

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

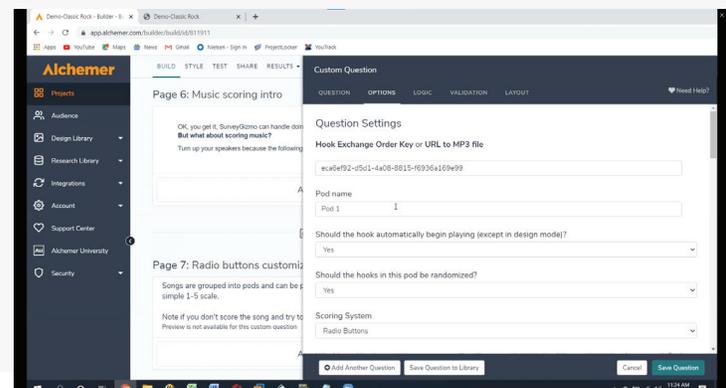
Now almost all of the major broadcasters use Cornerstone Research and Alchemer to get these results. That's because Brad and team built the Hook Exchange that allows companies to use standard hooks or add their own, which enables companies from around the world to test regional music as well as Top 40.

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.

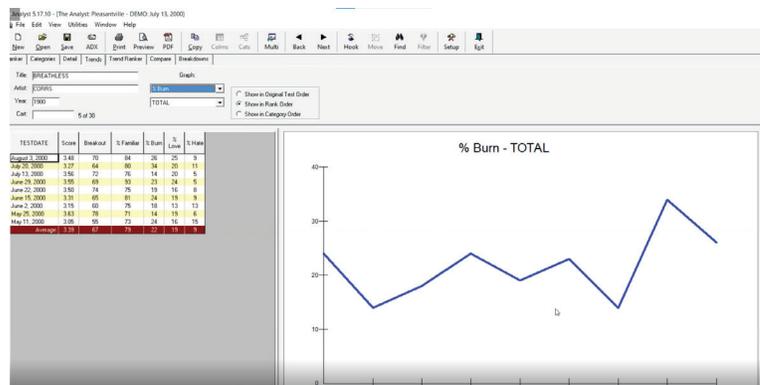
From survey software to customer-feedback management, Alchemer helps organizations of all sizes understand and transform how they engage with their markets, customers, and employees.

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 % FANCLUB	TOTAL % RUN	TOTAL % LEAD	TOTAL % HITS	PREVIOUS TOTAL Score	Aug 01 2000	Jul 20 2000	Jul 15 2000	Jul 10 2000	Jul 05 2000	Jun 29 2000	Jun 24 2000	Jun 19 2000	Jun 14 2000	
1	WTF JAM! WIDE OPEN	GREEK	D	20	104	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2	WISHER	CREED	D	20	104	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
3	WHEAT	BLACK CLINT	B	11	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
4	LAST RESORT	PAUL RICHIE	A	13	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
5	BREATHLESS	METALLICA	B	30	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
6	THE DREAMWALKERS BETWEEN US	BUSH	C	29	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
7	TOUSLE	MADONNA	A	14	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
8	MUSIC	MADONNA	A	14	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
9	STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN	LED ZEPHELR	C	5	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
10	PIRCH	MARINELLA LADES	B	5	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
11	BEST	KATYHOPE	C	6	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
12	WAP/PIRCH	HILL HATH	C	12	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
13	EVERYTHING YOU WANT	VERTICAL HORIZON	C	4	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
14	EVERY MORNING	SUGAR RAY	B	18	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
15	SHO & SINK	MILLERGRAM JOHN COO	C	27	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
16	IT'S MY LIFE	SON JAY	A	17	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
17	ON MY OWN	BLACKTREE BOYS	C	20	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
18	GIRLS GOT WHAT TO MAKE YOU LAUGH CRYER	SON JAY	A	27	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
19	WAKE ME UP	KISS	A	11	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
20	WARM MACHINE	BUSH	B	20	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
21	WINDSHELL	LEF	C	16	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
22	GOING TO THE SUN	SEARS BRITNEY	D	24	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
23	CHAMP OF	BLACKTREE BOYS	B	2	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
24	WINDSHELL	EVERCLEAR	B	4	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
25	YOUSIE IN MY HEART	COLIN HAY	D	24	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
26	EVERYBODY IS A WINDING ROAD DRIVE	EMERALD	D	28	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
27	THEY KNOW ME	ALICE	D	18	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
28	IF YOU	SON JAY	A	17	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
29	IT'S SOMEBODY	ALICE	D	17	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
30	WTF DOES IT ALWAYS RAIN ON TRAYS	SON JAY	A	17	100	76	14	20	6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100



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