



Online Music Research Raters - How to Get 'em and Keep 'em

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If you do online music research where you have to create your own database of listeners (raters) and then over time, keep that database growing - or in most cases - from shrinking, I may have some helpful tips on how to grow and keep your raters.

- The best way to get raters quickly is through your own email club (database of listeners you contact weekly with emails regarding programming and promotions). Over time, these email clubs can become quite large. Every 6 months you should come up with an email encouraging your music lovers to have a say in the music they hear on their favorite station and join the music panel.
- If you have a Facebook group for your station this is another way I've found effective to get raters. It's on a smaller scale but, every new rater counts!
- At the station I work at I happen to be the one that answer all incoming email to the radio stations website general inbox and music request inbox. Whenever I get an email from a passionate music lover or even just someone requesting a song I'll answer the email and make sure to personalize it. I always include their name and then make sure to answer their question or to let them know we are working on their request or I'll even tell them when the song they requested will be played next. Then, I'll inform them of the music panel by saying something like... *'Since you are such a music lover, have you ever thought of joining our music panel'?* From there I go into why it's important and why their favorite station is interested in their feedback on the music. From this practice alone I've received about a 15% sign up rate from the emails I've replied to.
- When sending out your new music test to your existing raters in the body of the outgoing message include what the panel said their top 5 favorite songs were last week and maybe even what songs might be in a bit of trouble. Change the outgoing email each week to let them know that you are looking at the results and that you do care what they think! Maybe if something big has just happen in your city or even nationally find a way to comment on it to start the email.

Ex: Wasn't that a great Super Bowl game Sunday?! We feel a bit sorry for Kurt Warner but are sure happy for the Steelers!

Doing that or something more local just shows them it's not some automated email...even though it kind of is.

- If you create a countdown (Top 10, 20...) make sure you use your research to create that countdown. Then, during the countdown have your jock plug your music panel and promote the fact that this countdown was created by the panel. Encourage listeners to join the panel to help create next week's countdown!
- Give your jocks a list of top 5 PASSION songs each week so that when they play one of those songs they can promote the music panel and say that this song was the #2 favorite song according to the music panel. Also, let your jocks in on songs that are not testing well...songs with high negatives. I would be careful how you handle this on the air but maybe after a song that has high burn or high negatives the jock could be very real and tell the listener that if they are a music panel member they can tell you what they think of the song and by doing that maybe hinting at the fact that it may not be a favorite. Or maybe BEFORE a song with high negatives or high burn plays the jock says I really want you to hear this song coming up after the break because our music panel is giving us mixed reactions to this song and then go on to say that we want *your* thoughts on it!

Online music research is great...but you do need a minimum of 25 raters in any cell (demo breakdowns, male, female, core and non core) to make it count.

I hope this helps you maintain and grow your database. If you have any ideas you use, I'd love to hear them!

