resonate

Digital Twins Glossary



Synthetic data can shrink the time between a question and a confident decision from months to days.

Its value depends entirely on what sits underneath each answer.

The category moves fast, and many vendors use the same words for very different things. This guide defines the terms you'll hear, explains why each one matters to your results, and gives you the questions to ask before you buy.

93%

Average match to fielded data in head-to-head tests

6

Audience refreshes a year

5

Days to validated answers plus a targetable audience

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The foundation

Every synthetic answer is only as strong as the real data behind it. Start with these five terms.

Term	What it means	Why it matters to you
Predictive consumer intelligence	The ability to know every consumer as a unique individual and predict what they'll do next, before they do it.	It is the foundation every Resonate digital twin is built on, so answers trace back to real individuals rather than group averages.
Synthetic data	Data generated by AI rather than collected directly from people, built on real-world data and patterns.	It answers new questions when fielded research is too slow, too expensive, or can't reach the people you need. Its reliability depends on what it's built on and how it's tested.
Digital twin	An AI representation of a real person, built to predict how that person thinks, feels, and responds. Also called a synthetic persona, synthetic respondent, AI twin, or digital twin of a customer.	A twin built from one real person's data gives you individual-level answers. A twin built from a demographic label gives you a stereotype.
Grounding data	The real-world evidence a digital twin is built from.	It sets the ceiling on quality. Ask what real data every answer traces back to, and whether it is individual-level or an average.
Individual-level ID matching	Connecting survey responses, observed behaviors, and attributes to one specific person in an identity graph, rather than to a demographic group or segment average.	Each Resonate digital twin starts from one ID-matched person's own data, so answers reflect real individuals. Results also resolve to real, addressable IDs, so what you learn becomes an audience you can reach.

How to judge quality

Plausible answers are easy to generate. These terms separate answers you can act on from answers that only sound right.

Term	What it means	Why it matters to you
Validation	Checking synthetic results against real answers the model never saw, such as fielded studies, your own research, or public benchmarks.	If results hold up on questions with known answers, you can trust them on new ones. Ask to see the process, not a promise.
Similarity to fielded research	How closely synthetic results match what real people said when asked the same question.	It tells you whether decisions made on synthetic answers would hold in market. Resonate Digital Twins averages a 93% match in head-to-head tests against fielded data.
Calibration	Tuning synthetic results to known benchmarks, including your own surveys, public data like census or voter files, and trackers or polls.	Results stay consistent with what you already know about your customers instead of contradicting your prior research.
Representative by construction	An audience built to match US Census (American Community Survey) and third-party credit bureau demographics from the start, rather than weighted after the fact.	Panel-based tools inherit the skew of whoever joined the panel. Building in representation from the start reduces that bias.
Drift and refresh	Drift is the gap that opens when people's views change but a model stays the same. A refresh rebuilds results on the newest data.	Without regular refreshes, answers that once held up slowly fall out of step with the market. Resonate Digital Twins audiences refresh six times a year.

Terms you'll hear in the market

Similar names often describe very different approaches. The difference that decides your results is what grounds each answer and whether you can act on it.

Term	What it means
Synthetic panel	A group of digital twins assembled to represent a population and asked questions the way a research panel would.
Synthetic audience	A set of real, addressable people scored on a synthetic answer, ready for media. Many tools stop before this step.
Synthetic attribute	One synthetic answer attached to an individual, also called augmented data. It works like any other audience attribute.
Panel-trained synthetic data	Synthetic answers modeled on a single survey panel's past responses. It inherits that panel's coverage gaps and quality issues.



How your research options compare

Option	What grounds the answer	What you walk away with
General AI chatbot	General patterns in public training data, with no real person behind the answer	An aggregate guess
Panel-trained synthetic data	One research panel's past responses	Insight bounded by that panel
Traditional fielded research and polling	Real people asked directly	A real human baseline, delivered as an insight in a report with no audience to act on, after weeks or months
Resonate Digital Twins	Real, ID-matched individuals and their measured attributes	Validated answers plus a targetable audience, in about five days



Six questions to ask any synthetic data vendor, including us

01

What grounds the responses?

Ask exactly what real data each answer traces back to and whether that grounding is individual-level.

02

Can you show me validation?

A credible vendor documents how it checks results against real research and will back-test against your own holdout data.

03

How do you handle known AI pitfalls?

Ask how they prevent agreeable answers, manage question wording and order, and correct for bias.

04

Is the audience representative from the start?

Ask whether results are calibrated to real population benchmarks or adjusted after the fact.

05

Can I act on the output?

Ask whether results become a targetable audience or whether you'll need a separate step and vendor to use them.

06

What is it not good for?

Any vendor claiming synthetic data works for every question should raise a flag. A credible answer names real limits.

Bring us the question that's stalling your next decision.

Your Resonate team can show you what Resonate Digital Twins can deliver in five days.

Schedule a consultation

