensure we get full buy-in from key stakeholders early on.
- That way we get the clearest possible picture of:
 - a) what your business already knows, and...
 - b) what it needs to find out.

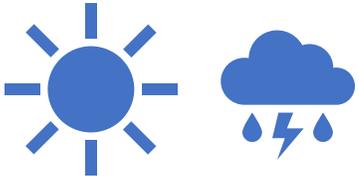


What we deliver

We feedback our findings in a report form best suited to your needs. In it we will:



Explain the key findings of the project. Creating a clear narrative that helps you discover important insights about your market.



Relate our findings to the specific circumstances of your own organisation; outlining the potential opportunities and threats that they represent. Recommending possible actions and strategies you might take.



Facilitate a suitable form of de-briefing to help your organisation to disseminate the information and make practical use of it. Depending on your needs; this might be anything from a simple de-brief presentation to a more interactive workshop/brainstorming event.

Other options: Help with surveys you run in-house

Some people may these days elect to run some of their own surveys in-house. Some may acquire simple online survey tools that enable the collection and analysis of data and, for a basic survey, that may well be sufficient.

However, running a survey in-house can be a time drain and the technicalities of designing and analysing such a survey can be a daunting prospect. Accessing respondents can also be a huge challenge.

So before embarking on such a course it is important to feel confident about all the things you will need to do (and having enough time to undertake these tasks).

However, there is a middle road you can take here. You can choose to manage some tasks in-house and outsource others. We can provide you with a modular service, that enables you to select only the services you need:

- **Questionnaire design service:** Based on a brief you provide; we can design a survey questionnaire for you in MS Word format. You can then do the rest.
- **Analysis and Reporting service:** Maybe you've already designed and run a survey in-house and just need a helping hand with analysing the data and reporting the results.

Contact us for more information or discuss a potential project

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