

METROPOLITAN POLICE

Employing more than 32,500 officers, about 14,200 police staff, 230 traffic wardens and 4,300 Police Community Support Officers, the Metropolitan Police Service covers an area of 620 square miles and a population of 7.2 million. It therefore needs to know the level of service it is providing and so regularly consults members of the public to get their views. Mile Drury is a Performance Analyst with the service's Neighbourhood Policing Programme. He says:



We look after the whole of London in terms of community policing. My role is to find out how well we are doing this.

POLICE

MAKING CURRENT ACTIVITIES POSSIBLE

Key Survey is used extensively for this work. Although Mike wasn't with the unit when the application was acquired, he knows that the method of conducting surveys then was quite basic compared with what happens now and severely limited what could be achieved. He is also aware that current activities would not be possible without it:

“ We didn't really have this sort of community engagement. We used whatever was corporately available but did nothing bespoke for ourselves. We might have done something on an Excel spreadsheet with about five or six questions and hoped for the best. A lot of the stuff we do now is possible because we have the technology to do it.

Key Survey was acquired in 2007 and so is well established within the unit to obtain the public's views of the Metropolitan Police's work. The general procedure for each survey is to send out an email with a link so the survey is completed inline. One of the surveys that has run annually for three years is a youth consultation. Mike explains:

“ It's aimed at 11-18 year olds who are mostly taking secondary education across London. We want to know what they think of the police and what makes them afraid in their neighbourhood.

The unit also has a Key Individual Network, which comprises people across London who have provided their email addresses because they want to be involved in surveys.



We'll individually target people on the network. We will host the survey on our own website so we get random traffic coming in or we do a specific targeting campaign.

HELPING

HELPING TO REDUCE CRIME

The Metropolitan Police runs operations over the Halloween and Bonfire Night period in an effort to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. It then, as Mike explains, tries to find out if the public sees a benefit from this work:

“ We build a survey, target that key individual network and ask the members to tell us how well we have done. We then analyse the results and, because we do it every year, we start building up trend data.

Added to this, the unit regularly consults a panel in order to find out if they understand the policy changes the service is making. It also runs various ad hoc surveys that include contacting the victims of antisocial behaviour. Mike says:

“ They’re the ones who have registered their details with us. They’ve called 999 and we’re calling them back and asking them how well we’ve dealt with their call. We don’t send the link out to them. We complete a paper survey over the telephone and then key the results into Key Survey. So we’re using the technology but we don’t send the link out because we actually want to speak to the victims on a one-to-one basis.

PRESERVING RESPONDENTS' ANONYMITY

One Key Survey feature that's particularly valuable to the Metropolitan Police is the ability for respondents to remain anonymous. It does, believes Mike, mean that people are likely to be more open and forthright:

“ We always host the link so we can't track through the complete survey. We don't want to go down the route of being able to identify who's completing the survey because, being a police organisation, it can get a bit awkward. So we keep it anonymous and people are a lot happier.

Mike does choose many of the options within the survey questions and has customised the survey forms:

“ It's all branded as if it's the Metropolitan Police so you wouldn't think it is part of Key Survey. It has our own corporate logos, background and colours. That's built into every survey we send out so members of the public won't get confused that it's not a police survey.

Reporting and analysis is generally handled by exporting survey data into Excel or SPSS.



It's very quick, efficient and easy to do. Three clicks and you've got an Excel document.

SUPPORT

HELP & SUPPORT

Mike hasn't undertaken any formal training. He says:

“ I just sat down at my desk one day and managed to build two or three surveys. It's very easy to use.

On the few occasions he has needed help, he's used the online chat facility to get sorted out:

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I've never had a problem where they haven't been able to answer my question within a few minutes. There's a contact that I speak to quite regularly. They've always rectified the problem within minutes. It's usually something simple, like I've pressed the wrong button.

In Mike's area within Metropolitan Police Key Survey is continuing to grow. He says:

“ I'm the only one with a licence at the moment and it's only used in the Performance Analysis area. But, because it's known that surveys can be quite expensive and I've got the licence, I'm being poached by different business groups to do surveys for them on their behalf. So we're doing wider police work on it.

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It's just started to be used in different areas in the past 4-5 months. People are starting to say 'I've heard you've got this piece of techy software and can we get a piece of the action'. Because we do high profile surveys that are published internally a lot, people are getting to know that we do have this technology. Our survey unit, which commissions all our big corporate surveys, is aware of it and using it more often. So we are now talking about how we can better utilise it.

TOP RATING

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Mike gives Key Survey a nine out of ten rating but admits this would probably be ten out of ten if he had the time to go through all its features. He concludes:



I'm really happy with the product and I can't see a reason why we wouldn't continue using it. The survey technology itself, I can't rate it high enough.