



Overview

The Need

MarketCast needed to cross-tabulate huge volumes of data into a condensed, easy-to-read format that could be readily used by internal report writers, while simultaneously reducing both project turnaround time and the high number of “cut and paste” errors.

The Solution

MarketCast implemented IBM SPSS Reports for Surveys, complementing its core analytics engine, IBM SPSS Statistics.

What Makes it Smarter

MarketCast turns massive amounts of survey data into actionable information in a fraction of the time it used to take using manual tools, and with fewer errors.

The Result

“We’ve more than tripled our custom business over the last couple of years, and this success is on the back of what we’ve done with SPSS Reports for Surveys.”

— David Breihan, Director of Operations and Organizational Development, MarketCast

Star Power

MarketCast leverages IBM® SPSS® Reports for Surveys to create actionable information for the entertainment industry

Is it the long-standing affection that moviegoers have for a beloved comic-book character that drives them to want to see the first-ever cinematic adaptation? Is it the “origins story” of how the hero obtained his super-human powers? Is it the inner psychological conflicts that the main character wrestles with as he navigates his every-day life while maintaining the secret of his true identity? Or is it simply the promise of eye-popping, revolutionary special effects?

These are some of the kinds of questions to which motion picture studios — not to mention producers, television networks, and cable programmers — eagerly seek the answers. Once it has been properly instrumented, analyzed, and interpreted, huge volumes of this survey data are used to optimize marketing and distribution strategies. The trick is to make sense of the data and present it in a way that can be readily turned into smart business decisions and incisive action. That’s what MarketCast does, and IBM SPSS Reports for Surveys is one of the tools behind the magic.

MarketCast is a leading research firm servicing the global entertainment industry. The company has consulted on hundreds of movie releases and television programs and is dedicated to providing strategic research and advice to maximize the impact and reach of its clients’ marketing resources. Services range from brand and segmentation studies to exit polls, advertising testing, recruited screenings and focus groups, tracking studies, positioning analyses, home video volumetric forecasts, and many custom capabilities. One of the tools MarketCast uses is Reports for Surveys to turn the massive amounts of data generated by such services into actionable information.

Easy and powerful

The first step in many cases is to convert the data into cross tabulations, or “crosstabs,” so that MarketCast’s talented writers and analysts will have the crisp statistics and condensed, easy-to-read format they need for preparing their client presentations. Cross tabulation is the process of creating a contingency table from multivariate frequency distributions





Business Benefits

- Helped triple the company's custom business over a period of approximately two years
 - Greatly improved staff productivity, reducing typical project turnaround time (close of field to preparation of tables) from one week to one day
 - Enhanced external customer satisfaction by enabling more timely delivery of client reports
 - Easy to use with no need for programming background
 - Turns massive amounts of survey data into actionable information in a condensed, easy-to-read format
 - Improves accuracy of data by eliminating error-prone "cut and paste" techniques
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of statistical variables. However, programming and statistical analysis cannot be permitted to act as a bottleneck when summarizing and analyzing data. Instead, writers and analysts can concentrate on their core expertise of interpreting the information and applying the right statistical methods while leveraging the power of SPSS Reports for Surveys to streamline the process of delivering key results and insights for MarketCast's clients.

"It doesn't always have to do with statistics," according to David Breihan, director of operations and organizational development. "It has to do with being able to get information into a format that works well for us, and quickly." And this product doesn't require sophisticated programming skills to make that happen. "In the past we had to create the crosstabs using complicated syntax, and you almost needed to be a programmer to do it," Breihan continues. "But with SPSS Reports for Surveys, it's immediately clear how to set things up. I don't need to be a programmer to get the most out of this software. I just need to be smart and intuitive."

Of course, if you *do* have a programmer handy, then you can add IBM SPSS Data Collection Reports Professional for Surveys to your toolkit. MarketCast has occasionally done this to speed things up even more, but Breihan emphasizes that it's not necessary. "We don't need to have a programmer on staff," he says. "We've chosen to add this skill set because it makes the product's capabilities even more far-reaching. But if you have enough technical savvy to simply manipulate data, then Reports for Surveys is the perfect solution for you."

Smarter Market Research:

Powerful survey report engine fuels business growth



Instrumented

Survey data is transformed into cross-tabulations and exported directly into spreadsheets.



Interconnected

Deploying this product to interconnect data across the organization has fuelled tremendous business growth.



Intelligent

By turning data into intelligent and actionable information, Reports for Surveys has become a strategic element in the company's growing success.



Solution Components

Software

- IBM SPSS Reports for Surveys
 - IBM SPSS Statistics
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“In the past, we would typically need a week to get the information into a report writer’s hands. Now we can turn it around in a day, because we can output the information exactly the way we want it.”

—David Breihan, Director of Operations and Organizational Development, MarketCast

Tripling the custom business

In order to support the critical step of preparing data for use by internal writers, MarketCast needed a product that would deliver greater speed, fewer errors, and more flexibility than the approach they were then using. “We had to generate a large number of tables quickly and without errors,” explains Breihan. “The ability to create crosstabs that we could control, with an individual spreadsheet for each chart, was extremely important.”

None of the products MarketCast had used previously could deliver that kind of flexibility. By contrast, the versatile Reports for Surveys product met the company’s needs perfectly; in fact, the use of this product to interconnect data across the organization has fuelled tremendous business growth. Says Breihan: “We’ve more than tripled our custom business over the last couple of years, and this success is on the back of what we’ve done with Reports for Surveys.”

Reducing the potential for error was also a key business driver for MarketCast. “In the past, we would export data from IBM SPSS Statistics to a spreadsheet, and then cut and paste cells into a separate spreadsheet-based template that was more attractive,” explains Breihan. “Copying and pasting is a process highly prone to errors, especially when you’re working under very tight deadlines.” That error-prone process has now been completely eliminated; with Reports for Surveys, MarketCast can export the data straight into the spreadsheet, and then write macros to format everything exactly as desired. Breihan notes that add-ons from ecosystem partner Verge Consulting further enhance the value of Reports for Surveys at MarketCast.

Faster service, happier clients

The ease of use and versatility of Reports for Surveys have resulted in significant time savings for Breihan and his team. “It has allowed us to design our tables in such a way that our internal clients, the people who create the client presentations and write the reports, can very easily navigate through our tables and extract the information they need,” says Breihan. “In the past, we would typically need a week to get the information into a report writer’s hands. Now we can turn it around in a day, because we can output the information exactly the way we want it.” Saving time not only enhances MarketCast staff productivity but also greatly increases the satisfaction of the company’s clients, because they are receiving their reports in a much more timely manner.

By helping MarketCast turn data into intelligent and actionable information, Reports for Surveys has become a strategic element in the company’s growing success. Concludes Breihan: “Reports for Surveys really puts the user into the driver’s seat for accessing information.”

About IBM Business Analytics

IBM Business Analytics software delivers complete, consistent and accurate information that decision-makers trust to improve business performance. A comprehensive portfolio of business intelligence, predictive analytics, financial performance and strategy management, and analytic applications provides clear, immediate and actionable insights into current performance and the ability to predict future outcomes. Combined with rich industry solutions, proven practices and professional services, organizations of every size can drive the highest productivity, confidently automate decisions and deliver better results.

As part of this portfolio, IBM SPSS Predictive Analytics software helps organizations predict future events and proactively act upon that insight to drive better business outcomes. Commercial, government and academic customers worldwide rely on IBM SPSS technology as a competitive advantage in attracting, retaining and growing customers, while reducing fraud and mitigating risk. By incorporating IBM SPSS software into their daily operations, organizations become predictive enterprises – able to direct and automate decisions to meet business goals and achieve measurable competitive advantage. For further information or to reach a representative visit www.ibm.com/spss.



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