PARADIGM™

Deep Dive into Online Research

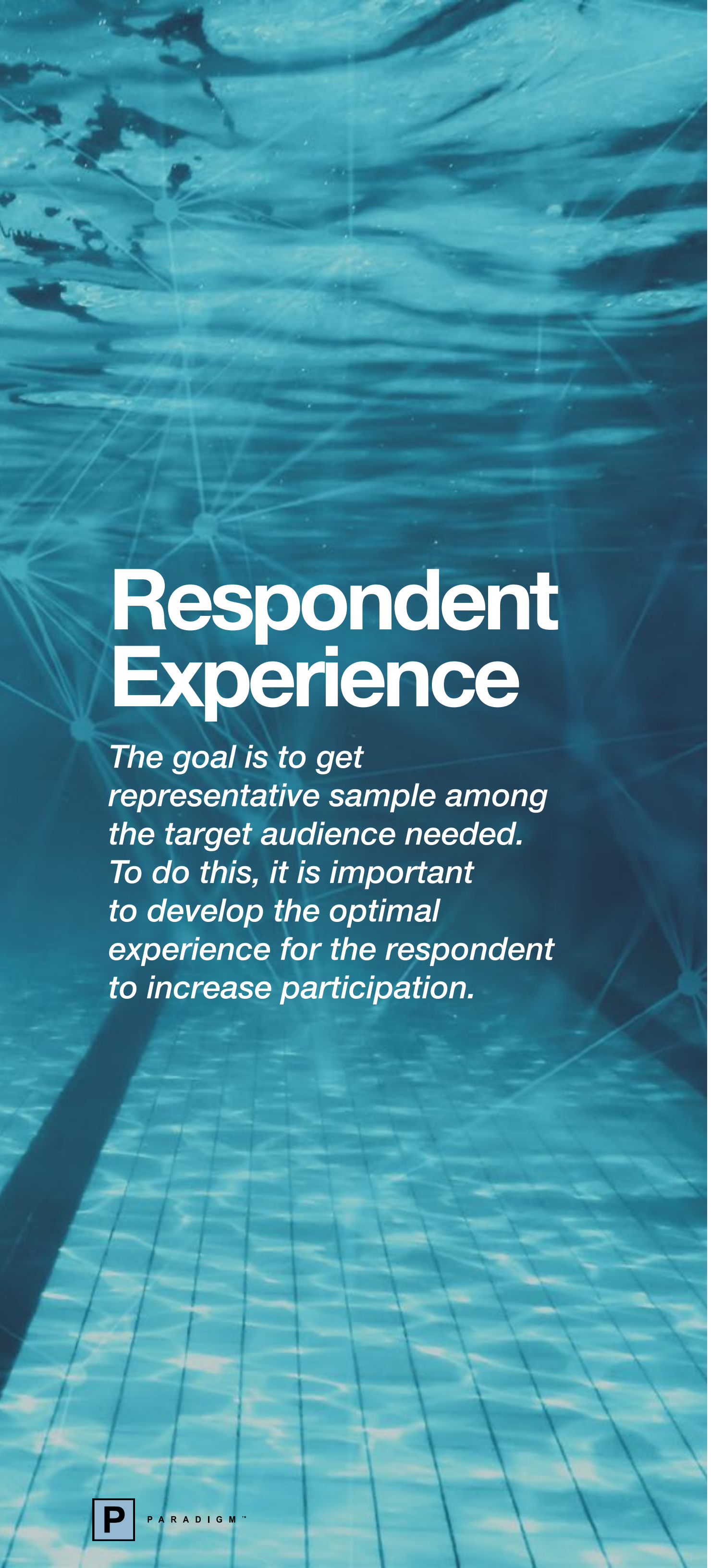
O V E R V I E W

Market Research is an essential process for businesses to conduct to drive critical decisions. Research informs product development, product positioning, pricing, messaging, advertising copy and so much more. **The fundamental basis for any actionable research is the sampling and data collection approach and process.**

The critical success factor for any online quantitative study is to get a representative sample of the larger population. To do this a buyer of online sample must consider respondent* experience, incentives, device optimization, data quality, invitation management and quotas.

This guide provides a framework for buyers of sample to consider when working with a data collection provider.

**A respondent is an individual from within a sample population that provides answers to a survey.*



Respondent Experience

The goal is to get representative sample among the target audience needed. To do this, it is important to develop the optimal experience for the respondent to increase participation.

Survey design matched to target respondent

To ensure that the survey respondent is the right fit for your project, it is important to have an air-tight set of screening questions on the front-end of the survey. These questions should not be leading in any way. For example, if you are looking to survey people who use a particular software, you would first want to ask an industry or department screening question to determine if they could be a potential customer for that software, before asking what kind of software they use. This avoids enabling respondents to guess what they need to say in order to qualify.

Error-free survey design

It is important to avoid errors within the survey as they could potentially drive away respondents. To promote optimal survey investment, a respondent must feel that their time is being valued. Respondents want to share their opinions and feel that the researcher is as invested in the experience as they are. Inconsistent survey design and non-functional surveys can drive away respondents who are eager to provide valuable feedback.

Length of time required to complete the survey

A lengthy survey can become tedious and lead to “survey fatigue.” When a respondent becomes fatigued, they will be less likely to give thoughtful responses. In many cases, instead of giving up, they may rush through the survey to get to the end. As respondents become disengaged, it can lead to inconsistent responses, and ultimately artificially skewed insights.

Variety of question types

Using the same question types repeatedly in survey design can have a similar effect to lengthy surveys in contributing to respondent fatigue. Respondents may tend to “go through the motions” and develop response patterns which may not accurately represent how they would respond in a more thoughtful state.

Appropriate incentive

There is a fine balance related to incentives. Higher incentives increase response rates and completion rates but also attract fraud. In addition, incentives should not be the key criteria for participation. Types of incentives typically offered include “points” equivalent to dollars, gift cards, cash/checks, sweepstakes entries or a value exchange such as a report of the key findings. The amount should be dependent on factors such as the length and complexity of survey, target audience, and survey methodology. Consider these factors when determining the survey.

- ☑ Audience type: Are you looking for a high-level business decision maker? Are you looking to research a general consumer? Depending on the audience there are general standards for the base incentives.
- ☑ Incidence Rate: How easy or difficult is the desired respondent to find among the group sampled? For every 100 people who click the survey, how many would you expect to qualify? The lower that number, the higher incentive you will want to consider, to attract more people to try and take the survey.
- ☑ Length of interview: How much time is the respondent expected to spend in your survey? Incentives should be increased accordingly, to make the respondent’s investment of time worth it from their perspective.

Device optimization

Device agnostic surveys, meaning surveys that work on mobile and desktop, are encouraged wherever possible to ensure a representative sample. Many audiences in different regions, countries, and demographics can only reliably take surveys from a mobile device. Panel distributions are currently skewing heavily towards mobile, ~70% or higher. To exclude a device type puts your study at risk of artificial bias, by under-representing a potentially large percentage of a group.

Data Quality

With advancement of technology, it is important to leverage tools during the entire data collection process.

Pre-survey checks include:

- ☑ Duplication checks to ensure that the same respondents are not attempting the survey multiple times.
- ☑ Geographic checks to ensure that respondents are entering the survey from where they say they are.
- ☑ Fraud detection algorithms, which use metadata and machine learning to determine what attributes are typically associated with the devices of respondents who tend to game the system and commit fraud within surveys. These algorithms score every respondent who enters a survey with a likelihood that they will commit fraud, allowing sample companies to block these respondents at the point of impact, before they ever get into the survey.
- ☑ Bot, VPN, TOR, and Proxy detection services to keep surveys free of unnatural survey “respondents.”

In-survey checks include:

- ☑ Trap and attention check questions, which can be used to programmatically determine whether a survey respondent is disengaged while they are in the survey.
- ☑ Red herring questions to help determine whether a respondent is who they say they are. For example, if you are running a survey about accounting software and ask respondents “which of the following software have you used,” you can include fake options to know if respondents are not being honest in their answers.
- ☑ Consistency check questions to determine whether a respondent is being truthful in their responses.
- ☑ Programmatic open-end validation to review open-end responses in real time. Programmatic tools are available to evaluate response quality in the moment by searching for gibberish, foul language, response length and more.

Post-survey checks include:

- ☑ Speeder checks to determine how long a respondent spent completing the survey, when measured against the rest of responses.
- ☑ Link manipulation to determine whether any respondents manipulated their return URLs, coming back into their panel platform in attempts to gain any additional/unearned incentives.
- ☑ And of course, some good old-fashioned manual data cleaning and review.

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Invitation Management

The approach of sending sample also widens the “net” for the most respondents to participate in the study.

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Timing

Invitations can be sent on a balanced outgo over a span of time (over 5-7 days, for example) and during varying times of the day. This allows the invitations to hit respondent’s email boxes at different times, as not every respondent is reading their email 24/7. Some respondents only reply on their lunch break, while others indulge in surveys on the weekend. You always want to get the maximum representation, so it is important to allow everyone a chance to participate by keeping the survey open.

Quantity

Invitations can also be sent in large batches. This allows many emails to hit many potential respondents at once and “boost” response. If you need quick movement on a survey, that can be arranged, as many of the tools we leverage when sampling can provide an up-front kick into overdrive.

Restrictions

When possible, relax any restrictions to qualification. By no means should you sacrifice the qualifications needed to capture a representative sample that you want to research, however when possible relax restrictions for qualifications are the “nice to have” versus essential. By relaxing restrictions, you will be able to close the rest of the survey faster for quicker insights. Also, the initial read on fielding progress may allow you to determine whether some audiences are not easily reached online and may be best fit for alternative sampling methodologies such as via telephone interviews.

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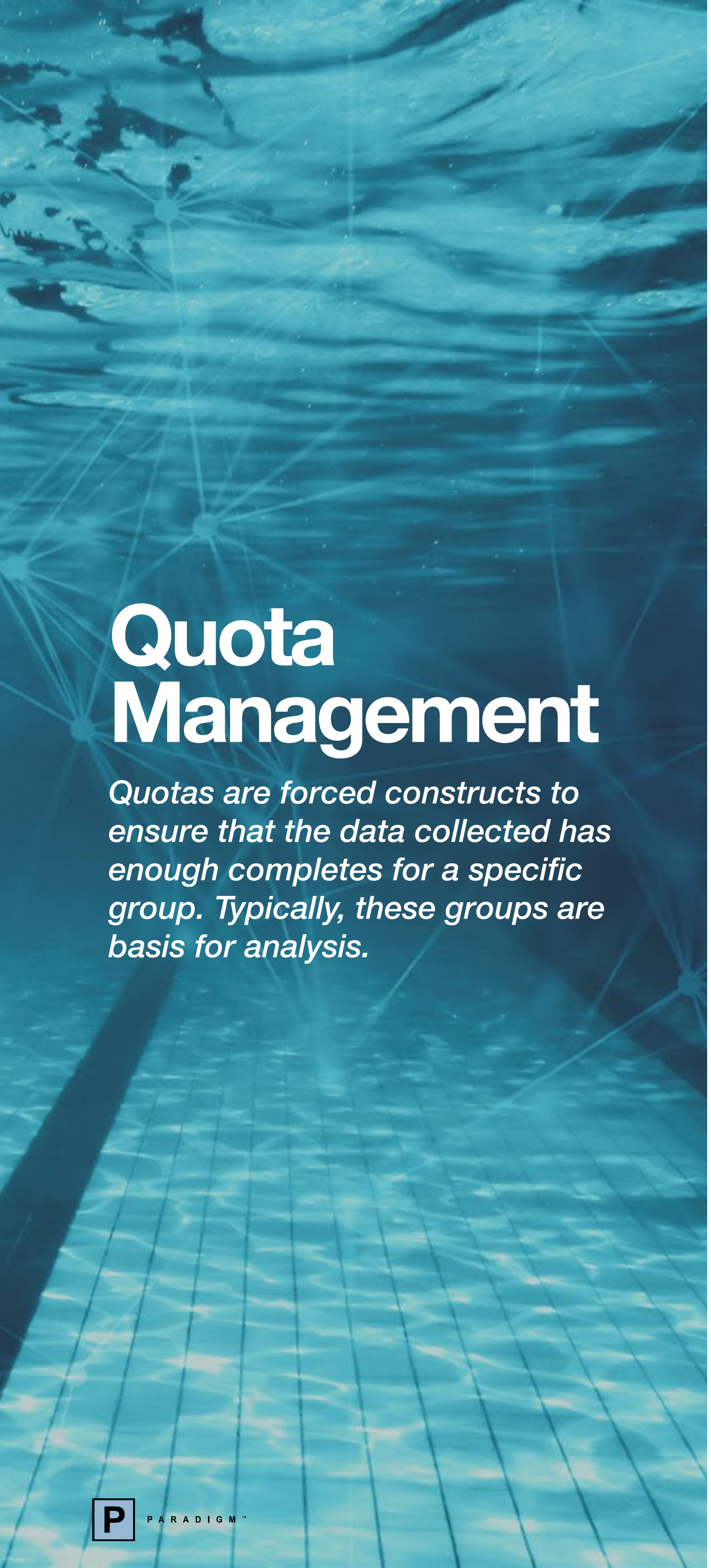

Quota Management

Quotas are forced constructs to ensure that the data collected has enough completes for a specific group. Typically, these groups are basis for analysis.

Proper Representation

It is important to determine what is needed for analysis. If you need 60% males and 40% females to get your representation, quotas can be leveraged to get to those exact numbers.

Time in Field

Quotas can be applied to age, gender, or any targetable group. Quotas can also be applied to non-targetable groups, but this will impact the length of time that the survey must remain in field to be filled.

Keep in mind that quota groups can often slow down field progress as "easier-to-reach" quotas fill, and the difficult ones remain open.

S U M M A R Y

Sound sampling strategies and dedicated project management of the entire data collection process is critical to fuel high quality and actionable insights. We at Paradigm Sample have partnered with our clients for over 10 years to ensure their success.

Give us a try!

- Send your RFQ/Bid to Paradigm Sample at bids@paradigmsample.com.
- Paradigm Sample will address your bid and respond, acknowledging receipt and assigning a bid number.
- When our Bidding Team has prepared the bid, we will send it to you, usually within 2 hours.

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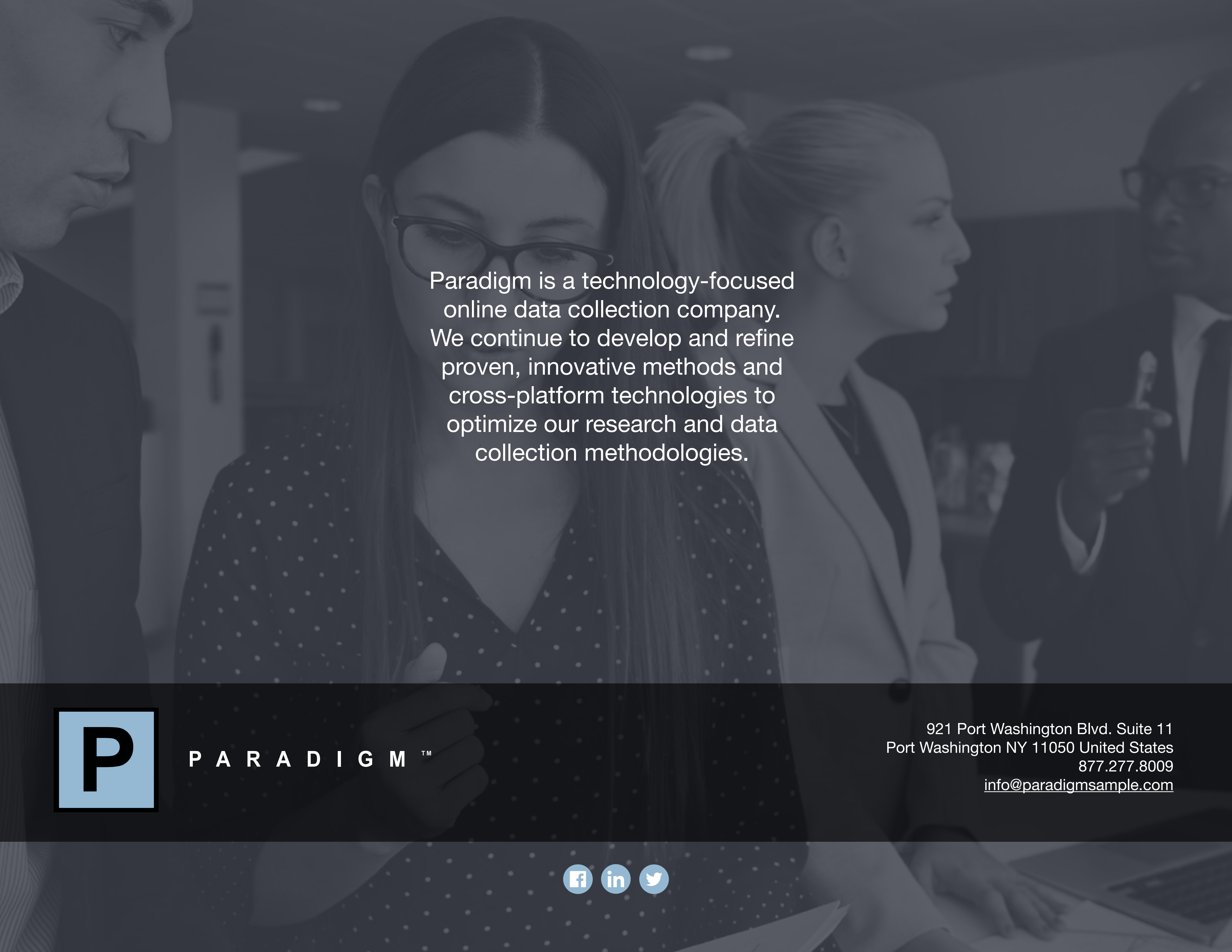

Paradigm is a technology-focused online data collection company. We continue to develop and refine proven, innovative methods and cross-platform technologies to optimize our research and data collection methodologies.

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