



CenterCap Advisors provides institutional advisory services to fund managers and investors across the real assets industries.

We have been involved in + 90 engagements, providing investor relations advice, business consulting and our proprietary branded suite of marketing collateral products, communication plans and investor surveys.

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CCG PERSPECTIVES

Hmm ... What Do Your Investors Really Think?

By Deborah Smith

Not surprisingly, in our experience, investors are more comfortable providing feedback to us on an anonymous basis than they are conveying it to the fund manager in direct dialogue.

Do some of your investors feel that way? I can assure you - they do!

Investors can be secretive! Keep their thoughts to themselves. Obvious actions tell of satisfaction (they reup) or dissatisfaction (you find out too late when they don't reup). However, why wait until the next time you hit the fund raise trail before you find out? Conducting investor surveys can be your very own proprietary research tool. It's at your fingertips. You can learn what your investors are up to, what they think about your organization, communication strategies, performance, team, strengths, weaknesses - and so much more. Quality feedback gives you a leg-up to making better investment strategy decisions.

But this kind of tool has much broader application. Investor surveys can also strategically be used to test the waters on what you may be thinking about doing in the future. Your organization's growth. The next phase beyond the here and now.

You have a hunch. How about you confirm your hunch about a market trend? Survey research can provide investor intel on the pulse of the market and what investors are interested in.

You have a new investment or market thesis. How about you validate your thesis (or revise it based on feedback)? Survey feedback can assist your development / thinking on the thesis. Perhaps this leads to a new product idea or simply adjusting your current path.

There's a new product you think makes sense to pursue. Unsure about investor interest? You can utilize survey research to validate whether launching it is worth your time and money.

This kind of information can give you an edge. But don't fool yourself - many investors do prefer to remain anonymous when discussing it for a variety of reasons. The fund managers who utilize investor surveys are able to make better-informed decisions and make them faster. The fund manager can collect information readily, efficiently and real-time.

Still not convinced? Consider this. Our recent survey work has a consistent recurring feedback theme that may indeed be more important than anything discussed above - investors are appreciative that firms are reaching out to them to solicit personal and direct feedback. Taking the extra step, making the extra effort to hire professionals and invest capital to solicit their feedback is a standout feature. You want to distinguish yourself? No more important time than in an unsettled market to do exactly that.

How does it work? There is no magic formula to how your survey should be conducted. No one size fits all. We have conducted investor surveys with as few as 5-10 investors or on a much larger scale. You can utilize various mediums of communications spanning both verbal and electronic, or a combination of both. It's up to you. Tailoring the survey to your specific needs to maximize both the quality and quantity of feedback is critical to the objective. Investor surveys are a core marketing collateral product for us. At this point, we have figured out how to make them worth the investment.

Get ahead of your competitors. The market is uncertain but that doesn't mean you can't have the pulse on what's going on in your investors' minds. They are the life blood of every investment manager.