Citizen Reference Panel – Summary of February 2016 report

This research was conducted as focus groups involving a total of 19 respondents across two sessions held in Manchester on 10th February 2016.

Participants, who were all regular users of online services, were recruited to represent three previously identified attitudinal groups: Fundamentalist, Unconcerned and Pragmatic.

Each group lasted nearly two hours and covered three core topics: Online Passwords, Nuisance Marketing Phone Calls and Charity List Misuse.

Online Passwords

Nearly all respondents admitted to reusing passwords on multiple sites and, even where they were changed, most respondents used minor variation on a theme. Respondents justified their approach by offsetting convenience against security issues, known or unknown.

Often the only strong passwords used are on banking sites, where levels of security and password criteria are dictated by the website.

Nuisance Marketing Phone Calls

All phone owners taking part said they had some sort of problem with nuisance calls and that those received are primarily about PPI or bank charges, phishing for insurance claims and scams (usually computer related).

The nuisance value does not relate to subject but rather the frequency and timing of the calls.

Only a limited number in these groups were aware of or have made use of the free Telephone Preference Service (TPS).

Charity List Misuse

Although awareness was high, respondents had no direct experience of list misuse. Several did have elderly relatives who experienced list based problems although all but one were historic cases. One did have a grandmother still receiving excessive mail from new charities.

Some respondents had recently experienced aggressive approaches by charities to which they already donate, asking for additional or increased amounts.