

# 19 Questions to Ask When Choosing Community Engagement Software

Does this meet my needs?	Legitimacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<p>Does the platform verify that your participants are who they say they are? e.g. geo-verification</p> <p><i>Advantages: Builds trust, generates higher quality feedback, ensures legitimate data is collected.</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<p>How accurate is this verification process?</p> <p><i>Advantages: The better the verification the more defensible your data and the easier it is to justify your conclusions.</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<p>Does this verification allow you to meaningfully segment your audience when reporting?</p> <p><i>Advantages: Can you break down your audience into smaller segments e.g. neighbourhoods, to identify micro-trends in the data.</i></p>
Does this meet my needs?	Ease of Use
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<p>Is it easy to set up a consultation and navigate through the interface?</p> <p><i>Advantage: Makes your job easier and saves you time.</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<p>Is it easy for participants to sign up? (have you asked others to do so?)</p> <p><i>Advantage: The more laborious the process the less people will sign up to your consultation, however, the shorter the signup, the less relevant information that is collected.</i></p>

<b>Does this meet my needs?</b>	<b>Repeatability</b>
---------------------------------	----------------------

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Are there existing participants using the tool that you can include in your consultation? <i>Advantage: You can quickly get people engaging with your topic.</i>
--	---

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Can you easily reach out again to your participants in later consultations? <i>Advantage: Allows for ongoing engagement and simpler second consultations.</i>
--	--

<b>Does this meet my needs?</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
---------------------------------	------------------

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Is social media integrated into the platform? <i>Advantage: Allows you to post YouTube videos.</i>
--	---

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Does it allow your participants to easily share your topic? <i>Advantage: Allows your participants to easily share the topic with their connections generating more engagement.</i>
--	--

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Are there additional tools e.g. web widget, which you can use to promote your consultation? <i>Advantage: Properly promote the consultation on your own website to achieve maximum awareness.</i>
--	--

<b>Does this meet my needs?</b>	<b>Pricing</b>
---------------------------------	----------------

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Is the pricing flexible? e.g. can you pay monthly or do they ask for a long term commitment. <i>Advantage: More freedom. Be wary of anyone forcing multiple year commitments. Anyone with confidence in their platform should give you options.</i>
--	--

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Is the pricing transparent? <i>Advantage: Open pricing means no hidden fees or nasty surprises.</i>
--	--

Does this meet my needs?	Support
--------------------------	---------

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Does the platform have a track record of holding successful consultations? <i>Advantage: Be confident you are working with a platform that has worked for others.</i>
--	--

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Do they have a way for you to contact support should an issue arise? <i>Advantage: Sometimes you will need someone to help answer your questions.</i>
--	--

Does this meet my needs?	Privacy & Security
--------------------------	--------------------

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Do they make clear the privacy settings for participants? <i>Advantage: The better the privacy, the more people will feel comfortable signing up and contributing in a meaningful way.</i>
--	---

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Do they adhere to any additional privacy guidelines e.g. privacy by design? <i>Advantage: Going beyond basic privacy policies will be especially important for contentious issues.</i>
--	---

Does this meet my needs?	Toolkit
--------------------------	---------

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Does it have a range of tools for facilitating engagement? <i>Advantage: The type of engagement you host may require one or more tools to achieve the best feedback.</i>
--	---

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Does the platform have inbuilt features that further promote engagement? <i>Advantage: Combined with suitable participant validation this ensure you get more of the quality feedback.</i>
--	---

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes No N/A	Can I export my results into a common format? <i>Advantage: Allows you to work with your data in a way you are familiar with.</i>
--	--