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QUIRK'S

Marketing Research Review

Keeping it real

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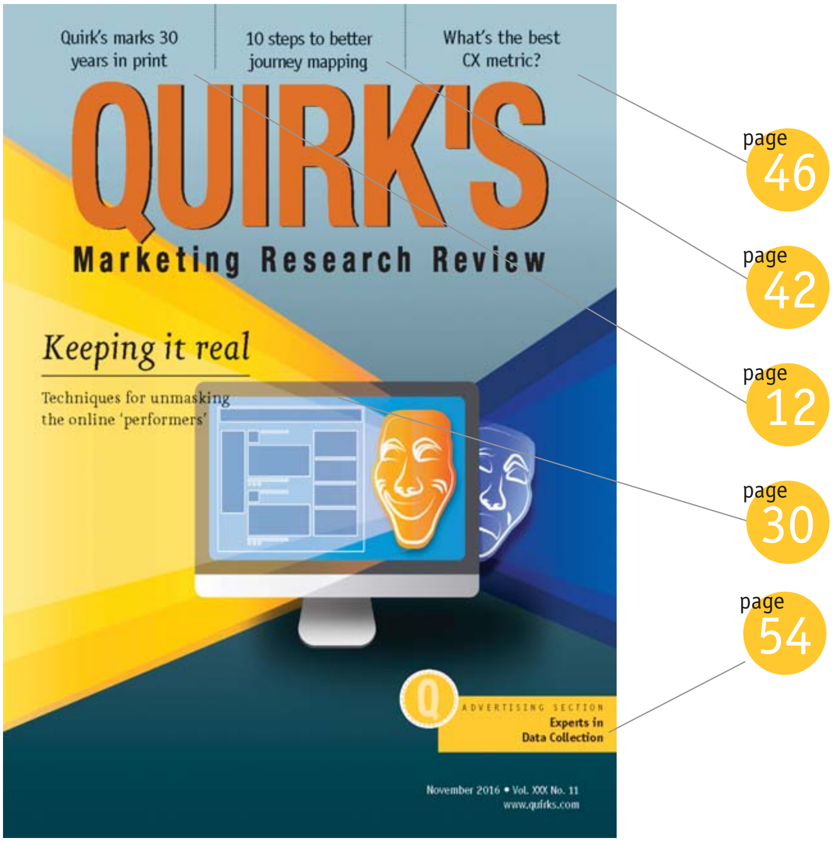

Illustration by Jennifer Coppersmith Design

ON THE COVER

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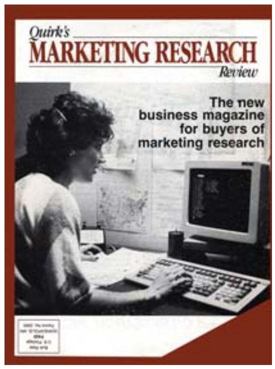

2 READ QUIRK'S FIRST 'FROM THE PUBLISHER' | Having worked in the marketing research field for more than 20 years, Tom Quirk was convinced there was a need for a publication that acted as an information source and promoted the value of marketing research. In 1986, Quirk's Marketing Research Review was launched. http://quirks.com/articles/from-the-publisher-october-1986

3 CHECK OUT QUIRK'S NEW WEB SITE | See how far we've come! As Quirk's celebrates 20 years on the Web, we are excited to roll out our new site with a robust and intelligent search feature at its core. www.quirks.com

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••• e-commerce research

U.S. consumers not flocking to Chinese sites

A survey conducted by One Hour Translation, an online translation agency, in collaboration with Google Consumer Surveys, found that the rate of U.S. citizens doing online shopping on Chinese Web sites is low. Only 15 percent of the U.S. consumers participating in the survey reported they had purchased a product or products from Chinese Web sites during the last year.

The U.S. survey was part of a larger one conducted in April 2016 which examined a representative sampling of 2,100 respondents from nine countries; 500 people from the U.S. and 200 from each of the following eight countries: U.K., Australia, Canada, Germany, France, Spain, Japan and Brazil. The survey question posed, and presented in the chief language of each of the nine countries, was: "Have you purchased any products from a Chinese Web site in the last year?" Sixteen percent of the Canadian consumers reported buying from a Chinese e-commerce site during the last year. In Europe, 11 percent of U.K. consumers purchased from Chinese sites, compared with 12 percent in Germany, 15 percent in France and a relatively high rate in Spain of 28 percent. Seventeen percent of Brazilian consumers reported they had purchased from a Chinese site, compared with 23 percent of Australians and a very low rate in Japan of 4 percent.

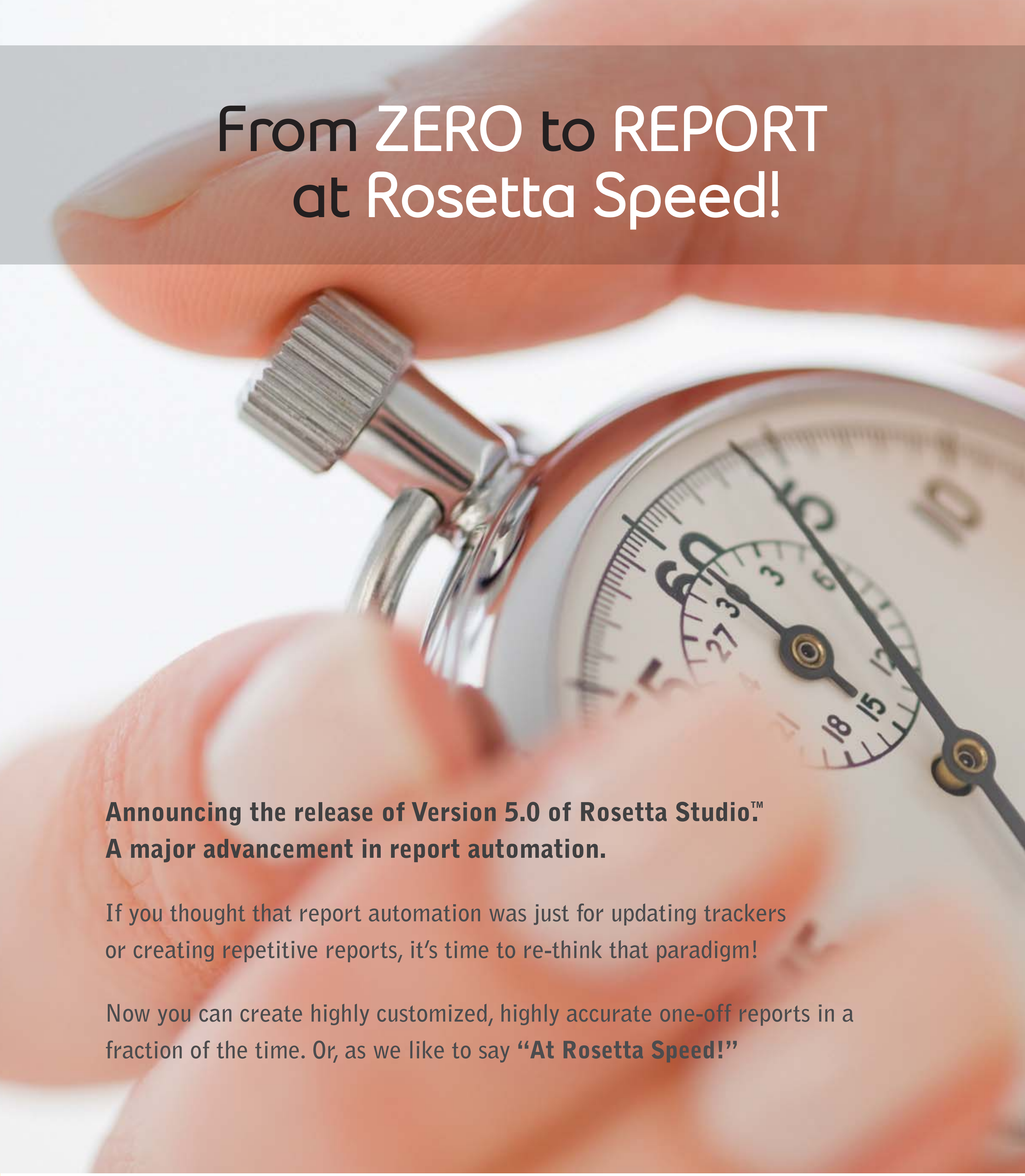
quirks.com/articles/2016/20161101.aspx

••• direct marketing

Thursday's the day for e-mailing

Data from Chicago-based marketing communications firm Yes Lifecycle Marketing's cross-channel marketing platform Yesmail360 shows that in Q2 2016, e-mails sent on Thursdays sparked the greatest engagement, such as open rates and unique click rates, while e-mails sent on weekends performed better in terms of conversions.

The report shows that open rates for e-mails sent on Thursdays were 14 percent higher than the Q2 average, while unique click rates were 41 percent higher and click-to-open rates were 24 percent above average. However, Thursday conversion rates were among the lowest, falling 23 percent below the Q2 average. Alternatively, e-mails deployed on Saturdays and Sundays resulted in conversion rates 60 and 40 percent higher than average, respectively. Twenty percent of all e-mails in Q2 were sent on a Thursday, which was the most popular campaign deployment day of the week. The weekend was least popular for sending e-mails, with Saturdays accounting for 11 percent of Q2 e-mail volume and Sundays making up 10 percent.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By Joseph Rydholm, Quirk's Editor

Quirk's celebrates 30 years in print, 20 online

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Joe Rydholm can be reached at joe@quirks.com

This fall marks the 30th year in print for *Quirk's Marketing Research Review*. While we celebrated our 25th year in 2011 with a bit more pomp and circumstance (25-year markers are generally more momentous than your garden-variety five- or 10-year mileposts) another five years in business is nothing to sneeze at, especially for a media company!

After all, we *are* still in business – unlike many media companies – and while we're certainly feeling the effects of the changing publishing landscape, I'm happy to report that we are doing just fine, thanks to the enduring support of readers like you and the research companies who market their products and services across our many outlets.

We're also celebrating 20 years online. By the time you read this, the first iteration of the redesigned Quirks.com will be up and running after many, many months of construction. It's a brand new platform that gives us a solid base to build upon. At its core is a smarter search function, designed to make it easier for you to find and access all of our content, from our directories to our jobs section to our storehouse of nearly 6,000 articles.

Back when we were reviewing several older stories in conjunction with our 25th anniversary issue, I was proud of how well they had held up. Granted, that piece on fax-based surveying from the May 1996 issue may have lost a little of its relevance (ahem) but in general, while the methods and tools to have evolved, the main tasks of marketing research haven't changed. Thus our online article archive remains as valuable as ever (and still free of charge) – and is now even more readily accessible.

A big shout-out to Dan Quirk and Ralene Miller for their hard work on the new site. We can now see that all of the hours they spent in meetings and trading e-mails and phone calls with the Web design firm and in testing and re-testing all the various features and functionalities have finally paid off. The site is still a work in progress but if anyone can get it to where it needs to be, it's Dan and Ralene.

Speaking of Dan, he related a story to me that neatly encapsulates everything we've tried to do here since the first issue debuted in 1986. Dan was recently out for drinks with a group of friends and was introduced by a mutual friend to a woman who had worked in marketing research for a long time before switching careers a few years ago. His pal introduced Dan to her as "Dan QUIRK, you know, of Quirk's!" hoping, as only a really good friend would, that she would register a blank stare. Instead, much to his friend's chagrin, the woman proceeded to gush about how much she loved Quirk's and how the Quirk's brand was so well-respected and stood for quality. Dan thanked her profusely and told her how his dad Tom had founded the magazine after stints in the publishing and marketing research industries with the goal of promoting the value and understanding of MR in all its forms through helpful, practical articles. She was amazed to find out the firm is based here in the Twin Cities and has a staff of just 11 and also pleased that Quirk's had entered the event space in 2015.

I'm proud to say that her reaction is not uncommon. Tom's approach to serving the industry was always based on delivering personal customer service. And as a business owner himself, he knew the value of being flexible with the independently-owned MR firms that formed the bulk of the early *Quirk's* advertisers. He also knew that the audience would quickly tire of reading empty puff pieces of the type that were (and still are!) so common in trade publications so he always stressed the need for us to deliver substantive, independent editorial content.

Those values, along with being nimble, creative and responsive, have sustained Quirk's for these past 30 years and I'm confident they'll see us through the upcoming decades as well.

quirks.com/articles/2016/20161102.aspx

IN FOCUS

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

Q // Survey Monitor

••• b2b research

B2B firms are active social media marketers

Followers from LinkedIn, engagement from Instagram

Many industry-defining B2B brands have not only embraced social but have completely changed the game with innovative social strategies, says a TrackMaven report on social media strategy, per a Research Brief report. Twelve months of social media content from 316 leading B2B brands across five key social networks – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest – shows a grand total of 508,060 social media posts and over 100 million social interactions. The 316 brands featured in the analysis include the leading B2B brands in the Global 500 and B2B leaders.

quirks.com/articles/2016/20161103.aspx

"Overall, B2B brands have the largest audience on LinkedIn – 36 times the median number of followers they have on Instagram. But B2B brands get 20 times more engagement on Instagram than on LinkedIn," the report notes.

Takeaways in the report from the brands B2B industries excelling on social media include:

Biotech, engineering and financial services brands have both substantial audience growth and high content engagement on social media, indicating impactful social content. The financial services industry's 81.77 percent average follower growth per brand is especially impressive given the industry's large median social following.

Brands in the machinery sector see the highest social media audience growth, with average annual follower growth across all five major networks of 129.02 percent. Engaging content is a correlated factor; social media content from machinery brands is ahead of the B2B pack, as indicated by its high engagement.

Across the B2B landscape, biotech brands have the most engaged social media audiences with an average engagement ratio of 12.46. Financial services brands are a distant second at 9.94.

According to the research, LinkedIn is the big B2B winner, based on brand popularity follower count. The median social media audience size for B2B brands is: 109,000 followers on LinkedIn; 34,000 page likes on Facebook; 18,000 followers on Twitter; 3,000 followers on Instagram; 420 followers on Pinterest.

LinkedIn is B2B marketers' social channel of choice, used by 94 percent of B2B marketers, and the 10 most-liked brands on LinkedIn are all B2B brands, says the report.

Looking at B2B brand popularity by content engagement, the average engagement ratio (number of interactions per post per 1,000 followers) for B2B brands on each social network, Instagram is by far the B2B powerhouse. The average engagement ratio for B2B brands is: 22.53 on Instagram; 15.88 on Pinterest; 5.99 on Facebook; 1.09 on LinkedIn; and 0.86 on Twitter.

A separate report, The Fortune 500 Instagram Report, and analysis by TrackMaven examining the usage of Instagram including their posting strat-

egies for follower growth and engagement, finds that there are a few major areas of disconnect between how major brands use Instagram and how consumers engage with brands on Instagram.

Fortune 500 companies do most of their posting during East Coast business hours. In fact, Fortune 500 brands dramatically favor the 9 a.m. through 9 p.m. ET timeframe for Instagram posting; 88 percent of Fortune 500 Instagram photos are posted within this 12-hour window. The least-popular time to post among Fortune 500 brands is between midnight and 8 a.m. ET.

Instagram posts by Fortune 500 companies published between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. ET time see the highest average engagement level, compared to the average engagement for Fortune 500 Instagram posts, says the report. Posts published in this window see 6.15 percent to 8.78 percent more engagement than the average Instagram post from a Fortune 500 brand. The worst time to post on Instagram for Fortune 500 brands is between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. ET. Posts published within this window see 4.18 percent to 6.58 percent less engagement than average.

Videos are a different story, says the report. The video functionality is relatively new on Instagram and, as a result, the data set is small. But the report reveals that consumers are more likely to interact with Instagram videos during non-work hours.

Fortune 500 brands post their videos primarily during work hours, just like their pictures. During work hours, an average of 22.5 out of every 1,000 Instagram followers interacted with videos posted by Fortune 500 companies. During off-hours, 33.4 out of every 1,000 followers interacted with the content, which is nearly 50 percent higher. And finally, on the weekends, followers interacted with videos at a rate of 25.7. The report suggest that some consumers are probably reluctant to watch videos, which may include an audio component, while they are at work.

••• lifestyle research

What does the modern family dinner look like?

No phones but TV OK

Family dinners have customarily held a sacred place as part of family life, holidays and traditions. But what do they look like to Americans today? To better understand what modern "family dinners" mean, The Harris Poll found out who's invited, how often the table is set and what role technology plays at the table.

A majority of adults who live with others sit down to family dinners at least once a week and 93 percent of Americans say family dinners are something to look forward to. But be careful about what you bring to the table – 90 percent of Americans say cell phones don't belong. Other technology, however, is welcome, with nearly four in 10 eating their family meals in front of the TV (37 percent). These are some of the results of The Harris Poll of 2,236 U.S. adults surveyed online between March 16 and 21, 2016.

Among those who live with others, a vast majority (87 percent) sit down to family dinner at least once a week, while just 5 percent say they never have family dinners. Those most likely to sit down once a week tend to have incomes of $75,000 or more. Married Americans are more likely than those who aren't to sit down every night (34 percent vs. 21 percent). For many, just getting dinner on the table can turn into a family affair, with 65 percent saying it's a group effort, especially among adults with kids under 18 in the house (71 percent vs. 61 percent of those without).

But is it enough? Those who don't sit down more often say it's because it is too difficult to coordinate schedules (29 percent) – a reason cited more often by unmarried Americans (36 percent), compared to their wedded counterparts (24 percent). Those excuses may be regretted in the future, however, as over 4 in 10 Americans (44 percent) say they wish they'd had more family dinners when they were growing up – a sentiment especially strong among adults with kids in the house (53 percent vs. 39 percent without). On the other hand, four in 10 (42 percent) are perfectly content with family dinner frequency, saying they sit down together as often as they would like.

The proverbial dining room may be losing its appeal. Although a majority of Americans (71 percent) say they eat around a table, 37 percent eat in front of a television and 22 percent eat on the couch. Kids definitely make a difference, however, as adults with kids in the house are more likely to eat at the table (76 percent) compared to those without (68 percent). On the other hand, adults without kids in the house are more apt to eat in front of the TV (44 percent vs. 27 percent with kids), as are unmarried adults (42 percent vs. 33 percent married).

Most commonly, spouses (65 percent) and immediate family (58 percent) are present for family dinners. Two in 10 (20 percent) say their parents attend and around one in 10 (11 percent) say extended family or friends join in as well. Millennials are much more likely to have friends, parents, extended family and roommates attend family dinners, compared to their older counterparts.

No matter who may be in attendance, many are just happy to have their family together. With all of the recent emphasis on healthy eating, local sourcing, and organic foods, it may be refreshing to hear that over eight in 10 (86 percent) say the family eating together is more important than where the food comes from. At the same time, however, 79 percent say they have made changes to make their family dinners healthier over the past couple of years.

This Harris Poll was conducted online, in English, within the United States between March 16 and 21, 2016 among 2,236 adults. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Poll surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

••• health care research

Patients, HCPs differ on health care knowledge levels

They don't know what they don't know

While patients are most confident that they have both the knowledge (81 percent) and tools (74 percent) to manage their own health effectively, only half as many health care professionals (HCPs) think patients have the knowledge (41 percent) and tools (49 percent) to do so. Similarly, half of HCPs said they have patients who think they know a lot about healthy living but actually do not. This indicates that there is gap between what is considered appropriate management of an individual's health and what professionals deem is necessary to ensure appropriate care.

These findings come from a new report, the Future Health Index (FHI), an international study from Netherlands-based health technology company Royal Philips which explores how 13 countries around the world are positioned to meet long-term global health challenges through integration and connected-care technologies.

The U.S. ranks highest on health care access and high on connected-care technology adoption but lower than average on health care integration, according to the report. While health care system integration is recognized as important and beneficial in the U.S., it is still in its early stages. Additionally, although interest in connected-care technology is high, the U.S. is not yet taking advantage of these devices to power integrated health care, signaling potential areas of opportunity for the American health care system.

While both patients and HCPs surveyed in the FHI agree that access to care in the U.S. is good, there are some wide contradictions in place when it comes to personal health management. For instance: 88 percent of Americans would rather be healthy than rich, yet only 37 percent anticipate that their health will be very good or excellent in the next 10 years. Four out of five Americans over the age of 50 suffer from one or more chronic conditions.

Only 13 percent of HCPs predict that our health would be very good or excellent in 10 years. Moreover, health care professionals do not believe that Americans know how to manage their health effectively; both patients (81 percent) and health care professionals (78 percent) agree individuals have full responsibility for preventing poor health.

Additionally, the top reasons

Americans have not visited a health care professional include: the cost of care; denial that they need to see a doctor; lack of time to go and difficultly getting an appointment.

When it comes to new consumer technologies aimed at improving certain aspects of an individual's health, the FHI found that Americans believe connected care technology, such as wearable devices, is helpful: 79 percent of connected-care device owners believe the device has allowed them to take better control of their health; most Americans only use them for a short period of time and 63 percent of device owners have not shared the data from the device with a HCP.

More than three-quarters (76 percent) of device users – who were currently not using their devices – had only used their wearable to track physical activity for six months or less.

When asked why they stopped using the device, more than half (54 percent) said they just "lost interest in using" the device.

These findings indicate that even if relevant health data is being collected, it is not being examined by a professional who could potentially deliver recommendations and discuss observations that could positively impact an individual's health – further validating that today's connected devices need to move beyond lifestyle products and support collaboration and better health management.

To improve the quality, access and affordability of care, health care systems around the world are transforming from a focus on hospital-based reactive care to new models of integrated, coordinated care from healthy living and prevention to diagnosis, treatment and home care. To further explore how this will impact the future of U.S. health care, Philips partnered with the Institute for the Future (IFTF) to examine the market perceptions that are impacting the FHI findings, as well as the future forces that will impact what the future of U.S. health might look like in 2026.

According to IFTF, health care cannot keep pace with illness as people age. Despite medical advances that have boosted life expectancy, over the next decade, health care leaders and decision makers must redefine access, integration and technology adoption, moving decision-making to the patient and family.

In order to move from reactive to preventative care, individuals will be expected to be true partners in managing their own health. The ultimate goal must be to design a health care system and engage patients in ways that help to ensure their health span matches to their life spans.

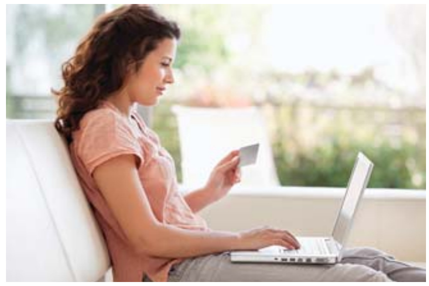
IFTF also highlights three key forces that will inform and influence patient and provider views on access, integration and technology adoption over the next decade. They include:

Flipped care. Access to health care will change from provider-centered to person-centered where encounters between patients and the health care system will occur virtually and in new consumer-directed settings. Demonstrating the need for integration and connected-care outlined in the FHI findings.

Integrative health systems. A system of health that will include the external factors well beyond the walls of the clinic or hospital – housing, family support, food, wealth and education. The FHI report highlights that integration is still in its infancy in the U.S.

Encoded intuition. A shift in technology from assistive to empowering devices that will rely heavily on the patient's willingness to take a proactive role in managing their health reinforces the FHI finding that connected care devices could play an empowering role in improving self-management of health.

In fact, according to IFTF, HCPs thought an automated tracking program would be as effective a tool as better access to health facilities for patients and more effective than more personalized consultations and treatments from their health care providers. The IFTF also outlines that the next wave of wearables will be designed as temporary tools to help reprogram lifestyles and behaviors in order to improve overall health and well-being. Ultimately, the goal of a health app or fitness wearables will be to make themselves redundant, helping people to make better health choices until they are no longer dependent on the device, not to build dependency on another technology.



••• online research

Profile of the online shopper

Shopping from the bathroom?

According to a new study examining the online shopping and purchase habits of the U.S. population, results show that 96 percent of Americans are shopping online, spending an average of five hours per week making online purchases and allocating an average of 36 percent of their shopping budgets to e-commerce. U.S. shoppers ranked online shopping ahead of smartphone GPS and streaming media as a basic essential they could not live without, according to the report from Austin, Texas-based e-commerce platform BigCommerce.

The study was conducted to determine how U.S. shoppers buy online and to help inform and educate the broader industry on running an effective online business in today's retail environment.

Its results suggest that consumers are buying wherever, whenever and however is most convenient to their lifestyle and Web browsing habits.

"Shoppers are dedicating more of their time and budget to online shopping and the frequency and number of online stores they purchase from has grown exponentially during the past few years," says Troy Cox, senior product director at BigCommerce. "With e-commerce now such a prevalent part of America's buying habits, retailers have an incredible opportunity to reach more customers by opening their business to new channels."

While e-commerce favors younger generations, with Millennials spending nearly half of their total budget online, all Americans are allocating a significant amount of their time and budget to online shopping: 67 percent of Millennials and 56 percent of Gen X prefer to search and purchase on e-commerce sites rather than in-store; 41 percent of Baby Boomers and 28 percent of seniors prefer online to offline shopping. Millennials and Gen X spend 50 percent more time shopping online each week (six hours) than their older counterparts (four hours).

Although they have greater proximity to physical stores, online shoppers in metropolitan areas spend more online annually ($853) than suburban shoppers ($768) or those in rural areas ($684).

Men reported spending 28 percent more online than women during the past year.

Online spending is taking up larger portions of the American household budget, with shoppers going to marketplaces, online stores, major brands and specialty retailers to find the perfect product; 80 percent make online purchases at least once a month; 30 percent make a purchase at least once a week.

Nearly half (48 percent) of online shoppers have bought or spent more than planned when shopping online.

One in two (48 percent) online customer journeys begin at e-commerce marketplaces such as eBay or Amazon.

In the last year, online shoppers have spent the most with e-commerce marketplaces ($488), closely followed by major online/offline brands ($409) such as Nordstrom or Best Buy.

With notifications the new normal and devices always on-hand, there is no limit to where and when people shop online: 43 percent of online shoppers have made a purchase while in bed; 23 percent have made an online purchase at the office, while 20 percent have purchased from the bathroom or while in the car; a quarter of online shoppers (25 percent) have made an online purchase while at a brick-and-mortar store. One in 10 shoppers admitted to buying something online after drinking alcohol.

Today's online shopper is driven by price, shipping and a personal connection to the product. When identifying factors influential in determining where to shop online, 87 percent of respondents cited price as influential, closely followed by 80 percent reporting shipping cost and speed as influential.

Sixty-six percent have decided not to buy an item because of shipping costs; 72 percent of females and 59 percent of males have decided to abandon their purchase because of shipping costs.

Online shoppers want products to be brought to life with images (78 percent) and product reviews (69 percent). Half of respondents cite not being able to touch, feel or try a product (49 percent) as one of their least favorite aspects of online shopping; 34 percent said difficult to return items and waiting for delivery were also a pain.

Consumers are more open than ever to buying via social posts and pins, with 30 percent of online purchasers stating that they would make a purchase from a social media network. Respondents were most open to making a purchase on Facebook (20 percent), closely followed by Pinterest (17 percent), Instagram (14 percent), Twitter (12 percent) and Snapchat (10 percent).

Males are more open (23 percent) than women (17 percent) to make a purchase through Facebook. More than half (51 percent) of millennials say they would be likely to buy through a social network.

BigCommerce conducted this survey in partnership with researcher Kelton Global during March 15-19, 2016. Survey responses were collected from more than 1,000 nationally representative Americans 18 years and older who cited making an online purchase within the previous six months. To view the full report on the country's shopping habits, visit www.bigcommerce.com/blog/omni-channel-retail.

••• alcoholic beverages

They like mojitos at Fridays

Study taps U.S. drinking trends

A snapshot of America's eating and drinking habits in restaurants and bars emerges from the first On-Premise Consumer Survey for the U.S. market from Nielsen CGA, a joint venture between Nielsen and CGA Strategy. A biannual survey of 15,000 on-premise consumers, all of legal drinking age, it aims to provide a look into America's preferences and is nationally representative of age, gender and location (state).

Here are some sample findings.

General fan favorites: 23 percent of the U.S. population have drunk a cocktail out of home in the last three months. Tequila (44 percent) is the favorite liquor base for cocktails in the U.S., followed by: light rum (39 percent), flavored vodka (39 percent), non-flavored vodka (39 percent) and whiskey (27 percent). The margarita (60 percent) is the most popular cocktail in the U.S., followed by: daiquiri (44 percent), piña colada (36 percent), Long Island (33 percent) and mojito (29 percent). Forty-eight percent of consumers feel that cocktail menus with named liquor brands are very important or important when choosing a cocktail.

Fan favorites by retail chain: Chili's consumers are 7 percent more likely to try a margarita (67 percent) than the U.S. average (60 percent). Buffalo Wild Wings consumers are 7 percent more likely to try a tequila sunrise (34 percent) than the U.S. average (27 percent). Bonefish Grill consumers are 13 percent more likely to try a martini (39 percent) than the U.S. average (26 percent). TGI Fridays consumers are 8 percent more likely to try a mojito (41 percent) than the U.S. average (33 percent).

How much are Americans willing to pay for a cocktail when out? $8.72 for a standard cocktail. Consumers are willing to pay 25 percent more for a cocktail made with premium spirits. The average willingness to spend: $10.98.

A hunch about brunch: Around six in 10 Americans are likely to drink alcohol with brunch; 24 percent of those who eat out at brunch will drink a cocktail. Forty-five percent of brunchers would often order mimosa, 36 percent a bloody Mary and 27 percent a Champagne cocktail.

The Nielsen CGA on-premise consumer survey was conducted online, in English, within the U.S. between March 20 and April 7, 2016, among 15,000 adults (aged 21 and over) who have visited an on premise establishment at least once in the last three months during the time of the survey.

IN FOCUS

Product and Service Update

••• social media research

Sift through social media data with Scraawl

Can analyze structured, unstructured data

Rockville, Md., technology company Intelligent Automation Inc. (IAI) has released Scraawl v2.0, a cloud-based social media and open-source data analytics tool that gives brands and agencies a solution to listen, search, extract and analyze social media conversations to gain insights. Scraawl aims to enable brands to derive actionable insights by analyzing structured and unstructured data associated with social media posts. With the release of Scraawl 2.0, Scraawl users will now have access to a set of analytics that leverage advanced machine learning, natural language processing and big-data algorithms. Built on IAI's analytics-as-a-service framework, Scraawl's analytics include influence discovery, community detection, sentiment analysis, topic modeling, image analytics, social network graphs and bot detection. By using a series of geo-spatial, social network and content-based filters to eliminate or focus on social bots, topics, media postings, influencers, or communities of interest, Scraawl enables brands and agencies to sift through billions of posts from social media feeds, such as Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube and RSS feeds, and engage with desired audiences to promote their brands or manage their reputation. Scraawl offers a free version for personal use. Brands and agencies can upgrade to professional, premium or enterprise plans depending on their needs. For brands and enterprises interested in integrating Scraawl's analytics with their proprietary data sets and data feeds, and maintaining the installation behind their corporate firewall, Scraawl 2.0 also offers an option for an on-premise install. Scraawl has partnered with Echo Analytics Group, a social analysis firm, to provide Scraawl training and consulting services.
www.i-a-i.com

quirks.com/articles/2016/20161104.aspx

••• new product research

Ipsos tool taps sensory dimensions

Identify barriers and opportunities

Ipsos ProductQuest, New York, has launched Sense*Suite, which uses product deprivation, role-playing, 3-D stimulus and other qualitative approaches, along with scaled responses, to address clients' product development challenges. Solutions within the suite include: Product*Sense, which identifies the sensory dimensions that consumers want; Sensory Stations, which evaluate sensorial product features and potential package designs; rapid prototyping, which iteratively evaluates potential prototypes; sensory lab. which evaluates prototypes in a lab environment, including drivers of appeal, potential barriers and improvement opportunities; and Censydiam*Sense, which uncovers the emotional drivers of a product experience.
www.ipsos.com

••• retail research

Space-planning application from Nielsen

Cloud-based approach

Nielsen, New York, has launched its Assortment and Space Optimization (ASO) solution for assortment and space planning and execution. The ASO cloud-based application incorporates data with space-aware analytics and informs planograms that ensure each product within a category is allocated the space needed to maximize its performance within physical and supply chain constraints. Newly-introduced functionality is designed to allow manufacturers to create assortments with the confidence that both retail supply and demand are optimized simultaneously; collaborate in an integrated platform with streamlined processes to save time and hassle; access "always on" performance analytics to inform adjustments with real-time impacts on business; know the efficiency and effectiveness of assortment plans before execution; and develop analytics-informed category review stories to justify products on the shelf and negotiate wins with retail partners.
www.nielsen.com

••• brand research

Understand the strength of your branding

Part of Toluna Automated Insights suite

Researcher Toluna, Wilton, Conn., has launched PowerConcept, the latest addition to its Automated

Insights suite available within the QuickSurveys platform that helps users to understand the overall strength of their branding, product or advertising concepts. PowerConcept enables users to understand the overall strength of their branding, product or advertising concepts. Working within QuickSurveys Automated Insights users can select a concept product or service category; add up to eight concepts, which can be images, video or copy; create the survey using a wizard; target their audience in real-time using the Toluna community of 10+ million (in most of Toluna's 59 markets). PowerConcept then builds the survey in real time, with a full reporting suite available offering a read-to-share infoboard of directional insights; a comprehensive PowerPoint deck of customizable slides; and a TolunaAnalytics dashboard for data visualization and analysis capabilities. us.toluna.com

••• online research

Ascribe, Google Consumer Surveys partner for platform

Analyze survey, verbatim data

Cincinnati-based text analytics solutions firm Ascribe has launched Ascribe Surveys, an online survey platform coupled with consumer sampling powered by Google Consumer Surveys. The platform is integrated with Ascribe Intelligence Suite and provides researchers with analysis of surveys and verbatim data. Ascribe's analytics technologies will partner with Google Consumer Surveys technology and sample base to enable market researchers to: reach large consumer samples and capture their feedback; mine and visualize structured and unstructured data; analyze consumer sentiment and compare across subsegments of the sample; and deliver actionable insights and improved customer experience. goascribe.com

••• Briefly

■ Researchscape International, a Bradenton, Fla., research consultancy, has launched a new survey data-cleansing service that aims to improve the quality of survey results by removing extraneous and potentially spammy responses. www.researchscape.com

■ Researcher Ipsos, New York, has launched the YCCI-Ipsos Think Tank, a new behavioral economics think tank with the Yale School of Management and Yale Center for Customer Insights (YCCI), as well as insights leaders from ConAgra Foods, Mars, Merck, Pfizer and SC Johnson. The think tank will develop and conduct research and experiments on the practical application of behavioral

economics principles in key areas of consumer marketing.
www.ipsos.com

■ New Orleans-based audience platform Lucid has introduced The Fulcrum Exchange Quality and Composition Program or Fulcrum Quality, a quality assurance and measurement program for market research sample. The program allows researchers to deliver more accurate insights by testing multiple characteristics of over 40 major sample panels. The program was created in partnership with Chuck Miller of digital agency DM2.
https://luc.id

■ Doyle Research Associates, Chicago, has released *A Researcher's Guide to Using Mobile Qualitative: Where Qualitative Meets Technology to Harness Opportunity*, a nine-page e-book that can be downloaded for free from the firm's Web site.
doyleresearch.com

■ California-based researcher Trusted Talent has launched the Trusted Talent Recruiting Hub specifically for the market research industry. The hub allows research professionals to post profiles and résumés for hiring companies to access. Additionally, hiring companies can use a matching algorithm that identifies and ranks talent for each position.
www.trustedtalentmr.com

■ Digital advertising agency NMPi, London, has launched a new analytics service that will deliver a range of bespoke analytics solutions across four areas: Web analytics, tag management, attribution and consultancy.
nmpilondon.com

■ Australia-based marketing firm Shopping Links has introduced Managed Collaborations, a service that adds personalized and fully managed campaigns to its self-service digital platform, assisting social media agencies and brands with finding the best influencers to develop effective collaboration ideas. The service can also curate invitation lists for influencer events.
shoppinglinks.com

■ Cupertino, Calif., firm SiteFocus Inc. has made available Communications in Focus (CIF), a cloud-based analytics platform that democratizes unstructured data analytics by eliminating traditional prerequisites, enabling data scientists, business users and end users to benefit from self-service analytics.
www.sitefocus.com

■ EBay, San Jose, Calif., and Australian retailer Myer have joined forces to develop and launch a virtual reality (VR) department store. Throughout the VR experience, Australian customers can browse Myer products, select and add them to their cart using eBay Sight Search. The Virtual Reality Department Store connects to the existing eBay.com.au API and allows Myer's product range, pricing and stock information to be updated in real-time.
www.ebay.com; www.myer.com.au

■ Research agency BrainJuicer, London, has launched System1 Politics, which uses the firm's behavioral science-based Fame, Feeling and Fluency model to improve the prediction of election outcomes.
brainjuicer.com

■ Shelton, Conn., researcher SSI has teamed with Topbonus, airberlin's frequent flyer program, to provide a new rewards program called Meinungsmeile or Opinion Mile. The program allows loyalty members to earn Topbonus award miles for flights and other benefits by participating in surveys and sharing opinions. The program will also allow SSI's Germany-, Austria- and Switzerland-based panel members to provide clients with more access to consumer and business travelers' opinions.
www.surveysampling.com

■ Warren, N.J., researcher Lightspeed has introduced 10 new research capabilities in Australia, including Lightspeed AdTracking, Bulletin Boards, Business Matters, CATI, Facial Coding, Metering, Mobile Audience, Social, Video Appends and Youth Matters.
www.lightspeedresearch.com

■ Netherlands-based researcher Nebu has released Nebu Data Hub, a centralized data management solution that collects and processes data from multiple sources. The firm has also launched a new Web site and brand identity.
www.nebu.com

■ Chicago-based market research crowdfunding start-up Collaborata has moved out of beta. The online marketplace brings together buyers and sellers to crowdfund research projects. It was founded by Jimmy Zollo, who was most recently at tech start-up Grubhub, and Peter Zollo, founder and former CEO of youth research firm TRU. Ben Diedrich will head up global sales for the firm.
www.collaborata.com

■ Researcher MARU/VCR&C, San Francisco, has launched the Qualitative Insights Center of Excellence, a new research group that uses a range of online technologies in developing insight into consumer behavior. The team is headed by Senior Vice President Tommy Stinson. MARU/VCR&C Qualitative Insights is designed as a standalone research offering and an enhancement to a quantitative research program. It is available globally in Asia, Europe and Latin and North America.
maruvcrc.com

■ Shelton, Conn., researcher SSI has launched a new rewards program, Opinion Check-In, with IHG Rewards Club. The program allows members who join Opinion Check-In to earn points by participating in surveys and sharing their opinions. The Opinion Check-In program will also help grow SSI's worldwide panel and give clients more access to consumer and business travelers' opinions.
www.surveysampling.com

■ Nashville, Tenn., firm 20|20 Research has launched Velocity, a new research solution that provides quick-turn studies, delivering results in seven days.
www.2020research.com

■ Warren, N.J., researcher Lightspeed has introduced Survey

Health Score (SHS), a capture of panelists' feedback and satisfaction levels post-survey that provides clients with feedback of respondent experience. SHS helps analyze and benchmark survey design techniques, length of interview effects and the influence of devices.
www.lightspeedresearch.com

■ Nielsen, New York, has made its Digital Content Ratings available in full syndication for clients. Nielsen's Digital Content Ratings provides daily measurement of audiences across digital content types including video and text, with metrics fully comparable to television.
www.nielsen.com

■ Salt Lake City customer experience software firm MaritzCX has made available a new CXFuel framework that provides a developer portal that allows users to access their customer experience data through APIs, as well as an Integrations Hub with pre-built connectors for popular enterprise systems, including Adobe Analytics Connector; Marketo Connector; Oracle Sales Cloud Connector; Salesforce Connector; and Tableau Connector.
www.maritzcx.com

■ ThinkNow Research, Burbank, Calif., has launched the Minority Business Owner (B2B) Panel in the U.S. The panel will provide insights to help brands create better messaging and design more relevant product and service offerings for minority businesses. The company will continue its panel expansion by launching new panels in Latin American countries.
www.thinknowresearch.com

■ Bord Bia (the Irish Food Board) has launched The Thinking House, a consumer research and market insight center in Dublin that will provide global trends, research, consumer insights and industry innovations to Ireland's food, drink and horticulture industry. It will be managed by Helen King, director of consumer insight and a team of 11 professionals.
www.bordbia.ie

■ Germany-based eye-tracking technology firm SensoMotoric Instruments (SMI) has launched the SMI Digital Classroom, a new framework for educational researchers that collects eye-tracking and behavioral data from up to 40 students simultaneously. The solution is aimed at researchers in educational and learning sciences, psychology, cognitive science and neuroscience.
www.smivision.com

■ Nielsen, New York, said that it will provide all electronic measurement for its local television ratings across all designated market areas by mid-2017. The firm will incorporate Return Path Data from set-top boxes and other electronic measurement into local services, including the TV markets currently measured by paper TV diaries. Nielsen aims to retire paper TV diaries by early 2018.
www.nielsen.com

The five pillars of data-driven strategy

| By Lawrence Cowan

snapshot

Cicero Group's Lawrence Cowan lays out an overview of the steps needed for a business to become data-driven, top to bottom.

Data has quickly become one of the most important aspects of achieving a competitive advantage in business. Creating a business where data are leveraged to create real value is the ultimate goal. A data-driven business is one where data is a basic requirement for business, a value-generator rather than a cost line-item of the balance sheet. This is more challenging than it seems but it can be done. We've identified five pillars of a data-driven business that serve as a framework for creating real value from business data.

Pillar 1: Articulate a data strategy which serves the strategic imperatives of the business.

The future vision for a business should be at the forefront in defining how data are leveraged to create value. Simply put, a well-defined data strategy must start with business strategy. Today's advanced analytics methods and solutions create near-infinite possibilities for deriving value from data. Tying a data strategy to the most important company initiatives allows the business to focus its advanced analytics efforts and technology choices on the areas that will provide the most value for the firm. A data strategy enables data-driven decision-making using technology and applications that help a business achieve its strategic imperatives.

quirks.com/articles/2016/20161105.aspx

- Data strategy must be driven by the business not by the technology that services the business. Focus first on what is driving your business, then move to defining the tactical elements of the data strategy.
- Data strategy must be clearly articulated and communicated to employees at all levels of the organization so that your business as a whole can understand the importance of your data to creating value.
- Data strategy should be based on measurable outcomes and milestones. Clear steps with time frames to get from the current state to desired outcomes are laid out and communicated across the organization. If you cannot define a clear path to executing the strategy, then you don't have the right one.

Pillar 2: Promote, train and enforce a culture of "data-driven-ness."

The most successful businesses create a culture of data, one in which data drives decision-making. They create a culture of measurement and adjustment based on data and analytics.

- The culture is focused on educating the entire organization to appreciate the value which can be generated through data. Businesses teach employees how to ask the right questions of data in order to understand how data will relate to unique jobs and goals. A shared understanding of data and its value helps create consensus and consistency and avoids analytical output being viewed

skeptically by the business.

- The culture of decision-making leverages advanced analytics as its foundation. Businesses should create a continuous cycle throughout the organization of evaluating impact and changing based on the data and outcomes.
- The culture of predicting outcomes and results through predictive analytics becomes the norm. Continuous improvement includes feeding prediction errors back into predictive models for continuous refinement.
- The culture becomes a mind-set that consists of continuous testing; continuous improvement; weighing and prioritizing decisions; sharing data with others in the organization; and using analytics to inform and influence others.

Pillar 3: Address the realities of human- and technical-capital requirements.

An honest recognition of a business's capabilities for generating real value from data is imperative to becoming a data-driven business. A business must leverage strengths, adapt skill sets and shore up gaps. This includes both human capital (skills and expertise) and technical capital (technology, systems and infrastructure).

Human capital capabilities

Ensuring the right human capital capabilities is paramount. It makes little sense to spend money on expensive systems without having the talent to derive substantial value from those systems.

- While businesses often recognize the need to bring on more expertise, they struggle with identifying which skill sets are most critical when hiring and training. A business should base skill-set requirements on the data strategy roadmap, identifying the skill sets which are critical to execution. Talent management processes should include a strategy around sourcing, developing, rewarding and nurturing technical and analytical talent.
- A primary goal for the business should be to build a deep bench of analytical professionals throughout the organization. Professionals should not only know how to run analysis and use the analytical tools at their disposal but have the capability to think critically about business issues, applying tools and methods to sophisticated and sometimes abstract questions.
- Human capabilities and skill sets need to be backed up by continuous training and development. Professionals should desire to continuously learn new skills and stay ahead of the curve and the business should be prepared to provide those opportunities.

Technical capabilities

New technology solutions may be needed to enhance current IT and communications capabilities. Businesses should be open to investment if it is determined that new technology is aligned with the data strategy and will generate value. New big-data ecosystems (e.g., Hadoop and its associated applications) are creating enormous value-generating opportunities for businesses when aligned with the right data strategy and human capital.

- Businesses should avoid implementing sophisticated IT systems until the business is prepared to leverage the features provided by the systems. This includes having the required data strategy, analytics talent, institutional will and data-sourcing to allow the business to realize the value that the technology can provide.
- Attention should be paid not only to back-end infrastructure but also to data reporting, communication and visualization tools. Effective reporting tools should streamline data collection while simplifying query functionality, allowing employees to more easily access and refer to particular data. Additionally, tools should make it simpler for non-data-savvy employees and C-level executives to track performance and incorporate data into the decision-making process.
- Significant consideration should be given to eliminating data silos and centralizing data. Data is increasingly powerful as it is brought together with other data, opening the doors to today's advanced analytics methods. Systems and other technical changes can effectively combine data, eliminating data silos.

Pillar 4: Maintain creativity in sourcing, selecting and prioritizing data types.

To best achieve powerful results from data, businesses need to source and select powerful combinations of data. Sourcing external data to combine with internal data can yield impactful analytics. It is especially important to not overlook sources of internal data that can give new and proprietary insights.

- A process for determining and ensuring data are accurate, timely and secure is critical. Without certainty that data is accurate, it will throw into question any insights generated.
- Collect the right data to meet the needs of the business's data initiatives. Choosing data based on the data needs generated by initiatives provides several benefits:
  - Interesting data is not always the most useful. Grounding data-sourcing in the initiatives makes it easier to discern between the two.
  - There are near unlimited sources of data, so focusing on just the data that will meet the needs of specific initiatives allows the business to home in on value-generating activities.
  - The data currently being collected might not be the best data for the business needs. Understanding how the current data reconciles with the data needs allows the business to adjust which data are being collecting and how it is being collected.
  - Don't overlook the potential value of unstructured data such as text, voice and other under-utilized data types. Advanced data mining techniques, natural language processing and text analytics allow for this information to be used in powerful ways.
  - Consider the power of data from unconventional sources when combined with the firm's own data. For instance, sensor data from smart devices or data from Web and social media are examples of potential useful data that could be powerful ad-

ditions to a business's data strategy and associated analytics initiatives.

Pillar 5: Maximize the value of data while maintaining high levels of data security, quality and agility.

Businesses often recognize the need to use data but struggle when it comes to implementing a company-wide data strategy. This often results from a poorly-defined data governance structure. It is easy for a business to fall into one of two camps: 1) data and analytics initiatives are kept structurally separate from the firm's ongoing operation, often in their own division or department, hindering the ability for the business to create a culture of "data-drivenness;" or 2) all data and systems are open company-wide, which leads to data quality and security issues.

- Businesses should define appropriate organizational data requirements and rules based on needs and structure. Data and analytics should not be left entirely to data scientists and IT departments – they require technical savvy and organizational coordination. To succeed, businesses need to embed data and analytics deep into their organizations to ensure that information and insights are shared across business units and functions.
- Businesses should identify how analytical decisions are currently being made. Examine how that decision-making process can be reinforced and altered with data and feedback.
- There should be clear understanding of who is accountable for facilitating any given analysis and leveraging its insights. From executive-level to analyst, there should be no questions of ownership.
- Firms need to effectively manage the supply and demand for analytics services across the business. This can involve tracking departments or units that are consistently underutilizing analytic capabilities, which will reveal divisions that may be lagging behind in becoming data-driven.
- Breaking down organizational walls between initiatives, workflows and employees can be key to combining data in powerful ways. Data silos are often created by departments or units not just keeping their data technologically separate but also structurally.
- Pay attention to regulatory and compliance requirements, both to meet industry-specific requirements and to ensure individual-level data meet the requirements defined by the business – client/customer expectations.

Benefits far outweigh costs

Creating a data-driven business requires significant upfront and continuous effort. This effort has proven, time and again, to bring about benefits that far outweigh the costs. The five pillars described here are the framework for achieving that type of success but specific application will depend on industry, vertical and context.

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••• online research

Keeping it real

Techniques for unmasking the online 'performers'

| By Patricia Sauerbrey Colton

snapshot

Thoughts on how to work around and see underneath consumers' tendency to present idealized versions of themselves in social media and in online research.

quirks.com/articles/2016/20161106.aspx

"My online friends don't get to see the train wreck I can be in real life." (Jen, 36, comparing her online and real-life self).

Social media are adding a new layer of complexity to already multifaceted consumers as their self-portrayals inevitably show up in the online media we use to conduct research. Yet our job as researchers is exactly to make sense of consumers' "train-wrecky" sides. It is especially their contradictory, irrational, spontaneous, raw and honest sides that can lead us to the heart of their longings. Good news: We can account for their newly-forming communication patterns by disrupting these increasingly automatic processes in our own and the consumers' heads.

Let's take a step back. We as researchers and consumers have immersed ourselves in the Internet and social media. We slipped into new communication forms that are fundamentally changing how we interact.

We have grown into a performance society. When we are online, we show off, present ourselves and try to gauge reactions of others to our thoughts and productions. Likes, shares and comments have become new currencies of how well we are doing. We have become savvy at filtering the facets of our personality and looks and avidly use the opportunity to repeatedly edit what gets to be a final post. We are becoming specialists in simply portraying an aspirational version of ourselves by creating online personas that serve the interest at hand: getting the job, growing a business, looking good, being a good parent, supporting a cause. This typically goes along with a can-do and all-access mentality – the opportunities are virtually unlimited. At the same time, we easily get to pick and choose what works within our framework and what does not. We simply crop off, shut off or ignore the inconvenient truths of ourselves and others so that we can live in fairly comfortable bubbles that we can redesign on a daily basis.

Just like consumers

In our researcher mentality of trying to be where the consumers are, we eagerly adapted online methodologies that closely mirror social media interactions and elicit similar masking behavior. The convenience, lower cost and the ability to reach so many people at once with less effort fascinates us just like consumers. However, it is easy to fall into the trap of creating information or insight bubbles ourselves, by accepting the validity of their personas or taking respondents' reactions at face value because these reactions are simply all we get. We are not physically with the consumers and therefore we cannot draw valuable insights from mismatches of facial expressions, tones of voice and body language but rather must go by the edited photos, videos and text that they present online. And we must therefore wonder about what is not being shown, about the absence of what is more difficult, potentially embarrassing or too "train-wrecky" for the respondent to discuss online.

Against this backdrop, we as researchers can assume a crucial role: adapting a more disruptive mentality to help consumers express themselves beyond bubbles and personas.

In our daily work at our firm, we use various online, offline and hybrid methodologies to get to the bottom of the consumers' minds and have found that not only the methodology (mix) selected but also the way the methodologies are applied have a fundamental impact on the depth of results. In the following, I will focus on online bulletin boards and face-to-face interviews as examples of our discoveries.

Considerable impact

In a project for a large food delivery service, we saw the considerable impact of the determined, seemingly "in control" online selves of consumers. When exploring the consumers' relationships to their delivery person in a bulletin board, respondents primarily saw this relationship in the light of them being in the position of a master and the "delivery guy" being the servant. They highlighted the rational, practical side, keeping themselves as the customer in a comfortable, shielded position of the director of this relationship (like they typically do in their social media interactions).

Yet the face-to-face in-depth interviews opened the view towards the more embarrassing emotions in relation to the delivery person: respondents felt dependent, needy and also partially uncomfortable admitting that they actually might not always cook (which meant in this case relying on delivered food). The direct interaction with the interviewer seemed to allow for this type of opening up, which turned out to be crucial in helping the company (beyond other objectives) shape its relationships with its customers.

However, in another study, this one for a baking products company set up in a similar way as the food delivery study, the insights gathered online and face-to-face were surprisingly similar. The engaging and connecting topic seemed to have sucked people in and the online bulletin board provided a welcome forum for their enthusiastic exchanges. It even facilitated their wish to share and hear from others using similar products.

Online personas

In a recent research project, circling around social media usage, we wanted to get to the bottom of this and directly discussed respondents' online personas, the differences to their "real-life being" and their openness online versus face-to-face. We used an online bulletin board and did follow-up real-time Webcam interviews.

Nearly all respondents admitted that their online personalities are quite different from what they are like in real life, a fact that influenced their behavior in the online bulletin board as it made them wonder about veracity of the other participants and their posts. Face-to-face, revealing truths were uncovered. A woman talked about social networking around sex toys; some opened up about over-filtering Instagram photos; another respondent discussed resentments against his online friends and thoughts about fellow bulletin board participants with whom he could have interacted.

The Webcam interview was described as having relieved some pressure of editing, portraying and considering. They had to only consider one listener, the moderator, who was more transparent by being also readable through her facial reactions, tone of voice and body language. The conversation with the "connectable human" interviewer triggered a sense of commitment while the bulletin board made some respondents post what was "good enough."

The interview setting triggered a sense of being involved in a process of shaping and developing something together, guided by the very specific and more natural communication flow with a less "robotic," actual person. In contrast, the bulletin board thought processes were constantly interrupted by other daily tasks as moderator and participants asked and answered at their own convenience.

Unique advantages

Just as interview results are shaped by the skills of the moderator, the results of online research are determined by how well it is conducted, in the context of the image-shaping online mind-sets of consumers. In fact, online research has unique advantages when embedded wisely into the research process:

A collaborative, involving process. Online research, e.g., with bulletin boards or longer-term communities, provides a great opportunity to create a collaborative, involving process for all stakeholders. While face-to-face research is limited to the time at hand and the point of time when it happens, online research allows for a more flexible, adjustable process, building on what is understood in collaboration with the complete research team including clients. This connects to the next advantage.

Tapping into consumers' everyday lives at their convenience. Consumers can get caught in the moment or close to the moment of actual product usage (in their home), they can visually document their behavior through videos and photos and talk about the research topic at their convenience, hopefully when on their minds, adding an ethnographic component.

Respondents can be given tasks that they can embed into their everyday lives and report on their behavior and thoughts through the online board. They do not only have to imagine how they would act but are able to report on a real experience that is ideally very similar to what they would do and feel like beyond the research situation. This can be testing a new product, discussing a topic with a friend, creating a collage, trying out a store, documenting ad exposure, etc.

A mix of social and personal engagement. The social aspects of a topic can be discussed among all participants while respondents can deepen their online conversation with only the moderator privately. Participants can even get selected for a face-to-face follow-up.

Hypothesis framework. Online research can provide a great springboard to collect consumer thoughts and opinions around a topic to be deepened in face-to-face sessions. This is particularly helpful when stepping into a new, unknown territory, market or psychological impact field to serve as a basis to frame hypotheses.

Become disruptors

However, to fully take advantage of these points means to commit to tackling the growing challenges that come with online research. The following describes facilitating techniques to inspire researchers to become disruptors of our own and the consumers' changing online mind-sets.

Being aware and disrupting consciously. Like consumers, we researchers ourselves are strongly impacted by the shifts in online and offline communication. As a first step, being aware of and acknowledging these changes allows us to consciously disrupt processes of persona- and information bubble-creation. The number of online natives is constantly increasing, challenging us to dig behind even more routine behavior to uncover less-manufactured online personas. At the same time, our awareness and knowledge of these developments can serve to help us develop a unique expertise.

Keeping it real. A key disruptive and overarching principle to get the most "real" responses is to connect consumers to their actual

lives as closely as possible. A great example is to use online research for documentation: reporting on everyday life examples of usages, interactions, observations, tasks, etc. As discussed, this lets the researcher tap into the respondents' everyday lives and at the same time provides a workaround for rationalized answers and opinions that are easily tinted by a self-portrayal. Reporting on what actually happened and thought processes going along with that lifts statements into the behavioral, interactive world, getting closer to actions outside of the research project.

In this context, we researchers need to be cautious of a trap of convenience: limiting the research to opinions and statements about potential views and behaviors that we can only take at face value and are therefore easier to analyze. Connecting to the actual behavioral world of respondents requires us to analyze what happened or was created, etc., as well as how it was talked about and what this interplay psychologically means in the context of all respondents. Real-time follow-up interviews can help untangle this often contradictory interplay.

Forming a relationship. With online research getting to consumers through the same overcrowded channel as all things Internet, the moderator can assume a key, differentiating role: caring and conveying interest about respondents and their engagement. As soon as respondents recognize the authentic efforts of the moderator to form a real relationship, they usually feel safer to open up. Videos of the moderator introducing herself, explaining tasks, summarizing feedback, sharing her own experiences, etc., mimic an atmosphere closer to a face-to-face interaction. It shows some vulnerability and humanizes what could potentially be a somewhat robotic experience. Such videos also provide great opportunities to showcase spontaneity, flaws or in-the-moment reactions, relieving respondents from the drive to over-edit.

Creating something together on a collaborative journey. Participants are likely to feel more committed if they get a sense of being an important element to an overall result. Standardized and preformulated questionnaires bear the risk that the individual feels like only one of many, while research flexibility to adjust on-the-fly allows a deepening of the conversation flow with certain respondents and shows that the process is an organic one. The rules of engagement, the research process and expectations are ideally explained during recruiting so that the moderator finds open doors when inviting the respondents to their joint journey, highlighting how everyone's input is important to direct it.

Leaving room for reservations and contradictions. Providing room for private conversations between moderator and respondent can help them adjust their posts to the various layers of the research and feel in a safe place throughout the process. Contradictions are typically a great sign of consumers showing various facets of themselves. They can serve as anchor points to deepen a conversation and figure out the underlying principles together.

Acknowledgement of online needs. Participants have, in effect, been hired to fulfill a task. They are likely initially driven by taking on this "job" rather than an intrinsic interest in the content (like they are in social media). However, the researcher can trigger the interest for the topic as it connects to the participants' lives. Taking this dive together can be exciting and hearing from others along the way is an added benefit. The moderator can serve as a guide to connect the dots and open the view towards interesting joint discoveries, indirectly "liking" the group's and individuals' creations.

Contradictory and hidden drivers

Keeping it real with consumers requires researchers to be real with ourselves and with them. The facilitation techniques mentioned above can help uncover their "trainwrecky," often contradictory and hidden drivers and also serve as a basis to inspire researchers to experiment with what is most "real" or authentic for them. These are exciting times in which to be attempting to disrupt newly-forming patterns and if we can succeed at peering behind consumers' masks, we will be uniquely positioned as cultural experts who can still find depth in a realm that often teems with superficiality.

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TAKE YOUR MOBILE GLOBAL

Holiday Shopping Around the World

As mobile research continues to grow in prevalence, international companies will increasingly seek out mobile solution providers with global reach.

And why not?

If your products, customers, and operations are in multiple countries, shouldn't your mobile research capabilities be there as well?

Field Agent, recently named MRMW's mobile research agency of the year, presently operates in seven countries, with plans to continue expanding to meet its clients' needs.

"We've been aggressively expanding into new markets," said Henry Ho, co-founder and chief strategy officer at Field Agent, "really with one primary goal in mind: to provide companies a cohesive mobile research and audit solution in markets worldwide."

According to Ho, companies benefit from global-mobile solutions—what he playfully calls "GloBile"—in at least three primary ways:

GOING GLOBiLE

Cost Savings:

Field Agent can efficiently execute the same project in multiple countries using the same research platform, generating considerable cost savings.

Simplicity and Efficiency:

By offering a complete line of research and auditing services across borders, Field Agent can serve as a "one stop shop" for exploring international markets.

Cross-Country Comparisons:

As the following mini-case demonstrates, Field Agent's mobile research platform makes it fast and easy to compare shopper insights from around the world.

Need far-reaching, globetrotting mobile solutions? Field Agent is standing by.

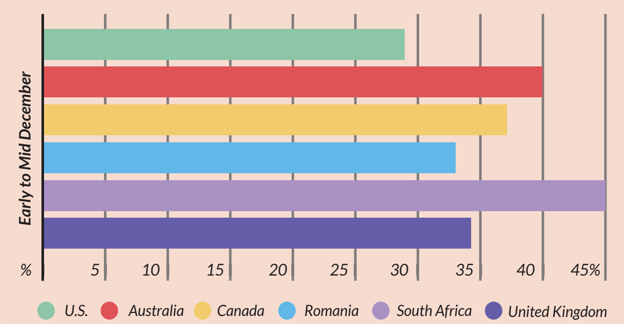
●●● *Joy to the WORLD*

Field Agent's ***Guide to Holiday Shoppers 2016,*** ***presently available for free on the company's website,*** illustrates how the firm facilitates rapid cross-country comparison.

To understand the attitudes and behaviors of holiday shoppers around the globe, Field Agent recently surveyed almost 3,000 adults in six different countries.

Among other things, Field Agent asked shoppers when they purchase most of their holiday gifts. The results show differences yet even more similarity.

When do you purchase MOST of your holiday gifts?



****Download the guide below to see the full results.***

Field Agent's research into global holiday shoppers illuminated several compelling insights, including:

- Shoppers in all six countries expect to spend more on gifts for their children in 2016, compared to last year
- 61% of American parents predict their children will receive gift cards this holiday season, compared to only 3% of parents in Romania, 8% in South Africa, and 13% in the United Kingdom
- Among parents buying presents for their kids, attire (i.e., clothing and footwear) was the most popular gift item across all six countries

"The results of the 2016 holiday study accentuated key similarities and differences among the world's shoppers," said Ho, "and demonstrates just some of the benefits of using an international mobile research provider."

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••• global research

Language is just the beginning

Tips on conducting international research

| By Sarah Faulkner

snapshot

From local weather to local scale preferences, Sarah Faulkner explains some of the many factors to consider when researching overseas.

Getting spa services in Singapore, interviewing physicians in Frankfurt, shopping for skin care products in Shanghai, watching men shave in Paris and visiting homes in Moscow – these are a few of the amazing opportunities I've gotten to learn about consumers all over the world. Conducting consumer and market research outside your home country brings with it plenty of interesting experiences and stories and new and rich learning but also comes with plenty of potential pitfalls. Here are five key areas to focus on when planning international qualitative or quantitative research.

Lay the groundwork. When planning primary research in another country, it's helpful to first get some understanding of the unique market dynamics, key competitors, consumer habits and practices, etc. If you don't already have access to secondary research in that market, some smart Internet searches can go a long way.

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It will give you good context for creating meaningful research questions as well as helping you better understand local consumer responses.

For example, before conducting a quantitative survey on workplaces in Australia, I checked out blogs for ex-pats working there. It was a great, quick way to get some compare-and-contrast insights about unique workplace culture and habits in that country. In another case, before doing consumer interviews about skin care services in Hong Kong, I visited lots of local spa Web sites to check out the service menus, benefit language, etc. If you're doing Internet research for a country with a different primary language than your own, Google Translate is a lifesaver (not word-perfect translation but it helps you get the gist).

Supplier partnerships. As with any research project, finding the right research partner is key for success. When conducting research internationally, you generally have a choice between using a large, multinational full-service supplier or going straight to a locally-based, often more specialty, vendor. In general, I would recommend using a multinational firm if you're planning research in more than one country for the benefits of a single point-of-contact for coordination and logistics. Depending on the country, those firms then either have local offices for execution or contracts with local research companies. If you're focusing only on one international market (or region), going straight to a locally-based company can get you closer to local experts who know their market best and is often more cost-effective.

When conducting international research, I rely heavily on my local research execution partner to offer guidance on market-appropriate research approaches and techniques as well as recruiting and incentive best practices. I would also recommend giving and getting detailed plans, timelines, scope, etc., in writing up front to minimize potential misunderstandings from language differences or general expectations. When conducting qualitative research, if you're working through a global firm, make sure you also have a locally-based contact that will physically be present during the research and is familiar with all the details, as tracking down someone in another country/time zone can be difficult if a question or issue comes up during research.

Research logistics. When scheduling research internationally, be sure to carefully check local holiday and events schedules, ideally directly with a local as there may be "blackout" dates for research that aren't necessarily obvious based only on a calendar. For example, August in Europe is best avoided as many people are on holiday that month. And, while Chinese New Year is officially one day on the calendar, celebrations extend far beyond that.

Take guidance from the local recruiter but when planning qualitative research in other countries, typically plan for multiple extra recruits per group, especially in large urban areas. Traffic, weather and even local attitudes toward time/punctuality can all impact respondent arrival time.

While I've certainly tagged along on many in-home and shop-along interviews in other countries, it's important to hire a skilled and experienced local moderator to lead interviews and focus groups. Not only because of potential language differences but also for the cultural understanding and nuance – both in the interview and the ability to share contextualized insights after.

If you will be physically traveling for research in another country, it's critical to pre-plan all logistical details and not take anything for granted. Make sure you know what resources will and will not be available at the research site (e.g., copier, projector, wireless Internet). If you're doing in-home or shop-along research, will you need to hire a driver or will public transportation be more appropriate?

Translation. Conducting research in a country with a different primary language than your own presents many challenges. Many local research companies will have bilingual staff, especially those with ties to the large multinational suppliers, which is very helpful, but these people are usually not professional translators so make sure to secure those resources separately.

Live, simultaneous translation of qualitative research is a very specialized skill so if you need a translator for that, try to get recommendations from others or, at a minimum, make sure that the research translator specializes and is experienced specifically in that field. Also make certain that the local focus group facility is set up with the proper tech equipment for simultaneous translation, particularly if some attendees will be listening in the local language and others to the translation.

Translation of questionnaires and research stimuli (e.g., concepts, package copy, advertisements) is another consideration. Most global research firms offer translation of screeners and questionnaires but many will not translate research stimuli. Check with your research vendor to be sure, but also be prepared to hire a third-party translation service for any stimuli. Sometimes language departments at local universities can be a good resource to provide or refer this service.

With any written translation, be sure to request a back-translation as well. Back-translation is a translation from the translated foreign language back into your own language. This can often help catch mistranslations, especially for local idioms and culturally-specific meanings or terminology. For example, "anti-aging" skin care in English might get translated to a nonsense term in the local language that literally back translates to "against being old." Explaining the intent, giving examples and talking to locally-based bilingual contacts can help find the right terms to substitute.

Response scales and cross-country comparisons. Many side-by-side studies have been conducted and academic papers written on the subject of cultural bias in research scales, so I will not attempt to address all the nuances of that here but I do want to just mention the need to be aware of variances in how different cultures use response scales in questionnaires. For example, in Asia, scale order is typically in reverse of scales used for research in North America because Asian consumers are usually more likely to give a more positive or affirmative response vs. their North American counterparts. So, a response scale used in South Korea might list agree options from "strongly disagree" down to "strongly agree" while the same question in the U.S. version of the study should list "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

These cultural dynamics also impact how questions are asked in a qualitative setting to be as non-biasing as possible, so be sure to involve a locally-based researcher, ideally the moderator, in writing the discussion guide and planning any creative activities and exercises within interviews.

If you're conducting quantitative research across multiple countries and want to be able to compare the results, there are a few things you can do. First, consult an expert (within a multinational research firm or a research consultant with global experience) for guidance on tailoring your questionnaire by market. This could involve re-ordering sections or individual questions, using different scales or response order, or even customizing the instructions you give for filling out the questionnaire. Also make sure your scales themselves are as non-biasing as possible; consider using a numerical scale (e.g., rate from 1-10) vs. a qualitative scale (e.g., rate from "excellent" to "poor").

Probably the most effective way of understanding a country's specific results relative to another country is to use benchmarks and databases. If your company conducts lots of multinational research frequently, you might be able to construct your own internal databases and benchmarks for comparison. Otherwise, many larger global research vendors maintain robust results databases by country. For example, if your concept gets a top two-box purchase intent score of 40 percent in the U.K. and 50 percent in Japan, you can compare those results to norms for the category and country for more insight. You may learn, for example, that a 40 percent score in the U.K. is actually in the top 20 percent of that database, while a 50 percent score for the same category in Japan is actually only in the top 40 percent of that database.

Do your homework

Many lessons in effective global research can only come from experience, so talk with colleagues and research vendors and consultants who've been there before if you're just getting started with international market research. The most important thing is just not to assume that everything is the same in other markets as in your own home country. Do your homework, ask lots of questions and leverage the experience of others while you build your own. Doing consumer research in other countries is an eye-opening and fascinating experience. It's a unique chance to learn about other cultures, appreciate our differences and similarities and gain fresh insights for our business.

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••• customer experience research

Track, describe, understand

10 steps to journey-mapping success

| By Jonathan Dalton

snapshot

Jonathan Dalton outlines strategies for charting a comprehensive view of how customers interact with your brand or product.

In the "Age of the Customer," customer journey-mapping is a technique that enables you to see and fully understand the customer experience from their perspective. Empowered buyers are demanding a greater focus on their needs, habits and behaviors with an expanded concept of value and to deliver this we need to gain a more intimate and holistic understanding of who they are as people. Value is now very personal and consumer expectations are changing!

It's no longer enough to incorporate the implicit qualities of excellent functionality and usability as well as the explicit qualities of an appealing look and feel of a product or service. Organizations and companies need to discover new, attractive qualities by considering the whole experience of interaction between a person and the product or service over time.

Companies slowly have to walk away from the methods that got them where they are today. Traditional barriers to entry in any given market, such as manufacturing strength and distribution power, will no longer solely be enough to sustain competitive advantage. The new role for marketers, service providers and manufacturers is to come up with an experience, a service or a product that people can't help talking about and then consistently deliver on it, over and over and over again!

Our firm extensively uses customer journey-mapping as a means of informing the definition of new products, services and experiences. It is the process of tracking and describing all the experiences a customer has and understanding not only what they encounter but also their visceral responses to their experiences. It is a simple and powerful technique any company can begin to use to gain a stronger experience orientation.

However, not all customer journey maps are created equal and they can often fail to identify how to improve the journey and envision the future state. It's not enough to create customer empathy; an effective customer journey map should help you prioritize and focus on touchpoints that generate the most value for the customer and envision what the ideal

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experience looks like for the customer.

Here are our 10 sure-fire steps to successful customer journey maps that will help you translate customer statements and behaviors into actionable initiatives and tactics.

1. Anticipate the journey. Spending some time up front and mapping the territory you are going to explore before going in the field is a critical part of the customer journey-mapping process. Hosting a workshop to bring together all your customer insights and understanding is an excellent way to engage stakeholders in the process; keep it high-energy, inspirational and engaging. To provide context and scope for the research we suggest focusing on three simple questions to maximize your investment in your upcoming research:

What do we know? The insights you already have and facts that can support those garnered from your industry experience and past/prior research.

What do we think we know? These are your insights or your working hypotheses that need to be either validated by or challenged with additional primary research and learnings.

What don't we know? The knowledge gaps that need to be filled with primary research and learnings.

2. Get focused, be targeted. Before going into the field, it is imperative that you have a clear picture of what you want to achieve and who you need to participate in the process. Focus on the following critical elements to bring clarity and purpose to the study:

Define your strategic target. You cannot be everything to everyone; you need to focus on a particular target and understand their current pains and frustrations and what will constitute new value to them in the future.

Prototype your journey. Building quick sketches of the anticipated journey for your strategic target is a great way to form your working hypotheses and anticipate what you expect to see when observing customers. Be clear on the map, its scope, scale and offshoots, noting all the steps you think people will go through and identifying the channels people will use at each stage.

3. Capture the experience. Experiences are tied to the passage of time so to understand customers you need to engage them in the moment. Ethnographic research methods, such as shadowing and observation, help you enter the moment and should be used as much as possible when in-field, along with structured interviews to capture their activities, repertoires and emotions. Emphasis is on uncovering what customers think and feel as they experience a specific product or service and the qualities they value. Customers are no longer passive but a valuable and intrinsic part of the process. Consider them holistically and look at the larger context in which they use products and services.

4. Identify the touchpoints. Identify the touchpoints for each step of the customer journey; think about all the physical and virtual interactions the customer has with the experience. It is important to understand how a customer interacts with different touchpoints, what is done at each touchpoint and when. This gives you a holistic assessment of your brand's relationship with the customer and helps you evaluate the impact and performance of the touchpoints you already have in place. From here, you will be able to identify which touchpoints are redundant, the gaps that exist, how customers are currently experiencing your brand and where to focus.

5. Identify the moments of truth. Moments of truth happen when customers invest a high amount of emotional energy in the outcome. These points in the journey are where customers may pause, evaluate the experience and make crucial decisions. Address their needs at this moment and you'll get an engaged, delighted customer. Fail to meet their needs and you risk losing a customer. These moments of truth are the key points where you can act to transform the experience and differentiate your brand.

6. Find the pain points. Strong emotions often occur when a customer has a problem. At this point, you have the greatest opportunity to create an emotional bond. Look at the map to identify the issues and pain points that customers experience that you need to address. Capture them using emotive words to bring their pains to life with clear calls to action. After you've identified the lows in the experience, you can frame key insights and opportunities that address customer pain points at each stage of the journey.

7. Amplify the emotional highs. Opposite the pain points are the emotional highs of the customer journey. By amplifying these moments, you have an opportunity to not only stand apart from your competition but also positively engage with the customer. Build on them, as this is where you already have equity, but be mindful: It will only create an impact if the customer actually values it. Be selective in where to focus. Touchpoints are expensive to maintain so make sure you are investing in the ones that truly deliver new value for maximum ROI.

8. Explore new possibilities. Use the customer journey map to generate new ideas and concepts collaboratively with your team. Facilitate ideation workshops that take the insights, opportunities and principles that populate the map and put them into action. Work together to improve and re-envision the customer experience. The resulting ideas, concepts and systems will have the potential to build more meaningful relationships between the customer and the broader ecosystem of channels, touchpoints, places and people that you call your brand.

9. Envision the ideal journey. To envision an improved and dramatically different customer experience, you'll need to create an "ideal customer journey map." This new map moves beyond the experience you have just documented and helps to define the desired future state by mapping what customers would ideally like to do, think and feel as they interact with your brand's touchpoints on their way to satisfying their needs and desires. Don't be afraid to dream! Integrate the ideas and concepts you developed in step eight, create provocative images of the future and move beyond day-to-day business as usual thinking.

10. Bring the journey to life. Turning your map into a compelling visual story means thinking through both the work you've done and the work you want to inspire. What action and next steps do you want your map to initiate? How do you want to use your map within your organization in the map short-, mid- and long-term? Remember: A customer journey map is a widely-shared artifact and your goal is to craft a compelling piece of communication that can stand on its own and inspire new ideas. Invest in design; communication is everything! Don't let all you great work fall at the last hurdle. It should look and feel important and connect with the communication style of your organization.

Truly in control

This new reality for developing products, services and delivering experiences is increasingly personal and one where customers are truly in control. How are you going to create new value? A customer journey map will help you answer that question.

Jonathan Dalton is CEO and co-founder of Thrive, an Atlanta-based product development and strategy firm. He can be reached at j.dalton@thrivethinking.com.

••• customer satisfaction research

Build to suit

Ground rules for selecting the best customer-focused metric

| By Howard L. Lax

snapshot

Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, make sure your customer experience and loyalty metrics match your organization and the needs of its customers.

Some marketers display a near-religious devotion to Net Promoter Score (NPS) as THE measure of customer experience and loyalty, while others display an equally devout opposition and adopt an anything-but-NPS mantra. Both apostles and apostates of NPS do the field a disservice, as the "best" customer-focused metric should be a matter of measurement and validation, not postulated as a fundamental belief. We all know that emotional connections are central to customer relationships and, perhaps, even our preference for key metrics. But shouldn't the search for the metric to use as a measure of customer focus be solidly anchored in the science of measurement and marketing? Here are a few ground rules to help.

Rule #1: The best metric is that which best explains the behaviors companies want to motivate.

Like every customer-focused key performance indicator (KPI), NPS has its strengths and weaknesses. No KPI is perfect. That is, no customer KPI explains or predicts customer loyalty or delight with anything near 100 percent integrity. Rule #1 is about loyalty behaviors, the behaviors that create value for a company. These behaviors include, among others, continuing to be a customer, giving a company a larger share of household wallet or spend and recommending the company to others. One KPI is more useful than another because it does a more thorough job of explaining the customer behavior or outcome that the company wants to promote to create value.

How does NPS stack up on this dimension? Pretty good. Across every study I have seen, Promoters are less likely to churn and are more likely to own more products, give a larger share of their spend and recommend a financial services provider than a Detractor. So far so good.

But this is also true for every major customer metric, whether NPS, Customer Effort

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Score (CES), TRI*M or other measures. None of these metrics will lead a company in the wrong direction. But which does the best in explaining value-creating behaviors? Our research suggests that composite indexes typically are better predictors of actual behavioral outcomes.

We see similar results when linked to actual customer behavior and across the range of financial services firms – whether we are talking about the persistency of life insurance, share of investment dollars, retention of credit card holders or recommendations of borrowers – as well as in other sectors, from tech and telco to retail and hospitality. We see it in B2C and in B2B. The differences may not always be dramatic but there always are differences.

Rule #2: The only way to determine what best explains loyalty behaviors is to measure and test the results.

Industry norms are great. But the only way to determine what best explains loyalty behaviors among YOUR customers, for YOUR firm, is to (Rule #2) measure and test the results. Your CFO will be interested in the norms; but they will be compelled by your own company data.

Measurement requires some patience, as the explanatory power of your measurements today can't be established for perhaps six to 12 months or longer. That is, what measurements today best explain customer behaviors over the coming year?

You can, of course, cheat a little: Technically, measurements at time period 1 can't explain the outcome at time period 1 (strictly speaking, cause and effect can't happen simultaneously) but it is not at all unreasonable to start with simultaneous measurement and explanation and to then validate the findings over time.

Don't just take our word: Companies are wise to capture multiple metrics so they can test different measures and combinations to determine which has the most meaning and explanatory power for their business and customer base.

Rule #3: There is no one universal best metric; the optimum KPI will vary by the business context.

One size doesn't fit all. So Rule #3 is that there is no universal best metric and the optimum KPI may vary by the business context: the company's business model, sales channels, competitive context, value proposition and strategy.

The old rule of thumb was that homeowners moved every eight years or so; today it's less often. Either way, mortgage brokers, lenders, servicers and realtors, for example, would be misguided to hinge their KPIs on the likelihood of repeat business eight or more years down the road. NPS may well be the ideal metric for these firms that have infrequent transactions and a limited portfolio of products for cross-selling and which rely so heavily on the recommendations and referrals of customers.

Measures other than NPS may be better for businesses with more frequent fee-generating transactions – be they brokers or card issuers – or those with high customer acquisition and infrastructure costs with profitability dependent on long-term relationships, such as life insurance. Here customer retention KPIs might be more important to creating value than the possibility of recommendations. For firms in sectors where customers typically split their spend – as is the case in banking – cross- or upselling and capturing a larger share of spend would seem an appropriate objective and banks would be wise to pick that KPI which best explains these outcomes.

Rule #4: The preferred metric also depends on what is being measured; loyalty and customer experience are not the same.

Rule #4 is a corollary of #3: In addition to being dependent on the business context, determining the preferred metric also depends on what is being measured. Loyalty and experience are inextricably intertwined but they are not the same thing. Companies running both RNPS (Relationship NPS) and TNPS (Transactional NPS) programs, for example, almost always are troubled by the issue that TNPS scores typically are far higher. It's not that one is right and the other wrong; rather, they are measuring different things.

NPS is a relationship measure. Is it surprising that great NPS scores on call-center experiences, for example, many of which entail simple administrivia, are not necessarily strong predictors of business outcomes? Similarly, Customer Effort Score may be a great metric when measuring the performance of your online help or self-service functions but based on both our research and on face validity, CES is not sufficient as an overall relationship KPI.

Beyond the science of measurement, it also is important that KPIs pass the sniff test of credibility with internal stakeholders, especially senior leadership. Metrics that make sense to staff and with which staff can identify are far more likely to rally support and galvanize action than measures that seem abstract and disconnected from the customer. Customer service reps of all stripes, for example, know that measuring their performance in terms of the volume of calls they handle is at odds with what customers would consider great service.

While measurement is more science than art, it is important to appreciate that often times the differences in the explanatory power of various metrics is more an issue of multiple shades of grey than the distinction between black and white. Given the inevitable issues of sampling and measurement error, it is important not to overemphasize marginal differences. It is far better to galvanize senior leadership support (and funding) for a "good" measurement program than to fall on your sword in a fight over the "best" metric. So if senior leadership is committed to NPS, this commitment might outweigh marginally better explanatory power from a different metric.

Taking actions

In closing, let's look at a few final thoughts. First, remember that actions trump scores. Understanding what is driving or influencing the KPI and taking actions to strengthen performance is far more important than the decision on which metric to use. Sure, the metric matters. In many instances, however, there are a number of highly-correlated KPIs with similar explanatory power. Regardless of the metric, the focus should be on what is driving customer assessments and improving performance on what matters.

- Set priorities: Everything isn't important and trying to solve for everything is a sure-fire way to accomplish nothing.
- Make the investment in action-planning: Identify the internal processes and issues that are the root cause of what customers are telling you.
- Be sure to walk-the-talk internally: A "customer-first" mentality has to be organically integrated into the DNA of the organization, not simply mandated from above or written on posters in the break room. This means executive-level involvement and visibility, constant communications and involvement at every level of the organization.
- Motivating employees or associates with incentives makes sense but this is an area with potential land mines, so be careful about the reliability of measurements being used and unintended consequences.
- Be certain to differentiate between risks that undermine customer relationships or satisfaction and opportunities to enhance customer focus – and always focus first on attending to risks, as the payoff from mitigating risks always exceeds the value of further improving areas of strength.

Always remember the ultimate objective: influencing customer behaviors to create value for the firm. And if you find the holy metric along the way, give me a yell.

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●●● data analysis

Bringing it all together

Moving from big data to big synthesis

| By Blair Peters

snapshot

Blair Peters looks at big synthesis – what it is, why it's important and how to implement it.

With all the focus today about big data, one of the biggest opportunities for insights departments is to deliver "big synthesis" by fully leveraging their existing information assets. Big synthesis is the process of integrating insights into a meaningful storyline across customer research studies, syndicated data and secondary information to address a business need or issue. The process can be extended to other information assets as needed such as customer satisfaction, social media, consulting studies, etc.

Firms spend thousands to millions of dollars on research and consulting projects to better understand their customers and to boost business performance. Business leaders are looking to insights departments to provide direction as cost-effectively as possible. The means to address these goals often lie in information that already resides internally. The purpose of this article is to: define big synthesis; highlight its importance; identify the barriers to implementation; and offer implementation solutions.

What is big synthesis?

The following quote from a research leader during a 2012 Inside Research roundtable discussion provides an interesting perspective on big data and a definition of big synthesis:

> *"It's great to hear everyone talk about big data but the other side of the coin is big synthesis. The idea of analyzing big data is laughable as a goal in and of itself without some effort to connect all the learnings from it to other knowledge in the company. We might be drowning in data – big or otherwise – but at present, we are missing big synthesis and related knowledge management that would make such data efforts worth their while."*

Figure 1 provides a fuller definition of big synthesis as well as the needs it serves and common applications. Synthesis allows an insights department to better align

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Figure 1

with management goals of being more customer-driven, identifying opportunities, fostering innovation and achieving cost savings. Adopting synthesis as a common practice allows you to save research dollars by uncovering new learning at no additional cost and preempting the need to commission new research.

Synthesis is also a process, requiring a series of steps to plan, organize, analyze and communicate results. The rigor, tools and specific approaches vary widely. For instance, a synthesis can be organized by project, topical outline, predetermined business issues, business drivers or a model (e.g., customer journey). Thought must also be given to how to best generate insights, communicate results and promote action.

Why is it important?

Many researchers acknowledge the importance of doing syntheses. In fact, two recent industry studies cited synthesis as the No. 1 industry information gap and skill of the future.

A number of research leaders view big synthesis as a competitive advantage, as demonstrated by the following quote from the previously-mentioned roundtable discussion:

"Insight departments have an opportunity to take the lead on this and thereby expand their influence and impact on the business. The need for synthesis will grow along with the dramatically increasing the river of information available to companies and will be a key source for competitive advantage."

Building on the prior statement, synthesis provides an insight department with an opportunity to provide leadership and direction based on fact-based customer knowledge. Possessing this knowledge provides a means of landing and maintaining a seat at management's table by virtue of becoming a trusted advisor. There are numerous industry case studies where big synthesis has helped turn businesses around or identified major new opportunities. For large consulting companies, synthesis is a commonly-accepted best practice. I can also personally attest and provide actual cases where conducting syntheses has driven winning strategies and yielded market successes. One insight leader frames both the need to capitalize on this opportunity as well of the downside of not pursuing big synthesis this way:

"Insight departments have a unique opportunity to bring all these sources together and leverage that information to set the strategic agenda of the enterprise. Executives want this, marketers want this and if the insight departments don't step up then someone else will, leaving marketing research as the survey step-child."

What are the barriers?

While synthesis is often recognized as an important need, insights departments frequently fail to conduct them for several very real and understandable barriers such as:

- The synthesizing task, which requires locating and integrating all the different information sources, is typically manual and very time-consuming.
- Staffs simply lack the time, skills, expertise and/or training to conduct a synthesis.
- There has historically been an absence of technology to enable researchers to quickly mine their survey studies.
- Implementation requires leadership, vision, planning and energy – justifiably difficult under today's environment of tight budgets and staffing constraints.
- Turf battles can occur in some companies regarding who owns a particular data source (e.g., customer satisfaction, CRM, social media, market analytics/modeling, etc.).

These prior realities explain why syntheses are left undone or are contracted to outside consultants when the need is great. Even if time is available, having the right staff trained and in place is often a critical issue. Individuals who excel at doing synthesis work typically possess a business analysis orientation. They truly enjoy reviewing numerous and diverse information sources to create a meaningful storyline for the issue at hand. They are good at organization, pattern recognition and triangulation of information. If not a requirement, a background in business and marketing strategy is a major plus. An added burden is that the researcher should have the ability to tailor the synthesis to different internal audiences (e.g., marketing, strategy, management, sales, R&D, etc.). One research leader framed both the opportunity and staffing barriers eloquently:

"Information synthesis/data synthesis is an essential component of the effective future insight department.

But the real issue isn't centralizing a repository but synthesizing the learning and producing briefs summarizing the insights. This requires a broad skill set that encompasses marketing research, market analytics, etc. It also requires the ability to pull multiple strands together. Neither of these are prevalent in insight departments today. The added problem is insight departments are structured and funded to carry out projects, not to review and synthesize information and this task cannot be delegated to junior people."

In the eyes of another research leader, the labor-intensive nature of the work and historical absence of technology are the most critical hurdles facing advocates of synthesis:

"The barriers to synthesis are not skills but time and technology. There are bits of technology that can synthesize but connecting the dots all the way from attitudinal/organic data sources like ethnography all the way to behavioral and close the loop to insights ... is tough to do now. It is highly manual and personalized to the researcher and not really scalable."

Outside parties can provide the manpower and expertise to provide a stopgap solution. Costs range dramatically depending on whether a management consultant is hired versus a less-expensive independent contractor. A frequent downside is that the insight department can lose control of these initiatives especially when granted to a major consulting firm. Unfortunately, in these cases, insights departments will rarely get much or any credit for the information or insights they provide.

How can we implement it?

Not surprising, there is no silver bullet or clear-cut set of solutions that will dramatically increase an insights department's ability to produce big synthesis. The good news is, a series of complementary steps tailored to your organization can be incrementally adopted to increase capability such as:

- Build credibility by conducting one or two syntheses on issues critical to management. Provide insights to all the different internal audiences/functions vested in addressing these issues. Creating success stories will help build the case for adding capacity.
- Acquire staff with the proven ability to conduct syntheses or train targeted staff members with an aptitude and interest in doing this type of work. Possessing at least one individual on your staff familiar with the process will greatly increase the ability to produce and direct synthesis work.
- Adopt a rigorous and credible process for conducting the syntheses. This should include a planning process, means of organizing the information and reporting standards.
- Build an outside network of experts and suppliers capable of doing synthesis work under departmental direction and control. This builds capacity without the burden of adding internal overhead.
- Adopt new search-engine and data visualization technology designed for survey studies. Historically, industry software has not been available to allow effective and efficient mining of a department's survey data at the respondent and individual question level. This is no longer the case.

The last point on technology warrants greater elaboration. Sea changes are rapidly advancing technological capabilities in our industry. Different software applications and dashboards are already well in play to more effectively manage continuous sources like brand/advertising trackers, customer satisfaction, CRM and syndicated data. A major historical roadblock has been the management and mining of customer research studies for insights. This is particularly acute for the more strategic studies such as segmentation, brand equity, A&Us, shopper studies, problem detection, etc.

Today, firms such as KnowledgeHound offer software enabling an insights department to not only organize all their research reports but search and graph information down to the question and respondent level for quantitative studies. This represents a major step in terms of allowing an analyst to quickly synthesize information from their customer research studies. Advances of this nature will continue to enhance synthesis capabilities over time.

Seek to capitalize

Big synthesis is a powerful approach that can elevate an insights department's contributions and stature within its organization. As insights functions increasingly recognize and seek to capitalize on this opportunity, it will no doubt lead to greater industry adoption of the methods and strategies outlined here.

Blair Peters is a senior partner in the Greensboro, N.C., office of Glenview, Ill.-based Solution Partners Consulting. He can be reached at blair.peters@solutionpartners.com.

••• special advertising section

Experts in Data Collection

Data collection is central to the market research function. Having reliable and secure ways of collecting robust, insightful data is essential to any successful research project. In order to make informed, effective decisions, you must be confident in your data collection methodology and data processing.

Data collection field services companies can offer many different but effective ways to gather all of the data needed to give you the best insights for your research project. When interviewing respondents for your project, these companies can provide all of the necessary channels to reach the most relevant audience, including quick and efficient online mediums or more in-depth traditional methods such as mail or in-person surveys. Whatever methods are used, these companies can help you reach the widest audience possible and ensure you have access to the most relevant audience for your data, whether you are working to reach thought leaders and experts in a certain field or just the everyday consumer. No matter the field of research you specialize in, these companies can help you with all of the interviewing and data collection needs for your project.

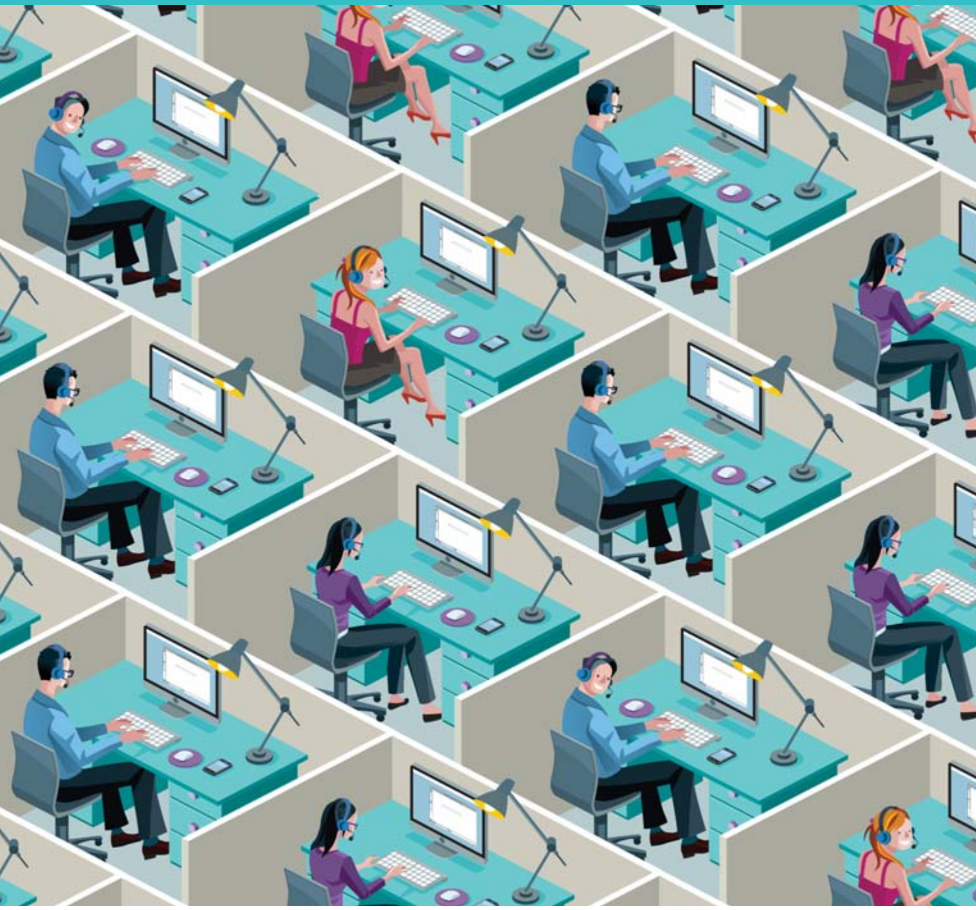
quirks.com/articles/2016/20161133.aspx

3Q GLOBAL

3Q Global

Founded 2006 | 25 employees
Traci Wood, Director of Sales

Backed by 50+ years of experience, staff and data collection expertise, powered by Quick Test/Heakin and Discovery Research Group, 3Q GLOBAL is a trusted full-service research firm, offering creative



and customized solutions for all of your market research needs. Our data collection methodologies include fieldwork, mall/hall interviewing, CATI/CAWI, IVR, online surveys, in-person and online focus groups, market research communities and bulletin boards. In addition, our experience includes study design, project management, data collection, coding, programming, text analytics and executive summary reporting. Regardless of how big or how small your research projects are, 3Q GLOBAL is "The Connection to All of Your Market Research Needs."

Phone 855-799-0003 ext. 6114
www.3q-global.com

Market Dimensions Healthcare

3 Market Dimensions

Founded 2003 | 86 employees
Alex Stil, CEO

Whether it is health care, patients, doctors or B2B study – online, telephone, phone-to-Web, face-to-face – research companies and direct clients trust one name: 3marketdimensions.com and our robust panels in U.S., Canada and Europe. 3marketdimensions recently expanded to 2 million health care and 1 million B2B panel members. We are known among peers as one of the most trusted patients panel, whether it is cancer, diabetic, heart or other chronic ailments. Additionally, we have successfully undertaken ethnic studies and hard-to-reach audience surveys for the past 10 years using CATI and P2W methodologies. With seven client-servicing offices, we have 34 languages translation, programming, fielding expertise in-house, making us one of the fastest growing companies in market research.

Phone 844-777-8100
www.3marketdimensions.com

Rakuten AIP

AIP Corporation

Founded 1997 | 140 employees
Hidefumi Watanabe, CEO

Looking for a reliable partner in Asia? Rakuten AIP should be at the top of your list. Pioneers in the region for over 20 years, Rakuten AIP's quality samples from locally-managed proprietary online panels across 12 countries (China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam) and through partner networks, together with their expert knowledge pertaining to each market's localization would give you a smooth guiding hand. A friendly and dedicated team in your time zone makes the communication headache-less. After joining the Rakuten Group in 2014, Rakuten AIP has been further extending their capabilities and commitment to quality.

Phone 646-829-0560
www.aip-global.com

AOC Marketing Research

Founded early 1980s | 25 employees
Cathleen Christopher, CEO

Top three in the nation for recruiting, according to Impulse Survey of Top Rated Focus Facilities, 2015. AOC's specialties are focus groups, IDIs, large quota taste tests, CLTs and other in-person research in their Charlotte, N.C., facility. AOC features private client suites and a fully-equipped test kitchen with an experienced staff. Each of their four suites include a private client lounge with an office and restroom, a client entrance/exit outside and separate HVAC controls for client and respondent areas. Only a 20-minute drive from the international airport, AOC is also minutes from several hotels and award-winning restaurants.

Phone 704-341-0232
www.aocresearch.com

C&C Market Research

Founded 1992 | 700 employees
Thomas Morrison, Project Director

C&C Market Research is the complete answer to all of your data collection and field service needs. For over 25 years our data collection specialists in our field locations, coupled with our proprietary programming and data transmission capabilities, have ensured countless successful projects. We are the largest privately-owned and -operated data collection company in the U.S. and have remained a leader in today's marketplace through hard work, ingenuity and a dedication to quality. We work on both qualitative and quantitative projects on a daily basis and understand that high-quality data collection goes a long way in determining the overall success for any project.

Phone 479-785-5637
www.ccmarketresearch.com

transforming market research data into marketing solutions

CatalystMR

Founded 2009 | 10 employees
Adam Berman, CEO

CatalystMR is a high-touch, high-quality market research service leader providing full-service research and panel solutions. Our cost-effective panels are made up of consumers including teens and gamers, B2B including C-level and ITDM's and health care professionals. Our researchers and technical teams have decades of market research experience specializing in cost-effective online and mobile survey programming and hosting. We are experts in conjoint, segmentation, Web site intercepts, copy and advertising testing, highlighters and heat maps, store shelf tests and other complex research techniques. CatalystMR specializes in language translation, CATI, real-time reporting, dashboards and data tabulation. Contact: info@catalystmr.com or 800-819-3130.

Phone 800-819-3130
www.catalystmr.com

COMMUNICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

Communications for Research Inc.

Founded 1997 | 140 employees
Colson Steber, Co-CEO

We act as an extension of your team by managing research logistics and utilizing our own team to execute data collection.
Our strength is in taking ownership over our portion of the research. We do that by understanding the target outcomes and knowing what it will take to achieve them based on strong process and experience. We perform data collection on over 500 research projects annually. We know how to set up and engage the target audience online, on the phone, by mail or in any combination of the three that fit your study.

Phone 573-775-4550
www.cfrinc.net

complete research connection

Complete Research Connection

Founded 2004 | 35 employees
Chelle Precht, CEO

Complete Research Connection was designed by a moderator, and clients can tell. What sets us apart? Read these client testimonials: Flexible space: "With four suites and a multipurpose room, I can execute any type of study here." Unique viewing: "You have wrap-around viewing in not one, but two of your suites?" Enormous back rooms: Upon explaining our largest room can seat up to 45 clients; "Who brings 45 clients to a focus group?" Stellar staff: "I've never seen such attention to detail." Visit www.crcmr.com to discover more about what makes CRC rated No. 1 in Columbus!

Phone 614-220-4120
www.crcmr.com

CRGGlobal

CRG Global Inc.

Founded 1989 | 450 employees
Mary Cunningham, CEO

CRG Global Test America elite data collection resources are unlike any other North American data collection supplier. Our consumer testing studios are purpose-built for an array of product testing, featuring sensory booths, ventilated fragrance chambers with sinks and mirrors, fully-equipped test kitchens (consumer and commercial), laundry rooms, large testing areas with client viewing and more. Our expertise is in niche recruiting, qual/quant blended and immersive methods, fragrance, health and beauty aids, food, beverage and alcohol and pet care. CRG's qual/quant technologies, Survey Passport mobile app and QualTopics SMS chat moderation software, enable in-the-moment, in-depth consumer interactions. Datatelligence Online is our online community of 400k households.

Phone 866-209-2553
www.crgglobalinc.com

Custom Intercept Solutions

Founded 2004 | 9 employees
Scott Ranssi, President

Custom Intercept Solutions puts the person back into your consumer insights research! We are the leader in providing on-site insight from consumer's point-of-experience. We maintain the largest network of vetted, experienced researchers across North America and beyond so you can capture in-the-moment insight anywhere. We are both qualitative and quantitative, capturing insight with our multilingual staff on multimedia tablets so you can capture robust consumer thoughts from everyone. We collect insight in the real world at retail, dining and sporting/ event venues, capturing the freshest data without invasive mobile tracking or opt-in-biased panel communities. Contact us to breathe life into your data: info@customintercept.com.

Phone 612-294-2032
www.customintercept.com

Fieldwork

Founded 2001 | 15 employees
Michelle Borea, President

Fieldwork Network International understands the unique difficulties of conducting research in far-reaching countries. We are your connection to qualitative and quantitative project management across the globe – a single contact that means time-saving convenience, simplicity and seamless continuity. From the initial proposal to dates in field, Fieldwork is there through every step to ensure a high level of research and data collection. Our services include managing language and cultural barriers (local moderation, advice on local customs, translation services), handling currency conversion and exchange rates and managing vendor procedures and processes. Focus on the research. We'll do the rest.

Phone 800-863-4353
www.fieldwork.com/global-field-management

FOCUSCOPE Inc.

Founded 1980 | 50 employees
Kevin Rooney, CEO

Chicago's exceptionally great field service with three spectacular facilities (Chicago, Oak Brook, Oak Park), all Impulse "Top Rated." Chicago facility newly remodeled. We feature the industry's most complete database of virtually all population segments, worked by our experienced, well-supervised recruit staff. We emphasize rigorous quality control; attentive, proactive service at every level; superb cuisine options; and every available technological resource. Capabilities include online community platforms, panel development, field management, central location testing, online surveys, usability testing, ethnographies, shop-alongs, ethnic recruiting, online community recruiting, mock juries.

Phone 708-386-5086
www.focuscope.com

Full Circle Research Company LLC

Founded 2013 | 10 employees
Adam Weinstein, Co-CEO; Nathan Lynch, Co-CEO

Founded in 2013, Full Circle Research Co. is the first and only U.S.-based online consumer sample provider to earn ISO 26362 certification and the only company to offer HoNoR (Holistic Next-level Research), a proven approach to quality. This unprecedented, automated marriage of advanced technology, flexible community strategies and industry-leading quality controls gives business decision makers immediate access to the purest data in the industry. Full Circle prizes foresight, treasures agility and pulls from 100 years of in-house research experience to deliver a deeply consultative, worthwhile experience. To learn more, visit iLoveFullCircle.com.

Phone 301-762-1972
iLoveFullCircle.com

GLocal Mind Inc.

Founded 2010 | 52 employees
Vrinda Deval, Managing Partner

Headquartered in the U.S. with offices in London and India, GLocal Mind provides global health care data collection services. GLocal Mind's 1.5 million+ panelists are carefully recruited and verified, providing clients with a high-quality and diverse global panel. The panel includes specialist physicians, KOLs, nurses, dentists, veterinarians, ophthalmologists, opticians, pharmacists, payors, managers. In addition, they also provide global access to patients. GLocal Mind's quantitative services include programming, hosting and translation, data collection and data processing across 57+ countries including U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and Middle East. Their qualitative services include recruitment, scheduling, moderation, interviewing, translation, report writing and content analysis.

Phone 215-366-2787
www.glocalmind.com

Gold Research Inc.

Founded 2006 | 2500+ surveyors
Nitin Sharma, CEO

Gold Intercepts™: We guarantee Real-Time Certified Surveys from Credentialed Surveyors™. We specialize in customer satisfaction research, exit interviews, audits and mobile surveys anywhere in U.S. or Canada. Gold Journey Mapping™: Our customized journey maps display customers' entire paths to purchase by segment (and channels) to help you make targeted improvements and impact buyers positively. Gold Research-Support™: We offer survey programming, data processing, report development and project management so you can focus on more critical tasks. Gold Full Service™: Satisfaction research, concept testing and marketing/ad testing. We specialize in collecting the right insights needed to help take your business to the next level.

Phone 800-549-7170
www.goldresearchinc.com

INGATHER

Founded 2001 | 25 employees
Cory Balthaser, COO

INGATHER Research & Sensory® is the blue ocean concept in marketing research in-context. Regardless of your data collection needs; traditional, sensory data collection or in-context, we go far beyond in order to get you closer to your consumer. "We don't just recruit, we Scout. There is a Difference™!" Using psychographic profiling, mixed-method recruiting with unique locating and contacting, INGATHER dives deep to find ideal, fresh and engaged opinionators™. Book your next data collection project at INGATHER and see what an impact we will make in your results!

Phone 303-988-6808
www.ingatherresearch.com

Innovate

Founded 2014 | 50 employees
Gregg Lavin, Co-Founder/Managing Director

Innovate delivers Real People, Quality Data and Superior Client Service. Innovate is a global online sampling firm, generating high-quality data from engaged panelists. Founders Matt Dusig, Gregg Lavin and George Llorens pioneered the modern digital sampling industry, creating the world-class uSamp and goZing panels. Innovate provides 24/7 client service to thousands of market researchers and research departments around the world. Innovate pioneered Human-Powered SamplingTM, which promotes responsive communication for client satisfaction and created the First Class PanelTM, which is a heavily screened, profiled and engaged audience of survey respondents.

Phone 818-584-2090
www.innovatemr.com

Issues and Answers Network Inc.

Founded 1988 | 500+ employees
Mohit Gour, Director International Field Services

Issues & Answers Network Inc. is an independent global marketing research firm providing everything from survey and sampling design, data collection (400 CATI stations in six U.S. call centers and 160 CATI stations in Europe), project management to data analysis. Our international network of reliable alliance partners extends our research capabilities across six continents. International research capabilities include qualitative, quantitative, Web, as well as translation and transcription services.

Phone 757-456-1100
www.issans.com

Key Research Solutions

Founded 2011 | 375 employees
Ed Ledek, CEO

Key Research Solutions supports the marketing research, public affairs and political polling research communities. We have 300 stations across our centers are in Provo, Ephraim, Price and Cedar City, Utah. In addition, we have focus group rooms in Salt Lake City, Provo and Orem. We offer a full array of qualitative and quantitative support services. Both our experience and our location next to major universities and colleges, allow us to provide services in over 65 different languages. Areas of developed expertise include B2B research, consumer research, branding, advertising, public affairs and political polls.

Phone 801-592-1943
www.key-research.com

Logit Group Inc.

Founded 1997 | 495 employees
Sam Pisani, Managing Partner

Logit Group is a quality-oriented and independent research execution company. Methodologically agnostic, we can deliver on your online, telephone and on-site research needs. Our online offerings are powered by our proprietary Q-FI Surveys platform and focused on matching methodology + technology to ensure best client solutions. Clients bring us projects of all types and sizes because we consistently work with them to achieve their research goals and enable them to focus on their part of the research process. We work quickly, efficiently and are focused on quality while also ensuring competitive pricing. We believe in getting the job done right, on time and on budget.

Phone 866-84LOGIT
www.logitgroup.com

Olson Research Group Inc.

Founded 1995 | 60+ employees
Charles Olson, CEO

Olson Research offers a full spectrum of qualitative and quantitative market research services with unique access to a robust proprietary database of 2.4 million U.S. health care professionals throughout the life sciences sector, including 960,000 active physicians. Precise targeting is available including geolocation tracking and up to 75 unique profiling fields. We are best known for: Access – our unique and thorough reach to all facets of the U.S. health care decision maker population; Experience – our team of seasoned PMs having on average seven+ years of industry experience; and Approach - our flexible and collaborative approach to project design, fielding and final deliverables.

Phone 267-487-5500
www.olsonresearchgroup.com

Opinion Access Corp.

Founded 1995 | 600+ employees
Lance Hoffman, VP, Business Development

With over two decades of fielding the most difficult ad hoc and tracking studies, Opinion Access Corp. leads the industry in delivering quality data collection solutions. Our telephone, online and mail capabilities are all driven by unsurpassed project management and a level of customer service that keeps our clients informed and well assured that projects finish on time and on budget. Coupled with our multicultural expertise spanning across all methodologies, we maximize representation for you and your client. Let our reliability and expertise drive your success.

Phone 718-729-2622
opinionaccess.com

OpinionsLTD.com

Opinions Ltd.

Founded 1998 | 750 employees
Mark Kikel, President/Owner

Opinions Ltd. provides consistent, accurate, timely and cost-effective data collection. This simple philosophy has served us and our clients well since 1998. You can rely on our consistent protocols, personal approach and the pride we take for every project. Thirty owned-and-operated facilities/studios nationwide U.S. All are flexible and adaptive to incorporate the latest innovation and technologies. Mall intercepts, focus groups, in-store intercepts, ethnographies, large CLTs, pre-recruits, sensory research, national recruiting and online surveys. Experienced and professional staff in operations, project management and coordination, client services, analysis/statistics/reporting, programming and tabulation. Data collection, fieldwork and complete market research services offering you "remarkable research." Contact us today: bids@opinionsltd.com

Phone 440-893-0300
www.opinionsltd.com

Reconnaissance Market Research (ReconMR)

Founded 2012 | 700 employees
Tod C. Higginbotham, President/COO

Reconnaissance Market Research (ReconMR) is a data collection research firm headquartered in the Austin-San Marcos, Texas, metropolitan area. ReconMR has market research experience dating back to the 1960s. Data collection services are conducted via 300 U.S.-based TCPA compliant CATI stations utilizing Voxco and ACS Query interviewing software programs. ReconMR is experienced in public policy and public opinion research, academic studies, political polling, consumer and B2B market research. Consultation services include questionnaire development, sample design, survey programming, data collection methods, data analysis and reporting. Through its affiliated brands ReconMR is MBE, HUB and DBE certified.

Phone 512-757-8112
www.reconmr.com

Schlesinger Associates
Quality Without Compromise

Schlesinger Associates

Founded 1966 – Celebrating 50 years | 600 employees
Steve Schlesinger, CEO

We deliver outstanding data collection services for any qualitative, quantitative or hybrid study across consumer, health care and B2B markets. A half century of data collection experience is complemented by Schlesinger's continually expanding range of leading-edge online and in-person research methods to allow researchers to enhance the quality of their research. With offices strategically located across key markets in the U.S. and Europe, we help you take the pulse of markets worldwide. Our long-standing values of partnership, quality and service excellence underpin our relationships and our uncompromising commitment to your success sets us apart.

Phone 732-906-1122
www.schlesingerassociates.com

SSI (Survey Sampling International)

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

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

Phone 203-567-7200
www.surveysampling.com

Secret Shopper

Founded 1990 | 50 employees
Paul F. Ryan, CEO

At the core of Secret Shopper® is our expertise in evaluating your customers' experience online, on-site and on the phone. Try our digital audit to see how your users' experience measures up while evaluating your SEO and SEM strategies to drive the right traffic to your site. Check out our on-site evaluations to gain vital customer experience details for your own business. Measure and analyze your competitors for a complete picture of the market. On-site merchandising services also available. Our phone audit program trains your employees to be warm, enthusiastic and courteous. Come visit our Web site www.secretshopper.com to learn more.

Phone 763-525-1460
www.secretshopper.com

SmartRevenue

Founded 2000 | 31 employees
John Dranow, CEO

SmartRevenue is your eyes and ears at the point-of-purchase, experience and consumption, at home, in public, in-store and in digital anywhere in the world. SmartRevenue has conducted over 1,000,000 observations and interviews in 107 categories across 190 retail banners in the U.S., Canada, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Leveraging the best trained and educated in-house field force of over 1,200 global ethnographers, SmartRevenue identifies and quantifies critical point-of-purchase, experience and consumption KPI data white space metrics unavailable through other market research approaches. Our diverse, educated and multilingual field force provides rapid, accurate revenue-producing data collection metrics. Using the latest technologies, SmartRevenue integrates quantitative and qualitative questionnaires and protocols.

Phone 763-561-0716
www.smartrevenue.com

Names of Note

In Memoriam...

■ **Joyce Rachelson,** a longtime member and volunteer for the *Marketing Research Association*, died on September 21. She previously held positions with CfMC and Ocucom and, most recently, was owner of research firm 3R's.

■ Marketing technology firm *Signal*, Chicago, has named **Tim Suther** as chairman of its new advisory board.

■ *YP*, an Atlanta-based marketing solutions provider, has named **Jared Rowe** as CEO.

■ Research solutions platform *AYTM* (Ask Your Target Market), San Francisco, has appointed **Lenny Murphy** as senior strategic advisor, a newly-created position. Murphy will continue his roles at GreenBook, Gen2 Advisors and multiple research vendor advisory board engagements.

■ *Numbers International*, developers of Q Research Software and DataCracker, has made several new hires in its U.S., U.K. and Australian offices. U.S.-based **Tim Ali** has joined the support and development team and **Matthew Steele** has joined the U.K. team to support brand and business development. **Mattias Engdahl** and **Carmen Chan** have joined the customer engineering team. The development team has brought on **Po Liu** and **Michael Wang**, who will focus on data visualizations. **William Guo** has joined the Sydney team and is responsible for everything finance-related.

quirks.com/articles/2016/20161112.aspx

■ **Henrik Åquist** has been appointed managing director of integrated data services firm *Norstat Sweden*.


Åquist

■ Visual analytics firm *Tableau Software Inc.*, Seattle, has appointed **Adam Selipsky** as president and CEO. **Christian Chabot**, the firm's co-founder and current CEO, will continue to serve as chairman of Tableau's board of directors. Additionally, **Chris Stolte**, Tableau's co-founder and chief development officer, will transition to technical advisor and **Andrew Beers** will become chief development officer. **Francois Ajenstat** will be elevated to a new position as chief product officer.

■ Columbia, Md., marketing agency *Merkle* has appointed **Mike Goldin** as senior vice president and general manager of Merkle's health practice.

■ Engagement marketing firm *Marketo Inc.*, San Mateo, Calif., has promoted **Chandar Pattabhiram** to senior vice president and CMO. Additionally, Chief Administrative Officer **Fred Ball** is leaving the company.

■ **Mary Beth Lake** has joined Blue Bell, Pa., research and consulting agency *AMC Global* as executive VP, corporate strategy and innovation.

■ **Blake Skorich** has joined *MFour Mobile Research*, Irvine, Calif., as a solutions development representative. In addition, **Todd Costello** has been named senior solutions executive and **Sabrina Santos** has been added as an administrative assistant.

■ The supervisory board of *GfK*, Nuremberg, Germany, has elected **Ralf Klein-Bölting** as its new chairman. He took over office on September 13, succeeding **Arno Mahlert**.

■ *Illuminas Austin*, a research firm in Austin, Texas, has appointed **Lisa Evans** as vice president.

■ Marketing technology company *Magnetic*, New York, has appointed **Paul Phillips** as chief data officer. Phillips will be based in the San Mateo, Calif., office.

■ London-based market research viewing facility *i-view London* has promoted two of its staff members and has brought on four new hires. **Belma Lugic** has been appointed as studio director, a newly-created role, while **Sam Grey** has been promoted to studio manager. **Kiren Nijjer** and **Vivienne Myroti** have joined as senior studio executives and **Simona Zykiate** and **Rachel Sansom** have been appointed studio executives.


Lugic


Grey

■ New York-based research agency *360 Market Reach* has appointed **Kyle Gollins** as vice president of client development.

■ In London, **Arjen van Duijvenbode** has joined online research firm *dataSpring* as director of business development EMEA. Duijvenbode will be responsible for establishing an EMEA business in line with dataSpring's global objectives, beginning with opening an office in London.

■ **Amy Perifanos** has been named vice president of Auburn Hills, Mich., researcher *Gongos'* insight curation practice Artifact.


Perifanos

■ Predictive technology company *Reach Analytics*, Redwood City, Calif., has appointed **Ben Barenholtz** as VP of marketing and communications.

■ *20|20 Research*, Nashville, Tenn., has named **John Pflum**, vice president of accounting and finance, as CFO.

■ *Kantar Media*, Washington, D.C., has named **Steve Passwaiter** as vice president and general manager of its Campaign Media Analysis Group. Passwaiter succeeds **Elizabeth Wilner**, who is leaving Kantar Media to pursue a new business opportunity.

■ Target CMO **Jeff Jones** will join San Francisco-based *Uber* as president, Ridesharing. Jones will be responsible for the company's operations, marketing and customer support.

■ Research company *Abt Associates*, Bethesda, Md., has named **Gavin Macgregor-Skinner** as the company's senior global health security advisor.

■ Sales and marketing firm *Acosta*, Jacksonville, Fla., has appointed **Steve Matthesen** as president and CEO.

■ Research technology firm *FocusVision*, Fresno, Calif., has expanded its leadership team in EMEA. **Zhana Baleva** has been promoted to regional head of the EMEA; **Toby Fowler** has been promoted to director of sales and new business for EMEA; **Liza Vasileva** will lead the EMEA client development team; and **Petar Dzindzhev** will be responsible for all software renewals in the EMEA region.

■ *SIS International Research*, New York, has appointed **Gina Zaccheo** as director of global operations and **Troy Cole** as project manager. Additionally, the company has expanded several of its business-to-business, health care and consumer panels and databases for qualitative and quantitative research projects across the U.S. and around the world.

■ Online data collection firm *AskingCanadians* has promoted **Roy Gonsalves** to senior VP of sales and **Amber Bartlett** to VP of sales. In addition, **Danny Tomas** has been promoted to associate team lead (programming), **Kaitlyn Lord** to project manager, **Leah Abelson** to senior project manager and **Adam Whibley** has transitioned to panel and data manager. The firm has also hired seven new members in recent weeks.


Gonsalves


Bartlett

■ Lawrence, Kan., research firm *True North Market Insights* has named **Jason Jacobson** as vice president and **Michelle Seidl** as project manager.

■ **Jim Goldenberg** has joined New York-based firm *Clarion Research* as executive vice president, where he will lead the firm's health care/pharmaceutical division.

■ *Bloomberg Media*, New York, has appointed **Michelle Lynn** as global head of data science and insights.

■ Warren, N.J., researcher *Lightspeed* has named **Jennifer Carrea** as CEO of Lightspeed All Global, the firm's global health care practice, and member of the board of directors.


Carrea

■ Communications agency *LEWIS*, San Francisco, has appointed **Amanda Diamondstein-Cieplinska** as vice president, West Coast marketing services.

■ **Mechele Lee** has joined research firm *Burke, Inc.*, Cincinnati, as senior account executive in client services.

■ Research firm *MARU/VCR&C* has named **David Gardner** as managing director and head of its San Francisco-based Technology & Retail Practice group.


Gardner

■ Plano, Texas, health care fieldwork company *GLocal Mind* has appointed **Chara Parmar** as senior account director. Parmar will be based in London.

■ Market research firm *Psyma International*, Philadelphia, has appointed **Charles Schembri** as vice president of its U.S. financial services practice.

■ **Kathy Ofsthun** has returned to research and consulting firm *Chadwick Martin Bailey*, Boston, as VP of qualitative strategy and insights.

■ Westport, Conn., data and insights company *Critical Mix* has appointed **Colin Turner-Kerr** as managing director, U.K.


Turner-Kerr

■ *IBM*, Armonk, N.Y., has appointed **Michelle Peluso** as its first-ever CMO.

■ Marketing and communications firm *MDC Partners* has appointed **Lotta Malm Hallqvist** as its first managing director, CMO in Europe.

■ **Meredith Falvo** has joined Plainview, N.Y., qualitative research services firm *Recruit and Field* as director of business development.

■ **Sharona Sankar-King** has joined advertising agency *BBDO New York* as EVP, head of marketing science, a newly-created role.

■ **Jason Boxt** has joined research-based consultancy *Penn Schoen Berland*, Washington, D.C., as executive vice president.

■ Salt Lake City customer experience software and services firm *MaritzCX* has named **J.D. Jeppson** as vice president of business development and partnerships to expand the company's partner ecosystem.

■ Marketing services firm *Harte Hanks*, Austin, Texas, has appointed **Scott Elser** as the head of its global agency practice.

■ **Steve Alsbury**, president of Louisville, Ky., firm *Thoroughbred Research Group*, and **Nancy Alsbury**, vice president of operational resources, retired from the firm, effective September 1. Steve Alsbury will remain a member of the company's board of directors for the next two years. **Brad Larson**, VP of marketing, will assume operational management responsibilities, while **Tim Wirtz**, director of operations, will oversee the management of the company's four call centers.

■ *Clear Seas Research*, Troy, Mich., has named **Tracy Bristow** as syndicated research director. Additionally, **Lydia White** has rejoined the firm as a project manager.

■ Herndon, Va., research and analytics firm *ORI* has promoted **Paresh Patel** to chief technology officer.

■ **Babita Earle** has joined London-based researcher *ZappiStore* as its global accounts and partnership director.

■ Denver-based research solutions firm *GutCheck* has engaged **Joe Giacobbe** as VP of research operations to further scale its agile research operations.

■ **Artem Violety** has joined Detroit-based researcher *Morpace Inc.* as vice president on the Morpace West Team in California.


Violety

■ New York-based customer experience platform *Bluecore* has appointed **Jared Blank** as senior vice president of data analysis and insights.

■ **Mike Wagner** has joined San Diego, Calif., firm *brinc* (Branded Research Inc.) as vice president of client development.

■ *Complete Research Connection*, Columbus, Ohio, has promoted **Jessica Rodden**. Rodden's enhanced role, in addition to client services, is to advance the firm's quantitative offerings while supporting the President, **Chelle Precht**, with day-to-day operations.

Research Industry News

News notes

■ In a press release, **GfK Verein**, Nuremberg, Germany, denied late-August media reports regarding the possibility of the company selling its shares. In the release, the company said it has not considered doing so and indicated that selling part or all of its GfK shares was not planned.

■ Nashville, Tenn., firm **20|20 Research** is celebrating 30 years in the research industry.

■ **The CASRO Institute for Research Quality** has awarded certification to Detroit-based research and consulting firm **Morpace Inc.** for compliance to the ISO 20252 Standard for Market, Opinion and Social Research, which establishes globally recognized terms, definitions and service requirements for project management in research organizations.

Acquisitions/transactions

■ Crestview Hills, Ky., innovation firm Seed Strategy, a **Burke Inc.** company, has acquired **The Cherri Prince Company**, an Odessa, Fla., female insights and innovation consultancy.

■ Port Washington, N.Y., researcher **The NPD Group** has signed an agreement to acquire **EEDAR**, a Carlsbad, Calif., research and data analysis firm for the video games industry. EEDAR will operate as EEDAR, an NPD Group Company.

■ Little Rock, Ark., data, analytics and software-as-a-service company **Acxiom** has completed the sale of its Impact e-mail business (Acxiom Impact) to **Zeta Interactive**, a New York-based marketing technology company.

■ **LRW** (Lieberman Research Worldwide), Los Angeles, has completed the purchase of **MotiveQuest**, an Evanston, Ill., social media insights company. The company will continue to be led by founder David Rabjohns and leadership will continue with Brook Miller as CTO and Kirsten Recknagel and Zack Nippert as general managers. The company will now be named LRWMotiveQuest. This is the third in LRW's planned series of strategic acquisitions supported with growth capital from Tailwind Capital.

■ Research firm **Toluna**, Wilton, Conn., has acquired Israel-based company **Crossense** from Nielsen's innovation incubator **Nielsen Innovate**. The Crossense team will join Toluna's R&D center in Haifa, Israel. Crossense provides a permission-based digital tracking solution that delivers insight into cross-platform digital behavior.

■ Berlin-based native advertising firm **plista** has acquired Oslo, Norway, content analytics company **Linkpulse**.

■ Alternative investments firm **XIO Group**, London, has completed its acquisition of Costa Mesa, Calif., researcher **J.D. Power and Associates** from **S&P Global** for $1.1 billion. J.D. Power will remain headquartered in Costa Mesa and continue to be led by its existing senior management team.

■ **Time Inc.**, New York, has acquired **Bizrate Insights**, a voice of the consumer data company formerly owned by Los Angeles-based marketing solutions firm **Connexity Inc.** Bizrate Insights will be integrated into Time's Synapse Group Inc., an affinity marketing subsidiary based in Stamford, Conn.

■ **The National Research Center for College & University Admissions**, an educational data platform and research organization based in Lee's Summit, Mo., has acquired Boston-based research and advisory firm **Eduventures**. Terms of the acquisition were not disclosed.

■ London-based business intelligence firm **Informa** has agreed to purchase New York-based information services company **Penton** for $1.56 billion.

Alliances/strategic partnerships

■ Researcher **Schlesinger Associates**, Iselin, N.J., and Merrill Dubrow, president and CEO of Irving, Texas, research firm **M/A/R/C**, have become partners of the **QRCA**'s Young Professionals Grant program.

■ **Nielsen**, New York, and Canada-based customer intelligence platform provider **Vision Critical** have formed a strategic alliance that will help clients better understand their customers and build more authentic customer relationships. The first of several planned future offerings is the connection of Nielsen's currency-grade measurement data of what people watch and buy to insight communities powered by the Vision Critical platform, which will help uncover and provide consumer insights to support business decisions.

■ Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization **Women in Research** has partnered with the **ESOMAR**

quirks.com/articles/2016/20161113.aspx

Foundation and the Marketing and Social Research Association (MSRA) in Kenya to launch the MSRA Kenyan Scholarship Fund, which will provide a scholarship to a female student in Kenya to study market research. For every one dollar that individuals and companies donate to the scholarship fund, Unilever will match up to $5,000, bringing the total scholarship amount to $10,000.

■ **The NPD Group**, Port Washington, N.Y., is partnering with information services and marketing analytics firm **Neustar MarketShare**. The companies will combine NPD's sales data with Neustar MarketShare's marketing data to build proprietary category marketing mix models delivered on the Neustar MarketShare platform, allowing clients to create and assess what-if scenarios to test assumptions, constraints and competitive actions to decide on the most optimal marketing investment strategies.

Association/organization news

■ In a joint letter to members, Vaughn Mordecai, chairman of the board for **MRA**, and David Rothstein, chairman of the board for **CASRO**, say the boards of directors for the two associations have voted in favor of merging to create the **Insights Association**, a moniker chosen to move "from a research process-focused name to one reflecting the outcome of research." The letter encouraged members to vote in favor of the merger plan, where CASRO will merge with and into the MRA. The MRA board called a meeting to submit to the vote of member approval of the merger plan on September 26 in San Francisco. Members were also able to vote online, with an online voting deadline of September 23. The letter stated that if the merger was approved by members, the new association with launch with 15 voting members of its board of directors, which will be chaired by Simon Chadwick, managing partner of Cambiar. Rob Stone, CEO of Market Strategies International, will be vice chair.

■ **The Marketing Research Association** (MRA) filed an amicus brief on September 22 regarding a Texas push poll dispute. The case is an appeal of sanctions levied against law firm Brewer, Attorneys & Counselors, which was defending a company in a personal injury suit. A judge ruled that a survey that sought to test public opinions on themes and views of the case before trial was a "push poll" and sanctioned the law firm for breaching legal ethics. The MRA says its amicus brief specifically focuses on the merits of the research itself and not on the merits of the research companies responsible for the study, the law firm or the case. In the brief, the MRA said: "Based on an objective review of the survey, it was not a push poll. However, MRA is concerned that a ruling mischaracterizing the survey as a push poll would have a chilling effect on future legitimate research activities."

Awards/rankings

■ Jonathan Price, CEO of incentive solutions firm **Virtual Incentives**, Fishkill, N.Y., earned Gold status in the *Golden Bridge Awards Most Innovative Executive of the Year* category. Price received the award in the innovation category for his use of technology in the rewards and incentives space.

■ Insight consultancy **Firefish**, London, won the *ESOMAR Research Effectiveness Award* at the ESOMAR Congress in New Orleans in September for its work with PayPal on generating insight for developing its new global positioning. The Research Effectiveness award recognizes projects that contribute to a brand's direction and performance and recognizes the importance of research in brand decision-making.

■ Shelton, Conn., researcher **SSI** has named **KnowMedia and Duff & Phelps** as winners of the *Best Overall SSI QUEST Awards* for survey excellence at the ESOMAR Congress in New Orleans in September. SSI has separated its QUEST Awards into two categories: QUEST-X Awards, based on panelist experience with surveys, and QUEST-T Awards, based on survey structure, formatting and multi-device usability. KnowMedia won the Best Overall Award in the QUEST-X category and Duff & Phelps won the Best Overall Award in the QUEST-T category.

■ **RTi Research**, Stamford, Conn., was named as a *2016 Top Workplace* by **Hearst Media Services**. The Top Workplaces lists are based on the results of an employee feedback survey administered by research firm WorkplaceDynamics that measures aspects of workplace health and culture.

■ **Alexander Wheatley**, Warren, N.J., firm Lightspeed's research innovator, won the inaugural *ESOMAR Corporate Young Professional Award* for his presentation, Head or Heart: The Conflicts of Political Polling. The award, initiated by the Corporate Young Professionals program, encourages young professionals to participate in ESOMAR Congress. Wheatley was one of five finalists who presented research during this year's conference in New Orleans. The winner was determined by audience voting and jury scores.

New accounts/projects

■ Reston, Va., firm **comScore** has been selected as the Online Audience Measurement Partner in Indonesia for two years (from 2016 to 2018). The appointment, supported by the Indonesian Creative Economy Agency, is by five associations that collaborated to standardize online audience measurement in Indonesia and accelerate digital advertising growth in the country.

■ Nuremberg, Germany, researcher **GfK** has selected the **Jackson Research** family of companies as its preferred vendor in Atlanta and Los Angeles to host GfK's user experience research, which helps companies create and improve customer experiences for existing or new products and services.

■ U.K. research agency **Join the Dots** has been appointed to the new **BBC** Digital Design Research roster and will be working with the BBC to better understand its audience. Join the Dots has been appointed with the remit for quantitative research and joins seven other market research companies on the roster. The agencies will work with the BBC for the next two years.

New companies/new divisions/relocations/expansions

■ Elizabeth Granahan and Meghan Surdenas, former executives for research firm **Focus Forward**, have opened **SyncScript**, a new translation and transcription firm located in metro Philadelphia.

■ Blue Bell, Pa., research and consulting agency **Attitude Measurement Corporation** has formally changed its corporate name to AMC Global.

■ Media, insights and marketing solutions company **Jumpstart Automotive Group**, San Francisco, has unveiled a new logo and is changing its name back to Jumpstart Automotive Media. The company has also developed an application icon that will be used primarily for its social media pages.

■ **The NPD Group**, a Port Washington, N.Y., research firm, is reorganizing its softlines sector to include luxury tracking services, which were previously operated independently. The firm's luxury services, including sales tracking for watches, designer jewelry and diamonds, will move into NPD's softlines business group, led by Diane Nicholson. The reorganization follows the departure of former NPD Luxury President Fred Levin, who is leaving to pursue other opportunities. With the reorganization, Chris Casey, vice president, diamonds, will continue to head that business, while Lori Monaco, vice president for NPD's fashion footwear and accessories businesses, will also oversee watches and designer jewelry.

■ **Kantar**, London, has launched a new corporate identity for its parent brand and its family of 12 operating brands to be rolled out in the coming months across all external and internal communications channels. Operating brands not previously Kantar-branded will take a Kantar prefix (for example: TNS and Millward Brown will become Kantar TNS and Kantar Millward Brown) and a new, common typeface. The only exception is Lightspeed GMI, which now rebrands as Lightspeed. The company has also launched two new operating brands, Kantar Public and Kantar Consulting.

■ In Waltham, Mass., health care solutions firm **Verisk Health** is rebranding to **Verscend Technologies Inc.** As part of the transition, Emad Rizk has joined the company as CEO.

■ Plano, Texas, firm **Research Now** has opened a new office in Gurgaon, India. The new facility will provide space for more than 50 staff servicing the India market, Asia-Pacific clients and Research Now's global teams.

■ Stockholm-based research firm **Cint** has opened an office in San Francisco, the fifth U.S. location for the firm. Deputy CEO Richard Thornton will relocate to head up the new office and build the team.

■ Oslo, Norway, integrated data services firm **Norstat** has opened an office in Paris and has appointed Marc-Antoine Jacoud as managing director of Norstat France.

■ Research consultancy **Kelton Global** has relocated its headquarters from Culver City, Calif., to Playa Vista, Calif., to accommodate its expansion, diversification of services and its expanding list of clients.

■ Alpharetta, Ga., sample provider **P2Sample** is relocating its headquarters to accommodate its growth. Additionally, the firm has added a dozen new team members since January 2016 and plans to grow its team by 38 percent by the end of 2017.

■ India-based research firm **MarketsandMarkets** has launched its North American headquarters in Seattle. The company has also hired a new team to lead its North American operations: Dan Holmes will serve as senior vice president and head of the North American operations; Frank Capovilla will serve as group vice president; Lisa Whalen will serve as vice president of consulting for the automotive practice; and Jagdish Rebello will serve as global vice president for the firm's semiconductors and electronics practice.

■ **Sparks Research**, Clemson, S.C., has opened a second office in Greenville, S.C. The firm plans to continue to expand its presence in Greenville by adding personnel and specialized research capabilities and facilities, including an expansion of their qualitative services, with an emphasis on focus group facilitation and moderation.

■ **Kantar**, London, has launched Kantar Public, a new global brand that will work with clients in government, the public sector, global institutions, NGOs and commercial businesses to advise in the delivery of public policy, public services and public communications. Michelle Harrison has been named global CEO and the chair of Kantar Public UK.

Research company earnings/financial news

■ Seattle-based research firm **Discuss.io** has raised $880,000 from **Unilever Ventures**, the venture capital and private equity arm of London-based consumer goods company Unilever, and other existing investors.

■ Market research language and translation service firm **GlobaLexicon**, London, reported that it achieved its third consecutive year of over 50 percent revenue growth.

■ Chicago-based data science and media technology company **4C Insights Inc.** has raised $26 million in Series C financing led by Kayne Partners. All previous investors also participated in the round. The company plans to use the funds for geographic and product expansion as well as adding technical talent and sales resources. Leon Chen, vice president of Kayne Partners, will join the 4C board of directors.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

••• can't-miss activities

Global Executive Events will hold its Unleashing Data Excellence event on **November 7-8** at De Rode Hoed in **Amsterdam**. Visit dataams16.globalexecutiveevents.com.

The American Statistical Association will hold its International Conference on Questionnaire Design, Development, Evaluation and Testing (QDET2) event on **November 9-13** at the Hyatt Regency Miami in **Miami**. Visit www.amstat.org.

NEMRA will hold its Fall Conference on **November 10** at The Conference Center at Waltham Woods in **Waltham, Mass**. Visit newenglandmra.com/nemra-event/nemra-2016-fall-conference.

ESOMAR will hold its Global Qualitative 2016 event on **November 13-15** in **Berlin**. Visit www.esomar.org.

AMA will hold its 2016 Advanced School of Marketing Research on **November 14-18** at the Terry Executive Education Center in **Atlanta**. Visit www.ama.org.

The Strategy Institute will hold its 3rd Annual Digital Marketing for Financial Services Summit event on **November 15-16** at the Wyndham New Yorker Hotel in **New York**. Visit bit.ly/295Rh8l.

ESOMAR will hold its Big Data World conference on **November 15-17** in **Berlin**. Visit www.esomar.org.

IIR will hold its OmniShopper International event on **November 15-17** at the London Marriott West India Quay Hotel in **London**. Visit marketing.knect365.com/omnishopper-intl.

MRS will hold its Financial Services Research conference on **November 17** in **London**. Visit www.mrs.org.uk.

The Strategy Institute will hold its Fifth National Summit on Data Analytics for Healthcare event on **December 8-9** in **Toronto**. Visit www.healthdatasummit.com.

The MREF will be taking a vision trip to Haiti to visit The Joseph School and other schools on **January 12-15**. Visit mrgivesback.org.

IQPC will hold its Call Center Week Winter 2017 event on **January 17-20** at the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel in **New Orleans**. Visit www.callcenterweekwinter.com.

QRCA will hold its 2017 QRCA Annual Conference on **January 18-20** at the JW Marriott Los Angeles L.A. LIVE in **Los Angeles**. Visit www.qrca.org.

MRS will hold its Kids and Youth Research Conference on **January 26** in **London**. Visit www.mrs.org.uk.

SampleCon 2017 will be held on **January 30 - February 1** at the Ritz-Carlton in **New Orleans**. Visit samplecon.com.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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10 minutes with...

Tara Franz
UX Research Manager, Facebook

"If you take time to recruit with the intention of a diverse yet representative sample any method can be used to reach participants around the globe."

As a qualitative researcher, do you feel that qual is unfairly overlooked these days? Why or why not?

This is one of those arguments that tends to shift over time based on a culture within an organization or whatever is popular at the time. I think currently big data is very popular and a hot topic, which is good for qualitative research. Having numbers that indicate patterns of behavior is a great lead-in for further qualitative investigation to understand in-depth and with context why those patterns are occurring. Some say data wins arguments but I believe that stories, quotes, comments and depth of understanding are also very persuasive and act as an equally good platform from which to make product and design decisions. Numbers are reassuring because they state something that appears true and not up to interpretation – people are drawn to that. Qual research provides so much more narrative though and we can use those stories to create memorable findings that stick with you and help lead great innovation

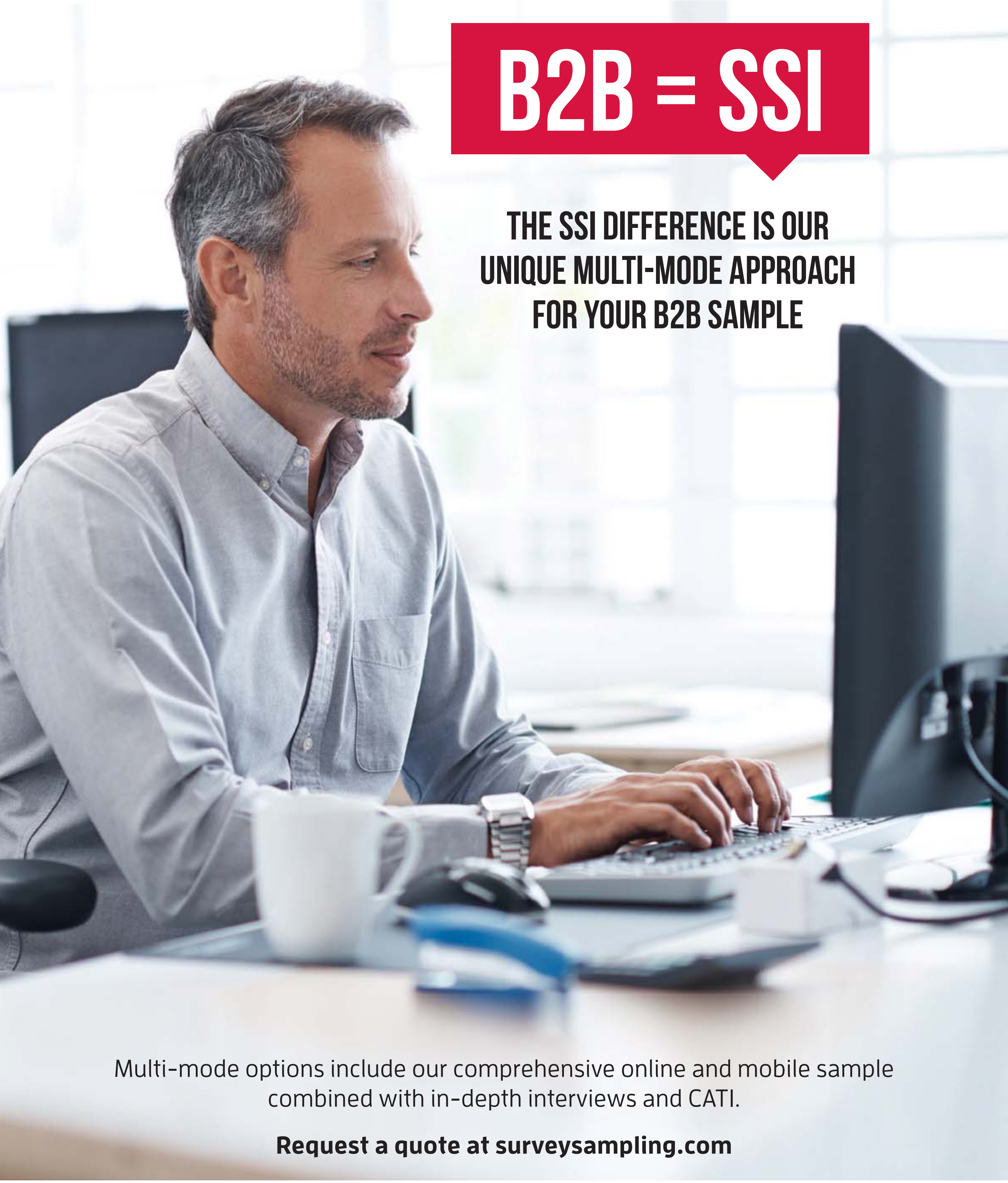
Facebook reaches users around the globe. What methodologies have you found to be most useful for authentically gathering from and/or representing the diverse user base?

At Facebook we keep a very global perspective on who we are designing for and work hard to keep the global user base top-of-mind. We have some research teams dedicated entirely to global consumers, customers, advertisers and businesses. In terms of methodologies, we balance in-person qualitative work with remote and quantitative. I work on our ads-creation tools and I have found it is great to go meet people where they are, do on-site office visits and see in-person how people work, collaborate and create. However, we have to be conscious about our impact and presence and often it can be less invasive but still very authentic to conduct remote interviews for testing designs and exploring concepts with a global audience. Our team has also been working hard to make it easy for researchers to include more countries both quantitatively and qualitatively. This can be challenging but it is worth the effort. If you take time to recruit with the intention of a diverse yet representative sample any method can be used to reach participants around the globe.

Are there any types of insights or data tools that you haven't found to be effective?

Typically, most methods are useful if you apply them to the proper research question and use the appropriate analysis. I would say that my biggest insight on research tools and their usefulness is to apply the right tool to the right job. I have always loved working on diverse research teams where researchers have differing skill sets. This way, when you apply multiple methods to any one question you have someone there who can really do it well. I definitely get the most satisfaction out of work that is done in collaboration with others – researchers, data scientists and market professionals.

Read the full interview at quirks.com/articles/2016/20161122.aspx.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