

CASE STUDY

Facts International

Placing innovation at the heart of insight



 **Forsta**

FACTS
international

Facts International, part of the Chime Insight and Engagement (CIE) division of international communications and sports marketing group, Chime Communications plc, is committed to providing fast, accurate yet cost effective research to companies that are looking for a step change in their research.

Introduction

Offering innovative research solutions that deliver actionable findings is the driving force behind Facts International's approach to research. Facts International's customers require proactive, intelligent and responsive direction from experts who have a detailed understanding of the nuances of research.

What this means in practice for one of the UK's leading Market Research companies is taking a client-led approach to individual projects in order to deliver better quality insights, instead of selecting a technique that suits the skill set or technical capability of the research agency itself.

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CRISPIN BEALE, Chief Executive, Facts International

The Challenge

Crispin Beale, Chief Executive for Facts International, explains: “From our beginnings in 1985, we have built a solid reputation as a reliable Market Research provider, which resulted in our acquisition by Chime Communications plc. We had a long history as experts in computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) and face-to-face interviewing, but recognized that we needed to offer multi-channel research to provide tailored solutions for our increasingly discerning customers.”

The agency had investigated new research methodologies in order to extend its portfolio and had put in place a variety of specific point solutions to facilitate IVR and online surveys. “It was becoming increasingly apparent that if we wanted to leverage the opportunities presented by emerging channels such as mobile and social media – and to integrate results from all sources to deliver real, actionable insight – we needed to move to a fully integrated, cross channel solution,” said Beale.

The Solution

After careful investigation of survey and reporting solutions on the market and following discussions with colleagues, suppliers and clients in the industry, Forsta offered the market-leading solution Facts International required. It would enable the agency to offer the full range of research methodologies – including CATI, face-to-face, online, postal, SMS and IVR – from a single multi-channel solution.

“One of the key factors that stood out for us was that Forsta offers an extremely user-friendly scripting interface, which enables staff members who don’t normally script questionnaires to do so without programming skills in HTML or Visual Basic. Its CATI product is also available as a SaaS service via a web browser, which means that capital investment and time to install is reduced to virtually zero,” said Beale.

Other key factors that set Forsta apart from its competitors include the ability to provide end-to-end support for the entire Market Research process. The solution is used at every stage of a client project, from survey creation and delivery, through to data collection and reporting. Data collected from multiple sources is gathered into a Forsta centralised data hub, for reporting, which allows Facts International to deliver both top level and drill-down analysis of feedback to its clients.

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Aside from the technical capabilities of Forsta, Facts International benefited from the high level of industry knowledge provided by the Forsta team, which translated into a detailed understanding of the agency's client needs.

Beale added: "From our perspective, we were impressed by the commitment to research and development, and ongoing support, at Forsta. The speed at which the company is able to develop new functionality and solutions, and to respond to customer needs, is extremely impressive. It's the combination of constant innovation and reliable support that makes this solution a market leader. Nobody else is doing anything like this in the market."

FORSTA PROVIDES:



Full call center research solution for up to 200 agents, with monitoring and call recording



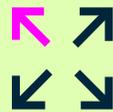
Multi-mode data collection, including web, CATI and CAPI



A future-proof solution courtesy of its commitment to R&D



Live reporting dashboards



The security, reliability and scalability to offer a dependable service

Implementation

The transition to Forsta presented a number of challenges, largely as a result of the introduction of new and different ways of working in comparison to the previous survey solution, which had been in place for over 16 years.

A clear roadmap, some tough milestones and a determination to make the most of Forsta's intuitive capabilities – combined with a comprehensive training program – led its successful adoption across the agency.

Forsta is now used at the agency's expanded telephone call center – one of the largest professional research telephone centers in the UK – by between 150 and 200 agents at any one time. They are managed by up to 10 supervisors who are responsible for accessing recordings and monitoring productivity, also via Forsta.

Forsta is used by the 20-strong scripting and data output team to create multi-mode scripts, surveys and questionnaires, and to provide clients with an online view or test facility during the design phase to ensure optimum questionnaire development. The success of each project is maximized by using the most appropriate channel or methodology, including web, telephone and face-to-face. Cost efficiency and completion rates are boosted by enabling respondents to complete questionnaires online if they do not have time for a telephone interview, or to switch from an online survey to a telephone interview if they prefer.

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The large 3,000 field force and 1,000 mystery shoppers also use Forsta web capabilities to carry out face-to-face interviews. This forms part of external fieldwork activities in what is referred to as a 'large environment' where respondents are invited to take part in a survey off the street. The ability to access the surveys on a browser and upload them to one central point on Forsta is a major benefit. It eliminates the time and effort required to gather data on one computer and then amalgamate it with previous survey findings at a later date.

"We are now able to see exactly where we are most efficient and which areas require attention, and are delighted that the costs for interviewing are reducing."

CRISPIN BEALE

Chief Executive, Facts International



Benefits

Following the full adoption of Forsta in late 2011, Beale comments that the SaaS access to Forsta, supported by the secure hosting environment created by Rackspace, has provided the scalability and guaranteed uptime that is essential for an MR business that needs to be able to offer a consistently reliable service. Furthermore, it has revolutionized the way in which the agency shares information with clients and suppliers, providing far greater transparency. Partners and customers are able to review data themselves as it comes in live from the field, for example, which is extremely empowering.

He also cites the ability to monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across the agency, including the productivity of agents in the call center, as a huge benefit. "There is clearly no comparison with paper-based evaluation systems that are prone to inaccuracy and can't provide an immediate picture of how staff are performing. We are now able to see exactly where we are most efficient and which areas require attention, and are delighted that the costs for interviewing are reducing."

The most significant advantage of using Forsta is the agency's ability to provide its customers with sophisticated real-time online analysis and reporting, using Forsta. "Our clients increasingly want immediate feedback from surveys so that they can begin to view aggregated results and emerging trends 'in the moment', instead of having to wait a month for data

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to be analyzed and provided in a formal presentation. The auto-charting feature provided by Forsta enables us to access raw data as it becomes available and to output it as a PowerPoint chart, for example, quickly and cost effectively.

“Demonstrating the value of research in such a transparent and immediate manner helps us to differentiate Facts International from our competition. More importantly, it enables our clients to respond to changes in the market with a dynamic decision-making process supported by real insight,” continued Beale.

Executive Vice President at Forsta, Tim Hannington adds: “We’re delighted that Facts International is deriving such great value from Forsta. We’re committed to the exploration of new technology and development of new functionality to ensure that we support Facts International as it continues to meet the ever-evolving demands of its clients. With so many exciting projects ahead, we’re looking forward to continuing to support their needs in the years to come.”



Beale concludes: "There is no doubt that new and emerging channels will have a huge impact on the solutions we develop for our clients. Working with Forsta gives us the confidence that any new offerings we provide will deliver the exact capabilities that we – and our clients – need to stay ahead of the competition. We're looking forward to taking advantage of the latest developments in Forsta, such as active dashboards and action management, in the years ahead."

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Award Winning

The success of Forsta is evidenced by the fact that the agency won the MRS Operational Award for Best Field Force 2014. The award recognizes Facts International's investment in people, commitment to training and development, and delivery of quality data, and Forsta was a contributing factor in this success.



Growing Smarter Together

Forsta is the world's leading provider of Experience & Research Technology, working together with our clients to help them discover, understand, and share human-centered insights packed with real action potential.

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