

LGBTQ Marketing 101: Ten First-Year Steps

The American LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) market segment is estimated at over \$890 billion, and is obviously a diversity segment that marketers can't overlook. But how do you get started? The Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) team has been assisting marketing professionals and brands reach the LGBTQ communities through our market research and consulting practice for over 25 years. We've outlined ten initial steps to consider before you jump in.

Of course, every business and industry segment is different. The marketing approaches of an insurance company are very different than those of a retailer or a hotel chain. Some of these fundamental guidelines may apply to your business more than others.

1. **Slow Down and Start With Planning:** Before launching into marketing planning, your company's "house needs to be in order." Consult with your HR department to be certain that your hiring and personnel policies embrace LGBTQ employees, and that LGBTQ-inclusive diversity training is in place. The commitment to serve the LGBTQ community should exist among C-level, management and staff. It's fine to take as long as you need for research, training and planning. Stepping into the LGBTQ market before you are ready could result in internal hurdles, poor performance, and in some cases a negative first impression.
2. **Tracking Results:** Another important preparation is to determine your LGBTQ market goals, and how you will track ROI. Like all your other initiatives, gear your LGBTQ marketing efforts to reaching what your company will recognize as success.
3. **Community Involvement:** One of the most common mistakes made by a company entering the LGBTQ market is placing a full-page ad in an LGBTQ newspaper or banner on a website, and then wondering why the "phones don't ring." During the first year, advertising should be secondary to authentic community involvement. Get out there, connect and network. Sponsor and/or attend community events, talk to people, and understand the community and their response to your company before starting your advertising campaign. Some of the most successful brands in the LGBTQ market are those that prioritize a community partnership approach first, and traditional advertising/marketing second.
4. **Determine Who Your Customer Is:** Unless you have an unlimited budget, or your product/service has mass consumer appeal, don't think in terms of marketing to the entire LGBTQ community. Instead, decide which "segments" of the *diverse LGBTQ communities* are right for your company. Those segments might be geographical, by interests, gender, income, age, ethnicity, relationship status or more, all *within LGBTQ*. Research is often the best way to identify these opportunities, and in crowded LGBTQ market segments like banking and hospitality, differentiation is the key to gaining traction. Targeting and fine-tuning your initiatives will produce improved ROI.

5. **Your Website is Very Important:** The LGBTQ community is very connected to the Internet. Care needs to be taken as to how your company presents itself on the web. For example, if you create a dedicated LGBTQ display ad, which then directs customers to an “overtly heterosexual” website (or Facebook page, etc.), how effective would that be? Display ads may generate interest in your service or product, but your website needs to complete the connection. Developing a dedicated presence (e.g. an LGBTQ microsite) should be your first marketing priority; then direct all ads, promotions and PR to that site.
6. **Get Social and Mobile.** Get connected to LGBTQs via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube, etc. to drive awareness. As an example, a few of the most popular LGBTQ advertising campaigns have involved the posting of a clever LGBTQ-themed commercial to YouTube, which is then forwarded tens of thousands of times. On a parallel line, LGBTQs are early adopters, and have gone mobile faster than the general market. Your website, microsite, etc. should be mobile optimized.
7. **Think Like Your Customer:** After you determine who and where your most-likely LGBTQ customers are, start thinking like them. Which Internet sites do they frequent? What print media do they read? Which community organizations are important to them? Which events do they attend? The LGBTQ media is becoming increasingly stratified. This is a good thing for marketers, because you can create customized messaging in well-matched media. Conserve resources by advertising where your LGBTQ customers and prospects are most likely to receive your message.
8. **Media Buys:** Placing creative in LGBTQ media can be complicated. There are hundreds of national, regional and activity based/special-interest publications, websites, blogs, apps, etc. You’ll find a few larger-circulation magazines, but most of the media are small, specialized, and off the radar of many ad agencies. Plus, you will discover that the cost per quality impression varies widely in the LGBTQ media. Subscribe to LGBTQ print magazines and regularly visit LGBTQ websites. Pay attention to the design, messaging, imagery and offers that grab your attention. Continually monitor your competition. Focus group test your LGBTQ ad/marketing concepts with LGBTQ consumers, before investing in media buys.
9. **Empower:** Let your LGBTQ employees and customers become your ambassadors. Often your LGBTQ employees, even those without marketing backgrounds, can be your best advocates. They are proud of their company’s support for the community and they want to tell the world. Train them on the marketing talking points, and let them generate the all-important word of mouth. Same with your LGBTQ customers: Get them passionate about your brand, for example, by letting them know that you are making a donation to an LGBTQ organization that is important to them.
10. **Learn!** [CMI’s website](#) is loaded with valuable research, all available for download. Review our LGBTQ Community Survey, African American LGBTQ Survey, LGBTQ China Survey, etc. to gain high-level insights on the overall market, and the many viable markets *within* LGBTQ.

Marketing to the LGBTQ community can feel overwhelming at first. Sometimes it helps for your company to obtain some short-term guidance or long-term support. This can come from LGBTQ consumers themselves through focus group and survey research, your own employees, and/or qualified consultants.

Community Marketing & Insights' clients often tell us that their involvement in the LGBTQ community has been an enjoyable and worthwhile experience on many levels. Many also tell us that the lessons learned from being involved in the LGBTQ market have been invaluable to their expansion into other market segments as well.

For more information about CMI's research practice, please visit www.CommunityMarketingInc.com, or contact Thomas Roth at 415/437-3800 or tom@CommunityMarketingInc.com



ABOUT CMI'S LGBTQ RESEARCH PRACTICE

Founded in 1992, Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) is a full-service market research firm, focused on LGBTQ insights and analytics.

Market research studies and resulting insights and action items are meant to help marketers understand the LGBTQ communities, and influence sales, marketing and outreach decisions. However, not all research is the same. Community Marketing & Insights' (CMI) methodologies and experience are distinct from other research companies when considering approaches, survey respondent sources—and ultimately—the validity and utility of sought-after results.

Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) has been conducting LGBTQ consumer research for 25 years. Our practice includes online surveys, in-depth interviews, intercepts, focus groups (on-site and online), and advisory boards in North America, Europe and Asia. Industry leaders around the world depend on CMI's research and analysis as a basis for feasibility evaluations, positioning, economic impact, creative testing, informed forecasting, product development, measurable marketing planning and assessment of return on investment.

CMI's research findings have been published in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, USA Today, Chicago Tribune, Miami Herald, CBS News, CNN, NPR, Reuters, Associated Press and many other international, national and regional media.

CMI's research and corporate training clients span the globe, and include leaders from a wide range of industries. CMI studies have been produced for these and many other B2B and B2C brands: Aetna, Inc.; Credit Suisse; Prudential Financial; Wells Fargo; DIRECTV, LLC; Viacom/Logo; Johnson & Johnson; WNBA; Hallmark Cards, Inc.; Target Brands; E&J Gallo Winery; Gilead Pharmaceuticals; Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate; TELUS Corporation; Hyatt Hotels Corporation; Hawaiian Airlines; NYC & Company; Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority; VISIT FLORIDA; Hawaiian Tourism Authority; Canadian Tourism Commission; Tourism Office of Spain; Japan National Tourism Organization; U.S. Census Bureau; Centers for Disease Control; American Cancer Society; Kaiser Family Foundation; University of Pennsylvania; City University of New York; and numerous other corporations, universities and organizations across North America and around the world.



ABOUT THE CMI RESEARCH PANEL

Over the past 20 years, CMI has developed the world's most community-representative panel for a variety of LGBTQ research methodologies. Corporations, government agencies, non-profits, universities and other research firms all utilize CMI's panel resources because of its size and flexibility. CMI can assist with research projects requiring thousands of participants, and we can deliver on smaller projects requiring targeted segments within LGBTQ. For example, CMI was able to recruit for projects needing 1,200 men living with HIV, 200 LGBTQ African American Millennials in urban U.S.A., and 750 transgender community members. We also produce qualitative projects that are challenging—or impossible—for other research groups to achieve.

CMI has developed our panel through authentic partnership and trust within the LGBTQ community. CMI never uses the panel for sales or marketing purposes. Panel members have the direct email addresses of their project's Research Director. We protect panelist confidentiality, and we respond to study questions, concerns and feedback within 24 hours. Since CMI is a specialized LGBTQ-owned and operated company, established over 20 years ago, we have earned a level of confidence and trust that can only come from being members of the community. As distinct from other panel approaches, we actually have a very personal relationship with our panelists, who are willing to open up and honestly share genuine experiences, sensitivities, opinions and motivations with us. They know that the results from the research will be used for the betterment of the LGBTQ community.

CMI'S PANEL CONSISTS OF OVER 80,000 SELF-IDENTIFYING LGBTQ COMMUNITY MEMBERS, WHICH INCLUDES:

- 60,000 LGBTQ panelists in the United States
- 7,000 LGBTQ Canadians (includes English and French speaking)
- 4,500 LGBTQ Chinese
- Capabilities in the UK, Germany, Australia and other countries

IN THE UNITED STATES, THE PANEL HAS SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS IN EVERY LGBTQ SEGMENT

- Over 20,000 lesbian and bisexual women
- Over 30,000 gay and bisexual men
- 3,000 transgender community members
- 7,000 bisexual community members
- 5,000 with income over \$150,000
- 5,000 with income below \$25,000
- 18,000 representing LGBTQ communities of color
- 20,000 LGBTQ Millennials
- Thousands of men living with HIV (Note: All health-related data is maintained independent of personally identifying information)
- Participants in all 50 states with ZIP code-level geographic targeting capability
- 10,000 with a master's degree or better
- 4,000 LGBTQ parents with a child under 18 living at home
- 10,000 legally married same-sex couples
- Experience with LGBTQ youth research (in partnership with an institution and IRB approval)

CMI'S LGBTQ STRATEGIC PLANNING & CORPORATE TRAINING

CONSULTING: Evaluating your opportunities and strengths based on research findings, strategic consulting identifies brand and product positions that can lead to maximum success and return on investment. We'll also assess your corporate policies and practices—crucial to LGBTQ loyalty. LGBTQ consumers tend to vote with their wallets: they favor good corporate/community citizens.

TRAINING: The Community Marketing team has developed and presented custom on-site training for a wide variety of companies and organizations exploring their opportunities in the LGBTQ community. The trainings may include topics ranging from a basic introduction to the LGBTQ community, research, case studies and marketing opportunities...to diversity/sensitivity training best practices...to sales training and customer service.

LGBTQ Community Survey and Community Marketing are registered trademarks of Community Marketing, Inc.

Minority/Diversity Procurement: Community Marketing, Inc. is an NGLCC-Certified LGBTQ-Owned Business Enterprise.



CONTACT US

Visit www.CMI.info, email research@CommunityMarketingInc.com, or call +1 415-437-3800

584 Castro St., #834, San Francisco CA 94114 USA

LGBT Market Research:

There is a difference!

LGBT research is meant to help marketers understand the LGBT community, and make educated decisions about strategies and tactics to reach them. Not all research is the same, however. At **Community Marketing & Insights**, we leverage unique experience, methodologies and our own proprietary panel to generate the valid and actionable results that our clients depend on.

CMI'S PROPRIETARY PANEL: WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) has recruited for our proprietary consumer panel over the past 25 years by partnering with over 300 LGBT media, organizations, events and social media throughout the USA, Canada, the UK, Germany, Australia, China and beyond. The panel is thus highly representative of LGBT consumers who interact with the LGBT community and media.

CMI research is trusted by—and frequently quoted in—The New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Miami Herald, Forbes, Ad Week, NPR, CNN, CBS News, Associated Press, etc.

Other research providers typically send out widely distributed panel invitations (via Yahoo, etc.), and then sort for those who trust the researcher enough to indicate in a survey that they are gay or lesbian. They may also use lists from one or two LGBT publishers, which is likely to skew results.

If you are a marketer looking for valid LGBT consumer insights about products, services, or advertising creative and marketing strategies, “general market” panel development approaches are not likely to yield LGBT community members who interact with the media where you are placing ads.

CMI'S QUANTITATIVE SURVEYS: SIZE DOES MATTER

CMI has conducted hundreds of LGBT-dedicated quantitative surveys since the early 1990s, covering a wide variety of topics, industries and interests. Through these studies, we both observe and influence the trends of this market.

Size does matter when it comes to surveys. Our panel has grown to over 70,000 qualified LGBT consumers—the largest of its kind, by far. Our Annual LGBT Community Survey® study has attracted up to 45,000 survey participants representing 150 countries, making it the largest such study in the world. We leverage our long history, experience and expertise to guide you, fine-tuning our portfolio of research panels, methodologies and approaches to best match your market intelligence goals.

If your communications channels are via the LGBT media, you'll want to depend on research that represents these consumers' interests, preferences, sensitivities and motivations.

Without access to this enormous resource of qualified LGBT consumer panelists, other companies have to compromise on the quality and demographic representation of their panel—or “reinvent the wheel” at your expense.

It's not possible to fathom the diversity and complexities within LGBT (see below) through a small sample. And with small samples, you lose the opportunity to derive statistically-significant crosstabs based on gender, geographical location, age, income, experience, product choice, etc. Can you really make the assumption that a Millennial lesbian couple in Seattle has the same purchasing motivations and behaviors as a 67-year-old gay man in Atlanta? Generalities and sweeping statements about “the LGBT market” based on comparatively small samples can distort the validity of research findings, wasting your investment of time and resources.

LGBT PANEL DIVERSITY IS IMPERATIVE, BECAUSE THERE IS NO “LGBT MARKET”

Community Marketing & Insights emphasizes that there is no “gay market,” just as there is no single “Asian market.” The LGBT communities represent a broad and dynamic spectrum of interests, sensitivities, preferences and priorities. Add to that variations in geographical location, age, income, relationship status, gender identity and more, and it becomes essential to discover which opportunities within LGBT will help you achieve your goals. Fine-tuning your approaches based on highly refined, well-targeted matches within LGBT will make your outreach initiatives more efficient and cost-effective, optimizing your marketing investment.

General market surveys that may include a small subset of “the gay community” just scratch the surface of the diverse and varied of opportunities marketers can enjoy if properly explored and understood.

GET A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

For over two decades, CMI has produced the most consistent, longest-running series of LGBT community surveys in the world. But we don't stop there. Quantitative (data) research is important, but it's just one side of the coin. Our full range of research services uncover the rest of the story through qualitative research, most notably derived from focus groups.

We pre-qualify our focus group participants from among our survey panelists, identifying the best candidates based on characteristics such as age, gender, relationship status, geographical location, and even a propensity or history of using the client's products or services. We maintain sufficient numbers of panelists to conduct groups in most major metro areas across the USA, Canada, UK, Germany, Australia and China, as well as many other markets. Sometimes the same creative, tested in different regions, can yield different perspectives. Isn't it wise to know that—and adjust your plans—before investing in marketing campaigns?

CMI is the only LGBT-dedicated research provider that produces and facilitates qualitative research, including focus group studies (both in-person and online), in-depth interviews, online communities and advisory boards, which can round out a comprehensive market intelligence plan.

By producing online surveys only, other research companies are telling only half of the story...at best. Without actual consumer interaction, they cannot fathom the deeper insights hiding behind the bar graphs and pie charts. Nor can they adequately advise you on the sensitivities and complexities that can only be uncovered by qualitative research—extremely important considerations that averages and assumptions extrapolated from survey statistics are likely to miss.

IN-HOUSE EVERYTHING. WE DON'T OUTSOURCE!

Community Marketing & Insights maintains our own research panels and utilizes advanced, sophisticated research software. We conduct all of our research in-house—because nobody knows this market segment as well as we do.

Unlike many other firms, CMI will never sell or represent another research company's services. Nor will we outsource your projects and report on the results of a third party's work. Without being intimately involved in every aspect of a project—discussing client goals, designing the study, building and implementing the survey, and engaging directly with consumers in focus groups—it is difficult to gain the insights that we regularly deliver. CMI's hands-on LGBT research specialization spanning over two decades is unmatched.

VALUE FOR THE INVESTMENT

You might think that with this kind of specialization and experience, you'd have to invest considerably more for Community Marketing & Insights services than for research from other companies. With our specific focus on LGBT market intelligence, however, and the cumulative 60+ years of LGBT-dedicated experience among the CMI team, we're able to keep your costs low. We don't spend your money locating qualified survey or focus group participants, and we won't waste time trying to source comparative data or case studies. We've already done all that, for your benefit, over the past 25 years.

At CMI, we're not running a large operation juggling many accounts and projects with varied focus. Our client dedication and LGBT market specialization delivers you superior intelligence at a fraction of the cost.

WE ARE TRUSTED. WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:

Community Marketing, Inc., founded in 1992, pioneered LGBT consumer research. Because our company is LGBT-owned and -operated, and well known in the community, we have earned the recognition and trust of our survey panelists. LGBT consumers recognize that we use research data to build corporate relationships that ultimately lead to social progress, better conditions for LGBT employees, and more sensitive communications.

PROUDLY LGBT-OWNED AND -OPERATED

One of the questions in HRC's Corporate Equality Index application is whether the applicant company includes LGBT-owned suppliers when sourcing products and services. When you contract with Community Marketing & Insights, you not only gain the benefit of our long-standing leadership in this field, you are working with one of the world's only LGBT-owned market research providers. Community Marketing, Inc. is an NGLCC Certified LGBT-Owned Business Enterprise.

AND PROUD OF OUR COMMUNITY CITIZENSHIP

CMI is involved in the LGBT community: We volunteer time, donate resources and raise funds for numerous community-based organizations. We also participate in leading business and advocacy organizations, events and conferences within the community, such as Out & Equal, HRC, National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, GLAAD, NCLR and the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association. Our community connection is not only the right thing to do, it is essential for maintaining authentic community relationships to benefit our clients.

Proud to serve these and other companies, organizations, universities, government institutions and researchers with

**LGBT Community Research Studies,
Strategic Consulting and Corporate Training**
since 1992

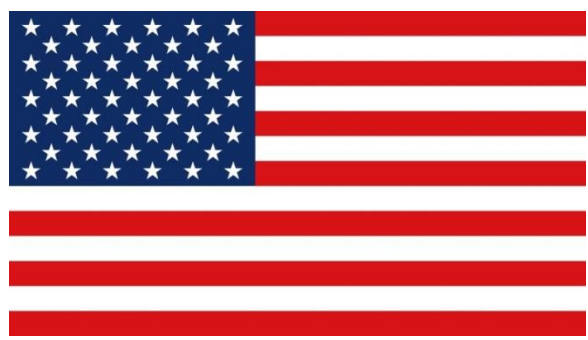
				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				



LGBTQ Research Panel 2018

Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) is uniquely positioned in the global LGBTQ marketplace, with 25 years of dedicated experience conducting LGBTQ consumer surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews, advisory boards, consulting services and training. We skillfully assist our clients with strategies, tactics and cost-effective plans based on research results and case study experience.

CMI's PANEL CONSISTS OF OVER 80,000 SELF-IDENTIFYING LGBTQ COMMUNITY MEMBERS, WHICH INCLUDES:



60,000
LGBTQ Panelists
in the USA



7,500
LGBTQ Panelists
in Canada
(English + French Speaking)



4,500
LGBTQ Panelists
in China



Capabilities in the
UK, Germany,
Australia and other
countries



IN THE UNITED STATES, THE PANEL HAS SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS IN EVERY LGBT SEGMENT

20,000+
Lesbian and
bisexual women



30,000+
Gay and
bisexual men



3,000
Transgender
community
members



7,000
Bisexual
community
members



5,000 With an HHI
Over \$150,000



5,000 With an HHI
Below \$25,000



- Participants in all 50 states
- Zip code-level geographic targeting capability

Thousands of men living with HIV

Note: All health-related data is maintained independent of personally identifying information.



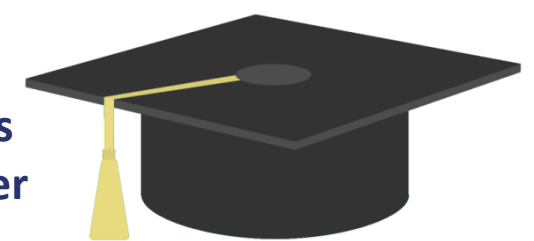
18,000
Representing
the LGBTQ
community
of color



20,000
LGBTQ
Millennials



10,000
With a master's
degree or higher



4,000
LGBTQ parents with
a child under 18
living at home



10,000
Legally married
same-sex couples



LGBTQ youth research
experience
(in partnership with an
institution and IRB approval)

