



# Taking a 360-Degree View:

## Gathering Insights with a Multifaceted Approach



**August 2022**  
KNow Research

Each year, the team at [KNow Research takes on a pro-bono project](#), selecting a nonprofit organization or small business that could use some insight help to understand their audiences or business issues. It allows us to give back to the community and also try some new approaches to our work that we've wanted to try or, in this case, one we have not considered. The opportunities expand our skills and give us new ideas to offer our clients for future work while helping a worthwhile organization. A win all around.

In 2021 we worked with GCUC, the [Global Coworking Unconference Community](#). The organization is a network of coworking spaces hosting more than 30 conferences around the world. As thought leaders in the coworking movement, GCUC wanted to freshen up the findings on a 2015 survey of coworking members and owners. The updated data will be used to help coworking owners improve and promote their spaces and as well as used for talking points for media kits to promote the industry as a whole.

While updating the member survey was the key objective, we wanted to add extra value with our qualitative expertise. As well, we knew that the coworking world and workplaces globally had changed dramatically due to the 2020 pandemic shift to remote work and we thought the project warranted a deeper dive. We sought to hear stories of how professionals were managing the changes and what they were seeking in coworking spaces.

GCUC invited our team to attend and host a workshop at the first in-person GCUC conference in months. The outcome was a layered approach to gathering insights which gave us a fuller picture of the topic and provided GCUC with a story to share with their global community.

### **Phase 1 – Adding Context with Quick Qualitative**

It would have been easy for us to repeat a survey conducted in 2015 and call it done, but we saw the opportunity to add more context and bring the survey to life by adding qualitative interviews. Using the KNow Pop Up Booth® Insights approach, we

intercepted 20 small business owners at the [Los Angeles Small Business Expo](#) to understand their experiences with and impressions of coworking.

Why did we go to the Small Business Expo? Instead of spending time and money on trying to find professionals to come to us for an interview, we went to them. We knew within one day at this expo we could connect with enough of the hundreds of professionals in attendance and get the answers we needed. It's one of the advantages of [Booth® Insights](#); we go where the people are to streamline the data gathering process.

The results gave us valuable insight into how professionals view coworking whether they were members or not. It also gave us video and voices of real people to use to illustrate findings in a visually and emotionally impactful way that would capture the attention of our client's audience.

We love it when qualitative interviews reflect back the results of quantitative studies and often they expand on the findings, adding nuance and context that a survey simply can't provide on its own. We didn't have to conduct a series of in-depth exploratory interviews to get these results either. By honing in on the key questions we could interview enough people in a day to learn what we needed to know and validate the findings from the quant study.

**Key Qualitative Finding:** *We found that even professionals who have not used coworking spaces see the value of working in a dedicated space. They see the opportunity for creating connections and building community with like-minded professionals. Spoiler alert: when we analyzed the data from the survey, professional connections and building community were the top benefits of using coworking spaces among members.*



## **Phase 2 – Client Immersion**

When the team at GCUC offered the opportunity to attend and present a workshop how to capture customer insights at the GCUC conference, we saw an opportunity to bring our presentation to connect with new audiences and potential research clients. These coworking owners and managers were eager to learn how they could tap into listening to the voices of their consumers. However, we gained even more from this phase of the research.

Getting to know the end users of the research and the issues within the industry allows us to be better consultants when the time comes to deliver the results of our work. We now look for ways to attend events whenever possible to engage with the client's work, keep up on industry news and find new ways to learn more about what we're researching and who we are researching it for. While our job is always to represent the voice of the consumer (or end user or stakeholders) we interview, immersion in our clients' worlds gives us another point of view to have a deeper understanding of how our clients engage.

## **Phase 3 – Quantify**

Finally, we felt immersed and prepared to launch the survey and get the quantitative data the client needed updated. We sent a survey to coworking members and owners through GCUC's database. In the end, 840 members across the globe answered the survey.

What we heard in the intercepts and in discussions with coworking owners were validated with a robust data set. We learned that community is the key benefit of joining a coworking space. These collaborative spaces allow for professionals to connect with other professionals, make friendships and expand their skills along with their professional networks. Members look for spaces that help to create these connections through introductions, planning events and through thoughtful design of the physical spaces.

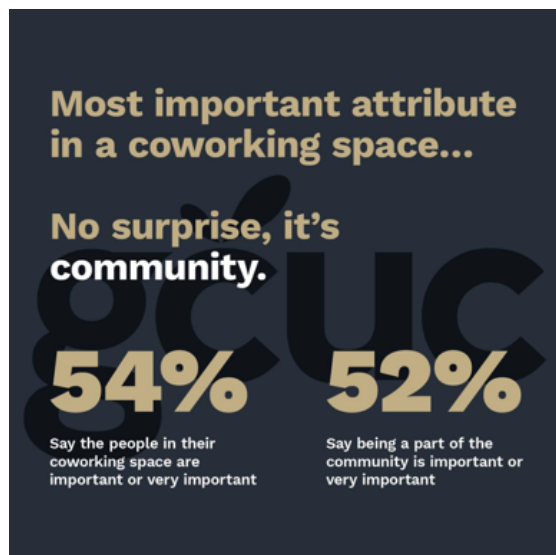
In other studies we often [collaborate with a partner with expertise in quantitative research](#) to conduct surveys and our qualitative interviews can help clarify outstanding questions, bring to life personas or dig deeper into key areas of inquiry. While combining qual and quant isn't new, we find adding even a smaller scale qualitative phase through the Booth® Insights approach can add so much to a traditional study, without adding too much to the budget.

**Key Quantitative Finding:** *Coworking creates connections. On average, coworking members met 9 new people in the past year through their coworking connections and 13% met up to 25 new people. And 85% of coworking members turn to other members for help, guidance or to find or outsource work.*

### **Then, Make it Shareable**

Since GCUC wanted to use the research results as part of their role as thought leaders, we gave them as many compelling deliverables as possible to help them spread the word. In this case, the recipients of the information are not necessarily researchers nor do they have time to sit with the data. Shareable, compelling, multi-media content was key!

Our video sizzle reel and podcast gave GCUC that extra something they could use to share the data easily and efficiently. And, our research team discussed the findings of the study in a [round table style conversation](#) podcast report highlighting the key themes and learnings, complimented by interview audio clips so listeners can hear the insights in our participants' own words.



[Podcast deliverables](#) are just one of the ways KNow is working to deliver insights creatively, giving clients more options for sharing their work with their internal clients to make a greater impact.

GCUC also took data from the report that was most meaningful to their audiences and created their own branded graphics to share among the community.

Following this successful project, we now recommend a multi-prong approach to get a full understanding of the issue at hand. We encourage other insights professionals to consider adding complementary components to the mix as well, such as:

- Add a small qualitative component to illustrate quantitative findings
- Validate and measure with quantitative research
- Conduct research from the inside. Get to know the client, the end users and the industry through attending industry events and get a 360-degree view of the question at hand.