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Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. (RMS) is a full-service market research firm. We provide custom data and insights, making innovation possible.

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4 ways to get back to business after your summer vacation

Summer days are winding down and you're back at the office, daydreaming about the sun and sand. It's time to snap back into gear because autumn is one of the busiest business seasons of the year. Here's how you can take control and finish out 2017 on top:

1. Gauge your resources. Heading into the year's final quarter means reassessing your goals and figuring out what resources you need to complete them. Conduct a quick survey to figure out where you stand. Do you need to learn a new skill? Upgrade your software or technology? Expand your networking or attend industry events? Bring on a new team member or work with an existing team to make your goals happen?

2. Check your tech. Is your website showing its age? Maybe you've updated your site in the past few years, but it's always good practice to give it a tune up at the end of the season. Remove outdated summer promotions, update with new blog posts and upcoming promos. Since your website is the first place people go to check you out, it should be working for you, not against you. Clean up unnecessary text, cluttered photos, and ensure it's mobile-friendly at all times.

3. Revisit your marketing plan. Take a peek at the calendar. Organize your marketing plan to cover what's left of 2017. The last few months of the year are loaded with holidays and seasonal experiences you can turn to your advantage. Launch a new product or program around a holiday theme, get extra visibility by attending fall trade shows and events, prepare your email marketing, social media strategies and blog posts now so you can unwind and enjoy the holidays when they come around.

4. Review. Now's the time to review what's been working and what hasn't. It's also a great time to try that new email campaign or Facebook ad boost you've been thinking about all year. With everyone back at their offices and focusing on year-end tasks, there's no better time to get moving with what you have on tap for the future.



RMS' Manager of Research Analytics is a 40 Under 40 winner!

The results are...Christopher! This October, Christopher Coville will receive the CNY Business Journal 40 Under 40 award!

Ask. Listen. Solve.

The results are in. How did you 'fair'?

The Great New York State Fair and the annual RMS State Fair Survey both broke records this year

Maggy Stewart, Graphic Designer & Marketing Coordinator

According to a poll of Central New Yorkers conducted by Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. (RMS) in August, 91 percent of survey respondents planned to go to the State Fair this year, which is not surprising considering the majority of respondents (59 percent) said the new layout of the fairgrounds led to a "better" experience. With over half of the respondents noticing some of the new changes made last year, their favorites were more seating (16 percent), main gate updates (14 percent), new layout (13 percent), and bigger midway (12 percent). When asked which musical acts respondents were most excited to see this year, The Beach Boys came in first at 35 percent.

A surprising 'twist' for the 2017 annual survey: Pizze fritte is no longer the favorite fair food. Coming in as respondents' number one fair food for 2017 at 45 percent is milk, followed by BBQ (ribs, brisket, pulled pork, etc.) at 41 percent, and pizze fritte (39 percent). Tied at 37 percent were Gianelli sausage, ice cream, potatoes from the potato booth, and the blooming onion. Thirty-six percent of respondents couldn't wait for the funnel cakes, followed by the gyro (32 percent), deep fried treats (28 percent), fries (27 percent) and roasted ears of corn (24 percent).

"Syracuse remains a top test market in the country, and thousands of vendors and new products are exhibited at this highly anticipated annual event that draws hundreds of thousands of people," said Sandy Baker, RMS Senior Director of Corporate Strategy. Respondents surveyed were asked about favorite Fair attractions, foods, Midway games, spending habits, recent capital improvements, concert options and more.

Seventy-seven percent of respondents attended the New York State Fair last year, and most (62 percent) purchase their tickets in advance. The majority of respondents (52 percent) travel less than 20 miles to get to the fair, with 77 percent planning to drive themselves. Eight percent planned to arrive via bus, seven percent were taking the Park-N-Ride Shuttle, four percent said they'd be dropped off by their friends or family, and four percent planned to take an Uber or Lyft or were unsure.

When asked how many times respondents planned on going to the fair, 31 percent planned on going three or more times. Almost 40 percent planned on attending just once. Up from 6.8 hours in 2016, respondents planned to spend an average of 7.36 hours at the state fair. Last year respondents typically spent \$121.36 and planned to attend with one other person. This year they anticipated spending \$127.97 at the fair and the majority planned to visit with two or four other people. Aside from food and drink, respondents said they typically buy clothes (31 percent), household items (27 percent), lottery tickets (27 percent), jewelry (26 percent), sunglasses (16 percent), outdoor items (15 percent), and caricatures (9 percent).

When asked to pick all of their favorite Fair attractions, 70 percent of respondents again identified the Chevy Court as their favorite, followed by the butter sculpture (69 percent), sand sculpture (67 percent), Center of Progress Building (57 percent), Taste NY (56 percent), Horticulture Building (49 percent), beer/wine tent (43 percent), art and craft exhibitions (42 percent), Midway rides and games (41 percent), International Building (38 percent), Science and Industry Building (33 percent), and Iroquois Indian Village (32 percent).

When asked which concerts respondents were most excited to see at the fair, following The Beach Boys came Earth, Wind & Fire (29 percent), 3 Doors Down (29 percent), The Marshall Tucker Band (20 percent), LeAnn Rimes (20 percent), Kansas (19 percent), Bret Michaels (18 percent), Kool & The Gang (17 percent), Brantley Gilbert (16 percent), Blue Öyster Cult (14 percent), and Spin Doctors (13 percent).

When it came to the Midway attractions, the water squirt race was again voted the favorite game by survey respondents with 34 percent. I Got It (tic tac toe board) came in second at 26 percent, followed by skee ball (23 percent), darts (21 percent), Whack-A-Mole (18 percent), lucky duck pond (15 percent), bowler roller (13 percent), rings (12 percent), fool the guesser (12 percent), basketball (eight percent) and beer bust (eight percent).



We surveyed Central New Yorkers about their plans for the 2017 State Fair. Here's what we found out about

THE GREAT NEW YORK STATE FAIR

91%
PLAN ON GOING TO THE FAIR THIS YEAR

77%
WENT TO THE NEW YORK STATE FAIR LAST YEAR

62%
buy their tickets in advance

52 PERCENT
TRAVEL LESS THAN 20 MILES TO GET TO THE STATE FAIR

7.4 HOURS
THE AVERAGE AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT AT THE NEW YORK STATE FAIR

ATTENDEES TYPICALLY GO TO THE FAIR WITH 2 OR 4 OTHER PEOPLE

THE TOP FIVE FAVORITE ATTRACTIONS AT THE STATE FAIR



CHEVY COURT



BUTTER SCULPTURE



SAND SCULPTURE



CENTER OF PROGRESS BUILDING



TASTE NY

#1 SPECIFIED EXHIBIT — ANIMALS!



59 PERCENT

SAID THE NEW FAIRGROUNDS LAYOUT MADE IT A BETTER EXPERIENCE

ON AVERAGE, VISITORS SPEND

\$127.97

OTHER THAN FOOD & DRINK, VISITORS TYPICALLY BUY



CLOTHES



HOUSEHOLD ITEMS



LOTTERY TICKETS

CONCERT FAIRGOERS ARE MOST EXCITED TO SEE



FAVORITE FAIR FOODS



FAVORITE FAIR GAME



THE TOPS WORDS ATTENDEES USE TO DESCRIBE THE NEW YORK STATE FAIR EXPERIENCE

FUN!
AWESOME! EXCITING!

When asked to describe the New York State Fair in one word, respondents' top answers were "fun," "awesome," "exciting," "great," "crowded," and "tradition."

The RMS ViewPoint Fair Survey results were gathered August 10, 2017 through August 21, 2017. A total of 1770 surveys were completed. Respondents consisted of RMS ViewPoint Research Panel members, as well as the general community.

You can participate in upcoming RMS ViewPoint surveys by visiting RMSViewPoint.com.

Case Study: Higher Education Enrollment Process Research

Erica Winters, Senior Research Analyst & Social Media Strategist



A higher education institution recently partnered with RMS to conduct enrollment process research. The client wanted to better understand the follow up, efficiency, and effectiveness of enrollment services. The market research objective was to follow-up on and measure improvements from the results completed several years ago.

To determine the effectiveness of enrollment services, RMS performed 26 mystery shops. The mystery shops were performed via telephone or online, and explored how inquiries regarding enrollment services, admissions, residence life, and financial aid are handled by institution staff. Individual scenarios were used for each mystery shop. The client provided RMS with a list of contact points to be tested,

which represented a broad spectrum of department touch points and services. Fieldwork lasted approximately one month. Following the data collection and analysis period, a comprehensive report was delivered to the client, which included a visual dashboard of the findings, as well as next steps and recommendations.

Here are some highlights of the study's findings:

- There was a noticeable improvement in staff response and response time to online inquiries.
- Staff has gotten better at encouraging prospective students to take the next step in the enrollment process.
- Online inquiries, in general, received

a timely response but did not answer all scenario details or questions that a prospective student may have.

- Telephone inquiries, in general, received no response on multiple occasions, but answered more scenario details and questions that a prospective student may have than online inquiries.
- Of the inquiries where next steps in the enrollment process were provided, most mystery shoppers felt the amount of encouragement received was appropriate.

With extensive experience in higher education research, RMS has the ability to provide custom data and research to make innovation possible. Interested in our capabilities? Contact us at info@RMSresults.com.

RMS OUT AND ABOUT



Maggy Stewart (L), Graphic Designer & Marketing Coordinator & Sandy Baker (R), Senior Director of Corporate Strategy headed to the Great New York State Fair this August to share the annual survey results live on News Channel 9's Bridge Street program.



Happy trails to Josh Elander, Research Associate (pictured) & Mark Dengler, who traveled to Chicago & L.A. to conduct focus groups this past summer.

Game of Drones: Zach Shaw (L), Panel Associate & Christine Benn (R), Business Development Coordinator had the chance to be pilots at the Drones Over Downtown Centerstate CEO event at The Tech Garden.



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CNY is one of the nation's best test markets. Are you part of its best research panel?

Visit RMSViewPoint.com and share your experience.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Market research: more than data collection in this digital age



**MARK DENGLER,
PRESIDENT &
OWNER**

Over the past several years, the market research industry has sought to identify relevant consumer data and turn that into decision-making, informational knowledge for clients. However, no longer is it sufficient to simply analyze data and answer questions like "Are my customers satisfied with our product or service," or "What price point should we launch at?" Now it is critical to provide detailed insights along with the research findings. Insight as to what the data and information means and what the next steps

should be for the client and their organization to remain competitive.

Companies utilizing market research want knowledge for effective decision-making, but they also want direction and consultation. Market research needs to suggest what the next actions should be.

Given the research findings, what *should* be done next? Today's effective research firms are transforming themselves to address this new "insight" expectation. There is

**Big data,
real-time data,
usage behavioral
data—the market
research industry
continues to
evolve.**

an effort to ensure that the scope of research work aligns with a company's strategic direction and focus. Before research is conducted, researchers seek to learn what clients want to do with the findings. Multiple primary qualitative and quantitative data components as well as secondary data reviews may be employed in studies to capture a broad array of data elements, thereby providing added value. Research analysts look to consolidate multiple sourced findings so that a richer, more well-rounded report and future action steps can be identified.

The function of market research has been elevated to the C-suite, providing strategic direction and measurable benchmarks for organizations. In fact, some have begun reclassifying the term "market researcher" to "insight professional." Market research is no longer something that ought to be done, but rather it must be done for today's organizations to be successful and to triumph over their increasing competitor base.