

Measuring what people say (Market Research News 1/30/06)

A new continuous survey called TalkTrack and designed to measure the impact of word-of-mouth marketing campaigns is due to go live in the US on 1 April.

TalkTrack, at present being tested, is the core service offered by a new company, the Keller Fay Group, based in New Brunswick, New Jersey and set up by Ed Keller, former CEO of RoperASW, and Brad Fay, its former Managing Director. Both left Roper after it and its parent company NOP World were acquired by GfK.

When operational, TalkTrack will recruit via the Internet 100 respondents each day. They will be asked to keep a written diary for one day, recording all “marketing-relevant” conversations they have, including product recommendations by either themselves or their interlocutors.

The company is currently busy recruiting staff and has so far one announced TalkTrack client, namely media-buyer Starcom MediaVest. Expressions of interest in TalkTrack have come in from both the US and abroad.

The service can be seen as a natural extension of the type of inquiry pursued in the past by Keller as co-author of the book *The Influentials: How 1 in 10 Americans Tells the Other Nine How to Vote, Where to Eat, and What to Buy*. However, TalkTrack respondents will be chosen at random from the general population, not from among Influentials.

Word-of-mouth marketing is being taken increasingly seriously in the US. A Basic Training Conference held by WOMMA (Word of Mouth Marketing Association) in Orlando, Florida, earlier in January attracted 450 delegates.