

Our approach to proposition* testing

Source Global Research is the world's leading firm specialising in researching the professional services sector. In the consulting market, the top 20 largest firms buy our research.

In the last two years consulting firms have become increasingly aware of the need to have clearly articulated propositions that resonate with clients. Having a big brand is no longer enough.

We've been working with some of the world's most iconic consulting firms as well as many specialists, providing them with the data and analysis to make better, more informed decisions about their services.

**Positioning, messaging, and intellectual property*

In our experience, the most successful propositions:

1. Have a clear economic rationale, so will generate a positive ROI.
2. Will resonate with clients at an emotional level.
3. Articulate what you do and how you work in clear and concrete terms.
4. Explain what's different about your approach.
5. Provide evidence and other proof-points of the impact your work has had.

Evaluating competitors

In today's highly competitive consulting market, no one starts with a blank sheet of paper – certainly not the buyers and users of consulting services. However innovative you'd like to be or dismissive you are of your rivals, you still need to understand how they position their services and talk about their propositions.

Our on-going programme of interviewing senior partners in leading consulting firms around the world gives us a unique window on how consulting services are evolving, and the way in which firms are trying to establish a competitive advantage.

Asking clients

However, the people that matter most are clients themselves. We gather their views either by organising quantitative surveys, interviewing them, or via a combination of the two.

With the intelligence we've gathered on competitors, we design surveys that get under the skin of an issue. Survey samples range from small, local snapshots aimed at giving immediate guidance for urgent decisions, to much larger-scale groups of people ranging across multiple markets.

Where qualitative research is required, our preference is to interview a firm's clients, current and/or past, as these tend to have the most to say and have a better understanding of how best to position a proposition so that it plays to a firm's existing strengths.

Creating actionable insights

The best propositions aren't built in a day, but our analysis, because it focuses on the four key components of success, helps organisations cut through internal disagreement about the way forward.

Our recommendations are grounded in data, which we're happy to explain and defend, in order to help build a clear sense of direction.

