



## ENROLLMENT DATA/RESEARCH – HOW WELL ARE WE DOING?

Market research often shapes decisions in the private sector and increasingly has been adopted by government and the non-profit sector. In the last few years, Jewish overnight camps too have begun to build up their information infrastructure and take a more data oriented approach, for example, with parent satisfaction surveys. Below are a set of market research and data tools which can help your camp to better understand its customers and those who influence them, pinpoint enrollment problems and opportunities, and provide a basis for Boards and staff to develop a shared understanding of the camp’s marketplace and inform their enrollment, programming, and other decisions.

Please use the following scale for Column 2 “HOW WELL ARE WE DOING,” and feel free to add qualitative comments.

- A – We are doing it well    B – We are doing it okay    C – We are doing it but not that well**  
**D – We are doing it very poorly/irregularly    E – We are not doing it at all**  
**NA – We aren’t doing it and don’t want to do it**

TYPE OF MARKET RESEARCH DATA	HOW WELL ARE WE DOING?	WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?
<p><b>1. Demographic and related Attitudinal Analysis</b></p> <p>Long-term demographic trends are critical to the future of any camp. How many Jews fitting your current or future target group priorities live in your cachement area? Is the number growing or shrinking? These data are generally available through census data or market research undertaken by the Federation or another organization. Local or national surveys like the recent PEW one, also can shed important light on the Jewish marketplace. Camps should understand and review available data for implications to them.</p>		
<p><b>2. Parent Satisfaction Survey</b></p> <p>In the last several years most camps have conducted a regular parent satisfaction online survey. These surveys typically ask parents a set of quantitative and qualitative questions aimed at finding out what parents like and didn’t like about the camp based on the experience of their child as well as themselves. Ideally, a leadership team designs/ adds questions to a standard survey, reviews the results and discusses its implications and next steps for programming, operations, facilities, staffing and marketing.</p>		

<b>3. Camper Satisfaction Survey</b>		
<p>Directly obtaining the perspectives of campers about their camp experience is also valuable. Simpler surveys can be designed for younger campers. A group meeting could be held at camp to obtain input and suggestions.</p>		
<b>4. Parents Market Research Survey</b>		
<p>In addition to satisfaction questions, it is useful to ask parents more direct market research questions. For example, this might include. <i>What factors do you consider when deciding about a camp for your child? How did you find out about the camp? How do you learn about camps (e.g., web research, brochures, ask other parents etc. – and what is most critical to you? What other options did you consider? How would you compare the camp’s strengths and weaknesses to others? Have you/would you recommend the camp to others? Why/why not?</i></p>		
<b>5. Phone Interview of Exit/Non-Returning Interviews</b>		
<p>Understanding why campers who attended the camp but did not return can be crucial to finding problems that are affecting others and dampening positive word of mouth. In addition to assessment by camp personnel, it is useful to have a third party (can be a Board member) phone up all parents and take ten minutes to find out their perceptions of the camp and reasons for not sending back their child. Making the effort to reach out may also provide an opportunity to change minds and/or reduce negative word of mouth.</p>		
<b>6. Phone Interview of Families Expressing an Interest who did not register their Child</b>		
<p>A prime group to better understand is families that expressed an interest – perhaps did a tour or attended an open house or made an inquiry – but did not ultimately send their child. They represent a priority group of people who have an interest so it is critical to also find out their turn-off factors in order to better adjust the camp or the marketing efforts.</p>		

<p><b>7. Staff Perspectives on Enrollment</b></p>		
<p>In addition to standard staff surveys/interviews on their perceptions of the camp's approach to staff, staff's front line insight about enrollment issues should be tapped. Whether through interviews, focus groups or the addition of a few questions to the staff survey, staff should be encouraged to communicate what they thought worked best for the campers, worked least well and where improvements could be made. The perceptions of sections heads and staff who significantly interact with parents should be systemically probed.</p>		
<p><b>8. Alumni Family Market Research</b></p>		
<p>Alumni campers, families and staff can be important ambassadors and referral sources for camps. Typically, only a small fraction of alumni families send their children to the camp to which they went. Often their experiences of the camp were different than the experiences of campers today. Understanding their perceptions and why they do/ don't send their children to the camp or refer others can be valuable. Alumni market research also can generate valuable testimonials.</p>		
<p><b>9. Key Influencers Interviews</b></p>		
<p>There are often key individuals who influence decisions that families make about sending their children to camp. These can be Rabbis, Principals, well known educational psychologists or pediatricians, Federation, JCC or synagogue leaders. They will have various knowledge and perceptions of the camp, which, indeed, could be out of date. Understanding their perspectives is helpful in designing strategies to ensure they have an accurate and positive view of the camp. Indeed, market research also is a form of marketing and influencer research also can generate valuable testimonials.</p>		

<b>10. Competitive Analysis – Challenges and Best Practices</b>		
<p>Camps function in a competitive marketplace, not only with other Jewish overnight camps but also with day camps and non-Jewish camps and even other summer recreational experiences. For priority target groups, it is useful to identify and track the competition in terms of what they do better/worse than your camp – in terms of services/ programs, price and marketing. This information can be gained from the web, families and staff with experience of the competition. Competitive analysis can drive both program design and marketing differentiation.</p>		
<b>11. Retention Analysis</b>		
<p>Increasing retention is probably the most important means of strengthening enrollment. Every camp should have retention data for each age cohort and gender and even cabin over time. This can help pinpoint challenges and opportunities.</p>		
<b>12. ROI Analysis of Enrollment Investments</b>		
<p>Understanding the return on investment for retaining or recruiting additional campers, whether a few more who can fit into existing cabins or a larger number for whom further staffing and capital investment is required is critical to determining how much to invest in enrollment boosting activities.</p>		
<b>13. Overall Enrollment Research/Data Management</b>		
<p>Taking a data driven approach to customer decisions is the hallmark of successful organizations. Camps that do this effectively undertake some or all of the above analyses in a systematic way. Senior staff and Boards take the time to review the data and draw the implications. Effective technology and data entry processes are used to facilitate analysis and decision-making.</p>		