

Press release: 18th February 2008

Fieldwork date: November 2007

Shifts in the student account market

New research carried out by Opinionpanel – The Student Account Acquisition Study 2007/8 – reveals the latest trends in the student account market in both England & Wales and Scotland. Now in its third year, this Opinionpanel study provides unrivalled access and insight into the student market.

The student account market can be a volatile one and market shares can shift dramatically from year to year. Opinionpanel's Student Account Acquisition Study tracks these shifts and provides in depth analysis on the forces behind these trends.

In England & Wales, eight in ten full-time first year students have a student account. NatWest is the number one bank amongst those English & Welsh students who have a student account, with a market share of 48%.

Lloyds TSB is now 2nd place in this market, having gained an impressive amount of market share since last year. The proportion of students having their main account with Lloyds TSB has risen from 11% in 2006 to 16%.

HSBC is in third place, followed closely by Halifax and Barclays. Halifax has significantly increased its share of students using their student account as their main account since 2006.

In Scotland, two thirds of full time first year students have a student account. Royal Bank of Scotland is the number one bank in Scotland, with 48% of all those who have a student account having an RBS account. Royal Bank of Scotland has made significant gains in market share this year. Bank of Scotland is in 2nd place in the Scottish student market and Lloyds TSB is 3rd.

One area of analysis provided by Opinionpanel's Student Account Acquisition Study is how banks are perceived by students, and how these perceptions are changing.

NatWest is seen as really interested in students, understanding students' needs, being a bank its customers would recommend, and having convenient branch locations

Lloyds TSB has seen impressive improvements in image amongst its own customers since last year. Its own customers see it as trustworthy, really interested in students and as a bank they would recommend to others.

HSBC remains a player in the market. It is seen as a trustworthy bank; in fact, it is the bank seen as the most trustworthy by non-customers. It has seen an increase in TV advert recall since 2006.

Halifax does very well amongst its own customers on providing great value and being trustworthy.

Like HSBC, Barclays also has an image of being trustworthy, and is especially well-regarded amongst those students who don't have an account with it. Its recent advertising campaign has increased advert recall across key communications channels favoured by students.

Royal Bank of Scotland enjoys a strong image amongst its own customers. In particular, it is seen as a bank that really is interested in students, understands students' needs and provides great value.

Bank of Scotland does especially well on being seen as trustworthy and having convenient branch locations.

Opinionpanel's Student Account Acquisition Study also tracks key measures such as student account opening motivations, student responses to incentives provided by banks and account usage and satisfaction metrics.

Background

Opinionpanel is the fully independent market research company that owns and operates **The Student Panel** and **The Graduate Panel**, and new for 2008 **The Future Panel**. This new panel will include both university applicants and pre-applicants (those considering applying to university) and will have the facility to segment panellists according to whether they have made an application or are still in the pre-application phase. With over 60,000 members we cover those critical, transformative years before, during and after life as a student. We provide clients with genuinely valid and representative samples. All our research is confidential and in line with the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct. We are MRS Company Partners. We offer and provide clients with a choice of full-service research, field-and-tabs, or sample-only services.

Opinionpanel's panellists are recruited by email invitation sent by UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). UCAS is the UK's central body for handling undergraduate applications and is therefore able to invite almost the whole of each starting cohort. This means there is very little systematic bias in the panel. All respondents have verified ac.uk academic email addresses, which means only bona fide students take part, almost eliminating the problem of participants with multiple identities – something that plagues many of the consumer panels available. Panellists receive a £1 Amazon voucher per questionnaire they complete.

Notes

This research is provided conditional on the following:

Opinionpanel is always cited. A suggested format is: "The Student Account Acquisition Study 2007/8 was carried out by Opinionpanel Research. Fieldwork was conducted in November 2007 with a representative sample of first year full time undergraduate students."

If being used for a commercial context, Banks and their associated agencies may only refer to their own performance. We ask that:

- 1) A copy of the proposed article/marketing is sent to us prior to publication
- 2) A copy of the published article/marketing is sent to us post publication

Appendix

Methodology

Sample:	England and Wales - 1,514 full-time first year undergraduate students; Scotland 776 full-time first year undergraduate students.
Quotas:	Quotas were set to reflect the England and Wales population for full-time undergraduate students in terms of gender and university type (Russell Group, pre-1992 universities, post-1992 universities, other HEIs). Targets for the quotas were acquired using data supplied by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) [based on their Student Record 2004/5].
Weighting:	Weighting was applied to ensure the sample is representative in terms of gender and university type as defined above.
Fieldwork dates:	November 5th to 20th 2006.
Fieldwork mode:	The Student Panel – an online panel.
Incentives:	£1 credit in Amazon gift certificates.
Checks:	All panellists have verified ac.uk email address and were invited to join the Student Panel by UCAS.
Compliance:	MRS Code of Conduct compliant. Opinionpanel does not sell, advertise or market to panellists. All research is anonymous and confidential.
Design / Analysis:	The questionnaire has been designed by Opinionpanel over the last three years. Data analysis was carried out by Opinionpanel.
Technical:	All scripting, fieldwork, coding, tables and project management by Opinionpanel.