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Review

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March 1995

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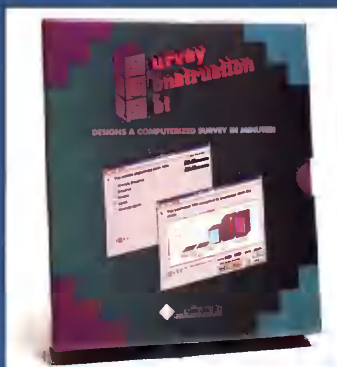
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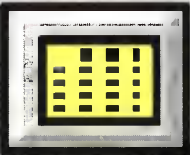
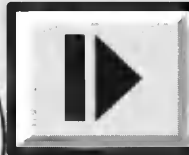
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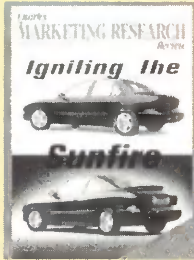
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**Volume IX, Number 3**

**March 1995**

**Cover**

Respondent collages helped develop the advertising for Pontiac's new Sunfire. Photo courtesy of DMD&B, Inc.

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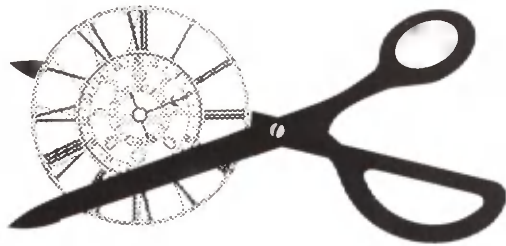
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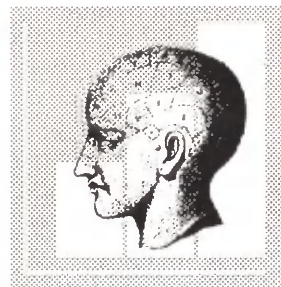
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*Igniting the*



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# *Respondent collages help agency develop ads for new Pontiac*

By Joseph Rydholm  
QMRR editor

**T**he whole idea behind qualitative research is to get respondents to express themselves, right? But who says they have to use words? As we all know — and as one ad agency has found — pictures can say a lot.

For the past two years, D'arcy Masius Benton & Bowles, Inc. (DMB&B), Bloomfield Hills, Mich., has been putting a twist on the standard technique of the respondent collage. Instead of having focus group subjects assemble collages at the facility, using magazines and construction paper, the agency asks respondents to create the collages at home on a pre-assigned topic before they show up for the groups.

"Having consumers create collages is not new," says Charles Stannard, director of research and marketing, DMB&B. "What we've done is figure out how to make collages better and more useful than they have been in the past. They're one of the tools we use to understand consumers and their relationships to the brands we advertise.

"In the focus groups, our interest is not just in talking about products or people per se. We're really interested in looking at the relationship between the two, how that product fits into their lives and what they think and feel about it. So we wanted to create a methodology that would capture that relationship visually as well as verbally. Pictures and images are not merely worth a thousand words, they elicit and evoke a thousand words and that's what we want."

Respondents are typically given a week before the group to create a collage — usually in the 20"x20" range so it's large enough for everyone in the group to see — that describes their relationship with the product in question. They're free to use any materials they wish (one woman included a slipper on her collage), including family photographs, photos from magazines, map sections, ticket stubs, or original artwork.

In most cases, the collages are the starting point of the group. When the respondents arrive at the facility, the

collages are collected and put in the focus group room. After the group begins, the moderator picks up a collage and asks the respondents to talk about the maker of the collage, how they would describe the person based on the images in it and how he or she seems to feel about the product in question. The collage maker then identifies himself or herself and talks about the things they chose to put in the collage.

## **Time and energy**

The agency has found that it hasn't  
continued on p. 51





# Florida golf school uses neural networks to analyze advertising brochure

**F**or golf schools, the advertising brochure is a critical marketing tool. Selection of a school is largely based on the text contained in these brochures (which are mailed to prospective students who respond to ads in major golf magazines) since students rarely visit a school in advance and word-of-mouth advertising is not prevalent. Sales are gained or lost depending on the messages conveyed in the brochures.

The Ben Sutton Golf School, Sun City Center, Fla., has a unique advantage over its competitors: all instruction is conducted under actual playing conditions on a real golf course — not a driving range or practice green.

The task of communicating this major competitive advantage in the text of the school's new brochure fell to The Becker Group, a Canton, Ohio, ad agency. To do this, Glen Becker, president of the Becker Group, needed an objective critique of the new advertising copy. He turned to artificial neural network analysis.

### Complex patterns

Artificial neural networks identify complex patterns of information in text data and then determine the association among the different patterns. Thus, the technique is well-suited to analyzing several copy alternatives to determine which options best convey the intended message. Using neural network analysis, subtleties and potential trouble spots in advertising



copy are detected early in the creative process.

Alan Dutka, president of the National Survey Research Center, a Cleveland firm that performs customer satisfaction and other research for the Ben Sutton Golf School, says that "neural networks are appropriate when the research objectives are to determine the major ideas expressed in a text and to study the relationships among the words and phrases."

An artificial neural network analysis generates quantitative information in three distinct phases:

- word counts identify the most frequently used words;
- cluster analysis determines how words are grouped together to form major themes or ideas;
- connection strengths among words reveal the interrelationships among all the words.

These three phases were used to evaluate existing and new advertising brochures for the Sutton Golf School and also the brochures for



"Mountain Valley," "resort" and "tennis." The message of the existing Sutton brochure is less obvious. "Green" and "fees" relate to the fact that green fees are included in the tuition cost. "Day" is used frequently to promote the flexibility of three-, five- and eight-day classes.

**A cluster is worth a thousand words**

Though they provide valuable insight, word counts don't show how the words are grouped together to develop concepts. The next analysis phase quantifies the relationships among the words. These analyses are similar to statistical procedures used to examine numerical data.

The mathematical connections among words are strengthened when they appear close to each other in

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contains the words most frequently used in the Sutton school's current brochure and the brochures of two competitors with dramatically different advertising messages.

The contrasts among the schools are apparent: The Original Golf School presents a very personalized message emphasizing words including "you'll," "golfer" and "student." The Professional Golf School targets the resort aspects of the learning environment. Among the frequently appearing words are

**Figure 1**  
Most frequently used words in advertising brochures

	Ben Sutton Golf School	Original Golf School	Professional Golf School		
Frequency of use	Frequency of use	Frequency of use	Frequency of use		
School	36	Golf	52	Golf	16
Golf	30	School	45	Valley	10
Instruction	23	You'll	29	Mountain	10
Day	17	Game	19	Room	7
Fees	14	Golfer	15	Course	6
Course	12	Program	14	Maggie	5
Ben	10	Time	13	Resort	5
Sutton	10	Learn	13	Tennis	4
Game	9	Course	13	Nine	4
Green	9	Student	12	Full	4

eight major competitors. Figure 1



# Sharing inside



## information

***Spending a little time getting to know respondents can improve your qualitative learning***

**By Tim Huberty**

*Editor's note: Tim Huberty is vice president, account planner, at the Campbell Mithun Esty advertising agency, Minneapolis. He is also an adjunct professor in the Graduate School of Business at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul.*

**H**ow many times at a party do you go up to people and immediately ask them to tell you about their innermost thoughts and feelings? Usually, you begin the conversation with small talk and "work up" to matters of consequence.

It's the same thing when seeing a therapist for the first time. People just don't walk in the door and instantly open up. Instead, it takes time (often several sessions) for both parties to get to know each other, to build trust, to break down barriers.

And yet, day after day, in research facilities and shopping malls throughout the land, people are brought in

"cold," shown a poorly sketched concept or an idea for a commercial, asked to put their imaginations in overdrive and then brusquely paid for their contributions.

How many relationships could survive that sort of trauma?

### **"Getting to know you"**

For years, marketing research experts have been harping upon the importance of the data collection process. Many times I have told associates and students that the best designed questionnaire isn't worth anything without the best possible means of data collection.

And so, we write screeners that eliminate any possibility of talking to the wrong people. Yet, when these "experts" come in, it's "business, business and only business" because our time is so valuable. We have to get them in and out as soon as possible. We treat them like lab rats,

poking into their opinions, making fun of them when they can't come up with the breakthroughs or insights that we can't come up with ourselves.

A few more minutes of respondents' time can be time well invested. Instead of immediately launching into a questionnaire, interviewers should take some time to get to know the respondent as an individual, a savvy shopper with prejudices and philosophies, quirks and concerns. Take an extra five to 10 minutes up front to find out where "they're coming from." And also have the interviewer share a bit of herself. It's a two-way street. But more about that later.

### **Small talk isn't so small**

Time taken to get to know the respondent is a very wise investment. For conversation starters, you can use the "old reliables" — or interviewers can certainly ad lib:

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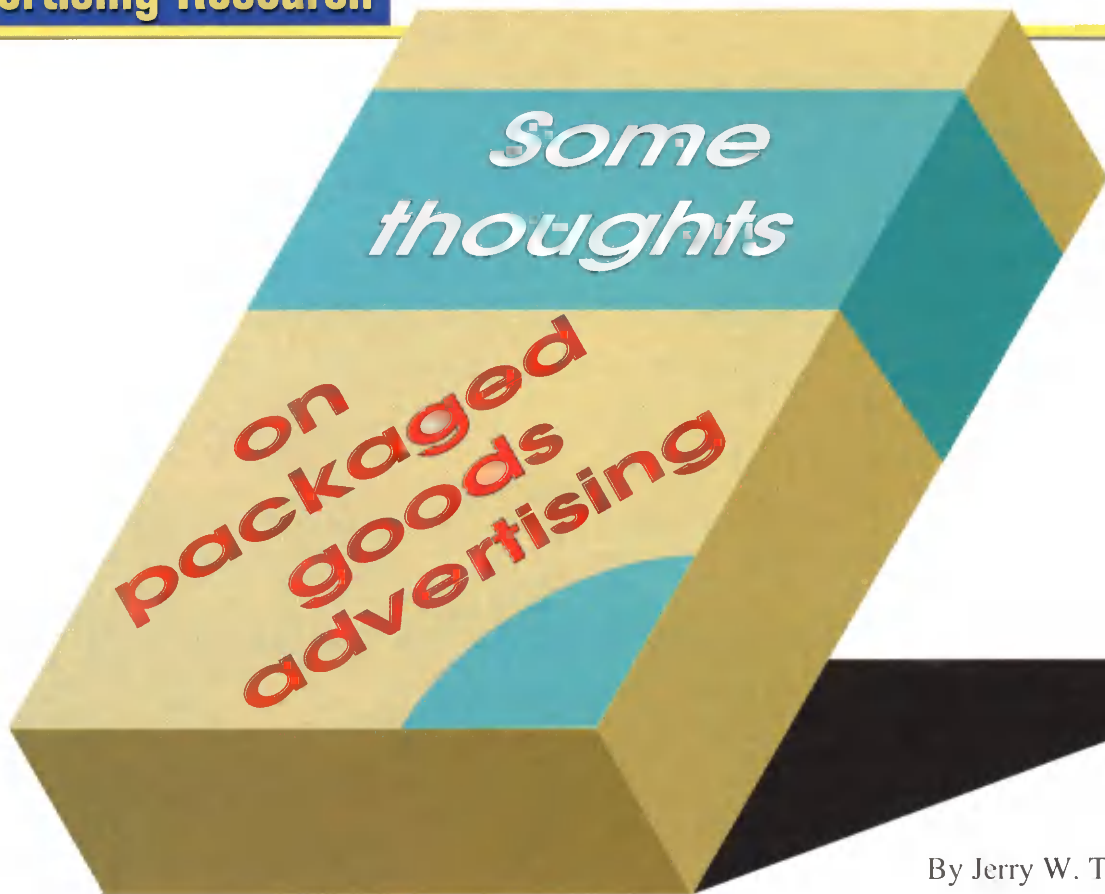
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By Jerry W. Thomas

*Editor's note: Jerry Thomas is president of Decision Analyst, Inc., Arlington, Texas.*

**T**he rise of scanner data (with its ability to measure the short-term effects of promotions), the growing American corporate interest in profits this quarter (never mind the future after that), and the rapidly increasing media alternatives to tv, radio and print all are working in concert to diminish the perceived value of traditional advertising in the packaged goods categories.

Companies with a longer-term perspective, however, will win the marketing wars through the effective use of advertising in the major media. This is not to say that other media (trade shows, sports marketing, the Internet, fax networks, telemarketing, etc.) cannot play an important supplemental role. Here are some thoughts about how best to use advertising in the packaged goods categories:

- Advertising is primarily a strategic weapon. Its total effects must be evaluated in the context of years, not weeks or months. Advertising cannot compete with sales promotion and direct marketing activities in generating short-term (less than one year) sales effects. But in the long-term, the cumulative force of good advertising can achieve results which cannot be equaled by sales promotion or direct marketing activities.

- Print advertising tends to work more slowly than television or radio. Therefore, an especially long period

of time (or an especially heavy media schedule) is required to fully evaluate the total effects of print advertising.

- Advertising for new products is more effective than advertising for established products. In other words, it's easier to create effective advertising for new products than it is for established products. The inherent "news value" of new products is the principal reason new product advertising is more effective. Given the greater effectiveness of new product advertising, one of the most common marketing mistakes is failure to take advantage of this inherent advantage (i.e., to underspend on introductory advertising for new products).

- Perhaps up to half of all advertising for established products is not effective, or only minimally effective, based on Decision Analyst's research. Perhaps no other industry has a failure rate as high as the advertising industry (with the exception of the promotion, direct marketing, and telemarketing industries, and other alternatives to traditional advertising). The persistently high advertising failure rate results primarily from lack of an accurate feedback mechanism, a lack of testing and evaluation. If an agency doesn't know when its advertising is bad or why it's bad, how can the agency possibly improve its advertising? Marketing research can provide this feedback, but it's too expensive for the typical advertisement

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# Just because you can't fly to the focus group, doesn't mean you can't attend.



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## Data Use

# Comments on Mullet's regression article

*Editor's note: The focus of this month's Data Use is a response to Gary Mullet's article "Regression regression," which appeared in the October 1994 issue of QMRR. The response, written by Albert Madansky, professor of Business Administration, and director, Center for International Business Education and Research at the University of Chicago, takes issue with some points made in Mullet's article. Following Madansky's comments is Mullet's response.*

In his article, "Regression, regression" (October 1994 QMRR), Gary Mullet offers an explanation as to why an F-test in a regression shows that the regression is significant, yet no t-test associated with the individual regression coefficients shows up as significant. He points out that this is caused by the existence of correlation between the independent variable. This is the most commonly given explanation for the occurrence of this phenomenon (see, for example, pages 146-7 of Chatterjee and Price's "Regression Analysis By Example," 1977, John Wiley & Sons).

Unfortunately, the example that Mullet cites, in which there are two independent variables, temperature in Fahrenheit and temperature in Celsius, is a misleading, indeed incorrect, example of such a phenomenon. If temperature in Fahrenheit ( $x_1$ ) and temperature in Celsius ( $x_2$ ) are both measured correctly, then  $x_1 = 1.8x_2 + 32$ , are multicollinear, and no regression package worth its salt would accept both these variables as independent variables in a regression. (In Mullet's words, the computer would give us nasty messages.)

It is also true that if  $x_1$  and  $x_2$  are measured with error — the situation envisaged by Mullet — and the errors are uncorrelated with the true values or each other and have 0 as their expected values, then the self-same nasty messages will be forthcoming from the computer. The observed variables may not bear the precise relationship we all learned in high school, but their correlation will still be 1. We will still have multicollinearity and thus an invalid regression, not one which produces a significant F and insignificant t's as output.

Unfortunately, multicollinearity is not the only explanation of the significant F/insignificant t's phenomenon. To see this, let me first cite a mathematical relationship between the t-tests and the F-test. Suppose we have k independent variables in a regression, and assume for simplicity that each of the variables (the dependent as

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well as the independent variables) is measured from its sample mean, so that the regression intercept will be 0. Assume also that the independent variables are orthogonal, i.e., totally uncorrelated with each other, so that there isn't the faintest hint of multicollinearity. Under these circumstances

$$F = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k r_i^2}{k}$$

that is, the F-test statistic (which tests whether the regression as a whole is significant) is equal to the average of the squares of each of the t statistics (which test whether a particular regression coefficient is significantly different from 0).

Now suppose the t-test degrees of freedom is 12 and we have two independent variables (i.e., k=2). Suppose also that all our tests are conducted at the 5 percent level of significance. Then the cutoff value for the F-test is the 95 percent point of the F distribution with 2 and 12 degrees of freedom, namely 3.89. Meanwhile, the cutoff value for each of the t-tests is the two-tailed 95 percent point of the t distribution with 12 degrees of freedom, namely 2.179. If each of our observed t values were 1.98, we would conclude that neither coefficient was significant. Yet the resulting value of the F statistic would be 3.92, and so we would conclude that we had a significant regression.

What's really going on here? Simply stated, the F-test addresses whether all the regression coefficients are 0; the t-tests address individually whether each regression coefficient is 0. Each of k regression coefficients may not be discernibly different from 0, but en toto the regression does significantly explain some of the variation in the dependent variable.

We can also ask the flip side of the question asked by Mullet, namely can one have a regression with a significant t-test but an insignificant F-test? The answer is yes, for a different reason. The F-test and t-tests are set at a significance level of 5 percent, so that the probability is .05 that we reject the null hypothesis when it is true. What is the null hypothesis? For the F-test it is that all the regression coefficients are 0; for each t-test it is that a particular regression coefficient is 0. Thus the null hypothesis for the F-test is the union of the null hypotheses of the individual t-tests. The probability associated with each t-test of accepting the null hypothesis when it is true is .95. If each of the t-tests is independent of the others, then the probability of accepting the hypothesis that all the regression coefficients are 0 via t-tests when that is in fact the case is .95<sup>k</sup>, not .95. When k=2, .95<sup>2</sup> = .9025, so that the implied level of significance based on using the t-tests to test whether all the regression coefficients are equal to 0 is .0975, not .05.

If k=20 we will on average reject a null hypothesis once  
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# The exploratory open-ended survey question:

## A potential bonanza that's typically a waste

By Jonathan E. Brill

*Editor's note: Jonathan E. Brill, Ph.D., is principal, Next Generation Research, Solon, Ohio.*

**A**ppplied marketing or social survey questionnaires typically feature several open-ended questions. The open-ended question represents but one of two fundamental forms that survey items may take. It requires respondents to compose their answers individually without suggestion from

the researcher or interviewer. The other fundamental form is the closed-ended question, where the respondent is required to select his or her answer from a specified and limited set of response choices. In any survey, an open-ended question can be designed for any one of four purposes:

1. Creating simplicity and economy in the interview design.

2. Providing improved validity and reliability in the data relative to that which could be collected through use of an alternative closed-ended approach. Open-ended questions of this type typically are used to measure awareness, knowledge or salience.

3. Stimulating respondent interest, thereby increasing involvement and propensity to cooperate in the interview among those in the sample.

4. Exploring and/or describing an issue or phenomenon about which little is known. Answers that are difficult, if not impossible, to anticipate or otherwise extraordinary in content are solicited. Typically, the hope is to collect data that not only is largely free of a priori assumptions, but also so rich in detail and semiotic or associative meaning(s) that it has great potential to result in new or expanded insights which otherwise could not have been achieved through survey research.

Today, many applied research surveys make appropriate use of open-ended questions in achieving one or both of the first two purposes. Unfortunately, the third purpose, to generate interest in the survey topic, is often overlooked. But most seriously, the last one — collecting detailed and extraordinary information that will lead to new or expanded insight — is rarely achieved in practice. In fact, nearly all exploratory open-ended survey questions accomplish little other than to waste time and research dollars. Given this, the remainder of this article will focus solely on exploratory open-ended questions, discussing the underlying causes that lead to poor results in their use and offering guidelines for collecting more useful information from them.

### Problems, problems and more problems

There are many reasons why data gathered by exploratory

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open-ended questions frequently is disappointing. Still, these reasons may be broadly grouped into two general categories: (1) overuse by researchers; and (2) poor or improper technique in interviewing administration.

### Overuse that's often abuse

Numerous experiences of having client organizations share questionnaires and corresponding results of surveys they have sponsored have led me to conclude that exploratory open-ended questions are greatly overused. This overuse seems likely to be due to the combined operation of at least three factors: (1) failure to appreciate the enormous cost of using open-ended questions relative to using closed-ended questions; (2) poor focus on the research issues involved in the study; and (3) laziness in questionnaire development and data analysis planning.

Many managers and research analysts overuse open-ended questions because of a failure to recognize the truly astronomical cost of the exploratory open-ended question relative to that of a closed-ended questionnaire item. The open-ended question's greater expense is a consequence of the higher interviewing costs, greater number of required analyst hours, and higher data entry costs it entails. With open-ended questions, several minutes are typically needed to administer the question and record the answer the respondent provides; an analyst must develop codes for the data after interviewing has been completed (or largely completed); and these codes must be assigned to respondent answers before data entry may be completed. In contrast, with closed-ended questions, seconds — not minutes — are typically required to administer and record the respondent's answer; there is no need to develop codes after or during data collection; and the data entry task can be effected immediately after or concurrently with data collection. And, in cases where computer-assisted interviewing methods are used, electronic entry of closed-ended data items can be completely automated, rendering the data entry function virtually instantaneous and cost-free.

Even greater than the costs of including open-ended questions in interviewer-administered surveys are the costs of including them in surveys conducted by mail or other self-administered methods. While it is true that interviewer costs for administration of open-ended (and closed-ended) questions are absent in mail surveys, several studies have shown that the inclusion of open-ended questions on mail survey questionnaires has a tendency to reduce survey participation rates, often dramatically. From a cost accounting perspective, because the expenditures associated with mail surveys are largely independent of the participation rate, this has the effect of inflating the survey's cost per completed interview. It also reduces the statistical reliability of all the data collected by the study, rendering management decisions based on the data riskier — which is yet another, albeit hidden, cost. Furthermore, as with all self-administered survey methods, item nonresponse rates tend to be considerably higher for open-ended questions than for closed-ended questions, and responses frequently are short, lack specificity, and/or seem incomplete or otherwise unclear. This makes the data less valid, less reliable and less useful than it might have been

continued on p. 55



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# Survey Monitor

## Watch out for fallout from the online and PC explosions

Based on its discovery that four of 10 Americans are aware of at least one online service, New York-based CDB Research & Consulting Inc. is forecasting a surge of new subscribers in 1995. Though 11 percent of the 356 individuals surveyed indicated that they had used Prodigy and 8 percent had tried CompuServe at home, work or school, only 3 percent of the group is currently connected into the Internet. No more than 2 percent uses any one of the commercial online services — Prodigy, CompuServe and America Online are the best known; Delphi/BIX and GENie less so. Still, 58 percent had either heard of or been

on the Internet, and 73 percent had hooked into or heard tell of Prodigy. CDB Research & Consulting, the research arm of public relations firm Creamer Dickson Basford, translates the low current subscription rates and relatively high awareness into perhaps a doubling in the former this year. Curiously, the survey did not measure respondents' interest in or plan for getting hooked into an online service. Cambridge, Mass.-based Forrester Research Inc. has more good news for the computer industry. According to the company, only 20 percent of American families now have a PC. Forrester analysts believe this means that growth in the PC market will skyrocket in coming years; by 1997, there will be 42 million PCs in U.S. homes. (There are 23 million

PCs out there today.) Lower prices, easier-to-use software and the introduction of new interactive services will make PCs more desirable than ever, according to the company. Still, Forrester's report predicts that in 1997, PC makers will encounter problems extending their market into low-income homes, and that a revolution in PC compatibility and affordability will be driven by marketplace needs. For more information on the CDB study, call Ed Stevens at 212-887-8033. To learn more about Forrester's analysis of the PC market, call Katie Kelley at 617-497-7090.

## The limited lure of frequent flying

In the go-go '80s, frequent flyer miles could be worn as some kind of badge of honor in business circles. And while massive amounts of travel still qualifies people as hard-core worker bees, the mile meter has lost its appeal as a travel incentive. In a recent Chilton poll in which the Radnor, Penn.-based research organization interviewed 1,000 people nationwide, 56 percent of travelers deemed frequent flyer miles least important among five factors to be considered when choosing a flight. First and foremost, folks who will fly in the next 12 months (463 of those surveyed) are looking for the cheapest flight — 46 percent said the deal was their primary criterion. American Eagle may be dismayed to learn that 32 percent of the travelers' most critical determinant was an airline's safety record. On-time arrivals and

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departures were most important to 14 percent, and only 4 percent labeled frequent flyer miles of primary concern. Three percent ranked the size and type of the aircraft used for the flight most important. For more information, call Barbara Nuessle at 610-964-4694.

## Falling off the child safety mark

Americans like to think of themselves as paragons of safety, and we believe we're especially zealous when it comes to the well-being of our kids. But a survey of 424 adults with children, completed by Princeton Survey Research Associates for a study sponsored by *Prevention* magazine, Emmaus, Penn., indicates that not only are our children not as healthy and safe as we'd like them to be, but in general, our efforts in this regard are falling off. The study helped the magazine compile its latest "Children's Health Index," a measure of American kids' status based

on survey findings in 14 health and safety categories, such as exercise, diet, home safety, gun safety, weight control and medical care. The magazine concluded that only 35 percent of American children fall into the "good" health and safety range on the index (above 60 percent on the composite index); a mere 5 percent were deemed to be excellent health and safety shape (scoring above 75 percent on the index). Some 38 percent of survey respondents' kids scored between 50 percent and 59 percent on the index, and 27 percent fell below 50 percent. The numbers translate into a tendency on parents' part to put forth a less than ideal effort to keep their kids safe and healthy. Lack of dietary diligence was deemed to be the primary culprit for the overall poor performance. Parents are diligent about making sure kids 6 to 12 to have a well-balanced, healthy diet. But folks tend to slack off on kids 13 to 17. What's more telling, only 50 percent of parents are trying "a lot" to

help their children avoid eating too much fat. In the 1992 Children's Health Index, 64 percent of those surveyed said fat was a primary concern. Likewise, in this survey, 63 percent reported concerted efforts to make sure their kids ingested an appropriate quantity of vitamins and minerals. Last time out, 83 percent said as much. Furthermore, efforts to limit sugar in children's diets dropped from 72 percent in 1991 to 49 percent in the next index. Folks weren't watching the salt or cholesterol as closely either: 60 percent in 1992 to 51 percent this time on the sodium scale; from 60 percent down to 46 percent when it came to cholesterol. The survey also discovered a jump from 1984 to 1993 in the number of children who are overweight: from 24 percent to 31 percent. In '84, 67 percent of kids were of normal weight; nine years later, 58 percent are. Eight percent were underweight in '84, 11 percent in '91. The study revealed another

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# HOW MUCH CAN YOU SAVE AT A NICKEL A NUMBER?

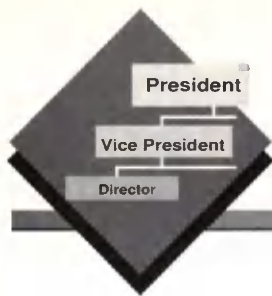


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# Names of Note

**David Bell** is the new client services director at *Marketing Evaluations Inc.*, Port Washington, N.Y. Bell will handle business development and serve clients for the company.

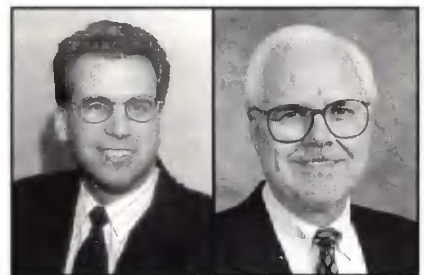
**Jill W. Polymeropoulos** has joined *Response Analysis Corp.*, Princeton, N.J., as a vice president in the firm's telecommunications group. She will direct research projects and develop new business for Response Analysis, specializing in telecommunications and advertising research.

**David Kalmus** has moved into the Gardena, Calif., Automotive Research Group office of St. Louis-based *Maritz Marketing Research*. Kalmus is a founder of Auto Quest Services, a financial education service for consumer purchasing, and Marketscan International Inc., and automotive marketing research and planning organization.

**Lisa Hammer** has been promoted to vice president — research at *Marketing & Research Resources Inc.*, Frederick, Md. She is responsible for the daily operations of the company's MIS and

research divisions, including a 32-station, CATI-equipped telephone center.

**Allan Vivian** has taken the position of vice president at *Nordhaus Research Inc.*, Southfield, Mich., while **R. Scott Snow** has signed on as a senior project director. Vivian comes from Brand Consulting Group. Snow comes from J.D. Power and Associates.



Vivian

Tatham

**Ronald L. Tatham**, the chairman and CEO of *Burke Marketing Research Inc.*, Cincinnati, is latest appointee to the University of Texas at Arlington's burgeoning advisory board for its master of science in marketing research program.

**Bridget O. Armstrong** has been pro-



Armstrong

moted vice president — marketing at *NFO Research Inc.*, Greenwich, Conn. She runs the company's Chicago Marketing Group and will oversee business

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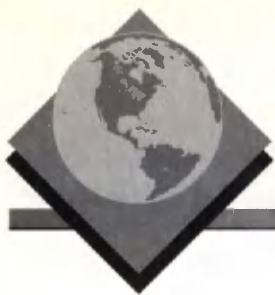
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**Bill Truett** (project director at **KPC Research**, a subsidiary of Knight Publishing Company in Charlotte, NC) — "We use SSI's ZIP/Exchange Analysis to define random digit samples for targeted study areas. The ZIP report tells us what we can expect for coverage and hit rate, and that's typically what we do find. I have compared other companies to SSI and found the other companies' samples are not as proportional or efficient. With SSI samples, areas are represented very well — one of the selling points that we use with our clients. And I believe our clients can make accurate decisions based on SSI's samples."

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# Research Company News

**The Hollis Research Centre** has opened in Hollis, N.H. Set in a rural location, the facility is designed to make respondents and clients feel comfortable. It features a kitchen, bakery and a 5,000-square-foot retail store. For an information package call 603-465-3034, fax 603-924-2009 or write to Route 130, P.O. Box 922, Hollis, N.H., 03049-0922.

**Conway Milliken & Associates**, Chicago, has opened Super Group offices in Los Angeles and San Francisco. CMA's Super Group division focuses on consumer-based ideation and concept development.

The World Bank of Washington, D.C. and Central European University have retained the **Pentor Research Institute**, Warsaw, Poland, to conduct an in-depth survey of companies in Poland.

**The Marketing Research Association**, Rocky Hill, Conn., has entered into an agreement with the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education to sponsor an independent study program for marketing research professionals. The program will include a diagnostic test, ten learning modules, and knowledge tests.

**Information Resources, Inc.** has been awarded a multi-year contract by Anheuser-Busch, Inc. IRI will become the brewer's primary provider of syndicated retail sales information.

**Claritas**, an Arlington, Va., provider of precision marketing services, has formed its Newspaper Precision Marketing Group. Using newspaper-specific training, consulting and analysis,

data, software, and other special services, the group is designed to help newspapers increase ad revenue, boost circulation, develop new editorial segments and more.

**Alan Newman Research**, Richmond, Va., has been purchased by the firm's principals, Alan Newman, president and CEO, and Cassandra Wright, executive vice president. The company was formerly a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Martin Group Agency, which is part of the Interpublic Group.

**Consumer Pulse, Inc.**, now has a third location in Denver with the acquisition of the Bennett Research facility in the Aurora Mall. The staff remains in place and has completed Consumer Pulse's management and interviewer training.

**Market Segment Research**, Coral Gables, Fla., is now Market Segment Research & Consulting.

**Centrac, Inc.**, has moved its head-

continued on p. 42

## We've moved to San Jose

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# Product & Service Update

## Enhancements, upgrades, seminars from Sawtooth

Version 1.1 of the Ci3 System for Computer Interviewing is now available from Sawtooth Software. The Ci3 System is used to administer questionnaires in a wide variety of research settings: central locations, such as malls or trade shows; door-to-door research; telephone research; and even disk-by-mail interviewing. Ci3 Version 1.1 starts at \$500. Larger systems, ranging in price up to \$5,000, are also available.

Sawtooth has also released Version 1.2

of its CBC System for choice-based conjoint. Choice-based modeling is used to assess how the features of a product (including price) affect the demand for that product. For more information on both products, call 708-866-0870.

Sawtooth has three seminars scheduled for late March for researchers interested in perceptual mapping and conjoint analysis but who have had little or no practical exposure to the techniques.

Dates and topics are: March 27 — perceptual mapping; March 28 — conjoint analysis; March 29 — introduction to ACA system.

The company stresses that the seminars are not training classes for Sawtooth products. The focus is on the theory and practice of the techniques. Topics covered include: study design, sampling, analysis and presentation of results. Case studies are also presented. A third session, "Introduction to the ACA System," is for those who want to learn more about Sawtooth's ACA System for Adaptive Conjoint Analysis.

The seminars will be held in Evanston, Ill., near the company's main office. For fee and registration information, call Melissa Bray at 708-866-0870.

**etc** 

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## Program simplifies word searches

CommTech PowerSearch version 3.0 is now available. The software gives Microsoft Word for Windows users advanced search capabilities, allowing them to organize vast amounts of unstructured information from databases, e-mail, CD-ROM disks and other sources. When doing a word search, for example, the program uses a thesaurus to suggest all relevant synonyms. PowerSearch also allows users to specify how close the search terms must be to one another (for example, within five characters, words, sentences, lines, paragraphs or pages). Until May 31, PowerSearch is available at a special price of \$99.95 for a one-user license. The regular price is \$499.95. For more information call CommTech, New Haven, Conn., at 203-495-1960 or fax 203-498-7842.

## Claritas combines data retrieval, desktop mapping

Claritas Inc., has launched Catalyst

continued on p. 43



## Just because it has ten digits doesn't mean it's a phone number.

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# Improving the odds

*Celestial Seasonings turns to research to make sure its advertising works*



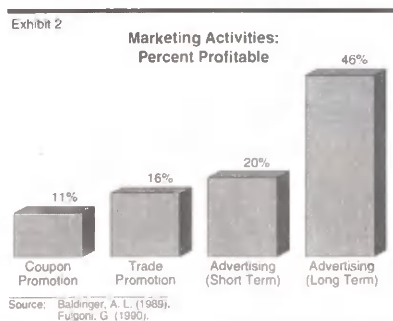
*Editor's note: This article is a synopsis of a speech presented on November 1, 1994, by Mike Mondello, then vice president of marketing for Celestial Seasonings, Inc., at the Conference Board 42nd Annual Marketing Conference. Transcripts of the original speech can be obtained through research systems corporation, Evansville, Ind.*

In the fast-moving consumer goods industry there are three primary marketing activities used to increase sales and profitability: trade promotions (which account for nearly half of marketing expenditures), consumer promotions, and advertising (both accounting for about one-fourth of marketing expenditures) (Exhibit 1).



Weekly scanner data has shown that trade and consumer promotions almost certainly provide a quick boost in sales. However, studies have shown that they seldom do so profitably. One such study found that only 11 percent of coupon

promotions and 16 percent of trade promotions are profitable (Baldinger, 1989). Another study conducted by Information Resources, Inc. (IRI) concluded that for many trade promotions, "The cost of selling an incremental dollar of sales was greater than one dollar!" (Abraham and Lodish, 1989). In a related IRI study, advertising was found to be more likely to pay off in the short term than either consumer or trade promotion, and nearly half of all advertising paid out in the longer term (Fulgoni, 1990; Exhibit 2).



Applying this learning in the decision-making process, Celestial Seasonings, Inc., chose advertising (over trade and consumer promotion) as the primary tool for launching a new product in the herbal tea category. Celestial then needed to find a means of ensuring that its advertising would fall within the half of all advertising that pays off.

Decades ago, advertising sage John

Wanamaker stated, "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted. The problem is I don't know which half." Wanamaker's statement turned out to be more than a hypothesis in 1989 when Abraham and Lodish of IRI found that only 49 percent of their advertising experiments had a measurable impact on sales.

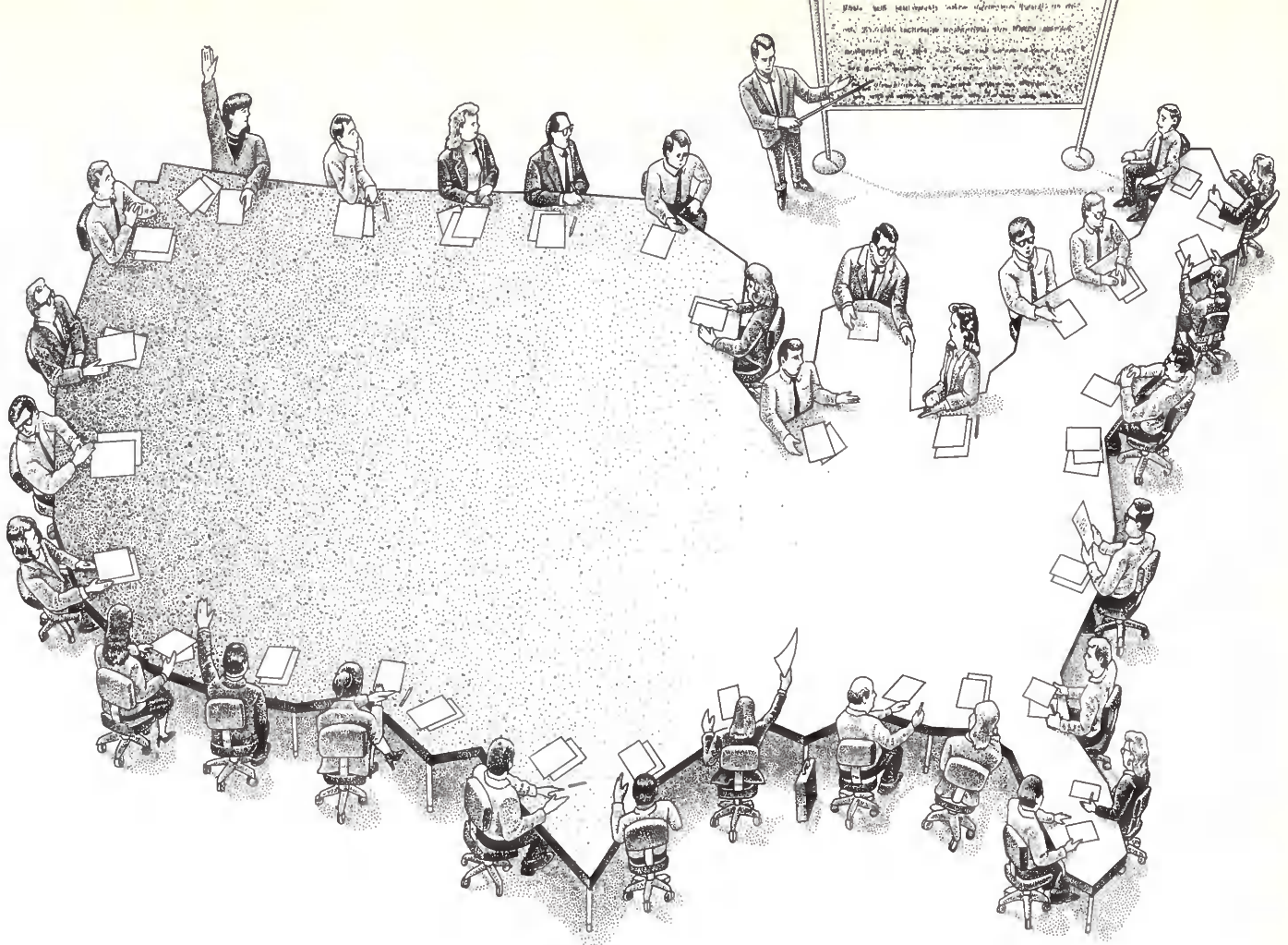
Perhaps the reason that half of all advertising dollars are wasted is that the research tools many advertisers use to develop and qualify ads for airing don't do a very good job of identifying which ones will have an impact on sales. Celestial examined the empirical evidence available and found that traditional measures such as commercial liking, brand-name recall, and related recall accurately predict an ad's sales potential only about half the time. With these statistics, it's no wonder that half of all advertising has no measurable effect on sales.

## Maximize productivity

While many advertisers have fallen victim to Wanamaker's dilemma, Celestial Seasonings found that using the right statistical measurement can make television advertising one of the most cost-effective ways to affect today's fickle consumers. Not willing to settle for a 50/50 shot at achieving advertising effectiveness, Celestial opted to use re-

continued on p. 40





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# War stories:

## True life tales in marketing research

By Art Shulman

*Editor's note: "War stories" is a regular feature in which Art Shulman, president of Shulman Research, Van Nuys, Calif., presents humorous stories of life in the research trenches. Readers are invited to call or write Shulman with stories of their own.*

Once worked on a mail survey of dog owners where an elderly panelist included a note with her completed questionnaire, confessing, "Rover died six months ago but I'm filling in this questionnaire as he would have if he were still alive."

Cathy Casteneda, head of research for Talbot's, a firm that sells women's clothes through catalogs and retail outlets, tells of a mail survey her firm conducted. After giving Talbot's the highest possible ratings on all characteristics, one woman wrote in the space for additional comments, "My dog, Talbot, is named for my favorite place to shop! Keep up the good work!" Casteneda did not proceed to recommend the correspondent to Talbot's management as a spokeswoman.

Speaking of dog owner surveys, Al Popelka of Pacific Marketing Research recalls a product test where dog owners were recruited to evaluate a series of new dog foods, one per week over a period of five weeks. After the fifth week one respondent

reported, "I like this product the best because it didn't make my dog nearly as sick as the previous four products did!"

Popelka also remembers the time his company was shipping product around the country for a peanut butter taste test, and the test product for one city disappeared. In the midst of the sweat and tears of vexation, one of his project directors came up with the only logical solution, "It must be stuck to the roof of the truck!"

Harry Heller, often at the cutting edge of research, cites a focus group on razors he conducted early in his career, in the days when some felt the quality of information would be enhanced by loosening up respondents with cocktails. Midway through the session respondents were led to a bathroom where they were asked to try a prototype razor. One particularly relaxed respondent returned to the discussion room, his face flecked with small pieces of toilet paper, and reported, "That was the greatest shave I ever had in my whole life."

Alan Fine reports the time the research firm he then worked for was conducting a test of electric razors. Fine was less than two feet away from a respondent shaving on the other side of a one-way mirror. Fine was carefully perusing how the man shaved —

which parts of his face he shaved first, which parts he had the most difficulty with and so on. When the man was done shaving he smiled and waved to Fine, who he could see through the somehow inadequate mirror.

Ron Gore of Facts in Focus reports a survey his interviewing service conducted for legal purposes on anti-embolism stockings. When visiting nurses and doctors who had previously agreed to be interviewed at their place of business, interviewers were supposed to show the two wooden legs they had been given, which were cloaked in the competitor's and the client's stockings. When Gore validated interviews, he found that one interviewer raised her skirt to display the products, one on each leg. It made much more sense to her for respondents to see the stockings on an actual person than on some artificial leg.

In future installments of this column, we'll report on more quirky, loopy and strange happenings in the world of market research. Whether you're a research provider or a client, if you'd like your story to be told — anything related to marketing research is usable, from spilling soup on your client's new suit to cute answers respondents provide on questionnaires — please call me (818-782-4252) or, better yet, write it up and fax it to me (818-782-3014). □



# Behind the mirror at the AHF Conference Center.



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## Inside info

continued from p. 10

- Friends and family. (*"I see you're name is Hepburn. Do you know any Hepburns in Minneapolis?"* or *"So what are the kids doing today?"*)

- Common neighborhood/city links. (*"This is my first visit here. What should I see to really experience the town?"*)

- The journey to the facility. (*"Did you have any trouble getting here?"*)

- How the day has gone. (*"So how's it gone so far?"*)

- What's planned for the rest of day. (*"What are you going to do after you're through here?"*)

- Media/product usage. (*"What newscast should I watch?"* *"What's your favorite commercial?"*)

- The weather — the old standby. (*"God, it's cold. Do you think it will ever warm up?"*)

I've been using this technique for a few years now. However, it was extremely informal and totally undisci-

plined. Then, a few weeks ago, I was doing some one-on-one interviewing for a client about a storyboard introducing a new product. More out of boredom than anything else (plus the fact that the interviews were supposed to last 30 minutes, but were going under 20), I just started chatting with respondents. First it was the "I'm from out of town and this is my first trip to Phoenix" stuff and then I went into "What's so great about Phoenix?", "How long have you lived here?", "What's the 'hot story' in the papers?", "Where should I go to eat tonight?", etc. Within 10 short minutes, I had made a group of friends. So much so, that I often found myself saying, "Hey, we're here to talk about advertising, so let's earn our money, OK?"

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thy. Consumers are more likely to open up, to offer unsolicited insights, to someone who has earned their trust. Instead of mumbled, plain vanilla answers, we get the involvement of a person, a consumer. In listening to the Phoenix tapes a few days later, I was amazed at how much more information I had collected from my "friends" vs. the earlier respondents.

Here's a sample reply from one of the first respondents I talked to, whom I asked for thoughts about the product featured on the storyboard:

*"It was okay."* (Probe) *"You know, I might buy one."*

From one of the later respondents:

*"It was pretty interesting. It's like we were talking about before. I've always thought to myself that it would be neat if they had a product like this. It's something there's definitely a need for. I would have to talk with my husband about it. I'd have to see how much it cost. I'd like to sample it for awhile first."*

Both respondents had essentially the same reaction to the product. How-

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ever, note the lack of probing during the second interview. Also, note that the second respondent introduced several issues (e.g., another decision maker, the issue of price) which weren't raised during the first interview. But friends often offer that sort of unsolicited advice.

The first five to 10 minutes of any interview are undoubtedly the most important. With this "getting to know you" time, the interviewer has a chance to understand the respondent

as a person. Somebody you could describe to other people. Somebody you'd like to have lunch with.

The people watching behind the glass (if there are any), gain a new perspective on their customers and non-customers. Respondents suddenly become three-dimensional. Thinking. Caring. With personality quirks. Just like those people behind the glass.

**Interviewers are the key**

The importance of hiring good in-

terviewers is crucial. (I'm assuming you're not doing all of this yourself.) The interviewers collecting the information have to truly like people and be interested in them. They have to be people who can easily win the trust of others.

In fact, "How much do you like people?" should be the first question asked of any interviewer applicant. Interviewers shouldn't look intimidating, shouldn't be more concerned about collecting the information than making a friend. They should be in the mode of making friends first, and then "Oh, by the way I have to ask you some other stuff now."

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terview can be introduced prior to any interview or even a focus group. In fact, it's probably more valuable in a focus group, a setting in which eight to 10 strangers are expected to bare their souls with consumers they have never seen before and probably will never see again. In this case, using the first 15 minutes of a focus group to chat will probably produce informa-



tion worth more than conducting countless additional groups.

Recently, I was doing a series of focus groups for a local grocery chain. People weren't just opening up. They sat back, arms folded, their bodies demonstrating how much they weren't into participating. So, after a few groups, I tried the old approach of, "Mary, you and Carol introduce each other and Susan and Julie, you introduce each other." This was somewhat successful until I dropped the "and tell us where you shop for groceries most often and why" in favor of "tell us about two things you enjoy doing" and "where you see yourself in five years."

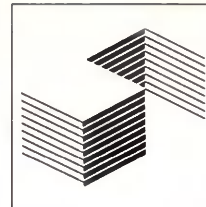
These items had nothing to do with the subject at hand. And yet, talking about what they enjoyed doing and their long-term aspirations put a special spin on everything we discussed after that. Plus, the participants were finding out "little secrets" about each other and establishing a bond.

#### "Do as I do"

Another key ingredient to success: The interviewer or moderator should be expected to participate in these rituals, thereby insuring acceptance by the individual or the group. Tell respondents or participants a little bit about your own aspirations, dreams, etc. Let them get to know you. During focus groups, I make it a point to introduce and tell the others about a participant in the group. And he or she tells the others about me. It forms a bond and gives the moderator a chance to share secrets, to become a friend rather than a snooty outsider.

The key is that you are spending quality time to get to really get know your customers. So what if the interview takes an extra five minutes? Believe me, you won't notice the time. But you will notice how much more insightful and creative your consumers become. They won't wait for you to ask the questions. They'll volunteer the information — information that will have the credibility of a personality behind it. □

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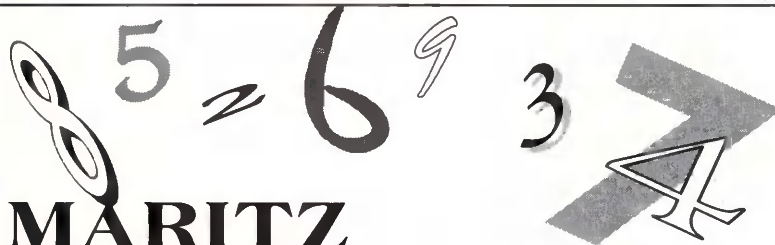
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## Survey Monitor

continued from p. 21

disturbing fact: Households with an annual income of \$25,000 or less were much more likely to score poorly on the Children's Health Index. Not surprisingly, kids from poorer homes visit the doctor more often, too. One particularly sore spot surrounded guns. In the survey, 47 percent of households had both a gun and a child, and in 41 percent of those, the weapon is hidden but not locked. There were up notes to be heard. The survey found that 96 percent of survey respondents' kids had received all of the proper immunizations, 89 percent of kids 4 to 17 see a dentist once a year, and 91 percent of kids know how to make an emergency call. Still, despite the findings, half of the parents surveyed said their kids are in excellent health, and 32 percent said their kids are in very good health. Either the crusty old sayings about kids' resilience are more true than most ancient adages, or parents are frighteningly deluded. For more information, call Patrick Taylor at 610-967-8621.

## Faxed ads deemed nuisances

Technology brings many wonderful things into our world, but faxed advertisements are not one of them. In a Penton Research Services survey, purchase-decision makers in business and government cited faxed ads as both most annoying and least informative — a devastating duo of downers for fax advertisers. Cleveland-based Penton says TV ads pulled up a close second on the annoying scale, and while direct mail wasn't far behind on the nuisance meter, it ranked higher than either for informativeness. Interestingly, radio ads are considered more useful and less irritating than TV ads. When buying the goods and services they need to get their jobs done, purchase-decision makers find ads in specialized business publications both most helpful and least bothersome. Almost half of the survey respondents (47.1 percent)

said specialized business publications were their first choice when seeking information on suppliers. (Sure it's good news for *QMRR*, but check with Penton, we're not making this one up.) Next most helpful are ads in business directories, followed by those in general business magazines. Penton's research also showed that in general, people do respond to advertising. A remarkable 97 percent of those surveyed said an advertisement had provoked some kind of action. The most frequent response was to contact the advertiser for more information, which 85 percent of respondents reported. The least common response was to call for a visit from a salesperson; still, though, 48 percent of respondents did exactly that. The bottom line is that 56 percent of the purchasers surveyed had specified, recommended or outright bought something because of an ad. For more information, call Ken Long at 216-696-7000, Ext. 2283.

## Lifestyles of the rich and richer

*Town & Country* magazine recently sponsored a study, conducted by Roper Starch Worldwide, New York, of the wealthiest Americans, and while the results confirm that these folks have a lot of money, that's about the only thing the richest 5 percent of Americans have in common. Roper Starch interviewed, by telephone, 1,003 adults in households with an income of \$100,000 or more per year and 100 people with household incomes of \$250,000 or more. Based on what the survey discovered, Roper Starch divides wealthy consumers into four profile groups: "stylish," who love luxury and are brand loyal (27 percent); "adventurous," who love luxury and aren't brand loyal (another 27 percent); "conservative," who care most about quality and are brand loyal (29 percent); and "utilitarian," who are least interested in luxury and are also brand loyal (16 percent). The demographic differences between these groups are not striking — median incomes range from \$139,000 a year for utilitarians to \$157,000 for the stylish. Rather, the groups attitudes define them.

Stylish consumers value luxury and prestige and are ready to pay for it. They're not particularly interested in experimenting, and they put a great deal of faith in brand names. The adventurous are a bit younger and more interested in flash. Conservatives don't much care about looking hip—they want stuff that works, which is also true of utilitarians, who have the least interest in having the best or most stuff; they want value above all else. The *Town & Country* survey also

discovered that most wealthy Americans (86 percent) didn't inherit their riches, they earned them. The average moneyed individual earned 83 percent of his or her net worth. The richest of the rich — those with household incomes of \$400,000 a year or more — are even more likely to have earned the bulk of their dough (95 percent). The survey didn't get personal with respondents — Roper Starch didn't ask them *how* they did all that earning. When it comes to

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	Good	Fair
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25%	28%	
55	87	
22%	35%	
70	51	
28%	28%	

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expressions of wealth, Richie Riches don't point to fabulous cars, furs or diamonds. Among the 20 signs of wealth survey respondents had to choose from, the largest percentage (62 percent) thought being a trustee of a cultural or educational institution was an exhibition of true affluence. The next three choices were similar: serving as a top executive of a large corporation (61 percent), owning a business (61 percent), and sitting on a corporate board of directors (57 percent). More ostenta-

tious displays — owning a boat (17 percent), frequently hosting schmancy parties (22 percent), shopping at prestigious shops (24 percent), and owning a luxury car (28 percent) — seemed to be dismissed by the affluent as status symbols. It's easy for them to say, but the wealthy do say that having a good sense of self-esteem (94 percent), being a good parent (93 percent) and having a happy marriage (92 percent) are the most important aspects of a successful life. Apparently the Beatles were right

about that "can't buy me love" thing. For more information, call Sarah Dutton at 212-599-0700.

## Hot and cold in Cali

The Sacramento-based California Retail Survey recently published the 1995 edition of its publication of the same name and while some markets show growth, others seem to have sunk into a malaise. The publication reveals the markets that generated the highest increases in retail sales from 1988 to 1993 are those that swerved farthest from fast lane. According to the survey, 28 markets expanded at annual rates of greater than 10 percent, and all of the markets in the survey's top 50 had growth rates of above 7.6 percent. The rates are especially impressive in light of the relatively flat inflation rates of the period. Only three of the 88 communities in Los Angeles County made the top 50, while nine from the San Francisco Bay area made it. The largest portion number of the big growers (11) came from the central part of the state. In further bad news for L.A., 21 of the bottom 50 markets are in L.A. County, and 38 of the bottom 50 are in Southern California. Ripon, near Modesto, clocked in with the highest growth rate (23.1 percent), while the market in El Segundo, immediately south of LAX, shrunk most, by 6.6 percent. For more information, call James Vaughn at 916-486-9403.

## Time off

If you're not getting at least two weeks of vacation a year from your job, it's time to start bellyaching. If feeling particularly petulant, you may want to resort to such a childish comments as, "But everybody else does!" St. Louis-based Maritz Marketing Research's AmeriPoll service queried 401 U.S. workers and discovered that 86 percent received two weeks' paid vacation per year minimum; almost 53 percent took off three or more weeks without denting their incomes. Some 15 percent get four big weeks off, but the number drops to 4.4 percent when it comes to five weeks off. Not too terribly surprisingly, those making the most money (more than \$55,000 a year) and folks in their kid-

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rearing years (35 to 44) were most likely to get more than two weeks off. Also as expected, tasks that the vacationing worker would normally do are handled by co-workers (63 percent). The second choice is, of course, no one (25 percent), a strategy that always makes returning from vacation a real treat.

## Violence — it's everywhere

Traditional stigmas and media depictions tend to make people think violence among teens is most common in urban areas, but a new report from Roper Starch Worldwide, New York, indicates that kids violence is prevalent in towns of all sizes and locations. The telephone survey of 502 kids between 12 and 17, conducted in consultation with the Harvard School of Public Health for the syndicated talk show *Rolonda*, discovered that 31 percent of high school and junior high students think violence is a serious problem in their own schools, and 45 percent believe violence has made their schools more dangerous in the last five years. At the same time, almost 75 percent of the kids in schools that have made efforts to reduce violence believe that those efforts have been effective to some degree. Not surprisingly female students are less violent than males: 11 percent of the girls who responded and 34 percent of the boys said they had been in a fight in the previous year. On the other hand, the survey did find a surprising regional discrepancy: Violence is typically most prevalent in the West and least prevalent in the Northeast, regardless of population and demographics. Some 30 percent of students in the West had been in a fight; the number was 23 percent in the South; 18 percent in the Northeast; and 17 percent in Midwest. Violence is often most problematic in small cities. Seventeen percent of students in small cities carry a weapon, compared to 12 percent in suburbs and rural areas and just 9 percent in large cities. For more information, call Deborah Johnson at 914-698-0800.

## What, businesspeople worry?

Folks in business tend to worry — it

seems to come with the territory. Given that, New York-based FIND/SVP reviewed its records from the past year in an attempt to come up with a list of its clients' most frequently asked-about topics. It may not be terribly exciting, but flexible packaging was of interest to the largest group of business folks. They also were especially curious about who exactly can be described as a Generation Xer and the content of employee handbooks — another one for the not-

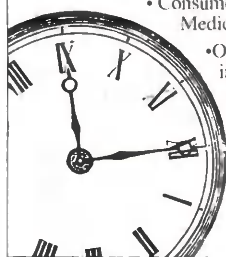
exactly-scintillating pile. In a bit of a slap in the face for technology junkies, innovations in the greeting card field attracted more queries than the Internet. Rounding out the top 10 list of frequently asked-about topics are electronic media and publishing, doing business with China, vitamins and supplements, homeopathic medicine and home construction. FIND/SVP has also completed a study designed to determine what the job market will be like for those enter-

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ing the workforce in the year 2000. The company queried, by mail, human resources executives at both Fortune 1000 companies and smaller growth firms represented by the Inc. 500, along with some executive recruiting firms. FIND/SVP found that information skills are of primary importance. Basic literacy and the ability to obtain and use information ranked highest, while among general attributes, flexibility (41 percent) and an aptitude for teamwork (24 percent) were seen as key. In terms of experience, employers are most looking for a general understanding of how business works when hiring a salaried employee. When searching for an hourly worker, employers are looking for task-specific knowledge and experience in a similar position. Employers feel that qualified employees are harder to find these days. Over half (56 percent) of companies find it harder to recruit qualified salaried entry-level employees, 72 percent are having a tough time locating folks with position-specific skills and experience. Education continues to grow in importance: Five years ago, 67 percent of the jobs out there required a high school diploma; now 75 percent do. Five years ago, 43 percent of all jobs required college degrees; now 53 percent do. Employers expect both percentages to continue to rise. Foreign-language skills are not as important now as they may be in the near future. A working knowledge of Spanish is most helpful, followed by German and Japanese.

As if incoming workers need more to worry about, FIND/SVP also reports that its survey indicates downsizing will continue. Almost all of the survey respondents (98 percent) believe that workforce reductions will continue in corporate America. For more information, call 212-645-4500.

### Too bright in here for you?

Sensible types who've always thought most sunglasses wearers were more concerned about their looks than their retinæ now have some ammunition to back up their supposition. Based on its telephone poll of 897 people over 18, Maritz Marketing Research, St. Louis, reports that 92 percent of Americans have at least one pair of shades, and half have two or more. More often than any

other single consideration, respondents said style (32.7 percent) guided their choices of spectacles with dark lenses. Protection from UV rays was next most important (14 percent), followed by price (9.9 percent) and "other" (8.9 percent) — an unusually large showing for "other," with implications that are not altogether clear. Only 1.4 percent bought primarily on brand, which falls well short of even "don't know" as a purchase motivation. For more information, call Phil Wiseman 314-827-1610.

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## Focus Group Research:

- in English
- same moderator
- multiple countries

## Multiple Countries:

- Belgium
- Germany
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands
- Scandinavia
- United Kingdom
- United States

## Multiple Subjects:

- Business to business
- Telecommunications
- Healthcare
- Medical instrumentation
- International finance
- Computers

## Multiple Purposes:

- Product development
- Service satisfaction
- Communication check

## Multiple Moderators:

- Jim Heimann
- Linda Lynch
- Jack Reynolds

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## Celestial Seasonings

continued from p. 26

search systems corporation's Total Quality Approach to maximize advertising productivity. RSC is an Evansville, Ind., research firm.

This approach allows marketers to take an empirical (or statistical) approach to achieving continuous improvement in their advertising. The approach starts with the ARS Persuasion measure, an advertising-effectiveness measurement proven to consistently relate to share, trial, sales, and category volume in over 750 validity observations. The ARS Persuasion measure surpasses the 50/50 predictability rate of other measures by far, with a successful 90/10 track record (Exhibit 3).

most important step in developing advertising that sells. Previous research by rsc found that ads which start with a strong selling proposition result in superior advertising almost three-fourths of the time. On the other hand, ads which start with an average or inferior selling proposition usually achieve only average or inferior persuasiveness. Using the sales-predictive measurement tool at this critical stage in the advertising process is the most important step towards continually improving advertising's track record.

Celestial Seasonings began the advertising process by spending a lot of time listening to customers. Using this insight, Celestial created five different selling proposi-

Exhibit 3

### Advertising Copytesting Measures: Track Records

Measure	Spend Test Source		Copy Test Source			Track Record
	rsc	IRI	rsc	IRI	ARF	
Liking	9/19	NA	0/5	NA	3/5	12/29 = 41%
Brand-name recall	10/20	NA	2/7	NA	2/5	14/32 = 44%
Recall	12/20	27/41	2/7	6/16	1/5	48/89 = 54%
Advertising weight	12/20	NA	NA	NA	NA	12/20 = 60%
<b>ARS Persuasion measure</b>	<b>20/20</b>	<b>13/17</b>	<b>7/7</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>NA<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>40/44 = 91%</b>

<sup>1</sup> The ARF study did not include the ARS Persuasion measurement. Source: Blair, M. H. and K. E. Rosenberg. (1994).

However, having the right measurement tool is only one part of the process. Knowing when and where to apply measurement is also important.

tions and tested the persuasive power of each. Celestial's propositions varied widely in persuasiveness, but one clear winner (Proposition A) emerged (Exhibit 4). In

Exhibit 4

### Celestial Seasonings: Selling Propositions

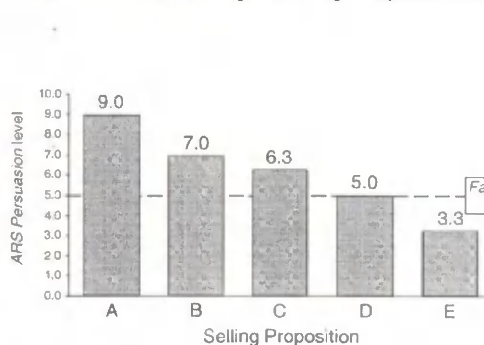
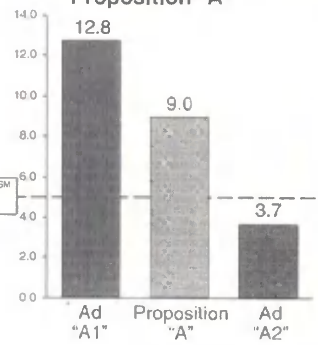


Exhibit 5

### Ads Based on Proposition "A"



### The selling proposition

Through rsc, Celestial learned that an effective basic selling proposition (upon which an ad is based) is the

addition to being significantly above the norm, the winner also had a persuasiveness level which, if duplicated in an ad, would be



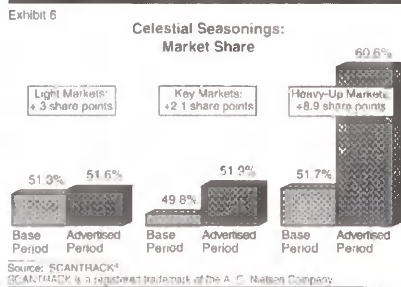
expected to result in measurable sales and market share impact.

### Development and testing of executions

Based on the results of these selling proposition tests, Celestial challenged two different ad agencies to develop television advertising that enhanced the inherent persuasiveness of the strongest selling idea. To evaluate their efforts, Celestial again used the ARS Persuasion measure, this time to test the resulting commercials. Ad A1 achieved a score of 12.8, enhancing the persuasiveness of the selling proposition. The other commercial, Ad A2, scored a 3.7, detracting from the basic selling proposition's effectiveness (Exhibit 5).

Celestial aired the stronger ad, experimenting with three different media weight levels. Sales responded immediately. In markets where Celestial used low media weight on cable television, share

increased about a third of a point. In its key markets, Celestial supplemented cable with spot television, and share increased more than two points. When Celestial boosted the spot television weight, it netted an increase of almost nine share points (Exhibit 6).



It is important to note that Celestial's advertising didn't just steal share from competitors; it grew the herbal tea category. While tonnage for most other hot beverages declined during this time period, herbal tea sales were up, with increases as high as 12 percent in one

of the spot television markets (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7

Hot-Beverage Category	Volume Trend
Ground Coffee	-3%
Instant Coffee	-3%
Regular Tea Bags	-3%
Herbal Tea Bags	+3%

Source: SCANTRACK

If the goal is to make advertising sell more consistently, then the solution is to use a research tool that is predictive of in-market effects at critical stages in the advertising process. More specifically the advertiser should use research to:

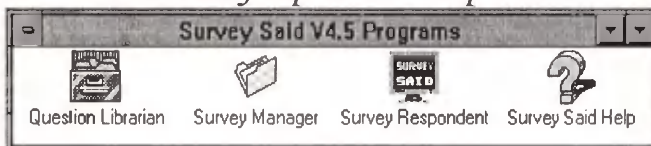
- test for a persuasive selling proposition before spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on production, and
- test the persuasiveness of each execution to qualify for airing before spending millions of dollars on media.

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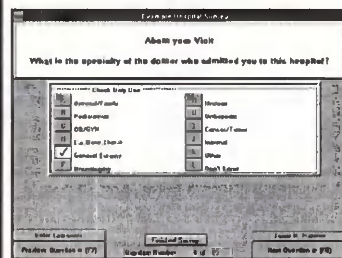
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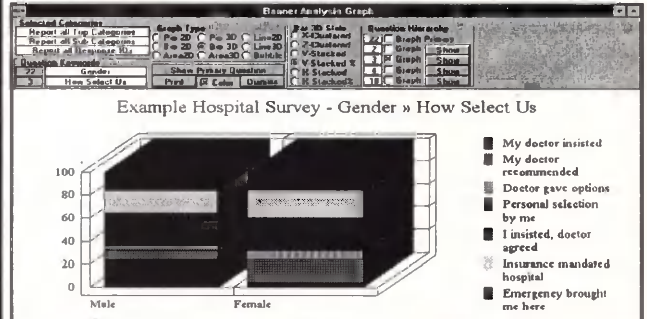
### SURVEY RESPONDENT



### FREQUENCY TABLE

Item	Count	Percentage
1-1	112	42.1%
1-2	107	39.6%
1-3	29	10.7%
1-4	18	6.6%
1-5	11	4.0%
1-6	11	4.0%
1-7	1	0.4%
1-8	1	0.4%
1-9	1	0.4%
1-10	1	0.4%
1-11	1	0.4%
1-12	1	0.4%
1-13	1	0.4%
1-14	1	0.4%
1-15	1	0.4%
1-16	1	0.4%
1-17	1	0.4%
1-18	1	0.4%
1-19	1	0.4%
1-20	1	0.4%

### CROSS-TABLE ANALYSIS - UP TO 6 PARAMETER BREAKDOWN



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## Managing advertising on-air

rsc has found that as an ad airs, its persuasiveness or selling power declines or is "used up." Since this rate of wearout has been found to be consistent and predictable, the outlook® model was developed as a tool for optimizing the effectiveness of media spending.

Using Celestial's commercial with an ARS Persuasion score of 12.8 as an example, after spending 1,000 GRPs behind it, the effective persua-

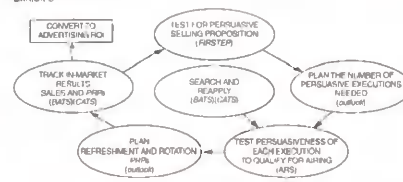
sive power would be "worn down" to a level of about 6, or about half of the persuasive power it had before airing. At this point, the ad could continue airing since it still has some persuasive power left. However, for even greater sales impact from the same media investment, the ad should be replaced with fresh persuasive advertising. Without refreshment, the first ad would eventually wear down to such a low level of persuasiveness that no further sales effect would be

expected, thus "wasting" the media dollars spent behind it.

## Sales feedback

rsc's Total Quality Approach for Maximizing Advertising Productivity applies sales-related measurement feedback at appropriate stages in the advertising development and manage-

Exhibit 8



ment process (Exhibit 8). The approach seeks to:

- Test the persuasiveness of the basic selling proposition to provide an early indicator of advertising potential.
- Determine the number of executions needed to achieve maximum effectiveness for a given media plan.
- Test the persuasiveness of each creative execution, then select the strongest executions for airing.
- Plan pool rotations and creative refreshment schedules to maintain sales momentum.

By applying this disciplined approach to the advertising process, Celestial Seasonings produced significant revenue gains with persuasive advertising. □

## Research Company News

continued from p. 23

quarters to 389 Passaic Ave., Fairfield, NJ, 07004-2415. The phone number is 201-575-3200; fax, 201-575-0520. The research firm was previously headquartered in Clifton, N.J. Its operations office remains in Bricktown, N.J.

The marketing, advertising and public relations firm of Rawle Murdy Associates, Inc., Charlotte, N.C., has formed a new division, **RMA Research**. Cindy Glenn has been named its director.

**Lee Slurzburg Research, Inc.**, has moved to: 379 Windsor Rd., Englewood, NJ, 07631. Phone 201-567-2265.

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## Product & Service Update

continued from p. 24

GIS+, the first Windows-based software to combine data retrieval and desktop mapping. The software incorporates Claritas' CD-ROM/on-line data retrieval and integration product, Catalyst Connect, with Catalyst Mapping, a practical desktop mapping system developed jointly with MapInfo specifically for use in Claritas' line of Catalyst products. Users can access, integrate, display and analyze Claritas data as well as their own corporate data geographically — from national statistics to street-level detail. Database offerings include: annually updated demographics, PRIZM lifestyle segmentation, business databases, consumer product demand, financial data, health care patient demand and more. For more information, write Claritas, 1525 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 1000, Arlington, Va., 22209.

## Predictive dialing add-on for Telescript

Digisoft Computers Inc., New York City, has released predictive dialing software as an add-on module to its Telescript call center software. Predictive dialing can now be used with Telescript to boost productivity in marketing research applications. For more information, call 212-490-7980.

## New CD-ROM products from Equifax

Equifax National Decision Systems, San Diego, has launched a new CD-ROM product line, called On-CD, designed to provide census demographics and business data for geographies as large as the U.S. and as small as a census tract. Two compact discs called Pop-Facts On-CD and Business-Facts On-CD are the first of five stand-alone CDs that will include demographic, business, financial, restaurant and retail data. Pop-Facts On-CD will provide 1990 census data, current-year updates and five-year projections of demographic variables such as population, housing, age, occupation and eight other major categories. Business-Facts On-CD will provide business counts for primary or secondary SIC codes, sales volume ranges, employment size ranges, as well as daytime population counts. For more information, call 800-866-6520.

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## Scholastic polls U.S. students

The Scholastic Online Poll of American Youth, a large monthly on-line marketing survey, has been launched by the Education Marketing Group of Scholastic. Grey 18 & Under, a unit of New York's Grey Advertising that specializes in marketing to children, is a charter sponsor of the poll. The poll will query up to 2,000 students (grades K-12) in schools nationwide. The results will be tabbed in two weeks. The polling is conducted via the Scholastic Network, an on-line network for teachers and students which connects an estimated 250,000 students. For more information, call George H. Simpson at 212-759-2191.

## StatPac upgrade

StatPac Inc., Minneapolis, has upgraded its survey analysis package StatPac Gold IV. Version 4.5 offers a number of major and minor changes requested by users, ranging from improvements to the ability to capture and report open-ended responses to a new breakdown program for printing banner tables of means. Many commands in StatPac's programming language have been enhanced to offer more flexibility in designing and labeling reports. The new open-ended response coding feature lets researchers create unlimited nets and subnets for summarizing verbatim comments. A new merge command makes it easier to work with multiple sets of data. Version 4.5 was shipped as a free update to users who purchased StatPac after October 15, 1994. For technical or pricing information, call 612-925-0159.

## New source for data on privately-owned companies

Hard-to-find executive data, estimated sales, news and recent developments on more than 12,000 privately-owned companies and corporate subsidiaries are now available online and by fax and mail, from Avenue Technologies. The San Francisco company has teamed with Fortune magazine to launch Private Company Profile reports. Each report averages 3 to 10 pages and is priced from \$9.95 to \$34.95, based on content.

Using proprietary software, Avenue Technologies scans major newswires, financial databases and more than 5,000

newspapers, journals and trade publications to create each profile. Information includes ownership data, competitive analysis, performance results, recent M&A developments and current news. For more information, call Rich Kreisman at 415-705-8404.

## PC program for educators

Market Data Retrieval, Shelton, Conn., Envisions Knowledge Products have teamed to form a knowledge base for the decision making process of educational marketers. Designed to address publishing, marketing, sales and research issues, Access: Education puts statistical and text data in a Windows-based PC format. It covers public school funding, enrollments, demographics, technology, curriculum, teachers and state adoptions with detail about these and other topics. For more information, call Mac Buhler at 203-926-4800 or Rosemarie McElwee at 610-565-1832.

## New studies focus on mutual funds, pensions

PSI and Phoenix-Hecht now offer syndicated research on mutual funds and retirement/pension products. The Mutual Fund Research Program will survey consumers regarding their ownership and use of mutual funds, track market share by major competitors and products, measure customer satisfaction with these products and providers and determine consumer preferences for delivery alternatives related to mutual funds. Program members are expected to include the top discount and full-service brokerage companies as well as major bank mutual fund providers.

The Retirement/Pension Research Program will track corporations' use and preferences for retirement and pension services, provider market share for these products and corporate preferences for product and delivery alternatives. The project also intends to track consumer satisfaction with products provided by employers. Tampa-based PSI is a division of NFO Research. Phoenix-Hecht is based in Research Triangle Park, N.C. For more information call Patricia Jordan at 813-287-2774 or fax 813-286-7377.



## Names of Note

continued from p. 22

conducted in a Midwest territory that includes Illinois and Wisconsin.

**Deborah Alleu** and **Fran Firth** have joined *STAT Resources Inc.*, Boston.



Allen

Firth

while **Shaun Illingworth, Ph.D.**, has been promoted by the company. Allen is serving as director of marketing and sales. Firth has been installed in the newly created position of manager of client services. Illingworth has been moved up from manager to director of research services.

**Kathleen Henderson** has been promoted to vice president — product development at *Healthcare Communications Inc.*, Princeton, N.J.



Henderson

Clark

**Jeffrey D. Clark** has joined *Response Analysis Corp.*, Princeton, N.J., as account executive with the firm's Organizational Performance Division.

**Kris Nelson** has joined *Miller Meester Advertising*, Minneapolis, as senior vice president for planning and research. In addition, **Eric Peterson** has joined the firm as research manager.

**Elizabeth Riegel** has been named

director of the Super Group San Francisco office. Super Group, a division of *Conway Milliken & Associates*, focuses on consumer-based ideation and concept development. In addition, **Erika Callahan** was named director of the Super Group Los Angeles office.

*Waldbillig & Besteman*, a Madison, Wis., ad agency, has added **Ann Coates** to its staff as marketing research coordinator.

**Barbara Caplan** and **Jon Berry** have joined the staff of *Roper Starch Worldwide*. Caplan will serve as senior vice president, director of client services. Berry will be the director of editorial services for the Roper syndicated services group.

*ICT Group, Inc.*, Langhorne, PA, has appointed **Carl E. Smith** as its senior vice president of finance and administration and chief financial officer.

**Scott Barnett** has been promoted to account executive in client services at *Phone Base Research*, Fort Collins, Colo.


**Roger Bedessie** has joined *Higginbotham Associates Inc.*, a Scottsdale, Ariz., research firm, as general manager. The company also announced that **Kirsten Bech** has chosen to pursue her career elsewhere.

*The Matrix Group*, a Lexington, Ky., research firm, has added **Laura Pikel** to its staff as research analyst.

*Forrester Research, Inc.*, Cambridge, Ma., has promoted several top analysts. **Stuart D. Woodring** has been named director, Global 2,000 Research Services. **John C. McCarthy** has been named director of research, New Customer Connection. **Bobby Cameron** will succeed Woodring as director of the Software Strategy Service. **Paul D. Callahan** is now director of Network Strategy Service.

**Cindy Glenn** has been named director of *RMA Research*, a new division of Rawle Murdy Associates, Inc., a Charlotte, N.C., marketing, advertising and public relations firm.

**Sheifa Smith** has joined *Consumer Pulse, Inc.*, as director of the firm's Detroit field office and Universal Mall location.



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## Packaged goods advertising

continued from p. 12

or commercial.

• Among commercials that are effective, the degree of sales effectiveness can vary greatly. One commercial might be several times more effective than another. This indicates that the quality of advertising tends to be more important than the quantity of advertising. Nevertheless, the quantity of advertising (i.e., the media weight) must achieve a threshold level for the advertising to have any positive effects. Limited telephone tracking research (which can be done with small budgets) can monitor the cumulative effects of advertising on awareness, brand image and consumer attitudes, and is one of the simplest and most effective ways to make sure that your advertising is doing its job.

• Recall of specific messages from advertising is not a very good indicator of advertising effectiveness; some very effective commercials produce little measurable message recall. Message recall is a positive factor but its importance should not be overstated.

• Brand registration, however, is always important

(as opposed to message/element recall). If consumers don't remember the brand name, the effectiveness of the advertising is correspondingly reduced. Failure to register the brand name is one of the most common weaknesses of commercials. When next you review your advertising, just make sure that the brand name is clearly stated and clearly shown in the commercial.

• Ultimate truth is elusive. Advertising effectiveness cannot be determined by any one measure, such as persuasion or recall. Recall is a good measure for some commercials but not for others.

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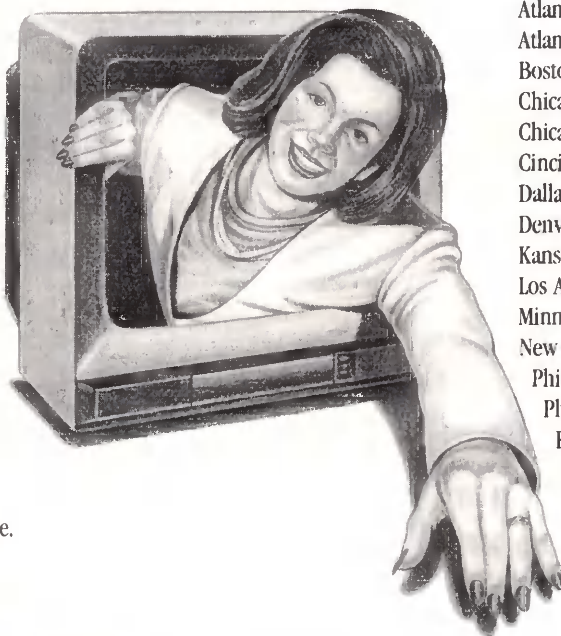
*Advertising works in the arms of sound strategy. What role does advertising play in the brand's marketing plan? What messages must the advertising communicate? What images should the advertising project? These are strategy issues, and they bring us to this conclusion: without sound strategy, the chances of advertising success are very low.*

---

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- Atlanta-Quick Test Opinion Center
- Boston-Fieldwork, Inc.
- Chicago Suburban-Smith Research
- Chicago Downtown-Smith Research
- Cincinnati-The Answer Group
- Dallas-Quality Controlled Services
- Denver-Information Research, Inc.
- Kansas City-Quality Controlled Services
- Los Angeles-Trotta Associates
- Minneapolis-Orman Guidance Research
- New York City-Murray Hill Center
- Philadelphia-Philadelphia Focus
- Phoenix-Fieldwork, Inc.
- Raleigh-L&E Research
- San Francisco-Ecker & Associates
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Persuasion scores don't work very well for brands with high market shares and cannot be relied upon for brands in poorly defined product categories. Purchase intent works reasonably well for new products but poorly for established products. A large number of important variables must be examined to judge the potential effectiveness of advertising.

- Radio commercials can be as effective or more effective than television commercials on the basis of sales return per dollar of media. However, radio commercials seldom achieve their true potential because they tend to be inferior to television commercials in content and production. Typically, radio production budgets are much less than television and radio commercials are rarely submitted to the rigors of marketing research evaluation.

- Advertising that offends the viewer or is in poor taste is almost always ineffective. The only exception to this rule is the commercial which presents a lot of relevant news, where the message is so important that how it is said doesn't matter much.

- If viewers like a commercial its chances of being effective are improved. Likability, however, is not sufficient (in and of itself) to insure advertising success.

From the researcher's perspective, what are the secrets to achieving every company's goal: advertising that really works? There is no simple formula for success, unfortunately, but here are some thoughts that might be of some value:

- Advertising works in the arms of sound strategy. What role does advertising play in the brand's marketing plan? What messages must the advertising communicate? What images should the advertising project? These are strategy issues, and they bring us to this conclusion: without sound strategy, the chances of advertising success are very low. Several research techniques are available to identify and resolve strategy issues, before creative development begins.

- Homework and hard work are more likely to yield effective advertising than creative brilliance and flashes of creative genius. Great advertising evolves from trial and error, tinkering and tweaking. Pretesting each commercial is a laboratory experiment, an opportunity to learn how to make the next commercial even better.

- Big egos (creative egos, client egos, research egos and agency egos) are barriers to the creation of effective advertising, because they tend to substitute wish and emotion for thinking, reasoning and objectivity. If your agency (or your client) is unwilling to make creative adjustments — based upon objective consumer feedback — to improve the creative product, then you have the wrong agency (or the wrong client).

- Test your advertising. Show it to members of your target audience and see how they react. No one — client, agency or the researcher — is smart enough to

.....

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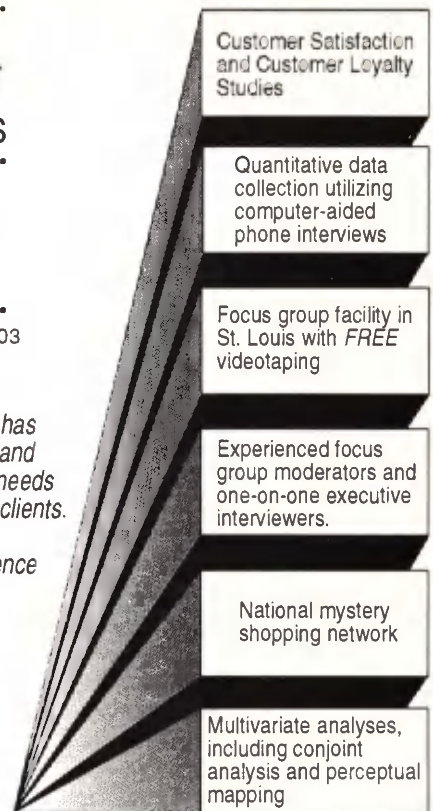
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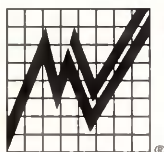


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know how consumers will perceive and react to a given commercial. If you can't afford one of the advertising testing services, test it yourself. Show the new commercial and a couple of old ones, and ask some consumers which one would most influence their interest in buying the brand. If you can't afford that, then ask your spouse what he/she thinks of your advertising. The method is surprisingly accurate, but often leads to a bloody divorce.

• Once you have chosen a testing system, stick with it, so that you (the agency, the creatives, the brand managers and the researchers) all learn how to use and how to interpret the test results for your product category and your brand. Sticking with and learning a testing system is more important than which system you select. No testing system is perfect. No testing system can be

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*If budgets permit, test at the rough, as well as the finished, stages of creative development. Once you've spent \$300,000 producing finished commercials, you will not be very open to any research which questions the effectiveness of those commercials.*

---

used blindly. A large dose of intelligent human judgment must always be incorporated into the advertising evaluation process.

• If budgets permit, test at the rough, as well as the finished, stages of creative development. Once you've spent \$300,000 producing finished commercials, you will not be very open to any research which questions the effectiveness of those commercials. Testing at the rough stage can help you refine the creative before spending the big dollars on production. The more rough executions you evaluate, the greater the probability the winning execution will be effective.

Testing at the finished stage can help guide final editing or re-editing of commercials or pool-outs, help determine how much weight should be put behind the creative, and provide understanding to help guide campaign evolution and the creation of subsequent commercials.

A couple of final suggestions. Be sure your advertising puts enough emphasis upon your brand name so that consumers will remember it. And, don't forget to give consumers some positive information about your product (i.e., a reason to buy it). Good luck at the supermarket. □

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## Pontiac

continued from p. 7

been difficult to get respondents to do the collages. In general, people seem to put a lot of time and energy into them. As you might expect, they receive a higher than normal incentive for their efforts.

The biggest initial stumbling block was finding focus group facilities to do the recruiting. Most were skeptical that respondents would take the time. "It was just a situation where some facilities were less adventuresome than others," Stannard says.

When the agency finally found operations to work with, it did everything it could to make the recruiting go smoothly. "The facilities were given very specific instructions to follow," Stannard says. "We did the homework for them, they just had to get on the phone and read the instructions."

### Sunfire advertising

The agency used collages to help develop advertising that began running last month for Pontiac's new Sunfire, an entry-level vehicle aimed at younger drivers who want a sporty car but can't quite afford one.

"The Sunfire is targeted at a consumer that Pontiac hasn't talked to in quite a while," says Mason Franklin, account supervisor, DMB&B. "Pontiac wanted to learn as much as possible about these people and they looked to us to help them do that."

Respondents for the Sunfire groups were men and women between the ages of 21-34 who were intending to buy a car in the Sunfire's competitive class. They had household incomes of \$25,000+ and some college education.

For the Pontiac groups, respondents were asked to do collages about their relationship with their car. "The research provided us with a very good starting point to understand how we could begin to talk to these people, what kinds of things are important to them, who they are and how they feel about themselves and their car," says Beth Stobbs, DMB&B's Pontiac Group research supervisor.

### Group dynamics

One of the many benefits of the collage approach, Stobbs says, is its effect on the group dynamics. "There's a sense of camaraderie, a shared frame of reference. They feel free to talk about their feelings



and personal stories. The visual references prompt questions from the other respondents, so there's a lot of group interaction and sharing. People are willing to talk very personally."

Stannard: "You don't get the hangers-back that you get in normal groups. People get involved and animated."

The collages were just one of many tools used during the Sunfire groups, Stobbs says. After respondents talked about their relationship with their own vehicles they were shown photos of the Sunfire and asked to talk about the car and their impressions of it.

A number of interesting and ultimately helpful themes came out of the ideas expressed in the collages. "The research helped us identify a number of areas that we could focus on for developing positioning ideas," Stobbs says.

• For this age group, the car was clearly a vehicle for discovery and adventure. "These are active, experiential type of people. Travel by car is important to these people because of their limited resources. They have a desire to escape, not from their lives necessarily, but to adventure. The car really helps them do that," Stobbs says.



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• Personal relationships were important to them, as was romance in their lives and with their cars. "Their car is kind of a partner in their adventures and a means of bringing people together for activities."

• Even though they have limitations in terms of time and money, they're very positive in their outlook about life.

### Creatives encouraged

The agency creatives were encouraged to watch the groups when possible. Those who couldn't were given presentations

on the groups, including quotes from the participants. All were encouraged to examine the collages.

"One respondent said, 'My car is motion, we go and go. We take advantage of what the city has to offer because we have a car.' We were able to read quotes like that which support each of the themes that we identified as important to the target audience. So the creatives ended up feeling like they knew these people and could write to them. They had visual cues they could use to inspire insights and ideas," Stobbs says.

### Escape to adventure

The TV spots that grew out of the research, titled Sunfire Adventures, feature shots of the Sunfire visiting far-flung destinations like the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Easter Island, the Great Wall of China and the planet Jupiter.

The research learning also led to tie-ins such as Pontiac Sunfire's sponsorship of "Live from the House of Blues," a weekly music show on the TBS network, and ESPN's Extreme Games competitions this summer. The car is also being marketed on the College Television Network and in health club displays in conjunction with *American Health* magazine.

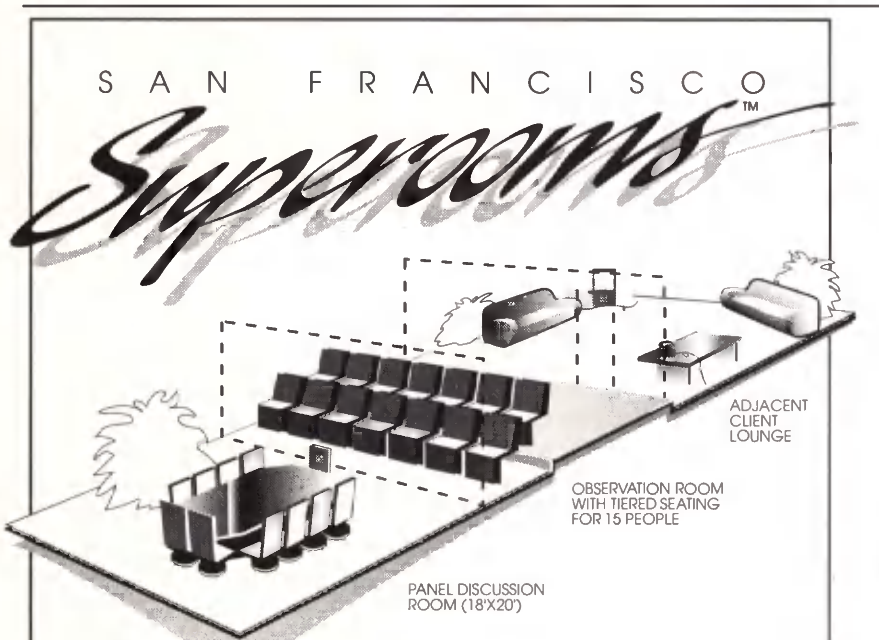
"We knew we had to do something different," says Gary Martin, DMB&B senior vice president and group media director on the Pontiac account. "The typical Sunfire prospects watch television, but quite selectively; they read but not the broader circulation publications. They are into fitness and music and spend a lot of time in their cars. Many are still in college and are impossible to reach with direct mail."

### Clients learn, too

Agency researchers and creatives aren't the only ones who learn from the collages. They also help clients understand the target audience as well, especially when they aren't in the age group being researched. Franklin says. "Bringing the collages into meetings and having the clients see the points for themselves that we're trying to bring forward is very helpful. They reference the collages throughout the process, so that when we get to the point of presenting the creative they'll say, 'I see how that fits because I remember those themes from the collages.'"

Beth Stobbs: "It increases the shared understanding between all of us, the client, the creatives and the agency, because everyone has the same reference, the same picture of the target audience. Clients have also asked us to share the collage information with groups outside of advertising because it brings the target audience alive."

The agency plans to continue refining the collage technique. Stannard says. "I think it humanizes the respondent. It doesn't matter who it is or how old they are. There is something intriguing and engaging about all of these folks. The client and everyone at the agency gets a real appreciation and understanding and fondness for the people." □



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# Golf

continued from p. 9

the text and are weakened when they are far apart. Consequently, connections that are frequently reinforced will grow strong while infrequently reinforced connections generate weaker (and possibly even negative) connections.

Negatively connected words inhibit each other, so that activating

generate clusters associated with choices in class length. One of the major clusters for the Original Golf School is very direct: "You'll learn." The resort aspects form the major clusters for the Professional Golf School.

Applying cluster analysis to text data provides valuable information regarding how strongly words are related to each other. But artificial neural networks don't stop there.



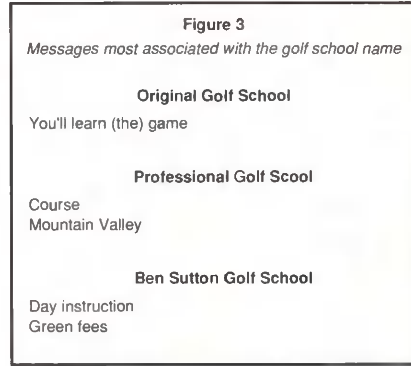
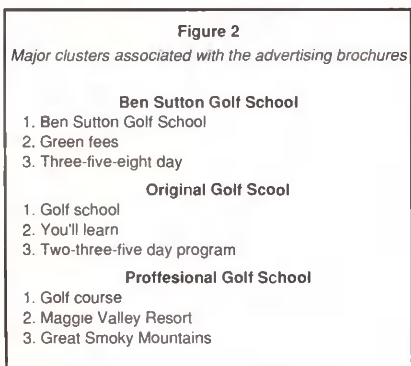
## Words activate words

One facet of neural network analysis is investigating how combinations of words activate other words in the text. Using an interactive neural net computer program, an analyst can select words or phrases from the

one word actually deactivates the other, Dutka says. Negatively connected words may signify an impending disaster. For example, an advertising strategy based on attributes not commonly associated with a product might work in reverse and stimulate the sales of a competing product.

These mathematical connections are used as input to a statistical

text and determine what other words in the text are activated. Words are analyzed, not as they exist in one arbitrarily selected cluster, but as connections to all other words in the text. Knowledge and experience are required to properly interpret this research phase, just as expertise is required to properly interpret focus group transcripts or a multiple regression analysis. The



cluster analysis. Figure 2 summarizes the three most significant clusters in the Ben Sutton, Original and Professional golf schools' advertisements. Both the Sutton and Original Golf School brochures

results can be very revealing.

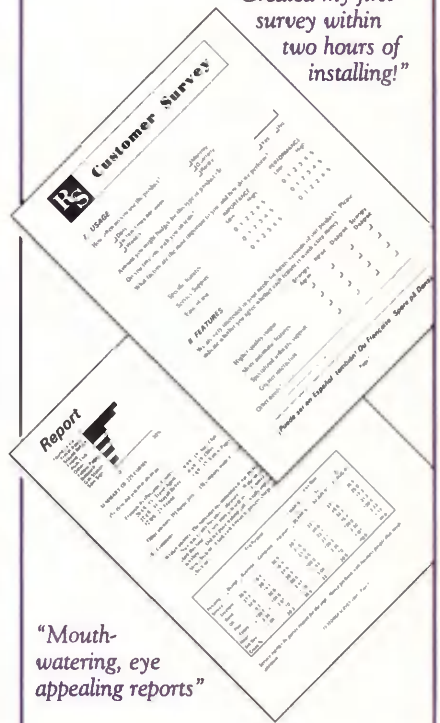
Figure 3 summarizes the words activated by the names of the respective golf schools. Once again, the Original Golf School's message is very clear: "You'll learn the game." Ben Sutton's name activates

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words relating to free greens fees and days of instruction. The critical message of learning under actual playing conditions is not evident.

Though the neural network analysis indicated that the advertising copy needed improving, Becker's strategy was to fine-tune the original message rather than initiate radical changes. "The brochure had a strong track record of attracting business over a long period of time," says Becker. "We knew it was good

but we wanted to make it excellent."

As Becker revised the copy, Dutka performed the neural network analyses. The goal was to group words more effectively while using essentially the same words in about the same frequencies. This would ensure an improvement while not drastically chang-

**Figure 4**  
Major clusters for the original and revised Ben Sutton Golf School brochures

Original brochure	Revised brochure
1. Ben Sutton Golf School	1. Ben Sutton Golf School
2. Green fees	2. Under actual playing conditions
3. Three-, five-, eight-day	3. Eight-day
4. Personalized instruction	4. Driving range
5. Sun City Center	5. Green fees
6. Under playing	6. Real instruction
7. Video analysis	7. Stop action video
8. Teaching facility	8. Personalized lesson
9. Check swing	9. Graph check

ing the message.

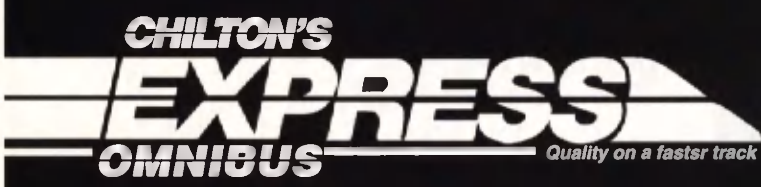
Figure 4 presents a summary of the major clusters in the original and revised brochures. The intended message "under actual playing conditions" is the second most significant cluster. "Real instruction" and "personalized lessons" highlight the quality of the school. "Stop action video" is more dramatic than a former cluster composed of "video analysis." "Graph check" refers to a unique and creative video methodology used to analyze a student's swing while a grid is superimposed over an image of the student.

#### The "net" result

Becker views the artificial neural network analysis as a valuable safety-check in the agency's copy design efforts. "The computer analysis removes the biases that are always present when we analyze our own work. In the case of the Ben Sutton Golf School, the artificial neural network analysis indicated that the major intended messages are effectively communicated in an exciting manner."

Dutka predicts growing acceptance of using artificial neural networks in advertising research. "When neural networks are properly analyzed, later research is improved," he says. For example, diagnostic testing in an early preproduction state will enhance the effectiveness of second stage focus group or mall intercept research.

"Many problems will be rectified by the initial neural network analyses. This will allow more time for in-depth research with a greater opportunity to investigate the subtleties that contribute to effective advertising," Dutka says. □



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## Open-ended

continued from p. 17

which, in turn, calls into question the advisability of consuming valuable questionnaire space with the open-end question in the first place. Considering the range and severity of problems presented by the inclusion of exploratory open-ended questions in self-administered questionnaires, one must wonder if their use in mail survey research is ever justified.

Poor focus on the survey objectives also frequently results in the inclusion and overuse of exploratory open-ended questions. Typically, such questions take the form of asking respondents to explain why they feel or behave as they do. There are several potential problems with including this type of question. For one, such questions assume that the respondent is aware of the underlying reasons for his or her feelings or behaviors, an assumption of dubious merit. Second, given that the respondent believes he or she is aware of these underlying reasons, it further assumes that the respondent is sufficiently articulate to clearly communicate and fully explain these reasons without preparation and in the short time window imposed. But, perhaps even more importantly, the open-ended information is rarely sought because it is useful for testing some hypothesis relevant to managerial action (i.e., consistent with the focus of the research), but rather because it is "nice to know" or, even worse, "nice to

confirm what we think we already know." In the case of the latter motivation, and in view of the enormous cost of open-ended questions relative to closed-ended questions, this confirmation almost certainly could have been acquired more economically through the use of a battery of items measuring the perceived importance of each known reason. In addition, and not at all incidentally, the relative importance of each reason could have been estimated more precisely and with greater validity by use of this kind of battery of questions.

Certainly, the failures to realize these economies as well as higher levels of measurement validity and precision may be the consequence of poor knowledge and/or skills on the part of the researcher; but all too often they are due to researcher laziness with respect to the questionnaire development and analytical planning processes. Every survey question should be included for an analytical purpose that is identified in advance. Planning of this type requires substantial effort because it requires the researcher to specify all relevant hypotheses and to ensure that the survey items will allow each and every hypothesis to be tested. Yet, too often, it appears as if open-ended questions are included to avoid this important step. Not only is this bad science, but it is also bad business. It is bad science because open-ended questions are plagued by the need to code them based on subjective judgments regarding meaning. (Computerized code development programs greatly lessen, but do not eliminate,



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this problem.) And, it is bad business because the use of open-ended data produces greater uncertainty. As discussed, an alternative battery of closed-ended questions generally provides greater statistical reliability, improved measurement validity, and increased control in testing hypotheses, all of which reduce the risks inherent in making decisions based on survey findings. For these reasons, much of the overuse of the exploratory open-ended question is truly abuse.

### Inadequate interviewer training and supervision

Poor technique or improper administration on the part of interviewers and ignorance or neglect by their supervisors are common reasons that results from open-ended questions prove disappointing.

The (fictitious) example of an irreproachably administered open-ended question, which appears in Exhibit 1, provides a basis for explanation of this charge.

Most research users and analysts have seen findings typically gathered by questions of this genre: results tend

to be summarized with codes labeled simply as "tastes good," "low price," and "appealing odor."

The problem is that one must be concerned that such codes lack validity and statistical reliability because so few interviewers demonstrate the care and tenacity evidenced in the example. Interviewers typically are not trained adequately and, as a consequence, they fail to probe and clarify the responses that interviewees provide (i.e., solicit specific information and/or ascertain intended meaning of given answers). Sadly, some supervisors are ignorant of proper administration technique, while others (who generally are evaluated on production rates rather than the quality of what is produced) neglect to insist upon these procedures.

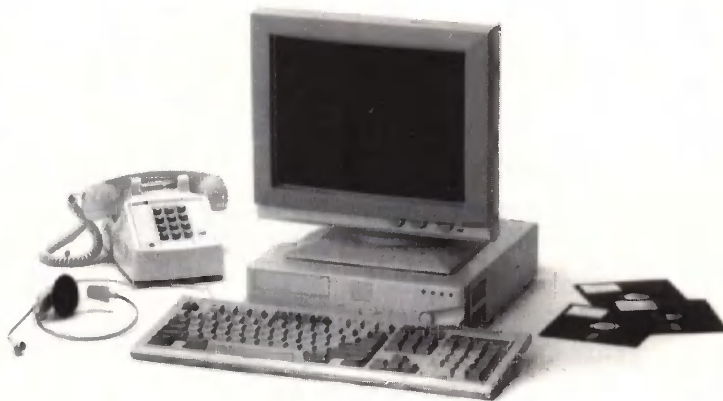
Consequently, when — as in the present example — a respondent answers "Because of the price," most interviewers would not ask for clarification, failing to recognize the ambiguity in the response and/or presuming the respondent had meant that the price is a

**EXHIBIT 1**  
Proper Administration of an Open-Ended Question

**QUESTION:**  
*Why do you buy Brand X dog food?*

**RESPONSE:**  
It looks good. <Meaning?> It has lots of meaty chunks. <Why else?> Because of how it smells. <What about smell?> It smells good. <In what way?> Well, it smells like chicken if it's chicken and like beef if it's beef. <Why else?> Because of the price. <What about price?> It costs more than other brands. <More?> It's good food and my dog really likes it. I love my dog. I want him to be healthy and happy. <Why else?> (nothing) <Think.> (nothing)

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However, as the present example demonstrates the answer given regarding price is ambiguous and, had the interviewer not asked the appropriate clarification follow-up, the counterintuitive finding would not have been possible. The result shown — that the owner is motivated to spend more for a food he or she believes is superior in nutrition and appealing to his or her dog — represents the kind of insight that may form the basis of an innovative and effective marketing communications program, the kind of bonanza that is hoped for from the use of exploratory open-ended questions. But without quality interviewing, such insights rarely are realized. Clearly, without firm knowledge that interviewers are well-trained and tenacious in administering open-ended questions, one must consider how valid, reliable, and helpful the data can be.

#### **Guidelines for using exploratory open-ended questions**

The message here is not to condemn the use of exploratory open-ended questions, but rather to encourage their proper use. Their erroneously high cost and the research problems inherent in their administration and analysis argue that they should be used sparingly and with considerable thought. In this spirit, issues that should be raised before including exploratory open-ended questions in a survey and some advice follow.

1. How will the data be analyzed and used? If the answer to this is not clear, eliminate the exploratory open-ended question.

2. Can the information sought be obtained by using one or more closed-ended questions? If yes, make the substitution.

3. Would data from an alternative set of approximately 10 closed-ended questions be of greater or equal value to management than the data from the open-ended question being considered? If the answer is yes, lose the open-ended question and choose the closed-ended questions instead. Even if it is a close call, the closed-ended data are preferable in that fewer threats to data validity and reliability are involved than with the open-ended item.

4. Are your interviewers sufficiently well-trained and supervised to deliver high quality, valid open-ended data? If there are doubts about this, it may be advisable to toss the question. If the question is important, do two things: (1) Look for interviewers who have completed a formal training program such as that developed by and offered through the Marketing Research Association; and (2) Verify that the interviewers are well-trained by monitoring interviewers during pretest interviews of your survey questionnaire.

By following these simple guidelines, you will be rewarded with better survey designs, data offering enhanced validity and reliability, highly focused analyses, and more actionable research findings and results. □

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## Data Use

continued from p. 15

when it is true; thus on average looking at 20 t-tests in a 20 independent variable regression you will state that one of the coefficients is significantly different from 0 when in fact it is not. The true significance level is  $1-.95^{20} = .64$ , not .05. The F-test, though, retains its .05 probability of rejecting the hypothesis that all the regression coefficients are 0 when that hypothesis is true.

—Albert Madansky

Gary Mullet's response:

*Madansky points out an alternative explanation why an overall F-statistic for the entire regression model may be significant and yet none of the t-statistics (F-statistics in some computer packages) for individual partial regression coefficients is significant at the same significance level. The major thrust of my original paper was to indicate that, yes, this can occur and, yes, it is frequently disconcerting to the analyst when it does.*

*The temperature example which I used is certainly not one which anyone would actually attempt to replicate. I doubt if anyone would seriously try to run a regression model using temperature measured in both Fahrenheit and Celsius as two separate potential explanatory variables. My discussion was more to generate an, "Ah, ha! I get it!" than to suggest using such highly correlated variables. However, and maybe this is more a function of my age than anything else, I recall running some regression analyses on a UNIVAC 1108 where I had messed up the data format card (yes, the term "card image data" alludes to the fact that data sets were once punched on actual cards and entered into the computer via a card reader) and all values of the dependent and all independent variables were read in as "0". The regression duly ran and the output showed no error messages, merely values of 0.00 for everything, includ-*

*ing ratios of 0/0, except the adjusted  $R^2$  was  $-.700$ . It seems like only yesterday that that happened, but it was more than a few years ago.*

*In Madansky's last paragraph, the reader needs to be aware that the reference is still to 20 orthogonal independent variables, not just any 20 "independent" variables, in the computation of the .64 significance level. This, too, points out the problem with the term "independent variable" in regression analysis in gen-*

*eral.*

*Overall, I'm pleased that such issues are not just a worry of mine, but concern many others in the research industry as well.*

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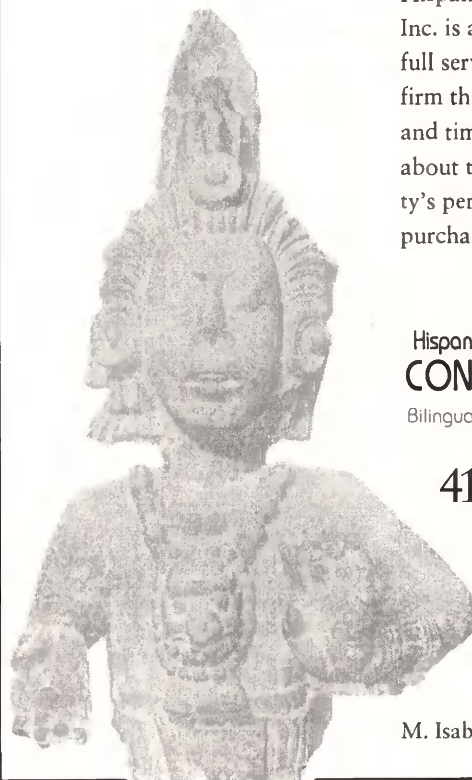
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Please add the following firm to the 1995 Directory of Focus Group Facilities:

Hollis Research Centre  
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Hollis, NH 03049  
Ph. 603-465-3034  
Fax 603-924-2009  
Contact: Rick Hardy or Lou Zivic  
1,2,4,6,7C,8  
Rm. 1) 30x43      Obs. Rm. Seats 10-12  
Rm. 2) 14x32      Obs. Rm. Seats 8-10

Please add the following firm to the 1995 Data Processing/Statistical Analysis/Software Directory:

Batch Data Processing Inc.  
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Dayton, OH 45424  
Ph. 513-235-2962  
Fax 513-235-2743  
Linda Seitz, President

Please add the following firm to the 1995 Ethnic Research Directory:

Lee Slurzberg Research, Inc.  
379 Windsor Rd.  
Englewood, NJ 07631  
Ph. 201-567-2265  
Lee Slurzberg, President

Please note the correction to the following listing from the 1995 Researcher SourceBook Supplement.

Due to a typing error, the write-up for Information Please (QMRR, January, p. 55) was incorrect. The corrected listing and write-up should read:

Information Please  
19 Main St.  
P.O. Box 350  
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Fax 908-776-6624  
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## Corrections

Due to an editing error, the entry "Market research report designer debuts" in the Product & Service Update section of the February 1995 QMRR contained incorrect information. The e-mail address to write to for information on SmartReport should read Mfassino@Delphi.com. QMRR regrets the error.

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**Headquarters:** Evan Tweed, *Quirk's Marketing Research Review*, 6607 18th Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55423. Phone: 612-861-8051. Fax: 612-861-1836

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## Trade Talk

continued from p. 66

moderator talks inserts a close-quote mark on my comment and begins theirs.

Short cuts also let the typist quickly insert observations about respondent body language, tone of voice or other behavior at the touch of a control-key. These observations, which appear on the printed transcript as [Laughter] [Sarcastic] [Hostile], can be customized to indicate just about anything — as I found, much to the displeasure of my co-workers.

Any comment can be marked as a highlight during the proceedings and compiled for later reference. Reports are time-stamped, making it easy to check them against video or audio tapes of the group.

The software's audio feature also allows you to record respondent highlights through a microphone or direct input from the audio line. The comments can be embedded into a report for later listening.

After the session is done, the typist uses the Session Analyst to create a report. The first section contains a summary of all of the highlights that the typist marked during the session. The second is a statistical summary, showing the amount of time spent on each topic, the percentage of time each respondent spoke, and the percentage of overall dialogue per participant (based on word count).

Using the Session Analyst, you can open several group sessions and merge comments into one document. You can

also do word searches and frequency analyses.

## Transcription drudgery

Rich Nadler, president of Perseus Development Corp., says the idea for the software grew out of frustration with the drudgery that is transcription reading. Before turning their attention to software development, he and his biz partners did a good deal of moderating.

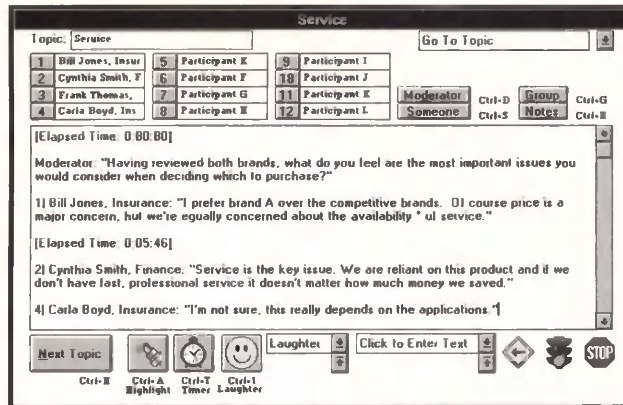
"We wondered, how can we streamline the process of capturing the information, so you have quick access to the jewels of learning? Once you've spent six hours reading transcripts you lose your enthusiasm. You want to remain fresh so that you can take advantage of the ideas that might come from the group's comments," Nadler says.

## Also in facilities

The software is also available for lease by focus group facilities. Nadler says a number of facilities are leasing the software, in cities like Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. He also reports that temp agencies in Boston and New York now have workers who are trained in using the software.

Hayes says that larger companies that do a lot of qualitative may find the program useful for managing the information they get from their one-on-ones or groups. Nadler reports that some companies are also using it to record meetings.

Personally, I'm waiting for Perseus to design a Mac-based version of the program so I can use it to transcribe my phone interviews. When it's ready for beta testing, you know where to find me, Rich! ☐



Here is a sample screen from FocusReport's Session Processor module, showing the view the typist sees while recording the focus group conversation.

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## Trade Talk

By Joseph Bydholm/QMRR editor

# A reprieve from transcription drudgery?

**E**verybody knows focus group transcripts are a drag. They're a drag to type and a drag to read. If you do qualitative, you can't avoid them — gotta have those verbatims — but a new PC-based software program might make them easier to slog through.

With the aid of a typist using the software, called FocusReports, a moderator can record, real-time, a near-complete transcription or compile an accurate sketch of a qualitative discussion to guide later transcription and verba-

tim searches.

FocusReports consists of two modules, the Session Processor, which is used to record the group proceedings, and the Session Analyst, which combines a word processor with a variety of text analysis functions.

The moderator simply sets up a typist at a computer equipped with the software, briefs them on the topics that will be covered and any jargon to be aware of, and the typist takes it from there, recording the comments of each participant as he or she watches the group from the back room.

The software was created by Perseus Development Corp., Needham, Mass., and is being marketed by Bernett Research Services, Boston.

Andrew Hayes, vice president of marketing, Bernett Research Services, says FocusReports isn't intended to take the place of transcripts. "It's more an abridged transcript or advanced notetaking program. We think that it will be a nice tool for turning reports around quickly and capturing the highlights."

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- *SmartReport* is Internet ready. Because of the authoring language underlying *SmartReport*, it is compatible with all specifications of Mosaic and Internet's World Wide Web.

### Easy to use

I had a chance to test-drive the program recently, typing in my own little imaginary focus group session featuring my co-workers and I. Sadly, none of it can be reprinted here — this is a family magazine, after all. I found the program easy to use and actually kind of fun.

Obviously, as with any new program, typists will need some time to get acquainted with it, but if a Windows rookie like me (I'm a Mac man, through and through) can get the program up and running with little trouble, anyone can do it.

The software has a number of built-in short cuts to make sure the typist can focus on recording respondent comments. For example, there's no need to type a person's name each time he or she speaks. Prior to the start of the group you pre-assign each respondent to one of the 12 function keys. So if I'm respondent three and you want to begin a quote of mine, hit F3 and my name is automatically typed out at the start of a new line, with the open-quote mark, like so,

3| Joe Rydholm: "

Hitting another F key when a different respondent or the

continued on p. 65

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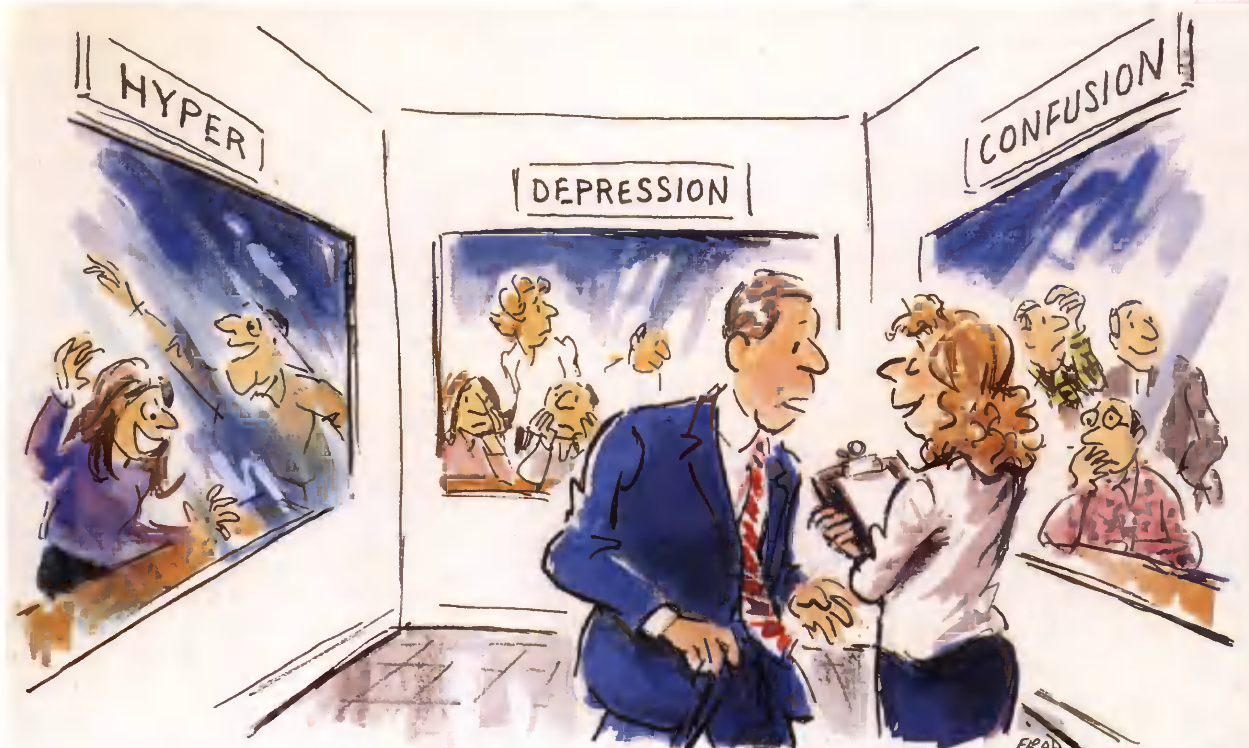
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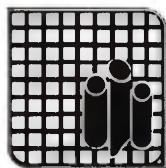
CHICAGO - O'Hare - 312-714-8700

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