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Quirk's Marketing Research Review
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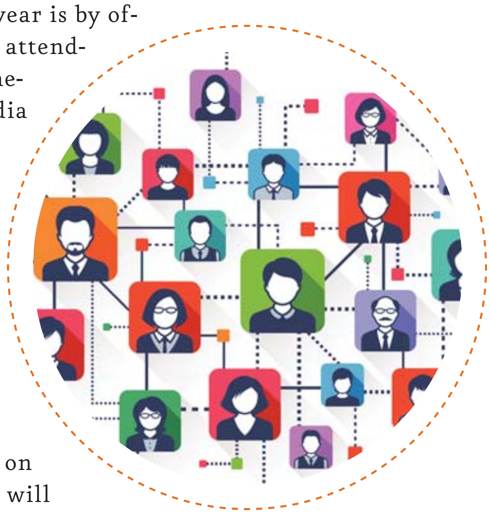
••• events

New features for Quirk's Connect 2017

When launching the Quirk's Event, we wanted to create an integrated experience with greater networking opportunities. One way we have worked to achieve this goal each year is by offering the Quirk's Connect App to attendees – a complimentary, state-of-the-art app that acts as the social media hub of the event. Registered attendees simply create a profile or connect their LinkedIn account to the app and answer a few questions. The app then recommends connections, focusing on other attendees with similar interests.



This year, in addition to the ability to chat with other attendees and request meetings directly on the Quirk's Connect App 2017, you will be able to exchange business card details electronically! The app now allows you to view the people that are near you (mobile device geolocation must be on for this function) and you can exchange contact details and keep notes with one click. To learn more about the Quirk's Event and Quirk's Connect 2017 visit www.thequirksevent.com.

// E-newsworthy

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Brick-and-mortar retail: Part 1: What's driving store traffic?
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••• consumer psychology

Unplanned fun is better than planned fun

In a series of studies, researchers found that scheduling a leisure activity led people to anticipate less enjoyment and actually enjoy the event less than if the same activities were unplanned. That doesn't mean you can't plan at all: The research showed that roughly planning an event (but not giving a specific time) led to similar levels of enjoyment as unplanned events.

"Scheduling our fun activities leads them to take on qualities of work," says Selin Malkoc, co-author of the study and assistant professor of marketing at The Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business, who conducted the study with Gabriela Tonietto, a doctoral student at Washington University in St. Louis. Their results are published in the *Journal of Marketing Research*.

In the paper ("The calendar mindset: scheduling takes the fun out and puts the work in"), they report on 13 separate studies that looked at how scheduling leisure activities affects the way we think about and experience them. Those who scheduled getting frozen yogurt with their friend, for example, rated the activity as feeling more like a "commitment" and "chore" than those who imagined the impromptu get-together.

The results have implications for leisure companies that provide experiences for their customers, Malkoc says. For example, some amusement parks offer tickets for their most popular rides that allow people to avoid long lines. But this research suggests that people will enjoy these rides less if the tickets are set for a particular time. Instead, the parks should give people a window of time to board the ride, which would be the equivalent of rough scheduling in this study.

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••• shopper insights

What drives in-store vs. online purchases?

In a study by Nuremberg, Germany, researcher GfK, shoppers within 17 industries across APAC, LATAM, Europe, North America and the Middle East were asked about what swayed their decision the last time they were deciding whether to purchase something online versus in a store. The most important factors that influenced the decision to buy online rather than in-store include saving money (55 percent), easier shopping (28 percent), a better selection of goods (26 percent), faster shopping (25 percent), access to better information online (21 percent) and because they routinely shop there already.

For purchases where shoppers chose to buy in-store rather than online, the leading factor was being able to see and feel the products before they buy (51 percent). A third (33 percent) said shopping is easier in-store, followed by easier returns (29 percent), because they routinely shop there already (28 percent) and a tie between getting better information and saving money (both 22 percent).

By Joseph Rydholm, Quirk's Editor

Stores tap technology to fight online shopping

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Joe Rydholm can be reached at joe@quirks.com

According to figures from First Data, retail e-commerce transactions grew by 12 percent in the 2016 holiday shopping season. Additionally, more than one-fifth (21.3 percent) of all holiday spending was conducted online, a substantial increase from 15.4 percent in 2015.

Faced with having to constantly battle on price and the prospect that their stores could be reduced to little more than showrooms for eventual online purchases, brick-and-mortar retailers are experimenting with technology to keep in-store shopping relevant.

As outlined in an article by the AP's Anne D'Innocenzio ("Here come 'smart stores' with robots, interactive shelves") here are five technologies and their current applications.

Smart shelves. While Web retailers can track which items shoppers have looked at and not purchased or have removed from their shopping carts (and try to interest them later in following through with a purchase), physical retailers don't have that ability. Enter smart shelves. Perch Interactive, a startup that is working with chains like Sunglass Hut and fragrance maker Jo Malone, uses laser and motion sensors to detect when a product is picked up. Perch monitors the interactions and lets retailers know what people pick up but don't buy. It also offers recommendations: When a shopper picks up a Jo Malone product, an interactive display pops up to show a complementary fragrance.

D'Innocenzio cites the example of a Kroger store in Cold Spring, Ohio, where shelves currently show digitized price tags and information about the products. The next step is to tie that to individual shoppers so that, for example, for a shopper who prefers gluten-free products, the price tags could illuminate in the aisle where all the gluten-free options are. (The company says this will all be done with the customer's permission.)

Robots. Home improvement retailer Lowe's is testing robots in one of its San Jose, Calif., store, and plans to roll them out to 10 more stores in the state in coming months. The robots can scan shelves for inventory and guide customers to specific products in both English and Spanish. Japanese joint venture SoftBank Robotics is testing a 4-foot humanoid robot called Pepper at two Westfield Malls in California. The robots can greet shoppers and have the potential to send messages geared to the customer's age and gender through facial recognition. SoftBank Robotics says it's working with clothing retailers to help suggest outfits to shoppers.

Interactive mirrors. High-end clothing stores are testing interactive mirrors in dressing areas. For example, interactive mirrors outside fitting rooms at 20 Neiman Marcus stores offer shoppers a 360-degree view of what an outfit looks like. Shoppers can make side-by-side comparisons without having to try everything on and share video with friends for feedback. Variations include capturing a customer's session at the beauty counter and e-mailing a video to help the person recreate the look at home, D'Innocenzio notes.

Virtual and augmented reality. Home improvement retailers are using virtual reality and augmented reality to help shoppers with their decorating plans. Shoppers don a headset to see how something might look in 3-D, in some cases overlaid on top of their real kitchen or living room. Home Depot's augmented reality app lets customers upload a picture of the room on their phone and choose from paint and stain colors until they find the right one.

Self-checkout. Despite stumbles by Wal-Mart and other stores with various kinds of self-service checkout options, plenty of stores believe they can avoid the pitfalls, D'Innocenzio says, including, of all companies, Amazon, which is testing a checkout-less store, dubbed Amazon Go, in Seattle.

Amazon paving the way for brick-and-mortar stores – now wouldn't that be the irony of all ironies?

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ASK THE EXPERT

Expert answers to important research questions.

How do I sell my research services to a research audience?

The research world is a paradox: the insights we unearth help our clients (and clients' clients) make sound, sustainable marketing decisions. You'd think, then, that selling ourselves within our own industry would be second nature.

But it isn't. And here's why:

I've spent more than two decades in the advertising space and nearly that long observing the research industry. When Full Circle brought me on board, the first thing I told them was this: You. Are. Toothpaste. Yes, *toothpaste*.

One company brightens teeth. One whitens teeth. One even sparkles teeth. But in the end, everyone in our industry is selling the same thing. What's more, we're selling it to people who are wise to how the whole marketing spiel works.

> How do we do for ourselves what we so naturally do for others? What's the secret to confidently and competently increasing our rate of conversion?

So how do we do for ourselves what we so naturally do for others? What's the secret to confidently and competently increasing our rate of conversion?

First, embrace your inner Colgate.

By accepting that few of us are truly reinventing the wheel, Full Circle started in a smart, strategic headspace. Acknowledging where we are industry-standard was critical. Otherwise, we could not honestly and mindfully peel back the layers to reveal where we are truly different. Because while, yes, we are all selling the same thing, we are not all the same.

That's the next step. There exists in all of us at least one resource – be it financial, product or human – that stands out. For us, it's a vigilant commitment to quality supported by proprietary technological processes and an unparalleled consultative experience. For you, it might be patent-pending software. Or the coolest new analytical approach. Your aim is to find your nugget(s) and be proud.

And, finally, the third and most fun step of all: exposing your organization's authentic self. Are you professional and detail-oriented? Fine. Are you a revolutionary risk-taker? Fine. And if you're both, that's fine, too. But if your print, direct mail, social media, e-blast, elevator pitch or even teeny-tiny line on the back-right corner of your business card convey any sense of you that's not real, potential clients will know it. The result? If you'll pardon the toothpaste pun, you'll watch all those marketing dollars go right down the drain. And that'd be a real shame.

Like us, you have the potential to achieve the exponential, tangible ROI that advertising offers. Even better: a strategic, mindful, comprehensive, true-to-self marketing campaign reaps everlasting benefits that will not only carve out your place in our industry, they help all of us move forward.

And there's absolutely no conundrum in that.

Alisa T. Weinstein
VP Marketing
Full Circle Research Co.
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Have a question you'd like to have answered? Submit it to info@quirks.com.
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IN FOCUS

••• a digest of survey findings and new tools for researchers

Q // Survey Monitor

••• packaging research

What's outside counts, too

Consumers value cleaner, greener food packaging

A study conducted for Memphis, Tenn.-based Evergreen Packaging has identified four packaging-related trends for 2017: Millennials' impact on food and beverage priorities; the importance of clean packaging; the power of leveraging of fresh and clean attributes to position healthy products; and the growing popularity of functional beverages.

The study, now in its seventh year, is conducted independently by research firm EcoFocus Worldwide and examines wellness and sustainability trends impacting the food and beverage industry to determine how consumer tastes, demographics and values are reshaping purchasing decisions.

Millennial motivators. According to *Forbes*, more than 50 percent of Millennials make an effort to buy products from companies that support the causes they care about and they're twice as likely to care about whether their food is organic than any other generation. The EcoFocus survey results illustrate additional details that tie into this larger national trend. Millennials are leading the escape from mass-produced, over-processed and over-packaged foods and beverages with a demand for real, less-processed ingredients. They want the preservatives and artificial ingredients out and natural, nutrient-dense ingredients in. Sixty-nine percent of Millennials have changed what they buy in order to avoid artificial ingredients in foods and beverages. Millennials aren't just thinking about the product's contents, they are differentiating packaging for improved personal and planetary health: 73 percent say they try to buy products in packaging that is recyclable; 59 percent say they look for beverages in packaging that is made with renewable materials.

Clean packaging gains momentum. The new study results show the clean-labeling movement is expanding to clean-processing and clean-packaging trends. As a *Prepared Foods* article highlighted, the rules have been rewritten and clean and clear labeling is the new global standard, extending to a more holistic demand for a clean supply chain. These demands apply to packaging as brands are expanding their transparency on all fronts – from supply chain details to their packaging choices. The EcoFocus study shows that 70 percent of grocery shoppers strongly agree or agree that foods and beverages with healthier ingredient lists should use packaging materials that are healthier too (74 percent of Millennials). With the demand for healthier packaging materials, it's important to keep in mind that 86 percent of grocery shoppers and 87 percent of Millennials believe some types of packaging can leave undesirable chemicals in beverages. They say cartons and glass containers are the least likely to do so – and that cartons and glass best protect freshness without preservatives.

The new value-add: fresh + clean = healthy. The definition of what makes foods and beverages healthier is becoming increasingly complex. Clean ingredients have moved from a trend to the norm for many categories and brands. Creating products that are fresh and eco-friendly is the new go-to as these attributes will become increasingly crucial

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contributors to consumers' measurement of "healthy" in 2017: 74 percent of grocery shoppers and 78 percent of Millennials say better personal health is a big benefit of an eco-friendly lifestyle.

Many brands have already taken out preservatives and removed artificial ingredients. The next challenge is to leverage packaging to convey and deliver freshness without the chemicals that consumers view as undesirable for their health. Brands need to ask themselves if their packaging is aligned with their focus on clean ingredients and messaging. Seventy-one percent of grocery shoppers say that packaging that keeps beverages fresh without preservatives is the most important quality for healthy beverage packaging.

Grocery shoppers' perception of different packaging materials heavily impacts the grocery industry. Smart brands and retailers must align with consumer values and effectively communicate the commitments behind their product, processing and packaging choices. Sixty-seven percent of grocery shoppers and 69 percent of Millennials say recyclable packaging is an extremely or very important quality for healthy beverage packaging. Fifty-nine percent of grocery shoppers and 64 percent of Millennials say packaging made with renewable materials is an extremely or very important quality for healthy beverage packaging.

Naturally-functional beverages. Consumers are increasingly looking to beverages to play new roles in their diets and health routines. Drinkable breakfasts and the "snackification" of beverages are fueled by consumer interest in nutrition and performance drinks that act as meal replacements and guilt-free snacks. In fact, BevNet reports that the carbonated soft drink category is continuing a five-year decline while demand for natural and organic drinks increases as consumers gravitate toward healthier options, with natural beverages driving 40 percent of dollar growth in the industry. Industry leaders should expect consumers in 2017 to demand beverages that work harder, whether for refreshment, satiety, energy, immunity boosting, sleep aid, blood sugar management or a host of other functional benefits now associated with these multifunctional power beverages.

When identifying the most desirable nutritional attributes for healthy beverages, grocery shoppers surveyed shared the following preferences: 63 percent are seeking a good source of calcium; 61 percent are looking for beverages that are a good source of fiber; 61 percent want their beverages to contain lowered or reduced sugar; 60 percent are drawn to beverages that are a good source of antioxidants; 57 percent want to consume beverages with increased protein; 55 percent buy beverages because they are a good source of omega 3; and 46 percent of grocery shoppers are looking for beverages that contain probiotics.

These shifts in consumer priorities are prompting companies to make changes. From Walmart's commitment to sustainably-sourced packaging to McDonalds' pledge to source 100 percent of all fiber-based packaging from recycled or certified sources by 2020 and *Food Business News* declaring clean labeling as the top trend of the year, it is clear that fresh and sustainable will be trends at the heart of consumer demands throughout 2017.

••• social media research

Engage me, please

Branded videos aid the purchase process

According to research commissioned by Brightcove Inc., as reported in a Research Brief from the Center for Media Research, 74 percent of consumers say there is a connection between watching a video on social media and their purchasing decision-making process. The Science of Social Video: Turning Views into Value report revealed that 46 percent of viewers have actually made a purchase as a result of watching a branded video on social media and another third have considered doing so. Further insights for brands include: 81 percent of consumers currently interact with brands on social media and 43 percent have done so through watching branded video; and 79 percent agree that video is the easiest way to get to know a brand online.

Social video consumption has risen in recent months, says the report, presenting a growing window of opportunity for brands to get in front of their audiences on social media. The results showed that: 67 percent of respondents watch more video on social networks like Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat than they did a year ago; the average consumer now watches 49 minutes of social video every day; and 60 percent of viewers expect the amount of social video they watch to continue rising over the next year.

The research also shed light on broader social video viewing preferences. Half of social video views take place on YouTube, 36 percent on Facebook and the remaining 14 percent is divided between social networks like Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram. The top attributes looked for in branded social video were for content to be relevant to consumer interests (44 percent) and engaging (40 percent). Facebook is the social network on which consumers are most likely to like (51 percent), share (44 percent) or comment on (32 percent) a good social video. Forty-five percent of people are more likely to tell friends and family about a brand after watching a good video by that brand on social media and 76 percent of people are more likely to watch a social video if recommended by friends or family.

••• customer experience

Consumers: Increasing minimum wage won't improve service

Is automation automatic?

Consumer attitudes about how raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour will affect their overall shopping experience were uncovered in a survey of 1,500 Americans nationwide by Cincinnati researcher Colloquy. The current federal minimum wage is $7.25 an hour. The firm asked consumers if they would expect better customer service and a better overall experience if the minimum wage were raised to $15 an hour. Also asked: If your favorite retailer raised its minimum wage to $15 an hour, would you actually receive better service and have a better overall experience?

Fifty-nine percent of all respondents said they are justified in expecting to receive better service and a better overall experience; 69 percent of all respondents said they would not actually receive better service or have a better overall experience; 71 percent of men said they would not actually receive better service, versus 66 percent of women; 66 percent of young Millennials in the 18-24 age group said they are justified in expecting better service, versus 59 percent in the same age group who said they would not actually receive it; 60 percent of older Millennials in the 25-34 age group said they are justified in expecting better service, versus 69 percent who said they would not actually receive it.

"The minimum-wage issue is of keen interest to marketers who believe in the power of the frontline employee to engage the customer and create an experience that sets a brand apart from competitors," Colloquy Editor-in-Chief Jeff Berry says. "Brands may see an opportunity to surprise and delight customers based on the skepticism shown by so many in the survey about actually receiving better service."

In other key survey results: 68 percent of women said they are justified in expecting better service with a $15 an hour minimum wage, versus 59 percent of the general population and just 50 percent of men; 38 percent of the general population said raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour would lead to retailers adding more automation, resulting in poorer service and a poorer overall experience; 44 percent of men said raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour would lead to retailers adding more automation, resulting in poorer service and a poorer overall experience, versus 33 percent of women; 38 percent of the general population said they support raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour.

Colloquy's consumer survey was conducted between October 17-21, 2016. The nationwide survey of 1,500 U.S. consumers has a margin of error, which measures sampling variability, of +/- 2.5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

••• ad research

More growth on tap for programmatic

Faster than social media, online video

According to Zenith's Programmatic Marketing Forecasts, programmatic advertising will grow 31 percent in 2017, faster than all other digital channels. This report, which covers 41 advertising markets, estimates that programmatic will grow comfortably faster than social media (which will grow 25 percent) and online video (20 percent) and a growing proportion of these other channels will be traded programmatically. Programmatic will become the principal method of trading digital display this year, accounting for 51 percent of expenditure, and will rise to 58 percent of expenditure in 2017.

At first programmatic marketing was often used to reach target audiences as cheaply as possible, with little regard for the quality of the sites in which the ads appeared. It is now being used, in conjunction with valuable data segments, to target individuals in intelligent and creative ways, identifying those most likely to be receptive to a brand's messages.

Programmatic advertising has risen to dominate the digital display market in just a few years, having accounted for just 13 percent of display ad spend in 2012. Programmatic ad spend grew from $5 billion in 2012 to $39 billion in 2016, at an average rate of 71 percent a year. Its growth is slowing down as it consolidates its dominance of the display market but according to the study, expect programmatic advertising to grow at an average of 28 percent a year to 2018, when it will reach $64 billion.

The U.S. is the biggest programmatic ad market by a long distance, worth $24 billion in 2016 and accounting for 62 percent of total global programmatic ad spend. The U.K. comes a distant second, worth $3.3 billion, and China third at $2.6 billion.

Programmatic trading accounts for 70 percent of display in the U.S. and the U.K., but only 23 percent in China, says the report, so there is plenty room for rapid growth in China.

Though these figures refer only to digital media, programmatic trading is starting to spread into the traditional media. Some television, radio and digital out-of-home platforms already offer automated and data-driven trading of inventory. Eventually programmatic trading will be available as standard across traditional media, concludes the report.

••• ad research

IAB maps future of virtual reality

Hardware a roadblock?

Virtual reality will emerge as the next big thing in digital advertising, says the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) in a report, citing opportunities for immersive storytelling, shopping, product demos and the power to stir emotions in a new way as some of virtual reality's major strengths. Anna Bager, senior vice president and general manager of mobile and video at IAB, expects virtual reality to grow "exponentially" in the next few years as an advertising medium.

In the next two years, says the report, IAB expects more companies to start to leverage 360-degree video, 3-D digital billboards and even TV commercials with virtual reality. Other uses could include interactive games, product demonstrations and virtual tours. This next phase of experimentation in the medium will be critical in determining its success, the report found.

"The Pokémon Go phenomenon has raised the profile of AR and VR, bringing the power of the medium into the mainstream, just as major brands and publishers have begun to tap into its breathtakingly immersive capabilities," Bager says.

The report warns that the extraordinary level of hype surrounding virtual reality leads people to expect to be wowed by their first virtual experience. Analysts say VR is especially popular within the tech industry but high-end car manufacturers like Audi, Jaguar and Volvo, beverage companies like Coca-Cola and Anheuser Busch, clothing companies like Nike, and even cheese maker Boursin have featured virtual reality in recent ad campaigns.

The IAB does note, however, that content creators need to understand that the VR production process is far from straightforward. With VR, consumers can interact with content and change their field of view and perspective, opportunities traditional media doesn't present. Though the hardware is becoming cheaper, sleeker, more advanced and more readily available, the current rate of adoption will likely lead to monetization challenges, the report suggests.

Car dealerships, real estate agencies and travel companies, for example, can offer headsets as a service at their locations but other applications might require consumers to buy headsets and download apps, none of which can be guaranteed.

••• b2b research

B2B content marketers cite confidence gap

Looking for better open rates

As pressure mounts for B2B marketers to deliver high-quality and highly-targeted leads, 82 percent reported being only "somewhat confident" or "not very confident" in the effectiveness of their campaigns, according to The Campaign Confidence Gap report from Boston-based SaaS firm SnapApp.

A number of challenges contributed to the low level of confidence B2B marketers reported in developing effective campaigns, including an over-reliance on static, lead-gated PDFs to generate leads. According to the survey, conducted by Demand Gen Report and sponsored by SnapApp, nearly half (41 percent) of B2B marketers listed identifying new lead sources as their top demand-gen campaign challenge. B2B buyers now not only expect content that is relevant and compelling to their specific needs but they are also increasingly less tolerant of campaigns that fail to speak to their unique areas of interest. As a result, one-third (33 percent) of respondents said they are struggling to develop compelling calls-to-action that capture prospects' attention.

"We were surprised to learn how uncertain B2B marketers were about the effectiveness of their campaigns and wanted to understand what was causing this confidence gap," says Aaron Dun, senior vice president of marketing, SnapApp. "We found that traditional B2B marketing strategies have become stale for buyers, reflecting a seller-centric approach to marketing."

Beyond traditional brand-focused campaigns and messaging, some B2B marketers are looking at content-enabled campaigns that address customer interest points and facilitate engagement. Among B2B marketers who are using content-enabled campaigns, more than half (54 percent) saw open rate improvements of at least 20 percent, while 66 percent also saw at least a 5 percent increase in click-through rates. The top of the funnel saw the biggest benefits, as 66 percent of B2B marketers noted that their content-enabled campaigns produce a greater response to these lead-generation offers. The use of interactive content is expected to increase dramatically in the next 12 to 24 months, with 87 percent of B2B marketers predicting at least 10 percent of their content will be interactive. The top five content formats B2B marketers are using or plan to use for content-enabled campaigns include; video (95 percent), surveys (92 percent), interactive infographics (85 percent), ROI calculators (84 percent) and assessments (82 percent).

While interactive content is not expected to replace traditional marketing campaigns in 2017, the survey revealed that B2B marketers will increasingly utilize these formats because of its ability to produce strong response rates and enable prospects to self-qualify. Additionally, interactive content will also enable marketers to collect data and insights that sales teams can use to accelerate the best prospects through the sales process.

The survey was conducted online by Demand Gen Report during Q2 and Q3 of 2016. The respondents included more than 100 B2B marketers.

IN FOCUS

Product and Service Update

••• product research

BuzzBack Claims Express debuts

Automates claims-testing

Technology platform ZappiStore, London, has launched BuzzBack Claims Express on its online platform. BuzzBack Claims Express helps users identify claims and benefits by using a streamlined methodology with BuzzBack's online creative projective techniques. It is available in the U.S. and U.K., with plans to launch in 13 other markets by early 2017.
www.zappistore.com

••• cpg research

Growth management suite from IRI

Aimed at mid-market firms

Chicago-based researcher IRI has launched the IRI Revenue Growth Management Suite, a group of prescriptive solutions for mid-market clients that quantifies the drivers of sales change, prescribes corrective pricing and promotion actions and measures their potential impact on revenue and profits. The RGM Suite is a component of the revenue growth management streamlining process; it uses the core predictive and prescriptive engine of IRI's Revenue Growth Management Enterprise Suite. This allows mid-market clients to build and enable revenue management capabilities using models from one of hundreds of categories linked directly to IRI Liquid Data. The RGM Suite provides a way for clients to add predictive analytics to their IRI Market Advantage solution. It leverages previously standalone solutions, including IRI Price and Trade Advantage Mobile and IRI Business Value Drivers. The new RGM Suite combines diagnostics and insights into drivers of market performance with the ability to create a series of reports, with an interactive price and trade promotion simulator. Clients who sign up for the RGM Suite will have access to IRI's revenue growth experts and their experience working on a number of categories and brands. The IRI Strategic Analytics revenue growth experts will help initiate clients into the RGM Suite and provide best practices for ongoing engagement and inclusion within a client's existing team and business process.
www.iriworldwide.com

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170204.aspx

••• social media research

Conduct competitive analysis on Snapchat

Track open rates, completion rates

Copenhagen, Denmark-based SaaS firm Snaplytics is now providing competitor analysis so brands can research and assess what others are doing on Snapchat to help them make strategic decisions regarding their own Snapchat campaigns. Snaplytics requires companies to plug a brand's user name into a Snaplytics dashboard and then review a range of analytics such as the frequency with which that account posts stories and snaps, the duration of the updates, how the content is split between videos and images as well as the duration and overall amount of time people have been engaged. Other analytics include open rates, completion rate, what screengrabs are taken, how many followers a campaign has and how followers started following the account. The company uses proprietary technology that does not require any public APIs. The service is free for competitive monitoring of one account. Prices start at $29 per month for two to five accounts, $49 a month for six to 10 accounts and $79 a month for 11-20 accounts.
snaplytics.io

••• predictive modeling

Salford releases version 8 of Predictive Modeler

Features automation, less grunt work

San Diego-based software firm Salford Systems has released version 8 of its Salford Predictive Modeler (SPM) software suite. The new version offers: 70+ pre-packaged automation scenarios inspired by the way leading

model analysts structure their work; tools to relieve grunt work, allowing the analyst to focus on the creative aspects of model development; regression, classification and logistic regression enhanced to support massive datasets; new features for core tools based on user feedback and advances in data science. SPM 8 is designed to be more efficient and leverages parallel processing on modern multiple core processors. It makes better use of RAM to run larger analytical problems and builds in more automation to drive quickly to better models. SPM 8 includes more exploratory data analysis tools and includes a host of new loss functions for TreeNet Gradient Boosting, supporting more accurate models. The new version includes classical and new tools for differential lift modeling and has more options and fine tuning controls for the expert.
www.salford-systems.com

●●● Briefly

■ Shelton, Conn., researcher SSI and Azul Brazilian Airlines' TudoAzul have launched a new rewards program, Pontos por Opiniões, which allows TudoAzul advantage members to earn award points by participating in surveys and sharing their opinions. TudoAzul members who enroll in the program will help grow and broaden SSI's panel membership in Brazil and provide SSI clients more access to consumer and business travelers' opinions.
www.surveysampling.com

■ National Research Corporation, Lincoln, Neb., has launched its real-time feedback solution that connects with patients via e-mail, SMS (text) or phone (IVR) and integrates with other NRC Health tools to show the totality of an individual's health care experience.

■ The New York American Marketing Association (NYAMA) and Canada-based research firm BrandSpark, in conjunction with data visualization and integration software firm Dapresy, have released the results of the NYAMA/BrandSpark American Marketers Survey, available via Dapresy's online dashboard.
dapresy.com

■ B2C marketing cloud company Emarsys, Indianapolis, has launched Emarsys AI Marketing, designed to help marketers bridge the gap between data science and executing personal omnichannel campaigns at scale.
www.emarsys.com

■ Port Washington, N.Y., information company The NPD Group has launched its Retail Tracking Service for the U.S. juvenile products market, covering the categories of travel, safety, feeding, bed/bath, infant entertainment and furniture. The service includes point-of-sale information from a cross-section of retailers in the specialty, mass, chain, food, drug, convenience store and online channels.
www.npd.com

■ Harpeth Marketing, Franklin, Tenn., has released an e-book, *I Hate Selling! – Part 2: Ensuring Repeat Clients*, a guidebook for small business owners, independent consultants and other part-time sales reps that can be downloaded for free from the firm's Web site.
www.harpethmarketing.com

■ MFour Mobile Research, Irvine, Calif., has launched its new MFourDIY Web site, which allows users to create sample surveys, get pricing quotes and explore the survey emulator. The site also provides a map of streaming data from an all-mobile panel that is crossing into geofenced areas and actively starting and completing surveys.
mfour.com

■ Chalfont, Pa., marketing and sensory research agency Blueberry has launched PinPoint, a proprietary research solution that provides specific concept and product guidance for market success. Within the context of the competitive set, the methodology simulates the path-to-product adoption to: predict how many consumers will purchase a product on a regular basis; identify which elements of the concept and product have the most impact on sales; determine the optimal price for the product; and forecast how the product will perform under various market scenarios.
www.blue-berry.com

■ Nielsen, New York, has reported that it will increase the panel in 48 Portable People Meter markets as part of its efforts to advance audio measurement. Nielsen will boost the effective sample size of the panel by 10 percent across all markets and demographics starting mid-2017.
www.nielsen.com

Get up close and personal with customers – without them knowing it

| By Cathy Fitzgerald

snapshot

Cathy Fitzgerald explores the use of thought-bubbles to probe the emotions of B2B decision-makers.

Interested in engaging your respondents and backroom clients by creating visual output that helps tell a better story than you could ever achieve by words alone? Read on to find out about the power of thought bubbles.

Amy, our client, wants to get deep insights on applications for a new product. She also wants to probe into perceived benefits and concerns among key business decision makers. She suggests qualitative research but asks, "How do we get beyond the superficial explanations that customers and prospects often verbalize during qualitative discussions?"

Our emotions and feelings unconsciously direct us in our decision-making. This is especially true among B2B buyers, where they have relationships built up over time that have a huge effect on behavior. For many B2B products, brand relationships are a critical element in why products sell. But how do we better understand the emotional foundation underlying these relationships which reside hidden in unconscious thought? To drive advertising copy and to develop appealing new product concepts, understanding unconscious emotions is critical.

I've seen this happen. As I'm watching behind the one-way mirror, Ralph, the respondent, rattles off "speeds and feeds," telling us what specs are key in his buying decision. Ralph describes his firm's elaborate process of developing a short list of products, getting feedback from the financial influencer, then making the final decision. It all sounds so clinical – and I don't believe a word of it! And Amy, our client is not getting what she needs.

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170205.aspx

Part of the story

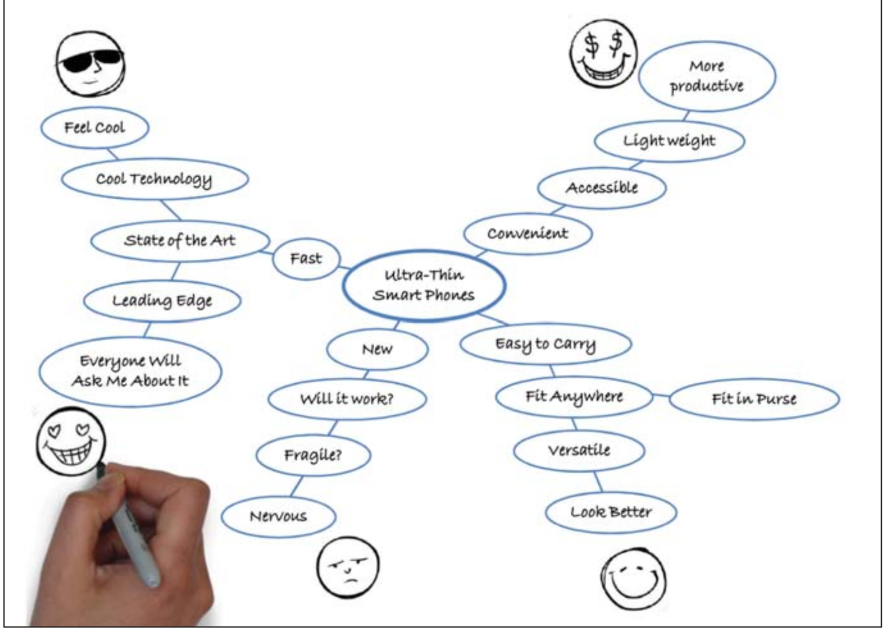
What is happening in our story about Ralph is that by just asking him questions we are not able to understand why he buys what he buys. We are only getting part of the story – the tip of the iceberg. We need to go beneath the surface to really understand the unconscious feelings and emotions that tell us the whole story of why Ralph the respondent does what he does.

Is it really as simple as handing Ralph some crayons? Yes and no. The secret to tapping into the unconscious part of the brain, where 95 percent of thinking occurs, is to get Ralph involved in the research through non-verbal stimuli. There are many ways to accomplish this using drawing, typing, pictures as metaphors, telling stories, etc. All of these techniques work because they are using "the language" of the unconscious mind: sensory images; emotion and metaphors.

One of the most effective ways to tap into the unconscious part of the brain is with "thought bubbling." It is particularly useful for messaging, new product development, branding and positioning research. It can be done in focus groups or one-on-ones and works great for international research.

Here's how it works. I hand Ralph a large sheet of paper. I've written the specific topic we are researching in a circle centered on the paper, such as we have illustrated in Figure 1. Next, I ask Ralph to write whatever thought or

Figure 1



feeling comes to mind. He puts that in a new circle and draws a line outward from the center circle. He continues drawing a line from each topic and circling it to create additional thought bubbles. I encourage Ralph to take each bubble as far as he can by writing down all the additional thoughts and feelings that each bubble creates. I remind Ralph to simply write or draw whatever pops into his head with the goal of filling the entire page with thought bubbles.

A thought diagram is born! Ralph has worked hard and now he gets to present the fruits of his labor. Why do we put him on stage by asking him to present? So that we get Ralph's story.

- Ralph explains the connections between his thoughts, giving us the deep dive that helps us understand how he really thinks.
- We get to understand Ralph's individuality by explaining how/why he chose the bubbles he did.
- Ralph feels responsible to do a good job and feels a sense of ownership when he presents.
- Ralph feels energized, actively participates and communicates his thoughts in a creative way.

Together, the respondents create a visual story for the clients. The room is filled with visual output which engages all the clients watching in the back room. The energy level of clients skyrockets because they are doing more than just listening. It allows them to actually participate by watching and learning. Clients can draw conclusions faster because they are getting real-time insights from the respondents as they tell the story behind their thought bubbles.

In addition, thought-bubbling eliminates group-think since each person has to commit their own ideas to paper first. It gets even the shyest of respondents to contribute their ideas that normally remain unheard. It gives us a tool to access visceral-level responses and motivations and allows for more ideas to emerge based on others' presentations.

A road map

Thought-bubbling gives us a road map to understand the intricate relationship between the positives and the negatives – which are often intertwined. When we ask questions, we logically have to separate them, but that is not how the mind processes or thinks. That is another reason why we use thought-bubbling. When we ask a business decision maker to diagram their thoughts, we get the architecture of their thought process, the evolution of the positives and the negatives. In other words, the map of their thoughts. We hand them pens, paper, markers, crayons, all the tools any brain needs to express itself and allow us to uncover respondents' innermost thoughts and concerns.

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“The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated.”
Telephone data collection isn’t dead;
it’s just changed.

••• the business of research

Research is research, right?

Why you should cast a wider net when staffing your insights department

| By Eric Whipkey

snapshot

Eric Whipkey makes a case for the value of diverse professional experiences and backgrounds in a research function's team members.

It is no secret that in consumer insights or marketing research there tends to be a preference if not a demand for industry experience when posting jobs at various levels. From my experience, the opposite can also be beneficial. Having different or new perspectives should be viewed as a positive, not a negative. This is part of what we call diversity of thought.

I suppose that I am lucky in some respects. I have managed to have a career that has crossed over from two disciplines and several industries. As a result, my perspective on this issue may be different from many in the marketing research field. To this day, I still find that I bring slightly different views on approaches, statistics and management that were derived from my time working as an industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology consultant. Likewise, I often draw on my cross-industry knowledge when thinking through financial industry issues. For example, I work for a very member-focused credit union, so my non-profit membership research experience often comes in handy. Similarly, my consulting skills, derived from previous work in the professional services industry, often come into play when working with internal clients or advising my team on such consultations. And, my time in the health care industry has helped me understand the many similarities between the fears and emotions experienced by consumers in both health care and financial services, which translate well to the measures that we use in my current position to monitor and track experiences and needs.

Learn new tricks

Of course, as I switched from I/O psychology and/or industries I have also had to learn new tricks, adjust my ways of thinking and acclimatize myself to different industry and company cultures.

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170206.aspx

That has been challenging, at times, and I am grateful to some previous managers for giving me the time and consideration needed to make those adjustments.

I think, though, that in their hiring practices, leaders across industries sometimes don't credit candidates with the ability to make these types of adjustments. This potential blind spot could mean that they miss out on adding some valuable new perspectives that could help their organizations. While focusing on industry expertise and/or internal talent supports internal hires and employee engagement, it also leads to insular thinking and decreases the likelihood of diversity of thought and its attendant benefits.

I get that there are actual and meaningful differences across industries. For example, in health care it can be difficult to conduct timely research among hospital patients. There are government regulations in place that place strict rules on access to patient sample (due to government-mandated patient satisfaction measurement programs like HCAPS, run by CMS). Surely, someone coming into the industry should be made aware of that. But once they know the rules of the road, research is still research. Likewise, someone coming out of that environment into, say, CPG may bring new approaches to acquiring sample or avoiding the need for sample learned out of necessity. They may also feel so liberated that they would do other great things for your research function.

Not have enough experience

There are also other presumed reasons for this bias toward industry-specific researchers. In CPG, conjoint is prevalent. Naturally, more obtuse offerings like those found in service industries are not always suited to conjoint or even max-diff, due to their complexity. The assumption might be that these service researchers would not have enough experience or knowledge of conjoint or max-diff. That may well be true but not necessarily. Consider that these same researchers may have developed creative approaches for testing product or service concepts across offerings like seminars, personal services or even housecleaning that could rival conjoint for complexity. They might even be using modified versions of conjoint or max-diff followed up with different approaches to measure the level of interest around the more detailed complexities of these offerings. What might these researchers be able to offer to the thinking around more straightforward research topics like package design or product/concept tests for features and benefits? In many ways, non-CPG research, like that found in service industries, is more complex. Therefore, the diversity of thought that could be brought to bear could be significant.

Likewise, shopper-journey research and shopper analytics are popular in many industries. This type of research may have a different focus across industries or be known by different names like customer or member journey-mapping. But the similarities are great. It would certainly not be accurate to assume based on industry alone that a researcher's experience with "shopper," "customer," "member" or "consumer" journey research would necessarily be wrong for your industry. To the contrary, their approach may add significant value.

Let's take a look at some possible examples of researchers transitioning to different industries or areas and examine some of the issues that might arise.

An academic researcher coming into financial services marketing research

Method/knowledge to bring to bear:

- In-depth literature reviews.
- Meta-analysis/analyses of other published or unpublished research findings.

- Will likely have solid general research technique background/training.
- May bring truly cutting-edge approaches and/or knowledge.
- Assuming that teaching was part of their academic role, it could translate to mentoring your existing analysts on any number of topics/research techniques.
- Connections with university professors and/or students could result in low-cost research partnerships.
- Students from the management or finance departments could study things like preferred payment platforms among Millennials.
- Students from the computer science department could have a hackathon to help improve things like security, anti-fraud efforts and/or existing or new apps.
- Students from the psychology department could design and develop a series of behavioral economic experiments to understand the emotions and/or fears behind personal finance and/or banking.

They will need to learn/change:

- To be less academic. Like any client-side research shop, there is often a focus on speed over strict rigor. Usually, no one is going to die over a type I or type II error in this context.
- Will need to learn the industry and your company's corporate politics (perhaps more so than others with more corporate experience).

A CPG researcher entering a large non-profit research think tank or membership organization

Method/knowledge to bring to bear:

- Conjoint and/or max-diff. Most concepts that a non-profit like this would need to evaluate will be too complex for these solutions but the ability set up these types of trade-off studies could result in interesting (new to non-profit) ways of looking at problems.
- Extensive knowledge of the consumer's path to purchase. Again, there is less purchasing in the non-profit research world but member experience could be relevant as could experience thinking through how consumers approach ecommerce and/or membership.
- Agile research techniques. Quick research turnaround will be appreciated everywhere.
- Co-creation. Working across multiple teams of executives to generate new ideas will be a key skill to bring to the role.
- Behavioral economics/non-rational techniques. This will be a hard sell and difficult to operationalize for non-profit problems but the mind-set will be appreciated.
- Business acumen is sometimes sorely lacking in these types of organizations. Being able to connect business problems to data and research will be highly sought after. As one of my former not-for-profit CEOs used to say, "No money, no mission."
- Experience with message-testing and/or positioning research will be very relatable.

They will need to learn/change:

- Adjust to the slower pace of research planning and execution. One or more people may die over a type I or type II error in this context (i.e., public policy research, health research, etc.).
- Think more about testing complex ideas and educational offerings instead of products and features. A CPG researcher with a needs-based approach to research would be more at ease.
- Will need to adjust to a non-profit mind-set. It is not all about making money.

A professional services firm consultant (i.e., Accenture, Strategy&, Booz Allen Hamilton, etc.) entering health care

Method/knowledge to bring to bear:

- Consulting skills will come in handy if working across departments is important (i.e., an internal client services model). If not client service-oriented, will be helpful with senior executives.
- The ability to scope out a proposal in a persuasive way will help to sell-in project ideas.
- Will come with a tendency to think about timelines and have a sense of urgency.
- Will have strong research techniques.
- Will have a breadth of experience across either government or industry (depending on the firm that they come in from).
- Will be aware of many techniques with less depth in many specific methods.

They will need to learn/change:

- Stop using consultant jargon, unless the company likes that.
- Figure out what types of methods will fly and get more in-depth training in them.
- Will need to learn the industry and your company's corporate politics (this will not be hard, as they have had to do that as often as once per month as a consultant).

An opportunity, not a threat

There are, of course, many other possible examples. But my point is that diversity of thought and experience are good things. With the intense focus on Millennials and the gig economy, the client-side research community could benefit from a more relaxed or open-minded industry focus in its recruiting. There are many ways to approach the same problems. A researcher willing to try new things or work in new environments should be an opportunity, not a threat. We should all try embracing these alternate industry researchers or career-changers. They will inevitably have new ways of looking at your corporate world and the research issues you're facing. When you consider how things are done in different industries or research fields, the potential to innovate methodologically skyrockets. Give it a shot and see what happens. You may open up whole new worlds of opportunity.

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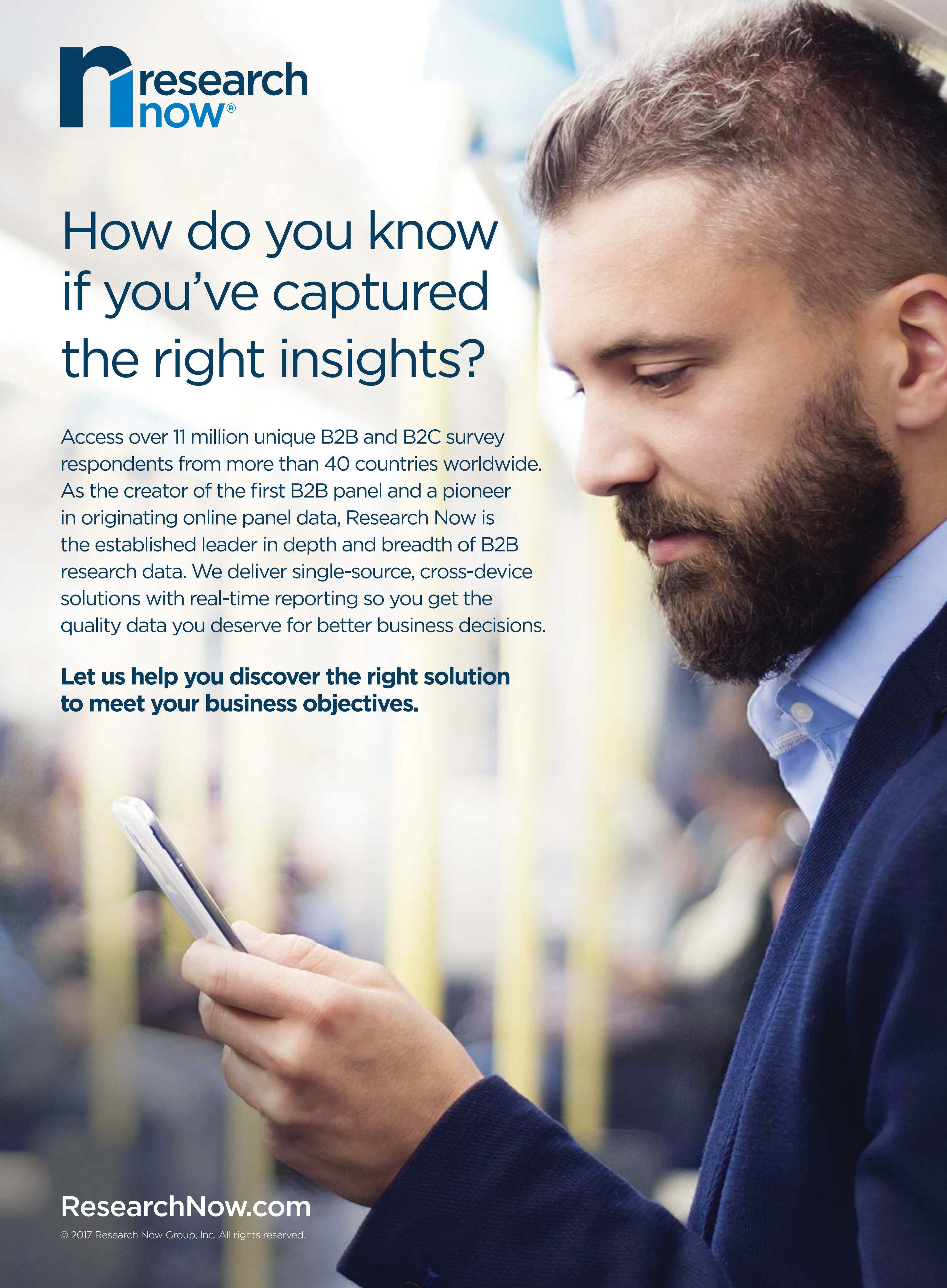
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••• mobile research

Lightsabers and digital lassos

Curating the 21st century purchase journey

| By Sarah Gleason and Christina Pate

snapshot

The authors draw from recent client studies to understand the impact of the Web and smartphones on the shopping process.

Classical journey tales – of war heroes, villains and spiritual seekers – are defined partly by the tools available to the travelers. Jason had his Argo, Luke Skywalker his lightsaber and Wonder Woman her Lasso of Truth. These objects in many ways shape our heroes' stories through their capabilities, as well as their limitations.

Fast-forward to a galaxy far, far away, where thousands of anxious observers (known as brands, publishers, agencies and others) are trying to understand the story of a single protagonist: the omnichannel shopper. Consumers through the ages have shared many characteristics: a thirst for bargains, a passion for performance and a keen ear for the opinions and preferences of others.

But today's shopper is armed with a tool that few ancient mariners or warriors might have imagined: the smartphone.


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teens
electronics
shopping
automotive
entertainment
grocery
children

Remade the retail marketplace

Computers connected to the Internet began to upend the retail world more than 20 years ago; algorithms and cookies have allowed digital advertisers to target people shopping for cars, shoes or insurance. But the smartphone has truly remade the retail marketplace and is redefining the purchase process for generations of consumers to come.

In GfK's FutureBuy research, 35 percent of all U.S. shoppers now say they rely on a combination of in-person store visits and online resources to make purchases across 16 product groups – with the proportion for high-involvement categories like electronics rising above 50 percent. One in five U.S. shoppers reports seeing an item in a store and then buying it from another vendor online, a process known as showrooming. And those who showroom say they are doing it more often – 40 percent report a frequency of once a week or more, up from 25 percent just a year ago.

On the flip side, we have the phenomenon known as Webrooming, in which the final purchase is made in a store after consulting both in-person and online resources. Overall, Webrooming – reported by one-third (34 percent) of all U.S. shoppers – is now more common than showrooming (21 percent of U.S. shoppers).

We also know that the next generation of shoppers – today's Gen Z (ages 18 to 26) – spends roughly one-quarter (24 percent) of its online shopping time using a mobile phone, compared to less than one-tenth (3 percent) for Baby Boomers (ages 52 to 70).

For brands trying to understand how shoppers travel from an unmet need through purchase research to a final buying decision, the sources of confusion and cross-talk have become almost unlimited. In addition to "traditional" media, the many online platforms – from shopping apps to social media to brand-hosted Web sites – have made every shopping trip from Point A to Point Z much more complex.

On the other hand, smartphones also offer a wealth of data about their users, from locations to Web sites visited to social media activity. When harnessed and interpreted properly, this rich information – in combination with custom, survey-based insights – can help marketers understand purchase journeys with a precision never imagined before. But, as with most other online data, there are roadblocks. There are technological and privacy hurdles – and researchers also face the challenge of analyzing and identifying relevant touchpoints in big data sets that can contain millions of Web site and app visits.

If we can conquer the obstacles, we have the chance to draw on all of our resources to describe and even predict purchase journeys in ways we could never have hoped to before – even taking into account the complications posed by an omnishopper's twisted path to purchase.

"Understanding the time consumers spend researching, the sites used for comparison shopping and the keywords used for searching is fairly easy to determine for our customers," says Rob Johnson, director of digital and channel research for Marriott International. "However, we did not have a direct comparison map of what consumers are doing on competitive sites and mobile apps. To answer this question, we have utilized passive tracking [such as GfK offers on KnowledgePanel Digital] to inform our competitive analysis and our customer acquisition strategies."

Relied on recollections

In the past, purchase-journey studies relied on surveys exclusively – capturing shoppers' recollections of what they did and when. These surveys provide a solid picture of what a consumer/shopper has done in terms of the broad-brush pathways, influencers encountered along the way and the final decision. But as these journeys have grown more fragmented, with in-person and online shopping intermingled, the likelihood of recalling what went on in each step is limited. In a recent study for a retail client, we collected both passive and survey data for the same data point: how many mobile touchpoints shoppers made on an average purchase journey. While the self-reported data indicated just four visits, on average, the passive showed 48 – a massive difference.

We find that shoppers can usually remember the apps and Web sites they relied on most but being able to recall individual visits and correctly summing them is (quite understandably) beyond the average person's ability. This is why we feel that, in creating a 21st-century purchase journey story, remaining data-agnostic is essential. Surveys can illuminate big-picture activities and deliver insight and emotional color that illuminates both the what and the why people consult the resources they do or make the purchase decisions they finally put into action. This information can now be supplemented with activity data from the shopper's new weapon of choice, the smartphone; these "digital lassos" basically act like extensions of consumers' own probing brains, allowing them to perform tasks and provide answers in seconds – and revealing a great deal about how shoppers think from the footprints they leave.

We feel client and consumer alike are much better served by tapping volumetric information – site visits, purchases and coupon use – from passive sources. POS tracking studies, customer loyalty card data and smartphone use information from controlled panels are powerful information sources that the journey "master" can turn to. Rather than an author, per se, the new purchase journey creator is a curator of diverse plots and information that can be woven together to tell an invaluable story – how a purchase gets made.

Serve a number of needs

The new "omnidata" purchase journey study can serve a number of needs in the digital marketplace. Recently, a major consumer service brand that had recently been acquired by another needed to know the digital behavior of loyalty members for both the acquiring and acquired brands. To answer this need, we were able to leverage a combination of: passive data on site visits and search engine use from select KnowledgePanel Digital members – adults who own a smartphone or tablet who have agreed to let GfK track their digital behavior; user experience (UX) studies on the apps and sites in question; and focus groups to catch personal observations from loyalty members.

Analysis of the passive data revealed that members of the acquired brand's loyalty program turned to aggregator sites in the category more than to the brand's own digital resources. Similarly, customers of the acquiring brand were less likely to visit that firm's apps than those of competitors; in fact, the average loyalty member visited over eight competitor Web sites – making insights into cross- and competitive-usage patterns key to driving repeat purchases.

Leveraging passive data shows just how intricate and sometimes unpredictable a purchase journey can be. Researchers can follow the navigational pathways that shoppers use in their searches – which sites came before and after. It turns out that consumers turn to different types of sites at different stages of the research process. One can even look at activity within the brands' own sites, providing helpful insights on likely traffic patterns and potential sources of frustration.

Qual provided a much more robust dive into the why behind behaviors. Immersive online community sites, such as GfK's Sociolog for example, allow researchers to, in some cases, observe what consumers do through the use of activity-based direction versus just answering questions (as in focus groups). The blogs are also a more projective technique.

UX research analyzed the features and benefits of each of the brands' Web sites to provide insight into how to optimize the experience once members reach their Web site. In purchase journeys, UX can also offer a disciplined process for diving into the steps of the journey and arriving at additional mapping that complements passive data.

Reveal a different view

Another recent purchase journey story, developed for a major durable-goods retailer, combined Web browser and app activity with survey results to reveal a different view of the path to purchase. In all, consumers consulted over 40 digital shopping resources to arrive at their buying decisions; and most of their online shopping time was devoted to mobile devices. It turned out that while the retailer's e-commerce site was receiving strong attention from consumers, its app was barely on shoppers' radar, a major handicap to be analyzed and resolved. Analysis also revealed that Amazon.com and the Amazon app acted as de facto hubs for purchase research; shoppers would travel to another e-commerce or information site, return to Amazon, then venture out again.

Studies of browser activity also provided a great deal of insight; it turned out that two-thirds of browsing before visits to the retailer's Web site was seemingly unrelated to the product search. And shoppers often used search engines just to find a retailer's or brand's own Web site – rather than simply typing in the URL. This kind of detailed data reveals not just micro-moments of impulsive ideas and actions but also larger moments of truth in the decisions to make major purchases. The new style of purchase journey study shows that the small and large moments intertwine, shaping each other in sometimes unpredictable ways.

To discern motivations for shopping and buying, we consulted the survey results, which revealed that "treating myself" was the most common reason for making a purchase from the retailer – a powerful insight into mind-sets of their customers and site users.

Almost always more complicated

By bringing a variety of insights and data to the task of telling the shopper's purchase journey story, we learn that this quest is frequently epic and almost always more complicated than we might assume. Armed with just a smartphone, shoppers can travel to a host of "countries" – Web sites, apps and other resources – to collect clues and wise counsel, leading to the best decisions for their needs and budgets.

Understanding how these journeys really unfold, and what desires and needs lie behind them, requires artful data integration and interpretation. Today's wealth of information is only truly valuable when spun into actions and next steps by a trained curator. With expert help, the everyday travels of average shoppers can provide essential guidance to the brands they may or may not be seeking.

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●●● millennials

A moving target

An overview of recent Millennial insights

| By Lauren Paul

snapshot

From social media use to dining and banking, the author draws from a variety of studies to help marketers keep pace with Millennials.

From their hard-to-predict voting behavior to their questionable-at-best survival skills, the power of Millennials to take center stage and influence the world cannot be ignored. So we decided to take a closer look at this desirable target audience, compiling all the consumer insights and implications from our company's recent research to observe the trends. Below are the highlights from what we learned about Millennials and what it means for the future of not only marketing research but product innovation, product development and marketing at large.

Millennials want straightforward social media that connects and informs them

In an exploratory study of what features matter most to both Millennials and teenagers (aka, Gen Z) when it comes to social media platforms, we discovered that both groups have replaced other media and communications tools with social media for the convenience and personalization they offer. This is because the primary drivers for social media use were stated by both groups to be connectivity and information consumption, allowing for access to news, celebrities and other influencers, and generally feeling connected to the outside world. But while Millennials were comfortable with more universal connectivity, teens desired more options for compartmentalizing their social groups within apps. Millennials were instead more focused on the need for convenience, expressing a desire for simple, straightforward apps which they don't have to spend time learning.

"I like to use social media to connect with others and learn new things. Social media helps me stay current with things going on in the world and see how other people view the world."
– 29-year-old male, Ohio

Millennials use social media on the go, in between other activities and during downtime,

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170209.aspx

so apps should be designed for short bursts of activity, with flexible content experiences conducive to both multi-tasking and in-depth consumption (like Apple's News app). But even in small doses, Millennials had a much more mixed relationship with social media, as they are pretty wary of the social and emotional implications of spending too much time on such apps.

They don't appreciate ads and glitches in their apps

Our discoveries about social media got us wondering: What keeps an app on Millennials' and teens' phones for the long run? Pokémon Go proved that it's still possible to immediately capitalize on technological innovation and established appeal but its swift decline means that it takes more than hype to maintain users' interests. Not surprisingly, the apps that earn a lasting place in the lives of Millennials are those that are easy to use, continually relevant and make their lives easier. The universality of Facebook and the organization of Pinterest were highly celebrated, as was the presence of interactive, user-supplied content, keeping the apps engaging and topical. Millennials also repeatedly expressed a desire for more apps that would help increase productivity and streamline daily activities, such as better planning apps or ones connected to other devices they use every day – without having to buy and learn a whole new operating system.

"I guess I'm kind of a forgetful person, so an app to turn up my air conditioning or down the heat, or turn off the lights, fans, TV, etc., would be very helpful in my daily life."

– 34-year-old female, iPhone user, frequent in-app purchases

But the crucial factors when it comes to loving an app are the presentation of ads and the efficacy of the app. Apps that are complicated, have technical bugs and crashes or use too many of their phone's resources are often targeted for deletion. And even though intrusive ads annoy Millennials, very few would pay to remove them, opting to just delete the app entirely. Ads that do not interfere with app function, or those linked to in-app rewards, were much better-tolerated than pop-ups, so apps looking to monetize digital behavior should be careful not to frustrate their users.

Basically, they're usually the tech experts in the family

As our exploration of Millennial attitudes and habits with regards to social media and apps already revealed, Millennials are no strangers to technology. Not quite at the same level of digital native as their teenage counterparts, Millennials were still born into a time of pervasive, if not rapidly accelerating technological innovation. They are tech-savvy to say the least and maintain an open and adaptable approach to their swiftly changing personal and professional technologies. In fact, many Millennials believe themselves to be sort of tech "consultants" to their parents and elders, if not always by choice. Their knowledge is more often assumed than it is demonstrated or earned but Millennials find they are usually competent enough to resolve the issue at hand.

But the responsibilities of being the resident tech expert don't end with minor troubleshooting and the inevitable restart. Millennials are often called upon to define and/or explain slang, memes and hashtags that confound older or less-familiar Internet users. And since trends in tech and the Web are often correlated with what is considered cool, we asked Millennials what they think is cool nowadays and found that most of them reject such forms of categorization, preferring variety without labels or stereotypes. They insist that cool is doing what you want to do without rubbing anyone's face in it. Tolerance and freedom of expression are persistent themes for Millennials and brands looking to connect with them would do well to keep this in mind when developing shopper and product marketing strategies.

Millennials want freshness they can see at quick-service restaurants

With Americans spending more on dining out than they do on groceries, it's no surprise that teens and Millennials are frequenting quick-service restaurants (QSRs) more than ever. In order to help QSRs capitalize on this trend, we sought to better understand current impressions and behaviors surrounding their business, as well as what conveys quality to their young customers. Turns out that taste, location and price drive most Millennials in their QSR choice, prioritizing cravings and freshness over overtly healthy options. Since it ranked so highly, we further investigated Millennial and Gen Z perceptions of freshness, revealing that in-view prep and ingredients that resemble what's found in nature are what connote freshness.

"I associate fresh ingredients with food not previously made. Like a burger made with that bright red beef instead of a grey frozen patty. They slice the tomatoes, lettuce and pickles themselves and then assemble the burger."

– 25-year-old male, Lawrenceville, Ga.

Millennials were also sensitive to messaging that helps contribute to perceptions of freshness, including terms like "crisp" and "just picked," and they were particularly appreciative of a clean, friendly atmosphere. Advertisements and in-restaurant signage that reinforce this ambiance with bright colors and natural produce could help keep freshness top-of-mind, as well as align this impression with the QSR brand. It's a fine line QSRs have to tread between speed and quality but making freshness visible to consumers will help QSRs, including chains, go far with Millennials.

They're looking for a secure, convenient experience from banks

Digital banking is already a part of consumers' lives, with many relying on such services to track day-to-day account activity, read statements and manage payments. But banks looking to expand into more advanced digital services, like mortgages and wealth management, must consider how they would be received by customers that span multiple generations. And when we asked both Millennials (ages 21-34) and non-Millennials (ages 35-55) if they'd be open to conducting these more-involved banking processes online, Millennials were receptive but concerned. Some were enthusiastic about the prospect, eager to perform any and all non-cash transactions digitally. At the same time, for many respondents, fraud and potential for security breaches were their main barriers to adoption, though many also lamented the personalized assistance and advice that digital banking lacks.

But overall, the convenience and accessibility of digital banking is enough to interest Millennials in more advanced services, citing the pushy sales techniques and long waits of in-person banking as particularly frustrating. They just want more customer service and data security. Many insisted that live help would be necessary for any advanced digital banking solution, as respondents were very wary of performing more complicated, often confusing banking functions on their own. A few respondents suggested that up-front policies on the part of banks concerning procedures put in place to handle compromised accounts could help make customers feel more confident banking digitally.

Give you the advantage

Though they often get a bad rap among marketers, Millennials aren't going anywhere anytime soon. Benchmarking your perceptions and taking note of consumer trends will help give you the advantage necessary to understand this ever-evolving segment.

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●●● text analytics

Getting the lay of the land

Applying descriptive text analytics

| By Steven Struhl

snapshot

In part two of a two-part series on text analytics, Steven Struhl examines descriptive analytics.

In last month's article ("Patterns and relationships"), we discussed the important first steps in analyzing text. These include removing common words, known as stop words, that carry little semantic meaning. Another key step is correcting misspellings and making the tenses and endings of words uniform, so that variations of the same word do not get counted separately. This is called stemming. Some programs go further and try to determine the part of speech of a word – for instance, determining whether a word like "wax" is a noun or a verb. This process is known as lemmatization.

Finally, some programs go further and look for combinations of words that belong together, such as "not bad" or for names that need to be treated as a single item, such as "Iron Mountain Brewery." This last activity is called finding named entities.

Sometimes this whole process is called tokenization. These tokens are what the computer processes.

We reviewed how text gets into analyzable form. Most commonly one of two models would be used. First, the word-vector model treats each block of text being analyzed, or document, as one row in a spreadsheet. The words appearing in the document (that have been stemmed and minus the common stop words) define the columns. The other method, the sequential model, looks for words that appear near each other, within a certain predefined number of words, within a document.

We also discussed how text can be used in a predictive model. These involve a target or dependent variable, typically something outside the blocks of text, such as an overall rating, or a behavior, like renewing an account. These methods can provide powerful insights that help direct tactics.

Descriptive analytics show broader patterns. Predictive analytics are more like a map that get you to a destination. Descriptive analytics are more like a landscape, showing broad contours and features. This month's article reviews some of the applications of the descrip-

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170210.aspx

Figure 1

tive methods. Of the two alternative approaches, the descriptive ones appear to get far more use.

Cleans up the words

First and most familiar, we have the basic word cloud, or wordle. There actually is no analysis here, just counting, although the computer does work fast and furiously to put the words into place. Basically, this diagram just cleans up the words, counts them and makes the most prevalent ones the largest, packing everything into a compact space. You may see the words packed into a rectangle, but in Figure 1, we have an arrangement that looks something like an ailing grand piano. This comes from a study about health insurance and summarizes the main themes in hundreds of comments about what is on the minds of doctor's office managers. You can see that patients are foremost on their minds, followed closely by providers (or insurers). You can also see that the program doing the analysis was fooled by a plural form and both "patient" and "patients" are among the words it tallied.

This is a baseline analysis for images that show relationships among words. Word clustering creates a diagram where words that appear together most in the document or documents are closest.

The lengths of lines in the diagram correspond to how related the words were to each other – shorter distance is more related. This uses a standard clustering method, called Ward's method. This has a number of technical properties that make it work well with text. (We will skip those for now, thankfully.) The diagram in Figure 2 comes from another study about health insurance and reflects hundreds of verbatim comments about what could be improved. The words fall into 10 groups, which have been color-coded so that you can see what is most similar. If you read very carefully, you can see relationships. Figure 3 is a small portion of the diagram, expanded so you can see it more easily.

It this excerpt, you can see the words most associated with "problem." These include: imperial, the disguised name of the insurance provider; doctor; plan; network; increase; and behavioral (which means getting psychiatric services, now called "behavioral medicine" for strange reasons). These indeed do sum up the central problems of the poor office manager's life.

This type of word cloud is a spatial diagram showing how often words occur near each other. It builds on the word clustering we just saw, using a technique called multidimensional scaling (MDS) to create a layout of the co-occurrences of words within the sliding n-gram window. Bigger words are more frequent, words that occur together are closest and the colors represent the clusters that we found earlier.

The diagram in Figure 4 is from a similar insurance study where the words fell into just three groups. Note that words from different clusters can appear together in this diagram because it is attempting to collapse the many-dimensional space that the multidimensional scaling found into the two dimensions possible when we portray a diagram on paper. We can think of this as something like the shadows cast by a three-dimensional object on a flat surface, except that there are more than three dimensions.

If words are colored differently and they appear right near each other, they likely are not quite as similar as the diagram suggests. We can see clearly that providers and patients again are most important – and that they definitely fall into the same group. Note that the insurer, disguised again as Imperial, is in the same group as incentive and pocket (as in "out of pocket") and nothing else. This by itself tells us something.

Help delineate groupings

We can do many similar diagrams. We can draw covers or boundaries around the groups of words, which may help delineate groupings. We can make graph layouts of the words, which draw connectors, so that we can see which words are most connected to others. Words with a lot of connections have a high degree or a high amount of centrality – and so are important concepts. These other charts are largely variations on a theme, highlighting different aspects of connections among words. Typically, it is best to generate all of these and select the one or ones that most strongly convey the patterns in the text you are analyzing. (You can see these variations in the book *Practical Text Analytics*.)

Not all treemaps are alike. As we mentioned earlier, the wordle is a type of conventional treemap that does not order the rectangles statistically. It simply packed words as closely as possible

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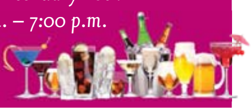
The Research Club's "Ice Breaker" Mixer Party
Monday, February 27th 6:00 – 9:30 p.m.
Separate registration required

Cocktails With Quirk's
Tuesday, February 28th
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.



Outdoor Yard Party with Lawn Games
Tuesday, February 28th
8:30 – 10:30 p.m.

Expo Hall Happy Hour
Wednesday, March 1st
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Southern CA MRA Networking Reception
Wednesday, March 1st,
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

MRA SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Brooklyn

The Research Club's "Ice Breaker" Mixer Party
Monday, March 20th 6:00 – 9:30 p.m.
Separate registration required

The MR Musical Jam Session
Tuesday, March 21st
8:30 – 10:30 p.m.

Cocktails With Quirk's
Tuesday, March 21st
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

New York MRA Networking Reception
Wednesday, March 22nd,
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

MRA NEW YORK

Expo Hall Happy Hour
Wednesday, March 22nd
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

QUIRK'S CONNECT 2017

A free mobile app and Web site that not only functions as a repository for all vital content of the event, it also acts as the social media hub and is designed to help attendees and exhibitors easily make connections – old and new.

Figure 2

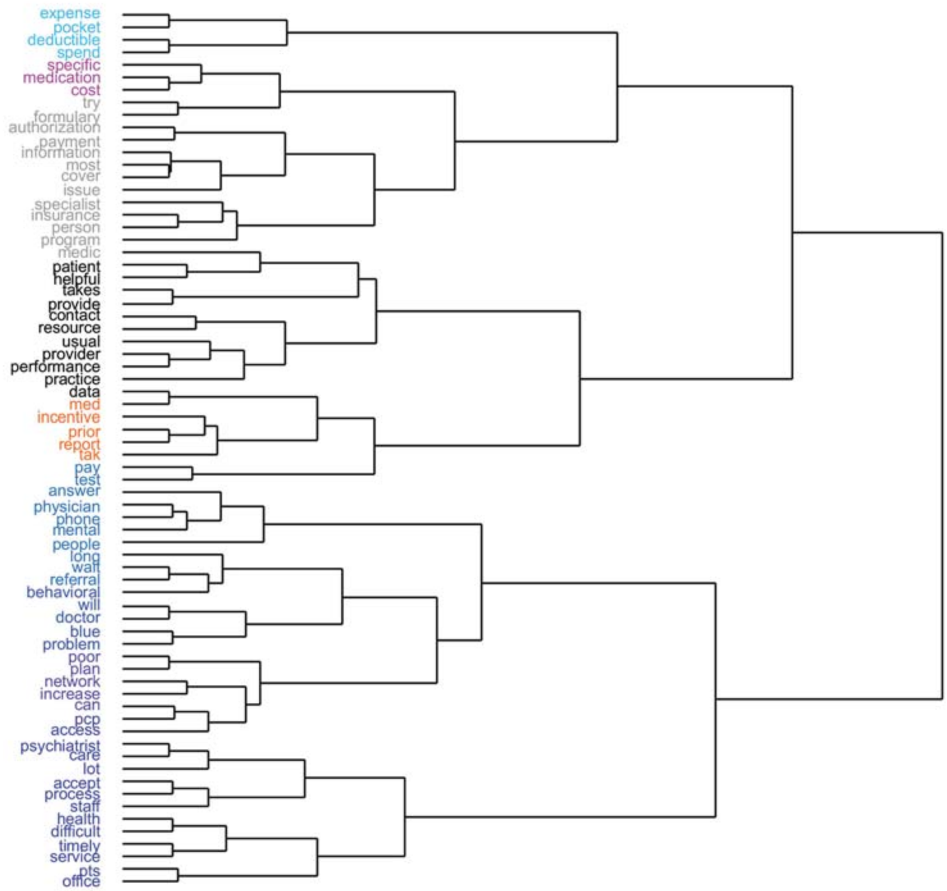
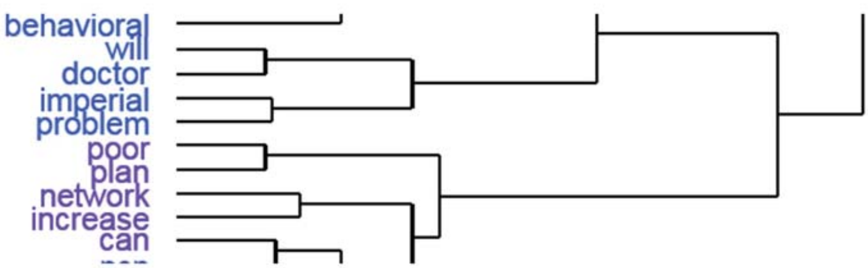


Figure 3



and sized them according to frequency. In the map in Figure 5, words are grouped so that similar words occur together. The sizes of the words and their surrounding rectangles also are proportional to their frequencies in the documents. Colors are based on the cluster analysis. Overlaying the clustering colors helps us check whether we have a sensible arrangement. If regions of rectangles are solidly one color, that increases our confidence that the cluster analysis found coherent patterns. In Figure 5, we can see this outcome – and groups that make sense.

If we look just at the section of the diagram surrounding one of the major themes, patient, we can see other highly related ideas (Figure 6). Wait is a key related concept, along with medication (captured in two ways as the stemmed word medic and as the common abbreviation, med). Other less-important concerns related to patients are staff and spend.

Overall, because it clearly shows groupings and the frequencies of words, this is a highly informational diagram. It is one of the best qualitative displays of the concerns expressed in a body of text and how they relate to each other.

Around the year 2000, finding words near a key word was the height of text analysis. In a really fancy program, you could pick out a word and all the other words that occurred around it would be reported. This of course is another kind of counting exercise. It gives a view of how many ideas link to each word and so gives a sense of whether the word connects to many other ideas. Many associated words show a word that is fundamental to the document. Figure 7 shows the words most closely associated with four specific key words in the same insurance study. Authorization (getting paid by the insurance company) is clearly more central than education in any of its forms.

Figure 4

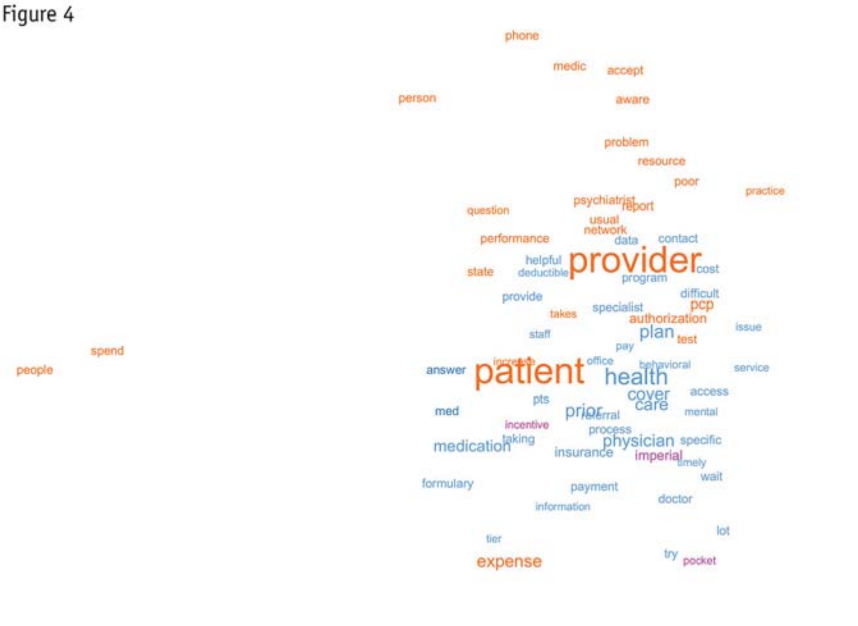
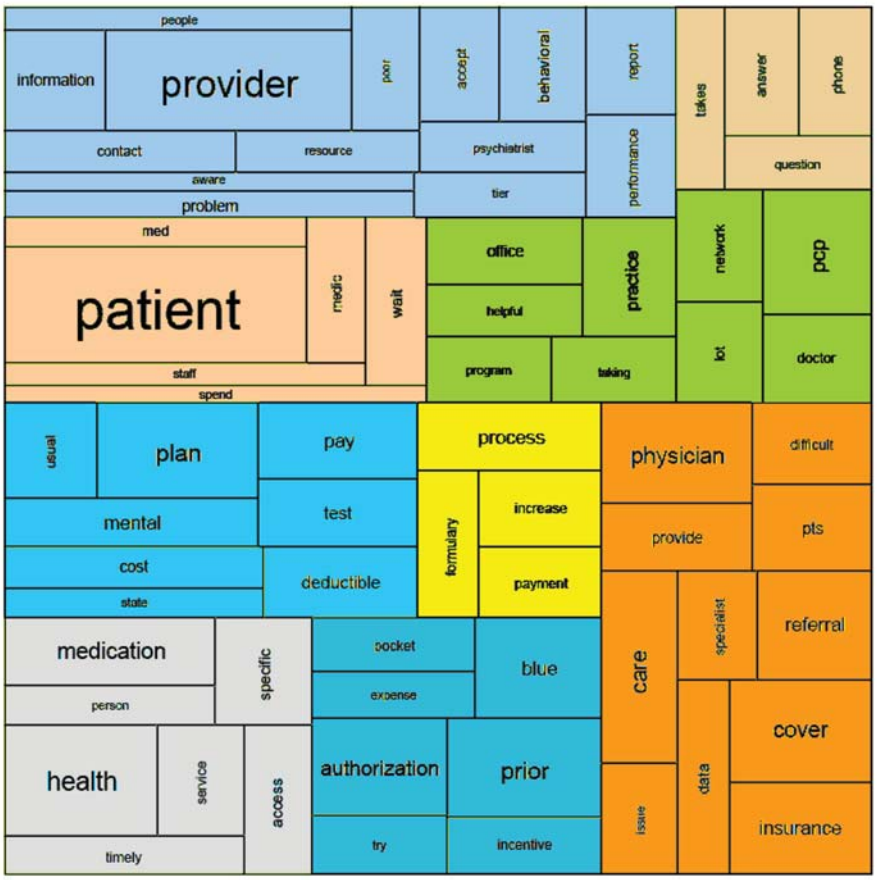


Figure 5



Two broad approaches

In this article and the one last month, we have shown a sampling of methods falling into each of these two broad approaches, the predictive and the descriptive. We aimed to give a sense of the different views they provide of what happens in a block of text, whether we are looking at hundreds or thousands of gathered verbatim responses or a complete document such as a book or a movie script.

Predictive approaches seek to find the words or combinations of words that forecast or explain patterns in a dependent variable, such as share of spending or overall rating. To get these powerful methods to work, you must have information other than the text itself – you must know something else about those who made the comments, whether it is a rating, an intention or a behavior.

Descriptive methods give more of an overall feeling or a lay of the land. While qualitative in nature, these can enhance understanding of themes and ideas in the text. Most text analyses appear to fall under this heading. They do not provide insights about whether the commentary is related to something that happens, whether it is an overall rating, intention or behavior.

The pictures and patterns revealed by descriptive methods can be highly engaging and help get discussions started. Still, when we do these analyses there is a key question: Are these supplemental or sufficient? That is what we need to decide.

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Figure 6

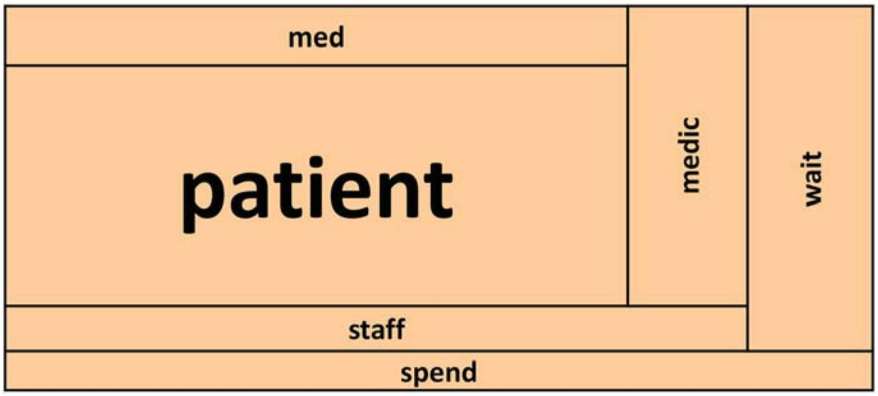

Figure 7

	Word	Associated Words
1	authorization	answer authorization calling card deal decrease diagnose direct easier education efficient eligibility extended guidance hardest hour implement information insurance looking medication medicine MRI nice patient people period prior problem read referral request requirement resource revisit simplify sooner suggestion test trained urgent wed
2	educate	able allow backdate company frequent online panel patient process real refer referral satisfy system
3	education	care delineation difference frequent improve information member patient process question refer referral responsibility specialist
4	educational	network requirement service

Toward a working definition

A proposal for a new research typology

| By C. Frederic John

snapshot

The author presents a system for thinking about and conducting marketing research projects.

The marketing research community faces many challenges today, ranging from whether the term "research" still retains any meaning to whether the research function can be expected to survive. Generally lost in the shuffle is the declining relevance of traditional ways of classifying "research" in the broadest sense of the term, encompassing commercial activity, such as marketing and advertising research, as well as polling and public policy or social research.

Organizing research into a logical system is far more than an academic exercise, because it forces us to set the boundaries of what to include under the research rubric and what to exclude. This is particularly important as the profession has expanded dramatically in recent years, with the emergence of new types of data, methods of collecting information, forms of analysis and ways of generating insights, while the role of the professional researcher has evolved to include consulting and other activities.

Historically, research has been segmented by multiple criteria, some binary, some more complicated. A few common ways in which research has been categorized include by:

- information source – secondary vs. primary
- projectable vs. not projectable – quantitative vs. qualitative
- data collection method – in-person, phone, online, mobile, etc.
- sample frame – general public, category users, etc.
- cost structure – custom, syndicated, shared-cost (omnibus)
- general business purpose – advertising, marketing, customer satisfaction, public policy, etc.
- marketing purpose – targeting, positioning, pricing, packaging, NPD
- type of output – segmentation, new product configuration, new package design
- type of data - survey, IDIs, social media, scanning, inventory control, etc.

Any one of these ways of slicing and dicing research can be useful in a particular situation,

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especially when comparing alternatives. And any given project or research report could be categorized using any number of these dimensions; for example, a quantitative study among heavy brand users for targeting purposes, using three of these criteria for classifying research.

But a single typology incorporating all these (and other) ways of slicing and dicing research would have thousands of cells and little utility. I believe, however, a single classifying system is not only useful in facilitating discussions and decisions but provides real value in understanding the brave new world we are entering.

Lost their validity

Developments over the past decade have grown the field to such an extent that traditional typologies have lost much of their validity. The resulting messiness suggests that a cleaner, more relevant, "unified theory" is called for that reflects the realities of the marketplace and can retain its relevance as things continue to evolve.

These developments are driven by two forces. One reflects the rapid increase in the types and methods of collecting and analyzing data, very often lumped together as "new tools." A second is the evolving role of the research professional from providing information (data and insights) to playing a more active role in guiding decisions. Inherent in this is the sense that the traditional neutral observer role of the researcher needs to be abandoned not only in dealing with clients but in the research process itself.

But crafting a new typology also means determining the boundaries – deciding what's inside and what's outside that which is to be considered. This is a sticky issue that generates considerable debate that is anything but academic. For example, it is forcing the revision of codes of conduct, affecting how research spend is calculated and changing the types of suppliers engaged by marketing departments.

Even more basically, devising a new classification system forces us to determine what aspect of the term "research" should drive the system. Is it research as a set of activities and procedures or as a set of outputs? The term is used in both ways: "We carried out an extensive research project…" "The research definitely shows that…"

Obviously, the term can be used in both ways. But it makes a huge difference in any classification attempt. Or it might demand two classification systems, one for research activities and another for research outputs. This would hardly be a simplification.

I suggest we approach the two meanings as two sides of the same coin. Research the *output* is the result of activities we include under the rubric of research activities. So one typology will suffice.

Why is any of this necessary or even relevant? Isn't it just an academic exercise that will become outmoded within a few years? On the contrary, the question is particularly critical now. Professional researchers are actively seeking to establish or reestablish their identity. Their roles are evolving, the death of research loudly proclaimed by many, while visions of the "researcher of the future" proliferate.

It appears to me that delineating the research function and establishing a more rational categorization system provide real value to understanding what our role in business and society really is, not only today, but what it can be in the future. Because I also believe that there is a central core to our role that does not mutate rapidly, if at all, and will remain essential to business and society regardless of the methods used, terminology employed to describe it or way in which it is structured or financed.

So, any definition of "research" needs to meet two criteria: delineates the full range of activities that are specifically germane, if not unique, to the research function; and encompasses the full range of research output.

Set its boundaries

As with any set or cluster, it is as important to set its boundaries both in terms of the commonalities that provide its identity as well as those aspects that mark it off from others. To start, we might consider the following question: What functions does the professional researcher carry out that would generally be considered a research activity? These would certainly include the following:

- assessing the objectives of an inquiry
- designing the inquiry, including selecting the appropriate data-collection method
- sampling
- writing the questionnaire, guide, etc.
- interviewing, moderating, leading discussions, etc.
- collecting or generating data or information from other types of sources
- processing and/or evaluating data/information collected or generated
- producing insights, conclusions and implications based on data or information collected
- writing reports
- presenting findings, conclusions, recommendations

What emerges from this exercise is that the role of the research professional involves either an intellectual component, the application of specific skills or, in many cases, both. But in order to be considered "research," many of these activities need to be part of a larger process that ultimately produces a piece of "research." For example, collecting data that are never analyzed should not be considered research. This is particularly important when considering the passive capture of information. A supermarket scanner that collects data that are never processed or interpreted can hardly be considered a research activity.

How about the consulting role provided by many researchers? In and of itself, this is certainly not unique to the researcher but is arguably an essential component of being a professional researcher. For that, one needs to look at context. Consulting/advice based on information/learning generated by another research activity (such as a survey) remains within the core of our profession. Advice based purely on experience, knowledge of a category or derived from anecdotal or the cursory gathering of opinion is not.

There are obviously fine lines and grey areas that might only be determined on a case-by-case basis. But in general, the creation and analysis of information by rigorous means must be part and parcel of the equation.

In terms of what to include as research output, I think we need to include any forms of data that are produced and treated in some way. This would cover data that have been aggregated or organized, analyzed or subjected to more vigorous analyses, as well as the display of these activities, whether on a screen or in cross-tabs, tables and charts, etc., or in written descriptions. It would also include written (or spoken) descriptions of insights and conclusions derived from the data, as well as implications and recommendations specific to the client.

Based on all of this, I propose two

somewhat extended definitions of the type of research we are discussing:

1. "Any activity directly involved in the careful, systematic study and investigation of a subject undertaken to discover or establish facts or general principles."

2. "Any results of such activity, including data that have been analyzed, organized or interpreted and written assessments of the learning that emerges from the new data or information that has been collected or generated."

Having decided upon what to include under the research rubric, we can finally return to the question of how this universe can best be sliced and diced.

Setting priorities

The key to establishing a new, rational, and useful research typology is essentially one of setting priorities. What criteria are really important in dividing up the field – both as activity and output – and what are secondary or even irrelevant? Here is my proposed solution.

The first basic dimension needs to reflect the accuracy of the output. Historically, we have looked at the projectability of the information to a defined universe as a measure of accuracy and quantitative methods as the means of achieving this. Many now argue that 1) projectable results are very difficult to produce and may be less meaningful than previously thought and 2) relevant learning can emerge from purely qualitative or subjective methods.

Taking the second point first, we need to consider the nature of different types of output – the what, the why and the what if.

In absolute terms, it makes a difference whether descriptions of reality (the what) produced by research are reflections of a larger marketplace reality or only reflect the perceptions/experiences of a subset that can't be projected onto the market as a whole. But there may be cases where clients may settle for an "indication" that is an imperfect measure of reality.

This perceived lack of relevance of representative sampling takes on even greater importance when the focus shifts from data to explanations of motivation (the whys), which are also often derived from qualitative means. Such an insight that arises out of a more rigorous exercise should probably be given more weight than one based on a pair of focus groups that may best be treated as hypotheses.

Future projections – particularly the likely response to a new offering – are by nature hypothetical and surrounded by caveats. But the degree to which these predictions are accurate, either within the market as a whole or among a specific group, is critical to their value to clients.

Finally, implications/recommendations/consulting are essentially freed from projectability, since they are not data but assessments of what course a company should pursue, based on multiple factors beyond data or information, including experience, understanding of the dynamics of the category, strengths of the brand and/or corporate reputation, etc.

So where does this lead us? I propose that one fundamental dimension of the new typology should reflect the probable accuracy of the output within a defined universe. This would fall on a continuum from highly probable to not at all probable.

For statistical data, this essentially coincides with projectability. But for information that arises from other types of means, such as the learning that emerges from focus groups, online communities or from other small or unrepresentative samples, or insights that emerge in the course of a project, projectability cannot be measured but only expressed in subjective terms. There may be good reason to believe a certain revelation is truly universal even if this cannot (yet) be proved. Simply assigning such a finding a low projectability score may not be doing it justice. But we can assess its probable accuracy.

This approach also mitigates the first barrier cited above – the practical problem of producing predictive sampling/producing projectable results.

The second dimension should reflect the basic nature of information capture or generation. Rather than enumerate a raft of methods, I propose this be boiled down to a single aspect – whether the capture/generation is active vs. passive. Traditional research behavior, built on the scientific method and willing participation of the respondent, assumed an active data capture. The emergence of other forms of information streams, such as social media, scanning data and other forms of big data, and tapping into these as sources of information and insights, has radically changed the landscape.

This is not to judge that active is superior to passive but that radically different approaches are employed between the two and quite distinct ways of evaluating the data and treating the results are required.

The third dimension should reflect basic purpose. Again, this should not be a laundry list of marketing or other goals but reflect the nature of the output itself. I propose a continuum that runs from assessment of factual information to the creation of something new.

At one end of the spectrum, you would have essentially the what data or information, regardless of source. It could be purchase data based on scanning, attitudinal information based on a questionnaire or focus group discussion, hotel satisfaction data based on a totally unrepresentative sample of visitors or self-reported product usage data, etc.

Further down the continuum you would get into the explanatory "why" information, which could be derived from multivariate analyses, IDIs or group sessions, exit polls, brain scans or other sources. Much of this would be devoted to motivation. But it would also include circumstantial information such as distribution or availability that play a large role in determining brands purchased. It would also include "insights" relating to deeper understanding of the underlying structure of a market.

Still further along on the continuum, you come to what-if or prediction aspects, such as tests of new concepts or products, followed by the creation of wholly new configurations through optimization techniques. Finally, you come to fully creative exercises, in which participants develop their own visions for products.

Where do we end up? With a three-dimensional cube, with each axis representing one of the three dimensions described above and broken into two or more parts. For the sake of discussion, imagine a cube with 18 cells, as follows:

Dimension 1: probable accuracy
Three pieces: high, moderate, low

Dimension 2: nature of capture
Two pieces: active, passive

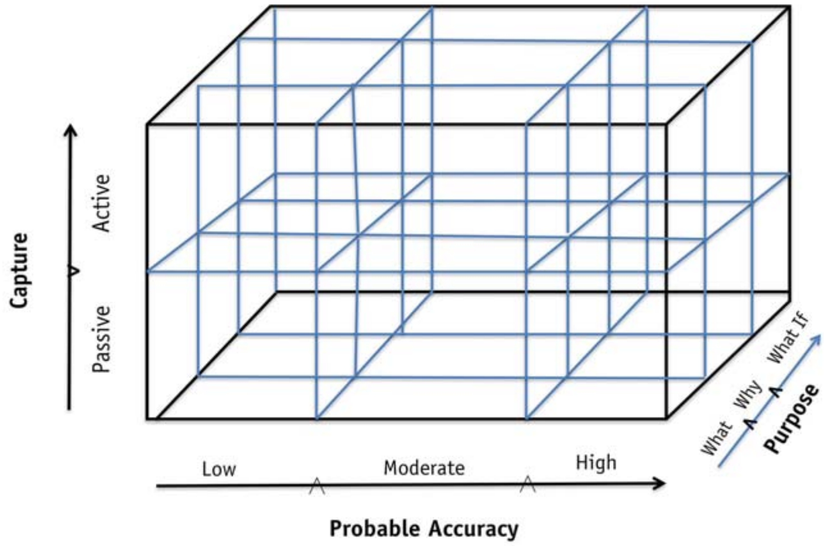
Dimension 3: ultimate purpose
Three pieces: what, why, what if

Accordingly, any research initiative or output can be assigned to (at least) one of these cells.

Simplifies our thinking

Just how useful is such a typology? I would suggest it greatly simplifies our

Figure 1



thinking and speaking about myriad types of research activity and output. Such a framework helps structure conversations with clients, who often have preconceived ideas of what they want done or get lost in discussions of multiple methodological approaches. In such discussions, and in our designing of projects, we can systematically run through the three dimensions and relatively quickly isolate the type of approach needed and then develop a plan to meet those criteria.

So the conversation might touch on these aspects:

- Just how accurate do the results have to be to meet your objectives?
- Can the information required to answer the objectives be best met from an active, primary research approach or can the answers be gleaned from existing information or other data streams?
- And just what type of information are we seeking along the continuum from "what" to "what if"?

Once determined, and agreed to, the design can be fleshed out, costed and approved.

Here are three hypothetical situations demonstrating how the typology could be successfully deployed.

CPG rebranding

A mouthwash manufacturer feels its brand is a me-too brand in a ho-hum category. It wants to conduct research that will help it find ways to bring excitement to the brand. In discussions with the research team, it is agreed that: best outcomes are creative ideas that will stimulate buzz; the project requires original research; and they should rely on "brand champions."

The researcher places the need within the typology as follows:

- Probable accuracy: low. Focus on totally unrepresentative sample.
- Nature of capture: active.
- Ultimate purpose: what-if/creating something new.

Once the cell is established, the researcher recommends establishing an online community of brand champions as the creative engine, with ongoing input and interaction with the client team.

B2B targeting

A U.K. provider of liability insurance to larger enterprises wants to expand into the small-business sector, focusing its efforts on the most rewarding segment. While information exists about the number and type of small businesses, no data are available about the use of, spending on or interest in purchasing liability insurance.

In discussions with the research team, it is agreed that: output must identify specific segment(s) of the market that are best targets; the results must be highly accurate; and only original research can provide the missing information, to be combined with census data.

The researcher places the need within the typology as follows:

- Probable accuracy: high. Large sample weighted to reflect census data.
- Nature of capture: active.
- Ultimate purpose: what.

The researcher recommends a large-scale market segmentation study based on a stratified random sample of a wide cross-section of small enterprises.

Hotel usage study

A global hotel chain with an active loyalty program wants to measure what factors drive overall usage (nights stayed and total spend) among its members. In discussions with the research team, it is agreed that: output will identify demographic, corpographic (for business travelers) and other variables that predict degree of usage; and the universe will be limited to current loyalty program members.

The researcher places the need within the typology as follows:

- Probable accuracy: fairly high, reflecting membership base.
- Nature of capture: passive. Existing data sources sufficient.
- Ultimate purpose: why.

The researcher proposes an intense analysis of multiple data sources, including hotel usage and spend, information provided on the original loyalty membership application and information that can be purchased regarding individual members. The ultimate purpose would be to identify predictors of heavy hotel usage

Stimulates further discussion

I am confident many will take issue with various aspects of what I am proposing – with the criteria for determining what is and is not research, with the three dimensions of the typology and the ways in which they can be divided. That is fine. My purpose has been to demonstrate the value of and need for such a system, not to offer the one-and-only solution. If this piece stimulates further discussion and alternative definitions and typologies, I will feel I have accomplished what I set out to do.

C. Frederic John is principal and founder of Consilience Research & Consulting LLC, Bronxville, N.Y. He can be reached at 914-653-6583 or at fred@consilienceresearch.com.

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40 years, 40 lessons learned

Advice from a veteran researcher

| By Doug Berdie

snapshot

From sampling to significance tests, Doug Berdie imparts hard-won tips and insights from four decades as a researcher.

Having conducted marketing research for 40+ years, many "truths" have become apparent to me. These lessons have wide applicability, having been learned across many different industries, many countries and cultures and across business-to-business and business-to-consumer settings. I'd like to share these insights in the hope they will save less-experienced practitioners from having to learn them the hard way.

General marketing research themes

1. Validity is the Achilles' heel of marketing research. Predictive validity is especially weak – mostly because companies change their strategies and tactics so often it's not possible to see whether early measurements actually predict later outcomes. My April 2016 *Quirk's* article ("A better use of your time") shows, for example, that customer satisfaction scores are not a valid way to predict financial outcomes. In addition, psychological studies of "influence" show that people often simply attribute their decisions to post facto rationales rather than to what really influenced their decision (often, because they do not even know what that was). We've also seen that people's estimates of such things as how long they were on hold before reaching a call-center service representative or how long they were in a store before a salesperson greeted them have little relation to actual measures obtained from phone logs and videos. Are answers to these types of questions estimates of actual time or indications of the degree of frustration experienced? It's hard to say. Marketing researchers must never blindly assume that what they are actually measuring is what they intend to measure.

2. Reliability can be maximized in marketing research. Using time-tested research methods does yield consistency in marketing research measures and that is one of the hallmarks of reliable data. Well-documented, repeated sampling designs; high response rates to surveys; consistent field observation procedures; survey questions and formats that measure the same thing (across people and across time); and consistency in how data are analyzed and reported all are

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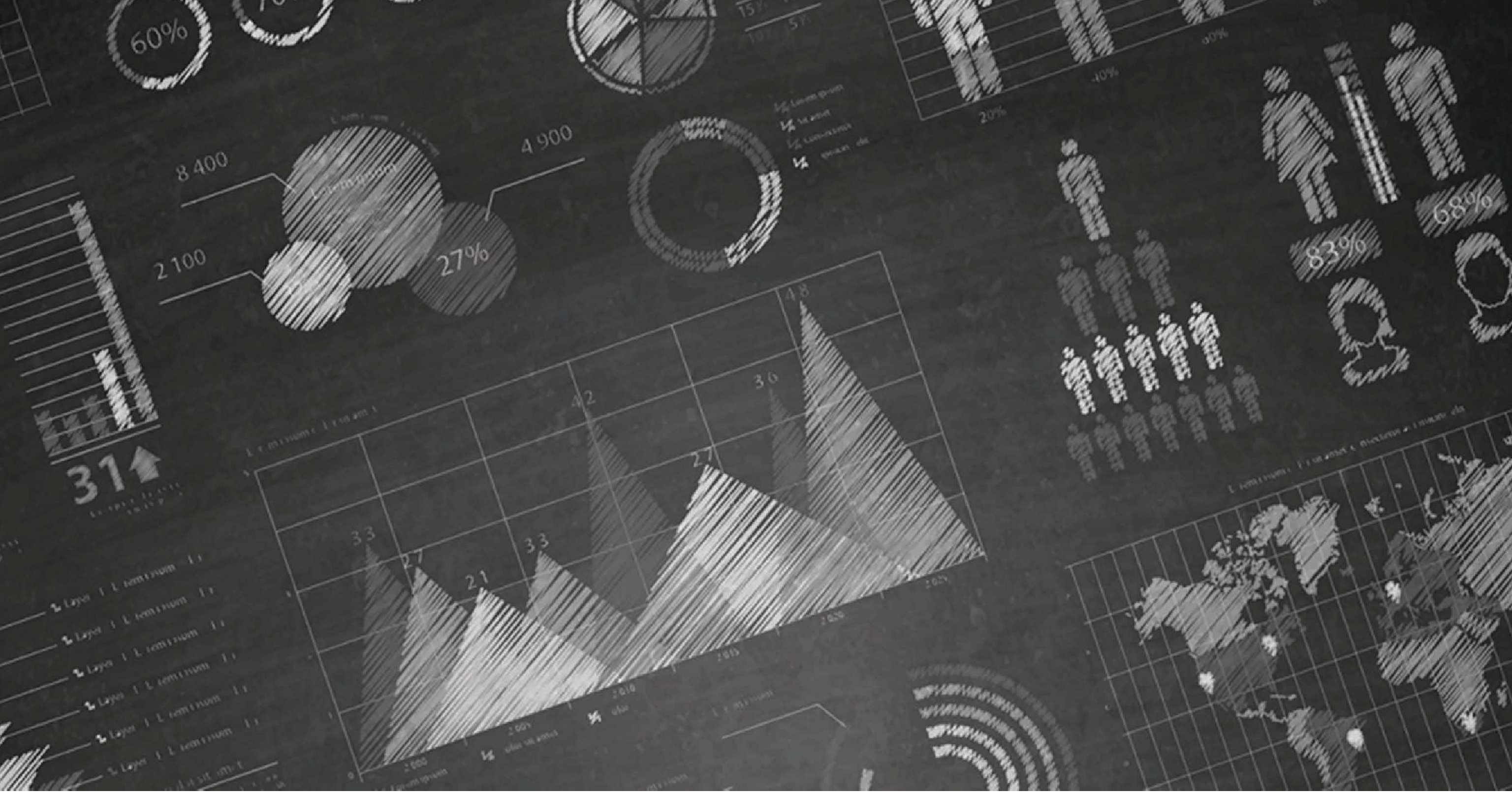

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attainable objectives and heighten the credibility and usefulness of marketing research data. Although research objectives change, retaining some core measures across time allows for longitudinal comparisons that generate more confident conclusions. Even with sound research designs, reliability will always be suboptimal.

3. Marketing research fads: here today, gone tomorrow. Management consultants make money by deriving new or repackaged research approaches. Hence, customer value analysis was popular for several years, yet is rarely seen these days. "SERVQUAL" was used extensively years ago for customer satisfaction research yet has largely disappeared. The more recent hot fad is relying strongly (or, in some cases, exclusively) on "recommend" questions in customer experience surveying (which has morphed from customer satisfaction surveying and customer loyalty surveying). As all these fads come and go (usually because they cannot demonstrate they validly predict anything of value), it's wise to remember the marketing research industry has been built on the sound fundamentals of scientific research (representative samples, well-articulated questioning, rigorous and appropriate analysis and clear and insightful presentations and recommendations). Sticking to sound principles yields the best results.

4. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Some marketing researchers are skilled at operations, others in research design and analysis, others in sales and others in management. Places exist for all these skill sets. It is relatively rare to find people who are strong in a variety of these skills. Teams containing all these skill sets produce the best research.

Clarity regarding research objectives

5. Getting the best data is not always the primary objective. For example, companies with many retail outlets may be striving to change their customer service culture by instituting store-specific satisfaction surveys so each store can gauge how well it is doing and take remedial actions where needed. In these cases, maximizing store participation is the overall objective and to do that, alternative versions of a survey may be required. Although using different versions of a survey (e.g., some with five rating scale points and some with three scale points; some in English and some in Spanish, etc.) may be suboptimal from an analytical standpoint, ways exist to maximize the quality of even these data – while facilitating the overall objective of the research.

Overall research design

6. The customer is almost always right. Marketing research professionals are often upset when clients reject the proposed research method. However, when my clients have understood my recommendation and the rationale behind it and, nonetheless, rejected it, their rejection has usually turned out to be well-founded. Although my research acumen may exceed theirs, their knowledge of what will be well-received in their organization exceeds mine. "Good research" well-received, with the results used to make decisions, trumps "outstanding research" that sits on a shelf.

7. What works in Sweden may not work in Uganda. How people in different countries use ratings scales, view their jobs, etc., varies considerably. For example, people in Nordic countries are harder graders than those in Mediterranean countries. People in Asian countries are less likely to use the full set of options in a rating scale. A higher percentage of Europeans than Americans view a life-work balance as being important. So, if the same surveys are used across all these cultures and the analyses do not take account of these cultural differences, the results can be very misleading. Hence, when business decisions (and compensation issues) are tied to these data, extreme care must be taken.

Defining samples

8. The quality of client-provided sample lists always disappoints. It is often so poor as to offer little comfort regarding its representativeness. Purchased lists are not much better. It is, therefore, usually necessary to use great creativity to find ways to get representative samples.

9. Seek and ye shall find. It is not true that the people highest up in an organization always have the information you are seeking. For example, the belief that surveying plant managers will yield the best data about day-to-day manufacturing operations is misguided. Careful pre-survey work (e.g., a few phone interviews) will reveal who really has the information. Those should be the people surveyed.

Determining sample sizes and data precision

10. Budget, research objectives and mathematics determine the correct sample sizes. There is no single formula that is correct for all situations. So, do not merely use a "sample size" table in reference books that, in reality, only applies to one situation and is misleading for others. The correct sample size to select is a combination of how much data precision is required and available budget.

11. The type of question dictates the correct formula for obtaining precision estimates. A dichotomous question requires a different formula than a five-point rating scale and a question asking for a numeric value (e.g., one's age) as a response requires yet a different formula. So, a survey (which will usually contain many types of questions) will require many formulas, each of which will yield its own precision estimate. To present accurate sampling precision estimates, one needs to present an estimate for each question.

12. Sampling precision numbers are, at best, very rough estimates. When survey results tout accuracy "within plus/minus 3.7 percent," chuckle and take that with a huge grain of salt. The formulas that generate those numbers assume the sample data have come from truly random samples where 100-percent response rates were achieved – two criteria marketing researchers never come close to achieving. So, the farther away from a true random sample, and the lower the response rate, the sillier it is to present sampling precision estimates at all, especially with numbers including decimal points! Furthermore, let's also be clear that the precision estimates from, say, a yes-or-no question are not "plus/minus X percent" but rather are "plus/minus X percentage points." If, for example, 50 percent of a sample say "yes," incorrectly stating "plus/minus 5 percent" (.50 x .05 = .025) results in a conclusion of "47.5% – 52.5% percent," while correctly stating "plus/minus 5 percentage points" results in "45% - 55%." It does make a difference.

13. Response variance greatly affects precision. Questions eliciting homogeneous responses provide greater precision (with the same number of respondents) than do questions eliciting responses with great variance. The bottom line here is there are many more variables than just "the number of completed surveys" that dictate precision estimates, so without presenting an estimate for each question, misleading interpretations result.

Nonresponse bias and response representativeness

14. The potential for nonresponse bias exists in all modes of surveying. This means online, phone, in-person and mail all need to address this potential problem. Using "replacement" samples does not solve the problem, it often only masks it – making it even more pernicious. The only way to reduce nonresponse bias to a "comfortable" degree is to get high response rates (of at least 50 to 60 percent).

15. Demographic representativeness does not guarantee representativeness of response to survey questions. Lack of interest, or negative (or positive) feeling may be what is driving the nonresponse.

16. Proper use of follow-up procedures can almost always stimulate acceptable response rates. Hence, leave plenty of time in the project schedule to implement them. For phone surveys, callbacks will be needed. Phone calls are also an effective way to follow-up with mail and online survey nonrespondents – in addition to additional mail and online contacts.

17. It is still possible to obtain exceptionally high response rates. In 2015, I obtained a mail survey response rate of 84 percent by using proven tactics of: a short questionnaire; clear, reasonable questions; and follow-ups. Don't believe the naysayers who claim that high response rates can no longer be obtained.

18. It's silly to expect high response rates when the topic being queried is of little interest to people. So, asking people to stop at a kiosk, for example, just as they clear customs in Vietnam (as I was asked to do) is unlikely to get a reasonable response rate.

Types of data collection

19. Online surveys share many characteristics with mail surveys. Both are self-complete surveys. Hence, there is much to learn from the history of mail surveys regarding question wording, etc., that should be examined and applied to online surveys. At present, many practitioners of online surveys are not aware of this wealth of empirical knowledge. They should be.

20. Panels will always be panels – and subject to their limitations. The lack of representativeness (participation in many cases being driven by incentives) and lack of attentiveness in responding are always concerns that need to be considered when relying on panels. Panels are not a substitute for true random samples.

21. Beware of big data. The underlying assumption of statistical analysis is that you need to state in advance what you are looking for and define acceptable levels of statistical error. Throwing all data into an analytical potpourri, spinning the wheel to see what comes out and accepting that as insight violates this key assumption and leads to lots of Type 1 statistical errors, merging of varying types of data, combining data of varying quality and confusing correlation with causation. It also leads to the erroneous application of group data to individuals. Big data may be useful for generating hypotheses and ideas for further analysis (that then lead to properly conducted analysis) but it's not all it's made out to be in terms of generating conclusive insights. Big data has its place but beware of claims that overstep what that place is.

Survey question-wording

22. Question stems should present all response options. Failure to do so biases responses. For example, the question stem, "Do you favor more, the same amount or less funding for road maintenance?" can lead to results that vary by as much as 28 percentage points from when only one option is in the stem: "Do you favor more funding for road maintenance?"

23. Even subtle changes in question wording can have large effects. Careful pretesting is essential to see and deal with these effects before they occur. For example, 57 percent gave a favorable rating to "Hillary Clinton," whereas only 49 percent did for "Hillary Rodham Clinton." Similarly, in a survey related to freedom of the press, only 27 percent approve of "censorship," whereas 66 percent approve of "more restrictions."

24. Don't let statisticians overly influence how questions are worded. If you ask questions "to suit the analysis" but that people cannot reliably answer, you have gained nothing. Most people cannot provide accurate answers to interval-level questions – even though analyzing them is easy. They can, for the most part, answer rank-order questions and are very good at answering categorical questions. A stated opinion is not necessarily a thoughtful/accurate one. So, do pretesting to find out what people actually can answer. Statisticians are paid to figure out creatively how to analyze data that may not be in the order they most desire.

Survey rating scales

25. Assign verbal anchors for each scale point. Don't just label the endpoints. If you can't come up with verbal anchors that make sense for each scale point, it's a good indication you have too many scale points and that respondents won't be able to see the differences clearly either.

26. Don't feel limited to one- or two-word scale-point anchors. For the "would you recommend" question, having options such as, "Would recommend even if I'm not asked," "Would recommend but only if I'm asked," "Would recommend against but only if I'm asked" and "Would go out of my way to recommend against" obtain much more insightful answers than the standard one-word anchors used.

27. Rating scale labels greatly affect responses. The more extreme the endpoint labels, the fewer people will select them. So, labeling the endpoints of a satisfaction scale with Extremely Satisfied and Extremely Dissatisfied results in fewer people selecting those options than if labeled Very Satisfied and Very Dissatisfied. Similarly, an importance scale with the endpoints labeled The Most Important and Not at All Important will generate fewer of those responses than one labeled Very Important and Not Very Important. Using strongly-worded endpoints generates the most insightful data.

28. Ranking questions are less useful than rating questions. They do not allow respondents to apply the same rank to more than one option – even though they may be of equal importance and, hence, yield data that do not reflect the person's real view. Also, people violate instructions and only rank some of the items and, in some cases, actually indicate the same rank for multiple items. There is no reasonable way to deal with these anomalies when analyzing the results. If you treat such violations as missing data, it's tragic because you throw out responses when you know exactly how the person feels. Use rating scales instead. Adding strong endpoint labels will accomplish what ranking questions attempt to do.

29. Consider trade-off designs instead of simple rating scales. Conjoint, discrete choice and max-diff question formats have the advantage that respondents are forced to trade off the various attributes of interest and, by doing so, actual ratio-level data can be obtained showing, for example, that Attribute A appears to be twice as influential in a decision as is Attribute B. Another advantage of these designs is they force the ultimate clients to consider during the design phase the variations in detail for the questions, which helps insure the resulting data are useful.

Data analysis

30. More data do not equal more insight. The real insight from research data comes from boiling them down. So, beware when piles of banner tables are presented instead of short, summary sentences that state what the research results mean.

31. Be careful of "that damn denominator." The old adage, "One can prove anything with statistics" is largely a result of fiddling around with various denominators until finding one that yields the desired result. Even when analyses are not problematic, choice of the wrong denominator can yield misleading results. Some canned software packages present data from both relative frequencies and adjusted frequencies – with the former using a denominator of all people who were surveyed and the latter using as denominator only those people who responded to that particular question. Sometimes one of those is most useful and other times that same denominator may be totally irrelevant and misleading.

32. Carefully examine the variance in data. If 200 people are surveyed with a five-point scale and 100 give a response of 1 and the other 100 give a response of 5, the implication is entirely different than if all 200 people had given a 3 – even though the average response in both cases is 3.

33. Verbatims are where the action is. Properly-worded and sparingly-used verbatims 1) describe the effects people feel from actions being taken, 2) detail the exact problems and benefits of a situation so they are clearly understood, 3) describe solutions to problems and 4) convey the degree of emotion around certain situations. Also, verbatim responses add spice and clarity to research reports and presentations.

Statistical significance tests and estimation

34. Clients want to know the size of differences between/among groups. Just knowing there is a difference is not helpful. The common practice of merely conducting statistical significance tests is, therefore, misguided. After all, with large enough sample sizes even a difference of one to two percentage points will be statistically significant. But marketers and decision makers need to know how large the difference is when deciding whether to spend money in certain ways. To provide this more insightful guidance, analyses should be conducted that provide confidence intervals that estimate how precise the collected data are. Reporting the results as ranges most facilitates decision-making.

35. Statistical significance tests and confidence intervals can be jiggered to produce any desired effect. For example, a significance test showing a significant difference using an 80 percent confidence level may not show a significant difference using a 95 percent confidence level – with the exact same data. And, a confidence interval could be +/- 3 percentage points at an 85 percent confidence level while being only +/- 10 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. Because of this, 1) it's critical to state in advance of any test or precision estimate which confidence level will be used as a basis for decision making and 2) one must always report the confidence level used when reporting the results of significance tests or confidence intervals.

36. Statistical significance is not the same as practical significance. A very small difference between/among groups may have no real impact on decisions – even if the difference is statistically significant. Conversely, a larger difference (that is not statistically significant because of a small sample size) may provide valuable direction for future business activities. One should not merely scan down banner tables and circle those that show statistical significance while ignoring the others. Instead, one should look at the size of the differences and, only then, be concerned with whether they are statistically significant. If they are not, one may still want to subject those variables to further research.

Making research results useful/actionable

37. Presenting preliminary data is essential. Early, preliminary data are almost always better than more complete data delivered late. Early peeks at the data allow decision makers to start their decision-making process. They can amend it, if needed, as more complete data arrive. And, experience has shown that the final data almost always closely mirror the preliminary data – minimizing any decision changes that may need to be made.

38. Balance academic integrity with actionable advice. Academics often waffle with statements such as, "On the one hand ..." whereas business decision makers want concrete answers to questions like, "What do you think I should do?" Researchers owe it to their clients to offer their thoughts. Having lots of data to support those thoughts is wise but presenting too much all at once can confuse the issue unnecessarily.

39. Business reasons may preclude all data seeing the light of day. Even when you have found serendipitous "good news," the client contact may fear that sharing it with upper management could have negative effects – for a variety of reasons. Do not be surprised if this happens. It's usually best to ask clients to sign off on any special "value added" analyses you may be considering conducting.

40. Don't use customer satisfaction scores to compensate people. This applies to both employees and channel partners. Rather, compensate them for what actually improves customer service and satisfaction, which is the design and implementation of approved quality-improvement initiatives.

Doug Berdie is president of Consumer Review Systems, a Minneapolis research firm. He can be reached at dberdie1@msn.com.

special advertising section

8 TOP BRANDING RESEARCH COMPANIES

Every brand wants to win over consumers, but their minds, attitudes and preferences are constantly changing. If you're looking to keep your brand up-to-date with consumers, a branding research company can help.

With the right branding research company, you can guarantee your brand stays relevant with consumers' needs and expectations. These companies can help you understand the mind of the consumer and assist with any and all decision-making that will affect your brand performance. Branding research can help narrow down and pinpoint the right audience for your brand and give you the tools to develop brand experiences that are targeted to them. Worried about the competition? Don't be! A branding research company can help you stand out among your competitors and ensure that your brand comes out on top. And as your brand is exposed and out in the world with consumers, these companies will help keep your brand performance going strong so you can continue meeting consumer expectations. So if you need a research company that can improve your brand image or continue to keep it relevant, contact one of these companies.

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170233.aspx

Ameritest®
see what others don't

Ameritest/CY Research

Founded 1989 | 41 employees
Chuck Young, CEO

Ameritest's data-driven insights assess both the visual and verbal territories that a brand can own, ways to tell the brand's story and how to bring that story to life. We know that a brand is a collection of memories built by the consumer. Through our patented process, we determine what message consumers are receiving, what brand memories they're building and if those align with the brand's intended communication. We help brands find opportunities that are a natural fit, where they can

stretch and help them avoid pushing too far. And, our methodology doesn't box in the creative.

Phone 505-856-0763
www.ameritest.com

Campos Inc.

Founded 1986 | 30 employees
A.J. Drexler, CEO

As a market research and strategy firm, Campos Inc. delivers expertise in brand planning and strategy that's rooted in a deep understanding of clients' customers. Our seasoned market researchers work collaboratively with brand planners and strategists, making us uniquely equipped to support clients throughout the brand discovery and development process. We're well-versed in established and emerging research techniques and our brand strategists bring considerable experience across a wide range of categories, companies and business challenges. From the discovery of compelling insights to the development of differentiated brand platforms, we are a full-service solution for your brand research and strategy needs.

Phone 412-471-8484
campos.com

Turning Intelligence into Opportunity

The Dieringer Research Group Inc.

Founded 1974 | 82 employees
Lanie Johnson, CEO

The Dieringer Research Group (the DRG) is a marketing research and consulting firm that turns market intelligence into opportunities. For over 40 years, we've been gathering intelligence customized to our clients' needs that empowers them to make smart decisions and grow their business.

We believe that to steer a brand toward continued growth, marketers need to monitor their brand health and understand the role their brand plays in consumers' hearts and minds. Through our brand research, we identify opportunities to help businesses increase awareness, differentiate themselves in a crowded market, build their reputation and attract more customers.

Phone 888-432-5220
www.thedrg.com/brandresearch

Isobar Marketing Intelligence

(formerly Copernicus and Forbes Consulting Group)

Founded 2016 | 50+ employees
Ivan Rocabado, VP, Client Partner

We are Isobar Marketing Intelligence – a practice area of Isobar, a first-in-class global digital agency helping brands fully understand their consumers in ways never before possible. We do this by bringing together emotional, behavioral and cognitive sciences which, when combined with the creative talents of our agency, generate profound insights and inspire unique strategies and solutions. We are recognized for our segmentation and emotional testing approaches. We operate as a full-service marketing consulting and research firm with offices in Boston, Lexington (MA), Westport (CT), New York and Chicago.

Phone 617-449-4490
isobarmarketingintelligence.com

NameQuest Inc.

Founded 1984
John Hoeppner, President

NameQuest is the first and most experienced company dedicated solely to verbal brand name development and research worldwide. The NameQuest Verbal DNA methodology is the most advanced and validated process of brand name development and research for products, services and companies. NameQuest's proprietary methodology is the world's only practice to apply data mining and research norms as a part of the process. "The goal of effective brand naming is to choose a product name that reflects and fits the customers' needs so precisely that the name sells the product." - John Hoeppner, President, NameQuest Inc. - Affiliate Offices Worldwide

Phone 480-488-9660
www.namequest.com

Phoenix Marketing International

Founded 1999 | 150 employees
Allen R. DeCotiis, Ph.D., CEO

Phoenix Marketing International helps clients improve their branding and communications, create and refine the products and services which they deliver and validate the delivery on those commitments.
Our proprietary AdPi® and BrandPi® platforms serve as frameworks to understand advertising performance and brand health in your category. Related historical ad performance norms (nearly 3 million of cross-category/cross-channel creative evaluations), along with predictive models and advanced analytics bring clarity to decision-making and positively impact bottom lines. Research is reborn every day at Phoenix, always pushing the industry

by applying new approaches, tools and techniques - resulting in faster, more disruptive insights.

Phone 845-876-8228
phoenixmi.com/solution/communications-brand

RTi Research

Founded 1979 | 55 employees
David Rothstein, CEO

RTi helps turn insight into action. We are an innovative, global full-service market research and brand strategy agency and for more than three decades, our clients have counted on us to connect the dots, tell the story and influence action. We are an AMA Gold Top 50 company and a Connecticut Top Workplace. Clients come to RTi seeking higher level involvement, more insightful thinking and extraordinarily attentive service; they stay because we deliver – we support their success. For more on how to leverage your brand for growth, please download our e-book on brand extensions at rtiresearch.com/ebook-signup.

Phone 203-324-2420
www.rtiresearch.com

SSI (Survey Sampling International)

Founded 1977 | 4,000+ employees
Chris Fanning, President and CEO

SSI is the premier global provider of data solutions and technology for consumer and business-to-business survey research. SSI reaches participants in 90+ sample countries via Internet, telephone, mobile/wireless and mixed-access offerings. SSI staff operates from 40 offices and remote staff in 20 countries, offering sample, data collection, CATI, questionnaire design consultation, programming and hosting, online custom reporting and data processing. SSI's 4,000+ employees serve more than 3,000 clients worldwide.

Phone 203-567-7200
www.surveysampling.com

Names of Note

In Memoriam...

■ Pollster, columnist and public opinion analyst **Louis Harris** died on Dec. 17 in Key West, Fla., at the age of 95. Harris founded *Louis Harris & Associates*, which carried out market research for *Johnson & Johnson*, *American Airlines* and the *New York Stock Exchange*, in 1956. The company was sold to investment firm *Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette* in 1969 and to *Gannett* in 1975, though Harris continued as chief executive until his retirement in 1992. A merger of *Louis Harris & Associates* and the *Gordon S. Black Corporation* in 1996 produced *Harris Interactive*, based in New York. *Nielsen* acquired Harris Interactive in 2014.

■ **Carlos Harding**, deputy CEO of *Ipsos*, died on Dec. 9 in Paris. Harding was also an *LT Participations* board member, an Ipsos Partners shareholder and a member of the Ipsos management board. Harding joined Ipsos in 1991 as international manager, in charge of developing and strengthening the company's international network, and in 1993 was given responsibility for the company's corporate development. He became chairman of Ipsos in Latin America in 1998.

■ **Wyndy Greene Smelser**, senior vice president of the Life Sciences practice for behavioral sciences consulting firm *CMI*, died on Dec. 17 due to complications from heart surgery.

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170213.aspx

■ Researcher *Cint*, headquartered in Stockholm, has appointed **Kevin Gianatiempo** as senior vice president of strategic partnerships and alliances. He will be based at the firm's San Francisco office, which launched in September.


Gianatiempo

■ Cross-device marketing technology firm *Tapad*, New York, has appointed **Igor Elbert** as vice president of data science.

■ Philadelphia research data collection services firm *Focus Pointe Global* has appointed **Pam Maltby** as chief business development officer.

■ Boston-based research and branding agency *Protobrand* has appointed **Peter Costa** as VP of client services.

■ In London, researcher *Lightspeed* has made eight promotions across its EMEA operations, including **Derek Gibson**, who will become director operations, France and United Kingdom. Additionally, **Michael Werner** has been promoted to client operations manager, Netherlands, while **Margreet Sasburg**, **Björn Ludwig** and **Andreas Hagn** have been promoted to team leader, MRA. **Mariana Monroy** and **Alban Zinsou** have been promoted to team leader, enterprise, and **Marcus Chen** has been promoted to senior research manager, Lightspeed All Global.

■ *Unisys*, a Blue Bell, Pa., information technology company, has appointed **Ann Sung Ruckstuhl** as senior vice president and CMO.

■ **Magid Abraham**, co-founder of Reston, Va., firm *comScore*, has resigned from the firm's board of directors due to other engagements.

■ **Sheena Bacon** has been named vice president of operations for Nashville, Tenn., company *20|20 Research*.

■ U.K. consumer insight agency *Join the Dots* has added six graduates to the dotAcademy, its in-house training and coaching center. The firm adds new graduates to its team each year who initially join the Graduate Training Programme for six months of training and are then promoted into the company's research teams.

■ Atlanta-based customer solutions firm *SeeLevel HX* has appointed **Donna Goodwin** as senior project director.

■ *Harpeth Marketing*, Franklin, Tenn., has appointed **Whitney Duprey** as marketing account manager.


Duprey

■ In Jupiter, Fla., *Morgan Investors*, the holding company for research companies *Quick Test/Heakin*, *Discovery Research Group* and *3Q Global*, has reported a reorganization affecting all three entities, with changes made to personnel. **Lori Weingarten** has been appointed as executive vice president of Morgan Investors, overseeing sales and operations for 3Q Global and Discovery Research Group. Stepping into Weingarten's former SVP role at Quick Test/Heakin are **Christy Crossan**, vice president, client services, and **Tracey Seitz**, vice president, operations. **Scott Sherman** has been appointed as VP, controller at Quick Test/Heakin and **Adam Breidenbaugh** as VP, information technology. **Robert Higginson**, VP of business development, has made a move from Discovery Research Group to 3Q Global, where he will help facilitate new sales for both companies. **Chauncy Bjork**, former VP/GM at Discovery Research Group, has been appointed as VP of information technology and analytics at Discovery Research Group.

■ *Simmons Research*, New York, has appointed **Steve Dennen** as vice president and head of partnerships.

■ Auburn Hills, Mich., researcher *Gongos Inc.* has appointed **Jason Muxlow** as vice president, technology.


Muxlow

■ In Dubai, UAE, researcher *Toluna* has appointed the following: **Abboudy Gogo** as client service team manager; **Rania Ayoub** as client service manager; and **Sakina Mannan** as account manager.

■ Marketing agency *Merkle*, Columbia, Md., has appointed **Ankur Jain** as vice president, analytic platforms.

■ **Marek Lipinski** has joined *Circle Research*, London, as client manager.


Lipinski

■ **Anders Bengtsson**, CEO of Boston-based research and branding consultancy *Protobrand*, has acquired majority share in the company after completing a buyout of **Phil Granof**, the firm's former co-founder and chairman. Additionally, the firm has added new investors and has appointed a new management team: **Pal Marton Afzelius**, VP of client services, will be entering his third year at Protobrand, while **Irina Zilberman**, research director, will continue to grow and manage the broader research team. **Hongyu Zhou**, technology director, will lead software development and **Annika Henricsson**, VP of client services, will increase the European client base.

■ Reston, Va., customer experience management solutions firm *Clarabridge Inc.* has appointed **Mark Bishof** as CEO. Current Clarabridge CEO **Yuchun Lee** will reassume his previous role as executive chairman of the board.

■ **Adam Buccafusco** and **Sarah Knapp** have joined Durham, N.C., research firm *W5* as practice consultants.


Buccafusco


Knapp

■ Nashville, Tenn., e-mail marketing software and services company *Emma* has hired **Ethan Zoubek** as chief revenue officer and **Wellford Dillard** as chief financial officer.

■ **Rob Stone**, CEO of research consultancy *Market Strategies International*, Detroit, will be leaving the company to pursue other interests. Current Chairman **Andy Morrison**, who founded the company, will assume the role of CEO. Morrison will advise the company's executive committee, which includes **Melissa Sauter**, president; **Katy Palmer**, chief solutions officer and managing director, health; Todd Mundorf, COO; and Phil Giroux, CFO.

■ In New York, researcher *Lightspeed* has appointed **John Mazzola** as global panel manager, Lightspeed All Global.

■ Chicago-based market intelligence solutions firm *Market Track* has appointed **Lisa Lanier** as its new chief client officer.

■ In New York, health care insights firm *Treato* has added **Allen Kamer** to its board of directors.

■ Santa Monica, Calif., customer experience firm *RED Interactive Agency* has hired **Max Miner** as director of customer experience strategy.

■ **Doug Shepard**, executive vice president and CFO for San Antonio-based marketing services firm *Harte Hanks*, resigned from the company, effective Dec. 31, to pursue another professional opportunity. **Robert Munden**, the company's EVP and general counsel, will serve as interim CFO while the company searches for a replacement and **Scott Hamilton** will coordinate the company's investor relations program.

■ New York-based technology company *Foursquare* has hired **Gayle Fuguitt** as chief of customer insights and innovation.

■ Research technology and services firm *Dialsmith*, Portland, Ore., has promoted **Clinton Godeke** and **Greg Treat** to senior manager, projects and client services. In addition, **Brian Izenson** has been promoted to senior manager, marketing and business development.


Godeke

■ Data and business intelligence firm *Strategic Insight*, New York, has appointed **Karl Jaeger** as CFO.

■ Business intelligence firm *ORC International* has appointed **Tom Markert** as CEO and global product development lead. Markert will be based out of the company's New York office.

■ Boston-based market intelligence firm *InCrowd* has appointed **Matthew Polletta** as executive vice president of sales.

■ Media agency *MEC*, New York, has named **Karima Zmerli** as managing partner, head of analytics and insight.

■ Text analytics software-as-a-service firm *OdinText Inc.* has added **Tim Lynch** as vice president and **Andrew Vogel** as data scientist.

Research Industry News

News notes

■ **Fine Research**, a Latin American fielding agency, in collaboration with researchers **Confirmit** and **Reckner Healthcare**, have launched an initiative to assist victims of Hurricane Matthew in Haiti. Over 2,800 doctors in the Americas were surveyed about the preparedness of these countries for a natural disaster. For every completed survey, the equivalent of a blanket and a drum of water was donated to hurricane victims through Save the Children mission in Haiti.

Acquisitions/transactions

■ **Dentsu Aegis Network**, London, has acquired Shanghai-based e-commerce firm **Bluecom Group**. Bluecom will become part of Dentsu Aegis Network's digital agency Isobar China Group and will be rebranded as Isobar Commerce. Patrick Deloy and Florian Legendre, managing directors of Bluecom, will join the Isobar leadership team.

■ Data-as-a-service company **DataMentors**, Tampa, Fla., has acquired Red Bank, N.J., marketing data provider **V12 Group**. The combined company will rebrand under the name V12 Data and will be led by DataMentors' CEO Anders Ekman.

■ Teaneck, N.J., information technology firm **Cognizant** has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire **Mirabeau BV**, an Amsterdam-based digital marketing and customer experience agency. The terms of the transaction were not disclosed. With the close of the acquisition, about 260 specialists from Mirabeau will become a part of Cognizant's Digital Business practice.

■ Port Washington, N.Y., information services firm **The NPD Group** has signed an agreement to acquire research and data analysis agency **Counter Intelligence Retail** (CiR). CiR will operate as Counter Intelligence Retail, an NPD Group Company.

■ In early December, private equity firm **Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co**. launched a voluntary public tender offer for the shares of Nuremberg, Germany, researcher **GfK** for an offer price of €43.50 per share. GfK Verein will remain majority shareholder of GfK with a stake of 56.46 percent. The Management and Supervisory Boards of GfK are supportive of the offer and, subject to their review of the offer document, intend to recommend that GfK shareholders accept the offer.

■ **W2O Group**, a San Francisco-based network of marketing and communications firms, has acquired Morristown, N.J., marketing agency **Sentient Interactive**. Adam Cossman, Sentient president and co-founder, will serve as chief digital officer of W2O Group.

■ Sterling, Va., information services firm **Neustar Inc.** has entered into a definitive agreement to be acquired by a private investment group led by **Golden Gate Capital** in a transaction valued at approximately $2.9 billion. The transaction is expected to close no later than the end of the third calendar quarter of 2017 and is subject to approval by Neustar's shareholders, regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions.

■ **Nielsen**, New York, has entered into an agreement to purchase **Gracenote**, a provider of media and entertainment meta data. With the transaction, Nielsen will acquire the data and technology that underpins the programming guides and personalized user experience for video, music, audio and sports content. The transaction is expected to close in the first quarter of 2017. Gracenote will operate as a business unit within Nielsen and will continue to operate from its headquarters in Emeryville, Calif.

■ Marketing communications company **Grey Group**, New York, has acquired Canada-based health care and consumer agency **Tank**. Tank will retain its name and become part of Grey Group Canada. Marc Lanouette, president of Tank, will become CEO of Grey Group Canada.

■ **MMGY Global**, a Kansas City, Mo., travel and hospitality marketing firm, has acquired **Myriad Marketing**, a Los Angeles-based integrated marketing firm. The merged organization also adds Spring O'Brien, a Myriad company specializing in travel and hospitality.

■ Customer engagement company **LiquidHub**, Philadelphia, has acquired India-based data management and analytics solutions firm **Annik**. The acquisition of Annik will add 1,000 professionals to the LiquidHub team, including Rahul Sahgal, president and CEO, and Sandeep Bhatia, COO.

■ **Vibes**, a Chicago-based mobile marketing platform, has acquired Miami-based mobile marketing and digital solutions company **Red Fish Media**. The financial terms of the transaction were not disclosed. Red Fish's founder and president Matt McKenna will join Vibes as the vice president of sales.

Alliances/strategic partnerships

■ Canada-based customer intelligence platform provider **Vision Critical** and

quirks.com/articles/2017/20170214.aspx

Australia-based business intelligence and media firm **RFi Group** have formed a strategic relationship. RFi Group has become a value-added reseller for Vision Critical and will deliver insight communities powered by the Vision Critical Sparq platform to the financial services sector in Australia and New Zealand.

■ **Nielsen**, New York, and St. Louis-based product data refinery platform **Label Insight** have formed a strategic alliance that combines Nielsen's market measurement and Homescan Consumer Panel data with Label Insight's product attributes to help CPG companies and retailers make more informed data decisions and grow sales by understanding product trends and creating better personalization for wellness consumers. The two firms will develop and maintain a CPG industry retail and consumer measurement capability incorporating food, beverage and non-food ingredients, nutrients and U.S. government regulated product attributes.

■ Potomac, Md., firm **Full Circle Research Co.** has formed a partnership with **Cannabiz Consumer Group**, a research firm focused on the cannabis industry. The two companies will provide an omnibus, CannaBus, which will allow clients to ask custom questions or conduct micro-surveys to better understand issues and interests important to them without the cost of an entire custom research study.

■ Chicago-based researcher **IRI** has formed an alliance with e-commerce intelligence firm **Clavis Insight**, Boston, to allow consumer packaged goods marketers to track and assess a brand's holistic online and offline performance to identify and capitalize on e-commerce growth opportunities. Clavis Insight's online channel analytics will be integrated with IRI's E-Market Insights service.

■ Consumer loyalty programs provider **Maritz Motivation Solutions**, St. Louis, has partnered with **The Wise Marketer Group**, a firm that provides loyalty marketing news, research and education to marketing professionals. The partnership aims to enhance collaboration with marketing executives on research, intelligence and best practices to improve the results of customer loyalty programs.

■ Japan-based panel and survey software firm **dataSpring** has partnered with an online points-based rewards community to expand its panel coverage in Hong Kong. DataSpring's proprietary platform, surveyon Partners, will be leveraged to recruit, engage and manage panelists from the partner's community.

■ Amsterdam-based behavioral data firm **Wakoopa** has formed a partnership with Japan-based firm **GMO Research**, bringing GMO Research into the Wakoopa Hub network. Through the partnership, Wakoopa Hub will extend its reach to the Asian market, including Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan and Indonesia.

■ **Aimia**, a marketing and loyalty analytics company that owns and operates Aeroplan, a coalition loyalty program, has partnered with online data collection company **AskingCanadians** to manage the Aeroplan Panel, a proprietary panel of Canadian Aeroplan members. On behalf of Aimia, AskingCanadians will manage the Aeroplan Panel as an online research community. In addition to participating in ongoing Aeroplan research, respondents will be able to participate in projects for AskingCanadians clients.

■ Stamford, Conn., digital media intelligence company **Tru Optik** has partnered with Port Washington, N.Y., researcher **NPD Group** to bolster its entertainment market information and analytic solutions offering. Through the partnership, NPD will have access to Tru Optik's first-party data set on the consumption of movies and video games via over-the-top TV and connected TV.

Association/organization news

■ **The QRCA** has announced the winners of its 2017 Young Professionals Grant program: Caitlin Homstad, The Research Partnership, Philadelphia; Sarah Brown, Kelton, Los Angeles; Russell Edwards, Precision Dialogue and University of South Florida Applied Anthropology Ph.D. candidate, Tampa, Fla.; Rebecca Fowler, FedEx Services, Memphis, Tenn.; Bernadette Lockamyeir, Consumer Insights, Rochester, N.Y.; Jennifer Myers, Ipsos RDA, Macomb, Mich.; Brandon Richard, The Link Group, Durham, N.C.; Keith J. Romer, The Garage Group, Cincinnati; Daniela Rubio, independent consultant, San Francisco; Kelsey Segaloff, Chadwick Martin Bailey, Boston; Nathalia Vega, Blackstone Group, Chicago; and Ashleigh Williams, C+R Research, Chicago. The recipients were awarded passes to attend the QRCA's Annual Conference in Los Angeles in January.

Awards/rankings

■ **Margie Kupfer,** vice president of marketing for mobile marketing services firm **3Cinteractive**, Boca Raton, Fla., has been named one of the Mobile Women to Watch 2017 by Mobile Marketer. The list recognizes 25 executives set to make a difference in 2017 for the mobile advertising, marketing and media industries.

■ **The Confirmit Horizons** platform from Oslo, Norway, research solutions firm Confirmit has been named a 2016 Customer Experience Innovation Award winner by media company TMC's *CUSTOMER* magazine.

New companies/new divisions/relocations/expansions

■ Research firm **Reality Check Consulting** has opened a Latin America headquarters in Miami to provide research and consumer insights to clients in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru. The new office will be headed up by Managing Director Andrea Lima.

■ **Lightspeed**, headquartered in Warren, N.J., has opened a new office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and has appointed Lindsay Dominguez as client development lead to manage local client relationships for the firm's Malaysian presence.

■ Supply-chain managed solutions firm **OSI Creative**, Irvine, Calif., has opened a new office in Seattle to serve the Pacific Northwest area. The new facility will provide local representation for clients in Washington, Oregon, Northern California, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. Nancy Rodriguez, account manager for the Seattle office, will handle the day-to-day operations.

■ India-based research agency **MRSS India** has added a social research practice to its list of services and has appointed Srikant Patel as head of social research practice.

■ **National Research Corporation**, Lincoln, Neb., has rebranded as NRC Health.

■ **Uber**, San Francisco, has acquired New York-based AI research start-up **Geometric Intelligence** and has created Uber AI Labs, a new division dedicated to research in machine learning and artificial intelligence that will be directed by Gary Marcus, Geometric's founding CEO. The 15 members of Geometric Intelligence will become part of the AI Labs team.

■ Market research language and translation service firm **GlobaLexicon**, London, has opened a new office in Chicago to extend coverage across all North American time zones and increase the capacity of its team. The company has also made several new hires, including in Germany, Belgium and Spain, and has continued the expansion of its in-house linguist team.

■ Arlington, Texas, research firm **Decision Analyst** has launched a new company, **Symmetric**, allowing research agencies and companies to acquire samples from Decision Analyst's consumer and business-to-business panels. Jason Thomas has been named president of Symmetric and Mauricia Wills has been named executive vice president.

Research company earnings/ financial news

■ Video analytics firm **Big Sofa**, London, has reported that its shares have begun trading on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange. The company raised approximately £6.1 million by way of a placing of and subscription for new ordinary shares at 17 pence per share to fund its U.S. operations.

■ Audience measurement company **Verto Analytics**, San Francisco, has reported a 300 percent increase in month-to-month revenue and has hired Jay Imus as vice president of East Coast sales. Additionally, the firm has rolled out its services in markets outside the U.S. and has opened offices in London, San Francisco, Singapore and Frankfurt as hubs for business development, marketing and sales.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

••• can't-miss activities

The 2017 Pharma Market Research Conference (USA) will be held on **February 1-2** at the Hilton Parsippany Hotel in **Parsippany, N.J.** Visit pharmamarketresearchconference.com.

The Merlien Institute will hold its Qual360 Europe 2017 event on **February 15-16** in **Amsterdam**. Visit eu.qual360.com.

Applied Marketing Science will hold a workshop titled, 'Voice of the Customer Fundamentals for Medical Product and Service Innovation,' on **February 15-16** at the Marina del Rey Marriott in **Marina del Rey, Calif.** Visit bit.ly/2gPlWdZ.

AMRA will hold its Africa Forum 2017 event on **February 16-17** in **Johannesburg, South Africa**. Visit africanmra.org.

AMA will hold its 2017 Winter AMA Conference on **February 17-19** at the JW Marriott Orlando Grande Lakes in **Orlando, Fla.** Visit www.ama.org.

The 2017 Pharma CI Europe Conference and Exhibition will be held on **February 21-22** at the Prague Marriott Hotel in **Prague**. Visit europe.pharmaciconference.com.

The Quirk's Event – West Coast will be held on **February 28 - March 1** at Hotel Irvine in **Irvine, Calif**. Visit www.thequirksevent.com.

Centaur Media will hold its Insight '17 event on **March 8-9** at Olympia Central in **London**. Visit www.insightshow.co.uk.

The Quirk's Event – East Coast will be held on **March 21-22** at the Marriott Brooklyn Bridge in **Brooklyn, N.Y.** Visit www.thequirksevent.com.

ESOMAR will hold its 2017 MENAP forum on **March 21-22** in **Dubai, UAE**. Visit www.esomar.org.

PRYSM Group will host The B2B Marketing Expo on **March 28-29** at ExCel London in **London**. Visit www.b2bmarketingexpo.co.uk.

NMSBA will hold its Neuromarketing World Forum on **March 29-31** in **London**. Visit www.neuromarketingworldforum.com/en.

The Southwest and Northwest MRA will hold their Las Vegas Conference on **March 29-31** at the Paris Hotel and Casino in **Las Vegas**. Visit www.swmra.org.

KNect365 (IIR) will hold its Marketing Analytics and Data Science conference on **April 3-5** at the JW Marriott San Francisco Union Square in **San Francisco**. Visit marketing.knect365.com/marketing-analytics-data-science.

The Merlien Institute will hold its Qual360 North America 2017 event on **April 5-6** at The Gallup Building in **Washington, D.C.** Visit na.qual360.com.

The **UTA MSMR Alumni** will hold their annual Marketing Research Conference for the industry on **April 13** in **Arlington, Texas**. Visit msmralumni.org.

Empresarial will host its spring studies trade show on **April 20-21** at the Palais Brongniart in **Paris**. Visit www.printemps-etudes.com.

PMRG will hold its Healthcare Marketing Researchers Connect event on **April 24-26** at the Caribe Royale in **Orlando, Fla.** Visit www.pmrg.org.

The Merlien Institute will hold its MRMW North America 2017 event on **April 25-26** in **Chicago**. Visit na.mrmw.net.

Wakoopa will host the WHAT Conference, a behavioral data conference, on **April 25-26** in **Amsterdam**. Visit what-conference.com.

PAA will hold its 2017 Annual Meeting on **April 27-29** at the Hilton Chicago in **Chicago**. Visit www.populationassociation.org/sidebar/annual-meeting.

The Conference Board will hold its 13th Annual Customer Experience Conference on **May 4-5** at the New York Marriott Downtown in **New York**. Visit www.conference-board.org.

LIMRA will hold its 2017 Marketing Conference on **May 31 - June 2** at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel in **Nashville, Tenn.** Visit www.limra.com.

MRIA will hold its 2017 National Conference on **May 31-June 2** in **Toronto**. Visit mria-arim.ca/events-awards/national-conference.

The American Society of Trial Consultants will hold its annual conference on **June 8-10** at the Westin O'Hare in **Rosemont, Ill**. Visit www.astcweb.org/astc-conference.

EphMRA will hold its 2017 Annual Conference on **June 20-22** in **Amsterdam**. Visit www.ephmra.org.

To submit information on your upcoming conference or event for possible inclusion in our print and online calendar, e-mail Sara Cady at sara@quirks.com. For a more complete list of upcoming events visit www.quirks.com/events.

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10 minutes with...

Sili Hacihanefioglu
Marketing Intelligence Lead, Turkcell

"I always prefer taking advantage of new technologies and neuroscience tools that leave no room for bias and can diminish the margin of error. It's faster and sometimes even cheaper than conventional techniques."

Describe your journey to becoming a researcher at Turkcell.
I began my career at GfK in 2005 where I was responsible for major and small domestic appliance categories in the retail audit department. After about two years, I accepted a job offer from Synovate (today's IPSOS) as a telecom, FMCG and tobacco research manager. Those five years were the best and most challenging years of my career. During that period, the telecom sector in Turkey was booming and the results and insights we obtained from our research were fascinating. I was impressed by the razzle-dazzle and the enthusiasm of the category. For a few years I dreamed of working at Turkcell, which was the market leader in Turkey and among the Top 5 GSM companies in Europe. I found myself thinking about how Turkcell and I would mutually benefit – how I could add value to their business. My dreams finally came true in 2011 and I have been the marketing intelligence lead ever since.

I still love deep-diving subjects each and every day.

What are some of the day-to-day challenges you face as a researcher?
Telecommunications is the fastest-growing sector all over the world. It's even faster than FMCG in terms of new product launches, tariffs, apps and ads. Working in this sector is a challenge. For instance, we conduct post-test surveys for almost 250 TV ads per year. Trends that are very inspiring today may be replaced by something else in a very short period of time. As a result, we must track changes weekly or even daily as opposed to monthly, quarterly or yearly.

Among this chaos, every task is urgent – all the reports are due yesterday. To be able to survive this world, one has to be forward-looking, alert and work with fast-delivering companies. Being fast is the biggest challenge and it makes my job more exciting.

Do you prefer to work with qualitative or quantitative methodologies? Why?
None of the above – I prefer neuroscience tools!

As an engineer, you'd expect me to say quant but I like them both. I sometimes need to deliver actionable insights and recommend fine-tunings for ads from focus groups. On the other hand, from time-to-time I need to discover the strength and magnitude of KPIs, which can only be achieved by surveys.

I always prefer taking advantage of new technologies and neuroscience tools that leave no room for bias and can diminish the margin of error. It's faster and sometimes even cheaper than conventional techniques. I am fascinated by the results of the implicit reaction time test, while eye-tracking study reports are fun to watch and the feeling of mind-reading is very exciting via EEG tests.

At Turkcell, we have been focusing on different neuroscience techniques for many years and I will be trying to share my experience and know-how at the Quirk's Event in 2017.

Read the full interview at quirks.com/articles/2017/20170222.aspx.