

CUSTOMER STORY

# How Radio Stations Know What's Hot and What's Not

In 2010, Brad Riegel of Cornerstone Research was going to build his own online solution for radio stations to conduct music research until he found Alchemer (then SurveyGizmo). Now Cornerstone does both auditorium and call-out research online, faster, and without many of the biases that can plague in-person research.

When Cornerstone Research started, music radio broadcasters conducted research in two ways:

- Auditorium Tests done in large rooms with Scantron forms. The researchers would play music clips, and everybody would fill in bubbles to rank the songs and collect their reward.
- Callout Tests are the barometer for current formats (not oldies or classic rock) to determine how much more or less they need to play a song. These used to be done by phone banks (hence the name). They would ask if the person listened to the radio station, then play a 7 to 10-second hook for a song and record whether the person had heard the song before, liked it, or was tired of it. They would tabulate the results to determine what songs went into next week's rotation.

## It Starts with the Hook Exchange

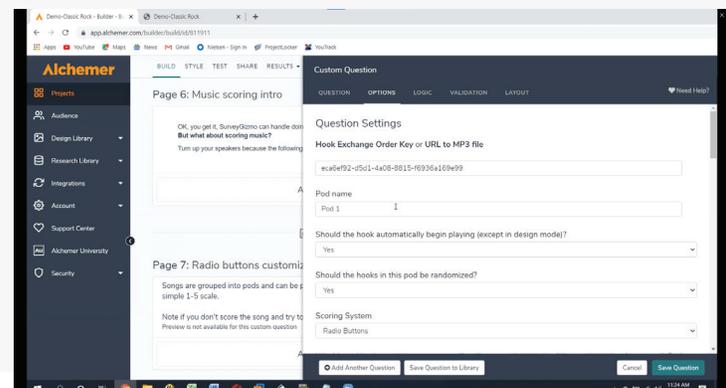
Now almost all of the major broadcasters use Cornerstone Research and Alchemer to get these results. That's because Brad and team built the Hook Exchange that allows companies to use standard hooks or add their own, which enables companies from around the world to test regional music as well as Top 40.

The Hook Exchange is a database of more than 150,000 seven to ten-second clips of songs (the hooks that we all know). These hooks become part of a custom question type that Cornerstone sends researchers. The researchers then add the custom question type to their Alchemer survey. All of Cornerstone's customers use Alchemer to conduct their surveys. The songs can be sorted and categorized, which impacts the rotation (or frequency) with which the songs are played on the station.

## “Partnering.

“We started with Alchemer because it was the only platform that offers this type of integration.”

Brad Riegel, Founder  
Cornerstone Research



**The Analyst**

The Analyst helps the radio industry sort, filter, and categorize the results into trends to see how people’s attitudes are evolving about a song. They can move a tune from one category to another. Using Alchemer, Cornerstone moved from Scantron forms to online surveys. “I had a Scantron scanner,” Brad explains. “UPS would show up with a stack of forms, and I’d feed them into the scanner, and we’d come out with an Excel spreadsheet, process it, and categorize it. Then the internet, Alchemer, and ubiquitous broadband happened, which enabled us to do all of this online.”

**INTEGRATED WITH MUSIC SCHEDULING SOFTWARE**

The Analyst integrates with the music scheduling software that radio broadcasters use to create their music logs that you will hear listening to that station. The rotation software selects songs based on their category. Songs move between categories (A through D) based on how consumers score them, and those categories then determine how often listeners will hear that song. Being online and automated allows researchers and broadcasters to categorize and populate their music schedules with what’s hot and not before people notice.

**PARTNERING FOR BETTER RESEARCH**

“I started building my own platform,” explains Brad. “But Alchemer (then SurveyGizmo) partnered with us to write this custom question type and help us integrate it. Our process sets up our server to communicate with the custom question type, the hooks stream off our server, and every time a consumer scores a song, it posts in the Alchemer database. Then the research firm can export the data that we process with their scoring mechanism, referencing the music, and the results.”

**About Alchemer**

Alchemer, formerly SurveyGizmo, provides the ideal solution for market researchers and CX professionals who have outgrown SurveyMonkey or don’t want the expense and headaches of Qualtrics.

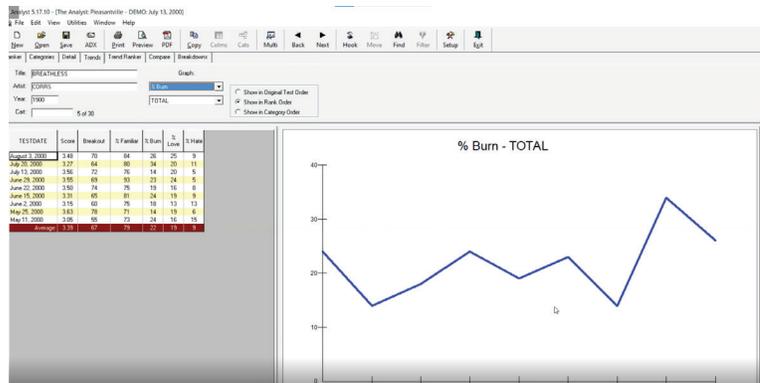
From survey software to customer-feedback management, Alchemer helps organizations of all sizes understand and transform how they engage with their markets, customers, and employees.

To learn how to capture feedback your way and put it to work right away, call Alchemer at **1.800.609.6480** or visit [www.alchemer.com](http://www.alchemer.com).

**ALL YOU NEED IS AN AUDIENCE**

The partnership between Cornerstone Research and Alchemer creates a way for online music researchers to set up their own scoring scale. With the integration with Alchemer, Cornerstone has a complete solution. “We give you a way to choose the music, to order it, sample it, collect your data, process, and analyze that data,” explains Brad. “All a researcher needs to do is find the people to study.”

Rank	Title	Artist	Category	Original Date	TOTAL Score	TOTAL Breakout	TOTAL % Family	TOTAL % Run	TOTAL % Love	TOTAL % Hate	Top 10 TOTAL Score	Aug 13M Breakout Score	Jul 10 TOTAL Score	Jul 17 TOTAL Score	Jul 24 TOTAL Score	Jul 31 TOTAL Score	Aug 7 TOTAL Score	Aug 14 TOTAL Score	Aug 21 TOTAL Score	Aug 28 TOTAL Score	Aug 31 TOTAL Score	
1	WTF AM I FEELING OPEN	GREASE	D	20	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
2	WISHER	CREED	D	20	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
3	WHEATHEAD	BLACK CLINT	B	11	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
4	LAST RESORT	PAUL RAGHI	A	13	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
5	BREATHLESS	METALLICA	B	30	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
6	THE DREAMGALS BETWEEN US	BUSH	C	29	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
7	TOUSLE	MADONNA	A	14	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
8	MUSIC	MADONNA	A	14	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
9	STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN	WIRENMAID LADIES	B	5	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
10	PIRCH	MADONNA	A	14	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
11	BEST	MADONNA	A	14	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
12	WAPRADIO	HILL PATH	C	12	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
13	EVERYTHING YOU WANT	VERTICAL HORIZON	C	4	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
14	EVERY MORNING	SUGAR RAY	B	18	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
15	SHO & SINE	MILLERGRAM JOHN COO	C	27	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
16	IT'S MY LIFE	SON JAY	A	17	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
17	OH MY THE HEARING	BLACKTREE BOYS	C	20	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
18	GIRLS GET WHAT THEY WANT	MARKUS KRAUER	A	27	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
19	WAKE ME UP	KISS	A	11	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
20	WIND MACHINE	BUSH	B	20	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
21	WINDMILL	LET	C	16	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
22	GOING TO THE SUN	SEARS BROTHER	D	24	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
23	SHAKE UP	BLACKTREE BOYS	B	2	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
24	WINDMILL	EVERCLEAR	B	4	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
25	YOUSIE IN MY HEART	COLIN PAUL	D	24	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
26	EVERYBODY IS A WINDING ROAD	DRIVE SHENELL	D	28	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
27	THEY KNOW ME	ALICE	D	18	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
28	WINDMILL	SONO DOLLS	D	10	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
29	IT'S SOMEBODY	ALICE	D	17	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
30	WINDMILL	SONO DOLLS	D	10	104	76	14	20	6	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108	108



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