

Research & education

Clients: various Dutch research and educational institutions.

Profile

DDC Europe works with several large renowned knowledge institutes and universities. These institutes are conducting research in fields such as healthcare, public health, nutrition and the environment. The data quality after processing the questionnaires is essential for the subsequent quality of data analysis.

Through both online and paper surveys, which are targeted at carefully selected audiences, substantial quantities of relevant information is collected on various topics. The results of these studies are mainly used by policy makers and authorities to create new regulations or to adapt existing regulations.

The challenge

A knowledge institute has started a research project and wishes to outsource the total trajectory for the processing of questionnaires, from the layout design to the delivery of the data output file. To process the questionnaires DDC Europe will receive the mail file and a draft questionnaire. The client requires a timely delivery, high-quality data and a minimum error rate guarantee. The entire process and all targets should be realized on schedule and within a pre-established budget.

The client has chosen DDC Europe as their partner because of its ability to provide professional document handling, data processing, IT services and project consultancy. The enthusiasm and a proactive attitude of the project teams were contributing factors as well. DDC Europe has many years of experience in managing all aspects of complex, large-scale projects in the direct marketing industry.

Our solution

DDC Europe has proposed a comprehensive total solution for the entire process of processing postal and electronic questionnaires. This solution consists of the following activities:

Code	Service	Activity	Summary
1	Project Consultancy	Advice and coordination	Clear and unambiguous communication on the project start-up and phasing. All processing and reject criteria for the response are determined as well as the project's objectives and expectations.
2	Digital questionnaire	Creation of a web portal	Creation of a web portal and a secure web application to carry out the digital survey and implement the underlying database. The survey's results and response statistics are available in real time through an online administration tool.
3	Physical questionnaire	DTP, print & fulfilment	DTP and layout final of the questionnaire (from concept), in line with specifications for scanning / OCR. Laser printing of the questionnaires and accompanying letters. Inserting personalized questionnaires and letters into envelopes. Following up on non-respondents.
4	Mailing	Sending mail	Opening freepost response address. Mailing all personalized mail packages, with discounts on TNT postage tariffs
5	Printing	Purchasing	Purchase of paper, postage and response envelopes. Printing samples are sent in advance to the client for approval.

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Code	Service	Activity	Summary
6	Shared Service Center	Data processing	Response is unpacked, sorted and counted. Numbers are reported to the client. Questionnaires are scanned and processed using OCR (optical character recognition) and data entry.
7	ICT	Data delivery	Combining various output files and performing quality checks. Delivery via DDC's FTP server, formatted for SPSS, Excel, or as flat .txt file.
8	Archival	Physical archive	After processing, the paper questionnaires are packed in storage boxes and archived.
		Digital archive	All questionnaires are scanned and predetermined fields are indexed. The images and index are accessible through specialized software.
9	Project Consultancy	Evaluation	End-of-project review and evaluation with the client. The results are analysed and lessons learned are documented, all follow-up activities are quickly conducted.

The result

The project has been divided into the phases as stated above. Following each phase is a review and evaluation by DDC Europe's Project Consultant and the client. This consultation was important to keep track of the progress and to verify that the project could successfully proceed to the next phase. In this way, the client stays involved and remains constantly informed of the project's status. The final evaluation showed that all objectives were achieved in terms of quality and within time limits and budget. The high response rate was achieved partly due to the design of the questionnaires and strategic timing of the reminder mailing to non-respondents. The entire project was conducted within the set time frame. The results of the survey were therefore quickly available to the client.

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