

# Beyond traditional customer surveys: The reputation analysis

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**Abstract.** An important strategic goal of Destatis is to continuously collect information about the customer satisfaction and the perception of important stakeholders and target groups. We conduct frequent customer surveys since 2007. But not all important stakeholders and target groups are necessarily registered customers. To learn more about their demands a reputation analysis was conducted in 2013 in cooperation with a market researcher. To determine a manageable frame for the study, we focused on three target groups: Respondents (households and enterprises), fast multipliers (online and data journalists) and young multipliers (young academics). The analysis was mainly based on the “Kano-Model”, a methodological approach, which is often used in quality management and product development. In the following article the survey design and the main results will be presented.

**Keywords:** Reputation, reputation analysis, user needs, customer survey, quality management, stakeholder, target groups, market research

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Destatis carried out a reputation and acceptance study 2013 in cooperation with a market researcher to learn more about the different demands of important stakeholders and target groups [1]. The survey was contracted out because otherwise respondents are likely to give biased answers to questions about the same organisation which carries out the survey [2], but the main concept of the reputation analysis was developed at the Federal Statistical Office.

### 1. Purpose of the study

Reputation is considered as the most important immaterial value of a company or an institution [3,4]. It is based on personal experiences and perceptions of target groups and stakeholders. Their basic needs and delighters concerning data search and data use are the most important drivers of reputation. The first question for the analysis was: How is reputation among tar-

get groups? The second question was: How to increase reputation within less available resources and within the fast changes of the media environment? Customer surveys do not answer important questions about the basic needs and expectations of stakeholders and target groups. They are very standardized and focus only on registered customers and the available products and services [4]. A reputation analysis goes beyond traditional customer surveys.

### 2. Survey design

A high-level-working group at the Federal Office worked out the target groups and the main topics for the questionnaires. Based on this frame the market researcher (LINK-Institute Frankfurt) developed the survey design with qualitative and quantitative parts [3]. They realized overall nearly 5000 quantitative interviews so that we have a reliable and representative database for every target group.

Table 1  
Survey design

Respondents	Fast multipliers	Young multipliers
Qualitative	Individual focussed interviews, $n = 5$	Discussion group, $n = 12$
Quantitative <b>Private households</b> , Computer-assisted telephone interviews, $n = 2200$ <b>Enterprises</b> , Computer-assisted telephone interviews, $n = 1000$	Online questionnaire, $n = 300$	<b>Graduates</b> Online questionnaire, $n = 1000$ <b>PhD students</b> Online questionnaire, $n = 290$

### 2.1. Target groups

There are many possible target groups for a reputation analysis depending on the different national settings: Opinion formers, key institutions and other multipliers [5,6]. To determine a manageable frame we focused on three target groups who became increasingly important for the work of the Federal Statistical Office in the past years:

- a) Respondents (households, enterprises)
  - b) Fast multipliers (online and datajournalists)
  - c) Young multipliers (young graduates and PhD students of social and economic sciences).
- a) The respondents are divided in two subgroups. We needed to learn more about the willingness of the population to respond in household samples and about their attitude towards official statistics in general (regardless of whether they have survey experiences or not). The market researcher realized 2200 computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) based on a representative sample of German landline and mobile phone numbers. 14% among the 2200 persons in private households participated already in surveys of official statistics (census, microcensus or voluntary household surveys). Enterprises in Germany must (depending on their number of employees and branch) respond to a variety of mandatory surveys monthly and annually. We wanted to learn more about their attitude towards the reporting process and their perception of official statistics. Most of them are only in contact with the Statistical Offices of the Länder because they conduct most official surveys. The market researcher realized 1000 CATI interviews with managing directors or members of the higher management who are in charge of the reporting process. 91% of the enterprises with more than 250 employees participated already in an official enterprise survey.

The respondents are a very important target group that has been neglected in the past. They

play an important role as multipliers for the National Statistical Office because compared to the overall population and the number of enterprises in Germany many of them got already in touch with official statistics.

- b) The needs of datajournalists are interesting for Destatis because their work is often data driven [7]. They tell stories with interactive charts via blogs or websites of the big newspapers. For the qualitative part of the study the LINK Institute interviewed five leading data journalists via Skype to identify relevant topics in the context of data search and data use. The results were integrated in the quantitative online-questionnaires for the fast multipliers ( $n = 300$ ).
- c) Statistical data was important for the studies of many young multipliers and will be important for their work in the future. Most of the young academics will get jobs in the private or public sector or in the scientific community where they can play the role of multipliers for official data. A focus discussion with 12 young multipliers from different German universities served as a basis for the development of the quantitative online-questionnaire. 1000 online-interviews with young graduates and 290 online-interviews with postgraduates were realized.

### 2.2. How to find out what target groups think

How can the needs and expectations of target groups be measured? Destatis was closely involved in the development of the questionnaires and the pretesting. The reputation analysis was mainly based on the "Kano-Model". It was developed by Narioki Kano, a former psychologist at Tokyo University. The model classifies user needs in different categories and is often used in quality management and product development [8,9]. The approach was adapted for the purposes of the reputation analysis.

The most important category is the basic needs. Basic needs are taken for granted and they are typically unspoken. If they are fulfilled, they do not increase

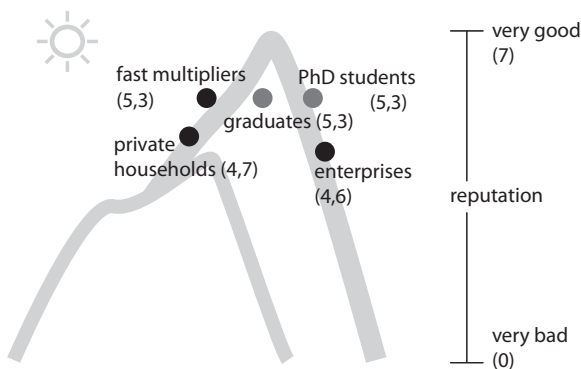


Fig. 1. Reputation results by target groups.

satisfaction. If they are not fulfilled, they will cause dissatisfaction. For example: If you have booked a flight, you expect your checked-in luggage at the destination for sure. Otherwise you are dissatisfied which would have caused a serious damage of reputation for your airline. Another important category is the delighter. Delighters are unexpected features that make customers happy. They do not necessarily cause dissatisfaction when not fulfilled, because they are not expected. For example: You booked an economy class flight and the stewardess serves hot towels for refreshment which is usually a service only in business class. Delighters are important because they can make the difference in comparison to competitors and can increase reputation. Target groups were asked for their basic needs and delighters concerning data search, data use and the reporting process.

For the measuring of the reputation values a multi-dimensional method which is common in market research, was used. The target groups had to assess Destatis in different dimensions (responsibility, products, vision, and environment). The average over the different fields is the reputation index for every target group [3].

### 3. Results and conclusions

Regarding the reputation values, the Federal Statistical Office is considered as a trustworthy and competent institution. Destatis is the most important data source for the fast and the young multipliers. About 60% of the journalists and young academics have used data from the Federal Statistical Office already. But the reputation values differ between the respondents and the multipliers (Fig. 1). Part of this difference is explained by the fact, that respondents are asked to fill out the

questionnaire and multipliers are asking for our data. Nevertheless we have to improve the results especially among the respondents.

#### 3.1. Respondents

Most of the managing directors in enterprises (59%) are of the opinion, that official data is important for the German economy and democracy. But only 29% think that the results of enterprise surveys are important for their company. Obviously they are not aware of how they can benefit from the data – which may have a negative impact on data quality. The analysis reveals similar effects for the private households.

In private households the reputation of Destatis and the willingness to participate in surveys increases with the educational level of the respondents.

*Most important basic needs and delighters:* Especially for the responding enterprises it is a basic need important to get survey results after the survey is completed. A telephone service is a basic need especially for the bigger companies and the households to support the reporting process.

It is a delighter for enterprises to respond only online. This is currently being implemented in Germany, regardless of the results of the survey.

The results show how important it is to reflect the results of surveys directly to the respondents. It is a demand that is not yet met by Official Statistics in Germany. This result affects the Statistical Offices of the Länder in particular, who are in charge of the data collection and the communication with the respondents.

#### 3.2. Fast multipliers

The satisfaction among the group of the fast multipliers is very high. 89% of them are satisfied or very satisfied with the services of the Federal Statistical Office and even 94% would recommend it. The most important information source for the fast multipliers is the internet. The results concerning the media use showed that printed publications are still very important for their work, so it is obviously too early to do without printed publications, which must be taken into account in the communication strategy. Also interesting is that every second journalist works with smartphones and tablets.

*Most important basic needs and delighters:* Fast multipliers expect more than databases and datasets. For almost every second a telephone-support is a basic need. This is quite interesting because there are many

Table 2  
Results at a glance

	Respondents	Fast multipliers	Young multipliers
Basic needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Results of surveys (enterprises)</li> <li>– Telephone-support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Telephone-support</li> <li>– Data quick to find</li> <li>– All data for free</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Data quick to find</li> <li>– All data online</li> <li>– All data for free</li> <li>– Detailed methodological descriptions (PhD students)</li> </ul>
Delighters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Results of surveys (households)</li> <li>– Online surveys (enterprises)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interactive charts</li> <li>– Explanatory texts for charts and tables</li> <li>– Application programming interfaces (data journalists)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Explanatory texts for charts and tables</li> <li>– Data on mobile devices (Graduates)</li> </ul>

internal discussions at Destatis to give up that service for the journalists. Also they expect to find data they are looking for as fast as possible and for free on the internet. After an average of 14 minutes of searching on the Destatis website they will contact the information service if they are not able to find what they are looking for. To satisfy their basic need to find data as quick as possible we have to improve the search engine. Most of our data is already available for free. Interactive charts would delight most of the journalists. Application programming interfaces (APIs) to grab huge amounts of primary data are the delighter especially for the data journalists. Destatis has an API connected to the Database but the analysis showed that the data journalists never heard of the Destatis API before. We have to find new ways to draw their attention to this service and we have to improve the marketing. Another important delighter are explanatory texts on how to read tables and charts. It seems that we have overestimated the statistical knowledge of journalists because obviously many of them do not know how to read complicated tables and charts.

### 3.3. Young multipliers

95% of the young multipliers are satisfied with the Federal Statistical Office and 64% can imagine working at Destatis. Most of them use data that was recommended by their lecturers. But only one third of them stated that their lecturers recommended statistical data of the Federal Statistical Office. The lecturers are obviously the most important multipliers for Official Statistics at universities. This share should be enlarged to reach more young multipliers.

*Most important basic needs and delighters:* There are intersections between the young and the fast multipliers. Young multipliers also want data as fast as possible and for free on the internet. Most of the PhD students expect detailed methodological descriptions related to the datasets. What are the delighters? Surpris-

ingly one half of the young academics mentioned examples on how to read tables and charts as a delighter. Similar to the fast multipliers we have overestimated their statistical knowledge in the past. Already more than one third of them see the opportunity to search for data via smartphone or tablet as a delighter. That means we have to offer more appropriate publication formats in the future.

### 3.4. Conclusions

The results are of great value because they show if the Federal Statistical Office is on the right track with its (dissemination-) strategies and investments. The results enable us to manage resources more effectively. On a scale from 0 (very bad) to 7 (very good) the reputation values are 5.3 for the fast and the young multipliers, 4.7 for the households and 4.6 for the enterprises. After the analysis we know the basic needs and delighters of our target groups and we can use this knowledge to manage and improve our reputation.

The analysis showed how we can achieve quick wins to delight target groups. To add explanatory texts related to charts and tables is not much effort. We have to publish our data in a way that enables people without special knowledge in statistics to understand the facts. Surprisingly social media had no impact on the Kano-Model for the fast and the young multipliers – not as a basic need, nor as a delighter.

The most difficult challenge is to meet the needs of the respondents. The results show that there is an urgent need to provide data for respondents after the surveys which is not common practice at the moment. This affects the work of the Federal Statistical Offices of the Länder because they conduct the surveys and cooperate with the respondents.

Basic needs and delighters of target groups are different in other countries for sure but the methodology and the survey design might be helpful in other national settings as well.

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