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Tweaking your brand tracker  
Case study: Drinkworks Home Bar

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Quirk's Marketing Research Review  
May/June 2020  
Volume XXXIV Number 3  
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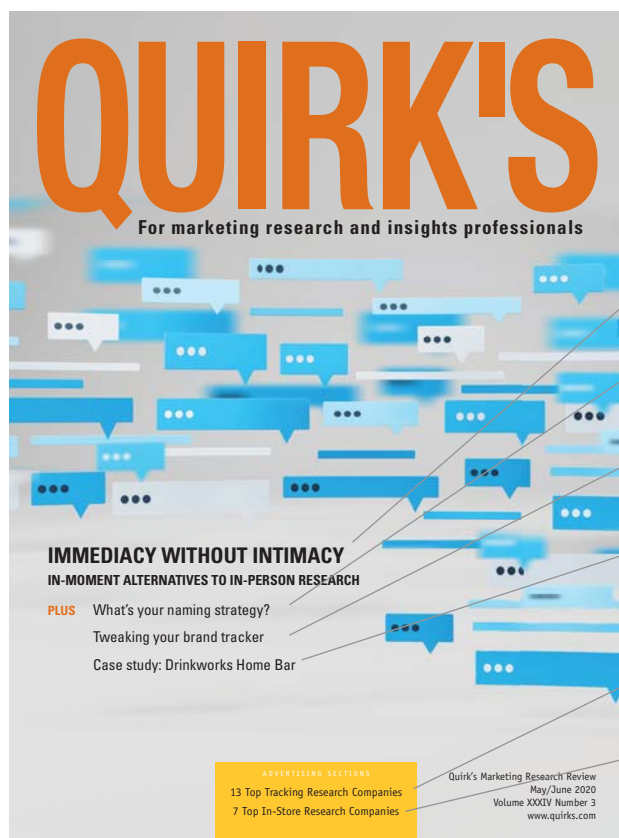
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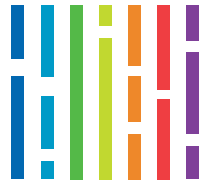


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gym x room x club x machine x equipment x	1017 (86.8%)
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member x class x people x membership x money x	540 (32.3%)
clean x pool x towel x shower x water x bathroom x	444 (26.5%)
staff x trainer x manager x instructor x employee x	414 (24.7%)
time x year x month x day x week x hour x	491 (29.3%)
hot x temperature x warm x air x cool x	149 (8.9%)
music x experience x	69 (4.1%)

Negative 152	
club x equipment x facility x fitness x gym x locker x machine x room x treadmill x	316
bathroom x clean x pool x shower x towel x water x	115
class x member x membership x money x people x	103
employee x instructor x manager x staff x trainer x	77
day x hour x month x time x week x year x	72
experience x music x	27

Positive 416	
club x equipment x facility x fitness x gym x locker x machine x room x treadmill x	106
employee x instructor x manager x staff x trainer x	122
class x member x membership x money x people x	79
day x hour x month x time x week x year x	44
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## Quirk's Blog

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### ARF releases creative research terms glossary

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### Eco-friendly packaging in Europe

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## Research Industry Voices

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### In a crisis, marketers must shift focus to brand purpose

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## In Case You Missed It

news and notes on marketing and research

### ... brand research

## Top brands should keep standard logos in social media ads

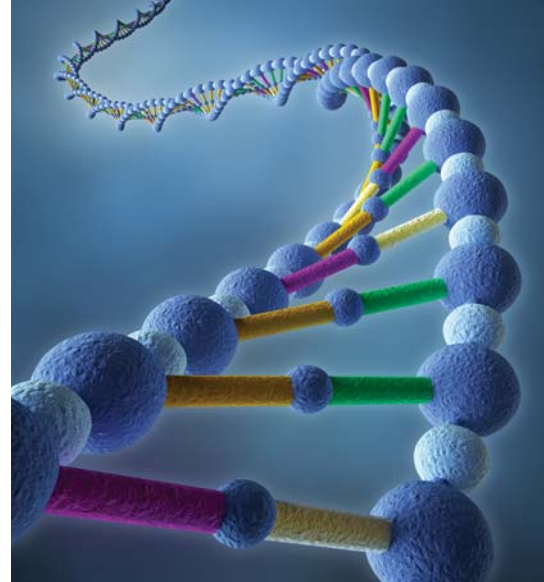
When it comes to ads on social media platforms, customers view well-known brands most favorably when they see traditional, standardized logos instead of altered graphic identities, says a report from Ball State University.

"Does brand logo matter in social media marketing? The moderating role of brand logo and brand equity in brand evaluation," recently published in the Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing, examined the use of logos and advertising on social media.

One hundred undergraduate students participated in the experiment and evaluated mock Facebook advertising from the brand. The study found that when the brand value is high, standardization of the brand logo led to more favorable attitudes toward the brand compared with adaptation. In contrast, when the brand value is low, there was no significant difference between standardization and adaptation of the brand logo.

"In the case of Nike, it has the 'swoosh,' which is familiar to the target customers in social media advertising, as this will lead to higher perceptual fluency and better evaluation of the brand," says study author Sangwon Lee, associate professor of marketing in the Miller College of Business at Ball State. "By contrast, the marketing managers of follower brands have more strategic freedom when it comes to revising the brand logo for social

media advertising as target customers are less likely to penalize brands that introduce a newly designed brand logo. This finding is especially helpful for marketing managers considering redesigning their logo as part of a brand repositioning exercise."



### ... health care research

## Gene may make Asians more prone to drug side effects

Asians – who make up more than 60 percent of the world's population – are at increased risk for a wide range of side effects from a variety of common medications used for everything from gout to hormone replacement therapy and depression, according to a study recently published in Clinical Translational Science.

Asians are more likely to have certain genetic variants compared to other ethnicities that put them at increased risk for these side effects. In the majority of cases that the study reviewed, the adverse responses to medications were due to Asians more commonly being carriers of a particular gene, known as the HLA-B\*15:02 allele. (This research referred to Asians broadly to be able to include a wide cross section of studies.)

University of British Columbia medical student Cody Lo, the study's lead author, and collaborators at Stanford argue that a one-size-fits-all approach to prescribing medications is risky. Research groups have suggested standardizing ways of classifying more specific ethnic groups.

For doctors, recognizing that certain effects may be more prevalent in Asian populations can be very helpful in their daily practice. Part of the reason why this review was conducted was to give doctors an evidence-based resource to help inform their clinical decision-making.





# 'This year, absolutely everything changed'

## Perspectives from David Boyle of TMRE

### What a year it's been! With so much volatility and uncertainty, what is the role of insights professionals during this time?

It was already hard to stay on top of the rapidly changing business landscape, even with the constant flow of innovations coming at us from the insights world. But this year, absolutely everything changed.

Everything before will be seen as "pre-coronavirus": business needs, consumer behaviors and the ways we build understanding to help businesses make decisions. Post-coronavirus, this will all be different.

The world is learning that brava-do isn't as powerful as building a careful understanding of what's happening. I see world leaders that started with the former strategy now adopting the latter. We'll also see a deeper corporate culture of building a true understanding of consumer needs and behaviors to solve business problems. We'll see a cultural shift where our work will be valued even more highly. I just hope we can prepare ourselves for that extra attention.

### Insights leaders were already dealing with pressure to do more with less. Are there any creative ways to do this?

Absolutely! Even the best teams were struggling, but they had

strategies that we must all now borrow from. There are three that I've worked to emulate and that have helped me.

First, build a network of friends who are in a similar role. I felt alone for a long time until I started to meet like-minded people at conferences who I could call for ideas.

Second, understand how other people solve problems. Sit through conference talks and actively listen. Challenge yourself to find parallels with what you're struggling with and ideas you can apply. It beats reinventing the wheel!

Third, innovate. Try small, cheap, quick pilots. If they aren't useful, kill them quickly (you'll still have learned valuable lessons). It's no exaggeration to say that one out of five tests I've run has radically changed how I think about and do my job.

### What advice do you have for researchers who haven't been through recessions or downturns?

Get really good at doing something. Work hard at it. Have a skill you're really proud of and constantly challenge yourself to get better and better at that skill. Stand out from the crowd.

What should insights professionals be focused on currently?



# TMRE

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Reevaluate everything. We've all run legacy projects that we don't think are the best uses of our time. And we've all had new projects we want to undertake but haven't been able to. We'll have so much new work to understand the new consumer and competitive landscape that we'll have to kill lots of old projects to make capacity and use new tools and techniques if we hope to keep up.

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# Research is up to the task

Interacting with other people is one of the core ways we display (or in some cases, refute) our humanity. It's also, of course, a key part of the marketing research process.

At the time of this writing in early April, most of us here in the U.S. are under some kind of stay-at-home order, limiting our in-person interaction to family members or six-foot distances from neighbors and those we may encounter on trips to the grocery store.

While there are some hopeful signs (though it feels so wrong to label death tolls that aren't as bad as those of the day before as "hopeful"), the prognosis for the next several weeks is bleak. And there are no guarantees that once this first major wave of infections subsides there won't be others that keep many forms of research from being conducted.

As an industry, after some resistance in the early days of the internet, marketing research has been an enthusiastic adopter of technology, steadily developing tools to take advantage of tech's facilitation of new forms of interviewing, data collection and data analysis. As a result, when face-to-face marketing research effectively stopped following the coronavirus outbreak, my in-box was flooded by e-mails from the various tech-driven marketing research firms touting their abilities to keep uncovering insights for clients.

It's hard to know whether the recent celebrations of qual-based methods as welcome providers of color and nuance to passive data are an enduring trend or a passing fancy but given the psychological impacts that this outbreak will have on our lives, the ability to take deep dives is more important than ever.

How else can we find answers to questions such as:


- Will we change our saving and investment habits and replace planning for an uncertain tomorrow with a carpe diem attitude?
- Will we travel more, after being cooped up for so long, or less, wanting to stay home and close to our loved ones, lest another outbreak occur in the place we visit?
- Will the habit of ordering-in become even more entrenched because of the convenience and comfort or will we all be so sick of our own kitchen tables that we are desperate to eat our meals in new and more interesting settings?
- Will we, after an initial explosion of buying fueled by pent-up demand, transform into a nation of savers, scared to death of again getting caught unprepared for months out of work?
- Will homeowners and homebuilders follow the prepper crowd and start adding bunkers and extra supply-storage rooms to survive the next pandemic?
- Will there be an explosion of interest in crafts and DIY, as mask-making and other skills become more than just useful hobbies?
- Will enrollments in medical and nursing schools plummet, as the country grapples with a generation of health care workers crippled by PTSD after the horrors they have witnessed on the job?
- Will disinfecting become a daily ritual, giving rise to a host of new disposable products for cleaning all of the places and surfaces we come in contact with?
- Will a start-up make in-home health testing technology as common as the mobile phone?
- Will food makers offer versions of popular products in forms that have longer shelf lives, are easier to prepare or take up less space?
- Will companies rethink the need to have so many on-site employees, based on the experiences of millions who are working from home during the outbreak?



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### More essential

I have no illusions of a return to business as usual any time soon, not with so many lives lost or permanently altered, so many variables still in play. But if we are able to get through this, I can't think of another industry that will be more essential to helping businesses, organizations and governments plan a way forward than ours. 



••• advice for researchers

# ASK THE EXPERT

Expert answers to important research questions.

## Has MR tapped the full power of automation?

Automation has forever changed marketing research. Technology has led to scope and scale previously unimagined. Consider the volume, breadth and depth of brands charted, products compared, data points tested and panel members reached. The industry has moved from hundreds of consumers comparing thousands of products to tens of thousands of consumers comparing hundreds of thousands of products simultaneously – and sharing their results in real time.

Automation has also improved the work lives of researchers. Technology does not get tired in doing the simple repetitive tasks required while conducting studies, increasing efficiencies and lowering the potential for human error. It has also freed researchers to focus on the parts of their jobs requiring knowledge and creativity. Machines can find patterns in volumes of data. Today, human expertise analyzes the patterns for context, perspective and business implications. Soon technology will support these functions as well, as machine-learning algorithms support predictions and more.

Quality is also a factor as automation supports high quality standards. We can automate best practices around sample and questionnaires, and templated quotas are helping brands find targeted audiences faster and in more consistent ways.

### Automation will do more . . . and soon

If there are 600 companies claiming to offer technology-driven consumer

insights, then there are likely fewer than 50 companies who can be classified as truly being automated. How can an agency or brand or organization distinguish the automation experts from those with software and marketing claims?

#### 1. Automated survey processes and results.

In general, most MR companies do a good job of end-to-end data collection. However, automation allows for the building of bigger frameworks than the old-school approach to marketing research. With every step of the process automated – sample, procedure, insights and recognition – multiple concepts can be tested at the same time with no threat to quality.

**2. Investment in tech.** AI and VR will soon have the impact that automation continues to have on marketing research. Clients should look for companies that continue to invest in technology. We ask questions to get answers, and the answers become our data points and then our models. AI and VR will vastly add to our abilities to collect, analyze and model data, as will the introduction of third-party data.

#### 3. Automation, agility and quality.

Moving faster and testing more means nothing if there is a negative impact on the quality of the results. Quality is protected when research methodology is embedded in the enhancements – for example, automated or templated questionnaires that provide best practices within a global organization or an organization with



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global needs, keeping consistency around research methodology.

Research industry experts know that technology is crucial to delivering consequential business decisions. It is not an option to sacrifice agility or quality, with automation playing a key factor in each. Rather, research must continuously deliver value – the results of automation, agility and quality – apace with market movements and consumer preference.

Have a question you'd like to have answered? Submit it to [info@quirks.com](mailto:info@quirks.com).

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*"I was quite happy with your panel's capabilities – as well as appreciative of myCLEARopinion's level of service, and degree of patience, when we ran into trouble in field."*

**\*B-to-B Market Research Manager**

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



## // Survey Monitor



... b2b research

### The path to purpose

Study looks at how B2B companies are incorporating purpose

Purpose is top-of-mind for B2B companies this year as organizations work to integrate purpose into their structure. Ninety-three percent of companies say they are somewhere on the purpose journey, with 57% saying they are more focused on purpose today than three years ago and 42% reporting that they are still early in the purpose journey, anywhere from discussing purpose internally to assigning teams to develop it.

Companies report a range of reasoning for pursuing purpose but the majority of respondents report their motivation

falls within four main categories: greater success than those without (82%), supports recruiting (75%), motivates sales teams (73%) and shows values and character in action (51%).

The study found that in most organizations, the C-suite drives purpose strategy, while HR and corporate planning functions are responsible for implementation.

While 86% of respondents say that purpose is “important” to their business, 29% report that purpose is “critical” to all they do. Despite this, only 24% said that purpose is so integral to their business that it influences culture, innovation, operations and their engagement with society. Additionally, about two-thirds of respondents don’t think their purpose has a measurable positive impact on society anyway. This

discrepancy highlights a gap between the stated purpose of an organization and its “activated purpose,” or the way this notion is incorporated into the business and related processes.

So, what’s holding businesses back? Purpose can feel more like a PR exercise than a legitimate business strategy according to 56% of respondents and half (50%) say their company lacks the capacity to put purpose at the center of their strategy. Another 51% say that purpose does not play a considerable role in their competitive set, while 28% do not even have a way to measure the impact of purpose.

Purpose takes a hit from employees as individuals as well: while 63% of respondents believe that purpose is an important aspect of culture, only 24% believe that their company’s engagement with society impacts culture.

Despite varying perceptions on purpose, the study shows that purpose can be a significant factor in employee satisfaction, engagement and inspiration; 73% of purpose-oriented employees report job satisfaction and employees are increasingly prioritizing purpose over money and achievement in their careers.

Together, values and purpose provide cohesion for culture and, ultimately, direction for business growth. Nearly two-thirds of respondents said purpose is important to company culture and a quarter said purpose is the most important aspect. But these leaders also believe values and people must precede purpose. In a ranking of importance of components of a company’s culture, the majority of respondents ranked values first (80%), followed by people (64%), purpose (63%), practices and policies (48%) and engagement with society (24%). This ranking also varies by function as well – 90% of respondents in strategy and corporate planning functions said that values are the most



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# Uncover faster insights through smart automation implementation

Many pressures are driving the need for speed across all industries, including market research. We must deliver crucial, game-changing insights quickly, overlaid with best-in-class intelligence and context from multiple data sources. Fortunately, with smart implementation of automation, we can start to forge a path to accomplishing these lofty goals.

Automation can help us by handling more manual, mundane and (let's face it) boring tasks. When we let the machine take care of data collection, data cleaning, charting and analysis, this frees us up from staring at tables, making mistakes and other frustrations. We must start letting automation do the heavy lifting in certain areas of our jobs.

## Current sample fielding models in market research

Unfortunately, the path to automation is often wrought with false starts or insufficient implementations. Our growing pains in this arena have resulted in many processes that are “semi-automated” and stopgap approaches for speed that mean a whole new set of challenges. In some cases, organisations end up over-engineering solutions, with people and technology, and deal with unexpected pitfalls. It's difficult to scale because there are still people involved in portions of the process that should be automated, and this slows down delivery times. One solution is to take a staged or scalable approach that offers more options.

## The golden path to sample automation

Implementing the right tech stack that utilises best-in-class APIs, alongside existing tools and integrations, is the only answer. This approach, coupled with streamlining operations for maximum efficiency, fast adoption and flexibility, is the right way to use automation. Ultimately, this makes the role of the market researcher more

valuable, more strategic and more important to your business. Implementing a professional, built-for-purpose SaaS platform to achieve your automation needs equals time savings, cost savings and high quality.

This doesn't mean massive change and workflow disruption. You can take a staged approach to automation that is flexible enough to fit any business model and grow with any size company. If you work with a technology supplier that has a wide array of options, you can scale with an eye to a future, more complete implementation.

Every company has a different business model. Some may work with fully managed services, while others may desire greater control with a DIY model. The key to success is finding a technology solution that can offer multiple options. Eventually, as companies grow and need a more holistic approach, the adoption of a more fully automated model is within reach. This is a model that can digitally transform a business to prepare for the future, giving companies control and flexibility, ability to blend sample and achieve data continuity, and realise fast value at a low cost. Full implementation is the perfect way to future-proof market research businesses.

Automation is essential as market researchers strive to meet demands for speed, efficiency, quality and cost savings. Implementing it to handle steps in the process where it can provide the most benefit leaves us free to do the strategic thinking, add our expertise and discover the insights that are relevant to the business.



**Greg Dunbar**  
EVP, Enterprise Solutions

# Cint

important factor supporting culture, compared to HR at 79%.

Who is the priority audience for B2B purpose? Employees – followed by customers, shareholders, communities, future talent and supply chain. More than half of respondents said employees are leading the call for purpose at their organization, making it critical to involve them at every step of the purpose journey. In fact, the study found that employees playing a role in defining company purpose was the most-identified element of internal engagement at 81%. Giving employees time off to volunteer was a close second at 77%, followed by purpose efforts being a clear source of pride for employees (74%), excitement of employees to discuss company purpose on social media (67%) and employees leading the call to become a more purposeful organization (55%).

While customers are not always the core reason to develop a purpose, respondents do believe their organization's purpose plays a role in engaging their customer base. The least-targeted audiences for engagement on the B2B purpose journey are supply chain (47%) and future talent (54%). Survey respondents may be indicating that supply chain issues can be dealt with more effectively through strategies other than purpose (sustainability, pricing, etc.). The lack of attention paid to future talent is significant: Purpose has been shown in countless studies and interviews to be critical to Millennial employees, who will make up 75% of the workforce by 2030.

*This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll as a collaborative effort between Harris, the ANA and Carol Cone ON PURPOSE among 259 B2B professionals. All qualified respondents held a title of director or higher and represented companies in sectors including financial and insurance, health care and allied industries, manufacturing, professional services, technology and telecommunications, and other.*



## ... content marketing Social media in the mix

### How agencies are using content marketing in 2020

Agencies buy into content marketing in a big way for their clients. But how do they use content marketing to promote their own businesses?

An article by Cathy McPhillips takes a look at Content Marketing Institute's annual study of for-profit agencies. One difference stands out – even jumps out – from when this segment was first studied for the 2019 research. A whopping 76% reported using paid channels to distribute content to market their firm in the previous 12 months. The previous year only 59% reported using paid content distribution to market their business.

Agencies in 2020 are focusing on the audience's needs, with 71% of respondents saying they prioritize informational needs over their own sales/promotional message. Eighty-six percent say they are using content marketing successfully to build brand awareness, while 76% say they have a content marketing strategy (45% actually document it).

Paid social media advertising is the top paid distribution method agencies use by far (83%). Of this group, the top two channels are Facebook (82%) and LinkedIn (58%), followed by Instagram (36%), Twitter (21%) and YouTube (12%). Over one-third (38%) of the agencies that

use more than one paid social channel say LinkedIn generates the best results, followed by Facebook.

Almost every agency (91%) in the survey uses social media for organic content distribution. And agencies aren't ignoring their owned channels: 86% use their company website/blog and 78% use e-mail. Another 61% take the opportunity to speak at or attend events to market their business.

Brand marketers often turn to agencies for help with content marketing but do agencies look for outside help when they're marketing their firms? As it turns out, most don't. Only 33% of agency marketers say they outsource any content marketing activity. Of those who do, most (71%) outsource content creation. Just 23% are investing in native advertising and sponsored content other than paid social and only 44% measure content marketing ROI – but of those who do, 71% say they're doing an excellent or very good job of it.

Of all the verticals examined in the study, agencies were the least likely to say they outsource. For example, 64% of manufacturing marketers and 70% of enterprise marketers (more than 1,000 employees) outsource at least one content marketing function.

When asked which three content marketing activities they thought their organization would prioritize in 2020 when marketing their own business, agency respondents most frequently answered: focusing on content quality/quantity (50%), improving content distribution/promotion (47%) and improving the quality/conversion of their audiences (46%).

Content Marketing Institute's 2020 annual content marketing research surveyed 230 for-profit agency respondents.



## ... financial services Can I Venmo you later?

Study explores adoption of digital payment methods

In a recent article by Ian Heinig titled, “Digital payment trends: How people use money transfer apps,” results from Visual Objects’ research highlight the rise of digital payment platforms and the global shift toward digital commerce that drives the change. This is due largely to the widespread use of smartphones and the prevalence of online shopping.

Merchants are adopting digital payment services to deliver the streamlined shopping experience consumers expect. Although digital payments integrate easily into the busy lives of consumers, these services are at odds with the mature credit system in the U.S., entrenched consumer habits and concerns about security.

Most people say the main reason they use money transfer apps is convenience (54%), followed by efficiency (20%) and security (17%). The adoption of this method is fairly new, with nearly three-quarters of digital payment users (73%) saying they began using digital payment methods in the past five years. More than one-third (34%) started using digital payments in the last one-to-three years.

A range of digital payment services exist, each offering users a convenient way to spend their money. For example, people can pay for online

purchases via any digital device in a single click (PayPal), make in-store purchases using their iPhone instead of cash or credit card (Apple Pay) and exchange money among peers in real-time (Venmo). The growing popularity of money transfer apps coincides with a downward trend in cash use. According to McKinsey, the share of the world’s transactions in cash has dropped from 89% to 77% in the past five years.

In the U.S., only 30% of people always carry cash and 43% still use cash but only inconsistently or at random. The U.S., however, lags behind the rest of the world in its adoption of digital payments. According to The Paypers Digital Payment Report, credit remains the primary payment method in the U.S. The widespread use of credit cards makes adopting a new payment system unappealing to some.

Despite this, consumers are warming to digital payments as a way to manage money with enhanced levels of flexibility, visibility and convenience. Most people use money transfer apps monthly (79%), followed by weekly (44%), less than once a month (21%) and daily (14%). Digital payment methods are most popular among younger generations, with 52% of users ages 18-34 and 47% of users ages 35-54 using them weekly, compared to 24% of users ages 55 and older.

People’s primary concern with using money transfer apps is hacking (41%), specifically the theft of financial information and personal data.

PayPal, Venmo and Apple Pay each dominate their respective niche for online transactions, peer-to-peer exchanges and in-store payments. Most people use PayPal (84%) then Venmo (31%) and Apple Pay (23%) when making a digital payment but people also use Google Play (16%), Amazon Pay (11%), Facebook Messenger (11%) and Square (8%) to a lesser extent.

PayPal’s continued dominance is rooted in the long-standing trust it has built with both businesses and consumers. Websites feature the “Pay with PayPal” button to offer one-click

payments but also to display a trust-badge to shoppers – both of which help boost conversions.

Visual Objects surveyed 983 digital payment users in the U.S. to understand how they use digital payment methods.



## ... real estate research Home ownership across the ages

Generational differences and similarities in home-buying

Are Millennials becoming their parents? When it comes to choosing a home, the similarities are striking. According to a study by Coldwell Banker Real Estate, almost all Baby Boomers (91%), Generation X (91%) and Millennials (92%) say that owning their own home is important – and at nearly identical rates.

When it comes to picking a neighborhood, the generations mostly agree on one thing: location. Eight in 10 (81%) Americans agree that they value the location of their home over the size, with all generations in agreement: Boomers (79%), Gen X (79%) and Millennials (81%).

These generations also overwhelmingly agree on the importance of living in a safe neighborhood with both Boomers and Gen X at 98% and Millennials at 93%. Nearly three out of four Boomers (72%), Gen X (73%) and Millennials (73%) want to live close to their families. When family can’t be close to home, the generations agree on how

to stay connected. Phone calls are the top choice across generations – Boomers (77%), Gen X (66%) and Millennials (64%) – calling on the phone beat out texting and social media when it comes to making faraway family members and friends feel closer to home. A majority (54%) of Millennials say living close to bars and nightlife is important. Those numbers drop slightly for Gen X (46%) and Boomers (34%).

Is avocado toast to blame? Paying down debt is the No. 1 reason some Americans struggle to afford their first home. Among those who have purchased a home, 26% cite this as the main reason they struggled to afford their first home, while just 6% cite spending on luxury items, 5% say dining out at restaurants and 5% say travel. Spending on avocado toast – and at restaurants in general – is not a barrier to home ownership. Sixty-six percent of Millennials spent \$0 on avocado toast in the previous year and only 15% spent more than \$50 in the previous year. In fact, the average American spends only \$35 per year on avocado toast at restaurants. General spending at restaurants and spending on travel were tied for last when respondents were asked if and why they had trouble affording their first home.

Millennials dream of more than just vacations and experiences – they are also more likely to say they believe that, in their lifetime, they will live in their dream home (81%) compared to 75% of Gen X and 67% of Boomers.

When Americans who previously worked with a real estate agent were asked why they did so, the most common response was, “I wanted a trusted advisor to help me navigate the buying/selling process.” A majority (56%) of Americans who previously worked with a real estate agent cite “excellent customer service skills” as one of the most important qualities for an agent to possess. Excellent customer service skills were defined as: “kept in touch/followed up, explained things well, made themselves readily available.” Sixty-four percent (64%) of Americans say they would prefer to work with an agent affiliated with an established national or local real estate company; only 3% would prefer to work with a startup.

Millennials are nearly twice as likely as Boomers to say they would be more likely to purchase a home with a white picket fence. Boomers, however, are more likely than Millennials to say hardwood floors would make them more likely to purchase a home (53% vs. 35%). Carpeting is less popular among all three generations, with 20% of Millennials, 21% of Gen X and 21% of Boomers saying that carpeting would make them more likely to purchase a home.

The two most desired home features across generations are a master bedroom with a private master bathroom and a fenced-in backyard. Eighty percent of Americans say they prefer to buy a move-in-ready home over one that requires any updating but what would they give up? Roughly seven in 10 Millennials (70%) and Gen X (71%) say they would be willing to sacrifice home size for a move-in-ready home. Boomers agree but at a lower rate (63%).

*This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Coldwell Banker among 2,002 U.S. adults ages 18 and older, among whom 543 are Millennials, 540 are Gen X and 569 are Boomers.*



## ... generational research **Stuck in the middle**

### The Sandwich Generation shoulders financial, familial burdens

New research from Haven Life Insurance Agency reveals that the Sandwich Generation is struggling physically, mentally and financially. The study was conducted to better understand the individuals who are

sandwiched by the responsibilities of providing care and decision-making support for both dependent children and aging parents.

The key insight from the survey shows that 80% of the Sandwich Generation is overwhelmed often or constantly, which translates to five out of seven days of the week. In fact, 84% of respondents indicated that their retirement will be negatively impacted by their financial responsibilities to both children and aging parents. The results from this survey underscore the enormous stress that individuals face when navigating the realities of caring for their aging parents and kids at the same time.

Gender and income may play a role in how overextended the Sandwich Generation feels. Women (84%) in the Sandwich Generation are more likely to report feeling overwhelmed compared to men (75%). Additionally, 84% of respondents with an income of \$0-\$49,900 report being overwhelmed compared to respondents with an income over \$150,000 (63%).

The areas where respondents help out their aging parents the most include health care decisions (60%) and financial decisions (55%). Forty-three percent currently assist their parents financially or provide physical care. Nearly 60% of the Sandwich Generation expect to financially support their parents or in-laws as they continue to age.

The Sandwich Generation could benefit from more support, specifically mental health and financial advisory services. When asked what would help to reduce their stress, the top three choices selected by respondents include access to a mental health professional (63%), decision-making support from their family (61%) and a financial advisor (57%). The Sandwich Generation's self-care is also suffering. When asked what activities are neglected the most as a result of their responsibilities, the top three choices included self-care (63%), sleep (62%) and financial health (43%). The Sandwich Generation would love more shut-eye. If Sandwich Generation respondents were gifted one extra hour in their days, the majority of them would spend it sleeping (50%), followed by



spending more time with their children (48%) and their partner (48%).

As a result of their financial responsibilities, a majority of the Sandwich Generation have had to adjust their retirement goals (55%), with 29% feeling that they will never be able to retire.

Two-thirds of the Sandwich Generation has life insurance. Given the enormous responsibilities of providing physical, emotional and financial support for their parents and children, the Sandwich Generation seems to understand the importance of financial protection. Of those who don't have life insurance, 66% said that being a member of the Sandwich Generation prevents them from getting coverage.

The study was conducted by Haven Life among 1,078 respondents ages 30-55 years old and who have dependent children and provide decision-making support or care for at least one parent.



## ... technology research Challenges in software development

Research explores roles and responsibilities of software developers

In recent research, IDG Communications explored the roles involved in driving business forward through software development. These go beyond the traditional developer title and responsibilities appear to be growing. The study provides insight into the tasks developers are spending the majority of

their time on, the skills they'd like to further develop and the challenges hindering their productivity. While 82% of respondents say they frequently or sometimes spend their time modifying/maintaining software applications, 41% say they would like to focus more time developing/building software applications.

Software development falls into three main buckets and survey respondents represent all of them: 68% are involved in full stack development, 21% are involved in back-end development only and the remaining 11% are involved in front-end development.

When asked about the most important skills they need to be successful in their current role, 62% said problem-solving/troubleshooting skills. Interestingly, only 10% of respondents claim to want to focus more of their time on troubleshooting operations issues over the next 12 months. Ideally, they would like to take on a more strategic role and focus their time building and designing new tools as well as researching new tools and solutions. Due to technology modernization, 40% of developers say they have a need for new programming/language skills and 39% say there is an increased need for new development tools and solutions.

Software developers are very much involved in steering technology investments – more than half (56%) say they are involved during the research stage and 29% say they are consulted once a trial is in place and vendors are being evaluated. Only 11% of respondents said they are never involved in the tech purchase process. It's also important to note that 81% are somewhat or very satisfied with their level of involvement during the technology purchase process. Additionally, 73% say that their working relationship with business management is highly or somewhat collaborative which gives them a voice when new technologies are being evaluated. This changes slightly by job title and increases to 78% for architects, 74% for engineers and decreases to 68% for developers.

The research also found that these individuals have a collaborative relationship with the security team.

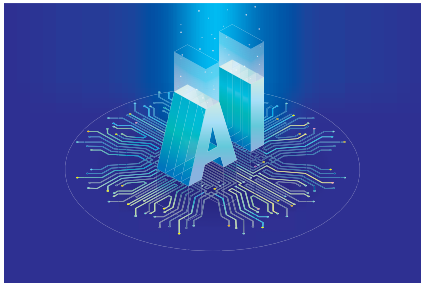
Nearly half (49%) of developers say that security is integrated into the development process in the planning stage before development begins and 33% say security is looped in once the first iteration of the application is developed. By communicating with both lines of business management and security personnel throughout the software and application development process, developers are positioning their tools and solutions for success.

With frequent tech advancements, security concerns and a shortage of time to focus on all necessary tasks, it's evident that developers experience challenges within their responsibilities. Tied for the top two challenges are doing more with less staff and keeping up with new technology advancements and skill requirements (28%). Following close behind, 27% say that the availability of experienced developers is a top challenge inhibiting their role. When faced with a job-related challenge, developers rely largely on peer communication and easily digestible information – 39% rely on peers inside their company, followed by online communities and discussion forums (36%) and blogs (34%).

The study also looked at the current staffing levels of development teams. Close to half of developers (46%) believe their team is adequately staffed, while 17% view their team as being well-staffed and 36% report that their team is understaffed. We can expect some staffing levels to improve within the next year as 39% anticipate their in-house development team will increase over the next 12 months and 42% report their level will remain the same.

The survey was conducted by IDG among the audience of IDG brands and partners and is based on 364 respondents involved in the software development process within their organizations.





## ... artificial intelligence Personalization in the AI age

### Consumers seek transparency in AI-driven services

A study commissioned by WP Engine found that in an era of purpose-driven consumption, values – such as transparency, trust and humanness – are key drivers that unlock value in artificial intelligence (AI).

Despite previous years' focus on GDPR and privacy regulations designed to give consumers power over their data, nearly half of U.K. consumers (48% according to a survey by CIM1) still don't know how brands are using their data. They remain concerned about the privacy of their personal information and online behaviors. As consumers demand that enterprises prioritize their data protection and become transparent regarding its use, collection and value, most enterprises have started having these necessary conversations regarding the role of ethics, data protection and consumer rights.

Personalization systems tend to give way to trust and ethical concerns, both from a privacy perspective and in terms of cross-device efficiencies. In the U.K., both consumers and enterprises indicated a high degree of importance regarding values issues, such as the protection of data privacy and security, the expectation of organizations being able to explain transparently what they are using data for, degree of personalization and a clear and direct value for the exchange of data, to name a few. Consumers over-

all placed more importance on these issues, putting enterprises on notice. Most important to U.K. consumers was that proper privacy protections are in place during personalization (92.2% agreed) and yet only 82% of enterprises indicated this was important, indicating a serious gap that needs to be bridged for enterprises to truly gain U.K. consumer trust.

An increasing number of digital users are now mindful and aware of the “value exchange” that occurs with a brand when they participate in a digital experience. Not surprisingly, the willingness to share personal information in exchange for a better service was highest among Millennials, with older generations less willing to trade their personal information for better, more personalized service.

Data sharing leads to personalized services and in this function AI is extremely capable, such as being able to push an ice cream advertisement to you while walking past an ice cream shop on a hot day. Still, consumers worry that this crosses the line into obtrusive – 86.8% of U.K. consumers felt it was important that personalization doesn't feel “creepy.” In response, 77% of U.K. enterprises agreed that avoiding creepiness was crucial. Ultimately organizations need to walk the fine line where a person's digital space must be respected in the same way as physical space.

The research resulted in several lessons for brands and agencies using AI in the digital age. Enterprises are increasingly using AI-driven platforms to make impactful decisions, such as the allocation of jobs, loans or university admissions. Thus, there is a rising concern from users on how algorithms make these decisions, as 92.7% of U.K. consumers feel it is very important for organizations to be transparent about how their data is being used for creating personalized online experiences. Keeping this in mind, organizations have identified the need to incorporate the values of AI, primarily trust and transparency, in their strategies. About two-in-five (41.5%) of U.K. IT decision makers say that it is very important to be transparent about how they use AI to personalize user experience.

Additionally, 81.5% of U.K. IT deci-

sion makers agreed that it is important for organizations to interrogate bias in their organizations and the data sets they use. It is particularly relevant for supervised learning and machine-learning data sets where the process of supervision allows brands to change the way they do things. This provides an opportunity to create diverse and inclusive teams to maintain various voices of change. A majority (79.5%) of IT decision makers agree that it is important that the teams building and maintaining AI systems are diverse.

With GDPR, the world began to see governments putting structure around what and how data may be used. The report shows that 86% of consumers do not want organizations tracking data that they don't have any use for and 92.8% of U.K. consumers said that they expect organizations to explain what they are doing with their data.

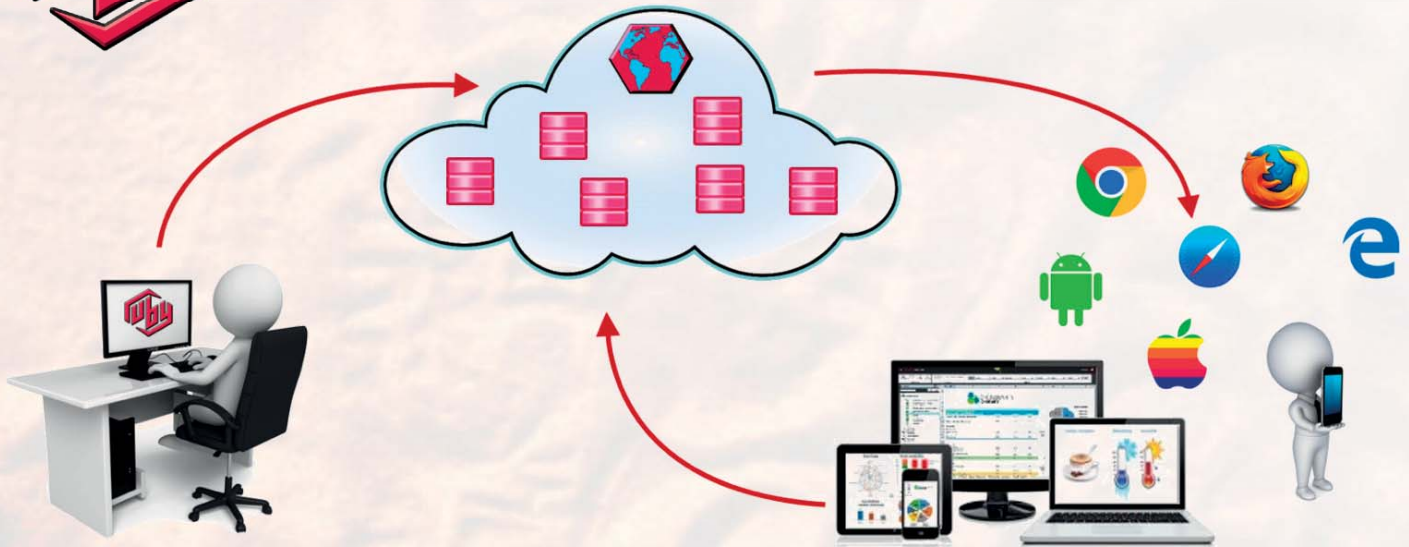
Thanks to advancements in natural language processing and conversation AI, the capability now exists for chatbots and digital assistants to closely mimic their human counterparts. In fact, 56.4% of consumers surveyed indicated it's important that websites have a chatbot or digital assistant to help with customer service and 82% of enterprises are using AI in this way. However, 85% of consumers surveyed agreed that it should be made known when AI is used in chatbots and similar customer-facing applications. A majority (85%) of U.K. consumers strongly agreed that companies have a responsibility to disclose the use of AI in chatbots and similar customer service interactions. Seventy-seven percent of IT decision makers also agreed that when it comes to deploying customer service chatbots, it should be made known to users that such a service is not facilitated by human agents, demonstrating alignment between enterprises and consumers about the importance of this issue.

The study was conducted by the University of London and Vanson Bourne on behalf of WP Engine and surveyed consumer and enterprise companies in the U.S., U.K. and Australia.

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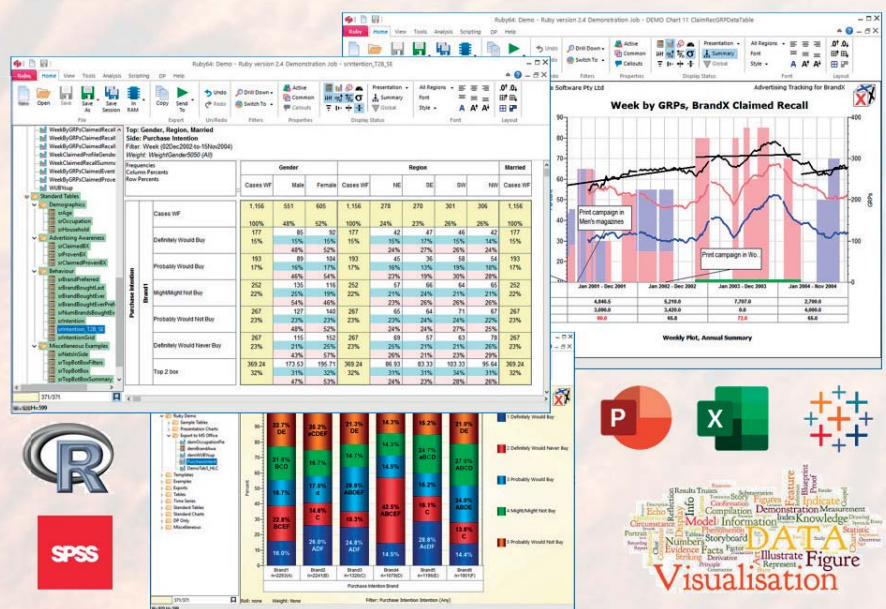


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# Pitfalls of relying on passively collected data

| By Mary Mathes



## snapshot

A tale of a hot dog stand, the Soviets and the need for 'why.'

When we at Thriveplan were first thinking about how to design a big study drawing on passive data, a story came to mind that I had heard back when I lived in Washington, D.C. It's a Cold War-era tale, maybe just an urban legend that tour guides tell visiting busloads of high school students every summer, but I still think it holds an important lesson for us as researchers as we approach the growing trend of using passively collected data in our work and what it can and can't do for us. A cautionary tale, if you will.

There was a small building in the center courtyard of the Pentagon back in the day. (There's still a building there but this particular one no longer stands.) As the story goes, the Soviet Union had missiles – nuclear ones, no less – constantly trained on this building. They were convinced it was the entrance to an underground bunker with a top-secret meeting room, with the whole Pentagon essentially acting as a fortress around it.

Why did they think this? Well, the Soviets had their own version of passively collected data: satellite imagery. Every day, their satellites would pass over and take pictures of the site and every day they would observe a pattern of behavior in those images: there were always military officers going in and out of this building. From this data, they concluded that clearly the building must be important. After all, it was smack in the center of the

Pentagon. This information didn't come from a human spy with an imperfect memory reporting what he or she recalled seeing, this was objectively what was happening.

Here's the thing: that building? It was a hot dog stand. There were always people milling around it because when the satellites passed over at the same time every day, it was most likely lunchtime.

I tell you this story because an emerging theme we hear more and more from clients is a desire to get away from "traditional surveys" that ask consumers to recall and report/explain their behavior. There is a push to derive consumer insights purely from the growing suite of passively collected consumer information – such as scanned receipts, loyalty card data, digital activity tracking, etc. – that a plethora of data providers now offer.

Some clients firmly believe that passively collected data are a better way to reveal true, actionable insights about consumers' behavior, because they don't rely on asking them anything or on their faulty ability to remember. We've heard from clients who want to rely solely, or as much as possible, on passive data, believing that any datapoint obtained by asking a respondent can't be trusted. They posit that the passive data is the "truth" and that if you just look at enough of it, you'll find patterns that explain behaviors, and by extension find the keys to encouraging more of the behaviors that you want. At our firm, we've been cautioning against the sole reliance on passive data, because we continue to prove that direct interaction with a respondent is still



[www.quirks.com/articles/2020/20200504.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2020/20200504.aspx)



valuable in unlocking the why behind their behavior, IF you do it right.

For me, the hot dog stand tale illuminates two big pitfalls of relying solely on passive data:


- 1) It can show you what consumers are doing but it can't tell you why. We can see which websites consumers go to, or look at what they put in their shopping carts, but from passive data alone we can only guess at why they surf Facebook during their workday, for example, and what that says about their likelihood of responding to the ads they see in their feed (if they notice them at all).
- 2) The behaviors you can passively observe are not the only behaviors that matter. The Soviets likely attributed outsized importance to that building because it was out in the open, in full view. Similarly, with passive consumer data, we can only analyze what we can measure. We

are far from being able to observe everything that a consumer does, sees, hears or smells that might lead them toward a behavior. No one passive data company can offer that complete of a picture. (And quite frankly, I'm not sure I want to live in a world where one can.)

This is why we believe that even with the many benefits of passive data, you can't get to the why of observed behaviors without some active interaction with the people being observed. Now, we do agree completely that simply asking them why they bought that product on Amazon or clicked on that Facebook ad is fruitless. But the idea that we can't get them to reveal insights into what drives their behavior via a survey instrument is false. We do it every day.

When done well, behavioral science-backed research leverages neurocognitive and neuropsychological

"tells" to identify the intrinsic motivations and costs expressed by individuals and how they are impacted by specific contexts of interests (e.g., an online shopping journey). While you're not likely to get good data by asking people why they do what they do, you can get them reveal the whys they don't even consciously recognize themselves – but only if you ask the right questions.

This revealed knowledge can unlock an otherwise unattainable level of fidelity in our understanding of consumers' attention, thoughts, experiences, decision-making and actions. And yes, it can also help make sense of a myriad of behaviors observed in passively collected data, so we can separate the truly important buildings from the hot dog stands. 

Mary Mathes is the market intel director for Thriveplan, a Cincinnati-based insights and strategy firm. She can be reached at [mary@thriveplan.com](mailto:mary@thriveplan.com).

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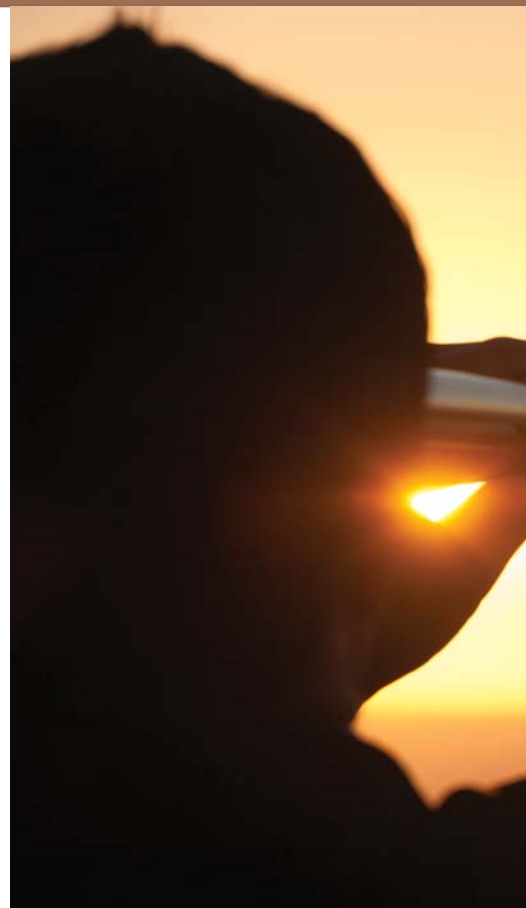
# 13 TRACKING RESEARCH COMPANIES

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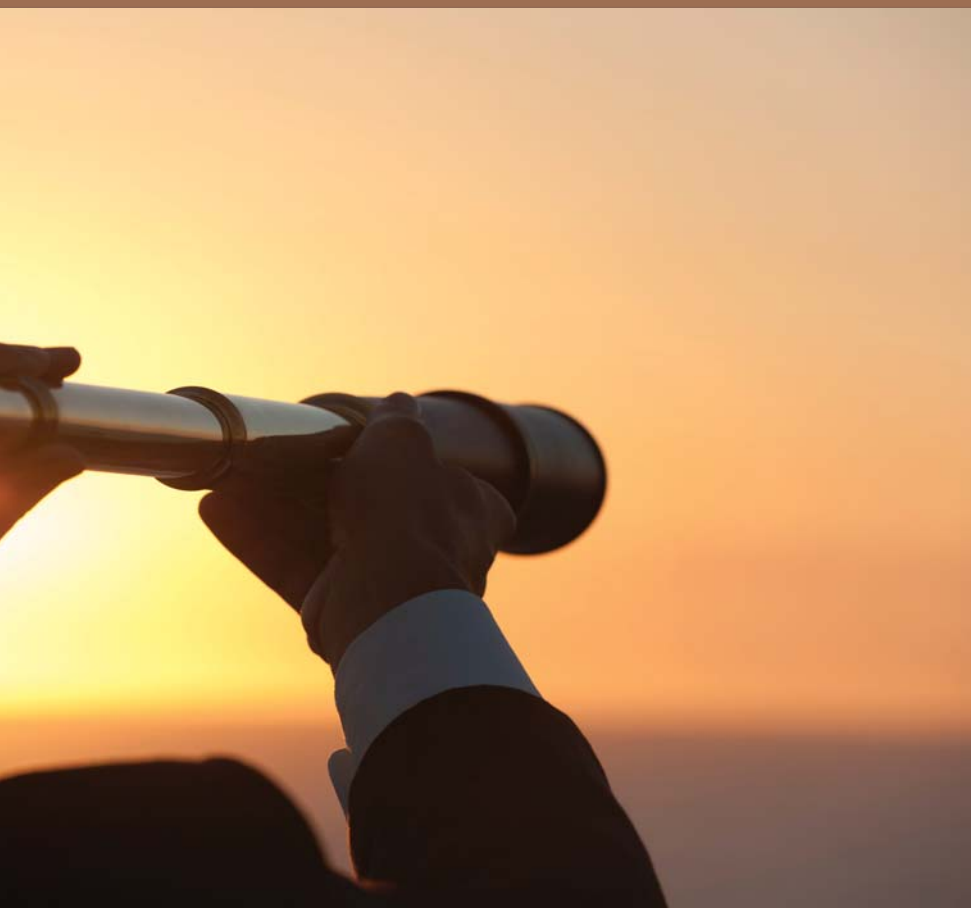


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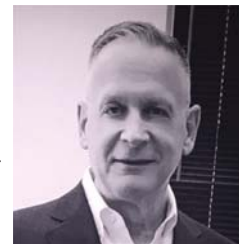
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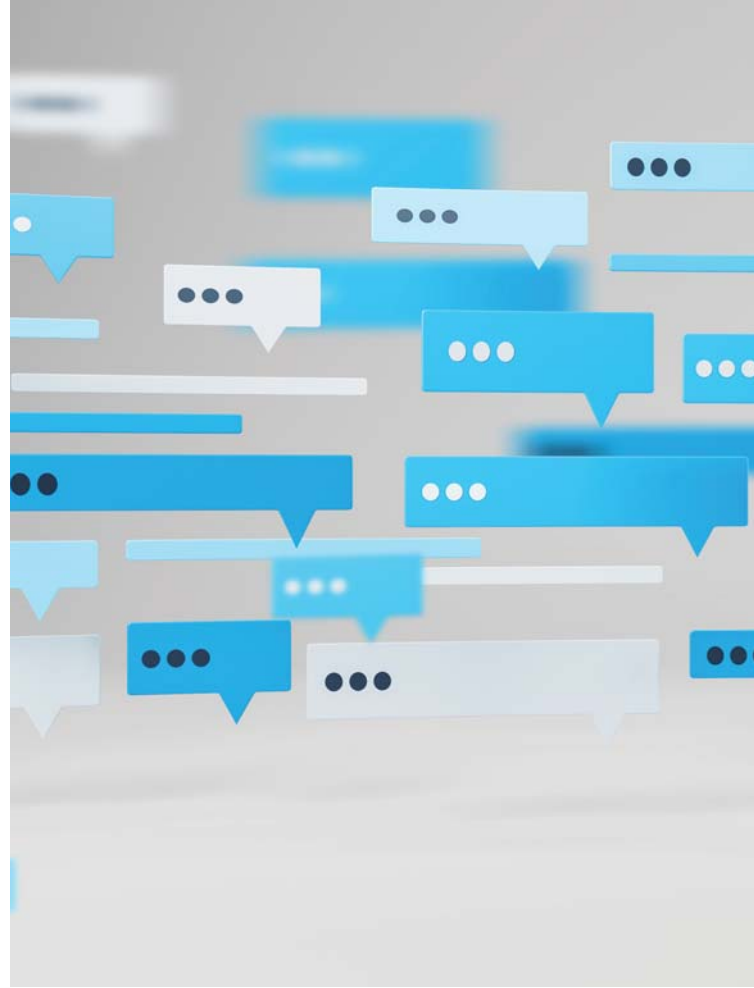


... qualitative research

# Immediacy without intimacy

In-moment alternatives to in-person research

| By Zach Mullen



## snapshot

As circumstances dictate a temporary move away from direct contact with respondents, Zach Mullen looks at some ways researchers can still get close.

In the past month, how often have you been asked to give your opinion on something solely for the sake of discussion? Team Coke or Team Pepsi? Do you prefer Domino's or Pizza Hut? Are you a PC or a Mac person? From sports to politics to *The Bachelor*, it can sometimes feel like we're in a cultural cycle that embraces debate solely for debate's sake. We don't care who wins; we just want to talk about it.

As marketing research professionals, it's in our nature (and our job descriptions) to formulate conclusions. We look at the facts, weigh our options and take a stance. And when it comes to business recommendations, we're no stranger to sharing our opinions.

Take the notion of in-person research as an example.

In just the last few years, there's been more of a push/pull on the pros and cons of this methodology than just about anything else within marketing research. One moment, it's an outdated approach easily replaced with digital alternatives. The next, in-person is seen as the great humanizer, so ripe with empathy that no digital platform can replicate it.

In any normal time, the debate over in-person would rage on. But with COVID-19, the battle is changing completely.

As a member of the qualitative team at Burke, Inc., I have my own opinions on in-person. My team has theirs and I'm sure you have yours. But regardless, one thing is abundantly clear: In-person research is absolutely relevant in the market today.

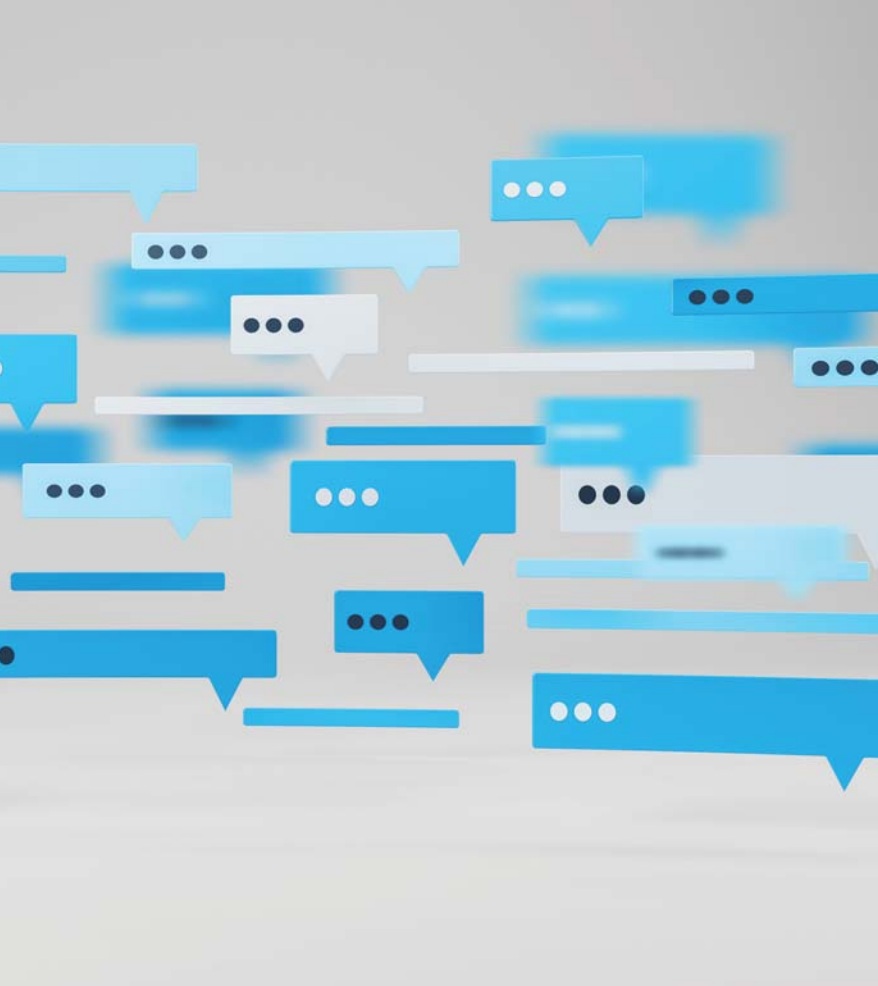
Around the globe, we continue to see high value in meeting respondents live and face-to-face. Researchers across industries consistently choose to observe consumers in-person, analyzing tone and expression in a way that a text response or transcript just can't convey (yet). And, in the case of taste tests or touching/feeling physical stimuli, the needs of the research literally dictate the necessity of being in a room together.

But what happens when the option for in-person research suddenly



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goes away? Run qualitative research long enough and you will inevitably be faced with situations where pivoting away from in-person is necessary. From our team's experiences, the cause of abandoning the idea of in-person usually falls under one of three scenarios:

**Timing.** The timing of in-person can sometimes cause problems. Unlike online or over-the-phone methodologies, it's pretty implausible for a respondent to complete a screener, drop the rest of their day and drive themselves downtown to participate in a two-hour, in-person focus group. Logistically, in-person works best when there's a little bit of a runway to work with, timewise. Unfortunately, fast turnarounds and deadlines are more common than not, so it's not always realistic for in-person to align with a quick-turn qualitative read.

**Specific needs.** At times, clients need a type of feedback from research that simply cannot be replicated by in-person. Sometimes this means "meeting respondents where they are" via passive data, online channels or something more appropriate for a particular demographic.

**Recruitment plus demos.** At the end of the day, in-person research does not always fit the intended target audience. For harder-to-reach respondents like builders, physicians and B2B professionals, it is rarely feasible for them to come into a facility for research. As such, it is critical to be aware of what alternative options exist when in-person just isn't in the cards for a tougher-to-get audience.

And then there's COVID-19. As alluded to earlier, the coronavirus pandemic has been the most glaring reason why in-person work has been cancelled or repurposed in the past few months.

At the time this article is being written, COVID-19 is changing the research landscape rapidly. We don't know what the next week, month or year might look like but the virus has already begun to make massive inroads on the global economy. And while the effect of COVID-19 on the market research industry is still unknown, it does

seem to have totally sidelined the possibility of in-person research in its wake.

Working at a custom research firm, it's my job to assess the full landscape of methodologies and advise clients on what will best answer their business questions. Sometimes this means doing in-person research. Sometimes it doesn't. When priorities change or extenuating circumstances like COVID-19 rapidly evolve, our qualitative team needs to be aware of what options best suit the needs of our client.

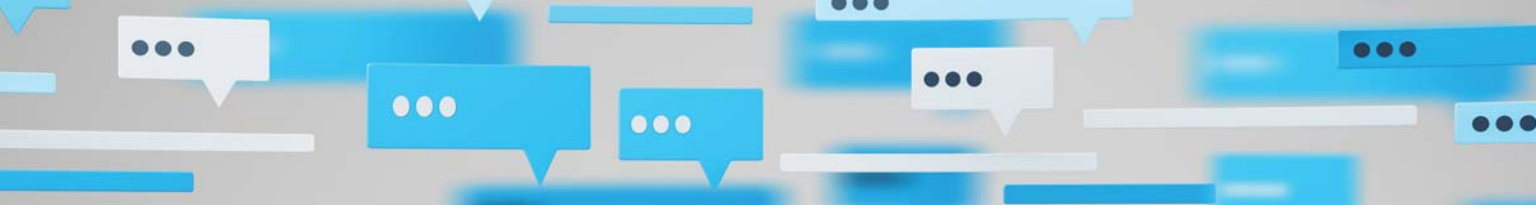
But how do you decide? At Burke, we don't tie ourselves to one particular proprietary platform or in-house service. Instead, we constantly evaluate the marketplace's offerings so we're able to curate and recommend specific platforms, technologies or services accordingly. It's critical for us to be fully aware of the adaptable and agile alternatives to in-person research.

So, is it possible to still make an in-the-moment connection without being physically in-person? We say yes. There is significant value in utilizing additional methodologies. In many instances, alternatives to live research are great at replicating – and in some cases even enhancing – the in-person experience. By exploring a new approach to the same business questions, customers can still engage with their favorite brands but in a more convenient offering tailored to fit their busy lifestyles.

Here are some of our top picks for in-the-moment alternatives to in-person research.

### Digital ethnographies

No in-homes? No problem. Digital ethnographies can serve as a viable replacement for immersions when an in-home visit or shop-along just isn't an option. Digital ethnographies offer the same face-to-face interaction that a regular ethnography does but, via technology, still allow the researcher to get a tour of the pantry, medicine cabinet or thoughts while shopping in-store. Typical ethnographies are limited to a select handful of observers but when digital,



more of the research team can watch, observe and discuss via a virtual backroom. Finally, in a rapidly-changing time, it can also give you a peek into what social distancing looks like for consumers.

*Watch-outs:* Even though there's real-time back and forth between moderator and respondent, digital ethnos can, at times, be at the mercy of what the respondents choose to show you. This can sometimes limit the opportunities for natural, observational exploration.

*What you can do:* Challenge your moderator to come up with creative probes to get consumers to share beyond what they have planned to show you.

### Online bulletin boards (OLBBs)

Versatile and convenient, online bulletin boards have the flexibility to be up and running quickly. By their very nature, they allow for thought-out responses to the questions you have right now, in the moment. OLBBs can act as either a private diary or a public conversation and, given their informal and conversational tone, allow for frequent and seamless topic transitions as information needs change. Online boards also allow respondents to easily upload photos and videos to help illuminate responses, express emotion and provide rich context to open-ends.

*Watch-outs:* Multi-day OLBBs often result in a lot of content, so go in with an analytical plan for listening and synthesizing the discussion.

*What you can do:* Get your whole team involved with specific listening posts and debrief meetings to learn as you go.

### In-depth interviews via telephone (TDIs) or webcam (IDIs)

Allowing for the same level of detailed conversation between moderator and respondent, in-depth interviews via telephone or webcam are an absolute go-to for busy and hard-to-reach audiences. TDIs and web IDIs unlock the same personal connection

that an in-person conversation would have and result in a meaningful one-on-one conversation. As an added bonus, stimuli can still be presented to respondents through a simple screen-share from the moderator – just like in-person. And with the comfort of their own personal surroundings, respondents can often dive deeper into their behaviors and feelings.

*Watch-outs:* Sometimes, respondents can feel a little too comfortable in their surroundings. We've seen respondents take calls from their dining rooms and offices but also in their car (while driving) and even from their bathrooms.

*What you can do:* Prep your team for how your moderator might handle these unique situations.

### Web-based focus groups

Web-based video focus groups take everything that's great about a traditional focus group and move it online. Respondents (and researchers) still get to experience a group dynamic, rich with layered builds and diverse opinions, but all parties are able to contribute from the comfort of their own homes. While research is live, teams have the ability to stream the groups in real-time and converse in a digital backroom – opening the door for in-the-moment probing or shift(s) in direction.

*Watch-outs:* The logistics of digital video groups can be a little harder to manage than the natural dynamic offered by in-person groups. To account for this, we recommend reducing the size of each group.

*What you can do:* Set up time for dedicated technology checks a day before the groups go live so that respondents will be in the research itself, not troubleshooting. Ensuring a digital sense of comfort ahead of time will make your participants feel more at home in the groups.

### Viable replacement

It's easy to think of replacing in-person research with just one of the above alternatives. Typically, the gut

reaction is to follow the path of least resistance and just swap out one for one – an in-person focus group for an online focus group, an in-home visit for a digital ethnography, and so on. While there are minor concessions to be aware of here and there, for the most part, each of these methodologies can act as a viable replacement, answering the same business questions with minimal disruption to the overall objectives.

However, before you jump to the one-for-one replacement model, consider the overall versatility. In our experience, these methodologies become exponentially more valuable when layered on top of one another.

Recently, one of our clients in the financial services industry came to us with a series of questions aimed at understanding a few of their specific segments. After internal conversation and collaboration with our client, we settled on a multi-month, multimode qualitative approach that did not utilize any in-person methodologies.

Here's a brief overview of that project to demonstrate how qualitative research can be just as valuable, when in-person is out of the equation:

**Research objective.** In order to help drive consideration of the client brand among pre-identified target segments, we sought to understand key financial needs and the accompanying decisions. Specific goals included identifying needs states, brands/products considered, consideration drivers, how solutions are selected and what success looks like. To build an understanding that went beyond top-of-mind needs, we recommended a longitudinal study spanning approximately two months.

**Methodology.** An initial, three-day qualitative discussion (online bulletin board) built an understanding of each participant's unique financial mind-set – their background, goals and aspirations, current financial situation and recent financial decisions/plans.

Then, respondents tracked all

financial activities for six weeks in a personal diary. During the six-week diary, we conducted two separate rounds of one-on-one in-depth interviews via webcam to dig into the emotional drivers behind the financial activities logged.

Near the end of the six-week diary, the research team used all data gathered to date and developed initial hypotheses during a workshop and brainstorming session.

As a final stage, ethnographic qualitative interviews were conducted with select respondents to further explore and refine the hypotheses developed in the consideration map planning phase.

**Results plus conclusions.** The initial three-day qualitative discussion (OLBB) provided a solid foundation to ease respondents into the project and for the research team to build a meaningful narrative around

who they are and what's important to them. Then, the six-week diary and accompanying webcam interviews identified a range of specific nuances and shared behavior when it came to understanding triggers, information sources and consideration drivers.

Finally, to contextualize all our findings, the ethnographies enabled a holistic understanding of the respondents as individuals, the impact of family dynamics and what role cultural factors may have played on their decision-making.

By employing multiple approaches of qualitative, we understood these consumer segments on a much deeper and more cohesive level. In the end, the client was able to offer customized financial services for these particular segments and, ultimately, help them meet their financial goals in new and unique ways.

## Uncover the underlying 'why'

In the past, being face-to-face with respondents has been a surefire way to understand deep-rooted emotions and help uncover the underlying "why" behind human behavior. But sometimes, that changes.

Familiarizing your team with a suite of alternatives to in-person research is a twofold guarantee: Your team will be well-prepared for any disruptions should face-to-face data collection no longer be an option and your collective capacity for addressing any research objective will be significantly expanded.

While methodologies may sometimes shift, the need to understand consumers on a deeper level does not. Be ready. ①

Zach Mullen is a senior project manager with the qualitative research department at Cincinnati-based research firm Burke, Inc. He can be reached at zach.mullen@burke.com.



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... new product research

# Looking for the right mix

How do you market an in-home cocktail maker?

| By Sarah Freske



## snapshot

For research into its Home Bar product, Drinkworks wanted consumers to drive the process.

Disruption, with all of the chaos that the word implies, is generally seen as a good thing if you're the one causing it. However, marketing a disruptive product comes with a variety of its own hurdles and the ways in which companies overcome these barriers to reach consumers can make or break a product.

Drinkworks, a joint venture between Anheuser-Busch InBev and Keurig, had just launched its own disruptive new product, a single-serving cocktail maker called the Drinkworks Home Bar. The product was available for purchase in five brick-and-mortar stores all located in St. Louis. In preparation for a move into additional expansion markets and ultimately a national launch, Drinkworks wanted to optimize its product and marketing strategy – but in order to do this it needed to understand which aspects of its current strategy were working well and which were not.

## Make the user the hero

To accomplish this, the company partnered with AMC Global, a research firm with experience helping launch products. It was critical to Drinkworks that insights were gathered from actual purchasers of the new product, but with very few units in market, the company knew this would be an incredibly challenging task. Drinkworks knew that it wanted to design a research process that enabled the consumer to drive decision-making. In fact, one of the “Five Principles” of Drinkworks is to make the user the hero, so this involvement was crucial. With this in mind, the company planned to use a test-and-learn approach to gather insights and improve its product.

The research plan began with AMC Global's PFU (purchaser follow-up) methodology, which gave the companies a way to recruit a robust sample of new product purchasers immediately after launch and understand



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## Qual and quant angles

Using AMC Global's ResponseCash PFU (purchaser follow-up) methodology, the companies recruited the very first purchasers of the Drinkworks Home Bar to participate in online or mobile research during the initial test market launch. The ResponseCash system uses in-pack or on-pack survey invitations to recruit purchasers of new products into survey research. For their participation, respondents receive a prepaid cash-card incentive. For this research, survey invitations were designed and placed in product packages prior to the product being shipped to stores. Additionally, Drinkworks leveraged a significant incentive (\$80) in order to recruit a quantitative base size of actual product purchasers, even when only a few hundred machines had been sold.

This method of inviting and incenting respondents ensured a robust and representative response to the survey. A sample size of 180 purchasers participated in the first phase of the research. These hard-to-reach respondents would have been impossible to find via more traditional methods such as online panels. This methodology also allowed the companies to follow up with purchasers over time. Here, purchasers were recruited to participate in three phases of research corresponding to key usage periods – immediately after purchase, after six weeks and again after six months of usage.

Because Drinkworks had a desire to connect with real Drinkworks buyers on a deeper level, it also utilized shop-alongs and in-home ethnographies. "Qualitative insights would be a critical supplement to the quantitative research and help to bring the consumer experience to life for the organization," says Erin Russeck, EVP, corporate strategy and innovation, AMC Global. "Immediately following the launch of the Drinkworks Home Bar, shop-alongs and in-home ethnographies were conducted in order to see consumers' experiences with the Drinkworks system firsthand. Specifically, we sought to gauge purchasers' first impressions of the Home Bar when they

their experiences with the product over time. Using a variety of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the companies conducted research to better understand the purchaser/user perspective and the shopper perspective, as well as the broader, market-level perspective.

Beyond tools and methodologies, an ongoing challenge for the research was the need for agile insights at a near-constant pace. "Drinkworks' goal is to learn from every consumer touchpoint and allow the insights to drive decision-making," says Jessica Bolger, director, consumer insights, Drinkworks. "Because these decisions are being made every day, we often don't have the luxury of time. We need to provide accurate and actionable insights that are senior-management-ready within hours and days instead of weeks and months."

## Real consumers in real moments

The newness of the product, as it turns out, did not end up being a barrier to the research. Because the most critical aspect of the research program was to talk to real consumers in real moments, the disruptive quality of the product could be overcome in testing. For most studies, consumers weren't actually presented with the product. Instead, the companies reached consumers as they experienced the product in market – from seeing it in store, to trying a sample, to buying it, setting it up at home and using it over time.

When recruiting target buyers for broader objectives and introducing them to the product, Drinkworks shows a traditional concept and descriptive video for the product. The video simulates what a consumer might find when shopping in a store or on the Drinkworks website. Therefore, it provides the same information that consumers would naturally have prior to buying in market.



The Drinkworks Home Bar is a single-serving, pod-based drink maker for cocktails, beer and more.

purchased in-store, brought it home, set it up and used it for the first time.”

In addition to understanding the product’s launch through initial buyers, Drinkworks also wanted to better understand sampling and demonstration efforts in the first launch market in order to optimize the sampling strategy moving forward. From the initial stages of the research, the companies hypothesized that sampling and demos would be a critical component of the marketing plan in driving purchase. Not only was this product disruptive, but it also came at a high price point and it was reasonable to assume that consumers would want to try it before buying it. Using SampleTrak, Drinkworks sought to confirm this hypothesis while also better understanding the role of sampling on strategy. Specifically, Drinkworks needed to understand who it was reaching through the sampling efforts, as well as the impact on conversion to purchase.

Drinkworks also wanted to know how successful it had been thus far in building awareness and purchase in

the market, as well as what attributes were most associated with the brand. To learn more, the companies conducted a multi-wave attitude and usage study with alcoholic beverage consumers timed with critical moments in the launch.

Finally, it leveraged actual purchasers from the PFU and recruited target consumers to conduct custom research including qualitative focus groups and conjoint research in order to inform the innovation pipeline. “Even the most challenging studies were successful,” says Russeck. “For example, within the first few weeks of launch and with less than 500 machines sold, we were able to recruit a quantitative base size of 180 actual product purchasers to participate in our research program.”

### Strengths and weaknesses

As planned, the research helped Drinkworks to uncover some strengths and weaknesses of the Home Bar launch. Many of the findings were positive signs for the new brand. For instance, through the

research Drinkworks found that it was reaching its intended target of consumers of alcoholic beverages. Home Bar purchasers had an understanding and appreciation for the uniqueness of the product, citing novelty, convenience, value for entertainment and the wide variety of drinks as the top purchase motivators. The product had also gained some buzz, with many consumers in the initial market learning about it via word of mouth. Finally, purchasers liked the drinks and were ultimately satisfied with the product.

The research also enabled Drinkworks to improve certain aspects of its product and marketing strategy. For example, as a result of this research program, Drinkworks modified the Home Bar’s quick-start guide to ensure that the setup process was clear and frustration-free. The company also improved its sampling and demonstration strategy in order to ensure that it reached a relevant target and drove conversion. Finally, it developed various strategies for increasing consumer value and driving NPS scores. Specifically, Drinkworks made changes to the price and promotion strategy, the innovation pipeline and brand communications.

### On the consumer’s level

While the disruptive nature of the Drinkworks Home Bar could have become a barrier to the product’s launch in additional markets, Drinkworks avoided this outcome by truly getting on the consumer’s level to understand the motivations of those who were already deciding to purchase the product. This enabled the company to not only capitalize on those aspects of the product that drew consumers in but also remedy any pain points that arose within the entire purchasing process – from when a potential buyer first laid eyes on the product to when they brought it home and tried it out for themselves.

This outcome was the direct result of Drinkworks’ desire to “make the user the hero” – which the company accomplished by gathering insights from purchasers through the entire buying and usage process and even beyond – enabling consumers to drive decision-making. 📌

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●●● brand research

# No identity crisis here

A product marketer's guide to effective product naming

| By Sanjay Puri



## snapshot

The author details his firm's quest to develop frameworks and guidelines for naming new additions to its product portfolio.

As companies evolve and grow their businesses, it's no secret that their product and service offerings are likely to expand as well. While growth is great for businesses, the expansion of product portfolios often requires companies to reevaluate their approach to how they define their brand and go about naming their products.

When companies start, there is typically one product and one company. Many times, the name of the company and product are identical. As companies attempt to address additional customer challenges, product portfolios grow. As a result, companies find themselves grappling with how to provide a way for prospects and customers to navigate an increasingly broad portfolio of products to find the specific solutions that fit their needs.

When a company is small, employees are few and products are even fewer, employees communicate constantly. The people who define messaging are also the ones building the website and possibly selling. However, as companies and products grow, and functional organizations are formed, opportunities for misalignment multiply. A product might show up as one name on product collateral, a slightly different version on the website and a completely different name on a sales invoice. Even though these deviations appear minor (and correctable) early on, they always (absolutely always) get worse!

The company I work for, Avalara, recently experienced this exact dilemma with our expanding product portfolio. As my team and I began researching with analyst firms and other B2B SaaS companies on how to, quite simply, name our expanding portfolio of products while staying aligned with our brand promise, we quickly learned that there is no ready-made guide to product naming. It was clear to us that we were going to have to pull together disparate frameworks and methodologies to develop our own product naming principles.

However, it also became rapidly clear to us that before defining the naming principles, we would have to first establish and understand several



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issue regulations and businesses work to stay compliant using spreadsheets and other manual processes.

The creation of marketecture is not merely a graphic design exercise. It requires a solid understanding of the company's products, how they align with customers' pain points and how they solve those problems. It also requires alignment with internal organizations including product management, sales, solutions consulting and others to ensure that there's general agreement on how we're going to describe the company to external audiences.

### Create a product catalog

Similar to the approach taken for a marketecture, the next step is to create a product catalog, which is an outside-in representation of a company's products and services. The product catalog is not how a company views its products externally but how you want your customers and prospects to view your product offerings.

To begin cataloging products, you must first establish how you will define categories in a hierarchical fashion, beginning with the category itself and all the way down to individual products themselves. By creating an agreed upon framework of definitions for categoriza-

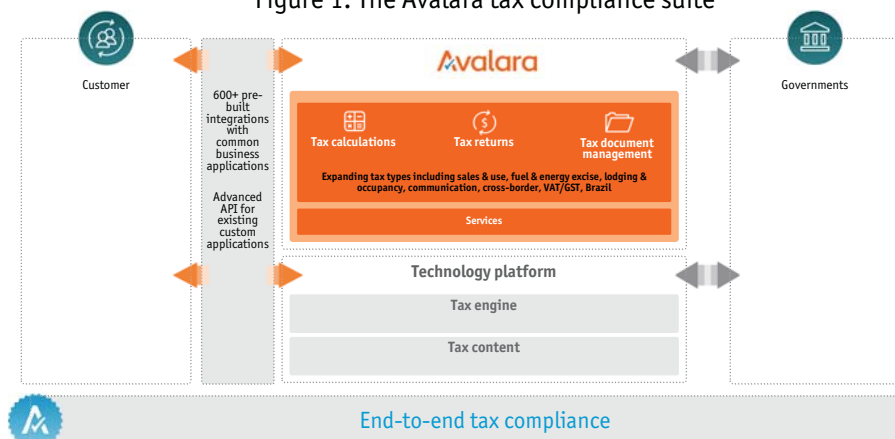
foundational elements, including our marketecture, product catalog, brand architecture and product naming rules.

### Clearly define the market

The first step in the product naming process is to define your company's marketecture, which is a simplified, outside-in representation of a company's place within the market. Creating a marketecture allows your team to clearly define the market in which your company operates and highlight where your products fit in the overall market landscape.

If done correctly, your marketecture should enable you to easily explain to someone outside of your company your market, business and product value-add. For example, Avalara is a provider of tax compliance technology, which is a piece of the broader tax compliance market. We sit in between businesses and governments (see Figure 1) to help manage nearly every aspect of the tax compliance process, including understanding changing tax legislation, managing tax calculations and returns, managing tax notices and supporting audit responses. The tax compliance market is historically a very manual process-driven market where governments

Figure 1: The Avalara tax compliance suite



Term	Billable	Definition
Market Category	No	The industry your company operates within as defined by valid third parties.
Product Suite	No	Everything your company does, including the complete set of products, services, and add-ons that serve customers.
Product Category	No	A class of products solving a specific market need in a similar fashion.
Product Subcategory	No	A subclass of several products within a product category solving a market need in a similar fashion.
Product	Yes	A thing or service that includes features and functionality that performs a complete function.
Product add-on	Yes	Functionality that is added to a product, and billed for separately, to create incremental benefit not available in the associated product.
(Named) Product Feature	No	Included functionality within a product that creates unique and high-value benefit.

tion, your organization can more easily determine the appropriate category for new products as they come to market. An overview of this hierarchical approach to definitions is shown in the accompanying chart.

Once you have these definitions established including whether customers pay for it or not (denoted by the Billable column), you can begin creating your product catalog by structuring the framework around the major product categories. For Avalara, our main product categories include tax calculation, tax returns, tax document management and professional services.

After each product has been mapped to the appropriate product category and subcategory, your catalog should also map out the key market attributes that align with each product. For example, these attributes can be created by asking a series of questions, including:

- What size business is this product relevant to?
- What specific business challenges does the product serve?
- What regions of the world or country is the product most relevant to?

Establishing a product catalog allows businesses to create a framework that is based on an outside-in view of its solutions. Creating this type of framework allows people across the business to better understand the products themselves and the categories they serve. This also enables your marketing team to push products and solutions to the market in a way that makes it clear to customers and prospects what the

value of the product is.

### Understand the framework

The next step in laying the foundation for product naming is to understand the brand architecture framework your company follows (sometimes without even knowing it). A brand architecture is a framework that guides how a corporate brand relates to a product brand. There are many variants of the framework here; it is less important which framework you follow than to follow some framework.

The first type of brand architecture is the **master brand** strategy. The company invests all resources and equity into a single corporate brand. Workday is an excellent example of this type of brand architecture. The company only leverages its corporate brand for all of its products and solutions. In fact, Workday barely mentions product names on its web pages or collateral.

A second type is the **sub brand** architecture. Under this framework, the corporate brand provides strength to the product brand, while keeping the corporate brand as a priority. A prime example of this architecture in use is Amazon. The company attaches the corporate brand to each of its product names (e.g., Amazon Alexa, Amazon Prime, Amazon Fresh, Amazon Marketplace, etc.) because the corporate brand provides an added layer of brand awareness and customer confidence in the products and services being provided.

The third category is the **endorsed brand** strategy. Companies that leverage this architecture enhance the product brand by endorsing it through

the corporate brand. In this scenario, the corporate brand elevates the product brand through association and is typically utilized by acquisitive companies who intend to keep the acquired brand alive due to its brand equity. For example, Google acquired DoubleClick and AdMob and then referenced the acquired products as DoubleClick by Google and AdMob by Google. Interestingly, Google's organic products continue to maintain a sub brand strategy (e.g., Google Search, Google Cloud, etc.).

The final, and perhaps most unique, category is the **individual brand**. In this architecture, there is no corporate brand attached to the product brand. Each product maintains its individual brand that is distanced from the corporate brand entirely. An example of this architecture in action is Atlassian. While the company has numerous products that are widely known and used by companies, many users may not even be aware that certain products (such as Confluence, Jira, Trello, etc.) are owned by Atlassian due to the branding style.

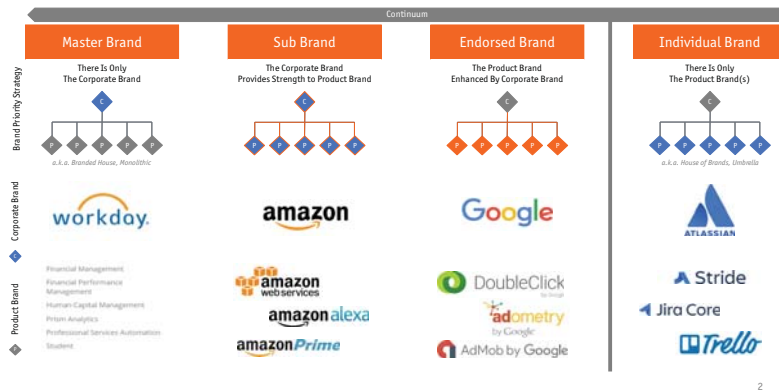
When it comes to brand architectures, companies have the ability to evolve and shift from architecture to architecture as their business evolves. Popular companies like Amazon and Google both started out as a master brand and have evolved over time into a sub brand and endorsed brand, respectively. The brand architecture you choose depends on a range of factors, including the brand awareness of your company, the industry you are in, your product set and more. For Avalara, we have adopted a sub brand strategy because the added association of our corporate brand helps prospects and customers to know that each of our products are tied to our commitment of "Tax compliance done right."

### Distinctiveness/Descriptiveness continuum

A common framework used by marketers for product naming is, quite interestingly, derived from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's articulation of the Distinctiveness/Descriptiveness continuum. This continuum starts from the least distinctive to the most in five steps: generic, descriptive, suggestive, arbitrary and fanciful.

**Generic.** A generic approach to product naming means that a brand

Figure 2: What are the brand architecture framework options?



uses a name that describes the product category with clarity. In this approach, you use the most well-known and widely accepted terms to name and describe your product. Workday is a good example where products are named Financial Management, Human Capital Management and Financial Performance Management, where merely reading the product name clearly describes the functionality of the product.

**Descriptive.** A descriptive approach to product naming is essentially a generic approach with a little twist. Under this approach, you want to make it clear and obvious what the product is, but do so in a way that makes the product name unique and allows you to associate your product name with the service it provides.

A few popular examples of descriptive product naming include Gmail, Word and Photoshop. In each of these examples, the company has branded the product in such a way that it is clear what the solution provides and allows consumers to associate the product name with the service. So, instead of Microsoft naming its product simply “word processing,” the shortened branded name, Word, makes it clear what the product does and who the product is owned by.

**Suggestive.** A suggestive product name makes it a little more playful and does not exactly describe the product. With this approach, brand names are highly suggestive of what the product does but use abstract names to capture the attention of customers without compromising their ability to understand the intent of the solution.

For example, MailChimp is a suggestive product name for several reasons.

First, it’s clear that the product has something to do with mail, specifically e-mail since it is a digital product. The playful nature of the product name points to the value-add the product offers, which is making e-mail marketing easy for everyone.

**Arbitrary.** An arbitrary approach to product naming uses a framework where a product name needs to have no tangible connection to the functionality of the product. However, the word itself is widely known and accepted.

Slack is a perfect example of this type of product naming. While this name has no clear connection to the communications functionality, the product is instantly recognizable due to its success and the uniqueness of the name.

**Fanciful.** A fanciful product name is one that has no current meaning and is often a made-up word. The benefits to this approach are that your company has the ability to own the word and trademark it. An example of this approach is the digital task management system Trello. The product name has no clear meaning but has been marketed in such a way that it is now synonymous with the service Trello provides.

## Determine the implications

Each of these product naming types comes with its own level of implications on the business. You can generally determine the implications by answering the following questions:

- How much effort will it take to create awareness of the product name?
- What’s the defensibility of the product name?

When using generic names, you

want to steer the customer conversations instantly past defining what you are selling to the differentiation with a competitor. On the other hand, each of the other naming types (descriptive, suggestive, arbitrary, fanciful) requires you to do some sort of education and definition around the product itself. Additionally, as you move from descriptive to fanciful, the process around defining and explaining product names becomes much more involved. With each naming type comes an added layer of marketing investment, which increases the costs around advertising, marketing collateral and general brand awareness for the product.

For Avalara, our company has a combination of product naming principles used in our portfolio. At the company brand level, the name Avalara is considered fanciful due to the fact that it is a made-up word and there are no other Avalaras. At the product level, we have historically chosen descriptive and suggestive names. However, as we went through this self-examination, we also decided that we wanted to start moving towards generic/descriptive names for our products in the future. With a distinctive name such as Avalara, it made sense to minimize the cognitive load associated with the product names.

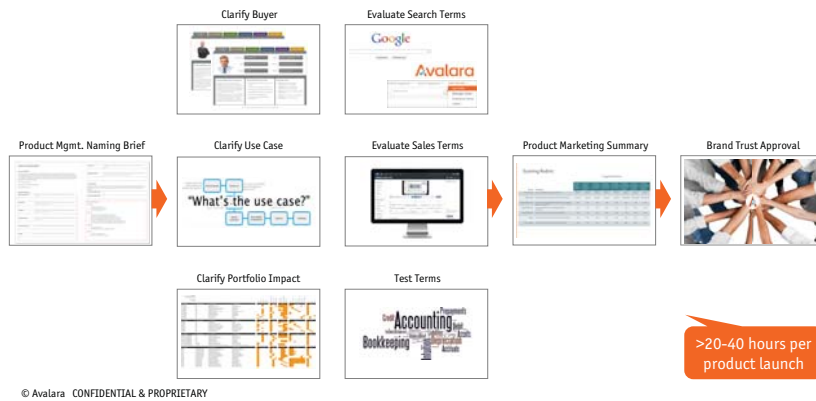
As part of our analysis, as we researched other B2B SaaS companies and how they manage their brand and product naming relationships, we discovered that a large number of them appear to be navigating (intentionally or otherwise) towards a master brand brand architecture and generic product naming.

At the end of the day, products should be used as support elements to your company’s overarching brand. The way through which you name your products should not compete with the company brand. Each product should measure up to the company’s mission and promise to support the overarching strategy of the company.

## Ensure consistency

Before you can begin applying these principles at your company, you must first define rules for how you create product naming principles to fit your business. These rules are critical to ensure consistency across all products in your portfolio. Oftentimes, these rules

Figure 3: Operationalizing our product naming principles



will be very simple, so it's important to not overthink when creating your guidelines. For example, after all of our analysis and thinking, our product naming rules were as follows:

**One company.** Product names should be cohesive and fit the company's larger narrative – for today and tomorrow. Avalara's first rule is "One Avalara," which helps ensure that each product name supports our narrative of "Tax compliance done right."

**Customer-centric.** Product names should reflect the customer's natural language. The language used should explain what a product does or does not do as well as the value it provides to the audience. How a product is named can either speed up the process of customer understanding or slow it down.

**Global relevance.** Depending on the size of your company, your product names should work across all markets, both where you are currently present and where you plan to expand to.

**Find your fit.** Identify the right product naming principle that allows you to explain the product value proposition. For Avalara, moving toward a generic/descriptive approach is critical for us to be able to explain the value of the product and easily tie it to the Avalara brand, which is where we have to focus a large portion of our marketing efforts with brand awareness.

Once you have rules set in place, the first step in operationalizing your product naming principles is to create a naming brief, which is a two-to-three-page document that grounds the organization on a number of items, including: what the product is; who the customers are that it serves; what pain points the customers are experiencing; how the

product fits within the current portfolio; and what other market insights, like competitive positioning or selling channels, have impacted the naming.

The naming brief is the foundational element that removes all of the things that a customer or the market in general doesn't necessarily care about so that you can focus on how to bring the product to life in a meaningful way.

Once the naming brief is in place, there are several work streams that begin behind the scenes, including:

- analyzing buyer persona research to clarify the target audience and buyer characteristics;
- clarifying the use cases for the product to understand how it can be specifically used by customers;
- understanding the impact on the portfolio and where the new product fits in;
- identifying the natural language search terms that prospects and customers will use to search for the solution the product provides;
- evaluating the sales teams and their calls to understand how the name can be used to increase conversion rates; and
- testing the audience to understand how the general audience responds to the product names.

All of this data can be very deep or surface-level depending on the amount of information your team needs, the product type, etc.

Following the completion of the work streams to understand all of the implications of the product and how to best utilize the name, the team should create a product marketing summary. The

summary includes a scoring rubric that measures the effectiveness of each proposed product name to understand how each name compares to one another. This summary is shared with the brand trust approval for review and feedback. At this point in the process, the committee will either approve your recommendations or provide feedback for additional testing and request a counterproposal.

While the product naming process – from the beginning with the naming brief to the end with approvals – can be lengthy, it demonstrates several things, including the complexity that surrounds product naming and the commitment of the leadership team in being thoughtful about how new products are introduced into the market.

The product naming process involves buy-in from multiple groups across a company and is not just limited to marketing. With that being said, each product naming endeavor should be viewed as a company-wide project. It's critical that product marketers leverage the insights, tools and processes created by other teams to help ensure that product naming is aligned to help move your company toward a more consistent voice when communicating your brand story. On the other hand, other marketing teams should leverage the agreed-upon product naming principles for your organization across ongoing programs, campaigns, internal tools, events and more to help fine-tune messaging and align closer to the brand promise.

## On the right track

It's important to remember that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to product naming. Each company has a unique mission, product set, value proposition and culture that all impact the architectures, frameworks and principles needed to clearly define and articulate your product names. As you begin identifying which product naming principles align most closely with your brand, keep in mind that as long as prospects and customers are willing to accept your name and the associated messaging, then you're on the right track toward success. 📌

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●●● brand research

# Tracking changes

Five ways to innovate a brand tracker

| By Carly Fink



## snapshot

Carly Fink offers tips for bringing brand trackers up to date.

In today's saturated marketplace, it is difficult for a brand to be heard. The world is awash in products and services. Private labels are competing for market share. Channels have multiplied exponentially. Media consumption habits have undergone a sea change.

As a result, tracking brand equity and advertising effectiveness is more crucial than ever.

Marketers are looking for guidance on how traditional trackers can become more relevant in today's world, given the following challenges: how consumers are interacting with media and technology; globalization; and big data.

**Media consumption.** The amount of time spent online has quadrupled in the last 10 years, with total internet usage coming close to the amount of time spent watching TV. Dual-screen or even tri-screen is the new normal. For example, a person often sits on their couch watching TV while typing on their computers and looking at their phone. The average person accesses their phone 96 times a day<sup>1</sup>. Not surprisingly, digital usage impacts how a consumer interacts with a brand. The traditional consumer purchase journey has to be reassessed to reflect this online media consumption. No longer is it a simple task to understand what drives awareness, conversion and ultimately longer loyalty. The current brand or ad tracker needs to be analyzed to determine if it reflects the digital behaviors of their consumers and prospects.

**Globalization.** A brand's distribution and marketing messages are now more easily accessible across the world, underscoring the need for a unified marketing message. It is vital to understand what resonates across the globe but also assess regional demands. Though a unified brand is essential, there also needs to be a local-specific understanding to build unified ideas. Brands need to take into account individual market nuances, challenges and interpretation into cohesive insights. When it comes to global trackers, separate trackers are often costly and informa-



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the individual needs of a brand. Incorporating what makes a brand unique helps the data become more actionable. Quick weekly meetings are an essential way to make sure that everyone is on board with the status of the project. Each quarter, in response to a quickly evolving digital landscape, the team should discuss what questions need to be continually tracked and if any part of the survey requires tweaking.

With today's survey technology, real-time results are an easy way to check the tracker's status. This lets marketers look at results when needed but there must be a sufficient number of respondents to make decisions that impact communication initiatives and respondents still need to be checked for quality.

Continual tracking can allow for results to be evaluated at any time throughout the year. This longitudinal methodology is beneficial for brands with significant media budgets or large volumes of transactions. Paired with real-time tracking, continuously fielding results allows for assessment during any given period regardless if it is a week or a full year.

## 2. Modularity

Wanting research with a smaller price tag and a larger scope is a popular request (and seems like a daunting and unrealistic ask). Creating one tracker for either multiple countries or multiple products or audiences is often a cost-effective solution. However, the key is to make sure the client has realistic expectations. In a modular approach, the tracker needs to be uncomplicated and changes between waves should be minor. Depending on the budget, a way to decrease cost is to limit the number of open-ended questions.

For example, modularity can be in the form of using one tracker for several countries. If a brand decides to have a multi-country tracker in place, it must use a global synthesis process that incorporates individual market nuances, challenges and local interpretation into cohesive insights. Without these regional changes, results may skew incorrectly.

When it comes to one tracker for global initiatives, having a localization specialist who

tion is slow to capture. Brands are looking for ways to have one global tracker that also takes into account regional differences.

**Big data.** With so much information available, it is hard to understand how to interpret all of it and link multiple sources together. Marketers question how trackers fit with their other data sources.

While brands are so focused on immediate results, trackers provide an outlook of success long-term. Marketers are looking for their tracking initiatives to go the extra mile to help address global initiatives, incorporating additional metrics, and the role technology has in the consumer purchase journey.

To address these concerns when it comes to this type of quantitative research, there are five ways that brand trackers can be more innovative.

## 1. Operational flexibility

The first change focuses on how to become a more agile researcher. The No. 1 concern from clients in regard to tracking is that they feel the research is not flexible enough. While flexibility means different things to every marketer, it most often refers to the speed of delivery of results and the ability to change questions based on shifting needs.

Changing survey questions in a tracker should only be done when there is clear communication between teams and a strong rationale for why the questions need to be changed. The goal is only to modify questions if it is essential to the brand. It is recommended to have a kickoff meeting with researchers, marketers and key stakeholders to launch a more flexible tracker that allows the changing of survey questions. Goals of this meeting are to make sure that objectives are aligned and determine what is working (and what's not) with the current tracker. The meeting should discuss the consumer sales funnel, key trigger points to purchasing the brand and specific shopping behaviors that need to be captured. Often, trackers focus on standard tracking questions vs. understanding



is also a market researcher is critical. Combining these two (research knowledge and localization) not only ensures work runs smoothly across all countries but also that the research is accurate and takes into account all cultural nuances. This specialist checks that objectives are met and learning is developed with consistency and depth across markets. The process also includes determining and employing survey scales that take into account cultural differences across countries.

The survey is first developed in English with client feedback to make this type of modularity work. Once the wording is approved, the research is then translated into each region's local language. At this point, any local differences are earmarked to make sure they are accounted for in the analysis phase. To ensure accuracy, it is reviewed by a separate third-party reviewer after translation. When results are out of the field, the localization specialist reviews the data to make sure regional differences are not due to cultural nuances.

try trends and information featured in press coverage.


For example, if a competitor suddenly had a significant increase in awareness, looking at outside data points can explain the reason behind the change. Did the competition increase ad spend? Did the brand have more press than usual?

## 5. Correlating outside data

Lastly, when it comes to ad tracking specifically, longitudinal quantitative data can be correlated with ad spend dollars (your brand's and the competition's). If marketers have access to the competitor's media spend, it can be integrated with a tracker.

Using advanced analytics, the difference in media spend can determine if there is any correlation between the difference in awareness, consideration and purchase. Marketers can use this information to determine if their creative and specific media buys are working.

For example, in Q2 a company may have increased its spending on paid search as well as radio. In this scenario, combining media information with tracking results can show that paid search did not correlate to an improvement in brand awareness. However, investment in radio commercials did improve awareness. Results become very actionable to the brand. Now the company's next steps are to determine if it is using the right targeting or creative for paid search or if perhaps the medium simply does not work. On the other hand, it may want to invest more in radio advertising.

Regardless if any of these innovations are right for a specific brand, the key is to stay in constant communication with their research team so data can be optimized to be as actionable as possible. 

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## 3. Modifying the pathway for the digital landscape

As technology advances, the consumer shopping funnel becomes more complex. The traditional shopping behavior has been transformed into a labyrinth of multichannel interactions influencing customer decision processes.

Building a brand that consumers love still includes measuring awareness, emotional association and sales drivers. But brand-building in the digital age also includes tracking how prospects and customers utilize media channels (e.g., search, YouTube, banner ads, TV commercials). It is critical to see how this multichannel behavior of buying impacts brand relevance, experience and visitors' desire to return to these sites.

The research now needs to break down the decision journey to identify critical points of influence, regardless if they are online or offline. It should show the role of the brand and the competition in these primary areas. Points of influence in the consumer decision journey include strategic touchpoints, content expectations at these touchpoints, friction points and desired experiences for the customer.

## 4. Contextualizing tracking (outside information)

With so much data available, there is more opportunity to connect the dots that the tracker leaves unjoined. Additional information can bring more depth and context to what is happening in the industry. Trackers can help explain the "why" behind the information by also looking at business KPIs, social listening, media data, web and search analytics, indus-



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●●● brand research

# Reasons to believe

Why brand religions should guide your research design

| By Niels Schillewaert and Angie Deceuninck



## snapshot

Whether you're a devotee of one or a believer in multiple, brand and marketing religions can offer useful guidance.

No two brands are the same. They have different objectives, serve different needs, are in different stages of their product life cycle, face different levels of competitive intensity and are run by different marketers with their own strategies. So why is it that we measure them the same way? Why do market researchers have the tendency to push standardized research approaches across brands regardless of context?

Branding research – as varied as segmentation and positioning, brand archetypes, distinctive assets, advertising optimization and testing, packaging research and brand tracking – is aimed at measuring brand success and performance. Yet what defines brand success and how can you measure it?

Every marketer needs to build, craft and grow strong brands. Many books have been written capturing marketing theories, frameworks and models on how to build future-proof brands. They provide brand owners and marketers with a framework on what defines brand success, which drivers to pursue as well as which key dimensions drive brand growth. Furthermore, they give insight into which metrics and KPIs to consider when measuring brand strength. This abundance of visions and beliefs causes a lot of confusion amongst brand owners and marketers on which strategy to pursue and how to define brand success. Yet in this abundance of complex choice, focus is crucial.

This is where the notion of religions kicks in. Religions have emerged because people want to have an explanation for phenomena that cannot be explained or are very complex. A religion is a line of thinking and “a pursuit followed with great devotion.” Similarly, as this definition points at, brands can benefit from choosing a brand strategy framework to guide them in everything they do.

In that sense brands need commandments (e.g., to gain understanding and alignment on brand strategy as well as measure brand foundations to support knowledge and instruction). Marketers and insight professionals need to contemplate (e.g., to develop your brand and translate it into brand



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activation, communication and packaging). And they need to show devotion – to consistently behave according to the commandments and track the performance of the brand and measure the impact of the marketing mix.

Those who have taken a course in marketing were probably introduced to Philip Kotler's principles of marketing and branding. For those who have not, Kotler talks about STP (segmentation, targeting and positioning), the importance of differentiation and the creation of a unique selling proposition. Kotler is the godfather of modern marketing and he and other thinkers like Kevin Lane Keller and David Aaker have laid the foundation of what we could label as the classic religion. Just like the classics in food and music, this thinking is still of great value today, with many brands using it as a framework to set up their marketing plans or brand strategies.

Yet in the postmodern world this Kotlerian thinking is being challenged by new beliefs and visions of how to grow a brand. This has mainly happened due to consumers being more informed and knowledgeable, often empowered by technology and social media. There have also been new vogues in business and marketing theories by several thought leaders, e.g., around System 1 and System 2 thinking. According to some of these experts, brands need to stop segmenting and focus on the entire market to guarantee growth, while others appraise the empowered role of consumers where they become the voice of the brand. We found that we can bundle these various streams of thought in five brand religions.

### **The classic religion**

*"There is only one winning strategy. It is to carefully define the target market and direct a superior offering to that target market."* – Philip Kotler

The foundation of modern marketing, emphasizing the importance of segmenting the market and differentiating a brand in the minds of

consumers. Building brand equity through the notion that retaining a customer is cheaper than acquiring a new one, backed by consistent integrated marketing communications, is at the core of this religion.

### **The penetration religion**

*"Sales growth won't come from relentlessly targeting a particular segment of a brand's buyers; this fantasy is harming marketing effectiveness."* – Byron Sharp

This school of thought challenges the classic thinking by introducing new marketing "laws" focusing on market penetration through acquisition of customers (not retention) based on mental and physical availability.

### **The relationship religion**

*"Emotion leads to action, while reason leads to conclusions."* – Donald Brian Calne, neurologist

This brand philosophy highlights the importance of building a long-lasting emotional connection with consumers to achieve loyalty from the heart and beyond reason, where these relationships are coherent with inter-human relationships.

### **The experience religion**

*"Welcome to a new era of marketing and service in which your brand is defined by those who experience it."* – Brian Solis, digital analyst, speaker and author

Building memorable experiences forms the foundations of this brand religion. Experiences surpass physical products consistently but also have exclusivity, play on multiple senses and focus on creating delight.

### **The influencer religion**

*"A brand is no longer what we tell the consumer it is; it is what consumers tell each other it is."* – Scott D. Cook

This brand religion follows a strategy of marketing "through" not "to" people. There is a key role for disciples (macro, micro or natural influencers) who generate online as well as





#### CLASSIC RELIGION

#1  
THOU SHALT SEGMENT  
TARGET AND POSITION  
TO DIFFERENTIATE

#2  
THY WAY IS THE  
ONLY ONE-WAY

#3  
THOU SHALT BUILD  
BRAND EQUITY



#### INFLUENCER RELIGION

#1  
CONVERSATIONS  
ARE THY SOLE PATH  
TO GROW

#2  
THOU SHALT LOOK  
FOR DISCIPLES

#3  
THOU SHALT BUILD  
CONVERSATIONS WITH  
A PURPOSE



#### RELATIONSHIP RELIGION

#1  
THOU SHALT  
PUT EMOTIONS  
AT THE CORE

#2  
THOU SHALT  
IDENTIFY WITH THY  
CONSUMERS

#3  
THOU SHALT BUILD  
LONG-LASTING LOVE



#### EXPERIENCE RELIGION

#1  
THOU SHALT  
TRANSCEND  
THY PRODUCT  
THROUGHOUT

#2  
THOU SHALT  
INTERACT RATHER  
THAN ACT

#3  
THOU SHALT BUILD  
MEMORABILITY



#### PENETRATION RELIGION

#1  
THOU SHALT GROW  
THY CUSTOMER  
BASE

#2  
THOU SHALT TREAT  
ALL THY BUYERS AS  
EQUAL

#3  
THOU SHALT BUILD  
AVAILABILITY

offline word-of-mouth to create a ripple effect for growing the brand.

Each of these frameworks provides a different viewpoint on what defines brand success, what to aim for and which key performance indicators to pursue. The graphic summarizes the key principles or commandments, if you will, per religion.

While they all preach different beliefs, in the end, all brand religions serve the same purpose: growth in sales and creating shareholder value. As Mahatma Gandhi said: "The various religions are like different roads converging on the same point. What difference does it make if we follow a different route, provided we arrive at the same destination?"

What is important is that all stakeholders within a business align on which brand framework(s) to pursue and set off in the same direction. Regardless of the choice or mix, clarity is key as strategy is also choosing what not to do. A clear brand religion definition (or mix of religions) forces all stakeholders to act consistently, it clearly defines brand success and which key performance indicators and metrics to pursue to assess performance.

### Outlines how one should measure

No two brands are the same, nor should they be measured the same way. The choice of brand religion (mix) not only shapes how one defines brand success, it also outlines how one should measure brand and communication performance.

Consider advertising research, where many approaches focus on ad liking and recall. What defines a good advertisement depends on the brand strategy and thus the brand religion framework. A brand that follows the penetration religion will focus on creating ad messages that strengthen its "mental availability." This school of thought emphasizes the importance of distinctive assets (i.e., brand identity elements like colors, slogans, logos, etc.) that signal the brand name to consumers and hence serve as memory shortcuts, allowing consumers to make buying decisions rapidly and easily. These assets allow a brand's communication to work effectively. Brands should use these assets in communication (and packaging) consistently in order to build memory structures in the consumers' minds over time. The research design should reflect this

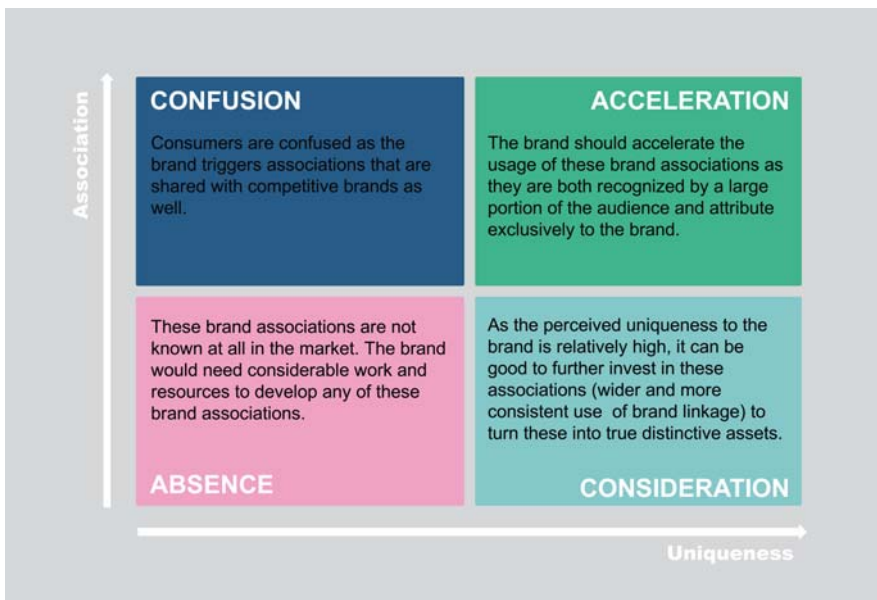
thinking and test if assets are strongly and uniquely associated to a brand – e.g., by means of putting participants under time or cognitive pressure.

Brands that pursue the relationship religion, on the other hand, will focus more on the emotions that are triggered by an ad. The relationship religion stipulates that ultimately consumers are driven by emotions and feel emotionally connected to brands. The goal of a brand is to build a brand-consumer relationship. Therefore, advertising here is aimed at building and strengthening that emotional connection with consumers. The research design will not focus on assets but rather on emotions by, for example, using an indirect measure like facial coding or an implicit association task to avoid rationalization.

A different research approach is also needed for brands pursuing the influencer religion strategy. Here the focus of the ad is to fuel conversations around brands, requiring research focus on the conversation potential of an ad. It is clear that, depending on one's strategy, advertising has a different focus and therefore must also be measured differently.

The same can be said for trackers.





Trackers serve as the ongoing finger on the pulse, gaining insight into how a brand is performing in line with brand strategy. However, trackers are probably one of the most static, repetitive and unidimensional research solutions out there. If one were to compare two random brand trackers, chances are they would be characterized by a similar research design and often be centered

around measuring the brand funnel. This is a typical framework from the classic religion, which emphasizes that it all starts with building awareness, to then move to consideration, trial, usage, preference, ending with loyalty to build brand equity. While the classic thinking is still relevant today, we see many clients shift away from these principles, embracing new beliefs

beyond the Kotlerian thinking.

If brands are shifting brand strategy frameworks, why are trackers still reflecting the classic marketing principles? Trackers should be seen as a composite of all metrics and KPIs that are important for brands to assess the extent to which they are on par with their brand strategy. Rather than considering a tracker as static and unidimensional, it should be a modular build-up where the KPIs reflect the relevant dimensions of brand success.

In essence, what one measures and how one measures it all link back to one's brand strategy. All brands are different and brand success is defined differently. Before starting research, it is essential to understand what brand religion (or mix thereof) is right for your brand. <sup>1</sup>

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# Origin story

Deconstructing the building blocks of brand identity

| By Eric Villain

## snapshot

Consumers' relationships with brands can run deep. Eric Villain looks at a way to frame and think about those relationships.

As researchers, we often talk about brands in the abstract – their core values, their ideologies and their equity, as if these were currencies that could be traded on the open market. But the truth is that, without a connection to consumers, a brand has nothing that we can discuss or measure. In fact, we could argue that there is no such thing as a brand in the absence of something called a consumer – no story without a reader or an audience.

We also know that the metrics of branding have been static since well before the digital revolution. Concepts like equity and value date back to the 1950s, if not earlier, when the number of brand touchpoints was still definable and consumer interactions with brands happened under predictable conditions – seeing a billboard, watching a TV commercial or encountering a product on store shelves. In fact, one can go way back to the middle ages and look at signage on pubs as an elemental form of branding (prior to widespread literacy).

Today, brand and consumer interactions have multiplied to an extent too extreme to get our heads around. Throughout the day, on our phones and laptops and smart speakers, we encounter brands. The line between sponsored and organic content becomes blurrier all the time, as “hidden” product references seep into things we would never consider to be advertising. Our impressions of brands consist now of so many random elements that concepts like equity can seem forced or overly simplified.

To return a level of clarity and practicality to the art of branding and brand measurement, we need to strip away long-held assumptions and return to the true core of brand meaning – the emotional relationship with the consumer. We need to go beyond brand models to understand how brands develop in the first place – the building blocks of brand identity.

Consumers develop a holistic understanding of brands across all



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touchpoints, based on personal experiences, and those experiences collectively lead to a gut feeling about a brand, something seemingly baked into our cells but actually consisting of specific moments of engagement and interaction. Fundamentally, this is our experience economy.

### Truly know the brand

This new, instinctual model of branding consists of what we call Brand Dimensions – positive and negative impressions that come before equity in the timeline of brand relationships. Brand Dimensions are difficult to dislodge; once all brand experiences have gelled in consumers' minds and consumers feel they truly know the brand, it can be very difficult to change that perspective.

Consider the case of a long-established car maker – let's use the name ABC – that positioned itself as top-quality and luxury in the 1980s. Ad campaigns, elite sports sponsorships and TV show placements sent the message that ABCs were exclusive and sumptuous, creating hooks in the minds of consumers of every class. The fact that those of us who were alive then were kids and young adults – still impressionable and inexperienced – set the hooks deeper in our psyches.

More recently, however, ABC vehicles have won fewer accolades; rumblings about performance issues have been heard in the market. Yet, for most consumers, the Brand Dimensions that ABC deployed long ago will continue to override any intellectual information that the brand may have dimmed its luster.

This is because Brand Dimensions developed into one overriding construct, lodged in emotion and instinct, not knowledge and discernment. These dimensions are the heartstrings that brands tug on, the roots that reach beneath thinking and connect products to the fiber of consumer identity.

Conversely, consider another imaginary automotive brand – XYZ

– which launched decades ago as a low-cost entry into the marketplace. Even after recent years of quality accolades and product improvement, residual Brand Dimensions still exist. It is taking years for consumers to shed these aspects of brand meaning and see XYZ as a quality vehicle maker.

Part of the thinking around the idea of Brand Dimensions was borrowed from a very different discipline – the pioneering work and publications of neuroscientist Antonio Damasio. To quote Damasio, “We are not thinking machines that feel; rather, we are feeling machines that think.” His concept of “somatic markers” recognizes the important connection between emotion and decision-making. Our point of view is that his theory and work can be applied to how brands develop in our minds and hearts.

Somatic markers – established through reinforcement of key messages and experiences – create a shorthand that is convenient for making choices and decisions. They bypass cognition and direct us toward quicker decisions and seemingly advantageous options. The bias that somatic markers create can be shaped by communication – if we figure out how to hack the marking process.

Similarly, Byron Sharp's seven rules to brand growth – cited in his classic book *How Brands Grow* – place “refreshing and rebuilding memory” at the center of the brand development process. Brand Dimensions are the sources of brand memory and they need to be consistently stimulated and reinforced to maintain solid consumer relationships.

The Brand Dimensions framework starts ahead of traditional brand equity KPIs, peeling down to the thoughts and feelings that make up a brand's impressions. These insights can help brand managers: reinforce positives; adjust communication to combat negatives; and go beyond tracking attributes (which are key yet do not tell enough of the core brand story).



### Three categories

We can separate the experiences that leverage Brand Dimensions into three core categories: reinforcing, expanding and dissonant. Let us illustrate them through the story of a hypothetical soft drink manufacturer, Mr. Zing, which has established itself with high-energy, very sweet sodas. Mr. Zing has been around since the 1990s, introducing different flavors but keeping to its guy-focused, hyperactive identity.

Reinforcing experiences are consistent with existing Brand Dimensions, strengthening neural connections and reinforcing existing responses. Mr. Zing does not need to do much to remind people what it stands for – 15-second commercials and six-second Twitter reminders featuring skateboarders and soccer stars reinforce the company's dimensions effectively.

Expanding experiences push the brand to a meaning that is consistent with its image but still refined or enlarged in some way. As the coffee craze kicked in, Mr. Zing introduced a Hyper-Latte that combined espresso flavoring with an extra jolt of caffeine – making its brand more appealing to adults as well as teens.

Dissonant experiences are incongruous with existing dimensions and must overcome them to make an impact. This can involve changing the personality of a brand, what a brand stands for, the look and feel of advertising and connections to distantly related categories.

Mr. Zing decided it could not resist the CBD phenomenon – but the idea of relaxation was completely counter to its established image. To bridge the gap, Mr. Zing introduced a Mellow Meltdown flavor, which featured its

characteristic energetic packaging and messaging but for a product that would “take you to a new high of calm.” But Mr. Zing's Brand Dimensions were too well established and this discordant offering never caught on with consumers.

### Getting consumers to talk

The key to uncovering Brand Dimensions is to get consumers to talk about their feelings and experiences with the brand. These results go beyond traditional brand attributes and personality dimensions to which people respond. We can get at these kinds of insights by:

- using projective techniques that reveal underlying territories occupied in the dimensions (usually followed up by why people imagined that brand that way) – generating the thoughts and feelings consumers have about the brand;
- putting consumers in a specific situation where they might experience the brand;
- characterizing the brand through references to people, places or things; and
- having consumers discuss different experiences they have had with the brand – e.g., first experience, best experience and most recent experience.

Through these techniques, we can construct the world in which each brand resides in the consumer's mind.

### What can we learn?

So what can we learn from a dimensions view of the marketplace and consumers?


**Act carefully when your brand is young.** When launching a brand, make

sure your communication is consistent and considered. With digital advertising so affordable, it is tempting to put out a few ideas and see what sticks but this would be a grave error. Communication that does not stick may actually hurt the development of positive dimensions; things that do not produce positive connections may also produce negative ones.

**Accentuate the positive.** If there are positive connections forming the dimensions, continually reinforce them. Leverage these connections to extend brand meaning into other categories and SKUs.

**Be realistic about the challenges of brand shifts.** Small brands that have not had strong experiences or communication to form the emotional dimensions of a brand are easier to change and shape. Well-defined brands, while hugely valuable in some ways, are harder to move. A brand with negative dimensions will take time to move – do not be discouraged. Redouble your efforts, keep to your North Star, to your brand vision. Fighting cognitive dissonance takes time and effort.

**Monitor your dimensions.** You need to understand what makes up your brand meaning and to whom. Has anything slipped into it over time? Have consumers taken your brand to a different territory? (And is that a good thing?)

Above all, respect the power and potential of brands – they are the building blocks of business relevance and are irreplaceable touchstones for consumers. 

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# Mutually exclusive

Why short-term thinking and brand-building don't go together

| By Phill Agnew



## snapshot

Access to more timely data can be a hindrance instead of a help, Phill Agnew says, by overamplifying the importance of the now.

It's a familiar picture for many working in a large corporation. They're in the boardroom of a multibillion-dollar company, their CFO is presenting the numbers and it's not great. They'd been in line for a big bonus but sales are just below the goal to meet the quarterly target.

It looks like they'll be waving goodbye to their hopes of a bonus. Unless they do something radical in the short term to boost sales, like a quick price promotion or two-for-one deal. Sure, it might not yield long-term benefits to the business but it would definitely help in the moment and get them closer to meeting the quarterly target.

While this way of thinking might seem shortsighted, it's commonplace for organizations that are under ever-increasing pressure to meet ambitious targets and show profitability.

A recent study by McKinsey found that two-thirds of executives believe short-term pressures have increased<sup>1</sup> and as a result we've become more focused on short-term wins. A clear example of this is the average holding times for shares. Back in the 1960s, shareholders would typically keep hold of shares for one year; today, it's less than six months.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, 80% of CFOs<sup>3</sup> at the world's largest companies would willingly sacrifice long-term values for tactics that hit this quarter's goals. This tactic, according to Gareth Price's thesis Thinklong,<sup>4</sup> places huge pressure on marketing, which has inevitably led to CMOs having the shortest job expectancy in the boardroom, averaging at just three-and-a-half years.

## Doesn't bode well for brand-building

The problem with this focus on short-term thinking is it doesn't bode well for brand-building. The types of tactics it encourages – sales promotions, short-term comms and cuts to marketing spend – all damage brands in the long term.

Instead, organizations need to invest in long-term thinking around



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brand-building and realize short-term goal-hitting doesn't supersede long-term growth.

In his book *How Brands Grow*, Bryon Sharp neatly details the problem with some short-term approaches. He explains why organizations should be cautious about using price promotions to drive sales. His analysis shows that sales promotions often do bring in a short-term spike in sales. This happens because the promotions bring in non-frequent buyers. Certain buyers switch between brands and tend to buy whatever is cheapest on the market, resulting in a short-term gain.

However, this means when the promotion ends, sales immediately return to their regular level. These promotions mean a smaller margin, so in order for the brand to gain profitability, it needs to secure long-term future sales with these tactics, but that's not what they deliver.

Seeing as sales promptly return to normal after the price promotion ends, brands often generate no lasting value from these short-term activities. A much smarter approach is to create long-term plans that actually add compounding value.

### Acting on the value

Part of the problem is the huge wealth of data we get from market research agencies and market research technology and our approach to finding and acting on the value of this rich data.

Gone are the days where we'd get a monthly or quarterly view on brand recall. Now we can see day by day, or even hour by hour, customer feedback from online panels or distributed surveys. There's still traditional qualitative research, which needs to be built on a foundation of hard, diverse data and analysis, but now there's also social media data and survey results – which should complement one another.

This never-ending flow of data should benefit us. It should reveal flaws

in our product, or opportunities to go after. But we're human and that's not how we naturally operate – this influx of data, if unmanaged, can render research ineffective, falling miles short of its transformational promise.

Robert Metcalfe, an assistant professor at Boston University, wrote a fascinating paper on the paradox of constant data. His paper looked at the decisions that stock traders made based on the amount of data they were given. If we're thinking of traditional market research in this scenario, we could safely assume that the more data these traders had, the better their decision-making would be. But that wasn't the case. When traders were given less information, they were more likely to invest in riskier but higher-profit stocks. Meanwhile, the data-fuelled traders were more risk-averse and quick to sell stocks as soon as they started to drop.

In all, the traders with less data actually had a much higher profit of 53%. This isn't as simple as being about the amount of data but rather what we touched on earlier, that how data is gathered and analyzed makes all the difference.

### Same value propositions

Back in 2008, comparison sites all looked pretty similar. Go Compare, Moneysupermarket, Confused and Comparethemarket all focused on functional benefits, like how much they saved the average consumer. This made a lot of sense at the time; after all, these are important benefits. But everyone was claiming the same value propositions and so they didn't generate any long-term value of differentiation.

In 2009, Comparethemarket decided to take a different long-term approach. Rather than communicate rational benefits, it followed a more emotional route. It created Aleksandr Orlov, the meerkat who owned Comparethemarket.

In the ads, Aleksandr complained about how the wrong visitors came to the site, expecting to find car insurance. Gone were the rational benefits and the stats on how much money you could save – but the results were considerably positive.



After this move, Comparethemarket rose from the fourth-ranked site to the first in terms of consideration and spontaneous awareness. Quote volumes went up by 83 percent and the company achieved its 12-month objectives in nine weeks, according to Richard Shotton's analysis.<sup>5</sup>

Ten years on, Comparethemarket still uses the same campaign and still sees positive results. It's leading the market, it stands out compared to small competitors and its campaign even inspired other competitors to follow similar themes (see Go Compare's opera singer). Sticking to a long-term strategy pays off.

### Circumvent this problem

Marketers and market researchers should broaden their focus and start to set longer-term goals for their work in order to circumvent this problem. Specifically, they should start lobbying for practices that encourage long-term investment and remove measures that don't relate to long-term value creation. For measurement, brand marketers need to stop conducting market analysis on their brand on a short-term, one-off basis.

Take this example. If we look at conversations around a brand that was the subject of some unflattering news in the last seven days, the picture might be bleak. Negative conversation could be on the rise, growing by double-digit percentages week on week. Based on this seven-day analysis, there could be some knee-jerk reactions. But if we broaden the time period we look at, it might be a different picture entirely. In fact, we might see that negative conversation



about the brand has dropped dramatically compared to previous years.

A short-term, daily focus would miss this insight entirely. It might lead a marketer or analyst to assume that the brand perception is negative and that short-term campaigns are needed. But taking a step back and analyzing your brand on a wider time scale reverses the picture and provides the context needed.

### Advice is clear

When it comes to effective market research, the advice is clear: monitor long-term trends before short-term shifts; use historical data to add context to daily or hourly insights; focus less on instant, one-off surveys and invest in longer-term variations; and build up a wealth of historical data to compare with ongoing data.

There aren't specific metrics you should monitor in every situation. That's better set by those who know the product and brand. But this advice should help steer you away from metrics that will warp your decision-making.

A good acid test to apply to your own business is to look at the last survey, focus group or other type of research project you conducted. Did it build on historical results? Did it last longer than a month? Did it check to see how consumer views and opinions have changed over time? If it only analyzed a snapshot of how your consumers felt then it will probably cause more harm than good.

### Context is vital

When it comes to building a brand, long-term approaches will always trump short-term thinking. And when it comes to measuring your success, context is vital. A long-term view of data, preferably by the year, is key to seeing if trends are really developing. And a contextual look at competitors is useful for setting benchmarks.

What's best, then, is to take a step back and check that the vantage point that you're looking at the data from gives you the most far-reaching and clearest view. 📌

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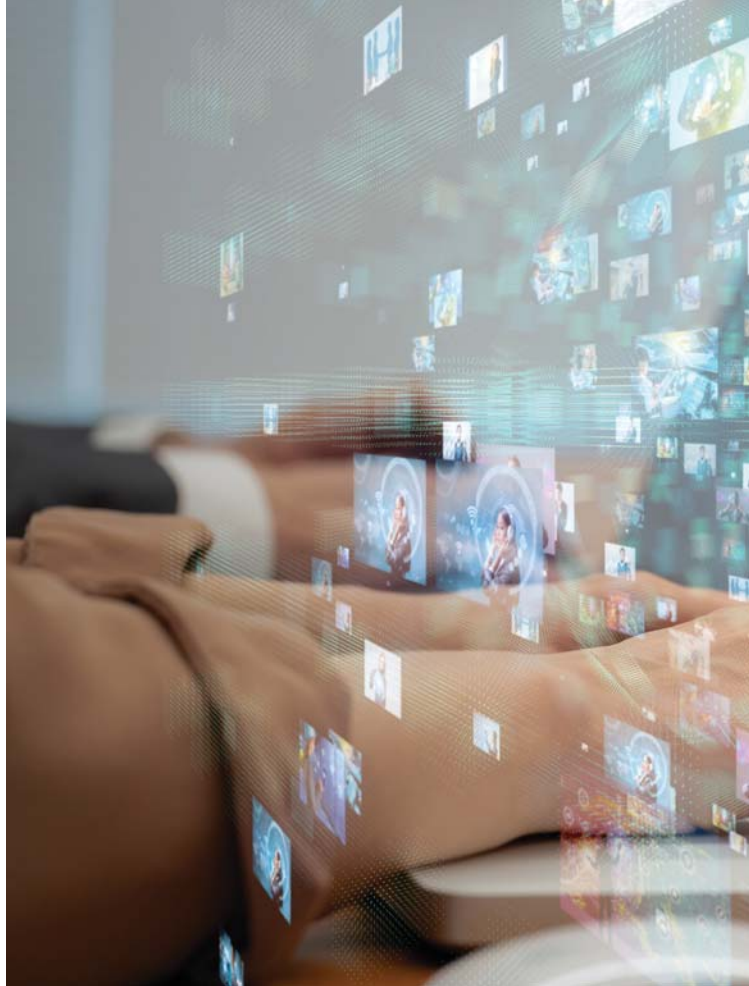
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●●● brand research

# Slices of life

Mining social media for product and brand interactions

| By Tetiana Kutsa



## snapshot

Adding image analysis to your explorations of social media data can uncover potential new product ideas, the author says. Caution: this article may make you crave ramen.

Market research is essential in finding and understanding competitors, customers and market niches. Once a company has information about consumers' needs, complaints and expectations, it can tailor its products and services to be more competitive in the market, increase ROI and win customer loyalty.

Beyond data gathered from traditional research, social media is an inexhaustible source of consumer insights, where people talk about various aspects of their online and offline life, share their opinions and experiences and complain and praise products or services. This article will use an example of instant ramen to explore how social media intelligence tools can help brands explore product usage and uncover potential innovations and marketing breakthroughs.

In our view, there are five reasons why social media intelligence improves market research.

### 1. Absence of the "interviewer effect"

Social media intelligence software can help avoid the influence of the interviewer on the data. Users post visual and textual context based on their feelings and emotions, triggered by a particular situation, offering abundant customer insights that could uncover many opportunities for further research.

### 2. The volume and data reachability

Social media intelligence software collects and analyzes millions of data points from thousands of sources daily. Thanks to the rising internet penetration into our lives (it has almost tripled for the last 10 years) researchers can monitor the activity of various socioeconomic groups in the social media landscape according to their interests, income, etc.

### 3. Retrospective data

Historical data is kept in the system even if users delete it, which allows researchers to find the original sources.

### 4. Verification of conventional research methods



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Social media data allows you to not only form hypotheses but also to supplement the conventional analytical results with additional data.

### 5. Visual analytics

Simple text monitoring isn't enough. Social media intelligence solutions that incorporate visual insights can be used to detect previously unknown customers and product usages which might go undetected with traditional tools.

Visual analytics is a feature of social media intelligence software for monitoring pictures. While social monitoring tools analyze text mentions, visual insights (VI) work with images. The system collects the images that are related to the topic and analyzes their context. A word cloud illustrates numerous insights such as people (women, men, toddlers, etc.), action – what they're doing (eating, standing, selling), the scene – in what setting (city, supermarket, a park, etc.) and with which object (computer, noodles, an appliance, etc.) they are interacting. These insights shed light into why people buy or ignore a brand or a particular product.

In addition, apart from detecting objects, scenes, colors, people and action, VI also recognizes brand logos. Logo recognition can boost marketing research and analysis by providing visual information about the customers' preferences – even if they didn't type a single word about a brand in their social media post. The ability to identify logos from pictures, in the absence of any accompanying text, opens a world of possibilities for the analysis of consumer-brand interactions.

### Instant-noodle case study

In order to conduct research on instant noodles, social media mentions and user photos were collected. The search query included two keywords: "noodles" and "instant noodles." Afterward, machine learning algorithms were applied to analyze user messages to understand what

they said about the noodles.

With the help of AI-powered social media intelligence software and image recognition tools, research was conducted in order to identify a typical consumer of instant noodles, including their interests and consumption moments.

Two million word-of-mouth mentions in total, and roughly the same number of images, were analyzed, including brand mentions on social networks, forums, blogs, review sites, online media. The research period was January 2, 2020 to March 2, 2020. The data was gathered worldwide in English and Russian. We employed



spam deletion, dataset sampling, sentiment and content analysis, visual content breakdown and Twitter-followed pages exploration.

AI-powered visual analytics detected three target audiences: students (young people under the age of 20), e-sports athletes, and women on a diet (20-50 years old). The research gathered their perceptions, attitudes towards the product and expectations of how the noodles can be consumed and improved. Moreover, it discovered popular trends and uncovered opportunities for new product launches.

Apart from the gender of people depicted in social media images, visual insights helped to detect more accurate customer personas





Cooking with Alison  
@CookingwithAli

I eat a lot of #instantnoodles when #bingewatching #kdrama. Had these #cheese #ramyun for the first time & loved them!

#foodblogger #noodles #koreandrama #Koreanfood #productofkorea #foodie



by identifying age and occupation. Once the system collected a sufficient amount of user-generated content – including customers' posts, reviews, photos and screenshots from social media – the researchers looked deeper into the data and revealed the following information.

**Students and young people under the age of 20.** When we analyzed the mentions and students' photos, we found that for every second student, instant noodles are lunch, while for every tenth student it's a staple diet. For the majority of students (92%)

noodles are a quick, cheap and nourishing meal. For some (24%) it's a dry snack, a hangover remedy and a way to escape routine. Most young girls (47%) enjoy the noodles as a guilty pleasure and a cheat meal.

AI-powered filters were applied to see if there were any insights that can help researchers understand the audience better. Here are some of them:

- Instant noodles are a part of a cultural code ('90s fashion). Young people love taking selfies with them.

- We found out how customers really eat the noodles. Interestingly, some prefer to drink them or eat them as a snack during class.
- Instant noodles were often detected in pictures with iPhones and other expensive gadgets, dispelling the myth about noodles as only being popular among the lower socioeconomic classes because they are a cheap meal.

**Expectations and opportunities:** The young users follow cultural trends and they expect noodles manufacturers to modify their packaging and taste to suit needs and wants of teenagers and students who prefer ready-to-eat foods. Moreover, they are actively insisting on noodle brands launching a new product (noodles as a dry snack) since some eat noodles during class or a break.

**E-sports players.** There are more than 18 million e-sports players chatting online and sharing photos with noodles. These people spend around 16 hours per day in front of a laptop screen. They rarely have time to eat, thus instant noodles is their favorite ready-to-eat meal – quick and nourishing.

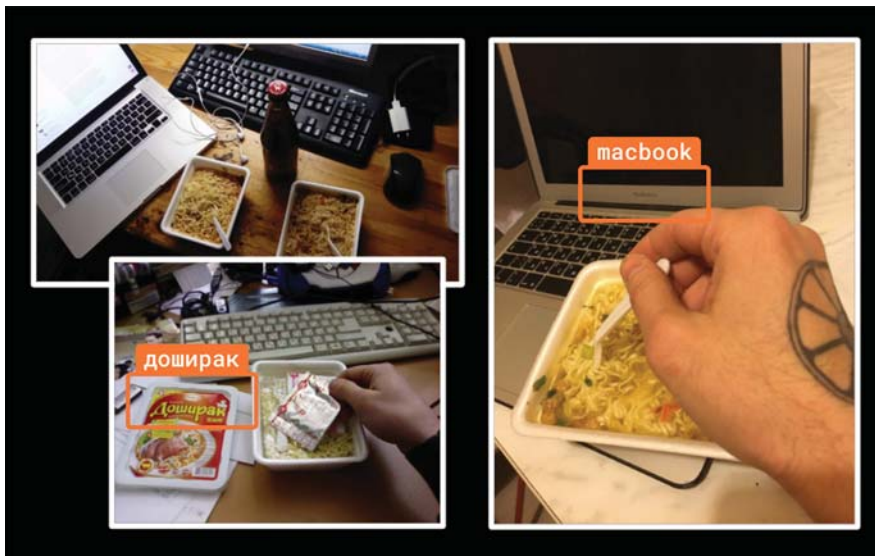
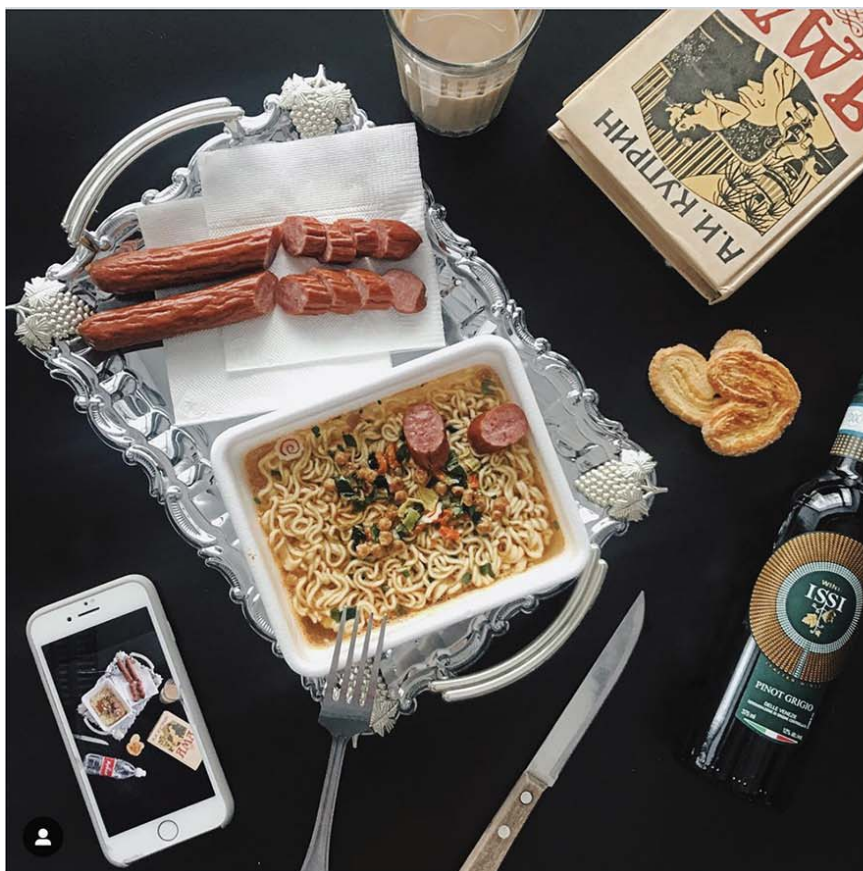
The research found:

- Laptops and keyboards next to the noodles. Most of the e-sports athletes eat right next to their computer (even expensive MacBooks!) and they risk spilling the noodles on the keyboard. Potentially valuable insight: create packaging that prevents spilling.
- Most e-sports players eat two packs of noodles in one sitting. They expect a bigger portion size and more sauce to make the noodles more nourishing.

**Women in the 20-50 age group who are interested in losing weight.** These women avoid the sauce, which is calorie-dense, but eat egg noodles because they are lower in carbs, exotic and tasty. Also, the analysis of images shows that children love the noodles and it's the only food they would eat without extra pushing from their parents.

The analytics revealed that 88% of





women post and share recipes with noodles, share ideas on how to make the noodles less calorie-dense and fatty and discuss Asian recipes. Their expectations are straightforward since the main desire is for instant noodles to be lower in calories but also remain something kids want to eat. (Image analysis revealed that the women frequently posted pictures of their children eating noodles for lunch and dinner “with gusto.”)

*Expectations and opportunities: A blog*

with recipes or a recipe along with calorie calculation on the package would be a great supplement to the product since this category of women love experimenting and sharing their successful yummy dishes online. Moreover, if children enjoy food, companies can modify the ingredients to make the noodles a healthy option for children.

### At the moment of using

Social media intelligence software can detect insights into how customers

feel at the moment of using a product, giving researchers another way to add depth and color to their data. In the example of instant noodles, visual analytics helped identify the target audience and understand their perceptions and expectations. The system collected and analyzed user-generated images, which uncovered opportunities for product improvement and can serve as an inspiration for marketing and promotional ideas.

This is just one example of a case where a social media intelligence software with visual analytics can help deliver a deep dive into understanding buyers’ interests and means of communication and interaction with a product. Researchers might want to consider leveraging traditional marketing research and the analysis of both the text mentions and visual analytics to explore how customers really feel and how they use the products in their lives. <sup>11</sup>

Tetiana Kutsa is chief marketing officer at YouScan, a developer of social media monitoring and analytics tools. She can be reached at [tetiana.kutsa@youscan.io](mailto:tetiana.kutsa@youscan.io).

●●● mobile research

# Meet them where they are

How mobile research gets you closer to consumers

| By Vardan Kirakosyan



## snapshot

The author draws on a coronavirus example to demonstrate the use of mobile research.

We've all felt the shift. Recent world events have impacted buying behavior. Forever. Consumers, who were already moving to mobile apps and the web for purchasing, are now buying household goods online. Nearly overnight the retail world, as we know it, changed.

As researchers, we rely on consumer behavior to help our companies make better decisions. Yet the insights we provide are only as good as the data we can collect. In today's economy, we must meet consumers where they're spending their time and where they're buying.

And more and more these days, they're on their phones. Sharing all kinds of mobile data. That data is powerful. Think about it: Using the smartphone, we have access to in-the-moment, meaningful, validated opinions from consumers. While they're in the midst of searching, evaluating and buying.

### People were concerned

Researchers have actually resisted the change. We now have the chance to fix that and mobile research will be the way we do so. In 2017, a research crisis was declared.<sup>1</sup> People were concerned. The most common methods to collect insights weren't working the way that they used to. Specifically, there were issues with:

door-to-door surveys: expensive, intrusive<sup>2</sup>

paper-and-pen surveys: slow and hard to review<sup>3</sup>

telephone surveys: less than 6% answer<sup>4</sup>

online surveys: only 49% of respondents were satisfied<sup>5</sup>

Enter mobile research. Today, a whopping 81% of the U.S. owns a smartphone.<sup>6</sup> And they spend more than three hours a day on their phones. That's an easy-to-reach, collective and representative audience.

The idea behind mobile research is to use smartphones to reach con-



[www.quirks.com/articles/2020/20200515.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2020/20200515.aspx)



sumers. It isn't tied down by in-person interviews, landlines or desktop computers. It moves with the people you study.

As an example, let's look at a major cell phone brand that was in a tough situation. It was tracking consumers to its stores but struggling to get a complete picture of the people likely to buy its brand. Specifically, it couldn't get an accurate sample of males, young people and Hispanic Americans using any of the four methods above.

Missing a majority of its target market meant a higher incidence rating and higher costs. It also meant that the company had to ask detailed questions to identify the make, model and carrier of people it could reach. Collectively, the challenges limited the accuracy of the research.

It solved the problem by switching to a mobile research tracker. Like a typical brand tracker, this research continued to follow the company's consumers but gave it the ability to open up the panel to 81% of the U.S. population who owns a smartphone.

This meant that the brand could now access 10 million daily consumer journeys via a market research app. It was able to meet its target market needs, find out exactly what make, model and carrier participants had – without asking – and increase its incidence rating. With a mobile app, it is also tracking online and app behavior.

### Do three things

You need to do three things to make mobile market research work for your projects: identify the need; pick your audience; add behavioral data. We'll take a look at each one to get you comfortable with the platform as a whole.

**Identify the need.** Any good research project starts with a goal in mind. Mobile research is no different. It's simply a weapon of choice, focused on acquiring accurate data and insights. So, you'll start in the same way you always do, with a simple question: What is the goal

of this study?

With that in mind, you can craft a compelling questionnaire alone or with a research provider. Either way, your questioning should be designed to meet that primary goal.

For example, in the wake of COVID-19, consumer spending has shifted. To understand the impact, we decided to research buying behavior. The goal was to track the purchases of essential versus non-essential items at big-box retailers.

We expected the virus to reduce non-essential spending. On the other hand, we expected food and toiletries would increase, as consumers prepared for a possible quarantine. Not wanting to rely on the questionnaire alone, we chose to leverage behavioral data as well.

We'll share more about behavioral research a bit later.

**Pick your audience.** In mobile research, your audience lives in an app. That app is how you connect with consumers' smartphones. When consumers download the app, they're sent a survey, asking for their demographic data such as age, income, ethnicity, relationship status any potentially many other pieces of data.

All of their data points are stored in the app. This gives you, the researcher, flexibility to profile your ideal target audience. You choose exactly who to include as a panelist.

For the COVID-19 panel we needed men and women 18+. The app gave us 1,133 participants, split 48% male, 52% female. The primary age range was 18-44 years old. Participants were screened on knowledge of coronavirus and a retailer visit within 30 days. Stated data was collected with a 13-question survey via the Surveys On The Go app. We fielded and collected data in two hours.

Here are examples of the stated behaviors they shared. In Figures 1 and 2, percent change was used to calculate increase/decrease from February to March waves.

We see consumers stocking up for a quarantine, based on increased purchases of hand sanitizer (80%), household supplies (65%), non-



Figure 1: Stated behaviors on high-traffic visits  
1/1/20 to 3/4/20

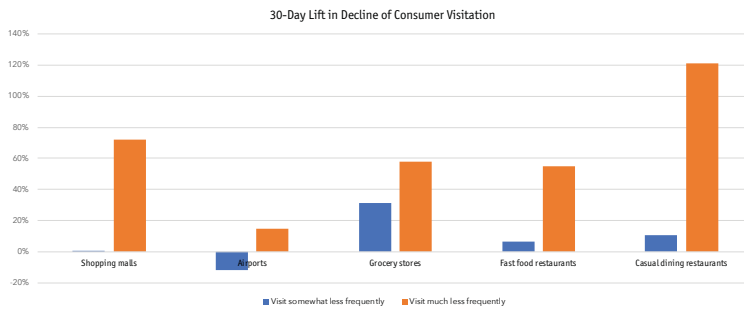


Figure 2: Stated behaviors on social interaction  
1/1/20 to 3/4/20

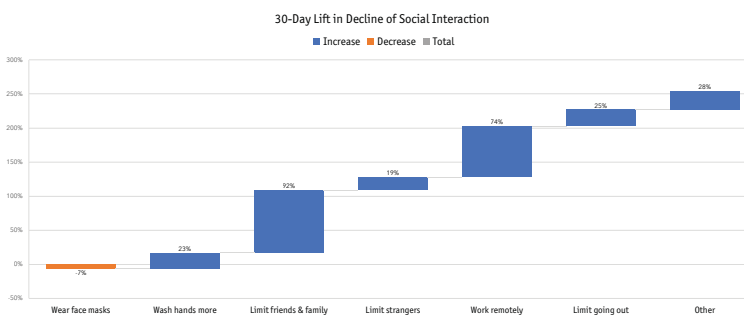


Figure 3: Tracked visits to big-box retailers  
1/1/20 to 3/4/20

Date Range	Walmart	Target	Sam's Club	Costco
Difference: week of 1/1 and week of 1/8	-3%	-14%	6%	3%
Difference: week of 1/8 and week of 1/15	-2%	-6%	-2%	-2%
Difference: week of 1/15 and week of 1/21	-5%	-7%	-4%	-9%
Difference: week of 1/22 and week of 1/29	5%	2%	7%	2%
Difference: week of 1/29 and week of 2/4	-4%	5%	0%	9%
Difference: week of 2/5 and week of 2/12	7%	9%	0%	0%
Difference: week of 2/12 and week of 2/20	-10%	-14%	-4%	-7%
Difference: week of 2/20 and week of 2/26	25%	27%	32%	29%

Percent change was used to calculate increase/decrease from week over week from 1/1 through 2/26.

perishable foods (49%) and face masks (35%). Generally, respondents were preparing for two to four weeks, which explains the buying shift at big-box retailers, where they can buy in bulk.

**Add behavioral data.** The real difference in mobile research? Behavioral data. Behavior-driven research is the ability to see what consumers do rather than rely on stated data alone. The reason it's so important is that it eliminates fraud and recall bias in one step.<sup>7</sup>

Consumers can't remember everything. So, if we only ask them to state their behavior and they can't really remember what they did, it puts the entire project at risk of being inaccurate.<sup>8</sup>

Mobile research has a solution. Here, the research is being done on an app connected to GPS on the smartphone. When a consumer moves, the app knows it. And the app can now send a survey to that consumer in real-time, right as they're walking into (or out of) a location, interacting with an

app, or doing an online activity. That's behavioral research.

Here's an example of behavioral research with COVID-19. We tracked total visits to Walmart, Target, Sam's Club and Costco. Each participant was geo-located through GPS using the Surveys On The Go app. A visit was defined as going to a listed retailer from January 1, 2020, to March 4, 2020. Visits were tracked week over week.

Figure 3 shows their behavioral data. Stated and behavioral data, together, shows us a massive shift in consumer spending.

Once COVID-19 was declared a pandemic<sup>9</sup> there was up to a 32% lift in visits to big-box retailers. When combined with the stated data, we are given a very detailed picture. Consumers are clearly preparing for a potential quarantine.

At the same time, in-store purchases decreased in home décor (31%) and clothes (32%). We'd expect consumers to decrease non-essential in-store spend as they focus on food and supplies, if they believe they're about to quarantine.

What's interesting is that we still see non-essentials being bought – consumers are just buying them online instead of in-store.

Hearing and seeing consumer behavior – in one place – is powerful. Stated surveys allow us to tap into the voice of the customer but behavioral data, delivered by mobile research, gives the credence we need to be sure our research picture is accurate.

## Final thoughts

Market research is personal. We're in the business of working with real people. And we need to get even more personal if we want to improve the results of our research. It's not enough to base important business decisions on guessing who consumers are, what they want or why they want it.

To do that, we need to talk to real people in real-time. That's what mobile research does. And that's why it is forging a new union between behavioral and survey data. Mobile research brings big data, consumer journeys and survey data together.

It's a single home for reaching a representative, first-party consumer panel. It's consumer understanding



Figure 4: Impact of coronavirus in-store – increased purchases  
1/1/20 to 3/4/20



Figure 5: Impact of coronavirus in-store – decreased purchases  
1/1/20 to 3/4/20

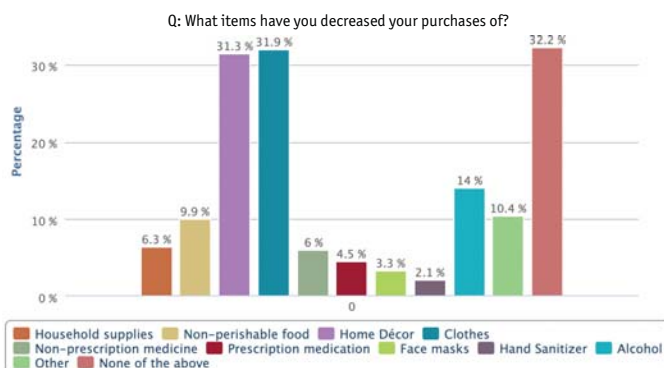
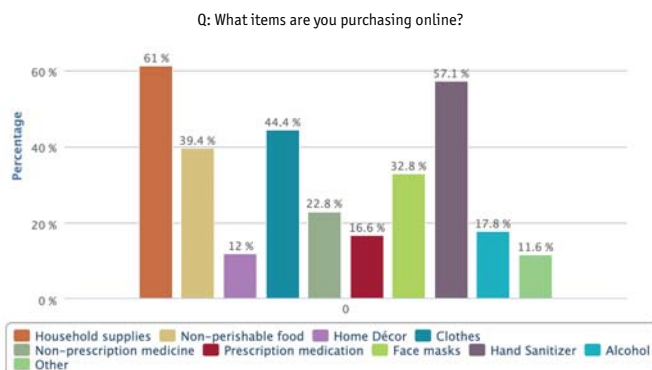


Figure 6: Impact of coronavirus on online purchases  
1/1/20 to 3/4/20



based on reality. We're excited to see our industry continue to expand, and benefit from, the latest technology. 📱

Vardan Kirakosyan is vice president of research at research firm MFour, Irvine, Calif. He can be reached at [vkirakosyan@mfour.com](mailto:vkirakosyan@mfour.com).

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# 7 TOP IN-STORE RESEARCH COMPANIES

Where better to reach shoppers than in the places where they shop? In-store research catches consumers as they make critical purchasing decisions, and the insights gathered through related methodologies enable companies to make important choices about packaging, placement and more. As shopping attitudes and behaviors continue to shift, the landscape of in-store research will shift too, and a quality research partner will help ease this transition to a new consumer climate.

The following companies employ a range of methodologies to meet your in-store research needs – from the supermarket and beyond. From face-to-face techniques such as shop-alongs and intercept interviewing to tech-driven methods like virtual ethnographies and eye-tracking, these companies are well-equipped to handle your in-store research needs.



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Elaine Buxton, CEO

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customer experience, user experience and compliance. The firm has deep experience with complex omnichannel fielding, data integration, brand representation at retail and on-the-spot rewards programs. In addition, fully integrated tech allows for crowdsourced insights for quick projects. It also allows for more robust, engagement-building, crowdsourced insights from loyal customers while in-store. Confero earned a Stevie Award for Customer Service Consulting Practice of the Year and is WBENC-certified. Confero offers mystery shopping services on-site, on the web, on mobile devices and through recorded telephone calls.

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## Creative Consumer Research

Founded 1976 | 83 employees; 13 full-time;  
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Founded 1978 | 150 employees  
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## Informed Decisions Group Inc.

Founded 2004 | 13 employees  
Colin Valdiserri, CEO



Informed Decisions Group Inc. is a full-service behavioral insights firm specializing in shopper research. IDG has been innovating in-store research for 16 years by leveraging our proprietary mobile eye-tracking analyses, retail ethnography, unique unobtrusive shop-alongs, basket metrics and shopper intercepts. Our combination of qualitative, quantitative and behavioral methods has led to breakthrough insights for POG, package, display and in-store communications research. When in-store permissions are not viable, we have the only life-sized touch-interactive 3D virtual aisle that is portable to anywhere in the world. This affords our clients the ability to measure shopper behavior in any market or scenario.

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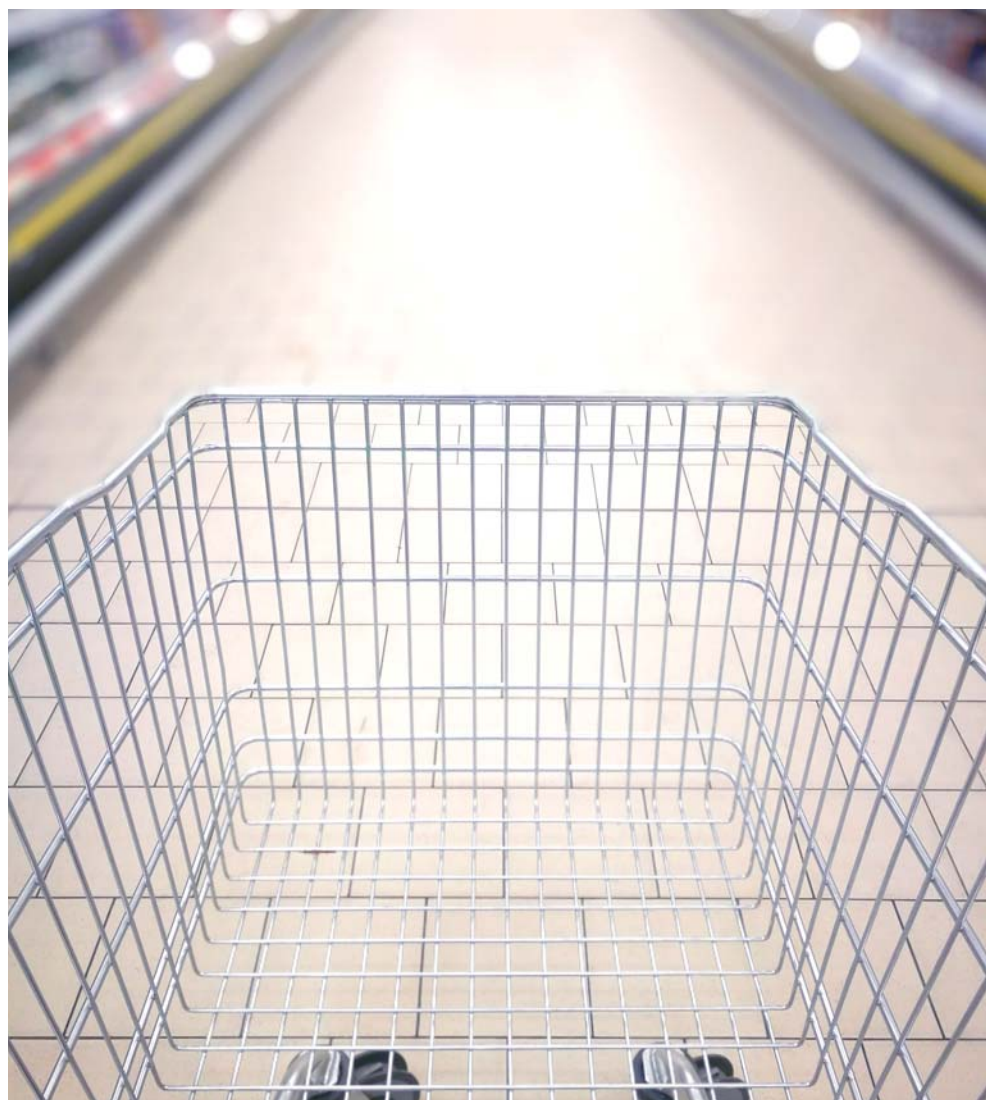
opportunities for growth through real-time learning from real people. From shop-alongs and in-store interviews to in-store ethnography and mobile video uploads, we bring a

fresh, creative approach to everything we do. As a result, you can count on us to provide you with the unvarnished



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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

... can't-miss activities

The **Insights Association** will hold its NEXT 2020 event on **June 1-2** online. Visit [bit.ly/3bVHPFL](https://bit.ly/3bVHPFL).

The **American Statistical Association** will hold its Symposium on Data Science and Statistics on **June 3-6** at the Westin Pittsburgh in **Pittsburgh**. Visit [bit.ly/2HutJN2](https://bit.ly/2HutJN2).

**AAPOR** will hold its 2020 Virtual Conference on **June 11-12**. Visit [bit.ly/2ouuwVL](https://bit.ly/2ouuwVL).

**we.CONECT Global Leaders GmbH** will hold its CiMi. CON Evolution EU event on **June 15-16** at the Maritim proArte Hotel in **Berlin**. Visit [competitive-market-intelligence.com](https://competitive-market-intelligence.com).

**we.CONECT Global Leaders GmbH** will hold its Pharma CiMi. CON EU event **June 15-16** at the Maritim proArte Hotel in **Berlin**. Visit [pharma-competitive-intelligence.com](https://pharma-competitive-intelligence.com).

**Empresarial** will hold its 2020 Printemps Des Etudes (Spring Studies) Trade Show on **June 15-16** at Palais Brongniart in **Paris**. Visit [printemps-etudes.com](https://printemps-etudes.com).

**Worldwide Business Research** will hold its eTail Europe event on **June 23-24** at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in **London**. Visit [bit.ly/2Sg9NWB](https://bit.ly/2Sg9NWB).

**Worldwide Business Research** will hold its Digital Food & Beverage 2020 event on **July 20-22** at the Hilton in **Austin, Texas**. Visit [bit.ly/2yY1xim](https://bit.ly/2yY1xim).

**Informa Connect** will hold its Insight Leadership and Talent Summit **July 21-22** at the Encore Boston Harbor in **Boston**. Visit [marketing.knect365.com/consumer-insights](https://marketing.knect365.com/consumer-insights).

**Informa Connect** will hold its Summer Insights Fest **July 21-23** at the Encore Boston Harbor in **Boston**. Visit [marketing.knect365.com/summer-insights-fest](https://marketing.knect365.com/summer-insights-fest).

**Informa Connect** will hold its UX Research and Insights Summit **July 21-23** at the Encore Boston Harbor in **Boston**. Visit [marketing.knect365.com/ux-research-insights-summit](https://marketing.knect365.com/ux-research-insights-summit).

**Worldwide Business Research** will hold its eTail Boston 2020 event on **August 11-13** at The Sheraton in **Boston**. Visit [bit.ly/2GhsVMw](https://bit.ly/2GhsVMw).

**IQPC** will hold its Customer Contact Week event on **August 24-28** in **Las Vegas**. Visit [bit.ly/2DoygRE](https://bit.ly/2DoygRE).

**Quirk's Media** will hold the Quirk's Event – Chicago on **August 26-27** in at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in **Chicago**.

**The Merlien Institute** will hold its Qual360 APAC event on **September 1-2** in **Singapore**. Visit [apac.qual360.com](https://apac.qual360.com).

**Intellus Worldwide** will hold its 2020 summit on **September 9-11** at the Marriott Downtown in **Philadelphia**. Visit [intellus.org/Events-Webinars/Summit-2020](https://intellus.org/Events-Webinars/Summit-2020).

**GreenBook** will hold its Iiex North America 2020 event on **September 9-11** in **Austin**. Visit [iiex-na.insightinnovation.org](https://iiex-na.insightinnovation.org).

The **Merlien Institute** will hold its MRMW NA event on **September 30 - October 1** in **Atlanta**. Visit [na.mrmw.net](https://na.mrmw.net).

**Informa Connect** will host TMRE: The Market Research Event **October 5-7** at the JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort and Spa in **San Antonio, Texas**. Visit [marketing.knect365.com/tmre](https://marketing.knect365.com/tmre).

**ESOMAR** will hold its APAC Event on **November 1-3** in **New Delhi**. Visit [bit.ly/2XpgIya](https://bit.ly/2XpgIya).

The **Merlien Institute** will hold its MRMW APAC 2020 event on **November 17-18** in **Singapore**. Visit [apac.mrmw.net](https://apac.mrmw.net).

The **Merlien Institute** will hold its MRMW EU 2020 event on **December 1-2** in **Amsterdam**. Visit [eu.mrmw.net](https://eu.mrmw.net).

*Events as of April 9, 2020. Please see event websites for more information.*

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## Do you know your chickens? A case study in online panel development

Ron Pocs, Regional Market Research Manager • CNH Industrial

As a large manufacturing organization, the idea of creating an online panel of B2B customers to efficiently and cost-effectively conduct market research seemed a bit far-fetched. When I first broached the idea among others within the organization, I was told that I don't know my chickens (i.e., this will never happen). Today, the panel has been successfully running for over 3 years with 900+ members. How did it happen?



## Neuro-physiological techniques for CX and UX research

Jose Gonzalez, Manager, Consumer Insights • Verizon  
Devin Harold, UX Research Manager • Verizon  
Claire Kearney-Volpe, UX Research Consultant • Verizon

## Zero to sixty (concepts) in the blink of an eye: How the sausage is made

Karen Kraft, Senior Consumer Insights Manager • Johnsonville  
Katherine Figatner, Senior Vice President/ Partner • C+R Research  
Monica Grant, Innovation Process Designer and Facilitator • Ideas To Go

## Worth more than 1,000 words: Using consumer-generated video

Stacy Shaleen, Market Insights Manager • Cargill

How do you conduct ethnographies and gather in-use insights when you have limited time and budget? Let consumers take you into their world with their phones. In today's smartphone-run world, everybody can provide a high-quality view into their buying decisions and usage habits. Like traditional ethnographies, the learning goes well beyond the questions asked. Without a bunch of strangers in their barn, consumers were comfortable showing all their routines and challenges.



## Segmentation at scale: Combining behavioral analysis and attitudinal insights to win every occasion

Rick Stringer, Vice President of Customer Solutions • Crayola

## Stars and scars of segmentation: Hacks for success

La Sridhar, Global Director of Insights and Consumer Excellence • Molson Coors

## Visual semiotics: Shouting without words – QRCA curated session

Michael Sack, Founder and Owner • Brand Kinetics LLC  
Todd Trautz, Chief Innovation and Solutions Officer • Maru/Matchbox

## Evolving CX measurement at Progressive

Mona Stronsick, Director of Market Research • Progressive Insurance  
Mike Franke, Senior Market Research Analyst • Progressive Insurance

## The privacy paradox

Reg Baker, North American Regional Ambassador • ESOMAR

## Cutting-edge research in associations and nonprofits: Hitting the goals and making a "profit" in a nonprofit world

John Laprise, Market Research Manager • Radiological Society of North America  
Lisa Herceg, Director, Business Insights, Research • National Association of REALTORS  
Randa Ulankiewicz, Market Research Analyst • Society of Actuaries

## Closing the experience gap: Diagnosing your gap and identifying the best strategy to close it

Rhonda Hiatt, Chief Strategy Officer, USA • Clear M&C Saatchi

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David Moore, Market Research Consultant • Purdue University  
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Ethan Braden, VP of Marketing and Media • Purdue University

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Susan Fader, Insight Navigator • Fader & Associates

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Emmanuel Probst, SVP, Brand Health Tracking and Adjunct Professor • Ipsos and UCLA

## AI for automated insight generation

Suresh Kumar, Head of AI Solutions • Palo Alto Research Center (PARC)

## The impact of cultural codes on consumer behavior and brand relevance

Shruti Saini, Senior Director, Brand Strategy and Insights • Anheuser-Busch



## Beyond customer journey-mapping: Understanding impact of touchpoints

Suresh Kumar, Former Business Insights Manager  
• Pella Corporation

## Rotary International identifies global engagement trends and drivers using cross-disciplinary insights to understand participants' journey

Anja Van Ostrand, Research and Evaluation Partner • Rotary International  
Michelle Roseborough, Senior Research and Evaluation Partner • Rotary International  
Amanda Reid, Manager, Research and Evaluation • Rotary International

## Ride the ripples or get soaked: How Wyndham Destinations uses insights to capitalize on disruptive trends

Julia Eisenberg, Vice President, Insights • 20/20 Research  
Lori Georganna, Senior Director, Consumer Insight and Research • Wyndham Destinations

## Using hybrid methods to supercharge your qual research

Ray Fischer, Founder and CEO • Aha! Strategic Online Qual Platform

## Accelerating the innovation process from 21 weeks to 21 days with AI-powered prediction

Nikolas Pearmnine, VP Client Services • Black Swan Data

## How to grow in a budding industry: Are consumers ready for CBD?

Silvena Milenkova, Chief Research Officer • BuzzBack Market Research

## Wake up, Tracker, and make yourself useful – It's 2020!

Mary McIlrath, Senior Vice President/Partner • C+R Research

## Managing online communities to achieve ROI

John Voda, Senior Market Research and Analysis Manager • AT&T

Learn best practices for managing an online research community, to develop topics for weekly research and to ensure you don't drown in work (since it never ends). Most importantly, learn how to ensure results are noticed by management to ensure your community achieves a ROI (and maintains funding).



## Data, analytics and storytelling – perfect together!

Holly Carter, Director of Product Marketing • Confront





## Be more than a forgotten footnote: Improve the activation of research and insights in your organization

Vanessa Roddam, Manager, Shopper Insights and Analytics • Constellation Brands

Sometimes large research projects create fantastic looking reports and powerpoint slides but they see disproportionately small adoption within an organization. And outputs from robust research sometimes get overshadowed by one or two statistics from the research instead of illuminating actionable insight. How can we better connect insights to action? And how can even the most complex projects deliver salient, actionable solutions? Keep the research methods robust and make the deliverables more embraceable.



## Which one is not like the other? The differences between UX and market research

Cara Woodland, Market Research Manager • eMoney Advisor  
Evan Eiswerth, Supervisor, User Experience • eMoney Advisor

To better inform the digital age, market research and the methodologies have adapted in many ways. A new breed of researcher has also formed out of the digital age to focus on user experience design and user-centric development. The goal of this session is to help define the similarities and differences between a user experience researcher and market research.



## Learn where to focus your media spend

Eva Gott, Vice President, Research • Savanta

## The generation of responsible shoppers – Does Gen Z put their money where their activism is?

Ally Aleman, SVP Qualitative Research • MarketCast  
Julie Arbit, Global SVP, Insights • VICE Media

## Gaining clarity through on-demand behavioral research

Greg Stucky, Chief Research Officer • InsightsNow  
Sarah Kirkmeyer, Sr. Director Client Partnerships • InsightsNow

## Behind the curtain: Perspectives from corporate insights leaders

Tyler McMullen, President and CEO • MarketVision Research  
Becky Shultz, Vice President, Qualitative • MarketVision Research

## How technology helped Irwin Broh transform their business

Bob Rowe, EVP • Irwin Broh

## From story to glory

Jeffrey Henning, Executive International • MRII

## How the sausage gets made: A recipe for brand growth in a mature category

Irina Zilberman, • Protobrand  
Meg Weltzer, • Tyson Foods

## The implicit playbook: Develop a competitive advantage by appealing to your consumer's subconscious

Thomas Fandrich, Co-Founder and Managing Director U.S. • quantilope

## Mind modeling: Identifying Cheez-It's distinctive attributes

Terrae Schroeder, Head of Insights USA • Kellogg's  
Tim Hoskins, President • Quester

## Overcoming a crisis: How insights have saved the past decade's most high-profile crisis

Rex Repass, President • Research America  
Dan McGinn, CEO • McGinn and Company



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## Hacking life shifts: How AARP has taken a leadership role in partnering with brands in launching innovative insights

Alison Bryant, Consumer Strategist, Media and Multigenerational Families Expert • AARP  
Lisa Cooper, Senior Vice President • RTI Research  
Lori Bitter, CEO • The Business of Aging

## Decoding signal vs. noise: How Microsoft uses proactive insights to stay ahead of the curve

Tanya Pinto, Director, Customer and Market Research • Microsoft  
Marc Goulet, Vice President • Russell Research

## Driving change and lessons learned

Chuck Sharp, CEO • Sharpr  
Mary Colleen Hershey, Vice President Consumer and Marketplace Insights • Nestlé

## Rapidly enabling breakthrough ideas for Barilla while building capability

Kit Burton, Brand Manager • Barilla  
Heather Christman, Director, Lean Growth • The Garage Group

## How much enjoyment can an indulgent snack really bring when life gets in the way?

Keren Novack, VP of Client Services • Curion  
Lisa Saxon Reed, Director, Global Sensory • Mars Wrigley

## We are what we...feed our kids? The what, where and why of today's grocery purchases

Bess Devenow, Director of Marketing • ProdegeMR  
Maureen Lawer, Senior Director, Data Solutions • ProdegeMR

## Clean label: "Better for you" consumer trends and generational differences

Antje Sardo, Senior Research Analyst • GutCheck

## Tapping organizational change to increase market research relevance

Monika Wingate, CEO and Co-Founder • Digsite  
Heather Vossler, Director of Insights and Innovation • Hormel Foods

Many organizations are seeking out agile approaches as they adjust to the accelerating pace of innovation. As a result, insights teams are shifting to agile research methods that allow them to simultaneously build, test and learn. In this presentation, Hormel Director of Insights and Innovation Heather Vossler and Digsite CEO Monika Wingate will discuss how combining the right tool with an agile research approach enables teams to quickly get in-context learning and deep consumer insights.



## 7 steps for building a scalable DIY research program that influences business growth

Morgan Molnar, Head of Product Marketing and Insights • SurveyMonkey

## Everyone wants to be heard, no one wants to be studied! How brands are leveraging conversational methods for deeper experiential insights

Matt Kleinschmit, Founder and CEO • Reach3 Insights  
Dara St. Louis, SVP and Founding Partner • Reach3 Insights

## Choosing from a feast of options: How to integrate qualitative tech for maximum impact

Kelley Styring, Principal • InsightFarm  
Jason Horine, Vice President Client Solutions • Schlesinger Group

## Niche audiences: How to reach the unreachable

Rodolphe Barrere, CEO and Co-founder • Potloc

## Reality Voice: Tune in to new perspectives

Garnette Weber, COO • itracks  
Kathy Fitzpatrick, VP Business Development • itracks  
Christine Keller, Program Manager, Customer Centricity • MassMutual

## Real business example of text analytics in action: Takasago International Corporation case study

Normand Peladeau, President, CEO • Provalis Research

## Beyond the screener: Reducing fraudulent and disengaged respondents

Adam Dietrich, Vice President • CloudResearch  
Leib Litman, Co-Founder, Director of Research • CloudResearch

## Product data, meet in-context research – a product development dream

LiMei Ruan, Senior Manager, Knowledge and Insights • fairlife  
Keren Novack, VP of Client Services • Curion

## From feeling to doing: How to turn empathy into tactics that grow brands

Jim Chastain, Co-Founder and Human Insights Strategist • RealityCheck

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Mark Doherty, Vice President, Practice Leader • Chadwick Martin Bailey

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Sylvia Knust, Director of Research • Tobii Pro

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Michael McCrary, CEO • PureSpectrum

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Erin Avery, Senior Vice President, Global Marketing • Vision Critical

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Phil Reeve, President • Reeve & Associates



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## Market research meets UX research: Understanding the interaction between NPS and usability metrics

Randal Ries, Research and Analytics Manager, IBM CIO Design • IBM

## Getting to the future first: How to identify early trend signals to support bold bets in innovation in product development and category management

Mark Garratt, Partner and Co-Founder • in4mation insights  
Stuart Schwartz, Managing Director, Client Growth • in4mation insights



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## SPECIAL EVENTS



### OPENING NIGHT

### Cocktails with Quirk's

We've had a blast hosting Cocktails with Quirk's in the past and The Quirk's Event wouldn't feel complete without everyone enjoying a few cocktails on us! After the first day of the show is done, mingle and network in the expo hall, enjoy free drinks and appetizers and take in the experiences with other attendees.

### Expo Hall Happy Hour

After the sessions end, grab a beer and stroll through the expo hall to learn and experience all of the latest and greatest the industry has to offer.



### The Research Club Mixer

Late night snacks, drinks and networking with your fellow Quirk's Event attendees.

*Separate registration required, see the website for details.*

## MR Musical Jam Session

Hear talented MR musicians perform live! Quirk's will be bringing together a talented collection of musicians in the market research industry to perform. The MR Jam Session is a great way to kick off the event by hearing great music and networking with your peers!



### 2020 WIRe Closing Reception

Join us in Chicago for a closing-night reception with the Quirk's Event! We'll meet at Lizzie McNeill's – just across from the conference venue – and enjoy light snacks, drinks and plenty of time for networking! This event is free and will sell out.

*Separate registration required, see the website for details.*



[TheQuirksEvent.com](http://TheQuirksEvent.com)



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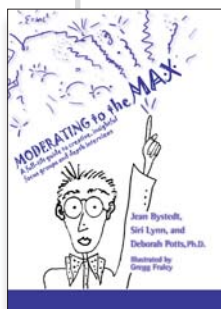
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# ESSENTIAL READING FOR RESEARCH PROFESSIONALS



## Moderating to the Max

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

Detailed instructions for more than 20 techniques that will deepen focus group findings and bring life to a fading group. From perceptual mapping to personification, you will never again have to guess whether a technique is the right one for the occasion. Full of examples and illustrations, the book's emphasis is on "play": how fun exercises can inspire focus group respondents to reveal deeper motivations.

160 pages, 7x10, 978-0-9830436-2-1 \$34.95 paper

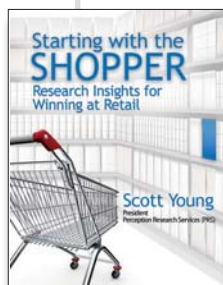


## Qual-Online: The Essential Guide

**What Every Researcher Needs to Know about Conducting and Moderating Interviews via the Web**

From the types of tools at your disposal to planning your first online study, this extensive guide will help you understand the sequence of steps to follow, timing, and costs involved and help you manage all of the useful insights you will gather—making your job of sharing information with your client that much easier and your reports more robust. *The* must-have guidebook.

216 pages, 6x9, 978-1-941688-26-7 \$29.95 paper

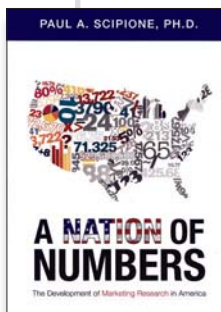


## Starting with the Shopper

**Research Insights for Winning at Retail**

Actionable insights, case studies and "lessons learned" from thousands of studies conducted by Perception Research Services, a global leader in packaging and shopper marketing research. What works in store, in home and online, and how best to apply shopper research to drive and measure success.

136 pages, 7x 9, full color; 978-1-941688-23-6 \$39.95 paper



## A Nation of Numbers

**The Development of Marketing Research in America**

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

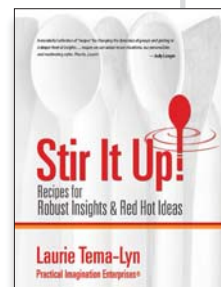
546 pages, 7x10, 978-0-9852482-2-2 \$49.95 cloth

## Stir It Up!

**Recipes for Robust Insights & Red Hot Ideas**

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

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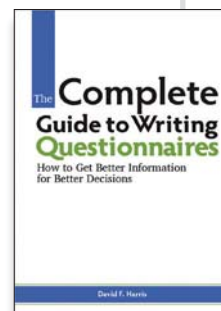


## The Complete Guide to Writing Questionnaires

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

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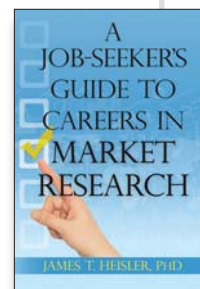


## A Job-Seeker's Guide to Careers in Market Research

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

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

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## 10 minutes with...

**Julie Loving**

*Insights Director, TherapeuticsMD*



“Our online  
communities around  
women’s health  
reportedly are the most  
active and interactive  
– including our  
community of health  
care professionals!”

**You’ve worked in a variety of industries – CPG, entertainment, pharma. How does this diverse background influence your role at TherapeuticsMD?**

The culture here is very entrepreneurial. You will never hear, “We don’t do it that way,” or “It wasn’t successful in the past.” This receptiveness to new ideas and methods allows the insights team to bring in techniques that truly help make better business decisions and help us more deeply understand our consumers/customers. The only technique you can’t do in pharma is a concept product home use test – that is the clinical trial.

We’ve used almost all techniques here that had beginnings in consumer package goods. This includes co-creation – a fancy word for brainstorming. We had one that included men and women in a session all around menopause! We’ve also done very robust segmentation of all of our customer groups, and have initiated marketing investment modeling

**Of all the market segments you’ve researched, is there one that seems more open to participating in the research process than others?**

Honestly, women’s health. Women feel isolated and confused as they enter menopause and really don’t feel that they have anyone to talk to. In every consumer workshop I’ve done, the women exchange e-mail or phone numbers after – we’ve created a safe support group for them! Our online communities around women’s health reportedly are the most active and interactive – including our community of health care professionals!

**Do you have any tips for researchers looking to launch their first online community?**

Set expectations in your organization about what the community can and cannot do. Our online communities have essentially replaced all qualitative. We use them for optimizing creative, copy and messages, as well as doing deep dives to learn about our women and health care professionals. How do they feel about their lives? What are the challenges? What are the rewards? The communities are not for quantitative evaluative decision-making unless it is so crystal clear how participants feel about the topic.

**What new methodologies or tools do you hope to use in the coming year?**

Biometrics. Given the categories we work in, we really need to appeal and break through on an emotional level.



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