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For marketing research and insights professionals

10 MISTAKES TO AVOID IN MARKET RESEARCH

PLUS 17 great ideas from 2017

Optimizing pricing strategies

An overview of the naming process

2018 Outlook

ADVERTISING SECTION

17 Top Mystery Shopping Companies

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January 2018
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CONTENTS

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Make a New Year's resolution to write for Quirk's!

At Quirk's, we are always looking for interesting, objective articles on all aspects of marketing research. We encourage you to submit in 2018! Please review our editorial calendar as each issue has a specific editorial emphasis in addition to the regular curated selection of marketing research-related content.

January • State of the MR Industry Report (a special sponsored content section) Suggested Query Period: Mid-September 2017 Final Manuscripts Due: November 10, 2017	**July** • Financial Services • Shopper Insights Suggested Query Period: Mid-March Final Manuscripts Due: May 11
February • Brand/Branding Research • Millennials/Youth Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-October 2017 Final Manuscripts Due: December 8, 2017	**August** • New Product Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-April Final Manuscripts Due: June 1
March • Advertising Research • Pharmaceutical/Health Care Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-November 2017 Final Manuscripts Due: January 12	**September** • Annual Researcher SourceBook Directory of MR Product and Service Providers (no regular editorial)
April • B2B Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-December 2017 Final Manuscripts Due: February 9	**October** • Customer Experience Research • Health Care Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-June Final Manuscripts Due: August 10
May • Qualitative Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-January Final Manuscripts Due: March 9	**November** • B2B Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-July Final Manuscripts Due: September 14
June • Research Technology Report Suggested Query Period: Mid-February Final Manuscripts Due: April 13	**December** • Qualitative Research Suggested Query Period: Mid-August Final Manuscripts Due: October 12

To submit an article for consideration, send materials to Quirk's Editor Joseph Rydholm at joe@quirks.com. For more information on submitting material to Quirk's please quirks.com/pages/editorial-guidelines.

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••• housing research

Regrets, apartment renters have had a few

More than two-thirds of renters have misgivings about their apartment, according to a survey from HotPads, a San Francisco-based apartment and home search platform for renters in urban areas in the United States. The apartments' monthly cost and noise level are among their top regrets.

In fast-moving housing markets, renters often have to act quickly to sign a lease and in the process may overlook things they will later regret. Over a quarter (26 percent) of renters cited their monthly rental payment as their biggest regret after moving in, followed by remorse over their apartments' noise level (26 percent) and safety of the unit and neighborhood (21 percent). However, renters admit noise and safety were not even in their top five considerations during the apartment search.

Other common regrets include in-unit laundry (18 percent), a parking garage (15 percent) and air conditioning (12 percent) – elements that can be difficult to assess before moving in. Renter's remorse can set in quickly: 61 percent of renters who have lived in their new rental for less than three months already have at least one regret about their choice. Since most renters opt for a 12-month lease, understanding what features matter most before committing to a rental can help prevent some of these common post move-in regrets.

HotPads worked with researcher Ipsos to conduct this survey. A nationally representative sample of 409 U.S. renters age 18 or older in buildings with five or more units ("apartment renters") was interviewed online, in English. The survey was fielded September 5-7, 2017.

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180101.aspx

••• the internet of things

Butt out, Alexa

A survey conducted by Wilton, Conn., researcher Toluna shows that 63 percent of respondents are concerned or very concerned that their personal information is being recorded via a voice-activated virtual assistant (Amazon Echo, Google Home, etc.). Concern regarding privacy is slightly higher among men (65 percent) than women (61 percent).

Those who own a voice-activated virtual assistant express greater intensity of concern at their personal information being recorded (46 percent) than those who do not own one (37 percent). However, the survey shows that nine in 10 of voice-activated virtual assistant owners say they would recommend one to a friend, while nearly 40 percent of those who do not currently own a voice-activated virtual assistant said they plan to purchase one in the future. The survey also found that consumers who own a voice-activated virtual assistant make fewer in-store purchases, do less online research and read and watch traditional media channels less frequently than before they owned their device.

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By Joseph Rydholm, Quirk's Editor

Money can't buy happiness for Millennials. Or can it?

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Joe Rydholm can be reached at joe@quirks.com

In a December *New Yorker* article ("Killing it"), Jia Tolentino gave a Millennial's view on theories about Millennials, focusing on some of the economic impacts and implications of how Millennials have been raised and how they view work and money.

It's a great read, more for the points it raises rather than the questions it answers, but some of her points resonated as I read press materials on a Wells Fargo study of Millennials and their conflicting and conflicted views of their financial lives.

Using data from a Harris Poll conducted on its behalf, Wells Fargo found that though they clearly don't view money as the key to happiness, Millennials also seem to worry a great deal about it. While 62 percent of those surveyed described themselves as very "happy" and 65 percent said their life is "meaningful," 69 percent said they want to get over their "anxiety" about money and only a third said they were "satisfied" with their financial life. At the same time, 98 percent of this generation also said feeling "financially secure" is important to them, along with feeling physically (97 percent) and mentally (97 percent) healthy.

Nearly half (46 percent) of Millennials surveyed said they have a significant amount of debt and similar percentages said that they can't afford to pay for health care (43 percent) and that they rely on others (friends, family, spouse) for support (42 percent).

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180102.aspx

Yet 88 percent said they see success as more about being "happy" and less about "material prosperity" and a quarter of Millennials said, "I don't care about money."

When asked to identify activities they actively engage in to make themselves happier, spending time with family (72 percent) and friends (61 percent) and helping others (59 percent) were highest.

Correspondingly, regarding areas in life that bring satisfaction, the three with the highest levels of satisfaction among Millennials were family relationships (56 percent), intellectual life (52 percent) and recreation and hobbies (50 percent).

Love and relationships were the top drivers of happiness for all Millennials. Respondents were given a choice of five words and asked to select the word they most associated with happiness and love took the top spot: "love" (62 percent), "doing good" (23 percent), "money" (10 percent), "work" (4 percent) and "power" (1 percent).

"The more active this generation is with their finances, the happier they are – and this was proven out by the group of Millennials who affirm all five statements in what we are calling the Positive Financial Indicator," said Kristi Mitchem, CEO of Wells Fargo Asset Management, in a press release. "What's interesting about this is it's not clear that Millennials recognize how being proactive with finances leads to happiness."

The five statements about financial engagement in the Positive Financial Indicator (PFI) – I have enough money to be able to save for future needs; I am saving enough for retirement; I feel in control of my financial life; I take an active role in setting and achieving goals for my financial life; I am able to pay for my monthly expenses – were highly correlated in the study and when looked at in aggregate, were also a driver of happiness. Out of the entire population, the 36 percent of Millennials who affirmed all five aspects of engagement in the PFI are happier than those who do not.

"It's great to see the bright outlook of the Millennial generation and that happiness is about the deep bonds of friendship and family and not explicitly about money. At the same time, this generation has a chance to become happier by taking specific actions – such as saving and planning for the future – that will benefit this group at large and lead to greater happiness," said Mitchem.

Conducted by Harris Poll June 16-29, 2017, on behalf of Wells Fargo, the results of the 2017 Wells Fargo Millennial Study are based on an online survey of 1,771 Millennials (ages 20-36), 26 percent of whom are affluent, have $100,000 or more in investable assets (earning a median personal income of $88,000) and 74 percent of whom are non-affluent with less than $100,000 in investable assets (earning a median personal income of $43,000). Head to https://goo.gl/wZ4ykU for more complete information on the study.

advice for researchers

ASK THE EXPERT

Expert answers to important research questions.

What are the main recruiting challenges researchers need to be aware of given today's crowded health care market research landscape?

As an agency focused on the recruitment of health care professionals, we continue to witness an industry-wide trend of targeting niche audiences. With pharmaceutical companies focusing on the development of specialized medicines, this shift in the market research landscape has resulted in a steady decline in response rates, harder-to-reach segments and challenging sample goals.

It is inevitable that health care marketing research is competing for time among a very busy group of respondents who have limited availability to participate in market research. Physicians in particular are selective when evaluating a research study invitation, oftentimes prioritizing participation by time commitment, perceived topic relevance or study importance. Compounding this, some heavily targeted physician specialties are now seeing an increasing number of invites in their in-box as research and development activities ramp up.

Ethan Frank
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What impact do researchers have during the study design phase to help minimize the recruitment challenges?

Fortunately, there are several areas where researchers have the opportunity to mitigate the effects of the recruitment challenges stated above.

At the project outset, ensure the target list and database used for recruitment are robust enough to support the sample goals. While this sounds obvious, many ongoing studies continue to draw from legacy sample sources, thus assessing feasibility in the current landscape and adjusting accordingly should be a routine task.

Other factors of the study design important to keep in mind are to be upfront about the commitment involved in participation, including any offline or pre-study work necessary. Demonstrating the relevancy of the study topic to respondents can increase engagement. If respondents are convinced of the importance of the study and their participation, they will be more likely to complete the exercise.

Screener design can also have implications on the willingness of respondents to participate. Overly strict screening criteria or quotas, while common in this industry, can have a negative impact both on a specific project response as well as future response. Similarly, extensive screeners can turn respondents off, especially if they do not qualify for a study. Budget a small incentive offering to terminated respondents, a goodwill gesture that may reap big rewards when you inevitably need to return to the same sample pool as criteria are relaxed. Finally, resisting the temptation to include non-terminating questions in the screener will improve results.

Overall it is important to recognize that health care professionals are an exhaustible resource. While double-blinding protects the end-client, negative research experiences still will leave a bad taste and prohibit future participation.

Market researchers, consultants and fieldwork agencies all play a role in impacting the response rate in targeted research efforts. Understanding these challenges and the role we play is the first step. Continuous dialogue at the project level around how to mitigate this is vitally important.

Have a question you'd like to have answered? Submit it to info@quirks.com.
Want your firm to be featured as an expert? Contact sales@quirks.com for more information. www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20180155.aspx.

IN FOCUS

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

// Survey Monitor

••• retail research

Mighty neighborly

Customers taking note of dollar stores' local focus

Dollar stores, or deep-discount retailers, have favorability ratings of more than 60 percent according to Washington, D.C.-based Morning Consult Brand Intelligence. But the dollar stores also ranked high in another category measured by the company: positive community impact, writes Morning Consult's Joanna Piacenza in a blog post ("The surprising impact of your neighborhood dollar store").

Sixty-two percent of U.S. adults said Dollar Tree has a positive effect on its community, while majorities said the same of Family Dollar (57 percent) and Dollar General Corp. (56 percent), according to Morning Consult's Community Impact Rankings.

All three stores rank among the public's top 15 brands for "positive community impact," alongside well-known institutions such as UPS, Amazon.com and Wal-Mart. The numbers can be seen as evidence of persistent but quiet campaigns from each dollar store brand in which they prioritize local neighborhoods over national giving.

Combined, there are more than 27,000 Dollar General, Dollar Tree and Family Dollar stores in the continental U.S. That's nearly double the number of McDonald's restaurants in the country. (McDonald's has 14,000 U.S. restaurants, according to a company representative.) Dollar stores also outnumber Wal-Mart stores roughly five to one.

Discount retailers have long been a part of Americana, catering to the financially-mindful consumer. The first J.L. Turner and Son Wholesale store, which would later evolve into Dollar General, opened in Scottsville, Ky., in 1939, on the heels of the Great Depression. Dollar stores again flourished during the Great Recession, according to analysis conducted by John Strong, a professor of business, economics and finance at the College of William & Mary. And the stores continue to prosper after the recession, as people still value lower-priced options.

Dollar stores not only have the quantitative edge but the stores engage with local communities in a way Target and Wal-Mart do not, Strong says. "Each of the three dollar stores have thought pretty carefully about their community support strategy – and they've localized it," Strong says, noting that this strategy is "almost 180 degrees" from that of bigger retailers, which donate larger sums of money to national or international organizations or causes. For example, Wal-Mart has given more than $35 million to the American Red Cross since 2007 and announced in August 2017 that it would donate up to $20 million for Hurricane Harvey victims.

The public also has favorable views of Wal-Mart's community offerings. Sixty-five percent said the company has a positive impact – but another 13 percent said it has a negative one. Strong attributes this to the idea that Wal-Mart siphons sales from local, downtown retailers, though he says discussion has slowly pivoted to place more blame on Amazon.

The dollar stores offer different charitable contributions: Dollar General puts much of its giving into the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, a nearly 25-year-old program aimed at helping employees and customers within 20 miles of its stores tackle education and literacy issues; Dol-

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180103.aspx

lar Tree generally focuses on assisting military families and helping finance employees' collegiate goals; and Family Dollar concentrates on small grants to local community groups that provide basic necessities, such as local food banks.

But you won't find every clothing drive on the dollar stores' press pages. These small contributions are usually felt around the corner not read across the country. "I don't think it's part of the culture of those companies to say, 'Look at what we're doing,'" says Strong.

Dollar stores also provide employment to rural areas that might not have many jobs, especially opportunities that offer advancement within a larger corporation, Strong says.

All three dollar stores ranked within the top 10 brands on community impact among those making less than $20,000 per year, per the Morning Consult rankings. The stores disappear from top 10 lists among those making $75,000 or more.

Much of that may have to do with location. The stores strategically set up in predominantly low-income neighborhoods, Elizabeth Racine, an associate professor of public health at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, says. The average family that shops at dollar stores makes less than $50,000 a year, according to a 2015 study.

Residents from Southern states viewed all three dollar stores more favorably than the public overall, with more than six in 10 saying the stores have a positive community impact. Midwestern residents' attitudes were roughly the same. Those living in the Northeast and West, however, did not rank their positive impact as high, with positive perceptions of the stores in the mid-50 percent range.

The rankings also found that those living in rural communities score all three dollar stores disproportionately high. More than six in 10 rural residents said Dollar General, Dollar Tree and Family Dollar have positive impacts on their communities, while suburban and urban residents' average ranking lands in mid-50s. Less than 5 percent of rural residents said the stores have a negative influence.

If rural communities do not have a Wal-Mart, dollar stores are often people's sole source for many products – which could increase perceptions of the stores' positive impact.

Suburban residents do not value dollar stores' community imprint as much as their rural neighbors. None of the dollar stores make it into suburbanites' top 10 brands with a positive community impact.

There's no sign of dollar stores slowing down. Both Dollar General and Dollar Tree have a spot on the Fortune 500 list. Both companies report net quarterly incomes of more than $230 million, either doubling or tripling their quarterly results from a decade earlier.

While Amazon is not an official measuring stick, a Morgan Stanley report released in September 2017 found that investors were most likely to say it would take Amazon the longest to "materially disrupt" dollar stores compared to other consumer markets such as food retail or home furnishings.

"This is one part of retail that has done a lot of very interesting things under the radar: they provide good value to lower-income households and they've provided support to lower-income communities in, what I think, are pretty innovative ways," Strong says.

••• shopper insights

Social media as sales gateway

Brands' posts helping sales

Survey findings released by Curalate highlight how social media content has become the new storefront, with 76 percent of U.S. consumers purchasing a product that they discovered in a brand's social media post. The 2017 Curalate survey also found that 40 percent of U.S. consumers shop online at least once per week, a number that rises to 52 percent for 18-34-year-olds. Given that consumers spend more time on social media than any other online activity, this survey offers insights into the growing and changing role played by social in digital commerce.

Product discovery happens across all social media channels, illustrating the need for brands to create compelling content for each channel. While more consumers in general discover products on Facebook than any other channel, younger consumers are much more likely to discover products across the whole range of social channels: 18-34-year-old consumers are 3.3 times more likely to discover products on Instagram than U.S. consumers on the whole; younger consumers are three times more likely to discover products on Snapchat, 2.7 times more likely on Pinterest and twice as likely on Twitter.

The data presented in this report highlight an evolution taking place in digital commerce. Traditionally, e-commerce has been rooted in consumers searching for products that they knew they wanted. Today content posted on social media causes consumers to stop scrolling and ask, "What's that?" – creating moments of discovery which represent a huge opportunity for e-commerce.

While social media content is great at sparking inspiration, that inspiration can sometimes quickly turn to frustration for many online shoppers. Sixty-five percent report being taken to a product they weren't interested in after clicking on a link in a social media post. Often the specific product the brand links to is not the one that caught the consumer's eye in the first place. Curalate's own data shows that when given the opportunity to shop all of the products in a particular post – and recommended products – consumers browse longer and spend more.

••• employment research

Well-prepared or ill-prepared?

Education's impact on economic views

A national survey developed by communications firm Burson-Marsteller and conducted by researcher PSB sheds light on Americans' views about the current state of the economy (with a focus on manufacturing) and their expectations for the future. According to Making it in America: The View from America, only 42 percent of Americans with a high school education or less say they have the right skills to succeed in the 21st century, while 71 percent with a college education or more say they do.

When asked what emotion best describes their feeling about the future of the U.S. economy, Americans with a high school education or less are 25 percent less likely to say they are optimistic than those with a college education or more. And they are 50 percent more likely to feel scared about the future of the U.S. economy than those with a college education or more.

Education level also plays an important role in how Americans feel about the future of the U.S. economy. Thirty-eight percent of Americans with a college education or more think the American economy is headed in the right direction compared to 30 percent of those with a high school education or less. When it comes to job security and the role of automation, only 14 percent of Americans with a college education or more say a machine could replace their job in five years, versus 30 percent with a high school education or less.

However, most Americans agree that business and government should work together in strengthening the economy. Fifty-seven percent of Americans say the government should play a major role in strengthening the economy and 86 percent support tax credits for companies that pay for workers to train in other, more modern work skills. Sixty-one percent say the government should promote job training and education programs for displaced workers to address loss of jobs to automation and machine intelligence. Twenty-two percent say the government should enact policies to protect those jobs and 10 percent support an increase in corporate taxes to fund programs for displaced workers.

Education level matters when it comes to Americans' outlook on technology. Fifty-five percent of Americans with a college education or more say technology will make overall employment better five years from now versus 45 percent with a high school education or less. Sixty-five percent with college or more and 55 percent with high school or less say technology will make job satisfaction better five years from now. In addition, 57 percent of Americans with college or more and 49 percent with high school or less say technology will make wages/salaries better five years from now.

Regardless of education level, Americans trust companies but distrust business leaders. Sixty-one percent of all Americans have an unfavorable view of business leaders and 73 percent say the wage gap between workers and business leaders will grow in the next five years. Yet, 59 percent of Americans say large companies have more of a positive impact than the federal government does. Interestingly, 96 percent of Americans are favorable towards small businesses versus 54 percent for large companies.

The Making it in America: The View from America survey conducted 1,500 interviews with the general population from June 1-5, 2017. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 2.53 percent and larger for subgroups. This survey builds off the June 2017 Executive Survey by McKinsey & Company, which surveyed 259 U.S. business leaders representing the full range of regions, industries, company sizes, functional specialties and tenures.

••• financial services

Bearing the burden alone

Study contrasts money habits of single vs. married

With singles accounting for 45 percent of all U.S. adults, it's more important than ever for those choosing the single lifestyle to empower themselves financially. TD Ameritrade's Singles & Money survey of 1,000 unmarried and 1,000 married adults (ages 37 and older) reveals that less than one-third of single Americans (29 percent) rate themselves as very financially secure compared with 43 percent of married individuals.

Research shows that singles tend to have more friends than married people, are more likely to volunteer their time and are as healthy or healthier as their married peers. When it comes to finances, however, the picture isn't as rosy.

Singles make an average of $8,800 less in personal income than their married peers ($52,900 versus $61,700). They're much less likely to own a home than married couples (58 percent versus 90 percent). Four in 10 working singles spend their entire paycheck each month with no money toward savings (versus 37 percent married).

"While an increasing number of Americans are finding that remaining single can have its virtues, there is one key area making the single life potentially more difficult – money," says Lule Demmissie, managing director of retirement and long-term investing at TD Ameritrade. "Having a spouse to split the mortgage, household expenses and insurance can make basic living costs more manageable. On top of that, for couples who file jointly, marriage can help reduce their tax burden. The logical conclusion is not that one should simply marry to save money! The substantive insight is that both married and single investors can learn best practices from one another."

Nearly one-third (29 percent) of singles cite "having complete control over the household finances" as the biggest benefit to not being married. But when it comes to saving and investing, two heads may be better than one. Fewer singles believe they are very knowledgeable about the stock market (16 percent of singles versus 26 percent of married individuals). Three in 10 unmarried Americans aren't saving for anything, compared to 17 percent married, and a quarter (27 percent) have emergency funds, versus 39 percent married.

Three in 10 (28 percent) singles classify their retirement savings as "I'll scrape by," while nearly a quarter (23 percent) identify as "super savers."

Forty-four percent are saving for retirement, versus six in 10 (63 percent) married. One-third (34 percent) of unmarried Americans expect to be very secure in retirement, versus 52 percent for married. Almost half (46 percent) of singles are worried about running out of money in retirement, versus 38 percent for married. More than one-third (36 percent) of singles want to fully retire but believe they won't be able to afford it, versus 29 percent for married.

"The good news is that singles can redefine the American dream on their own terms by taking financially prudent steps such as saving for retirement early, sharing expenses with a roommate or family member and establishing an emergency fund. This can help level the playing field with their married peers," Demmissie says.


Taxes Payable
cost elements
transportation

IN FOCUS

Product and Service Update

••• data analysis

Firms partner on video analysis solution

Explore themes, conduct sentiment analysis

Los Angeles-based research platform Fuel Cycle has launched a new video capture and analysis capability designed to reduce the amount of time required to analyze videos. In partnership with video research firm Voxpopme, Fuel Cycle's video solution gives brands access to transcribed and time-coded video data. Video can be captured by mobile, tablet, laptop and desktop devices from the Fuel Cycle platform, without the need to install plugins or additional mobile apps. Video analysis results include: transcription – transcribing of spoken words minutes after a response is recorded, with the ability to create word clouds to reveal key phrases; theme explorer – automated organization of content into key topics to find the best video snippets, with easily-accessed time-coded transcripts and thematic analysis; sentiment analysis – determine the attitude of respondents, creating a sortable and searchable picture of how users answered questions; advanced search and filter – explore all transcribed results and reach insights, with the ability to pass searchable additional data or add custom tags to individual videos that allow similar responses to be collated.
www.fuelcycle.com

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180104.aspx

••• tracking studies

SmartTracker integrates data sources

Third-party, customer, CRM

Research Now, Plano, Texas, has launched SmartTracker, a solution that allows users to connect tracker survey data to data sources for more relevant insights. SmartTracker maintains data consistency from existing research studies and leverages supplemental data to provide new insights without changing existing surveys. It allows new tracker studies to be designed with a more robust view of consumers, with benefits such as shorter, more-focused surveys. The types of data SmartTracker can integrate include: third-party data – such as segmentation, financial, life stage, automotive – to broaden and deepen understanding of consumers and enhance analysis; Research Now first-party profile data to supplement or replace existing survey questions; advertising exposure data to increase understanding of impact of ads on key brand metrics, read the pulse of the market regarding the impact of advertising creative and optimize and drive improvement of advertising ROI; and customer data – such as sales and CRM data – to link survey data directly with known behaviors.
www.researchnow.com

••• data analysis

Software uses machine learning, automation

No seats or licenses

Auckland, New Zealand, research solutions firm Infotools has introduced Infotools Harmoni, a research analysis software that uses machine learning and automation to help researchers spend less time preparing data and more time generating insights. Some features include: data agnosticism – Infotools Harmoni supports a range of data sources, including live connections and APIs into data collection tools such as Decipher, Dimensions and SQL, allowing users to adopt the platform with their existing data collection tools; data integration – the platform harmonizes data from multiple sources into one data set, reducing the amount of time spent preparing sources; machine learning – the software learns preferences, naming conventions, data structures and more and applies these to existing and new data sets through its machine learning capabilities to ensure researchers can focus on strategic value-add; real-time insights – the software shares knowledge and information through visualizations and analysis that can be updated whenever new data is available, creating real-time stories and dashboards; a new pricing model – users don't pay for seats or licenses but instead pay only for their actual use.
www.infotools.com

●●● qualitative research

20|20 Research enhances QualBoard

Version 4.0 includes diary and journaling tools

20|20 Research, Nashville, Tenn., has launched the first phase of QualBoard version 4.0. QualBoard is the company's digital platform for asynchronous qualitative discussions and activities. The first set of capabilities available in the enhanced platform is a tool for ethnographies, diaries and journals. These individual activities were designed with a streamlined interface, making it simpler for the researcher to design the questions and more intuitive for the participant to respond. The tool also includes options for more question types, as well as enhanced logic and skip patterns, including those based on keywords in open-ended text. Additionally, the design means diary and journal entries can be more easily managed on any device without the need to download a mobile app. And, by using the analytics engine within the platform, researchers can take advantage of concept and keyword extraction, as well as sentiment analysis, to assist with reporting.
www.2020research.com

●●● research software

New tools for academic researchers

The Mesearchr suite

Technology company iPug, San Francisco, now offers Mesearchr, a software platform designed for academic researchers. The suite of research and project management tools allows researchers to gather data, organize information, communicate and collaborate from one central work space. A secure and HIPAA-compliant online form builder is designed to enable efficient data collection and surveys on any device. Data can be stored in Mesearchr or exported to statistical packages, including SPSS. Organization tools for managing work from anywhere replace analog forms and offer a way to plan projects, tasks, campaigns and interventions. Further, collaboration features enable researchers to build projects and surveys with team members, add team members, industry partners or supervisors, assign tasks, share reports and work together in one central workspace. And the Mesearchr platform enables instant communication no matter where team members are located, with a secure channel to comment and discuss specific tasks or data points to keep conversations relevant and focused.
ipug.co

●●● Briefly

■ Shelton, Conn., researcher SSI has launched its Survey Capabilities Demo, allowing those who need survey design and programming to test the company's capabilities without going through a linear survey or speaking with a sales person.
www.surveysampling.com

■ Data science firm optimus will match Reston, Va., firm comScore's television ratings and digital measurement with optimus' custom modeled audiences, allowing optimus more in-depth political targeting on an individual basis across all marketing channels, including TV and digital.
optimus.com
www.comscore.com

■ Plano, Texas, firm Research Now has released an enhanced version of its DIY platform Samplify. Enhancements include a survey authoring tool designed to be used without special research expertise, while the drag-and-drop interface to author surveys allows marketers to reach consumers 24/7.
www.researchnow.com

■ Auburn Hills, Mich., researcher Gongos Inc. initiated a partnership with GDS Group to roll out its Decision Intelligence Customer Experience (DICE) Assessment at GDS' CMO Insight Summit. The exercise was designed to help executives assess how their organizations perform on 11 measures related to operationalizing customer centricity. Gongos is currently working on rolling out its DICE Assessment tool more universally to clients and executives.
gongos.com

■ Plano, Texas, firm Research Now has launched a Hispanic panel and has formed a partnership with mobile membership platform SABEResPODER (SEP), a division of URWelcome Technologies. Through the partnership, Research Now and SEP will provide access to Hispanic consumers across 50 U.S. markets. The Hispanic panel will be segmented across a variety of demographic, psychographic, attitudinal and acculturation variables.
www.researchnow.com

■ Nielsen, New York, will begin using real-time smart TV data from Gracenote to enhance the audience-targeting, consumer analytics and measurement capabilities of Nielsen Marketing Cloud's Data Management Platform (DMP). The Nielsen DMP connects Gracenote viewership data to Nielsen, first- and third-party consumer data for person-level consumer insights, as well as integrated paid and owned media platforms for marketing activation.
www.nielsen.com

■ Franklin, Tenn., firm Harpeth Marketing has launched the Cup of Coffee Tip Sheets, a new series of marketing resources. Each one-page sheet includes information on a marketing or sales topic.
www.harpethmarketing.com

■ Wilton, Conn., researcher Toluna has launched PowerPack, a do-it-yourself tool that provides marketers with feedback on package design concepts directly from the consumers most relevant to their brand.
corporate.toluna.com

■ YouXtools, a new venture start-up of San Jose, Calif., research consultancy UEGroup, has introduced the youXtools platform. The platform uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to allow product teams to visualize and analyze real-time customer interactions and move to action.
www.youxtools.com

■ Los Angeles research firm Alter Agents has published a new e-book, *It's Not You, It's Me: Shopper Promiscuity in Context*, available on the firm's Web site.
www.alteragents.com

■ India-based research company Borderless Access has launched proprietary panels in Egypt, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. The panels range from demographics to special attributes like mobile, auto ownership, IT, B2B and travel as well as social media behavior, mobile devices and other digital parameters.
www.borderlessaccess.com

■ Wilton, Conn., researcher Toluna has introduced Insights on Demand, a business concept and market category. As part of the Insights on Demand initiative, Toluna will be collaborating with industry thought leaders and creating additional educational resources.
corporate.toluna.com

■ Chicago-based research and consulting firm Technomic Inc. has launched Transaction Insights, a platform that provides the restaurant and food service industries with business performance metrics across the top 200 restaurant chains. The platform includes consumer-level purchase data from a longitudinal panel of over 3 million consumers, representing up to 18 million food service visits per month.
www.technomic.com

■ Nielsen, New York, has launched Marketing Budget Explorer, a media budget forecasting solution. The Web-based simulation tool allows brand marketers to evaluate combinations of marketing allocations and budget options to make more informed media planning decisions.
www.nielsen.com

■ In London, Harris Interactive has launched PackTest Express, a solution that allows clients to better test the impact and design of new packaging. Clients can improve features, messaging, claims and price to maximize sales on launch and to better understand the overall strengths and weaknesses of their packaging concepts.
harris-interactive.com

■ VICE Voices, the Millennial insights panel created by research company Lightspeed and VICE Media, is now available in the U.K. The platform will be extended to Australia in the coming months, with additional markets to be added across 2018.
voices.vice.com

■ The innovations team at U.K. research company Join the Dots now offers Caption, a Snapchat-inspired photo augmentation tool that uses a selfie and comment format. Caption expands Join the Dots' social media-inspired tool kit, which also features a range of qualitative and quantitative emoji-based tools.
www.jointhedotsmr.com

■ Chicago-based researcher IRI has enhanced its E-Market Insights measurement and insights solution. The enhanced solution includes insight into sales performance and trends across online platforms at the domain (.com) level, allowing for analysis across e-commerce retailers like Amazon, Walmart and Staples.
www.iriworldwide.com

■ Aragon Research Inc., Palo Alto, Calif., has introduced Visual Research, a new offering that combines traditional text-based research documents with videos that explain key concepts, technology trends and insights for faster learning, reinforcement and stronger knowledge retention.
aragonresearch.com

■ Canada-based company TechSci Research has launched Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) Surveys & Research Services to help businesses measure customer satisfaction levels.
www.techsciresearch.com

■ Provo, Utah, software firm Qualtrics has introduced new solution-level packaging based on experience program maturity and corresponding feature levels. The solution levels include best practices and recommendations learned in implementations to help organizations develop their experience management programs. Each level outlines the features and capabilities needed at each stage of program maturity so customers can find the best match for their needs and scale or adjust the program in the future.
www.qualtrics.com

QUIRK'S

OUTLOOK 2018

COMMENTARIES BY INDUSTRY LEADERS ON THE YEAR AHEAD

Welcome to Quirk's Outlook 2018! We asked research companies to offer up their viewpoints on a range of topics – from the future of qualitative to the role of DIY methods – to provide an overview of some of the factors that will impact marketing research as the next 12 months unfold.

P2Sample looks at what sample buyers and providers can do to improve the respondent experience. Branded Research lays out ideas for working in the current research ecosystem. Complete Research Connection tackles recruiting and what we can learn from the past to improve future outcomes. Toluna calls for new solutions to transform the MR industry. FocusVision profiles the forces driving research technology development. SoapBoxSample explores passive metering and how it can help keep up with consumers' changing behaviors. Surveys & Forecasts offers 10 considerations when building a customer response system. Jackson Research argues that qual is not dead and outlines how it must adapt to survive. Second To None explains how mystery shopping can be used as a strategic tool in an omnichannel world. D'Well Research charts trends in DIY. And AnswerQuest details the changes it made in its facilities in response to changing sensory research needs.

Taken as a whole, we hope this special section will help you start 2018 with plenty of food for thought and give you a head start on navigating the year ahead!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

QUIRK'S OUTLOOK 2018

SAMPLING

P2 SAMPLE POWERFULLY PROGRAMMATIC

Sample companies step up: Quality and engagement have become our job

P2Sample takes respondent satisfaction to the forefront with advanced programmatic sampling

JD DEITCH

CRO, P2Sample

Marketers, journalists, ethnographers, sociologists – well, just about everyone – is talking about consumer power. Millennials might be credited with driving this change but every generation is reaping the benefits. People demand quality experiences, personalization and ease of use or they will simply move on. Whatever field we are working in, including market research, consumers are forcing companies to tailor products and services to suit them.

Historically, in the market research space, creating a positive experience has been the responsibility of the researcher or questionnaire writer. Sampling companies simply provided the people. Yet as computing power and automation have come to dominate the market research process, both sample companies and researchers have largely failed to keep up. The result is that atrocious respondent engagement is now a "feature" of the market research tech stack. It doesn't have to be this way though. Programmatic techniques give sample companies the ability and opportunity to start treating respondents respectfully – but only if we choose to do so.

Programmatic sampling is the automation of the sample buying/selling process. While the specifics vary by provider, it basically involves buyers and sellers digitally exchanging demographic information and field status and directing respondents into survey projects. The automated nature of programmatic sampling makes it compelling for its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Unfortunately, though, this is the point where most sample providers stop, despite the many ways in which programmatic techniques can fundamentally improve quality and accuracy.

As an industry, we cannot be satisfied to merely be faster and cheaper. Sample suppliers and buyers need to insist on the following commitments.

Stop tolerating bad experiences: Bad respondent experiences yield lower response rates and bad data. It

Allowing respondents to push bad surveys out of field is a good start toward improving engagement and overall respondent satisfaction, as well as yielding better data and preserving business and industry health.

is baffling how this remains an issue despite mountains of evidence in the form of industry studies, reports and direct remarks from respondents. In GreenBook's recent GRIT Consumer Participation in Research study, findings showed that only a quarter of research participants were satisfied with their experiences. How can sample suppliers expect good data when they knowingly mistreat the people who are giving them that data? For an industry that strives to explain and predict consumer behavior, this is deliriously irresponsible. Programmatic techniques can indeed mitigate the myriad of regularly-occurring problems – from soul-crushing router bouncing to avoidable overquotas and terminations ("sorry, but after answering 20 questions, we've found out you're not qualified") to harrowing survey designs. But this can only happen if the commitment to the respondent experience is built into the platform. A good place to start is by letting respondents push bad surveys out-of-field. Machines that employ "self healing" algorithms yield better data and preserve the long-term health of the business and the industry.

Make technology solve the other problems as well: Programmatic sampling is more than "add a dash of tech and stir." Automation-driven integrations that improve sampling speed and enable better targeting and more efficient quota management, while at the same time decreasing costs and improving productivity, are only the beginning. Programmatic techniques can open the doors to real-time sampling and enable the collection of deep profiling data while providing for even better fraud recognition and checks on response quality. We are not far from witnessing massive improvements in machine-driven field monitoring and proactive error-correction, as well as pricing and feasibility. Programmatic opens vast possibilities for greater reliability, efficiency, global reach and feasibility and dependability.

Demand agility, not speed: In the race to adapt to new business conditions, we should not be content to merely go fast. For what we end up sacrificing is good sense, adaptability and the critical reflection that our techniques are fit for purpose. Agile programmatic platforms enable quick and dynamic sample sourcing and flexible technology that powers new methods and research techniques without compromising quality.

Nimble use of programmatic sampling has clear benefits. At its heart are the speed and cost savings that the industry demands, while automation and machine learning hold promise for greater dependability and reach. But the biggest advantage – and the biggest takeaway for sample providers – is that technology can meaningfully improve respondent engagement. We can no longer ignore or defer this responsibility. Programmatic techniques give us the tools to provide more accurate and reliable data – and we should do so.

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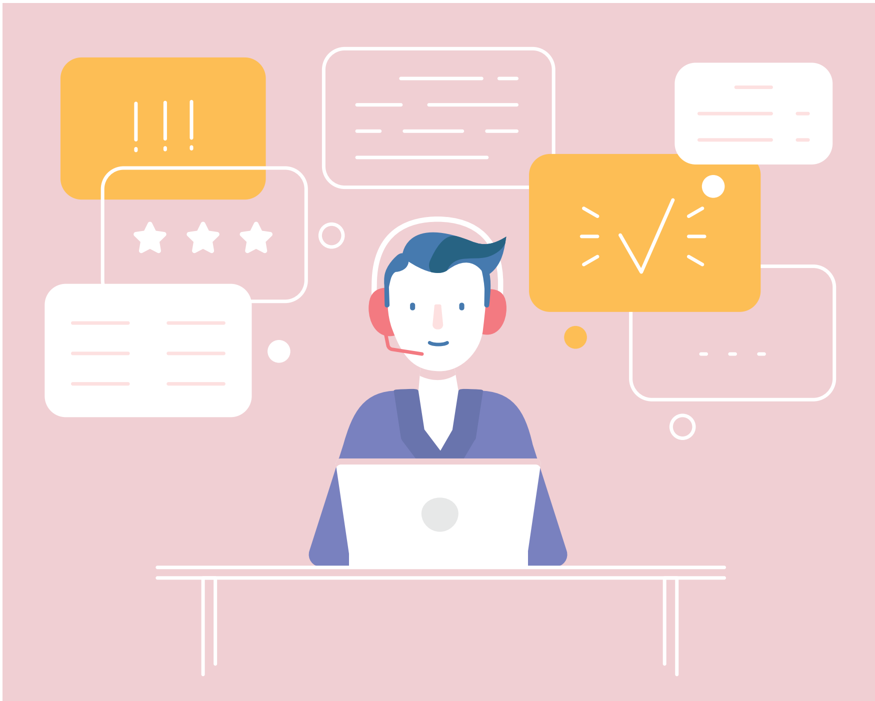
Respondent engagement best practices

The problem of declining cooperation rates is a concern for many in our industry, as evidenced by the multiple mentions of it from researchers who participated in the 2017 edition of Quirk's annual survey of corporate researchers and by comments from presenters and attendees at industry conferences. Respondents are the lifeblood of marketing research and while questionnaire best practices are commonly shared across the industry, comparatively little has been written about best practices for sampling as it relates to respondent engagement. Below are some of our top tips, offered with the goal of making 2018 the year we stem the tide of declining cooperation.



Limit "router bouncing"

One of the worst implementations of sampling automation is the endless router bounce. This is a function of two main problems. One is poor technology integration that prohibits the seamless sharing of even limited profile data. The second is supplier greed where, like last season's fashions on a clearance rack, vendors send participants from router to router in search of qualification. The combination creates a terrible experience for the respondent where they are passed from Web site to Web site and are re-asked over and over to provide their age, sex and other basic characteristics.

Qualify quickly

Qualify or disqualify respondents as quickly as possible and never in the middle or end of the survey. Respondents are uniformly frustrated after spending several minutes in a survey only to find themselves terminated, whatever the reason. This has a negative effect on their overall attitude toward surveys and can impact quality on the very next survey they attempt.

Don't sacrifice QA for speed

Do not cut corners under the premise that the survey is only a "quick read" and therefore can be sped into field. Would you be happy if respondents only paid scant attention under that same premise? Run the same checks for comprehension, logic and execution. A "soft launch" of the survey, e.g., launching to a fraction of the entire sample, is always good practice.

Pay close attention to dropout rates

The rate at which people abandon a study is a direct indication of the quality of the responses you will receive. Dropouts are the researcher's fault, not the respondent's. Moreover, a person who has abandoned a survey is twice as likely to stop taking surveys altogether. Analyze dropouts question by question (and across sample providers) to find the problems while taking open-end feedback into account. Don't discount the possibility that a bad survey setup could have introduced bias that might require exclusion of certain questions in the final results.

Communicate clearly and concisely

Unclear and misleading communication creates frustration and disappointment. Explain why you terminate people. Be honest about study length and don't lowball your estimate. Not only can this impact the quality of responses, it also reduces the respondent's likelihood of participating in future studies.

Ask your suppliers for proof

Get beyond marketing literature and ask sample and panel providers for proof of their commitment to respondent experiences. Get test links and try the experience yourself. These are not difficult steps and they could mean the difference between great insights and a big mistake.

www.p2sample.com
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QUIRK'S OUTLOOK 2018

PANEL RESEARCH

branded

Taking our seat at the table

How to succeed in the future of market research

MATT GAFFNEY

CEO AND FOUNDER, BRANDED RESEARCH INC.

I've been asked to address the changes and challenges (and opportunities) that lie ahead for the panel research and online sampling industries. The insights industry has been experiencing a long overdue shake up over the last few years. So where does this leave us panel researchers and sample collectors? These are big questions, so I turned to our dear old friend Confucius, who gave us – among his many kernels of wisdom – this particular one: "If you wish to define the future, one must study the past." As you might imagine, this is a highly introspective exercise. And one that forces some existential questions about our industry. Who are we as panel researchers? What is our role in market research?

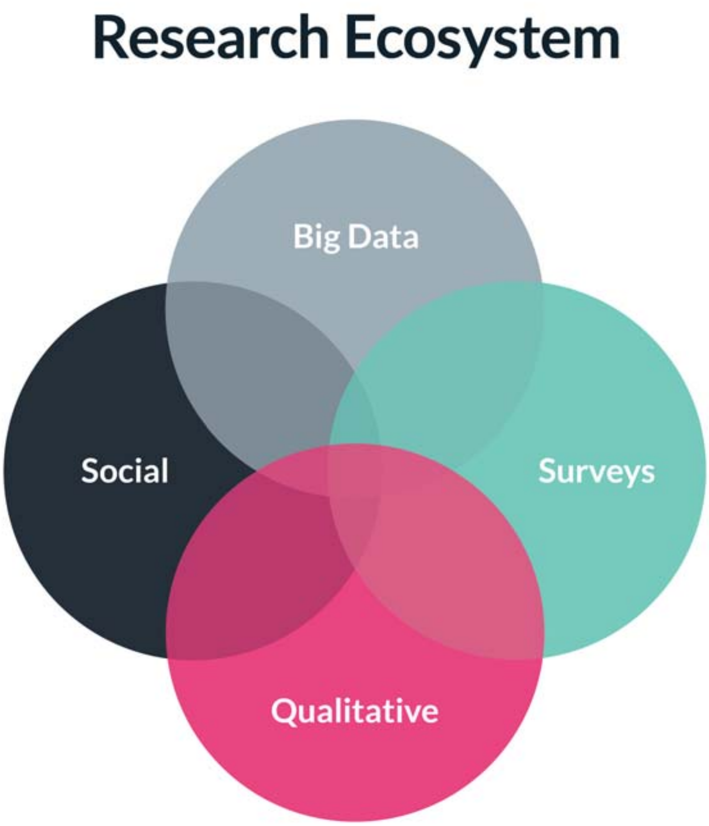
The answers lie in our ability to reacquaint ourselves with our core asset – the data itself. We, as the primary collectors of respondent data, stand squarely at the front of the market research queue. No doubt a winding and twisting process that will ultimately result in some very significant decision-making by our clients. Products and services decisions become solidified. Millions of dollars are set in motion the world around.

The segmenting. The trend-spotting. The predictive analysis. This all happens after we collect the precious data that goes into the MR soup. This is inarguably critical. In the current climate, however, the panel and sample providers seem to be largely on the outside looking in, a full arm's length from the rest of the soup-making. Much too far removed from the brand and agency conversations which eventually lead to our assignments. There are, of course, many reasons for this. And many of us are more than satisfied with this safe distance. But for the data-conscious, this is a fundamental issue that we are collectively going to need to solve.

We know our past, so how do we move forward into the future?

The fact of the matter is that research takes collaboration. Panel researchers and sample providers need to move across the market research aisle and take our rightful place at the table. We should be engaging in frontline conversations about sample methodologies and programming practices. We should resist the idea that our sample just shows up back at the agency without much fanfare regarding its origins. And so should our agency and client partners.

In order to collaborate effectively and transparently, the need for significantly increased dialogue across the buyer-supplier chain will be paramount. Do you have a compelling story about how you sample? How you recruit and develop audiences? Are you truly answering the "who" question? If so, you should be yearning to share those stories. By doing so, we'll be normalizing both the expectations and the economics of our sample and, at the same time, properly addressing the equally fundamental issues associated with the respondent experience.



Separately but equally as important, sample should not be entirely a commodity business. Sample as a commodity, with few exceptions, will undoubtedly present itself as compromised data. Expectations in this current climate are unrealistic and we're delivering far from an achieved product as a result. Expectedly though, not many are quick to point this out. Panel agencies, boutique panel companies, affiliate and publishing groups, arbitrage outfits – all have done exceedingly well in this environment. But things are beginning to feel a little bit different. And that's a good thing!

The macro forces at play – most notably mobile and the demands of agile research – are putting different pressures on how data can and should be collected. The data-first panel researcher is primed to take advantage of these shifts. We're moving past a standard survey online methodology as the silver-bullet quantitative solution. This was a flawed notion to begin with.

All things considered, however, I'm bullish on the future and the opportunities that lie ahead. What were prematurely and largely ill-considered as threats, scary terms like "big data" have only shifted the makeup of the overall market research pie (what I deem to include surveys, qualitative, big data and social).

There is simply more synthesis across the channels. More blended science. As a result, our duties as primary data collectors are becoming more broad, more nuanced. We have more roles to play. Now there's opportunity.

Surveys, albeit optimized for today's environment, still have their place. There will always be questions we simply can't find the answers to in preexisting data sets. They are certainly changing though, morphing into qualitative and quantitative mechanisms driven by the capabilities of our mobile phones. We're also employing big data solutions like collecting passive behavioral data on our panelists. And we're sourcing those panelists from social networks that provide rich data profiles and fusing quantitative methods like video and image capture.

The market research industry, on the whole, is facing intense pressures to become more agile, to keep up with the demands of a society whose attitudes and behaviors change at incredible speed. Remember spring/summer and fall/winter seasons in the fashion world? Cheap fashion companies like H&M introduce new looks weekly and rely on near real-time insight data to do so. As panel and sample companies leveraging numerous, highly effective mobile methodologies, we're well-equipped to do our part to deliver quick, quality-first data. In addition, the adoption of API solutions has significantly increased the efficiencies in how we can deliver this data.

Healthy business environments tend to present unique challenges along with unique and exciting opportunities. And I firmly believe that's what we have in front of us. To be sure, at the core of all of it remains the little gold nugget – the data. Let's use our past to define our future. Let's make data front and center. Let's tell our data stories and close the gap that exists between sample providers and the market research world at-large.

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Recruiting: looking to the past to determine marketing research's future

Understanding past recruiting practices for a successful future

CHELLE PRECHT

PRESIDENT/ OWNER, COMPLETE RESEARCH CONNECTION

It is a scary time for marketing research, in my opinion. As marketing researchers, we are offering information that shapes the world and our future. Data obtained from respondents during research is used by companies to formulate crucial business decisions, create new products, etc. Given the stakes involved in our data collection, we must examine the history in order to assess and learn from previous quality measures and standards set forth by industry leaders. It stands to reason that if we don't apply the best guidelines to data collection, then we're contributing to the demise of our own industry. Garbage in, garbage out, right?

Over the past 60+ years, literally hundreds of codes of conduct, guidelines, articles and posts about quality recruiting practices have been written. What they all have in common is the basic conviction that it is imperative for care to be taken by those who are responsible for obtaining respondents. Summarized by a line from the Marketing Research Association's (now the Insights Association) MRA Code of Marketing Research Standards (October 2013): "Accurate data can be obtained only when all parties to the research process are committed to quality."

There are right ways to recruit and there are wrong ways to recruit. How the respondent is identified and utilized is of utmost importance. Looking to the past and the essential standards set forth by industry leaders for identifying qualified respondents is what will, frankly, allow us to actually have a future for the marketing research industry.

Jay Zaltzman, president of the Qualitative Research Consultants Association (QRCA) says, "As qualitative researchers, we tend to focus on how to be most effective while we're interacting with participants. But all of our work is based on the assumption that participants really are who they say they are. We need great recruiters to make sure we can all do a great job. Of course, we can write screeners that don't give away what we're looking for but we need to make sure recruiting staff actually follow those screeners and don't tip off potential respondents about which answers will enable them to qualify for a study. Qualitative researchers are well aware of the risk that bad recruiting poses, so when we find a great recruiter, we stick with them and tell all our colleagues. So great recruiting really is a win-win!"

Naomi Henderson, founder and CEO of RIVA agrees, "Regardless of the type of qualitative research event it is important to have the 'right respondent' in front of a moderator and that moderator needs to ask the right questions." (But discussion about moderating's impact on research is another article to be written).

So, what steps need to be taken to recruit the right respondent and ensure that quality data is being collected?

Jim Berling, managing director of the Burke Institute says, "All too often we don't spend enough time to determine who we should really be talking with, especially when it comes to B2B research or hard-to-reach B2C customers. Spend the time upfront to determine who you really need to talk with and be prepared to accept the premise that the person actually making the purchase may not be the decision maker."

While there are a plethora of rules and regulations to be followed when recruiting, the most important from my perspective – and the practices that CRC insists upon when recruiting – are the following:

Do not use the topic or client name for project names. If a study is called the "laundry pod study," how many respondents are going to say they don't use laundry pods when asked that question on the screener? We use project numbers and study names that aren't related to the topic for security.

Have a thorough, non-leading and well-thought-out screener. (Remember, recruiters are to read a screener verbatim so as not to lead respondents, therefore, well-written questions are imperative.) The class I took on screener development years ago at the Burke Institute taught details that are still relevant to quality screener-writing today. An example is: Caution must be used for qualifying behavior that includes timing (such as past three weeks usage) because the respondent may have qualified when originally screened and then two weeks later may not qualify at confirmation (plus, if they haven't used the product in over five weeks, they may not have enough recollection of usage to have a productive discussion).

Ensure respondents recruited are reviewed in the database for their past participation (not everyone can remember the exact date of the last time they participated). Additionally, CRC ensures that a potential respondent hasn't participated more than twice in a year and has an overall lifetime maximum of 10 projects.

Speak with potential respondents on the phone or via video chat (vs. recruited and/or confirmed solely online). While it is faster, easier and cheaper to recruit using online methods only, this doesn't mean it is a quality way of recruiting. Plus, if you aren't talking with the respondent, how do you know if they are articulate or not? CRC's policy is to speak with respondents twice before they come to the research session; once during screening to ask the full screener and once during the confirmation process.

Looking to the past and the essential standards set forth by industry leaders for identifying qualified respondents is what will, frankly, allow us to actually have a future for the marketing research industry.

—Chelle Precht

Re-screen during the confirmation and check-in processes. This is another potential way of catching someone who wasn't telling the truth about their qualifying behavior.

We monitor show rates. Higher-than-average show rates (avg. = 80-90 percent) can be a sign of a recruiting issue. Based on my experience, "professional" (money-focused/not necessarily qualified) respondents are more likely to show than are standard participants (who have life situations that pop up, causing them to cancel or not show).

What's the bottom line? We must take it upon ourselves to ensure that everyone is trained in not only what good recruiting standards are but also how to follow them to ensure a future for the research industry! Contact Chelle at Complete Research Connection if you have questions or would like to discuss the topic further.

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614-220-4120

Insights on Demand will transform market research in 2018 and beyond

We've hit an inflection point in the market research industry, one that needs to be addressed by an entirely new solution

FREDERIC-CHARLES PETIT

CEO AND FOUNDER, TOLUNA

The old way of conducting market research is no longer viable in today's world where marketing and advertising professionals need to execute campaigns at 10 times the speed they were done in the past. We see the need not simply for the incremental improvement of market research or data collection but a new way of obtaining insight. Enter an entirely new business practice: Insights on Demand™. This democratized vision for market research makes insights into consumer intent accessible and achievable for all business professionals in companies of all sizes.

Why change? Consumers have

Today's consumers are more savvy than ever about the choices available to them in the marketplace. They expect brands to deliver personally-tailored content, products and services in real-time and on-demand. These "always on" consumers use mobile devices equipped with a wide range of tools that empower them to deflect or reject irrelevant content and opt-in to receive only the most relevant messages from their favorite brands.

Many of today's consumers also increasingly engage with brands across multiple channels and devices – from smartphones to tablets to laptops – to shop and make purchasing decisions. When brands attempt

to grab the attention and dollars of multitasking consumers by delivering the right content, speed and accuracy are critical.

Today's marketers who can stay one step ahead of consumer demands stand to gain a significant competitive advantage. But the only way to achieve that edge is by having access to real-time consumer insights that accurately reflect these new realities, provide a complete picture of consumer sentiment and are driven by cost-effective technology that automates the delivery of those insights to speed up the decision-making process. Additionally, today's speed of information creates constant and rapid shifts in consumer sentiment.

Brands have changed too

Agile and innovative companies of all sizes – not just giants like Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix and Google – will continue to find new ways of providing real-time, on-demand value to consumers and in the meantime seek new ways to obtain dynamic insights and move past the old way of static, rearview-focused market research data.

Incremental improvements in market research and data collection have in many cases become insufficient to address these realities, which now demand an entirely new way of obtaining consumer insight.

Based on our prediction of what's coming and my continued sense that the market research industry is ultimately to be democratized, we've taken a leadership position by creating a new market category called Insights on Demand.

Enter the aforementioned inflection point – Insights on Demand is born

Today's businesses need access to insights that are deep and dynamic, always available and tuned into constantly-changing market sentiment. So where does it leave those of us in the market research industry?

Insights on Demand is a new, transformational market category, based on business needs for fully integrated approaches to understanding constantly-shifting consumer sentiment and taste. Insights on Demand promotes the tight integration between technology and companies to provide real-time insights to organizations – no matter their size or timeliness of need. At the core, the market research industry faces challenges adapting to this new world order. It's not just about adopting technology – the need is deeper.

Insights on Demand is not just going to be bigger than market research because it's better. It will be bigger than market research because it's broader. It can be scary and difficult to change but when you are part of an industry that is being disrupted, transformation is the only solution.

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ONLINE QUALITATIVE

May the force be with you

Transformational forces driving research technology development

ZLATKO VUCETIC

PRESIDENT,
FOCUSVISION

"In the modern world we have invented ways of speeding up invention, and people's lives change so fast that a person born into one kind of world grows up in another, and by the time his children are growing up, lives in still a different world." - Margaret Mead

I love this quote because it remains relevant after 30 years. When I speak with my team at FocusVision about the state of the digital qualitative industry, one word continually comes up: transformation. Digital qualitative research is a powerful tool. It gives researchers the ability to constantly zoom in and out and engage with participants in ways that provide rich and unique insights. However, this method of research has been slow to transform because the data collected varies greatly: text, images, video, etc.

Contrast that with what we see now: bots and artificial intelligence, with accuracy and algorithms complex enough to handle vast amounts of digital qualitative data. The emergence of such is a truly transformative force, which will demand that all research technology platforms evolve – and quickly.

Forces of digital qualitative transformation

When thinking about the next level – the 2.0 of digital qualitative research – three universal forces of transformation will be at work:

Technological breakthroughs: Chat bots, machine learning and computer vision all create exciting analysis opportunities for the types of engagements that regularly occur in digital qualitative research.

Demographic changes: Our population is shifting, which has implications on how we engage participants. Today's younger generations have extremely high expectations for technology in both form and function. Research technology features like mobile data collection and offline modes are no longer value-add benefits but required table stakes.

Shifts in economic power: The free markets are all interconnected. Rises in power and growth in the western world require attention from brands and researchers alike in order to stay relevant.

Clarifying the co-existence of AI and digital qual

Terms like artificial intelligence have

become overused, misused and even devalued. In fact, the value that AI brings to digital qualitative research is quite unclear. This is in part because qualitative research inherently answers the "why" of a given challenge. And understanding the "why" is not one of AI's strong suits. For example, deep neural networks (DNN) are a subset of machine learning in AI. They are capable of unsupervised learning using unstructured or unlabeled data. However, DNNs have no way to explain the output of their data analysis to humans; only through technology. In short, they cannot explain the "why." This is important as we enter a period when the complex data types collected through digital qualitative research will use DNN algorithms.

This example doesn't discount the fascinating developments being made in AI. It is just a challenge to be addressed. These developments and their related challenges will truly transform our industry and we must clarify the path to co-existence. FocusVision has already begun doing so.

Adapting to the now culture

Invoking a classic Queen song, today's culture wants it all and they want it now. And, thanks to omnipresent mobile technology, people can have it all right now. A wealth of information is immediately available to consumers via their mobile devices. In turn, they yield a vast amount of data at a near-constant pace. Savvy consumers understand the treasure trove of personal data they produce and are highly sensitive about privacy. This challenges researchers to rethink methodologies to accommodate both immediacy and data security while working faster than ever to deliver results.

The beauty of digital qualitative research is its asynchronous nature. Things don't need to happen in parallel. This helps researchers pivot and adapt to constantly-moving cultural and business demands. FocusVision's integrated approach to research technology addresses this with both qualitative and quantitative solutions. For instance, our Revelation and FV Decipher platforms have been designed from the ground up for mobile usability and capture exciting in-the-moment insights. When coupled with analysis tools like FV Video Insights, researchers can quickly collect and evaluate authentic consumer data. This holistic approach ensures that all research data lives within a single, secure source.

Empowering the full stack professional

The immediate, mobile nature of today's research environment also requires a Swiss army knife approach to execution. Researchers must be able to operate in different arenas and understand multiple methodologies. I refer to this as the full stack researcher. These individuals are well-versed in a combination of business, research and technology methods and strategies. They are "uber generalists" with the knowledge and skill to drill down into specific areas when needed.

At FocusVision, this idea is embodied by our research strategy team. Their role is fluid by design. Led by Zoe Dowling, Ph.D., the group has deep expertise in research design and execution. They are also highly experienced in technology, operations and marketing. This enables them to connect with our clients and internal teams alike to drive innovation and transformation.

FocusVision: Intelligently moving forward

Transformation is complex. We are now in a period where new technologies like AI are breaking old benchmarks and creating new ones. As elements of AI, business/consumer culture and market research converge, our industry must react. FocusVision is poised to lead this charge. We have reimagined how we do business and how we empower researchers. We have rethought our entire suite of qualitative and quantitative solutions to better address the needs of our customers, technological advances and a "gotta have it now" mobile mentality. We are poised to partner with research teams of all levels as our industry evolves. I look forward to sharing these developments with you.

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QUIRK'S OUTLOOK 2018

PASSIVE METERING/
BEHAVIORAL DATA

Passive metering – You don't know what you don't know

The author discusses how brands can understand consumers' online behavior

JACQUELINE ROSALES

COO, SOAPBOXSAMPLE

Google now processes, on average, over 40,000 search queries every second. This translates to over **3.5 billion searches per day** and **1.2 trillion searches per year** worldwide. The way people engage with brands and online content is constantly evolving. No single day of digital behavior is the same as another. If I want to learn about the newest fitness gadget, I search it online. By the next day, I may be over fitness and want to know how to convert my home to a "smart" home, so I look it up. Later that same afternoon, I may want a new refrigerator that can build me a shopping list. Or I may just want to buy something mundane like shampoo (you know the kind that makes my hair that cool silver-purple color) so I simply look it up on Amazon and click "buy now." If brands want to stay competitive, they need to able to keep up with radical, fast-paced changes in consumer online behavior.

Brands have a great appetite for understanding how people behave and make decisions online. They need to understand their customers' purchase influencers beyond demographic and attitudinal data; passive tracking data captures how consumers move across the digital world, allowing brands to keep up by tracking their customers' digital journeys in real-time.

Adopting a passive metering strategy is not without challenges. The challenges range from technology implementation and respondent adoption to understanding the data. There are oceans of it and it is totally unstructured. Despite these challenges, more and more clients are diving in and having success finding those nuggets of "data gold" they would never have uncovered with surveys alone. Brands need to start somewhere and rather than trying to uncover the Holy Grail of all that passive metering can do, simply looking for trends in the data at a high level can deliver those unexpected "aha moments" brands want.

Keep in mind, consumers are complex. Passive metering is a super-effective starting point to understand what people are doing without disrupting or influencing their behavior. However, there is no one simple research formula or methodology that is all-knowing. Blending methodologies has been – and will continue to be – crucial for brands to really understand their customers. The opportunities for connecting digital behavioral data with traditional survey data, third-party data or even longitudinal data available through other innovative research approaches such as insight communities, translates to in-depth, actionable insights brands need.

We keep hearing passive metering is coming as the next big thing in research. Truth is, it is already here. It has been here for years. I encourage researchers to stop overcomplicating it. Take the risk of not knowing everything in advance, find great clients to experiment with and dive in. Remember, you don't know what you don't know until you know it.

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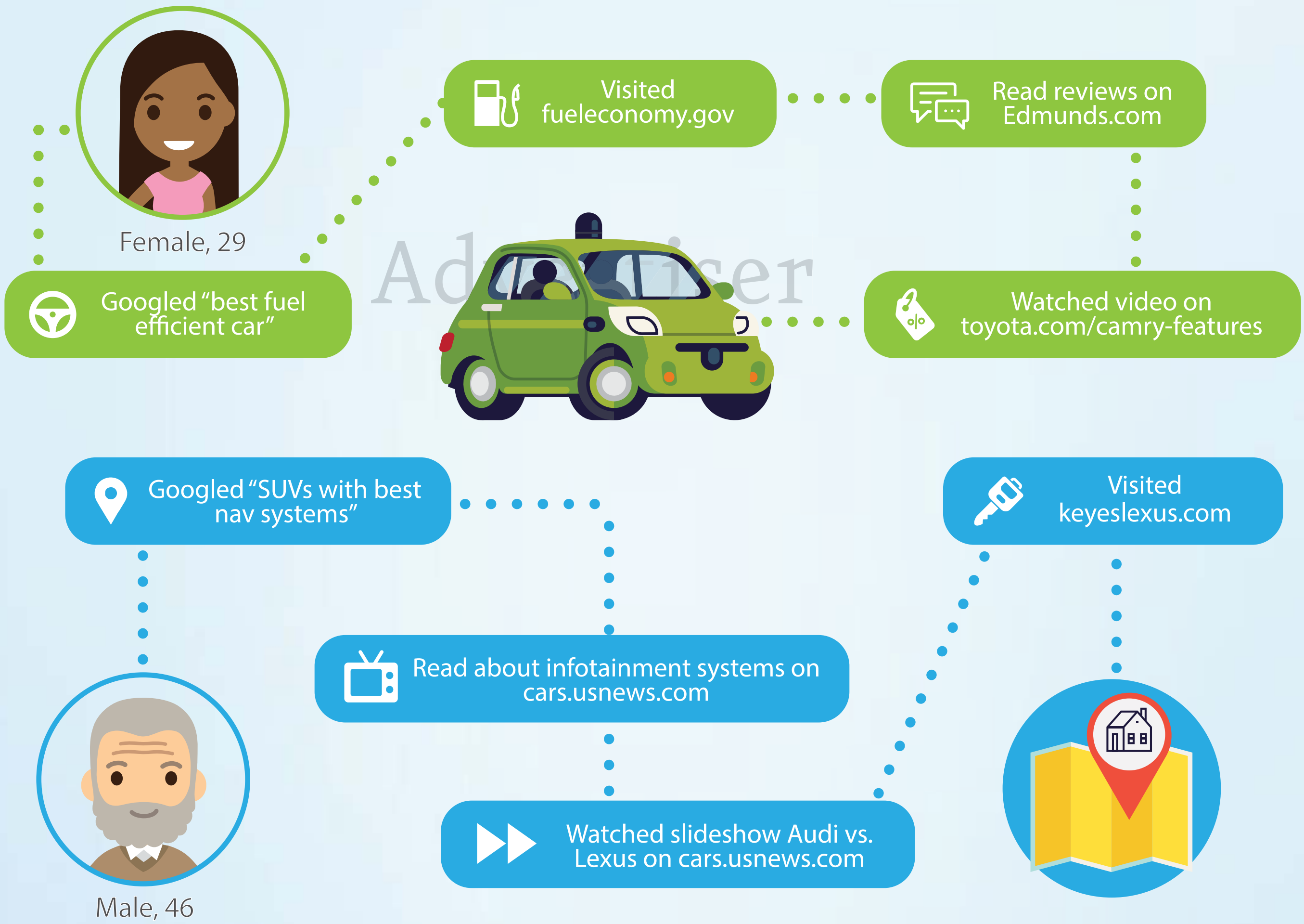
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW



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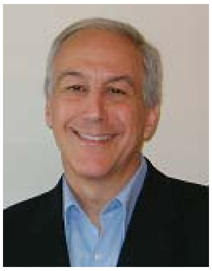
From customer satisfaction to customer response: A new feedback model

10 things to consider when building a customer response system

ROBERT WALKER

CEO AND FOUNDER, SURVEYS & FORECASTS LLC



If you work in marketing management or marketing research you are no doubt familiar with customer satisfaction (CS) programs. Some CS programs, created in the hope of helping businesses become more customer-centric, fail to deliver against this noble objective.

As a result, the concept of customer satisfaction has reached an inflection point. As an industry, we must move away from rote "report card" thinking to nimble feedback systems that support real-time response and intervention. Some companies have already pivoted to this new reality; most have not and risk being left behind. Let's recast our approach to one of rapid response based on a customer response system or CRS.

Below are 10 areas to consider before building a customer response system. If you already have a customer satisfaction program in place, consider these ideas to compare and improve the effectiveness of your company's program.

1. Management buy-in

CRS programs that have the endorsement of senior management have the greatest chances of success. A company must be invested in a never-ending journey to improve its products and services to the benefit of the end-customer. Management must truly believe that feedback, collected in a rigorous way, is no less important than sales or profits. Do not start a CRS program for the purpose of sloganeering, being self-congratulatory or for reprimanding departments or teams. Customer responsiveness must be based on continuous improvement principles and pushed deeply into a company's culture to feed growth and innovation.

2. Key touchpoints

A comprehensive assessment of all possible customer touchpoints needs to be made across the organization. Decisions must then be made about what characteristics need to be evaluated. As the number of discrete touchpoints increases, fewer questions should be asked per point. The customer will be asked for feedback at multiple points in the delivery chain; we do not want to create an excessive burden.

3. Link measures to processes

Broad measures are generally unusable for decision-making because they fail to provide the linkage between a problem and the process that created it. Your CRS program's goal should be to provide granular feedback to help improve the overall system. In every case, we should be asking, “How will we use data from this question?” Make your question wording, attribute lists and rating scales precise to avoid misinterpretation (i.e., strive for validity and reliability).

4. Minimize feedback time lag

Strive for immediate feedback whenever possible after every transaction or consumer touchpoint. In psychological experiments, memory decay occurs in minutes yet many customer satisfaction programs assume that the customer carries around a fresh recollection of the experience days or weeks later. Humans have notoriously foggy memories, especially in categories that have little emotional involvement.

As an industry, we must move away from rote “report card” thinking to nimble feedback systems that support real-time response and intervention.

—Robert Walker

5. Strike a balance

Every company must find the optimal balance between respondent burden and actionability. Single measures are generally insufficient to provide the guidance needed. A person’s “willingness to recommend” is an abstraction and inappropriate in most categories. Rather, consider measures that focus on areas for improvement. A scale such as “Needs no improvement” to “Needs significant improvement” helps management prioritize areas in need of attention. Be willing to experiment in your category.

6. Link touchpoint measures

Look longitudinally and link data points together using a customer’s unique ID. Multiple touchpoints exist: browsing an online store, the ordering or selection process, filling a shopping cart, checking out and (assuming it is shipped) receipt of an item. The customer also needs time to fully experience the product. Feedback must be obtained at multiple touchpoints, yet by minimizing the number of questions per interaction, we have a higher probability of obtaining high-quality data and less nonresponse bias.

7. Append transactional data

Do not ask customers questions that you already have on file in a data warehouse. CRS programs should append descriptive and longitudinal data to the customer record. This adds an enormous amount of power to your analysis. Also, consider reverse-populating your data warehouse or CRM system with survey information to determine, at the individual respondent level, whether satisfaction is improving over time. This helps avoid the variance inherent in multiple time periods and independent samples.

8. Issue immediate alerts and promote recontact

Whether you are using a DIY survey tool or an enterprise-wide platform, use alerts and triggers to rectify problems. If, for example, you run a food supply company and obtain low ratings on lettuce, create an alert to notify the produce manager. Alerts give you an opportunity to pick up the phone and call the customer – and in so doing, forge even stronger bonds with customers. Alerts also support the customer service function, which typically handles complaints.

9. Emphasize light users and new customers

Pay special attention to light buyers and new customers when analyzing CRS data. Most measures are affected more by changes in penetration (new or lighter buyers) than by loyal customers. It’s a numbers game: Successful brands with higher share have broader appeal and a larger customer base. Attracting new customers to your brand is also likely to be more cost-effective than investing in strategies focused on increasing loyalty.

10. Reporting

CRS data is different from measures such as sales, brand awareness or attributes. While many visualization and dashboard tools abound, their appropriateness for CRS data must be thought through. You will typically be interviewing only your customers. As such, you are only seeing a single slice of your market. Aggregate-level reporting may lull a company into a false sense of security by masking outliers. Very large exceptions are needed to trigger company-level alerts when using tools such as control charts. Consider reporting the number of alerts by discrete category for both accuracy and impact.

Summary

Programs that assess customer satisfaction are giving way to nimble customer response systems that go beyond high-level report cards and abstract measures. These systems capture feedback on specific characteristics linked to discrete processes and generate immediate alerts to appropriate team members to foster near-instant intervention. Consider these concepts as you build an effective CRS at your own company.

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QUIRK'S OUTLOOK 2018 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

JACKSON RESEARCH A cut above

Qualitative isn't dead

How qualitative research will adapt to survive and stay relevant

MARISA L. POPE
OWNER, JACKSON RESEARCH

Qualitative was supposed to be dead by now. So why isn't it?

There are mountains of behavioral data at our fingertips that tell us what people are doing, when and with whom they're doing it.

It's simple. We need to know WHY. Why they chose that place, with those people, at that time of day. Without the "why" we can't do much about their behavior except watch it.

I'm not going to bore you with all the other reasons why qualitative is living past its predicted expiration date. What's important is the future of qualitative and how that future will affect the industry. How will researchers have to adapt? What will facilities look like? And how will research buyers use it moving forward? These are the questions we all have to answer if we want to maintain relevance.

Adapt or die

The real difference between qualitative and quantitative is the emotive substance baked into the very core of most qualitative methods. Recently there's been a resurgence of mixed methods, including both, as researchers seek to get a "twofer." This requires both empathetic and analytical minds to collaborate; no easy task but one organizations will have to master.

And let's face it, these studies are expensive. But research buyers are discovering that one such project can offer the insights of multiple individual attempts (in less time) to gain the same level of understanding.

Four walls and a mirror

Researchers won't be the only ones asked to transform. Many facilities, too, may have to undergo a makeover. It won't be enough to have four walls and a mirror; even the living room setup is practically passé. No, facilities will have to become more adaptable, with creative, inspiring décor custom-built for the solution at hand – such as pubs, hospital rooms and even backyards – if we want to stay relevant.

As Steve Kantscheidt, CEO of research insights consultancy THREE says, "We need to be creative in meeting people on their own terms, in comfortable environments, fostering creative thinking and storytelling. There's a myriad of ways to do that but the key is to think of every project as an individual puzzle and identify the unique solution that meets the unique questions."

Customizable facilities like Jackson Research will be in high demand as clients search for agencies capable of creating unique spaces in controlled environments. Instant Access® is also expected in facilities; now we must have tablets, so with the click of an icon clients can get copies, order meals or even request a coffee run. The days of searching for a hostess are gone, thanks to technology.

Sexy or sustainable

But technology hasn't always panned out as expected. According to the 2017 Q1-2 edition of the GRIT Report, only one-in-10 research buyers indicated their real-world projects compared "very well" to their ideal project. One could speculate this is due to an almost universal attempt to offer "sexier" alternatives to traditional research. However, as shown in the 2016 edition of this same publication, many of the methods touted as the "future of marketing research" just a few scant years ago had already stabilized, rather than showing signs of increased adoption.

In fact, the data showed social media analytics, virtual reality and biometrics were flat over a two-year period. Why?

There are many possible reasons: expense, technical expertise, appropriate venue. But in the end, I believe it's because human connections still matter. Even the younger audiences, raised in a virtual world, with virtual friends and virtual playgrounds, enjoy coming together in face-to-face discussion groups. Rather than replace, researchers are integrating methods such as research gamification, online communities and mobile qualitative into tradi-

tional study designs. Perhaps because as stand-alone methods these methods still lack the depth required?

The end game

In their attempt to minimize project costs many corporations are opening autonomous facilities only to find the biggest expense is in building and maintaining a quality panel. Not only does the panel require constant attention but facilities spend valuable time and resources trying to weed out professional respondents; undoubtedly the greatest threat to qualitative.

The average consumer isn't as average as they used to be; search "paid focus groups" and you will find almost 1.8 million results. Consider sites such as www.focusgroupmagic.com or www.takesurveysforcash.com, both encouraging registration for as many groups as possible. Indeed, the most unscrupulous panelists have mastered the art of manipulation, making the use of photo ID meaningless. Tying encrypted participant data to a single profile, while daunting, is a mission Jackson has undertaken to prevent this type of fraud and will eventually become industry standard.

Qualitative research is here to stay. And while many consider it antiquated, we haven't discovered a superior method for gaining the insight a skilled practitioner can get from an engaged participant. One day, technology might offer us one (a Vulcanesque mind meld perhaps?) but probably not in my lifetime.

In the end, it's conversation

Observation, awareness, social constructs and psychology combine in perfect harmony to offer research buyers a glimpse of the participants' worlds. And while technological advances such as the Internet and streaming have opened up new pathways of communication, none has surpassed good old-fashioned conversation for gaining insight.

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QUIRK'S OUTLOOK 2018

MYSTERY SHOPPING

second to none

Mystery shopping in an omnichannel world

From a targeted methodology to a widely-used omnichannel tool

JEFF HALL
FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, SECOND TO NONE

Mystery shopping as a research methodology continues to stand the test of time and for good reason: Properly-designed programs deliver corporate-side stakeholders with line-of-sight analytics across their organizational hierarchy in near real time with the ability to prioritize resources for improving customer experience delivery with pinpoint accuracy.

While mystery shopping has most often been applied in a targeted or siloed manner and focused on the operational execution in select customer channels, Second To None views 2018 as the year this research methodology becomes widely adopted as an omnichannel strategic tool within the domain of customer journey mapping as brands recognize the need to design a journey map and build out an enterprise-level solution to evaluate all phases of the customer experience.

Broad consumer adoption and increasing preferences for e-commerce, online customer interactions and digital communications have created an unprecedented shift in consumer expectations – one in which our experiences with a brand should be met equally well whether in-person, online or over the phone.

Peak-performing omnichannel mystery shopping programs measure and report on a host of key distinct touchpoints within the context and lens of a fully integrated journey map:

Omnichannel mystery shopping | The channels

On-site

Owned sites

Mystery shopping is exceptionally good at measuring site-level ability to deliver along key operational standards, including location cleanliness, appearance, customer greeting, staff helpfulness, speed of service, adherence to protocols, product/merchandise knowledge, asking for the sale and thanking the customer, among others.

Partner/franchise sites

In addition to measures typically important to owned sites, partner or franchise locations can be assessed on compliance to signage, marketing, pricing, displays, associate perception of your brand, how your brand is mentioned/positioned among alternatives and whether it is portrayed in a positive manner.

Online

E-commerce

Key metrics to monitor include site access and rendering across device types, ease of site navigation, ability to locate products, evaluating the path-to-purchase, ease of checkout, order confirmation, out-of-stocks, time or days elapsed until delivery, condition of package upon delivery and ease of returning/exchanging product via shipping or in-store. A common iteration of e-commerce mystery shopping is the execution of a BOPIS measurement program – the full cycle of buying online and picking up in-store.

Messaging apps, chat, e-mail

Brand-driven digital communications through mobile apps, online chat and e-mail are fertile ground for extracting customer experience insights through mystery shopping. As more brands adopt direct-to-consumer strategies for nurturing highly personalized customer relationships, companies overlooking this channel as part of their mystery shopping strategy may easily put brand equity at risk.

On the phone

Contact center

Customer interactions with contact centers often represent prime opportunities to strengthen the customer relationship through agent ability to answer questions and navigate a path toward optimal issue resolution. Customers typically reach this channel while interacting with a brand's e-commerce site or after an in-store transaction, amplifying the importance of measuring wait/hold times, agent friendliness and knowledge, addressing the customer's need on their first call and the speed with which issues are resolved. Dismissing the importance of contact center mystery shopping creates vulnerability in a solid understanding of experience delivery across all touchpoints.

The challenges

Brands with a desire to measure and continually improve the omnichannel customer experience often face headwinds early on in attempting to internally identify who owns the customer experience at each touchpoint, where the CX ownership handoffs exist, then arriving at agreement around the priorities and standards of measurement. Navigating through this requires CX champions from the highest level of the organization, with an ability to advocate, articulate and champion cross-channel mystery shopping in a manner that can cascade downward and throughout the organization.

As with brand-side operational execution, the design of mystery shopping programs across disparate channels and customer touchpoints demands diligent planning and a research partner with the seasoned leadership, nimble project management resources, technology framework and analytical capacity to reliably administer a program at-scale.

The benefits

Omnichannel shopping programs developed to be adaptive and evolutionary in nature and initially designed through an internal collaborative framework will enjoy long-term organizational support. Aligning study design to assess and uncover the critical metrics reflective of the paramount customer experience elements and then leveraging a broad set of analytical tools, including key drivers, predictive analytics, sales linkage and text/sentiment insights, allows stakeholders across the organizational hierarchy to understand the story in the data, communicating priorities in real-time, affect positive change and continually enhance the customer experience.

Insights are verifiable and robust as each shopper completes multiple shops throughout their journey across each channel touchpoint. The shopper-research provider rapport is much like that of a customer community, wherein these shoppers participate over a longer time span and throughout a detailed set of interaction scenarios.

Progressive mystery shopping organizations will also be able to assist with your customer surveys as well. This simplifies the steps needed to create a 360-degree view of your customer experience gathered via marketing surveys, operational measures and journey evaluations. Your supplier should be apt to feed all data streams into the same dashboard for convenience.

As we witness high-performing brands embracing omnichannel mystery shopping as a much broader, integrated, cross-organizational journey map research tool in order to leverage the unique quantitative insights these measures provide, this holistic perspective is viewed as a critical means to informing continued brand relevancy, the protection of brand equity and the ability to outperform the competition.

About Second To None

Second To None empowers customer-centric brands to deliver consistent and intentional consumer experiences on-site, online and on the phone. Solutions include mystery shopping programs, voice of customer surveys, compliance audits and online reputation monitoring. Our work is grounded in statistical science, strategic relevance and the ability to deliver practical, actionable insights in real-time.

www.secondtonone.com

QUIRK'S OUTLOOK 2018

DIY RESEARCH TOOLS

D'WellResearch
User Experience Matters

Market research – where to go from here?

New trends and tools that will affect the future of DIY research

THOMAS GEORGE

MANAGING DIRECTOR, D'WELL RESEARCH

The changing global market has compelled innovation and a paradigm shift in the way businesses are being conducted and controlled. Move along or be left behind is the new axiom to follow. Old ways don't open new doors. Since market research is all about opening new doors, the industry has followed the new wave set forth by the scope and course of this change and refined its work to remain cutting-edge.

Technological trends are impacting market research and the industry is exploring avenues to put technology to good use. Automation combined with artificial intelligence is going to make research faster and cheaper. Desk research will gain an upper hand over field research as automated data collection methods gain importance and fulfill the promise of delivering relevant inputs.

Development of software that takes advantage of the available data can give new research options compared to labor-heavy surveys. However, quick-and-easy results come with their share of drawbacks. The importance of human overview in interpreting the results obtained cannot be overemphasized. Only then can the research be given the right direction.

With the world undergoing changes politically, socially and economically, businesses are facing their share of surprises. This has led to larger dependence on market researchers to understand the way forward. Though there is availability of data in large quantities through data mining, social media and online surveys, the researcher will need to sift through this and remove the grain from the chaff to come out with concise findings and a clear point of view to address the issues put forth by the clients. So, it's not the data but the communication of its insights that will drive decisions.

Information available in real-time combined with the possibility to use online tools has made it possible for more businesses to use DIY research. This allows small companies to remain in competition and gain market share at lower costs. Newer technologies will bring in newer DIY platforms with more customization and better ways to interpret the data that could fill some of the gaps left by DIY methods. However, DIY research misses out on the opportunity to benefit from the expertise of seasoned professionals in the field.

Enormous amounts of data available will make it easier to spot patterns and perspectives. This can create an opening to predict future trends, opportunities and threats. Answers to many business questions will lie in the right assimilation and analysis of these data.

Since competition among businesses is increasing and the fight for market share is on the rise, businesses will look for an edge over competitors. This could come from reading subtle consumer behavior by observation, rather than surveys with long questionnaires that would give predictive responses. Observational research and implicit measurement, along with the entire bag of neuromarketing techniques employed to read subconscious consumer behavior, can empower clients with knowledge about their target user through inferred data.

Talking to existing customers and staff in a business and listening intently to consumer complaints and grievances can offer a gold mine of information about hidden opportunities and undetected threats that need to be addressed. Tapping this network of the client correctly may be time-consuming but the results are accurate and reliable.

Social media could be tapped more for data and its analysis. Smartphones and wearable devices provide an easy-to-use research avenue with quick access to the data and feedback received in real time.

Market research of the future will involve more immersion studies and consumer interaction as the importance will be less about data and more about understanding the psyche of the consumer, patterns of their behavior in real-world conditions, listening and empathizing with them.

Market research of the future will involve more immersion studies and consumer interaction as the importance will be less about data and more about understanding the psyche of the consumer, patterns of their behavior in real-world conditions, listening and empathizing with them.

—Thomas George

Predictive market research is going to take precedence, potentially leading to product development that incorporates details that are in tandem with consumer values, beliefs, desires and demands, thus reducing the risk of failure and better return on investment.

Opt-in surveys and asking clients for ongoing feedback will keep research on continuously, which will help businesses swim against the tide and keep them thriving, paying off in the long run.

Studying the overall scenario by correlating results with market trends, the directions of economies, world events, consumer behavior, changing social and demographic scenarios will carry greater rewards, rather than looking at individual findings in isolation.

Any research can only work if the findings are put to the right use. Help in implementation of market and consumer insights could fall into the boundaries of marketing research in the near future. Along with this will come the demand for more accuracy in predictions, which will force the industry to look to new tools and frameworks to make this happen.

Since no two businesses are alike, customization and personalization may be the way ahead, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. There is also the buzz about using virtual reality to understand consumer sentiments and mentality. Not far behind is the concept to tap into virgin data unused so far like those generated by automobiles, consumer appliances and much more.

The time ahead for market research seems exciting with newer methodologies, novel technological tools and innovative data collection methods just around the corner. Like in all other industries, keeping pace with the change, finding footholds for support and reinventing skill sets that suit the times will ensure survival in an ever-changing environment.

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QUIRK'S OUTLOOK 2018 SENSORY RESEARCH

When enough isn't enough

How AnswerQuest updated its facilities for today's sensory research needs

JASON R. MILLER

CEO AND MANAGING PARTNER, ANSWERQUEST

Mmm, mmm, good. Or is it? This is the question being asked by food and beverage companies every day. But how to best get the answers? After 18 years in this business, I realized the CLT taste test was one method that couldn't be replaced digitally so I joined AnswerQuest in 2009 and opened a Boston facility shortly thereafter. I tested the waters with a minimal but effective facility (4,000 sq. ft., large CLT room, large prep kitchen and focus group room) and quickly realized that I might be on to something.

Fast-forward to 2017 and now we have a 9,000-square-foot facility with over 800 feet dedicated to our commercial test kitchen. We installed two 8x8 walk-ins, one cooler and one freezer and a 12-foot hood, commercial ranges, fryers, quick-connects, water lines, etc. We also added another (larger) CLT room and a 450-square-foot multipurpose focus group room. Both rooms can be viewed simultaneously from the dual viewing room (through one-way mirrors) to accommodate these dueling needs.

Why? Because the purpose of sensory research/product testing is to support the research and development teams at food and beverage companies, many of whom also utilize discrimination panels internally and therefore are used to producing product in their own kitchens. Being able to provide the same-level kitchen in a test facility is challenging. It requires a kitchen that is customizable; because each distinct R&D team will need to feel at home during the test and it is exactly why we built the commercial kitchen.

But adding commercial elements to a kitchen isn't enough. Sensory research needs are changing. The days of sparse facilities are gone as suppliers work as much with the marketing departments as they do R&D. Those buyers are used to well-appointed – and often even luxurious – facilities for their qualitative work. In many cases, sensory suppliers and buyers are asked to make a choice: a nice facility or a commercial kitchen. So here at AnswerQuest I made a decision to accommodate both. The trend to accommodate hybrid sensory research has been growing over the years.

Hybrid sensory research is just that – a mix of different methodologies – and it is different for everyone. Many clients are now asking agencies to recruit for a standard CLT – with a twist. Sometimes, we are asked to conduct the self-administered portion of the tasting and then the client immediately pulls out consumers

that pique their interest for either an individual interview or a focus group. Other times, we are asked to send consumers home with a product and a diary (online, packet of paper or mobile) and based on their responses they are invited into the facility for an in-depth interview.

Regardless, it's imperative that a CLT facility cater to both R&D and marketing in order to succeed in today's sensory environment.

Mastering the art of CLT work isn't for everyone but I love the controlled chaos. The precision with which we have to operate, the intense pressure to fulfill specific quotas and helping buyers refine their products – this is what drives me and my overly-talented staff.

It's also essential that everyone working on a study understand the type of method being employed. AnswerQuest (indeed, all Insights Center locations) personnel are all ServSafe® certified and trained. In addition, everyone in sensory must have a service industry attitude. As we all know, data collection is cut-and-dried – especially in a facility. Not only are we handling food and beverages, we are prepping, preparing and serving. On top of that, we wear our hospitality hats when clients are on-site to ensure they are as comfortable in our facility as they would be in their own.

In my opinion hybrid sensory/product testing is growing in popularity because these studies are incredibly efficient and in our budget-conscious world, researchers are able to gather top-level and deep insights in a single day. I also see the turnaround time getting tighter and tighter so lumping quant and qual together in sensory gives our clients the ability to make some fast decisions. And in food and beverage, getting it right is so important, especially at the data collection agency.

AnswerQuest – indeed, all Insights Center locations (Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver and Los Angeles) – understand how important the role of the data collection agency is in completing a successful project. It is imperative that we, as data collection agencies, understand the protocol of a project. We are the ones that are storing, preparing, handling, serving the product – as well as recruiting the correct consumers in order to give our clients the data they need to make (what can be) million-dollar decisions.

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Do you have experience in...?

| By Laura Cusumano

snapshot

A look at some of the factors involved in assessing a research firm's qualifications to undertake a project.

An age-old query when commissioning research is, does the marketing research agency have experience in the category? Every client company asks a prospective agency that question. It's an obvious, straightforward one. Client-siders spend significant amounts of time reviewing and discussing the specifics of the prospective supplier's experience. But how critical is experience in a category to effectively executing a research project? Perhaps the more germane question is: Do you have the skills and experience to successfully execute this research in a timely, cost-effective manner?

For a research agency to effectively deliver, direct category experience is only one aspect of its overall ability. For example, if an agency has only 10 years of collective experience among the research team in three categories across five clients, then direct category experience is probably very important for a successful project outcome. If the agency has 50+ years of collective experience in the team in 25+ categories across 25+ clients, then direct category experience is nice to have but probably not a requirement for success.

"Do you have experience in..." also demands an inquiry about when the projects were completed. If an agency completed 10 projects three years ago, are they more or less qualified than an agency that has completed three studies in the past year? Another issue is the activity of a category. Some categories are stagnant while others are dynamic, with an ever-changing landscape and market players.

Answers to "do you have experience in..." also depend on the degree and extent of the experience. Small, one-off studies probably do not provide the same level of experience that comes from a series of large, iterative studies. Is the experience in five small telephone projects equivalent to two, multi-wave tracking studies?

An accurate assessment of the specific value of "category experience" for selecting an agency would require a conjoint exercise that measures all the variables possibly considered, both consciously and unconsciously, when awarding a research project. These include but are not limited to:

- years of marketing research experience;
- years of related experience: marketing, sales, clinical or client-side;
- total number of categories worked in;
- similar categories worked in;
- diversity of categories with experience;
- the client's previous experience with the research agency;
- the scope of the project vs. the core competencies of the agency;
- the ability to successfully recruit target audiences;
- the marketing research approach and techniques under consideration;

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- the ability to meet the project's time frame and deadline;
- the number of years the agency has been in business;
- the size and makeup of the team who will execute the project;
- the project director leading the project;
- the physical location of the research agency; and
- cost and fees.

It is not likely that we will ever have the utility scores for these attributes but we can still address the question of the experience level required to successfully execute a study.

As you have guessed already, the answer is: Experience is required in some but not all studies. So, the relevant question is, "In what studies is experience required?" That, naturally, mainly depends on the category, the type of research and the respondent type.

Taint a study

It is easier to address when experience is NOT really needed and can actually taint a research study.

Experience may not be needed in studies that are considered straightforward, are shorter, more directive and are in less-complex or newer categories. Using a skilled, senior-level agency with little or no experience in a category can be quite valuable in exploratory research, which needs an open mind with no preconceived notions.

Sometimes a brand team needs to hear that the "emperor has no clothes" and it is harder for a marketing research agency entrenched in the brand or category to be able to step away and be totally objective. A naïve agency goes in more open-minded and can expand the view without drowning in the details and history. Generally, a new agency has not "drunk the Kool-Aid" and can challenge established beliefs or expose new, valuable morsels. However, if a research agency without direct experience is selected, it may require more time and effort for the client and adds a level of risk to the research.

Assuming that experience is always necessary can bias or limit the research and its value. But determining if experience is necessary is not easy and needs to be analyzed and considered carefully.

Laura Cusumano is a marketing research consultant based in St. Louis. She can be reached at lcusumano@msn.com.

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Improve Digital Activation with Market Segmentation
Hilary DeCamp, *Lieberman Research Worldwide (LRW)*

Inspiring Change: American Heart Association's Hybrid Approach To Critical Campaign Testing
Chelsea Gibbons, *20/20 Research*
Christine Tchoumba, *20/20 Research*

Is Your Problem Resolution on Target?
Sarah Simon, *Confirmit*

Legal Cannabis Is A Brand Innovation Game Changer
Linda Gilbert, *BDS Analytics*
Gennifer Jackson, *Market Strategies International*

Lessons from Political Polling: Using Mobile In-App Recruitment to Achieve Predictable Results
Kyle Gollins, *Pollfish*
David Rothschild, *Ph.D., Microsoft Research*

Life Unthanked: Exploring Differences Between Millennial and Seasoned IT Decision Makers
Nicola Finnerty, *Greenberg Strategy*
Michael Kuehne, *FocusVision*

Maximizing the Value of Conjoint Studies with Qualitative
Mike Humphrey, *Decision Analyst*
Suresh Sethuraghavan, *Pella Corporation*

LEVERAGING JOBS TO BE DONE FOR INNOVATION
Chelsea Lamey, The Hershey Company
Erica Norton, The Hershey Company

Meal Kits: A Flash in the Pan or Here to Stay?
Jordan Cusner, *McCormick and Company*
Rastislav Ivanic, *GroupSolver*

NASCAR: Leading the Race with Digital Behavior Tracking
Candice Rab, *Luth Research*
Norris Scott, *NASCAR*
Becky Wu, Ph.D., *Luth Research*

A New Golden Age for Japan: Opportunities and Pitfalls for U.S. Brands
Andrew Edsall, *Carter Group*

New Models for Market Segmentation
Peter Simpson, *xsperient*

The Net Emotion Score – Practical Emotion Intelligence
Chuck Bean, *Martec*

The Optimal Online Qual Study: When Failure is Not an Option
Ray Fischer, *Aha!*

Panel: How do Insights Get a Seat in the C-Suite? What Holds Insights Back and How do We Change?
Randy Adis, *Olson Zaltman*
Kathryn Korostoff, *Research Rockstar LLC*
Anastasia Leng, *Picasso Labs*
Anish Nanavatty, *Free Ion Advisors LLC*
Samrat Saran, *AB InBev*

Practical Persuasion: The Marketing of Ideas
Kelley Styring, *InsightFarm*

Putting a Segmentation Into Action: How to Use a Segmentation to Craft Marketing Campaigns
Eleni Bennett and Kasey Fong, *Sony Pictures Home Entertainment*
Jason Kramer, *Vital Findings*

ROI for Marketing Research – Why it Misses the Point
Bruce Olson, *MMR Research Associates*

Seeing the Story: Using Eye-Tracking 'In Real Life' for the Right Story with the Biggest Impact
Sylvia Knust, *Tobii Pro*

Smarter. Faster. Better. A More Effective Approach To Market Research Reporting And Visualization
Rudy Nadilo, *Dapresy North America*

Social Media Research and Digital Discussion Engines to Enhance Research Insights
Chauncy Bjork, *Discovery Research Group*
Fran Nuzzi, *Target Research Group*

Strategic Relationships: The Cornerstone Of A Superior Knowledge Estate
Karen Lynch, *InsightsNow*
Marci Needham, *Ventura Foods*

Studio Sessions Are Your Next Super Tool for Driving Excitement Through Consumer Insights
Margaret Mariani, *The StratLab*

Take a Swiss Army Knife Approach to Understanding Your Customers for Better Customer Experience Design
Frank DeFazio, *United Concordia Dental*
Paul Janowitz, *icanmakeitbetter*

TAKE ME OUT TO THE RESEARCH
Nishea Clark, NVC Consulting
Steve Seiferheld, Swedish Match

Using Facial Action Coding For Static Image
Jerry W. Thomas, *Decision Analyst*

What Does It All Mean? Research Storytelling For Turbulent Times
David Intrator, *RTi Research*
David Rothstein, *RTi Research*

What's Keeping CMOs Up At Night?
Shane Skillen, *Hotspex*

When Impulse And Conscious Reactions Go To Battle
Jeff Goldstein, *AcuPOLL*

Yes, You Can Measure System 1 Dynamics In Your Advertising
Trevor Kvaran, *Communicus*
Jeri Smith, *Communicus*

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Tuesday, February 27th
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

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New York Insights Association Networking Reception

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10 mistakes companies make with their marketing research efforts

| By Michael Oilar

snapshot

A veteran vendor offers advice and observations for client-side insights departments on improving their research processes, outcomes and relationships.

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180106.aspx

I've wanted to write this article for nearly a decade. Many in my firm cautioned against it, not wanting to endanger our relationships with existing and potential clients. "Don't get on your soapbox," they pleaded. Perhaps they're right but as the president of a mid-sized, full-service research company with more than 30 years in the research industry, I've seen just about everything and believe there are a few issues that still need to be addressed on the client side.

Some of you might think, "Who is this guy to tell us all the things we're doing wrong?" Well, like most good advice, it comes from a place of concern and caring. Know this: At our firm, we love our clients, we love research and we constantly strive to make it better. If you recognize yourself in even one of the bad traits listed in this article and want to improve the value of your research, we want to work with you.

Every one of these "mistakes" is described in order to make your client-side research budgets more effective. Yes, research firms would benefit as well from more efficient workflow but ultimately, we exist to make our clients more effective and successful and therefore I submit this list.

1. Sending all research projects out for bid

There is a common belief that competitive bidding is the best way to review and select vendors for upcoming research projects. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth. Researchers are often hesitant to submit their very best, most creative research design, for fear that an "expensive" design may not even make the first cut.

Corollary: Frequently, a second round of proposals/bids is requested, using the intellectual properties of one or more of the vendors who originally submitted a design. This is often couched as, "We've reimagined the project and would now like you to bid on…" The original – creative, experienced, knowledgeable – vendor is now faced

with a situation in which they must re-bid against vendors who were incapable of conceiving the sophisticated design in the first place. The other vendors now bid on the original design but are not familiar with its nuances and requirements and therefore submit bids far below the cost proposed by the original vendor. The result is the client getting “cheap” research from a company that doesn’t fully understand the design and is less capable of implementation.

There is a reason your company doesn’t send every advertising campaign out for bid, nor do they ask attorneys to bid on writing every contract or handling every negotiation. Heck, your company probably doesn’t even ask suppliers of consumable commodities (paper/water/toner) to bid on every shipment. Instead, most companies have annual or multiyear contracts for these services. Marketing research companies should be up for periodic review, exactly like advertising agencies and outside legal counsel. But you’ll never get the very best from a research vendor without building a true working partnership with them and that can’t be done while sending each individual project out to bid.

If you’re worried the removal of the per-project bidding process will result in increased costs, simply demand transparent pricing. You should be able to calculate the cost of a project before you receive a proposal from any research vendor that is your true partner. (Full disclosure: We share our cost calculators directly with our clients and encourage their use.) Review the designs your research partner submits and don’t be afraid to ask them to rethink any design you’re not completely satisfied with (much like you would do with an ad agency’s creative pitches).

Still not convinced? Have a heart-to-heart with any of your current research vendors and they will tell you they provide their very best pricing to those clients with whom they have the strongest connection and understanding of what to expect in the working relationship.

2. Not getting the most out of your research vendor

It’s a fact: In today’s world of frequent (and sometimes scheduled) company reorganizations, we, as research vendors, often find ourselves with more knowledge of and history with a client’s products, services or divisions than those within the company. It is the norm for us to have decades-long relationships with our clients, often spanning at least a half-dozen primary contacts on the client’s side. On ours? We still have the original account team, mostly comprised of principals in our firm.

A long-time vendor partner’s knowledge of what research has worked for your company and its products, along with the MR firm’s understanding of your market and its segments and even the ability to navigate your internal politics, can be encyclopedic. You’d be shocked at how often a new team asks us to conduct research that has already been done. We’ve lost sight of the number of times we’ve seen a research request along the lines of, “We need to better understand our customers and more fully integrate with their business model,” yet we know the exact date/year that very project was conducted, its outcomes and (often, but not always) what was done internally with the findings. But that knowledge falls on deaf ears all too often, because we’re not considered part of the team and all the people in the new positions want to do is pick the lowest-cost provider to conduct the (redundant) research for which they currently have budget.

Fully engaging your research vendor means you can leverage existing data (that no one on your team even knows exists) while spending that same budget to further flesh out the original findings or on another initiative altogether. Here’s a secret: We hate wasting time and money doing the same research over and over even more than you do. Let us help you get more out of your research budget.

That's when we can really contribute value above and beyond the parameters of the current project under consideration.

3. Thinking of research in terms of discrete projects, not as a process

The very best use of corporate research is an ongoing process that constantly improves its subject. Most research requests that hit my desk are one-offs, basically designed in a vacuum with a start and a finish. There may be some reference to an older study (think two years, not two months, old) but this is usually connected to a desire to "update" the information rather than building on and internalizing the findings from the first study. Additionally, we've all seen our share of tracking studies that just chug along, spitting out the same banal ratings/scores month after month, year after year (see mistake #10). There are sometimes projects that are multi-phased, with both quantitative and qualitative elements. But what we rarely see is the type of meaningful, ongoing commitment to a research program that truly produces actionable results to excite and motivate upper management.

We've all heard the expression, "Every good answer begs two additional questions," and in the cost/benefit world of market research this is often very true. Those additional questions are nearly always, "Why is it that way?" and "How can we change/improve it?" While those questions are probably asked superficially in your original study, they do not attain the depth of what you really need to know. More commonly, issues raised by the initial study deserve deep follow-up to fully understand but were unknown at the time of project initiation. Without a research process to provide continuous learning, this critical information will never see the light of day.

A well-designed, ongoing commitment to marketing research for a particular product, service or message delivers that nuance, leaves fewer questions unanswered, parallels the development of said product/service/message (i.e., adapts to the changes inherent in any production roadmap to stay relevant and up-to-date) and can even change the very personality of the development team/company. A true commitment to always knowing how the market will react to your development is critical and reduces the potentially exorbitant expense of missing the mark because your research was out-of-date, shallow or didn't reflect your current build.

4. Getting your vendor involved too late in the process

Our company is nearly always asked to provide examples of our experience in research, in our client's industry/business and in a specific methodology. However, sometimes the very next thing that occurs is that we're given an RFP that has a fully-baked methodology that doesn't match (or optimize) the goals of the project. And when we attempt to point this out, we're often met with silence or deflected with, "That's what our CMO/VP marketing/marketing manager wants," which immediately negates application of the years of experience that made the client want to work with us in the first place. Rather than helping the company craft a project that most accurately and efficiently meets their informational goals, we're reduced to the role of order-taker.

Instead, choose your research vendor based upon trust, knowledge, experience and ability to deliver and then include them in the early stages of research design. I guarantee, if you've chosen wisely, the vendor can improve turnaround time, remove extraneous and expensive design features and crystallize the data delivered into actionable insights. Perhaps more importantly, the vendor will understand every aspect of the reasons the project is being undertaken, the politics and personalities of those on the project team and can design research to better deliver the specific data required so your business can move forward.

5. Not focusing your data collection strongly enough on negative issues

Sure, everyone on your company's product team wants the survey to produce positive ratings for the new widget/service/message. But it's very difficult to take only positive feedback and tell your C-suite or front-line staff, "Our customers already like our product; now let's do better." Instead, focus on finding every opportunity to make your products and services better.

Homing in on potential obstacles to your offering doesn't mean the research is trying to kill it – in fact, quite the opposite is true. Well-designed research intended to tease out all potential roadblocks creates data that is a veritable roadmap to success.

6. Conducting too much research in-house

Bluntly put, in-house research professionals are often too close to the subject to produce fully objective research results. It could be as innocent as allowing a few marketing-generated adjectives to remain in your product description (that came directly from the marketing department/product group/engineering team). It could be leading and/or biased questions or even the omission of entire lines of critical questioning for the sake of expediency. Worse still, sometimes internal pressures and politics mean the research has virtually no chance of being objective.

Whatever the case, an objective outside vendor is better-positioned to scrub all bias out of the survey design, questionnaire document and data analysis. We all understand the value of independent, outside counsel in legal matters and we all place more value on objective, third-party white papers and case studies than we do on those created in-house with an explicit or implicit bias. The same is true for research. At its core, the goal of research is to reduce risk. Don't compromise that by allowing any bias to creep in. The risk on the back end is too great and if unchecked it will defeat the entire purpose of the research.

7. Excluding your research consultants from the implementation of the findings

Lots of companies have positions or even departments dedicated to customer insights or customer advocacy or, at the very least, like to include their customer's point-of-view in internal training and marketing discussions. But politics, inertia and incomplete understanding of all the market's segments often cause this message to become diluted or even abandoned. If you're serious about always including your customer's perspective, you should include your marketing research consultant on all customer-voice task forces and initiatives. Like any objective third party, we will ensure that your message remains on-target and will help real change occur. Don't let the job stop when customer data is delivered; continue it until it becomes part of your company's DNA.

8. Conducting research that is broad but shallow

Your customer insights department puts the word out that they're conducting research and the requests come flying in from all quarters, with an array of disparate suggestions for nice-to-know questions that stray far from the core goals of the project. Resist the urge to add items that broaden the scope but subtract from the profound data that a targeted, deep-dive project can deliver. The very best – and most actionable – research depends on a design that focuses on the subtle and possibly complicated customer attitudes and behaviors around the issue at hand. Focus laser-like on the core objectives and ignore peripheral questions. If you find that some of the off-topic questions are critically important to your company, then they probably deserve their own deep-dive research.

9. Leaning too much on online methodologies

The advent of online research capabilities has seduced many companies (both client and vendor) into using it nearly exclusively. At first blush, it's easy to see why: it's usually less expensive and faster to conduct. But dig a little deeper and troublesome underlying problems are raised.

Professional respondents. Straightliners, speeders, non-committed respondents – we've seen them all and they sprout like weeds within online panels. Don't believe me? Just notice how much time online panel providers dedicate to assuring you they have the issue under control. This is a problem that gets worse over time, as more and more people succumb to the come-ons proliferating all over the internet. (Fun activity: Google "get paid to do surveys" and sift through just the top 20+ results.) Anybody remember ads and promises to get paid to take telephone surveys? Didn't think so.

Probing and clarifying open-ended responses. Research companies spend hours every day, every shift training their interviewers to probe for more open-ended responses, as well as to better clarify them into meaningful, useful answers. This simply doesn't occur online. In fact, one of the ways every research firm cleans online data is to search for meaningless drivel and/or random typing in open-ended response boxes.

It is true that some online, open-ended responses can be detailed and on-point. But the vast majority are simplistic ("Why didn't you like this concept?" Response: "Just didn't like it.") or off-topic ("Why didn't you like this ad?" Response: "Your company sucks."). Trained interviewers know to probe past those responses and/or turn them back on track. Additionally, real-time monitoring and verification assures that respondents are focused on the topics being researched. Neither of these occur with online research.

Difficult audiences are almost impossible to reach online. Don't be fooled that business-to-business audiences, moderate-to-low-incidence audiences and high-level decision makers can be reached cheaply online, no matter what your panel provider says. Another industry side effect of professional online respondents is that they very quickly figure out how to fake their way past survey screeners. Unless screeners are very carefully written by experienced research vendors (and alas, even sometimes then) these respondents can suss out the correct path to gain entry. And because these difficult/low-incidence audiences are also typically paid the highest online survey incentives (either real cash or points to be redeemed) there is greater temptation to do so. Once again, trained professional interviewers, real-time monitoring and respondent verification are all designed to weed out these fake respondents.

This is not to say that all online research is bad. Rather, I'm suggesting we tilt the scale back towards the center and encourage thoughtful investigation of the research methodology chosen, instead of blithely pushing ahead with an online panel/survey. The goal is always to be cost-effective but you can't simply ignore the second word in that term: Will the chosen methodology be effective and not just low-cost?

10. Sticking with tracking studies that are too long in the tooth

Most of our clients have some form of long-term tracking studies in place for customer satisfaction, awareness, market share, etc. Often, the results from these studies are boiled down into a couple of measurement scores that find their way onto management dashboards (and sometimes, even management compensation) and therefore become entrenched into customer research. While these trackers can be useful, there are a few important caveats.

Staleness over time. While changing the questions asked and metrics used to calculate scores every wave would defeat the entire purpose of a tracking study, it is also not effective to leave them in place too long. If your company has one (or more) of these trackers in place, chances are your products or services look significantly different now than they did when the tracker was originated. There may have been a few changes along the way – a question added here or a wording change there – but most questions stay the same for trending/consistency reasons and don't necessarily reflect the current product environment.

Not the entire picture. Sometimes, too much relevance is put on the output from a deeply embedded tracking study and no one – least of all upper management – is questioning what may be driving that (potentially watered-down) calculation. Offsetting actions – a price decrease around the same time customer service response times are increasing, for example – can produce the same overall score but miss both sides of the changes in the market. If you aren't spinning off ad hoc studies based upon the findings of your trackers, you a) aren't using the tracker to the fullest and/or b) you need to update your tracking questions to be more meaningful.

Like other company processes and procedures, tracking studies need to evolve. Changes are made proactively to the product or service in order to adapt to external forces/changes and tracking measurements/scores must be transitioned as well. The best research vendors are masters at this transition. Tracking studies can provide critical, ongoing data to help steer your company in the right direction but only if they can adapt and change to accurately reflect your company's needs right now – not the situation that existed when the study was conceived.

Bonus observation: Procurement

If you've read this far, you deserve a little something extra: Procurement systems/agencies are the bane of the service industry.

I don't know enough about the use of procurement systems to speak to their value at saving costs across commodities or consumable products. What I do know is that they aren't doing your company any favors when purchasing consultative services. The "one size fits everything" approach is ludicrous, cumbersome, maddening and inefficient. Ever try to fit survey sample size options into a unit price table to calculate total price? Doesn't work. Just imagine how hard it is to communicate a creative, non-traditional design via a mechanism that, by definition, forces every submission to look the same. I can't imagine a scenario in which it is better to have another layer inserted between both sides in an ongoing, working consultative relationship. Buying pencils? Maybe. Trying to explain the various components of a multiphase, dual-methodology research project? Nope, not even close. And of course, this additional layer inserts procurement people who have little to no research experience or expertise into what is now a three-party collaboration.

We know our clients share some of our frustration on this issue and it is typically far removed from their purview. Still, it is important to be aware that you may need to help your most trusted, creative and loyal research vendors navigate this obstacle in order to provide an accurate, effective proposal.

Improve your research program

There you have it – the view from my seat. Remember, I present these from an authentic desire to improve your company's research program. After all, the better your return from research efforts, the more your company will commit to research in the future.

Michael Oilar is president of MDC Research, Portland, Ore. He can be reached at michael.oilar@mdcresearch.com.


NEWS

snapshot

A compilation of practitioner tips and insights on everything from text analytics to semiotics.

best practices

17 great ideas from 2017

Observations from the past year of *Quirk's*

| By Joseph Rydholm

With 2017 behind us, we thought it might be worth looking back at the past year's worth of *Quirk's* articles to compile a selection of useful ideas on a wide range of topics. Readers have told us many times that they save their issues but if you've misplaced an edition and your interest is piqued by something you see below, zip over to the online version for the full story.

By the way, we welcome articles from outside sources, so if you'd like to contribute to Quirk's in 2018, reach out to me at joe@quirks.com. (Check out last month's Trade Talk column for more info on writing for us as well.)

Of course, there are more than 17 ideas here, but you get the point. Without further ado, in chronological order, here they are!

Text analytics

Here are key steps to getting insights out of text analytics:

- Develop a taxonomy. Set up key word groupings that are important to business strategy or core business competencies.
- Know the business and keep it simple. Don't get too granular with the number of key groupings you are analyzing. Too much detail will make it hard to compare and gain insights from the text.
- Leverage experienced personnel. Make sure the person creating these key word groupings has a fundamental understanding of the current and future strategies and core business competencies.
- Use closed-ended variables to know the context. Attach as many useful variables to the verbatim comments as are available (for example, the day of week they interacted with your business; the product they purchased; where they live; the price they paid; the NPS score) and leverage these contextual variables to answer business questions and drive insights.

"Scaling the data mountain – A practitioner's guide to unlocking insights from customer feedback"

By Rick Kieser and Kellan Williams
January 2017
https://goo.gl/vzJ7if

Shopper insights

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.

"Lightsabers and digital lassos – Curating the 21st century purchase journey"

By Sarah Gleason and Christina Pate
February 2017
https://goo.gl/9F9yEu

Staffing your department

[D]iversity 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.

"Research is research, right? – Why you should cast a wider net when staffing your insights department"

By Eric Whipkey
February 2017
https://goo.gl/zPAMmy

Data analysis

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.

"40 years, 40 lessons learned – Advice from a veteran researcher"

By Doug Berdie
February 2017
https://goo.gl/J3QY4H

Health care research

To better understand organized [health care] customers, different types of secondary data sources must be integrated and analyzed to develop key insights. These data types include usage volume, affiliations, customer profile data, payer/plan information and organizational structure data. Tying these together, insights professionals can peer into organizations to better understand how they make decisions as well as the prescribing behaviors and number of in-network specialists in the network – information that will give manufacturers' sales reps critical insights before they even walk through the door. Are reps visiting an account that uses and loves the product or is this account putting up barriers? Does this account have effective prescribing controls in place? Secondary data sources will help answer those questions.

"Working toward a healthy prognosis – Reshaping primary marketing research for the evolving health care landscape"

By Amy Marta
March 2017
https://goo.gl/nihb9y

B2B research

Techniques to ensure insightful B2B reporting:

- Use a series of interaction roll-up reports to help managers at all levels.
- Provide individual sales rep reports to profile key B2B customers and rep performance.
- Build action into reporting sites by integrating initiatives/responsibilities.
- Present major themes, keeping details in a supporting, as-needed role.

Techniques to turn B2B data into action:

- Obtain buy-in from stakeholders before data collection proceeds.
- Conduct sessions to clarify process ties, ownership.
- Use ongoing scorecards to keep excitement up.
- Integrate report platforms with action (planning, implementing, tracking).
- Provide drill-down/supplemental data to clarify action requirements.
- Conduct periodic action sessions to update plans, realign actions.

"Many paths to the same goal – Strategies for optimizing B2B survey research"

By Doug Berdie
April 2017
https://goo.gl/ZQ1uEh

Pricing research

A brand risks losing sales when a price is raised and when that price crosses a certain threshold. This psychological barrier is why many brands price at $1.99 rather than $2.00. This is relatively straightforward and intuitive to marketers. However, it is easy to overlook the context of competitive pricing. There is absolute price and then there is your price compared to your competitors'; the difference is the "gap."

No brand exists in a vacuum. In order for it to make sense for the retailer to execute a strategy, one has to consider the entire category, not just a single brand alone. If a brand is considering implementing a new strategy, it must consider the impact that it leaves on the overall category. For example, increasing the price of a top seller might drive margin while sacrificing some unit sales. Increasing price too much might actually lead to fewer consumers even walking down the aisle, hurting sales for the entire category. Before implementing a strategy, take a step back and consider the potential side effects.

"Take charge of the fourth P – Why marketing should own pricing"

By Oskar Toerneld and Robin de Rooij
April 2017
https://goo.gl/UgiQBp

Millennials

Overall, Millennials connect with brands and allow social media to influence their purchase decisions much more than other generations. They're also more likely to potentially influence others' purchase decisions by sharing their experiences on social media. Older Millennials are slightly more involved than younger Millennials in connecting/sharing brand experiences. Females are more likely than males in all generations except younger Millennials to agree that "Social media connects me with the brands I love." In addition, across all age categories, females are significantly more likely to take advantage of perks or deals offered by brands on social media.

"Going (digital) native – Exploring Millennials' social media use"

By Aron Levin and Brian Lamar
May 2017
https://goo.gl/RHfsCw

Qualitative research

Recognize what's going on inside yourself as you listen. What assumptions, biases or prejudices do you have before you begin the research? What are you carrying into the research environment? These powerful words of advice were offered by the social worker, nurse, clinician and storyteller. These professionals often deal with people in times of crisis and pain. Whether the research topic is likely to be a sensitive one, e.g., women who experience urinary incontinence, or a less intimate one, e.g., experiences in casual dining restaurants, I find it's worth taking time in advance of the research to download my own and my clients' incoming expectations. Acknowledging and capturing these comments and emotions helps free up our ability to listen. Although, as the storyteller I spoke with emphatically stated, while there is no such thing as "objective" listening, becoming aware of and taking responsibility for our internal prejudices and beliefs certainly helps.

"Listening as an act of love – 12 considerations from professional listeners"

By Laurie Tema-Lyn
May 2017
https://goo.gl/2uMjtL

Respondent cooperation

Request peer-reviews of your questionnaires and discussion guides. If you're on the client side, exchange surveys with colleagues for feedback, especially those outside your business unit/category if possible. On the supply side, you can also get feedback from co-workers but just be mindful of confidentiality if you go outside the client team. To do that, you can use an in-market ad or package instead of the test one as stimuli and, if necessary, remove any proprietary client questions.

If you're an independent consultant or don't have ready access to colleagues for any other reason, strike a deal with a few trusted professional contacts to do a "feedback exchange" for questionnaires, guides, etc., where you review each other's materials on a regular basis. The confidentiality caution applies here too – either put a confidentiality agreement in place or strip out client-identifying details and confidential stimuli.

The purpose of this type of feedback is to get another expert researcher's opinion and to overcome any knowledge bias you may have. For example, if you've worked in the health care industry long enough, you've almost certainly picked up terminology and classifications from the professional or provider side that may not be transparent or make sense to consumers in survey or discussion guide questions. Having someone with research expertise outside your own industry can help make sure questions and response options are worded in layperson language.

"Think like a respondent – How to follow consumer research's golden rule"

By Sarah Faulkner
May 2017
https://goo.gl/45CeJs

Ad research

For marketers, understanding the interaction between the brain's memory and the mirror systems may become central to decoding how advertising really works in the brain. When we watch someone in a television commercial enjoy a bowl of cereal, wash their hair, drive a car or touch an iPhone screen, it engages our mirror systems and we mentally rehearse doing the same thing – it's called virtual consumption.

Interestingly, when remembering, the human brain does not distinguish between real brand experiences and virtual experiences. Because of this, virtual consumption memory (a memory created by watching an experience) may become a false memory.

Understanding how this *Matrix*-like phenomenon works is an active area of research study and is likely to become even more important with the influx of mass-market virtual reality and augmented reality technologies.

"A memorable impression – How to create brand memories in advertising"

By Charles Young
June 2017
https://goo.gl/nKcZaX

Ad research

One might ask how consumers, though not trained in semiotics, can detect ambiguity in a marketing campaign. In the same manner that humans learn language by repeated exposure to the language in daily life, consumers learn the codes structuring meaning in a category by means of routine, lifelong experience reading packaging, advertising and merchandising in the quest to satisfy their needs. Packaging codes guide consumers through their choices at the point of purchase because they structure consistent expectations about the value and cultural positioning of the product inside. Shoppers have learned from experience to identify processed snacks on the shelf by the bold colors and hyperbolic language on packaging. They also recognize contrasts between processed and natural snacks, with their earth tones and realistic claims. These codes define a kind of shorthand for consumers, enabling them to sort through the supermarket aisle with a quick sweep of the eyes down the supermarket aisle.

"Signs of confusion – Using semiotics to understand consumer responses to advertising"

By Laura Oswald
June 2017
https://goo.gl/7kyZjC

Best practices

At the beginning of any research study quickly check to make sure the corporate and research assumptions align with how the consumer is seeing the world. Verify everything, even down to words and phrases. One common misstep is when generic terms can mean different things to the corporate client and the consumer.

Good communication is quite difficult and without constant vigilance, words and phrases fly by and both parties involved in the interaction are disconnected from each other's intent. It's good to stop for ambiguous words and clarify meaning.

We do a lot of work in the financial services industry. Even though financial services is a term that most of us hear and use frequently, the majority of consumers in our research studies use an incomplete definition. Most only think that term refers to banking services and forget to include insurance products.

So if you don't make sure everyone is defining the term the same way, you end up where there are major differences in what you think you are talking about. So how do we clarify? Quickly at the beginning of a study ask everyone to write down their definition of the term and then ask what they wrote. If it's different from the definition that needs to be used, then clarify, e.g., "For this conversation we are defining financial services as including both banking and insurance services." It's also helpful to say things back to make sure you're receiving the message correctly.

"Finding focus – Why clarity and effective communication are so important to MR"

By Susan Fader and John Boyd
July 2017
https://goo.gl/yVTnBM

Financial services

Understanding how to optimize the omnichannel experience for the virtual customer, via the use of chatbots and other digital help for example, is critical. Yet that warm customer voice or handshake may be necessary to make the experience work. That's especially true for the customer who has spent several minutes doing a seemingly simple task only to hit a brick wall!

In short, make it easy. Functional, fast apps with great interfaces will help forge that connection if they allow customers to accomplish what they want with minimal disruptions.

"A satisfying transaction – Why financial services firms must forge connections in a virtual world"

By Tony Smith
July 2017
https://goo.gl/eubM3H

Customer experience

"To design a great chatbot experience is essentially to engineer a conversation – and that is much more difficult than one might guess. In a recent study, the French train service Voyages-sncf.com sought to create a chatbot that would help travelers buy tickets and get information – essentially providing the same interactions that a human ticketing agent would. But the train company quickly learned that basing its bot's actual word choices and dialogue strategy on the conversations people have with flesh-and-blood ticket sellers was a huge mistake. Without the context of the train station, the waiting line, eye contact, physical gestures and a host of other factors, the digital interactions were completely different. For example, you would never get to the front of a ticketing line and say, "I'm here to buy train tickets" but you might well start a chatbot conversation that way.

"Talking back to the bots – Defining the UX of AI in FS"

By Keith Bossey and Gavin Lew
July 2017
https://goo.gl/pae2L2

Health care research

The patient disconnect around medication starts early. So how can HCPs ensure instructions are really getting through to patients? Here, marketers can address gaps related to overall health management by providing educational follow-up materials. They can also build awareness for materials and programs outlining steps for proper medication use and the benefits of doing so. Doing this takes the pressure off both sides and can lead to higher satisfaction among patients with doctor visits.

"There's a disconnect here – Adherence study finds gaps in doctor-patient communication"

By Jonathan Weiser
October 2017
https://goo.gl/1vHksY

Health care research

The pharma and device companies usually want their participation to be blinded to avoid bias but we often over-obscure everything to make sure that happens. One of the best uses of mobile phone-based research I have seen, and this is going back to the infancy of mobile research, was with arthritis patients, specifically those with arthritis in their hands. What a terrible mix of methodology and audience, asking people who often cannot grip a toothbrush to do exercises on a tiny phone, right? That was actually the reason for the research. The app being designed was targeted at people who have manual dexterity issues as a way to track how they could input information comfortably. However, the respondents were not told this up front and the recruiting refusals piled up faster than the grumpy respondents who did agree and barely did the required activities. When it was decided to tell potential respondents the point of the study, which meant literally the addition of a single sentence explanation about designing something specifically for people like them, respondents started over-participating. We only needed an hour of time across a few days and people were doubling and tripling that. The study was a success because of the way it was presented.

Takeaway: Treat your respondents like partners and their dedication soars.

"Keep the focus on them – Strategies for dealing with difficult patients in health care research"

By Bj Kirschner
December 2017
https://goo.gl/2V91HF

Looking for the sweet spot

Using quantitative research techniques to optimize pricing strategies

| By Tom Rigby

snapshot

Tom Rigby looks at three methods for examining price and its impact on consumers' purchase intentions.

Among all of the stages in the product development process, setting the price is arguably one of the most important. This decision has implications across departments and business functions and typically exerts a significant influence over consumers' purchase intentions.

Ultimately, the powers that be need to select a price that is high enough to protect their margins but not so high that it scuttles demand and renders any marketing campaigns futile. This challenge is true for products already on the market but it becomes a particular point of contention when new products are being launched and for which there is no historical pricing or in some cases, no competitive brands to use as benchmarks.

Fortunately, a variety of quantitative research techniques exist that can help clarify a product's optimal price point. In this article, I will elaborate on three such techniques, explain how to apply each one and point out their respective advantages and disadvantages.

The Gabor-Granger technique

Developed in the 1960s by economists André Gabor and Clive Granger, this technique gives researchers a simple way to test various price points and to calculate the price elasticity of demand.

The process begins by showing respondents a description of a product as well as a proposed price and then asking them how likely they would be to buy the product at that price. Deciding which price point to show first is up to the researcher but options include: the middle price, the current retail price or selecting at random. For the purposes of this example, I have decided to begin with the middle price of five options (Figure 1).

If, at this step, the respondent indicates a positive response ("definitely would" or "probably would"), they are shown the product again but now with a higher price and then asked for their purchase intent once more. This higher price can be chosen at random or pre-set.

If, however, the respondent indicates a neutral or negative response at the first price

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180108.aspx

Figure 1: Gabor-Granger

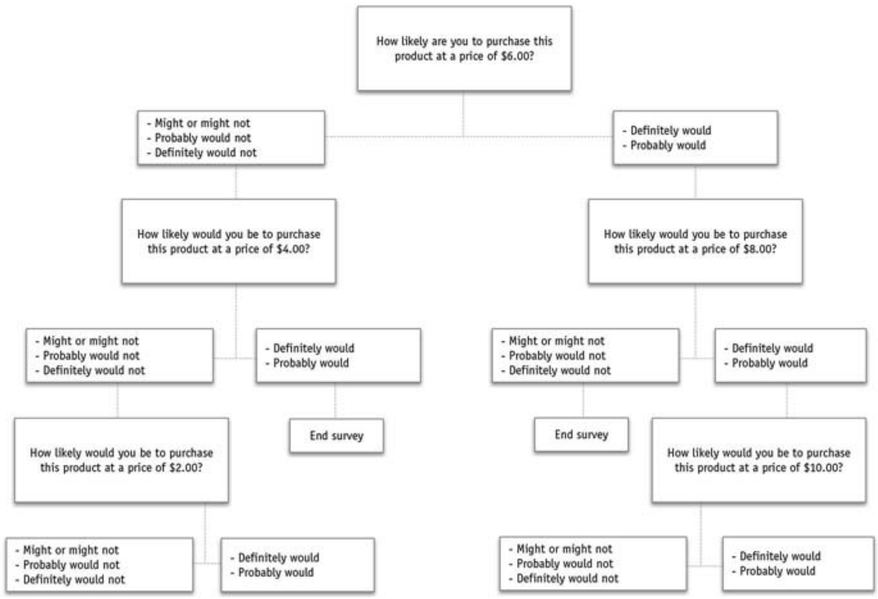
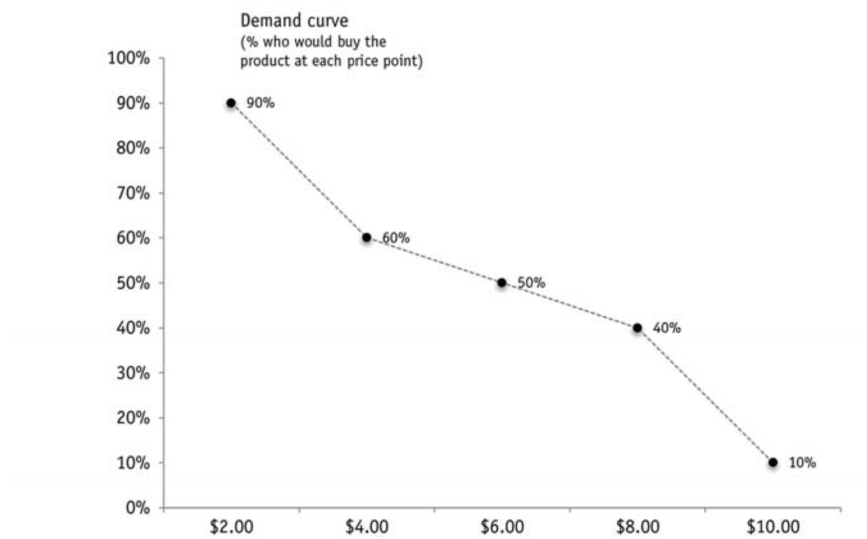


Figure 2: Gabor-Granger



point ("might or might not," "probably would not" or "definitely would not") the process then works in reverse. That is to say, the respondent is shown a lower price and asked again for their purchase intention.

This pattern is repeated multiple times until the highest price point a respondent is willing to pay has been established. Once the data has been compiled, it is graphically represented as the demand curve (i.e., the percentage of respondents who indicated a positive purchase intention at each price point). These results are then used to also calculate the revenue curve (i.e., the percentage of respondents who would purchase the product at each price point multiplied by that price). Overlaying these two graphs highlights the price/demand combination that will lead to the highest average revenue per respondent.

For example, in Figure 2, we see that 40 percent of respondents are likely to buy the product at a price of $8.00. This translates to an average revenue per respondent of $3.20 (40 percent times $8.00; see Figure 3). After performing this calculation at each of the other price points and plotting the revenue curve, $3.20 proves to be the highest average revenue per respondent and, therefore, we have a clear indication that retailing the product at $8.00 is the best option of the ones tested (see Figure 4).

At this point, a researcher might feel satisfied with their conclusions and provide their recommendations. However, the Gabor-Granger technique has another important application that often gets overlooked: the ability to calculate the category's price elasticity of demand. This metric measures the responsiveness of demand to changes in price and demonstrates the implications of lowering or raising prices in the category. To determine the category's overall price elasticity of demand, we must first calculate the elasticity between each price point (Figure 5).

Going back to our previous example, we can see that decreasing the price by 20 percent (from $10.00 to $8.00) increased demand by 30 points (from 10 percent to 40 percent). This yields an elasticity of -1.5 (30/-20). By repeating this calculation between each of the other price points and then taking the average of all four results, we obtain the overall category elasticity of -0.7 (Figure 6). This suggests that the category is relatively inelastic and that for every percentage-point drop in price, demand could be expected to increase by 0.7 of a percentage point. With these results, the decision makers can make more informed sales projections when adjusting prices, like during periods of sales and promotions.

As is the case with most research techniques, the Gabor-Granger approach has both advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, it is most celebrated for its simplicity and convenience. With just five questions, this technique provides compelling evidence of which price point is best and also clarifies the relationship between price and demand in any given category.

However, the disadvantages of this technique are twofold. Firstly, it does not ask the respondent to trade-off price for other product attributes and, in doing so, ignores the many variables that could influence purchase intention (for example, available budget, competitive pricing, brand affinity, etc.). The other main criticism of this technique is that it uses a sequential ordering of questions. If the respondent is quick to catch on that a positive purchase intention leads to a higher price and

Figure 3: Gabor-Granger

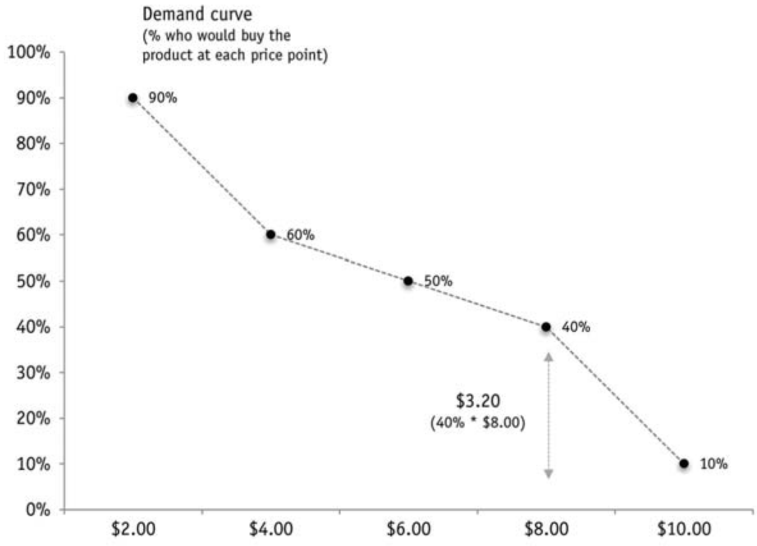
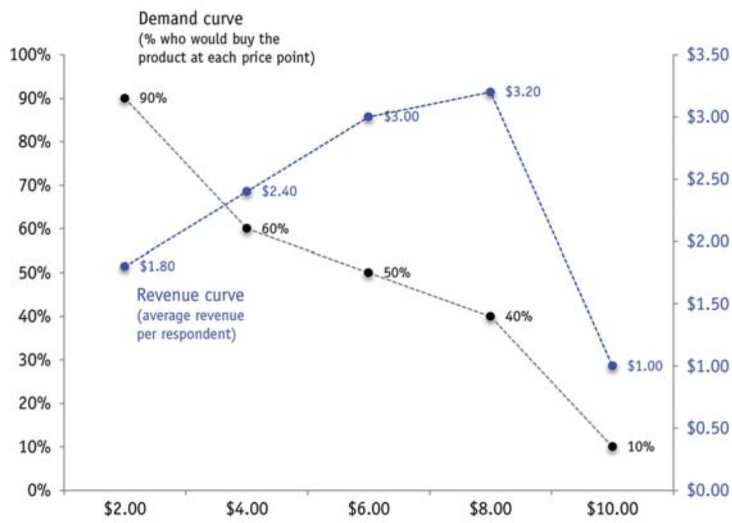


Figure 4: Gabor-Granger



a negative purchase intention leads to a lower price, there is some potential for bias in their response options. Consumers are, after all, typically motivated to pay the lowest price.

Due to these advantages and disadvantages, researchers often use an alternative technique that retains the best of the Gabor-Granger approach while mitigating its potential for bias: monadic price testing.

Monadic price testing

From the respondent's perspective, taking part in a monadic price testing exercise seems very simple and straightforward. They are shown a product description and a price and are asked how likely they would be to buy the product at that price. However, unbeknownst to the respondent, behind the scenes of this technique there is a more sophisticated analysis at work.

When employing a monadic price-testing approach, the overall sample of respondents is in fact divided into various groups of an equal size, with respondents being randomly assigned to each one. For a new product, there will be as many groups as there are prices to test. For a product already on the market, there will be one group that is exposed to the current price and then one additional group for each new price point that is to be tested.

The key to this technique is that while each group is asked the same question, they are each exposed to a different price point (Figure 7). At no point in the study are respondents aware that other prices are being considered and it is this feature that helps mitigate any concerns of influence or bias.

Once the survey has been launched and the data is compiled, the researcher compares results between the groups in order to determine how a change in price affected demand. The same process that was used to plot the demand and revenue curves in the Gabor-Granger technique can be applied to the outputs of the monadic test and the price elasticity of demand is once again easily determined.

As mentioned previously, the main advantage of this approach is that it produces the same results as the Gabor-Granger technique but without the potential for respondents to be biased by the fact that their answers dictate whether they see a higher or lower price option. Another advantage is that this technique is even more convenient as it requires each respondent to only complete one question.

There is, however, one downside to this approach and that is its necessity for larger sample sizes. For this approach to be properly executed, each price point needs to be tested by a separate group of respondents. So if, for example, 10 price points were going to be tested, a sample of 1,000 would likely be needed in order to result in a sufficiently robust sample of 100 respondents per group. Requiring this larger sample size means that this technique is almost always more expensive to run than Gabor-Granger.

Another point to consider with this technique, as well as Gabor-Granger, is that both only test consumers' reactions to prices that have been provided. As with any aided question this requires certain assumptions on the part of the researcher and leaves no room to understand consumers' spontaneous perceptions of value and price. For this, we must employ an alternative approach: the Van Westendorp price sensitivity meter.

The Van Westendorp technique

Introduced in 1976, Dutch economist Peter Van Westendorp developed his eponymous technique in order to

Figure 5: Gabor-Granger

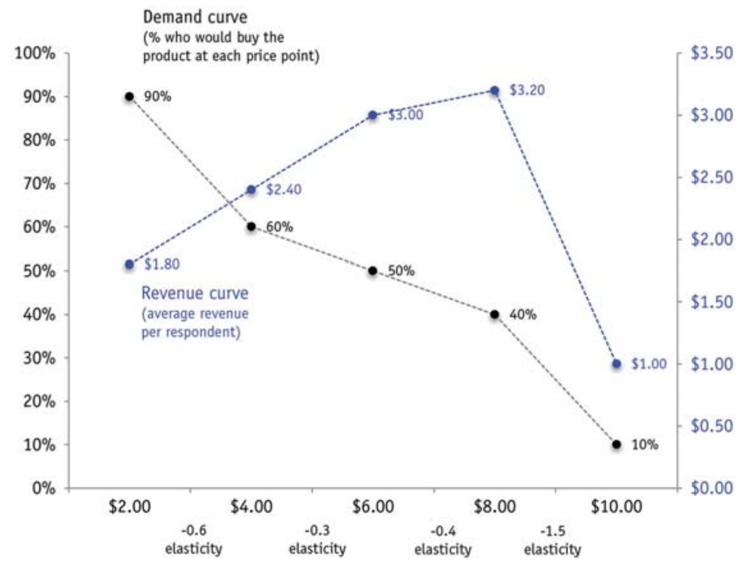
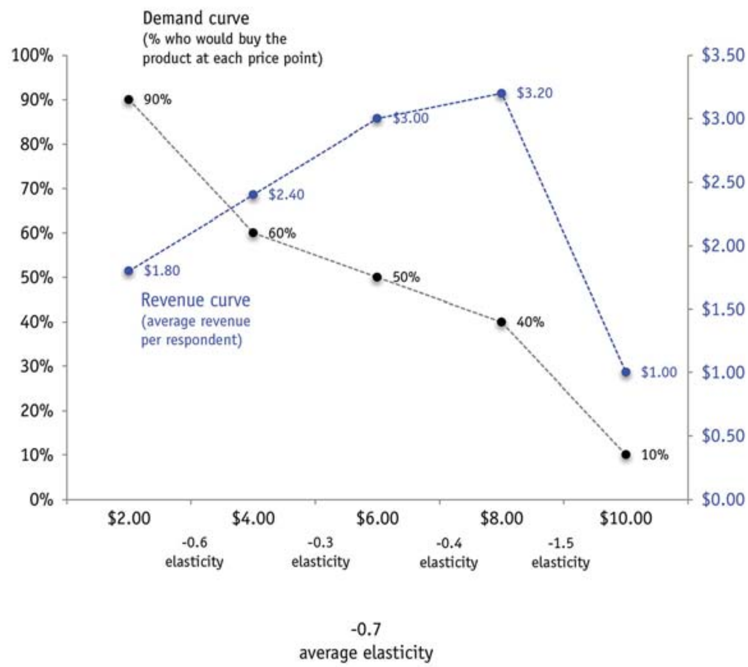


Figure 6: Gabor-Granger



determine a product's optimal price point without forcing respondents to react to predetermined options. More specifically, the Van Westendorp approach works by asking respondents four open-ended questions:

- At what price would you think this product is too expensive to consider?
- At what price would you think this product is so inexpensive that you would question its quality and not consider it?
- At what price would you think this product is getting expensive but you would still consider it?
- At what price would you think this product is a bargain – good value for the amount being charged?

The results are then combined to form a graph with four curves, one for each question. A variety of conclusions can be drawn from the graph but the two most important are the "optimal price point" and the "optimal price range" (Figure 8).

The optimal price point is the point of intersection between the "too expensive" and the "too cheap" curves. At this point, an equal number of respondents think that the price is too high as think it is too cheap. Based on this equal trade-off, this price is typically considered to be the best option to move forward with. In our example, taken from a study on a brand of computers, that optimal price point would be about $950. However, rather than providing one specific number, the researcher can also advise on an appropriate range. This range extends on the lower end from the intersection of the "getting expensive" curve and the "too cheap" curve. The upper end would be the point of intersection between the "too expensive" curve and the "bargain" curve. In theory, these lines set the upper and lower limits for optimal pricing and if the client chooses not to go with the optimal price point (either because they think it is too high or not high enough) they can instead select another price within the optimal range.

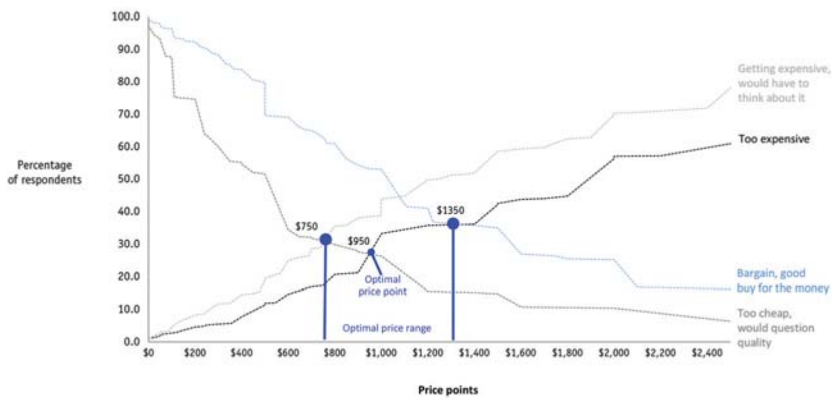
The main advantage of the Van Westendorp technique is that all of the responses are obtained via consumers' own input and thus this approach clarifies existing perceptions. There is, however, some debate as to whether this technique is appropriate in all categories. For example, one major tenet of the Van Westendorp technique is that there is a point at which the price is so low that it would affect perceptions of quality: "too cheap." While this may be true in high-involvement categories like automobiles or medical procedures, some question whether it is also true in low-involvement categories (like paper towels or toothbrushes). If there is in fact no price that is "too cheap" for consumers, the approach loses its relevance. This being said, on an overall basis, most practitioners tend to think of this technique as being a mainstay of pricing research.

Difficult to know which one is best

With the above options at every researcher's disposal, it can sometimes be difficult to know which is the best one to recommend to clients. In my practice, when budget permits, I advise my clients to begin the survey with a Van Westendorp analysis and

Figure 7: Monadic Price Testing

Figure 8: Monadic Price Testing



follow it up with a monadic test. This ensures that we obtain a clear understanding of consumers' spontaneous perceptions on price and quality in the category but that we also have the opportunity to directly test purchase intentions at the prices that my client is considering. This combined approach allows us to cover all the bases and also demonstrates the size of the gap that exists between the highest price that my client wants to charge and what consumers spontaneously demonstrate to be the optimal price. The larger the gap, the more my client will need to reconsider their decisions.

If, however, budget does not permit the use of both techniques, the decision usually comes down to whether the client has a clear idea of potential prices or whether they are more flexible and curious to see how respondents feel spontaneously. In the former case, a monadic test should be used. In the latter, the Van Westendorp approach should be used.

Leaving money on the table

For all of the time and effort spent crafting ad campaigns designed to increase demand, there often seems to be a lack of market research behind the pricing strategy. As shown in this article, with just a few short survey questions, many brand managers may find that they are in fact leaving considerable amounts of money on the table or that by making just a small reduction in price, they could generate a big gain in demand. With all of these potential benefits, the question may not be whether you should incorporate pricing research but whether you can afford not to.

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••• naming research

There's a lot on the line

Tips on finding that perfect product name

| By Jerry Thomas

snapshot

Jerry Thomas gives an overview of the naming process and how to navigate it.

That great new product is ready to go. Concept test results are positive. In-home usage tests of the product are positive. The package design looks great. Oops! Wait a minute: What are we going to call this new product? What is its name to be?

This would seem like a very simple problem to solve. Do a little ideation to come up with 50 or 100 names and then screen those names for the best candidates; that is, show those 50 or 100 names to consumers and ask them to pick the winners. Slam dunk. Problem solved. A new name is found.

But hold on. It's not that simple and it's not that fast. There are barriers and obstacles we must surmount.

Legal barriers

There's the "little" obstacle of getting the names past the lawyers. The legal barriers can seem formidable at times. All of the winning names seem to be spoken for, according to the lawyers. This is where good lawyers become extremely valuable. Perhaps the other claims to the winning names are for product categories not directly competitive to your new product or perhaps the winning names can be purchased at reasonable prices. Maybe your company is willing to roll the dice and use the name, even though its legal status is a bit risky.

Generally, your lawyers will not be very interested in doing legal research on 50 to 100 names, so the legal research is often reserved for the five to 10 names that score highest in the name-screening research mentioned above. Regardless of when the legal research is conducted, it is an important step in arriving at a new name that you can actually use.

Human bias barriers

Another barrier to choosing good names is human biases. The average person tends to react most favorably to names that sound or seem familiar or remind her of something familiar

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(we call this the status quo bias or familiarity bias). Names that are more descriptive, more explanatory or more commonplace tend to be favored by consumers. The average person tends to be very literal in reacting to names – without considering metaphor, allegory, allusion or symbolism. Collectively, these status quo tendencies are likely to influence consumers to choose a prosaic name for your exciting, new product. We'll come back to this subject later.

Lack-of-context barriers

The other major barrier to consumers choosing a good name is lack of context. The participants in the name-screening test don't know anything about your new product so you must explain what the new product is before asking anyone to select names. Normally, this is done with a rough ad or a concept board or with an explanatory video. This concept will have a picture of the product, explain its characteristics and properties, discuss how the product is used and perhaps list some of its strengths and advantages. Rarely would a price be included in this concept. The concept would be presented to respondents during the survey, just before the names are shown.

So, we are aware of the barriers and are now ready to push ahead with the name testing.

The name-reduction sort

With 50 to 100 names, the first task is quickly reducing the number of name possibilities for the product or service described in the ad or concept. It is best to do this with a card sort. The list of possible names is shown in randomized order. As each name is shown, participants are asked to sort the names into buckets, such as the "like" bucket or the "dislike" bucket, or perhaps "like very much," "like somewhat" or "don't like."

Regardless of the number of buckets, the goal is to reduce the number of name possibilities quickly. One could argue that "liking" may not be the best way to reduce the number of names. It is possible that utilizing degrees of "not liking" would screen out some good names. The counter-argument is that the final name should be liked, regardless of any other measures. Why would anyone want to burden a new product with a disliked name? We recommend using "liking" as the first sorting exercise. Only the "dislike" (or "don't like") names would be removed from the consideration set. Name-sorting of this type is easily accomplished in online surveys.

Name communication

After completing the sort, the number of names will probably be reduced from 50 to 100 down to 20 to 30 names (give or take). Each of these liked names is then evaluated on what the name suggests or communicates. The communication measures should tie back to the naming objectives for the new product.

Oh, forgot to mention this: When conjuring up all the possible names for the new product, those names should have been generated to achieve a set of naming objectives. For example, if the new product were a pickup truck, then the naming objectives might be:

- The name suggests rugged, tough and durable truck.
- The name suggests masculinity.
- The name suggests power and performance.

The liked names would be sorted again, three times. The first time would measure communication of "rugged, tough and durable," the second time would measure communication of "masculinity" and the third time would measure communication of "power and performance."

Names that were liked and achieved some of the communication objectives could then go through additional screening criteria, such as:

- Does the name remind respondents of the name of some other vehicle?
- Does the name remind participants of some other brand or product?
- Does the name have any obscene or negative connotations?
- Would the name be easy to remember?
- Would the name be easy to pronounce?
- Would the name be easy to spell?
- Does the name fit or go with a pickup truck?

All of these ratings and questions might make the survey too long, especially if the number of liked names is high. Where survey length might be an issue, the number of names evaluated in detail could be limited to 10 to 15 randomly chosen names, using an incomplete block research design. The goal would be to have at least 200 participants evaluating each of the liked names.

The scoring model

The winning names (and the goal is multiple winners, since the names still have to go through legal review) are chosen via a scoring model. You have to decide how much weight to give to each of the questions/ratings to build a scoring algorithm. Once you decide upon the weights, it is then easy to construct a model to score the names and choose the winners.

The final evaluation

If the name is really important (let's say the automotive manufacturer is going to spend $100 million in advertising to introduce the new pickup truck), then the five top names that survived legal review might go into a final evaluation phase. In this final evaluation, each name would be put into the form of a rough ad, commercial, concept or video. Each name would also be surrounded with the words, themes, music, colors and imagery that reinforced and supported the name.

Each of these ads, concepts or videos would be tested monadically. That is, each respondent would see only one ad or one concept, so the respondents would not know that the name is a part of the test. Reactions to the five ads or concepts would reveal if any of the names provided lift to interest in visiting a dealer to test-drive the new truck. Since the participant doesn't know what we are testing, the role of human biases tends to be minimized and we get a more accurate measure of each brand name's true value.

Human judgment

Keep in mind that human judgment and human vision are important in choosing the final name. The research results should inform the decision-making but should not make the final decision. The name has to fit the strategy and the human vision that defines its destiny.

Remember that any name chosen, especially if it is heavily advertised, will over time begin to acquire what the legal system calls secondary meaning. That is, as a name is used, the very definition and meaning of that name changes in the minds of the target audience. Starting with a good name means that the whole process of creating secondary meaning will go more smoothly, more swiftly and more efficiently. Oppositely, a bad name can reduce advertising effectiveness, create image problems and barriers to trial or consideration and actually inhibit the success of that new pickup truck.

Jerry Thomas is president and chief executive of Decision Analyst, an Arlington, Texas, research firm. He can be reached at jthomas@decisionanalyst.com.

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There are many ways to gain feedback on your products and services, including the popular method known as mystery shopping. Mystery shopping consists of hiring or contracting individuals to pose as a customer to gain feedback on things like customer service, employee engagement or store performance.

To ensure you will get the most out of mystery shopping, it's important to find the right mystery shopping provider. These companies can help recruit unbiased shoppers who can conduct assignments in-store, over the phone or online and provide fast and valuable insights for any type of industry, including restaurants, retail and financial services. Whether you want to test how well your employees have mastered their training or customer service, measure the performance of your store, product or brand or see how your competitors are faring, these companies can give you the tools and shoppers you need to gain valuable insight. Contact these companies to find out how they can help you with your mystery shopping needs.

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180133.aspx

Ann Michaels & Associates, Ltd.

Ann Michaels Ltd.

Founded 1998 | 11 employees
Kathy Doering, CEO

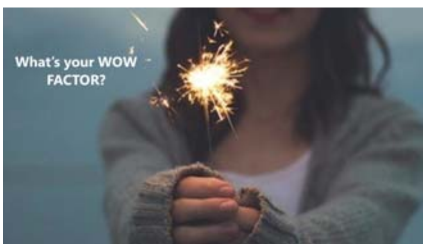
Customer experience management firm assisting clients with customer loyalty, consumer online sentiment analysis, competitive intelligence, brand awareness, customer satisfaction and customer experience measurement. Today's consumer has higher expectations, a larger reach and a louder voice. Keeping up with it all can be challenging even for the most customer-centric company. That's where we come in. Our customer experience measurement programs allow us to listen, engage and monitor the customer experience across all channels.

Phone 866-703-8238
www.annmichaelsltd.com

anonymous insights, inc.
Customer Experience Consultants
Leading the Way to Satisfied Customers

Anonymous Insights Inc.

Founded 1996 | Over 400,000 independent contractors worldwide
Patti Lengel, President and Co-Founder



What's your "WOW" factor? Are you Winning customer loyalty through Operational excellence and World-class service? Anonymous Insights can help you improve customer experience by utilizing mystery shops, satisfaction surveys, audits, exit interviews and competitive shops to determine how well you are meeting the needs of your customers. We offer industry-related experience, a worldwide network of shoppers, state-of-the-art technology and proven success in increasing customer satisfaction levels. We provide comprehensive, actionable data that allows you to see your business as your customers see it. This information provides you with the tools to develop employee behavior through reward/recognition and coaching/training programs. The result is increased customer loyalty and revenues.

Phone 844-WOWFACTOR
www.a-insights.com

BARE INTERNATIONAL
Revealing the True Nature of Business

BARE International

Founded 1987 | 302 employees
Dale Bare, CEO; Mike Bare, President

BARE International is a family-owned business celebrating 30 years leading the customer experience research industry, setting the standard as the largest independent provider of

customer experience research, data and analytics for companies worldwide. BARE has built a reputation on innovation, ethics and seamless client service management. Every business challenge is unique, so each solution BARE International offers is customized to meet specific needs, providing actionable feedback to help companies make critical business decisions. BARE's extensive field force and dedicated project teams give each client the attention deserved and an infrastructure spanning the globe, providing the resources needed to understand and enhance customers' experiences.

Phone 800-296-6699
www.bareinternational.com

BestMark

Founded in 1986 | 200+ employees
Meredith Harper, Main Client Contact

For 32+ years, BestMark has been a customer experience feedback pioneer and innovator and has continued to fine-tune our proprietary processes and approach. Today, in the era of digitization and emergence of cognitive science, BestMark remains agile in helping companies achieve individualized, precise real-time insights and actionable feedback through the integration of multichannel customer experiences. We apply exclusive methodologies to anticipate marketplace changes and make needed course corrections, which allows our clients to stay on the cutting edge. Services include: mystery shopping, mobile surveys, competitive intelligence, auditing, customer satisfaction, VOC, text analytics, reputation management, benchmarking and more. Fast facts: 15+ million evaluations completed – 600,000+ field reps – mobile and Web surveying – 24/7 analytics and reporting.

Phone 952-922-2205
www.bestmark.com

Confero Inc.

Founded 1986 | 48 employees
Elaine Buxton, CEO

Confero's customized solutions measure, monitor and report on employee performance, brand presentation, customer experience, user experience and compliance. The firm has 32 years of experience in mystery shopping, with deep experience with complex omnichannel fielding, data integration, brand representation at retail and on-the-spot rewards incentives programs. Confero was recognized with a Stevie Award for Customer Service Consulting Practice of the Year and is WBENC-certified. Our CEO Elaine Buxton has served as president of the Mystery Shopping Providers Association. Confero offers mystery shopping services on-site, on the Web, on mobile devices and using recorded telephone calls.

Phone 800-326-3880
www.conferoinc.com

DSG

Founded 1981 | 25-50 employees
Butch Nievera, CEO; Jennifer Mason, Main Client Contact

DSG is a leader in mystery shopping and field services for a broad range of businesses. If you need information about what happens between your company and your customer, DSG can help design and execute a program to collect it. DSG offers the capability and capacity to work as a partner in creating and managing programs for clients who demand integrity, reliability and responsiveness. The higher standards clients have for programs, the more they appreciate our unique perspective and commitment.

Phone 818-966-3950
www.dsgai.com

IntelliShop

Founded 1999 | 186 employees
Ron Welty, CEO

IntelliShop partners with clients and research firms to deliver customer experience research solutions for every touchpoint. For research firms, whitelisting our services and Web portal (InSite™) allows you to maintain your brand presence with your clients. Our panel of more

than 1 million shoppers can reach any geographic location quickly and efficiently for a variety of projects. We combine the most innovative Web-based intelligence and analytics platform with our team of exceptional people to provide you with a level of expertise and extreme service that is unmatched.

Phone 419-872-5103
www.intelli-shop.com

Maritz CX

MaritzCX

Founded 1973 | 824 employees globally
Mike Sinoway, CEO

MaritzCX has been managing mystery shopping programs for over 35 years. Our approach to mystery shopping means our clients receive near real-time insights on the execution of their brand, operating standards and CX programs across all customer channels. We have vertically integrated all operations in-house to offer the best in high-tech efficiencies without giving up the high-touch human element that allows us to focus on people. MaritzCX manages a national network of over 100,000 mystery shoppers who can be quickly deployed to ensure your brand's promise and standards are delivered on a consistent basis.

Phone 913-234-3875
maritzcx.com/what-we-do/mystery-shopping

MarketAnalytics INTERNATIONAL INC.

Market Analytics International Inc.

Founded 2002 | 50+ employees and consultants
Michele McKenna, CEO

Market Analytics' mystery shopping capabilities include B2C, B2B and a wide range of industries globally. Through offices in the U.S. and Asia, we cover the world with thousands of shoppers. Our programs include in-person, phone and online shopping and inquiries. Market Analytics' shoppers cover a wide range of demographics, diverse multicultural backgrounds and native speakers of foreign languages. Our programs focus on measuring customer experiences and service levels, benchmarking and analyzing competitors, evaluating staff performance and ensuring compliance to standards and regulations. Our clients gain actionable insights that drive positive change within their organizations.

Phone 201-556-1188
www.marketanalytics.com

M Market Viewpoint
Your Customers. Their Experiences. Powerful Data.

Market Viewpoint

Founded 1996
Angela Megasko, CEO and Owner

It's no secret: customer retention is the key to higher levels of profitability. To gain and retain customers, your customers must have positive, memorable experiences – every time they interact with your company or staff. For over 20 years, Market Viewpoint has provided clients with honest mystery shopping evaluations conducted with integrity and discretion. We create customized customer satisfaction programs recognizing your company's unique assessment needs. All with our guarantee: Every report will provide useful information for your company – or we reshop it for you. The powerful data obtained from our programs, along with our training services, creates solutions to your customer service and employee motivation needs.

Phone 610-942-7030
www.marketviewpoint.com

Quality Assessments MYSTERY SHOPPERS

Quality Assessment Mystery Shoppers Inc.

Founded 1984
Mary Furrie, CEO

Great customer service is an art, not a given! Quality Assessments Mystery Shoppers has been a national provider of location and call center mystery shopping services for all industries for over 25 years. We help our clients think about what is important to their customers and then make sure those things are consistent everywhere and all the time. Our tailored mystery shopping programs are guaranteed to promote excellent service that your customers will prefer for generations to come. From program design to back-end analytical online tools, our team can ensure you receive high online reviews! We believe great customer service is an art!

Phone 800-580-2500
www.qams.com

Second To None

Founded 1989 | 65 employees
Jeff Hall, CEO

Second To None is a leading customer experience research agency, specializing in omnichannel mystery shopping, voice of the customer surveys, compliance audits and social media reputation monitoring. We help regional and national brands deliver consistent, intentional and authentic customer experiences. Full-service solutions include program design, data collection and real-time analytics, grounded in solid statistical science and strategic relevance. Brand leaders leverage our assessments of operational standards through mystery shopping, integrated with voice of the customer and employee feedback surveys for competitive advantage. Our services enable transformative insights and priorities to emerge, allowing clients to take action, affect positive change and drive improved business performance throughout their organization.

Phone 734-302-8400
www.secondtonone.com

Secret Shopper

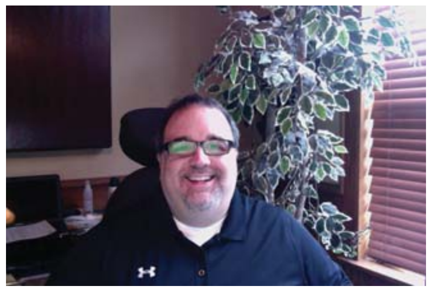
Founded 1990 | 50 employees
Paul F. Ryan, CEO

Secret Shopper® has been focused on evaluating client-customer engagement online, over the phone and in person since 1990. As a full-service mystery shopping company, we offer a range of customizable tools and training services. An in-house social media team increases brand recognition and following across platforms. Our audit systems evaluate user Web site experience and manage your search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM) strategies, while our coaching services train employees to provide customers positive experiences every time. Visit our Web site at www.secretshopper.com to learn more.

Phone 763-525-1460
www.secretshopper.com

The Sentry Marketing Group LLC

Founded 2005 | 13 employees
David Agius, CEO

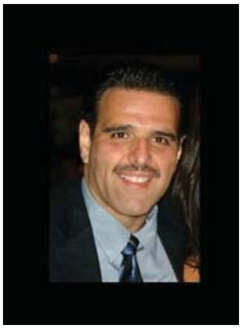


With employee engagement and purpose as its focus, Sentry Marketing partners with its clients to create unique assessment tools that go beyond mystery shopping. We work with our clients to focus on their culture and values to bring purpose and impact to the assessment. Our goal is to help our clients create a culture where their employees are engaged, fulfilled and give their best effort every day with programs that provide tools that help improve hospitality levels and quality of operations.

Phone 972-987-1696
www.sentrymarketing.com

Service Evaluation Concepts Inc. (SEC)

Founded 1987 | 22 employees
Arcadio Roselli, CEO



With over 27 years of experience, we at Service Evaluation Concepts Inc. (SEC) have built a unique research concept that has worldwide reach. We uniquely help to translate strategy into action using a global panel of over 650,000 brand agents (certified research participants) and our proprietary Enterprise Feedback Management System (EFMS). Our brand agents operate as undercover CEOs (mystery shoppers), empowering brands to measure the human dimension of the designed customer experience (employees and customers) to maximize conversion and maximize advertising. SEC validates return on investment by using cause-and-effect linkage that clearly impacts positive the corresponding financial key performance indicators.

Phone 516-576-1188 ext. 3530
www.serviceevaluation.com

SIS International Research

Founded 1984 | 75 employees
Ruth Stanat, CEO

SIS International Research is a leading market research and strategy research company. Our consumer and B2B mystery shopping services include price checks, product comparison research, customer service experience research, retail research and store audits and competitive pricing studies. Uniquely, we have a strategy group that does high-level B2B mystery shopping, market opportunity research and competitive intelligence. Our coverage is nationwide and worldwide. SIS also has a focus group and product testing facility in the heart of Manhattan and in Central London.

Phone 212-505-6805
www.sisinternational.com

TrendSource

Founded 1989 | 90 employees
Jim Caltrider, CEO

For over 25 years, TrendSource has been the leading provider of mystery shopping services. In 1998, TrendSource became a founding member of the Mystery Shopping Providers Association. Each TrendSource mystery shopping program is developed to ensure the right questions are being asked and that the data being collected is on target. Findings are presented in easy-to-interpret summaries that identify economic benefit, ROI and recommended actions. Our comprehensive in-house systems allow us to be nimble and provide our clients with high-quality solutions.

Phone 619-718-7467
trendsource.com

Names of Note

■ India-based researcher *MRSS India* has appointed **Madhumita Chattopadhyay** as vice president, **Praveen Mettelu** as research director and **R. Kumar** as consultant.

■ Cedar Knolls, N.J., marketing agency *Marketsmith Inc.* as appointed **Luis Hernandez** as senior vice president to oversee its digital team.

■ *Circle Research*, based in London, has hired **Amanda Boote** as engagement director, a newly-created role.


Boote

■ Oakland, Calif., researcher *Social Standards* has appointed **Mark Charkin** as chief revenue officer.

■ San Mateo, Calif., marketing software and solutions firm *Marketo Inc.* has hired **Sarah Kennedy** as CMO, while **Matthew Zilli** has been promoted to chief customer officer.

■ *Maritz Motivation Solutions*, St. Louis, has appointed **Chris Dornfeld** as vice president and head of the company's employee engagement solution.

■ *IntelliShop*, a Perrysburg, Ohio, customer experience measurement firm, has hired **Jim Mihaly** as chief operating officer and integrator, a newly-created role.

■ In Southfield, Mich., consumer engagement programs company *PrizeLogic* has appointed **Matthew Kates** as CMO.

■ Research consultancy *Kantar TNS*, New York, has appointed **Rob Wengel** as EVP of its client development team. Wengel will also lead the innovation practice across the Kantar portfolio in North America.


Wengel

■ *CBS Corporation*, New York, has named **Radha Subramanyam** as executive vice president, chief research and analytics officer, CBS Television Network.

■ In New York, *Simmons Research* has appointed **Andrew Feigenson** as CEO.

■ In Atlanta, data and analytics company *Teradata* has appointed **Mark Culhane** as executive vice president, chief financial officer and principal accounting officer. **Eric Tom** has also been appointed as executive vice president and chief revenue officer.

■ Audio company *iHeartMedia*, New York, has named **Michele Madansky** as executive vice president of insights, research and data analytics.

■ Wayne, Pa., e-commerce technology company *Unilog* has hired **Scott Frymire** as senior vice president of marketing.

■ Research company *Maru/Matchbox* has hired the following to its Qualitative Center of Excellence: **Chris Gray** as vice president, qualitative insights, based in Chicago; **Maria Hom** as research director, qualitative insights, based in San Francisco; and **Rosie Barraza** as field manager, qualitative insights, based in San Francisco.

■ **Scott Royal** has joined Rockville, Md., research company *Westat* as president.

■ New Hope, Pa., research firm *RG+A* has appointed **Ellen Gordon** as senior vice president and head of research.


Gordon

■ Toronto-based researcher *Vividata* has appointed **Pat Pellegrini** as president and CEO.

■ Chapel Hill, N.C., firm *datadecisions Group* has promoted **Dino Fire** to president of research and analytics.

■ In Atlanta, incentive solutions firm *Virtual Incentives* has added **Martin Hood** to its senior leadership team as senior vice president for ViPartners, the company's reseller division.


Hood

■ Customer insights firm *Cetas Healthcare*, based in Singapore, has named **Shane West** as vice president (client relationships) for the EMEA region.

■ Cincinnati-based researcher *Burke, Inc.* has promoted **Christie Reckman** to senior vice president, client services.

■ U.K. research agency *Watch Me Think* has appointed **Alex Batchelor** as non-executive chair.

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180113.aspx

■ *The Broadcasters' Audience Research Board* (BARB) in the U.K. has announced that it is looking for a new insights manager following the departure of its Head of Insight **Joe Lewis**, who is leaving to set up his own media research consultancy. BARB has also hired **Jessica Bromley** as communications manager.

■ Warren, N.J., researcher *Lightspeed* has promoted **Shaun Hawley** to senior vice president, global supply.

Hawley

■ *Competitive Edge Research & Communication*, headquartered in San Diego, has hired **David Ferree** as its El Paso, Texas, call center manager.

■ *V12 Data*, Tampa, Fla., has appointed **Heather Lockhart** as CMO.

■ *MFour Mobile Research*, Irvine, Calif., has hired the following: **Carl Nielson** as senior solutions executive; **Ayelet Germanski** as senior project manager for solutions engineering; and **Nicole Phan** as user experience designer.

■ Research firm *EurekaFacts*, Rockville, Md., has named **Paul Schroeder** as chief business officer.

■ **Gian Fulgoni**, co-founder and CEO of Reston, Va., firm *comScore*, has accelerated his previously announced retirement, originally scheduled for Jan. 31, 2018, and stepped down as CEO. Fulgoni has assumed a chairman emeritus role and will provide advisory services for one year. Until a permanent CEO is named, **Bill Livek**, executive vice chairman and president, will assume additional management responsibilities and Board Chair **Sue Riley** will play a role in the oversight of the company.

■ *The Interactive Advertising Bureau* (IAB), New York, has appointed **Orchid Richardson** as vice president and managing director of the IAB Data Center of Excellence.

■ *Full Circle Research Co.*, Potomac, Md., has added **Tobin Bailey, Jr.** as vice president, client development. Bailey will be based in Oregon, extending the company's footprint coast-to-coast.

■ *Univision Communications*, New York, has promoted **Roberto Ruiz** to executive vice president, research, insights and analytics. Ruiz will lead the newly-formed research, insights and analytics group, which combines the corporate research and strategy and insights teams. The team will drive all aspects of marketing, including research, consumer insights and big data analytics using syndicated and custom research tools.

■ Canada-based e-commerce company *Thinkwrap Commerce* has hired **Tracey Nero** as chief revenue officer. Nero will be based in St. Louis.

■ Chicago-based marketing company *Target Data* has appointed **Joseph Lavan** to its executive team as vice president of digital strategy.

Research Industry News

News notes

■ U.K. language services firm **Language Insight** has been awarded the ISO 27001:2013 accreditation, the Information Security Management Systems standard.

■ Information and health care services firm **QuintilesIMS**, Danbury, Conn., has changed its name to IQVIA.

■ **Lieberman Research Worldwide**, Los Angeles, has joined the **Paradigm for Parity** coalition and has pledged a commitment to gender parity in corporate leadership by 2030.

■ **Aimpoint Research**, Columbus, Ohio, has been certified as a Veteran Owned Small Business by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Acquisitions/transactions

■ Philadelphia-based data collection company **Focus Pointe Global** (FPG) has acquired Marina del Rey, Calif., research company **Trotta Associates**. The acquisition will add a third Southern California location for FPG and a focus group facility in Los Angeles. FPG plans to transition its current Santa Monica, Calif., location to the new facility during the first quarter of 2018. The management team will continue to be led by FPG's CEO Laura Livers.

quirks.com/articles/2018/20180114.aspx

Alliances/strategic partnerships

■ Germany-based research consultancy **2x4** has formed a strategic partnership with Netherlands-based research software firm **Nebu**. The partnership will cover two-way software reselling, product integration and provisioning of services and support.

■ Stockholm-based software company **Cint** and San Mateo, Calif., company **SurveyMonkey** have formed a strategic partnership to expand SurveyMonkey Audience globally. SurveyMonkey Audience will provide access to Cint's Insights Exchange in over 100 countries and the ability to conduct market research in 16 languages.

■ Denver-based researcher **GutCheck** has partnered with U.K. video insights firm **Voxpopme**. The companies will combine GutCheck's online research platform, which will capture a target audience's video responses, with Voxpopme's video analytics platform, which will process and organize the video data, to give clients a video solution that captures customer feedback across any device.

Association/organization news

■ **The Marketing Research and Intelligence Association** (MRIA), based in Toronto, has launched an independent inquiry into underperforming and conflicting election polling results published during the municipal elections in Calgary in fall 2017. The MRIA says it wants to know what information and data pollsters publicly released to support their polling results and whether industry standards for public opinion research were met.

■ **The Insights Association** and the **American Association for Public Opinion Research** have filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission, stating the need for greater clarity when defining marketing research and marketing for purposes of compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act.

■ **The Insights Association**, Washington, D.C., has formed a partnership with nonprofit organization **Women in Research** (WIRe). The partnership will provide WIRe members with discounts on Insights Association events, certification programs and first-year memberships. The Insights Association will work toward WIRe's 50/50 speaker goal by instituting an anonymized vetting process for proposals received from its calls for speakers.

■ **The Insights Association**, Washington, D.C., has appointed Hilary Fischer as director of chapter engagement, a newly-created position. The association has also launched an initiative to increase support for its chapters in 2018, including a new chapter funding strategy and the Insights Association Chapter Partnership Agreement, which defines resources, training and tools the association will provide to chapters.

■ **The Insights Association**, Washington, D.C., has made recommendations to the Federal Communications Commission, stating that non-telemarketing calls to a cell phone using an autodialer should be legal under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act if there is an existing business relationship or if the calls are free to the recipient.

Awards/rankings

■ Dave Lundahl, founder and CEO of Chicago-based research consultancy **InsightsNow**, has been awarded the 2017 Industry Change Agent of the Year by the Next Gen Market Research Group and Women in Research.

■ Golden Valley, Minn., mystery shopping and consulting firm **Secret Shopper** received the MSPA 2018 Elite Award from the **Mystery Shopping Providers Association**.

■ Waban, Mass., research company **Temkin Group** has announced the winners of its Customer Experience Excellence Awards. The six winners are **AARP**, insurance company **Allianz**, debt settlement firm **Century Support Service**, home care provider **Nurse Next Door**, energy company **Reliant and Sage**.

New accounts/projects

■ Princeton, N.J., organization **Mathematica Policy Research** has selected and implemented Confirmit Horizons from Oslo, Norway, research technology firm **Confirmit** as its new computer-assisted interviewing software system for data collection projects.

■ Indianapolis-based media planning and buying agency **EchoPoint Media** has signed a new measurement agreement with **Nielsen**, New York, for local television ratings and qualitative insights. As part of the renewal, EchoPoint will increase the number of markets for which it uses Nielsen Local TV currency ratings for its media buys to 49 designated market areas.

■ Stamford, Conn., research technology firm **FocusVision** has become a research provider for Bentonville, Ark., retailer **Walmart**. FocusVision's Decipher solution will centralize Walmart's online research operations to reduce research spend for Walmart U.S. and will provide integrated customer feedback.

■ New York researcher **BuzzBack** has signed a three-year renewal agreement with Oslo, Norway, research technology firm **Confirmit** to continue using the Confirmit Horizons platform to support its research and insight activities.

■ In New York, **iHeartMedia** has signed a multi-year agreement with **Nielsen** for radio ratings services for all Portable People Meter and radio diary-measured markets.

■ **SKO**, a television audience measurement service in the Netherlands, has renewed its contract with Nuremberg, Germany, researcher **GfK** for 2018. GfK and SKO will work together on a number of innovation projects, including data on viewing video across all devices, as well as watching other services through TV.

■ Nonprofit organization **Veterans Florida** has engaged **Study Hall Research**, Tampa, Fla., for a third year to undertake primary research aimed at evaluating the job search needs and opportunities for service members post-separation as they make the transition to civilian employment.

New companies/new divisions/relocations/expansions

■ Focus group facility **Fieldwork Atlanta** has announced a new expansion and remodel that includes a double-sized conference suite with respondent seating for up to 90 and client capacity of 35. All five conference suites have been updated and now feature HD recording.

■ **Complete Research Connection** has opened the Atelier, a new creative space at its Columbus, Ohio, facility. The space includes six televisions, boardroom and living room layouts and games to assist in conducting creative meetings like new product concept development.

■ U.K.-based translation company **Language Insight** has opened an office in New York to serve its clients in the U.S. The company says it also has plans to expand into Singapore.

■ **The Insight Lab**, owned by research agency **Brädo Creative Insight** in affiliation with **Schlesinger Associates**, has opened a research facility in downtown St. Louis. The facility includes two suites: The Clark Room, a usability lab that provides technology for evaluating and optimizing digital assets across multiple devices; and the Soulard Room, a focus group studio that includes a client room with a lounge equipped with HD cameras.

■ **Owl Solutions**, a Rochester, N.Y., research programming and fieldwork consulting company, has been launched by Michael Wildt, Leo Ladyzhensky and Victor Ochkovskiy. The company aims to provide health care research companies and consultancies with survey programming solutions designed to improve survey quality, reduce timelines and costs and yield better data outcomes.

■ Prague-based research company **response:now** has launched in the United States and has appointed Frederick Barber as managing director of North America.

■ Boston-based retail intelligence firm **Survey.com** has opened a new operations center in Charlotte, N.C. The company plans to hire 25 full-time employees at the new location in the next six months and will grow its product and service offerings, as well as the number of independent field agents, through the first quarter of 2018.

■ U.K. scientific and medical communications network **Porterhouse Medical Group** has launched Porterhouse Insights, a research, insight and evidence consultancy that will offer solutions to biopharmaceutical companies. The consultancy will be led by Fabrice Allum.

Research company earnings/financial news

■ **Nielsen**, New York, has reported revenues of approximately $1.64 billion for the third quarter of 2017, up 4.5 percent compared to the third quarter of 2016.

■ **Forrester Research**, Cambridge, Mass., has reported total revenues of $80.4 million for the third quarter of 2017, compared with $77.4 million for the third quarter of 2016.

■ **Facebook**, Menlo Park, Calif., has reported third-quarter 2017 revenues of approximately $10.3 billion, up 47 percent compared to the same time last year.

■ **Study Hall Research**, Tampa, Fla., has reported that for the first nine months of the year, revenue increased by 11.3 percent over the same period in 2016.

■ Reston, Va., consumer intelligence firm **Resonate** has raised $8 million in growth capital. The company will use the funding to accelerate go-to-market activities, with an expansion in its sales efforts targeting B2C brand verticals and agency partners. The investment will also go toward its consumer intelligence platform and will add new customer-facing mobile and location-based analytics.

■ India-based researcher **MRSS India** has reported a standalone net profit of Rs. 4.51 crore for the half-year ended Sept. 30.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

••• can't-miss activities

American Economic Association will hold its Annual Meeting on **January 5-7** in **Philadelphia**. Visit www.aeaweb.org/conference.

MREF will be taking a vision trip to Haiti to visit the Joseph School on **January 18-21**. Visit mrgivesback.org.

Insights Association will hold the 2018 CEO Summit on **January 22-24** in **South Beach, Fla**. Visit bit.ly/2yiB4dS.

IQPC will hold the Customer Insight and Analytics Exchange event on **January 24-25** in **London**. Visit bit.ly/2gb19DP.

QRCA will hold its 2018 Annual Conference on **January 24-26** at the Phoenix Marriott Tempe at The Buttes in **Phoenix**. Visit www.qrca.org.

Quirk's will hold its 2018 Quirk's Event - West on **January 30 - 31** at Hotel Irvine in **Irvine, Calif.** Visit www.thequirksevent.com.

KNect365 (IIR) will hold The Media Insights and Engagement Conference on **February 6-8** at the Miami Beach Resort and Spa in **Miami Beach, Fla.** Visit bit.ly/2eyPzmx.

Merlien Institute will hold its Qual360 Europe event on **February 7-8** in **Berlin**. Visit eu.qual360.com.

The 2018 Pharma Market Research Conference USA event will be held on **February 14-15** in **Newark, N.J.** Visit bit.ly/1Sh6Yhi.

African Market Research Association will hold the Africa Forum 2018 event on **February 22-23** in **Nairobi, Kenya**. Visit africanmra.org/AMRAWeb.

AMA will hold its 2018 Winter Academic Conference on **February 23-25** at the Sheraton New Orleans in **New Orleans**. Visit www.ama.org.

Quirk's will hold its 2018 Quirk's Event - East on **February 27-28** at the Marriott Brooklyn Bridge in **Brooklyn, N.Y.** Visit www.thequirksevent.com.

The 2018 Pharma CI European Conference and Exhibition will be held on **February 27-28** in **Lisbon, Portugal**. Visit bit.ly/2xSy2N7.

NMSBA will hold the Neuromarketing World Forum on **March 7-9** in **Singapore**. Visit bit.ly/P3Zi3Q.

Merlien Institute will hold its Qual360 North America event on **March 14-15** in **Washington, D.C.** Visit na.qual360.com.

ARF will hold its CREATIVExSCIENCE 2018 event on **March 27-28** in **New York**. Visit bit.ly/2g99He3.

KNect365 (IIR) will hold its FUSE 2018 event on **April 9-11** at the Dream Hotel Downtown in **New York**. Visit bit.ly/2vpiqRB.

UTA MSMR Alumni Association will hold their annual insights conference for the industry on **April 12** in **Arlington, Texas**. Visit msmralumni.org.

ESOMAR will hold its Latin America 2018 event on **April 15-17** in **Buenos Aires, Argentina**. Visit www.esomar.org.

Merlien Institute will hold its MRMW North America event on **April 24-25** in **Cincinnati**. Visit na.mrmw.net.

PAA will hold its 2018 Annual Meeting on **April 26-28** at the Sheraton Denver Downtown in **Denver**. Visit bit.ly/2xgZ131.

Insights Association will hold its NEXT 2018 conference on **April 30 - May 1** in **New York**. Visit bit.ly/2kK4lLk.

ESOMAR will hold its Asia Pacific 2018 event on **May 13-15** in **Bangkok**. Visit www.esomar.org.

ASA will hold its Symposium on Data Science and Statistics on **May 16-19** at the Hyatt Regency Reston in **Reston, Va.** Visit bit.ly/2g8o1TW.

AQR and **QRCA** will hold the 2018 Worldwide Conference on Qualitative Research on **May 16-18** in **Valencia, Spain**. Visit www.qrca.org.

LIMRA will hold The Marketing Conference on **May 30 - June 1** at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore in **Baltimore**. Visit www.limra.com.

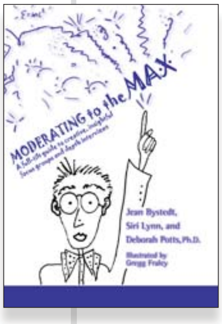
NMSBA will hold its Shopper Brain Conference - USA event on **June 7-8** in **New York**. Visit bit.ly/2gGCVAZ.

EphMRA will hold its 2018 Conference on **June 26-28** at the Congress Centre in **Basel, Switzerland**. Visit www.ephmra.org.

NMSBA will hold its Shopper Brain Conference - South America event on **August 30-31** in **Rio de Janeiro**. Visit bit.ly/2j3FGR1.

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.

ESSENTIAL READING FOR RESEARCH PROFESSIONALS



Moderating to the Max

A Full-Tilt Guide to Creative, Insightful Focus Groups and Depth Interviews

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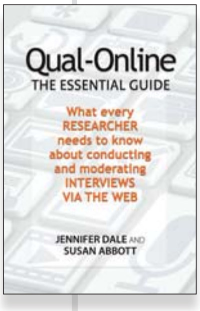

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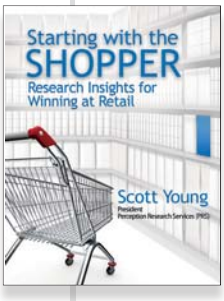

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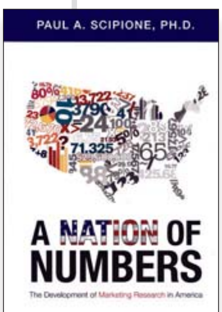


A Nation of Numbers

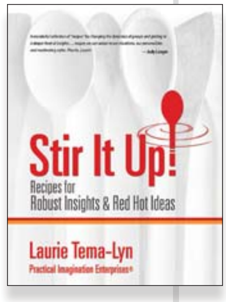
The Development of Marketing Research in America

Paul Scipione identifies the factors and events that came together to make America the birthplace of marketing research and documents how far the marketing research industry has come in its first 100 years, morphed from analog to digital, with new tools in big data and advanced analytics, observation of actual consumer behavior via scanning UPC codes, and advances in the neurosciences, and speculates where the industry will be in the future.

546 pages, 7x10, 978-0-9852482-2-2 $49.95 cloth

Stir It Up!

Recipes for Robust Insights & Red Hot Ideas

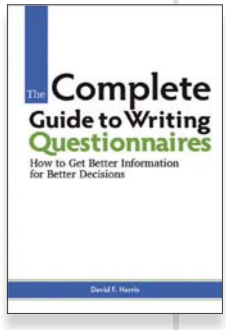


From time to time, every moderator, meeting chairman, or in-depth interviewer needs fresh ideas to jazz up a tired group or reenergize a flagging meeting. Here are 50 fresh ideas for exercises in an easy-to-use cookbook format. Organized by category, from Ice Breakers to Idea Developers each "recipe" (exercise) is presented with a brief description, an estimation of time required, a list of materials needed, instructions for how to do it, and useful tips.

140 pages, 7x9, 978-0-9830436-3-8 $24.95 paper

The Complete Guide to Writing Questionnaires

How to Get Better Information for Better Decisions



A comprehensive framework for creating questionnaires from planning research to support decision-making, conducting qualitative research, and planning the questionnaire before you begin writing questions, with guidelines to make questions clear, answerable, easy, and unbiased for the three most common tasks researchers ask respondents, and how to properly pretest a questionnaire.

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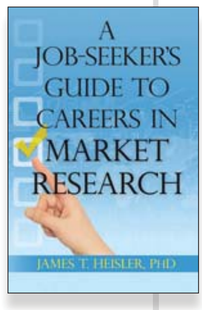
A Job-Seeker's Guide to Careers in Market Research

How to Decide if a Career in Market Research is Right for You



An authoritative guide to the market research industry at the beginning of the 21st century, its size and scope, what value it provides, who works in the field, who uses it and for what decisions, the market research process, common methodologies, growth prospects for the industry, and more. The book explores market research as a career choice—skills, education, and training; how to get that first job, moving upward, potential earning power, success profiles, and stepping stones to related careers.

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10 minutes with...

Victor Chia
Manager, Consumer and Marketplace Insights, Verizon

"Learning about the consumer demand of a product is essential to a lot of the research that we do and also helps shape the path our business takes in trying to market and sell a product."

How did you first become interested in consumer research?

In my first job out of college I worked as a data analyst for a consulting firm. I cleaned raw data files and ran some basic synthesizing of data and it was there that I first stumbled upon my first few consumer data files. I became really interested in discovering the story behind the consumer data which eventually led me to the consumer research field.

You graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics. How do you think your degree has affected the way you look at marketing research?

Most know the basics of economics – supply and demand – and in research you truly begin to understand demand. Learning about the consumer demand of a product is essential to a lot of the research that we do and also helps shape the path our business takes in trying to market and sell a product. Also within economics are things like utility and elasticity which are all used in a lot of research, particularly things like conjoint and pricing studies.

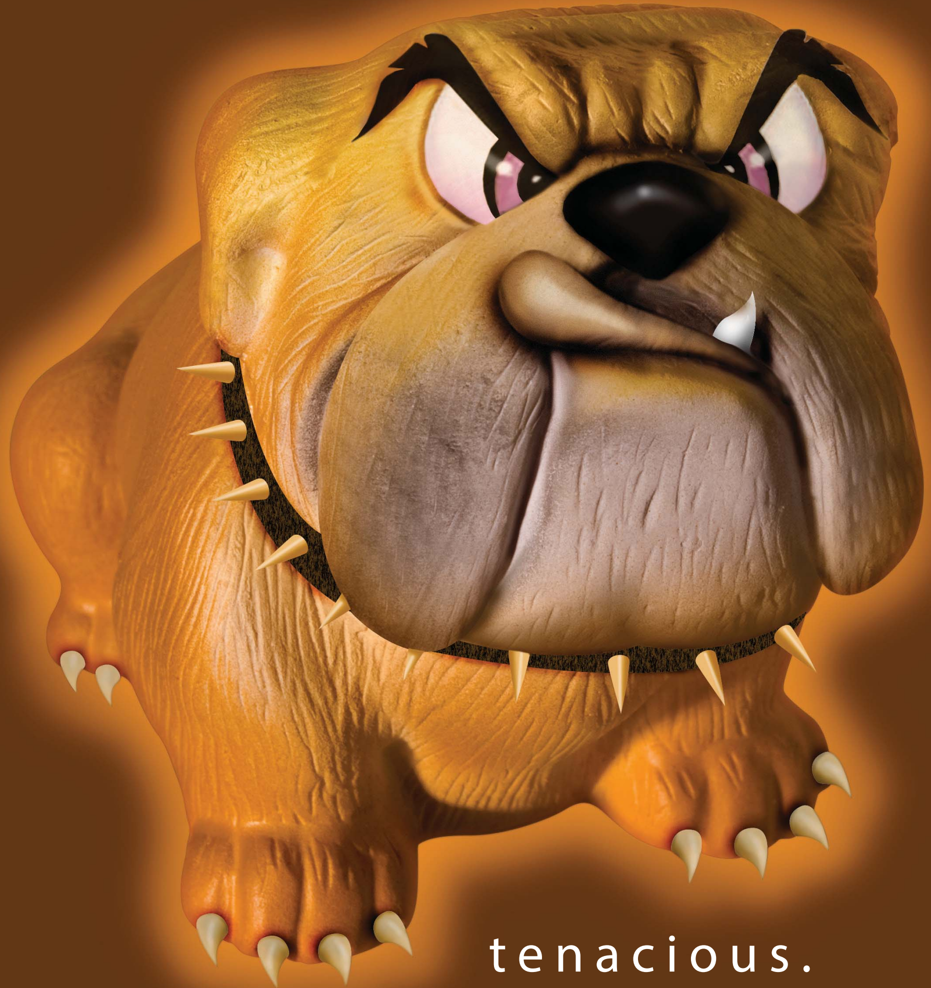
What recommendations would you have for someone conducting their first ethnography?

My recommendation would be to simply forget everything that you know or at least to try to put assumptions aside. It's really easy for one to get caught up in something they want to hear from the consumer and let that thought overpower the other great things the consumer is saying. Also, make sure you create an enjoyable experience for the consumer and yourself. A friendly conversation goes a long way in having someone open up to you and really share their true feelings about whatever topic you are discussing.

Are there any new methodologies you would like to explore in the next year and why?

I'm always on the lookout for new and exciting methodologies! I haven't had the pleasure of using virtual reality in any of my research projects yet and I'm really interested in trying that out. I've also seen quite a few demos and studies on neuroscience that have piqued my interest!

Read the full interview at quirks.com/articles/2018/20180122.aspx.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