

## For marketing research and insights professionals

## THE ESSENTIALS FOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

## Individual or account-based segmentation?



## 26 Top Medical Marketing Research Providers

Quirk's Marketing Research Review  
October 2018  
Volume XXXII Number 10  
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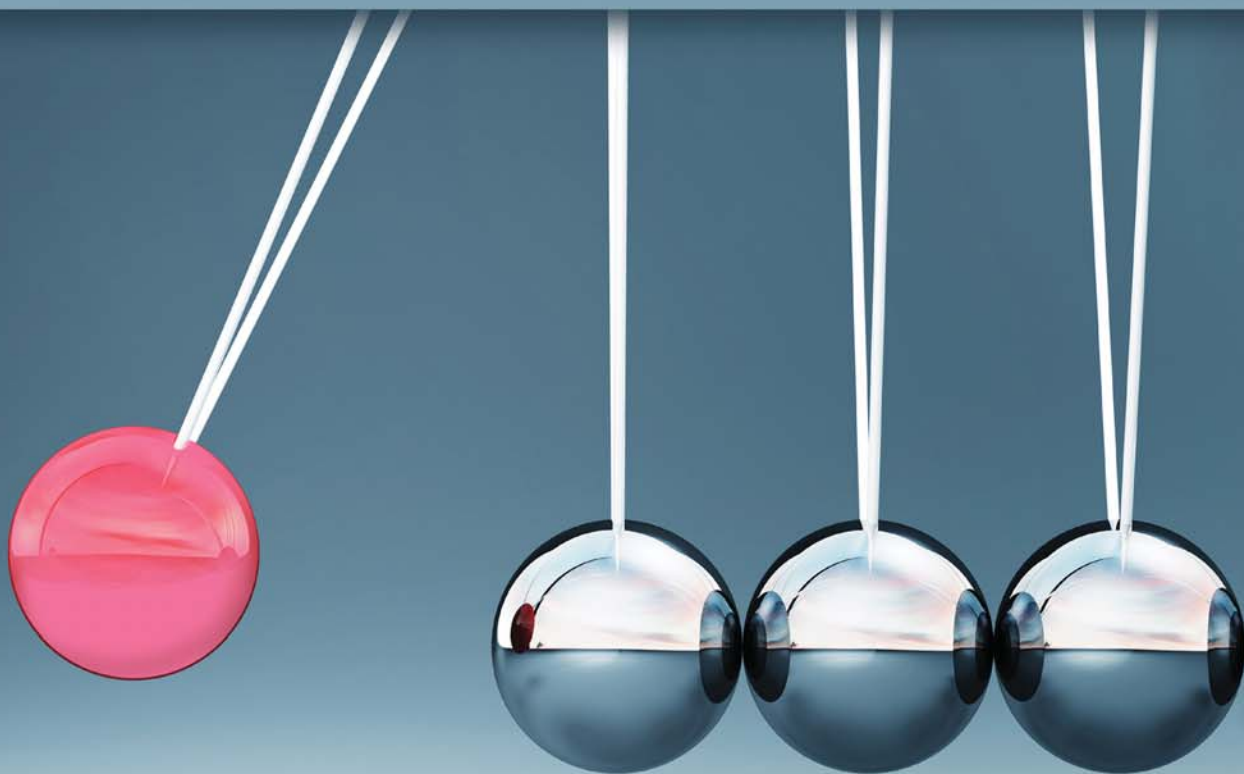
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For marketing research and insights professionals

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## In Case You Missed It

news and notes on marketing and research

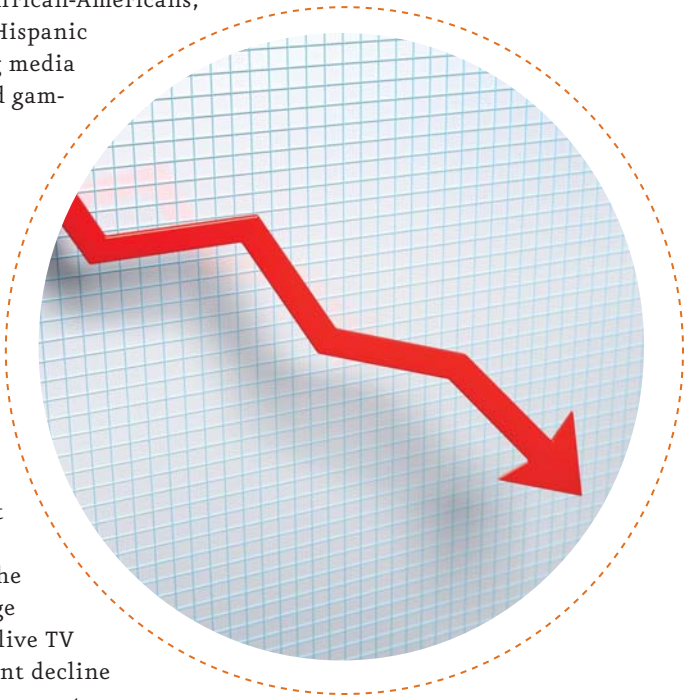
### ... television research

## Wide drop in TV viewership

According to a study by cultural insights agency ThinkNow, Burbank, Calif., live TV viewing has dropped from 68 percent to 48 percent, a 20-point decline across all audiences. The survey includes a representative sample of U.S. Hispanics, African-Americans, Asians and non-Hispanic whites regarding media consumption and gaming habits.

Live network TV is losing ground as the most-often choice for watching programming across all segments, dropping from 45 percent in 2017 to 31 percent in 2018. African-Americans had the largest percentage point decline in live TV viewing, a 22-point decline from 75 percent in 2017 to 53 percent in 2018. Seventy-one percent of Hispanics watch TV programming through Netflix, compared to 59 percent of non-Hispanic whites, 63 percent of African-Americans and 55 percent of Asians. Additionally, 35 percent of Hispanics say they watch TV programming most often using Netflix.

Almost half (47 percent) of all consumers perceive streaming as the future of television and a reason why they prefer watching shows through streaming services. The study also shows that Baby Boomers have experienced a 21-point decline in live TV viewing habits compared to 2017.



### ... data analysis

## Marketers crave data

A report by Research Now SSI and Econsultancy shows that the need for high-quality internal and external data is top-of-mind for marketers. The report explores perceptions and use of integrated data by companies, agencies, technology vendors and independent marketing consultants and is based on an online survey of marketers in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, Ireland and New Zealand.

The findings show that all respondents consider the quality of internal data to be important to their businesses, while 93 percent of client-side respondents see high-quality customer data as “critical to business success.” Quality of data is the biggest concern for both client-side (63 percent) and agency respondents (61 percent), significantly ahead of the second-biggest concern: expense of data.

Sixty-three percent of respondents strongly agreed that time spent on improving data quality is always time well spent. Confidence in third-party data differs between client-side and agency respondents, where 41 percent of agencies are “extremely confident” in the quality of the data their clients are using, compared to 17 percent of respondents from companies themselves.



[www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181001.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181001.aspx)



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PANEL

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# Q Report survey respondents speak up on vendor communication

One of my favorite annual tasks is writing the overview of results from our survey of client-side researchers for our Q Report, which comes out each September. (Head over here if you'd like to access the digital version: <https://bit.ly/2MZKq9b>.) I love reading the candid comments that our open-ends elicit – they are often quite honest, funny and thoughtful and I think they serve as a form of therapy, allowing researchers to get annoyances large and small off their chests.

A theme of this year's study was communication – with internal customers, with external customers and with vendors. An open-end about vendor communication drew some snide comments but, in the main, many responses mentioned having no problems at all or actually having such good communication with vendors that no improvements were needed – a fact I want to acknowledge, lest our vendor readers feel like I'm piling on. (True, comments of the "Everything's fine!" ilk aren't as compelling to read as those with a little bite to them but it's important to balance the kind with the critical, right?)

The main themes of the answers centered around problem areas that

have arisen in past Q Report surveys: vendors overpromise and under-deliver; they inundate prospective customers with e-mails and cold-calls; they don't take the time to understand the researcher's business or its particular needs; they data-dump 100-page PowerPoint decks rather than concise, actionable reports.

## Need for dashboard

Along with those traditional problems, this year there were several expressions from client-side researchers of the need for some sort of dashboard or other Web-based, centralized way to communicate with vendors, whether it's project-related or RFP-related.

As one commenter below mentions, there are a whole host of security and compatibility issues to deal with, but clearly client researchers see a need for streamlined, centralized interaction with vendors. Perhaps ease of communication could be a point of differentiation for research companies to highlight in their marketing?

*Would very much like to automate the request/reply process and improve the speed of effective communication.*

*I wish they were on our instant messenger service. It would be much easier.*

*Would like a solution that integrates into our existing SAAS marketing insights platform so they can deliver proposals, SOWs, briefs, surveys, reports and presentations, etc., through the platform so it becomes part of the collective consciousness (and is NOT living in e-mail chains).*

*It would be nice to know what's happening*



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Joe Rydholm can be reached at [joe@quirks.com](mailto:joe@quirks.com)


*during the RFP process. Feels like the RFP goes out, then falls into a black hole until the vendor decides to respond. Are they talking it over? Letting it sit? Waiting for a dept. to respond?*

*I'd like a project portal vs. sending e-mails back and forth.*

*I wish we had a file sharing system with our partners that was compatible with our online security protocol.*

## Mutually beneficial

Respondents to our survey had many good things to say about their vendor partners and clearly want the relationship to be mutually beneficial, so if you're a vendor reading this, as in many business situations, it's best not to take things too personally.

*We (in corporate research) have to pull plugs, change directions, do things that seem to make no sense, based on our internal demands and pressures. Sometimes I think vendors don't quite get that – they think we're bad clients when we're actually bobbing and weaving the best we can. Also, there are many wonderful research companies and we don't have enough work to go to every one we think highly of. It's hard on the other side but when we don't give you a job it may have absolutely no reflection on how highly we think of you.* 



••• advice for researchers

# ASK THE EXPERT

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## How can strategists bridge the gap between insights and action?

The biggest beef many clients have with their research partners is that study results often fail to answer “so what?” Not surprising, since a lot of us were trained as careful, precise researchers. And answering “so what?” is outside our comfort zone.

I come from a research family. As a young man, I had the opportunity to view the power of answering “so what?” at the highest level of government when my dad was President Ronald Reagan’s chief strategist. Decision-making happened at lightning speed and a smart team of Ph.D. statisticians knew they had to be both fast and right.

This is when I first learned about the importance of the strategist, who conducts a kind of alchemy that turns facts into strategic gold. This does not mean altering facts but it does mean developing the ability to think beyond the facts. A big survey with lots of points of analysis results in literally thousands of bits of data. Deciding which bits make a difference in solving the problem at hand is a valuable skill increasingly required of researchers.

In our company we feel it’s important to first honor the skills that ensure the quality and reliability of our research – but then to also ask our teams to step out on the ledge and become sharp strategists.

We call this the strategist imperative and it’s underpinned by four Cs:

**Chops:** This is having the gravitas to advise clients well and includes a strong grasp of business and of the client’s business specifically. It’s having the diplomatic skills to understand how client personalities can impact decision-making. This skill set comes from hard-won experience, formal education or a combination of the two.

**Courage:** Going out on the ledge takes personal courage and we work to support young, talented people who want to take the risk. We also celebrate the courage that makes our established strategists so valuable to the company.

**Creativity:** The strategist’s alchemy comes from applying creativity to the intersection of research insights and broader business knowledge. Skilled strategists meld findings into a story that will be understood by the non-researchers at the top of client organizations.

**Conviction:** This comes from working hard to identify the right guidance for the client and then making a strong case for the recom-



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mendation. Willingness to have a strong perspective and make a smart case for it elevates strategists to the role of trusted advisor.

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# IN FOCUS



## // Survey Monitor

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



... health care research

### Aetna study: Gender, age affect health care views

Women feel doctors don't understand their needs

The inaugural Health Ambitions Study, conducted by Hartford, Conn.-based insurer Aetna, which explores consumers' health goals and the relationship between consumers and providers in the evolving health care system, finds that fewer women believe that their doctors understand their health needs, as 70 percent of women say their doctors are aware of their lifestyle habits, compared to 81 percent of men.

Men say they are more confident that doctors understand their health

lifestyles. More than three-quarters (80 percent) of men say their doctor is familiar with their health goals, compared to 65 percent of women.

Still, 50 percent of women say they are very likely to take their doctors' recommendations, compared to 61 percent of men, highlighting an opportunity to improve how the industry engages women on their health journeys.

The study finds that people, particularly women, are paying attention to their holistic health, as they seek resources that better support both health and well-being. If given an extra hour in the day, 60 percent of people surveyed said they would spend it on mental and physical well-being activities (67 percent of women compared to 44 percent of

men). Forty-five percent of women say they have a stress reduction health goal, compared to 28 percent of men.

The study reveals the importance of providing simple, accessible solutions to help consumers achieve their health goals. Overall, respondents say it is very important that their doctors talk in a way they can easily understand (77 percent), have office appointments when they need them (66 percent) and offer access to other health care professionals to coordinate care (59 percent).

The study illuminates the health and wellness needs of the Sandwich Generation – those who manage the health needs of both their children and their parents. Encouragingly, nearly all consumers in the Sandwich Generation say their doctors spend enough time answering questions (85 percent), offer access to other health care professionals (84 percent) and have office appointments when needed (77 percent).

When it comes to supporting holistic health, consumers want access to resources that address mental health and stress reduction. More than one-third surveyed say they have a stress-reduction (40 percent) or a mental health goal (36 percent).

Doctors play a critical role in the network of support, with respondents saying it is important that their primary care physician be familiar with their mental health history (86 percent) and ability to manage stress (84 percent).

The study further reveals a clear opportunity to transform the way health care is delivered in the U.S. Doctors are seeking greater access to community and health resources to better serve their patients. In fact, over half of physicians (54 percent) say that mental health counselors are very important, yet only 7 percent say they have excellent access to this vital community resource.

Other notable findings of the survey include:

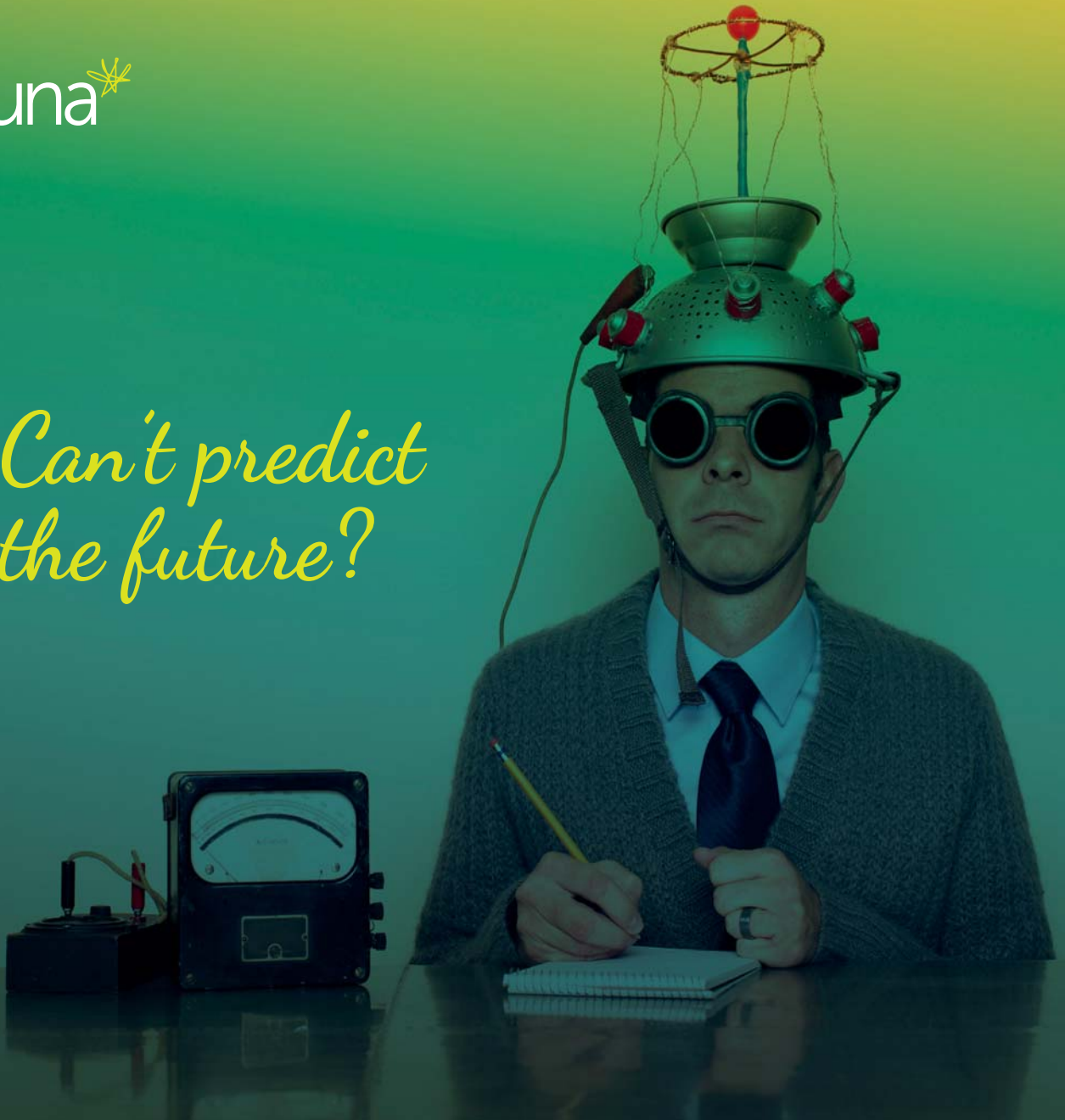
Younger consumers are turning to



[www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181003.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181003.aspx)



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the future?*



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digital tools, more than older consumers, to improve communication with their doctor: 37 percent of those aged 18-34 say digital messaging and 35 percent say virtual office visits would be valuable, compared to only 32 percent and 17 percent, respectively, of people aged 65 and older.

While consumers highly rated privacy (80 percent) and data security (76 percent) as important aspects of health care, health costs were also a concern. Seventy-three percent of consumers indicated that the cost of care is very important. This ranks ahead of getting personalized care (71 percent) and coordination among health care providers (68 percent).

Providers in value-based care models have greater access to community resources than providers who are not involved in value-based care models. For example, 61 percent of those in value-based care models say they have very good or good access to nutritionists, compared to just 46 percent of physicians not in value-based care models.

Aetna's Health Ambitions Study, conducted in December 2017, included two distinct surveys fielded by research firm Market Measurement. The consumer survey comprised 1,000 responses from consumers 18 and older. The physician survey comprised 400 responses divided among 200 primary care doctors and 200 specialists, all of whom have at least two years of experience.



## ... education research Study finds high opinions of higher ed

College 'fulfills the American Dream'

A clear majority of families believe higher education is worth the invest-

ment and most students and parents are willing to stretch themselves financially to make it happen, according to How America Values College 2018, a national study from consumer banking company Sallie Mae and researcher Ipsos.

Sixty-six percent of college-going families believe they are getting a good value for the price they're paying: 36 percent report they are paying a fair price, 10 percent say they're getting somewhat of a bargain and 20 percent believe the education is worth every penny.

Nearly 80 percent of families say going to college fulfills the American Dream. Eighty-three percent of families believe the student will earn more money with a college degree and the expected median starting salary range after college is \$40,000-\$59,000. The importance of a college education is rising; 77 percent of students and parents believe a college degree is more important now than it used to be.

"It would appear that families are making smarter decisions when it comes to considering how they pay for a college education – which itself is seen as increasingly essential in today's competitive job market," says Julia Clark, senior vice president, Ipsos. "It is especially heartening to see more families recognizing and planning for this expense against the broader backdrop of general economic optimism; clearly the challenges of the recent recession are firmly fixed in the minds of college-bound students and their parents alike."

Families, even those willing to stretch financially, are taking deliberate, resourceful and concrete steps to make college more affordable. Forty-five percent of college students are working year-round to earn money for school and 37 percent of students live at home with parents or relatives to save on housing costs. Sixty-seven percent of students are cutting back their spending and 24 percent of students are taking classes over a shorter period of time in order to graduate sooner and reduce costs.

Planning and ultimately paying for college involves terms and jargon that

may leave families scratching their heads. When asked a series of true-or-false questions about certain paying-for-college terminology, 42 percent of families mistakenly believe work-study funds are automatic, more than 20 percent believe "free tuition" means college is free and 19 percent believe the sticker price is what college will cost them.

"How America Values College 2018" reports the results of 1,907 online interviews Ipsos conducted between April 20 and May 25, 2018, of 957 American parents of undergraduate students and 950 18-to-24-year-old undergraduate students. The survey sample reflected a cross-section of demographic variables in the United States. Respondents were able to take the survey in English or Spanish. The complete report and a related infographic are available at [salliemae.com/americanvaluescollege](http://salliemae.com/americanvaluescollege).



## ... millennials research What Millennials expect from brands

American-made, not so important

Millennials expect more from brands. From the shoes they wear to the coffee they Instagram, their brand choices are increasingly used to project values in public and online, elevating the need for brands themselves to be value-conscious. A report from media and technology company Morning Consult examines how the values and ethics of America's most sought-after generation shape their consumer choices and what brands they admire the most.



The report uses data from over 2,000 interviews with U.S. adults and examines what Millennials expect from the brands they use.

Key takeaways include:

**While Millennials are more globally conscious, it doesn't necessarily mean they need their brands to be:** While a majority of Millennials (52 percent) say helping people across the world is an important value in their life, the average Millennial doesn't pay close attention to the politics of brands, isn't open to boycotting brands over politics and hasn't boycotted over politics in the past year.

**How brands should navigate social and political issues:** While Millennials do generally track more liberal, issues like abortion, immigration and gun control remain controversial to some extent. If a brand wants to win favor politically with Millennials, the least controversial political issues to take up include support for civil rights and gay rights.

**Millennials are less likely to care about "American made":** Nearly four in 10 (39 percent) of Millennials say they would like a company much more if it made its goods in America, compared with 58 percent of Boomers who say the same.

**Millennials have a strong affinity for tech brands:** All five of the most-loved brands among young adults are tech companies: YouTube, Google, Netflix, Amazon and Sony.

Here are the most-loved brands among young adults, ordered by net favorability: YouTube (82 percent), Google (81 percent), Netflix (80 percent), Amazon (74 percent), Sony (72 percent), Pixar and Hershey (tie, 71 percent), UPS and Dollar Tree (tie, 69 percent) and Colgate (68 percent).

This poll was conducted from June 12-14, 2018, among a national sample of 2,202 adults. The interviews were conducted online and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of adults based on age, race/ethnicity, gender, educational attainment and region. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.



## ... hispanic research American Dream still real for Latin American immigrants

Would recommend to a friend

Despite low levels of public satisfaction with the current state of the nation, a study conducted for Seattle-based digital remittance company Remitly found more than half of first-generation Latin American immigrants (60 percent) would still recommend relocating to the U.S. to a friend, family member or colleague.

The inaugural study, conducted by Ipsos for Remitly, surveyed first-generation Latin American immigrants (defined as Latin American adults born outside of the U.S.) on their attitudes and experience after immigrating to the U.S.

The findings from the 2018 Immigrant Sentiment survey also revealed that nine in 10 immigrants believe the American Dream – the belief that everyone in the U.S. has the chance to be successful and happy if they work hard – is still achievable. This optimism is despite the challenges immigrants face like cultural barriers, navigating complex immigration regulations, finding housing, work and accessing services.

Among the majority of immigrants who believe in the American Dream, access to living standards and better education are the most attainable opportunities (according to 49 and 47 percent, respectively). Just under two in five reported physical safety (38 percent) and better access to jobs (35 percent) as the most achievable aspects of the American Dream for them in the U.S., while 31 percent say the same thing of free speech.

Among the reasons first-generation immigrants give as to why the

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American Dream may not be achievable, most say that it's too hard to get ahead (59 percent) and one in five (19 percent) say it's because they don't trust the U.S.

If given the choice to do it again, one out of four immigrants (23 percent) would not choose to make the move. Among the 40 percent of immigrants who would not encourage family to relocate to the U.S. given the current political climate, more than half (59 percent) report this is because the immigration process is hard to navigate and/or because of racism (53 percent).

When asked about the biggest challenges they face as immigrants in the U.S., 31 percent cite cultural barriers, followed by immigration regulation (24 percent) and access to services (16 percent).

Looking at country-specific attitudes, nearly three-quarters of immigrants from Mexico relocated to the U.S. with their family (73 percent). Close to 50 percent of Puerto Ricans (47 percent) would not encourage their family members to relocate to the U.S., with 70 percent citing racism as the reason. Puerto Rican immigrants cite finding work (23 percent) and housing (15 percent) as the biggest challenges they face after cultural barriers (30 percent), while immigrants from Mexico name immigration regulation (28 percent) and access to services like medical and transportation (21 percent) as the biggest challenges. Twenty-nine percent of immigrants from Venezuela relocated to the U.S. to escape a dangerous situation, political turmoil or war, as a refugee. One out of four Mexican immigrants (25 percent) and nearly one out of five Puerto Rican and Venezuelan immigrants (18 percent) would not choose to stay in the U.S. if they could do it again.

When asked about both traditional financial services and mobile banking offerings, the findings revealed that 62 percent of immigrants trust mobile technology to handle their finances. Among the 38 percent who would not trust mobile technology to handle their finances, 71 percent say this is because they are worried about their data/privacy. Thirty-eight percent of

Latin American immigrants in the U.S. get their financial advice from family and friends and 23 percent turn to news publications. Eighty-four percent of immigrants think traditional financial institutions are meeting their financial needs and 93 percent feel mobile technology/financial technology is meeting their financial needs. When asked what they associate most with money, 50 percent believe money provides stability/security.

*The findings are based on an Ipsos poll conducted June 1-5, 2018 on behalf of Remitly. For the survey, a sample of 501 adults ages 18 and over from the continental U.S., Alaska and Hawaii was interviewed online, in English or in Spanish. To qualify for the survey, respondents had to report being born in a country other than the United States. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of  $\pm 5.0$  percentage points for all respondents surveyed.*



## ... shopper insights

# Deal-seekers still like in-store shopping

### The power of touch

Consumers have a fervent desire for coupons and deals, even if it means making a trip to a physical store, according to findings from the 2018 Purse String Survey, conducted by Livonia, Mich., media-delivery company Valassis.

Based on a survey of more than

6,200 consumers, the study found that when shopping for apparel, shoes and accessories, 96 percent of value-seeking consumers currently shop in-store. Of those, 77 percent plan to shop in-store just as much in the next year and 15 percent plan to do so more. The top reasons cited for shopping at a physical store instead of online include being able to see or touch an item in-person (70 percent); the immediate need for an item (66 percent); and ability to use more coupons and offers in-store vs. online (65 percent).

The top three categories of interest for savings are groceries (93 percent), dining out/restaurants (68 percent) and health care items (62 percent). Non-traditional categories of interest for coupons and deals include travel (33 percent) and prescription drugs (20 percent).

According to the survey, virtual assistants are expected to play a role in how consumers save as the technology's popularity increases. While voice-activated shopping is still relatively new, there's an interest in utilizing it for savings opportunities. Of the 21 percent of respondents that own an in-home voice assistant device or smart speaker, 32 percent are interested in receiving coupons and discounts through those devices. This percentage is even higher among Millennials (48 percent) and parents (42 percent).

The research continues to support the need for cross-channel campaigns, as they are more likely to inspire a purchase: 81 percent of respondents like brands to communicate coupons and offers in both print and online so they don't miss savings; 74 percent said seeing an offer in both print and online captures their attention; and 60 percent expressed that seeing an offer in both print and online makes them more likely to make a purchase.

The survey was fielded on redplum.com from May 15 through June 15, 2018. Findings are based on responses from 6,279 value-seeking consumers. This consumer survey has been conducted 10 times since 2008 with a focus on shopping and savings behaviors across a variety of product categories.



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# Q

## IN FOCUS

### Product and Service Update

#### ... text-mining New release of WordStat8

##### Explorer, Expert modes

Provalis Research, Montreal, has released WordStat 8, a new version of its text-mining software, which includes an Explorer mode and an Expert mode. Explorer mode allows inexperienced users to analyze documents and identify the most frequent words, topics and phrases as well as apply a categorization dictionary to find specific themes. Expert mode enables individual text segments, shows synonyms for individual words (along with frequency counts), provides a correspondence analysis, shows frequency tables and more. WordStat has an open interface with several solutions and directly imports and creates projects from Windows File Explorer, Excel, Word, PDF, Stata, CSV, social media, Web survey platforms and reference manager tools. WordStat 8 allows data analysts to pre-process or transform text documents using Python scripts. WordStat can still be run as a content analysis tool within QDA Miner, Stata or SimStat.

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

#### ... shelf testing Simulate product placement with PowerShelf

##### Includes survey-creation process

Consumer insights firm Toluna, Wilton, Conn., has launched PowerShelf, an automated real-time shelf testing solution that gives brands and retailers feedback on the impact of shelf placement on consumer attention to products in-store. It allows firms to test products in a simulated in-store environment and has an automated survey-creation process to help users understand how to best position products on a shelf, evaluate shelf design overall and more. PowerShelf is accessible within TolunaInsights, the company's automated consumer insights platform.

[corporate.toluna.com](http://corporate.toluna.com)

#### ... product testing BASES launches in-home use service

##### Tests consumers' pre-launch experiences

BASES, a product innovation discipline within Nielsen, has launched BASES Product Quick Use, an in-home-use product testing solution that aims to help marketers simulate a consumer's product experience prior to launch. Product Quick Use will be fueled by BASES' predictive analytics, a database of FMCG initiatives and proprietary forecasting models. Combined, these data and information from BASES are designed to help brands understand whether consumers will purchase their product long-

term, adapt products to better meet expectations and make adjustments and improvements based on consumer feedback and BASES' validated frameworks. BASES Product Quick Use is delivered on Nielsen Studio, a digital platform. Additionally, the new solution allows for continuous development of new diagnostics and customizable add-ons – such as volume forecasting, targeted testing and concept assessment – for more in-depth analysis based on budget, timeline and brand needs.

[www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com)

#### ... the business of research Platform highlights fake research activities

##### Phish of the Day

The Australia-based Association of Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO) has launched Phish of the Day, a digital platform that highlights fake or illegitimate research activities. The platform allows AMSRO members and the general public to report scams or non-genuine research activities to the association. AMSRO will investigate the reports and, depending on the severity and nature of the issue, will attempt to work with the organization to improve its operational practices to comply with relevant legislation or report it to relevant federal or state/territory regulatory or enforcement bodies. AMSRO says it can also discipline its own member companies for inappropriate research conduct, including expulsion for serious offenses.

[www.amsro.com.au](http://www.amsro.com.au)



[www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181004.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181004.aspx)

### ••• NPS research

## Firms offer NPS studies across retail categories

### Grocery, beauty, pets

Denver-based company ROI Consultancy Services and Boston-based management consulting firm Bain & Company have joined forces to produce Bain Certified Net Promoter Score benchmarking studies as part of a series of industry studies in North America. The two companies will jointly produce a study in nine retail categories: grocery; women's clothing; children's clothing; beauty products; pet food and supplies; sports equipment and athletic clothing; consumer electronics; home products; and home furniture. The studies establish and track ranges for consumer advocacy among competitors in each sector, with additional insight available from verbatim comments.

[www.roirocket.com](http://www.roirocket.com)

[www.bain.com](http://www.bain.com)

### ••• automotive research

## Nielsen, J.D. Power partner for car-marketing platform

### Measure ROI, efficacy

Nielsen, New York, has launched the Nielsen Auto Cloud fueled by Costa Mesa, Calif., research firm J.D. Power. The marketing and measurement platform combines the Nielsen Marketing Cloud with J.D. Power's car-buyer intelligence and insights, allowing automotive marketers to target audiences and personalize ad-

vertising messages based on criteria like car features and styles, buying stage and brand affinities as well as media engagement, geo-location and device type. Clients can plan and activate these car-buyer audiences across TV and digital.

The Nielsen Auto Cloud's always-on frequency management and in-flight analytics capabilities enable clients to measure and control how often and what types of ads people see throughout the life of a campaign. Additionally, clients can utilize established Nielsen planning and measurement solutions, including multi-touch attribution and marketing mix modeling, to measure the efficacy and ROI of their marketing spend.

[www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com)

[www.jdpower.com](http://www.jdpower.com)

### ••• Briefly

■ Des Moines, Iowa, consumer intelligence company Quester is making its proprietary analytics software CoreText Analytics available as a software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform, allowing companies to use it for their own qualitative data analysis. Users on the CoreText SaaS platform can conduct a review of verbatim data to gain an overview of the themes and ideas represented in the data set along with the key elements that make up the respondent mind-set.

[www.quester.com](http://www.quester.com)

■ Philadelphia-based data collection company Focus Pointe Global has launched FPG POV, a proprietary participant survey app. The app allows panel members to: take client surveys; receive push notifications for new available studies and qualification screenings; receive initial confirmation and reminder notifications for upcoming scheduled studies; manage their user account, including updating profile data points; send panel membership referrals; and take polls and receive immediate feedback on how other panelists answered. FPG

POV is available in the App Store and Google Play.

[www.focuspointeglobal.com](http://www.focuspointeglobal.com)

■ SIS International Research, New York, has launched new digital research solutions, including digital communities, online focus groups, video interviews and SIS Intelligence Answering monthly subscriptions. The digital communities include features like online forums and bulletin boards, concept testing, online diaries, respondent journaling, surveys and polls and more. The company has also launched its digital transformation unit, specifically devoted to tech innovations and new opportunities development.

[www.sisinternational.com](http://www.sisinternational.com)

■ Information services company Experian has launched Experian Marketing Engine for the automotive industry. The solution leverages automotive-specific insights, including vehicle purchase behaviors, ownership data and automotive equity and combines them with marketing data like demographics, purchasing habits and lifestyle interests to help automotive marketers better allocate marketing spend.

[www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)

■ U.K. mobile survey company One-Point Global has launched a survey app toolkit for panel companies. The app includes till receipt scanning, geofencing, offline surveys and audio/video features. It is compatible with all smartphones and tablets and will also be available on Mac desktops and laptops later this year. Panel companies can distribute surveys from multiple brands through their own branded app or create branded apps specific to each client brand and use them to issue multiple surveys that are also available offline.

[www.onepointglobal.com](http://www.onepointglobal.com)

■ Research sample provider P2Sample, Alpharetta, Ga., has published an e-book, *The Ultimate Buyer's Guide: How to Select a Sample Supplier*, which provides a look at the history, current state and

future of the market research sample industry. The e-book is available for download on the company's Web site. [www.p2sample.com](http://www.p2sample.com)

■ Google Surveys has launched in Kenya, allowing Kenyan companies and businesses to create online and mobile surveys. [surveys.google.com](http://surveys.google.com)

■ San Mateo, Calif., company SurveyMonkey and Paradigm Strategy Inc., a strategy firm that helps organizations build more inclusive workplaces, have released the Belonging & Inclusion template, a new survey template that draws on behavioral science to help companies determine areas of focus to foster an inclusive workplace for underrepresented groups across race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and more. [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)  
[www.paradigmliq.com](http://www.paradigmliq.com)

■ Fayetteville, Ark., e-commerce company WhyteSpyder has released a new Category Benchmark Report that provides an analysis across any retailer of a brand's category. The report features two parts: a SWOT analysis outlining brand strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities to improve search ranking, content strength and competitiveness within a category; and nine data scorecards that compare things like overall content health, share-of-voice, paid and organic search rank, etc., across any retailer. [whytespyder.com](http://whytespyder.com)

■ Somerville, Mass., personalization and customer data platform Evergage has launched Evergage SmartSurveys, a voice of the customer survey tool that allows companies to design and deliver targeted surveys to improve customer relationships. [www.evergage.com](http://www.evergage.com)

■ Santa Clara, Calif., social analytics firm NetBase now offers a cross-

channel customer experience analytics solution that provides brands with business insight from customer feedback. The solution provides standardized analyses for customer feedback including automated sentiment, passion scoring, top conversation rankings, drivers of low and high ratings and trending and geolocation. [www.netbase.com](http://www.netbase.com)

■ New York company Renaissance Research & Consulting has introduced BigTURF, an algorithm that uses Bayesian techniques to find optimal product lines from lists of products too large for standard TURF analysis. [www.renaiss.com](http://www.renaiss.com)

■ Nielsen, New York, has launched Friday morning data delivery, which provides an early read into the retail and consumer goods marketplace, allowing companies to identify and move on market trends sooner. The launch will reduce the wait time for weekly retail sales performance data, which often carries through the weekend and into the early days of the following week. [www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com)

■ Netherlands-based research company Nebu has released an updated version of the Nebu Dub InterViewer data collection tool. The updated version includes: a module to help managers schedule projects and plan interviewers' work; the ability to compile smart callback rules to optimize fieldwork; new sample management functionality; and 20 new templates for creating Web and mobile questionnaires. [www.nebu.com](http://www.nebu.com)

■ Cincinnati-based text analytics solutions firm Ascribe has introduced CX Snapshot, the latest text analytics software in the company's product suite. CX Snapshot automatically analyzes and visualizes themes and opinions from verbatim comments and allows users to categorize consumer feedback, producing greater

productivity and insights to improve customer experience. [goascribe.com](http://goascribe.com)

■ Stamford, Conn., research technology company FocusVision has introduced InterVu Now, a solution for conducting online focus groups or video interviews. The solution allows users to run digital focus groups through video capture, interactive monitoring and playback features. The company has also made improvements to the full-feature version of InterVu, which can now include more than 60 project scheduling scenarios of varying complexity through an Alexa-like assistant. It is also GDPR-compliant. [www.focusvision.com](http://www.focusvision.com)

■ London-based research company MESH Experience has launched its first annual experience landscape report for the retail bank sector. The report covers all touchpoints, including paid, owned and earned experiences across TV, online and word-of-mouth for major U.K. banking brands and also includes qualitative diagnostics. The report aims to help marketers bridge the gap in expectations versus reality when it comes to experiences across touchpoints. [www.meshexperience.com](http://www.meshexperience.com)

■ Kantar Media, London, has added audience profiling insights to its reputation intelligence offer. The addition will allow users to access and analyze consumer insights alongside wider media monitoring intelligence, enabling them to identify and better understand target audiences and optimize return on investment of PR and marketing campaigns. [www.kantarmedia.com](http://www.kantarmedia.com)

■ U.K. digital research agency Harris Interactive has launched new NPd express products, Need Express/PopUp Need and Idea Express/PopUp Idea, for needs and idea development and screening. The new products will help provide insights from consumers early



in the product development cycle, allowing brands to develop more relevant products and services.

[harris-interactive.co.uk](http://harris-interactive.co.uk)

■ Prosper Insights & Analytics, Worthington, Ohio, and Conway, Ark., marketing company Acxiom have introduced Prosper Predictive Audiences powered by Acxiom, a joint solution for marketers and their supporting agencies that enables them to increase the accuracy and predictive power of their omnichannel marketing efforts, providing consumers with more relevant offers when they are most interested in considering a purchase.

[prosperinsights.com](http://prosperinsights.com)  
[www.acxiom.com](http://www.acxiom.com)

■ San Francisco-based researcher InfoScout and parent company Market Track have launched Trade Insights, a joint solution that aims to close the loop between advertising and promotion activities and purchase behavior, allowing manufacturers and retailers to identify the promotions that bring new shoppers to brands and categories.

[www.infoscoutinc.com](http://www.infoscoutinc.com)

■ AI-based conversational survey tool AceBot has introduced emotion understanding capabilities to survey conversations, allowing users to tag sentiments of respondents and ask personalized follow-up questions based on that sentiment.

[acebot.ai](http://acebot.ai)

■ Consumer loyalty programs provider Maritz Loyalty, St. Louis, has launched a new suite of professional services products that use data and insights to advance loyalty programs. The 12 products focus on the areas of strategic design, decision sciences and creative services.

[www.maritzloyalty.com](http://www.maritzloyalty.com)

■ Cultural insights agency ThinkNow, Burbank, Calif., has launched ThinkNow ConneKt, an audience planning and segmentation tool

[www.quirks.com](http://www.quirks.com)

focused on the multicultural market. The solution provides behavioral and psychographic data combining mobile intelligence, first-party data and panel profile insights for a holistic view of multicultural consumers.

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

■ Denver-based research firm GeoPoll has launched research services in Pakistan, providing multiple mobile survey methods including SMS, mobile Web and mobile application. The launch expands the company's coverage in South Asia and allows media owners, brands, research agencies and international development organizations to collect data through mobile phones in Pakistan.

[www.geopoll.com](http://www.geopoll.com)

■ Snapchat is integrating New York-based researcher Nielsen's premium audience segments into its ad buying platform. The offering will provide clients with access to audience data across more than 30,000 segments, including Nielsen Buyer Insights and Nielsen Catalina Solutions, which are based on offline purchase data.

[www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com)

■ Wilton, Conn., researcher Toluna has released its first State of Digital Disruption Report. Based on data gathered from the TolunaInsights platform, the report provides marketers and insights professionals with information on the state of digital disruptor brands, including Amazon, Netflix, Uber and more. The index helps gauge consumer adoption, category preferences, purchase behavior, marketing influence and factors affecting loyalty.

[corporate.toluna.com](http://corporate.toluna.com)

■ Responsys, a Great Neck, N.Y., programming company, has launched an updated and redesigned Web site with improved functionality and aesthetics. The site includes information on the company's new proprietary qualitative software Sensor, which allows respondents to participate via self-designed

avatars in a virtual setting.

[www.responsysmobi.com](http://www.responsysmobi.com)

■ MarketResearch.com has released a new white paper titled Finding Business Opportunities: The Importance of Market Research, which highlights perspectives from a variety of Fortune 500 companies that use syndicated research to drive business growth. It can be downloaded at [bit.ly/2mzPxxb](http://bit.ly/2mzPxxb) (registration required).

■ New York research and analytics firm M Science has launched SWIPE, a data analysis product within its M Data offering. SWIPE uses machine learning to analyze transaction data collected from credit and debit card purchases to provide institutional investors with analysis of public and private company performance linked to consumer spending.

[www.msscience.com](http://www.msscience.com)

■ Facts N Figures and Meneses Consultants have conducted a study in Southern California, "Ask Los Angeles" Media Preference & Consumer Profile 2018. The study identifies preferred TV shows and TV series as well as updated demographic data, purchase intent of some products and services, traditional media usage and media preferences (TV, radio, print and online). The study will also quantify the ownership of all devices used to watch TV programs via the Internet.

[www.factsnfiguresinc.com](http://www.factsnfiguresinc.com)

■ Detroit-based online qualitative technology company Aha! has launched multilingual tools for global consumer research studies, including enhanced global recruitment services, programming and automated foreign-language translation technology.

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

■ Reston, Va., firm comScore has made enhancements to its custom reporting for mobile, including: the ability to benchmark traffic quality, cross-shopping and other mobile app

and site metrics against competitors; identify key consumer segments through demographic and behavioral patterns in Web and app usage; analyze consumer journeys over time and across information sources; fine-tune acquisition efforts through analysis of competitive search and other marketing efforts; and understand competitive loyalty patterns to attract, retain and engage users.

[www.comscore.com](http://www.comscore.com)

■ Simmons Research, New York, has launched Brand Catalyst, a brand strategy and predictive segmentation tool that helps brand marketers and their agencies understand consumer perception toward their brands using psychographics, intent, category preferences, brand and product consumption patterns.

[www.simmonsresearch.com](http://www.simmonsresearch.com)

■ U.K. research firm The Insights People has launched an American version of its Kids Insights platform. Kids Insights surveys 20,000 kids each year and provides brands with insights into emerging trends to support advertising, content, licensing, product and marketing investments.

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

■ Teaneck, N.J., shopper insights agency PRS IN VIVO has released its AI Pack Screening Model, which applies data mining, artificial intelligence and an expert review process to screen new packaging concepts. Over the coming months, the company will be launching new services focused on understanding shopper behavior and influencing consumer choice.

[www.prs-invivo.com](http://www.prs-invivo.com)

■ The Meaningfully Different Framework, a brand equity assessment engine by New York research agency Kantar Millward Brown, has completed the Marketing Accountability Standards Board (MASB) metric audit process. MASB's process, the Marketing Metric Audit Protocol, assesses connec-

tions from marketing activities and metrics to financial performance.

[www.millwardbrown.com](http://www.millwardbrown.com)

■ San Francisco-based neuromarketing platform CoolTool has developed and launched a beta version of Webcam-based eye-tracking, which runs on artificial intelligence technology. Webcam-based eye-tracking allows for testing of communication materials, including videos, static advertising, product visibility on a shelf and Web site mock-ups.

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

■ Auckland, New Zealand, research solutions firm Infotoools has released a new case study with telecommunications company Orange. The publication, called The Color of Transformation, examines how Orange's market research team re-invented the way they deliver consumer insights data to their business leaders. It can be downloaded at [bit.ly/2OrVM8B](http://bit.ly/2OrVM8B).

■ IGD, a research and training organization for the food and grocery industry, has launched IGD Asia, a research and insights platform. Led by IGD's team in Singapore, the service will offer field-based research and analysis into Asian food and grocery retailing, providing coverage of 18 markets across Asia with a particular focus on China. It will cover over 100 retailer profiles in the region, with information on latest strategies, forecast growth, news, store visit reports and photographs taken in-store.

[www.igd.com](http://www.igd.com)

■ Nielsen, New York, has launched Local Nielsen Media Impact, a planning system that allows users to understand cross-media reach, frequency and duplication on a local scale using audience segments from Nielsen Scarborough. The offering is built with respondent-level data to allow cross-platform analyses for both local TV and radio separately as well as TV and radio together.

[www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com)

■ U.K. research firm RealityMine has added RealLife Answers to its data product offerings. RealLife Answers is a behavioral data product that allows researchers to ask questions of passive behavioral data and return answers in the same format as traditional survey data, enabling them to identify insights for clients.

[www.realitymine.com](http://www.realitymine.com)

■ Marketing software company Bridg, Los Angeles, will be launching its customer data platform this fall. The platform is specifically designed for restaurants and retailers and will combine POS transaction data with loyalty and ordering data to create unified customer profiles.

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

■ London-based researcher Verve has rolled out Verve Hackathon, an approach that combines employee and customer voices in the innovation process and allows new concepts to be created, developed and validated in five days. The approach has been developed in association with several of the company's clients and is part of Verve's innovation practice, which was launched in July 2017.

[www.addverve.com](http://www.addverve.com)

■ Data science company Dstillery, New York, has launched Discover Maps (DMaps), a geospatial insights tool that provides a view into market composition by geography or location. DMaps uses Dstillery's digital audiences and insights to bring digital targeting tactics to other forms of media, including out-of-home, TV, radio and direct mail.

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

■ Sweden-based eye-tracking research solutions firm Tobii Pro has introduced Tobii Pro Lab VR 360, an addition to the company's analysis software Tobii Pro Lab that allows cognitive researchers, psychologists and marketing researchers to use 360-degree videos and images when conducting eye-tracking studies in virtual reality.

[www.tobiiipro.com](http://www.tobiiipro.com)



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# Two-dimensional max-diff

| By Rajan Sambandam and Westley Ritz

## snapshot

The authors propose using a two-dimensional max-diff approach as a way to reduce the burden on respondents.

A common problem in research is prioritization of a list of items (features, messages, etc.). With only a handful of items, a ranking exercise works nicely, though it doesn't really provide information on the spacing between the ranks. A constant sum scale is better, though it cannot be used when there are more than a handful of items. The research industry has gravitated toward widespread use of maximum difference scaling (max-diff) as a standard way of handling this task. The max-diff approach can easily handle many items and provides both rank ordering and spacing between the ranks (in the form of individual-level attractiveness scores).

In the standard max-diff approach, respondents are presented sets of (generally) three to five items and asked to choose the most and least important items in each set. This information is used to estimate the preference scores at the individual respondent level using hierarchical Bayesian (HB) analysis. With this information we can array the items on a chart from most to least important. While this is now an industry standard approach, it does have a significant drawback: the items are arrayed on only one dimension (usually, importance). But sometimes in practice, it is important to sort the items on a second dimension (say, uniqueness or innovativeness). In such cases the practice is to conduct another max-diff exercise with that framing or to ask rating scaled questions to get at that information. This can be a tedious



process for the respondents, especially when more than a handful of items are involved. The information from the two exercises is plotted together in a quadrant chart to provide insights.

## A more efficient way

The question then is whether there is a more efficient way to get at the answer – one that does not require the respondent to go through the exercise twice. Well, since a standard max-diff task does ask respondents to provide two evaluations per question set (most and least important), why not use two-dimensional max-diff (2DMD) to ask them to evaluate each set of items for the two dimensions instead? Let's say we are interested in the importance and uniqueness of the items. Then, let each respondent evaluate each set of items and pick two – the most important and the most innovative items in that set (see Figure 1). Other than that, the data collection process can proceed just as it would in a regular max-diff study.

An immediate question that comes up is whether the same item can be allowed to be chosen for both dimensions. The traditional max-diff approach does not allow the same item to be chosen as most and least important (which would be nonsensical). However, conceptually there is nothing wrong with an item being considered both important and innovative by consumers. So, there is good reason for us to allow this in the data collection phase, so that it becomes possible to identify items that have both characteristics (as also those that don't).

Once the data are collected, they can be analyzed to produce two sets of preference



[www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181015.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181015.aspx)



# cx snapshot

## A New Approach to Gain Consumer Experience Insights

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Figure 1

Single Dimension: IMPORTANCE			Two Dimensions: IMPORTANCE & INNOVATIVENESS		
Choose Most Important:	Items:	Choose Least Innovative	Choose MOST Important:	Items:	Choose MOST Innovative
	A			A	
a	B			B	a
	C	a		C	
	D		a	D	

VS.

scores (one for importance and one for uniqueness) for each respondent. Then, by plotting the responses on a quadrant chart, we should be able to identify winners (important and unique items) as well as dogs (neither important nor unique).

Sounds good in theory but will it work in practice?

### Unconventional topic

To run an initial test, we decided to use a somewhat unconventional topic – movies, evaluated as commercial or artistic. The primary attraction of this topic is that we could evaluate the results for face validity (i.e., whether they made sense) by inspecting where particular movies fell in the quadrant chart.

As can be seen in Figure 2, we get a good spread of data points, with the bulk of the data spread over three quadrants. One movie stands out as the only one (high up) in the last quadrant. This movie (*Titanic*) is generally seen as both a commercial and artistic success. And there are many other movies that fall in expected locations. In the commercial quadrant we find movies such as *The Fast and the Furious*, *The Avengers* and *Die Hard*, while the artistic quadrant comprises movies such as *Dances with Wolves*, *Casablanca*, *Les Misérables* and *12 Years a Slave*. And, in the lowest position of the lowest quadrant we find *Gigli*. It does seem somewhat odd that movies like *The Martian* are not further up but it could be because of the comparative nature

of the max-diff approach and *Titanic*'s asdoverwhelming dominance.

While this was a fun study to run and the results generally seem acceptable, there is no doubt that there can be differences of opinion about the placement of specific movies and even the nature of the dimensions themselves, i.e., the distinction between commercial and artistic. But the results were methodologically encouraging enough as a test that we moved on to a more conventional marketing research example.

### Nice scatter

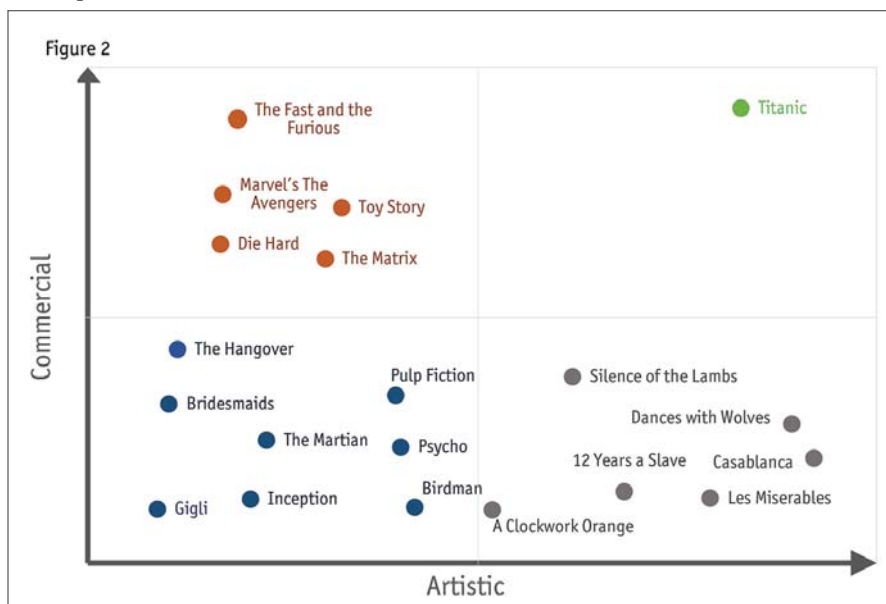
This time the features were for a smartphone (largely taken from an earlier iteration of the iPhone) and respondents evaluated each set of items on importance and innovativeness. The

results are shown in Figure 3. If the two dimensions are highly correlated (basically seen as one), then what we should observe is a narrow array of points stretching along the diagonal. Instead, we see a nice scatter of points across the four dimensions, indicating that respondents do indeed see these dimensions as very different, with a correlation coefficient near zero (-0.06).

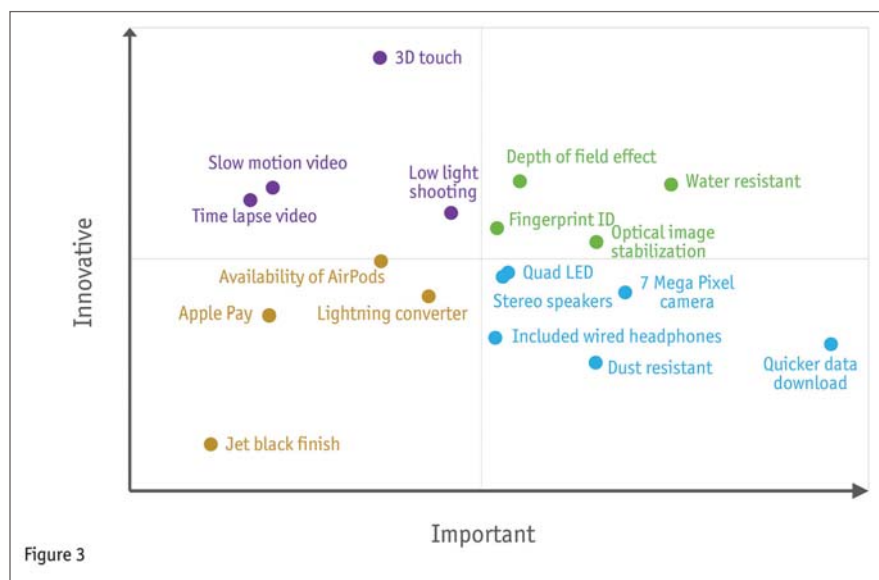
In looking more closely at the items, we see some interesting results. While no item stands out (like *Titanic*), water resistance is seen to be both important and innovative, while dust resistance is seen as important but not innovative. 3D Touch is seen as very innovative but not especially important, whereas quicker data download has the opposite perception. Jet black finish is seen as neither important nor innovative. Knowing these results can allow the marketer to more accurately position the product, as compared to simply using regular max-diff results.

### A more efficient replacement

Where is the 2DMD approach most likely to be useful? Certainly not as a replacement for regular max-diff where a distinction along only one dimension is required (as in the measurement of item importance). But in situations where researchers







burden of an entire extra exercise on the respondent, it appears to be a reasonable trade-off to make.

Since importance is almost always likely to be a dimension of interest in prioritization exercises, a more general way to look at this approach is to think of it as measuring importance along with one other quality. It can be uniqueness, innovation or any other quality that seems to be minimally correlated with importance but whose intersection with importance has marketing implications. A quick look at the dispersion in the quadrant chart will indicate the distinction between the dimensions and how specific attributes could be appropriately positioned. <sup>11</sup>

are forced to conduct two max-diff exercises in order to accommodate client demands for information on two dimensions, this is likely to be a more efficient replacement, saving respon-

dents from tedium and reducing the length of the survey (and therefore cost). There is indeed a dropoff in not measuring the “worst” item of the “best/worst” dichotomy, but given the

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# The basics of NLP

Essential natural language processing for customer experience

| By Briana Brownell



## snapshot

Briana Brownell explores how to understand natural language processing so you can apply it in your organization.

“Hey Siri, what’s natural language processing?”

She hears me perfectly and, after less than a second, she pulls up a Wikipedia article on natural language processing. I skim it. It tells me that natural language processing, usually abbreviated NLP, tells us how to program computers to process and analyze large amounts of natural language data. Yes, Siri, if only it were that easy.

Without realizing it, most of us are already using technology powered by natural language processing every day. It’s behind the page rank in Google’s search algorithm, when we ask Amazon’s Alexa to add paper towels to our shopping list and when we talk with a chatbot to dispute a fraudulent charge on our credit card or to add data to our cell phone plan. Our meetings with NLP-enabled technology are not always so helpful. Consider Tay, the Twitter bot that became racist and spouted conspiracy theories in just a few hours or a chatty new contact on Skype that tries to lure you to her fraudulent Web site.

Technology using NLP is moving quickly, making many new applications possible. But this speed means that it’s a challenge for many organizations to know how to take full advantage of it. Social media, voice search and conversational systems have fundamentally changed the way that customers interact with brands. But even further, it has given companies a more holistic view of their customers. We have come a long way from information retrieval systems, the most common early technology that relied on NLP, which had little to no effect on customer-facing businesses. Typically tucked away in the IT department it performed tasks like document retrieval or database storage but did not directly affect meaningful business metrics.

Within the past few years, the volume of data coming into organizations in the form of natural language directly from customers has skyrocketed and for many organizations has become unmanageable, despite its potential to be a powerhouse of insights. For this reason, NLP is having



[www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181006.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181006.aspx)



a major impact behind the scenes quickly compiling open-ends in market research surveys, prioritizing complaints that come into a help desk, tracking employee morale or even helping sales personnel close an important client. Increased availability of data sets for use in training natural language processing systems, improvement in the science behind the scenes and faster processors allows a whole new array of possibilities to understand, monitor and ultimately improve customer experience.

Even though the technology is moving quickly, some problems are much more challenging than others and having a basic understanding of the technology can allow businesses to evaluate use cases and apply it successfully in their organization.

## Word tokenization

The idea of tokenization, or splitting a text input into smaller pieces, also had its foundation in information retrieval. A common challenge was to search for a term in many documents and identify where it occurred. It's not so different from sorting through customer comments to find mentions of a competitor or a specific product.

broad sense of the contents of the data.

Since word tokenization uses spaces to decide what elements to split up, compound words and hyphenated words and phrases are challenging to handle. In a survey about shopping habits, we may wish to know the relative frequency of “store” in both “grocery store” and “bookstore.” But since bookstore is a single compound word, most word tokenization will treat it as a single token. On the flipside, phrases that are made up of multiple words sometimes should be treated as a single entity, such as “soap opera,” which does not have the same meaning when we split it into two tokens. These inconsistencies in language makes consistency even in the most basic processing a challenge.



## Sentence patterns

Analyzing the open-ended responses in a customer survey gives a level of understanding that is impossible to get from strictly quantitative measures. It allows us to capture the “why” behind satisfaction ratings and provides more insight on how purchase decisions are made. But aggregating this data while still attempting to capture these nuances is challenging. Simply counting words is not enough. For this reason, some rules-based NLP looks for sentence patterns to extract useful information.

In the first “chatterbots” developed in the 1960s, the algorithms looked for specific keywords in the text in a certain order and then responded based on stiff rules. One of the most famous examples was Eliza, who was supposed to emulate a Rogerian psychiatrist. It carried on a conversation with a user – assumed to be a patient – by matching the pattern of a sentence to one in its code and producing a response or asking a new question. Surprisingly, even in its simplicity, Eliza was very popular and many claimed conversations with her were helpful.

An algorithm built using very rigid, logic-based rules without any room for subjectivity or soft meaning must work a lot harder to decode the information contained in a customer comment, especially in aggregate. Customer comments frequently are incomplete sentences and may be full of spelling mistakes. For example, if a customer said, “I don’t like the color selection” we could automatically pick up all the text after “I don’t like” and store it in a variable field. But we will want to capture the “i dont like the color selection” or any variety of other errors. A human reviewer would immediately understand this despite the spelling errors. To take errors like this into account, we must keep increasing our set of rules in order to make it comprehensive. All this additional complexity makes for a system that is really time-consuming and difficult to update as markets change and new products or concepts start to appear in the data streams. It also means that manual work is still often more accurate.

## Synonyms and multiple word sense

Usually when we have a large amount

of text data we are looking for similar themes among many comments – for instance, common suggestions to improve or reasons for satisfaction – because this allows us to prioritize changes that will most impact customer experience. When we simply look at individual words without an outside mechanism we have no way of knowing whether the words are synonyms.

Most coding frameworks are created by researchers to solve this problem but it means that much of work is done manually. As new comments come in, the coding frame needs to be expanded. External frameworks for synonyms can be used but they are frequently too general to be effective. Most words have many different senses, depending on their context and use. Human coders easily understand this but for a computer it is much more difficult. Consider “interest rate.” Would we want to combine the word “interest” with its common synonyms “amuse,” “entertain” and “intrigue”?

## Sentiment analysis

Sentiment analysis is one of the most common basic text analysis procedures that is used on text data but, unfortunately, it’s probably also the most complained-about. Usually, sentiment analysis classifies text as positive, negative or neutral and sometimes assigns a numerical score to the comment so that responses can be ranked. This may be important when prioritizing many comments, looking for detractors or advocates or simply understanding the public perception of a company overall.

There are many sentiment analysis classifiers which work one of two main ways: phrase matching or learned sentiment classification. Phrase matching has a list of very positive, positive, negative and very negative words that it looks for and finds and then creates a score accordingly. For example, a sentence containing “hate” is likely to be very negative, regardless of its context. The second sentiment analysis method, learned sentiment classification, takes a dataset which is trained on data that has been tagged by human specialists and decides how negative each word or phrase is based on what it learned from this initial tagging. A learning classifier might

pick up on a word which just happens to appear frequently in the training dataset’s negative comments that has no real bearing on the sentiment. This results in overfitting and biases the output whenever that word appears.

This is usually the challenge with off-the-shelf sentiment analysis which may or may not be applicable to the type of data you’re dealing with. A comment like “Mortgage interest rates are too high” might be a negative comment in the context of a survey about banking but it’s unlikely that it will be found as such in a general sentiment analysis system.

## Word-embedding methods

Word-embedding methods, which attempt to solve some of the challenges in natural language processing, have been around since the 1960s but only recently have these techniques started to be widely used in commercial NLP applications.

Working off the assumption that a word is characterized by the company it keeps, word-embedding assigns each word a numerical vector based on the words around it, either in a linguistic context or simply the proximity to other words. In this way, it uses contextualization to closely group words that are found in similar contexts. This allows us to develop a more nuanced understanding of the way in which a given word is normally used.

These systems have the potential to be very effective since they can be used to understand the meaning of the word in context. From the resulting vector, we can figure out how closely synonymous two words are and what are their closest synonyms in the dataset. We can extend it to take into account that words may have multiple meanings.

Word-embedding has allowed machines to build up a much more refined idea of what words mean so classifying and grouping comments is easier but even this process has drawbacks. Since word-embedding works with the idea of replacement rather than how words may complement one another, words which can be interchanged but have very different meanings are frequently found embedded close to one another. For instance, considering the phrase “expensive pizza,”

the adjective “expensive” would find closer neighbors with “overpriced” than “delicious” but both would still be much closer than a completely different type of word, like “popsicle.” The word “expensive” is not likely to ever find itself in a sentence where it could be a replacement for “popsicle.”

This gives an interesting problem, where words which may suggest the same topic may not actually embed closer together than words that mean something quite different. For data about restaurant satisfaction, “food” and “service” both end up close together since in the comments left by customers, a great many have simple comments like “great food” and “good service.” Meanwhile other words related to service like “server” embed farther away because “service” and “server” aren’t interchangeable in many sentences, even though we know that they are related to the same topic.

Although word-embedding functions well, the volume of data needed to create accurate results is daunting – typically within the millions of rows. The more we want to add in the nu-

ance of understanding the individual words, like considering various word senses, the more data we need to be able to take it into account. Most businesses simply don’t have enough data to be able to effectively use these methods. Efforts are even being made to start crowdsourcing NLP development, with companies in the space using services like Amazon’s Mechanical Turk to build large, collaborative datasets so that people can help machines learn, which could help to push the technology to new horizons.

### Capture a richness

There’s no doubt that the advances in NLP are fundamentally changing how customers interact with brands and expanding the depth of insights that companies can draw from their customers. Understanding the technology behind it, what it can and can’t do, makes insight-generation tractable for those in the organization who are tasked with using it. Whether it is a straightforward word cloud or a neural network which embeds tens of thousands of words to get a deeper overview

of attitudes about a topic, working with language data allows companies to capture a richness that augments quantitative measures. The science driving these tools continues to improve as the underlying methodology is developed and tested in real applications. New, targeted datasets are becoming available and some of the challenges in using more sophisticated approaches to language will disappear.

Quickly finding insights in large volumes of customer comments is empowering companies to provide better customer experience, mitigate risks and enter new markets confidently. It allows companies to hear directly from the customer in their own words. Sometimes the most surprising insights come from this data. NLP technology means that game-changing insight in a mountain of data is finally possible to find. ①

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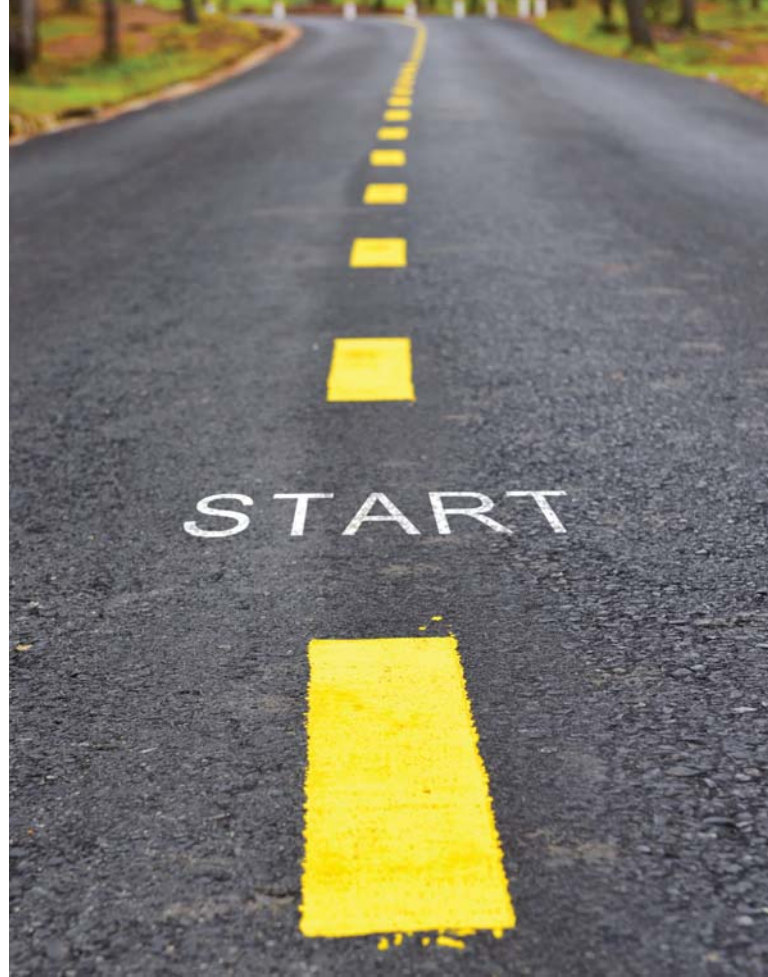
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# A worthwhile trip

How to go further with purchase journey insights

| By Joe Beier and Jason Boyd



## snapshot

The authors offer tips to improve your purchase journey insight and activation processes.

It's not just that some purchase journeys have become more complex – this goes without saying, given all the devices and touchpoints that influence buying decisions. But today's journeys are also much more diverse; in many cases, for example, consumers still want to buy things in the quickest ways possible – one reason that Amazon has become such a retail powerhouse.

This diversity of journeys makes it more essential than ever for marketers to home in on the evolving purchase paths for their categories. Simply knowing the steps – from desire to active shopping to buying – is Job 1 for every purchase journey program.

At the same time, the need to understand clearly which elements of a journey really moved the needle toward purchase has never been greater. With so many places where marketers can invest – social media, in-banner ads, in-store promos, traditional media campaigns – knowing which ones really make a difference for a given category is core information.

Today, it is up to researchers and their clients to take the search for purchase journey insights to a new level. Simply relying on tried-and-true sources is not enough; there are no cookie-cutter solutions anymore. Insights leaders need to become active seekers, to begin their own journeys toward truly differentiated data and learning.

We all know that researchers and marketers have more data about consumer purchase journeys than ever before. From online searches to loyalty card records to media use, information about consumer behavior has never been more abundant. But that data is often from diverse sources and combining data sets is not something that most researchers have mastered. In the past there was never a reason nor the material to work with.

To become great curators of purchase journey stories, researchers need to step out of their comfort zones – and not just in the realm of analytics. The opportunities and challenges of today's consumer insights ecosystem demand more than wonkishness; they require a greater focus on marketers' business priorities and needs, deeper connections



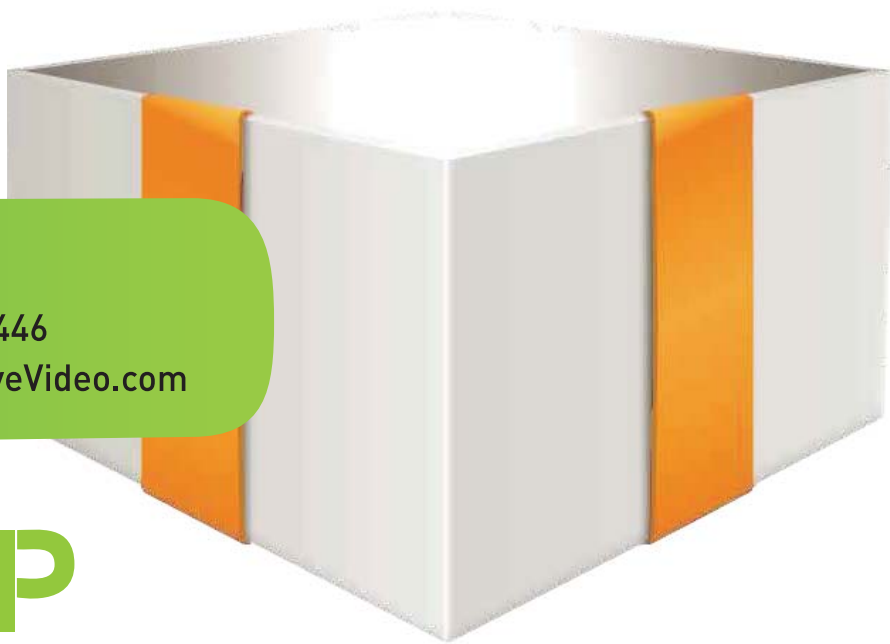
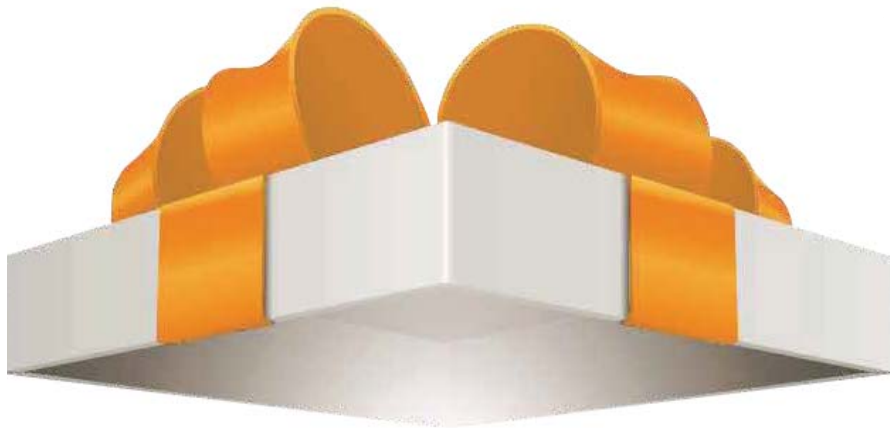
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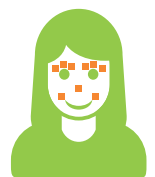
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with all stakeholders in the research process and a commitment to making a difference, not just in the realm of statistics but on the bottom line.

Understanding purchase journeys today requires a strategic mind-set, in which researchers think beyond any individual “project” and instead create a start-to-finish commitment to identifying, tracking down, fusing and acting on learnings. For any individual product or brand, purchase journeys are beginning and ending all the time and the nature of purchase journeys changes with technologies and lifestyles. Recent GfK research shows, for example, that:

- “omnishopping” has increased in even non-durable categories such as cleaning products, packaged food and beverages;
- more than half of consumers now say they purchased a product that they heard about via social media;
- Millennials are more likely to say they used a smartphone than a computer to shop in the past six months, while Boomers favor computers by almost 4-to-1.

So how can researchers today stay a step ahead of the purchase journey landscape – bringing their organizations the insights they require to make wise investments in a truly cluttered retail environment? How can they get the purchase journey insights that they – and their brands – need and deserve? Here are five essential tips to keep in mind and incorporate into your insight and activation processes.

#### **Begin with the end in mind.**

It may sound counterintuitive but working backwards is a great way to enrich your purchase journey work. This means putting as much thought into pre-study preparation as into the data-gathering itself. Think of it simply as asking a lot of questions about the end of your project but doing so before you even get started.

Researchers need to actively explore:

- What fundamental business questions or opportunities will this study address?
- What will my organization do differently once these findings are in hand versus today?

- Which aspects of my in-market execution does the study need to inform?
- Who are the key audiences for the findings (in and/or outside) and what are we going to be asking them to do?
- What is hypothesized/known about the category purchase journey today?

Addressing these “working backwards” questions defines two key pillars of any purchase journey effort. First we have to understand who needs to support our work – the stakeholder team, coming from many different departments. From marketing and insights to category management and innovation, it is key to know who will be relying on your work and have to help make it a reality.

The “working backwards” approach also helps us develop a learning and activation plan, laying out the full breadth of your efforts and seeing what is really feasible. In some ways, this is just Project Management 101 but many times some basic considerations can be overlooked. How compatible is the plan with timing and budget realities? How will we socialize our findings, to be sure they live and breathe in the organization? Considering these ahead of time can save huge amounts of frustration and wasted effort later on.

**Enhance journey work with behavioral data.** Passive digital behavioral tracking gives us a powerful window onto what consumers actually do, compared to what they report later on. Passive data from computers and mobile devices can be combined with panel profile insights and custom surveys to understand the “whys” behind consumer actions as well as their offline behavior. We can learn: which Web pages/apps an individual opens; what keyword phrases a consumer uses on search engines; when and how much time someone spends on sites; and navigational patterns, such as where people come from and go to.

**Leverage the full power of data integration.** Data integration may seem like table stakes for purchase journey work today but how you approach combining data will hugely affect the value of your output. Be methodical and clear about your options, using three key steps:

**Insights review.** To connect the

dots on what you already know, thoroughly explore what related studies you have already done.

**Gap assessment.** To prioritize insight needs, it is essential to see clearly what is missing and rank the importance of those gaps.

**Learning priorities.** Scope and prioritize your learning for both qual and quant research. Where do you need to go next?

### **Stages that made a difference**

As we noted earlier, there can be a foundational disconnect between what people say they do while shopping and what they actually do. Statistical modeling can identify the derived (not just stated) key touchpoint influencers – the stages in the purchase journey that made a difference (Figure 1).

Was it comparing devices featured online, handling and demo-ing the item in-store or looking for ratings and reviews in social media that really pushed the decision in a certain direction? Advanced modeling can unlock these secrets.

Once we know the derived influencers, we can map them to guide strategic execution. We can look, for example, at key disconnects between touchpoint usage and influence to understand where mere use data might mislead us in terms of our marketing investments.

### **Activate like you mean it**

Purchase journey insights mean nothing if they never become real-world actions. Connecting insights to your business and inspiring stakeholders to put them into gear requires planning and strategic tools. From workshops to portals to journey maps, bringing the data alive through visuals and hands-on interaction adds depth to your findings and makes their relevance clear. In share-back workshops, for example, you can identify specific, high-value, insights-driven strategies and activations by connecting the dots across multiple sets of data.

We also recommend action-planning workshops to engage a more cross-functional audience with your insights. Unlike a share-back session, these workshops typically include cross-functional teams, synthesize key findings across multiple studies and provide breakout

Figure 1: Touchpoint Importance Strategic Mapping




exercises and teamwork.

Activation – and what comes after – is so essential to an effective purchase journey and mostly outside the scope of what a researcher might have thought was his or her “job” just a few years ago.

Ultimately, empowering your colleagues to make informed business decisions is critical in the rapidly evolving shopper landscape. Working collaboratively toward outcomes of the workshop, providing data portals

that can support ad-hoc queries and developing external selling collateral are just a few examples of steps you can take. Seek out scalable data solutions that allow you to refresh your insights frequently; opportunities will be missed by waiting multiple years to redo a purchase journey study.

The challenges and rewards of purchase journey work today are clear. The availability of so much data – and the demand for such an advanced level of insight – requires that researchers truly expand their horizons. The good news is that resources for taking all of these essential steps are already available – for those who know the importance of looking.

Be sure to investigate thoroughly and activate fully on your journey to a new world of learning. 

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# Identify the right path to success

Setting goals in customer experience

| By Kunal Gupta and Jeremy Cochran



## snapshot

The authors explore four methods for customer experience improvement goal setting.

Recently, a client reached out to us for guidance on their goal of improving the customer perception of support center interactions. To accomplish this goal, management set very aggressive targets for “first call” and “on-time resolution” for the coming year. While management felt the targets were very achievable, the frontline employees were worried because the goals felt too aggressive and unachievable. The question we had to answer was: Who, if anyone, was right?

Most companies set goals related to financials or marketing strategy but one of the most important goals a company can set relates to customer experience outcomes. Companies that focus on improving customers’ experiences tend to see improvement in overall customer engagement, which leads to higher retention, greater share of wallet and ultimately, higher profitability.

Improving the customer experience should be fairly easy and straightforward. In its simplest form, all it takes is setting a goal and then working to achieve or meet that goal. So sure, in theory, it is easy. But in reality, things can quickly get complicated.

Here are a few of the questions you need to ask when setting a goal: How do you determine the goal? How do you demonstrate progress towards the goal? What if one team meets a goal and others don’t? Are your goals similar to those of your competitors? How do you know that the goal is meaningful to the overall organization?

Identifying the right method to set and track progress towards a goal helps organizations understand their processes better and make necessary changes to improve. In this article, we’ll talk about the importance of setting goals, discuss what to consider when setting a goal and describe a variety of methods organizations can use to set goals and track progress.

## Setting goals

An easy and well-known framework for setting goals is the SMART method.<sup>1</sup> SMART goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed. This framework is simple, comprehensive, and – when properly deployed – can be very useful.

For the purpose of our discussion, we will share two more goal-setting criteria that



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Figure 1

1. JUDGMENT-BASED METHOD OF GOAL SETTING
  - A. Goal setting based on managerial judgment
2. NORMATIVE METHODS OF GOAL SETTING
  - A. Goals to match competitive performance
  - B. Goals to match best-in-class – within or outside the industry
3. INTERNALLY-FOCUSED METHODS OF GOAL SETTING
  - A. A certain percentage improvement over the last time period
  - B. A certain absolute improvement over the last time period
  - C. Statistically significant improvement over last time period
  - D. Best performance historically over multiple time periods
  - E. Improvement targets based on allocation into performance bands (e.g., quartiles)
  - F. Closing the gap by a certain percentage
4. EXTERNALLY-FOCUSED METHODS OF GOAL SETTING
  - A. Outside-in method of goal setting

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are especially helpful in customer experience and engagement research: equitable and empirical.

First, goals should be equitable – meaning they should be fair. Goals that are not equitable could actually end up rewarding weak performers while punishing superior achievers, which we will touch on later.

Second, goals should be empirical. While so many decision makers claim to be data-driven, we often see goals set arbitrarily based on judgment and/or collective experience. Instead, when goals are empirically derived, they can lead to increased confidence and transparency in the goal-setting process along with greater commitment from employees.

Let us discuss some of the commonly used methods of goal setting. The intent of this section is not to be exhaustive, though we do cover a wide range of commonly used methods (Figure 1). These methods range from being more internally focused to following an outside-in approach and being empirical. Each of these approaches has benefits and drawbacks; we are not recommending any one method as the go-to way of setting goals. Instead, we want to highlight a few goal-setting approaches we commonly see applied, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each.

### Method 1: Judgment-based goal setting (going with your gut)

At one end of the spectrum, businesses could set their goals for customer experience outcomes based on their judgment. Rather than relying on a specific primary or secondary data source, judgment-based

goals rely mostly on the tacit and collective agreement of decision makers and/or other organizational stakeholders.

This is one of the most common methods of goal setting in customer experience, with examples ranging from decreasing call-handling time to a focus on delighting customers. It's not just shooting from the hip; judgment-based goal-setting is usually informed by a variety of sources such as historical performance of the firm, competitive landscape, overarching organizational goals and market trends. For instance, an executive might read an industry report and immediately know that the firm needs to reduce average call-handling time to decrease overall costs and thus to stay competitive in the industry.

The big limitation of this method, however, is that goals are heavily influenced by the tacit knowledge and biases of individual decision makers. Therefore, these goals may not hit any of the SMART metrics.

Here is a firsthand example of a judgment-based goal-setting process gone wrong:

A leading technology provider decided to invest in what it referred to as “customer centricity.” Top stakeholders felt that improvements in customer feedback scores for each customer touchpoint (e.g., online experience, support experience and out-of-the box experience) would boost customer engagement and, ultimately, the health of the brand. However, in their excitement to contribute to the strategic priority, aggressive goals were set without enacting any new programs or initiatives

to support employees in their effort to improve customer centricity. Thus these goals were never realized due to lack of employee training and support on this initiative, which led to disappointment and frustration among the employees associated with delivering the “improved” customer experience.

### Method 2: Normative-based goal setting (keeping up with the Joneses)

The core idea that supports normative methods of goal setting is to view your firm's performance in the context of the competition. In other words, a firm sets goals for itself by identifying gaps in its performance compared to competing firms.

The key factor here is the definition and scope of competition. In some cases, such competition is obvious – companies with similar offerings that serve similar customers (e.g., UPS and FedEx, Marriott and Hilton, etc.). In other cases, the definition of competition might expand to competing for the same customer dollars (e.g., cars vs. public transit – different industries but similar functions).

And there are two main targets firms could use to base their competitive goals: competitive performance and best-in-class.

When setting goals based on competitive performance, an organization compares its performance to its competition. For example, the American Customer Satisfaction Index provides normative data on the levels of customer satisfaction for the larger companies within most industries. Here is an example of these scores from the airline industry: <https://bit.ly/2NkYRDR>.

The limitation of such research could be twofold. First, some of these normative options, given their idiosyncratic methods, might not converge and, in some cases, could even contradict the firm's own information. Secondly, some of them, by design, may provide a scorecard but not adequate diagnostic information.

Setting goals based on best-in-class providers or companies also relies on normative comparison but the goals are set based on the best performers within – or even outside – the industry. For instance, an airline might view anyone in the travel and hospitality industry, including hotels, restaurants and theme parks, as their normative.



Figure 2

SAMPLE SIZE	SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT MEAN AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL
10	7.84
100	6.55
1,000	6.175
10,000	6.055
100,000	6.0175
1,000,000	6.0055

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### Method 3: Internally focused goal setting (look within)

The core idea of these methods of goal setting is for firms to look at their own historic performance to set future goals. This can be done in a variety of ways:

**Improve by a certain percentage:** Goals are based on improving from historical performance by a fixed percentage. For example, if the customer experience score for last year was 60 and management decides to set a 10 percent improvement, then the new goal becomes 66 ( $= 60 + 6$ ). It's simple and has an air of fairness to it. However, looking at the math, it ends up being unfair by rewarding underachievers; the lower your initial performance, the less absolute improvement you have to make. Higher performers can feel punished while the customer's experience doesn't improve.

**Improve by an absolute amount:** Goals are based on improving by a set number rather than a percentage (e.g., NPS needs to improve by five points across each business line). It's simple but yet again, underachievers are still rewarded; it's easier to move when you start at a lower base than a higher one.

**Improve by a statistically significant amount:** Goals are based on improving by a difference that is significant at a chosen level of confidence (e.g., 95 percent). Statistical significance, however, is heavily influenced by sample size; firms with a large customer base can find even miniscule changes in customer experience scores to be statistically significant. Our table (Figure 2) shows how much a score of 6 needs to increase to be statistically significant at various base sizes, assuming the standard deviation is constant. As you can see, a large base can make it easy to achieve a "significant" result (and vice versa for small base

sizes). It's important to understand that just because a change is significant that does not mean it is substantive; that is, it may not reflect a meaningful change in customers' actual levels of engagement.

**Improve to the best performance over multiple time periods:** Goals are based on the best performance achieved over a certain time period in the past. The logic is simple – if we did it before, why can't we do it again? An example we've worked with was a home services organization whose recent customer experience scores were around 70 percent but had been in the 90 percent range two years prior. Management, therefore, decided to set next year's goal at 90 percent. This approach often provides motivational and achievable targets (We did it before, we can do it again!). However, comparing to a good score in the past may not be fair if marketplace conditions or other factors

have changed between then and now. Going back to our example, the home services organization held a 90 percent score when the economy was weak, business was down and only the best employees were retained. It's easier to achieve good customer satisfaction when you're only working with your best staff. Trying to achieve that level again in a different economy is a recipe for frustration – and an example of a specific and measurable goal that might not be achievable or relevant.

**Targets based on allocation into performance bands:** This approach is similar to the approaches above but with a twist. It is applicable for businesses such as hotel properties, bank branches or car dealers, any industry that allows for distinct units that can be classified into performance bands – e.g., top-quartile performers (on say their customer engagement scores), the next quartile and so on. The target for an individual unit is then set by attempting to improve its performance to graduate to the next-higher quartile. This approach provides an ambitious, yet achievable, target. A big unknown is what to do with top performers: Should they be left alone or pushed to perform at even higher levels?

**Closing the gap by a certain percentage:** With this approach, goals are based both on historic performance and an aspirational target. The table in Figure 3 illustrates this process.

Once the target is set, the goal is to reduce the gap between the current



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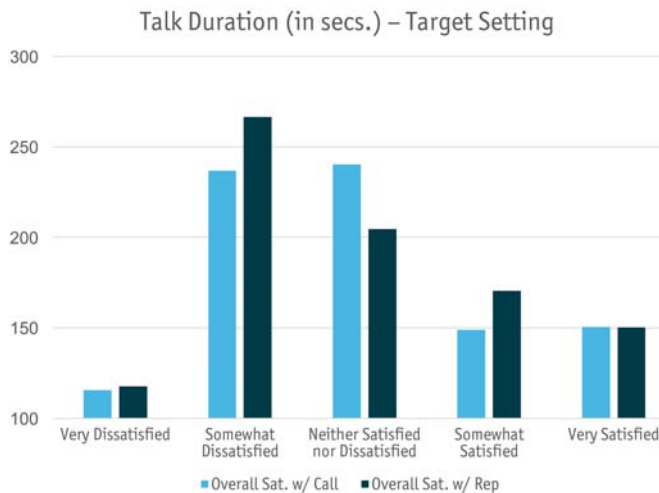


Figure 3

TIME PERIOD	SCORE	GOAL
1	30	35 (30+10% of (80-30))
2	6.55	39.5 (=35+10% of (80-35))
3	6.175	43.55 (=39.5+ 10% of (80-39.5))
4	6.055	47.20 (=43.55+10% of (80-43.55))

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Figure 4



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score and this target by a certain percentage. So for example, if the current score is 30 (on a 0-100 scale) and the goal is an 80, this leaves a gap of 50 points for the unit to achieve. If management decides to close this gap by 10 percent, the unit needs to improve by five points. Over time, the unit keeps inching toward 80 while the absolute amount of change each year keeps shrinking. A strong benefit of this approach is that it is equitable – higher-performing units have less to improve while goals are more aggressive for the laggards. However, the aspirational goals still need to be reasonable and the changes in scores each year may not actually lead to desired business outcomes.

#### Method 4: Externally-focused goal setting (begin with the end in mind)

This last method of goal setting focuses on setting process goals that lead to desired business outcomes. Decision makers start with the desired end state, often identified in terms of an explicit customer benefit, and then identify the level of performance needed to achieve this end state. Given the importance of aligning individual processes to support

overall business performance goals, this method has the benefit of ensuring that progress on this goal has a traceable link to overall business performance.

Here is a real example: Support-center management wanted to provide superior customer experiences by maximizing customer satisfaction scores with their rep interactions. Key driver analyses confirmed that the amount of conversation time that the representative spent with the customer was a key driver of customer experience. Management decided to implement an outside-in method of goal setting, focusing on the optimal amount of conversation time toward maximizing customer satisfaction. As we investigated the data, the pattern shown in the graph in Figure 4 emerged.

The pattern provided very interesting and intuitive information toward setting goals toward “optimum” talk time. Less than 120 seconds for the specific transaction measured here likely makes the customers feel that they are being rushed, resulting in very dissatisfied customers. Upward of 200 seconds of conversation likely seems too long, resulting in less-than-satisfied customers.

The optimum conversation time for

this specific type of transaction thus seemed to be in the range of 150 seconds – leading to somewhat or very satisfied customers. The firm, therefore, set a target time of 2.5 minutes.

The primary benefit of outside-in method is that proposed improvements and goals have a tangible and demonstrable connection to business goals, which resonates well with senior management. However, such analyses require having the right kind of data available. Additionally, this analysis is a bit of both art and science as analysts need to spend time thinking through what variables to investigate and then actually running the analysis and discovering whether relationships exist.

#### Important and highly effective

Thinking back to the original issue of the aggressive goals set by our client, we found that the frontline employees were worried that they would meet the goal but would not receive any credit unless they exceeded it. Our advice to the client was to set a goal based on closing the gap by a certain percentage, which helped business units show progress more easily.

We know setting goals is an important and highly effective way for organizations to track and improve the experiences they deliver for their customers as a way to improve customer engagement. However, as shown here, there is more than one way to set a goal. What seems like a simple procedure can become very tricky when details, such as multiple stakeholders, complex processes and varying baselines across teams, are considered. Organizations and decision makers must recognize there is no one-size-fits-all approach to goal setting. Each of the goal-setting approaches we discuss here has benefits and limitations; which method organizations decide to leverage should depend on what works best for that organization and its particular circumstances. 

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# Strategies for avoiding respondent fatigue

Designing research surveys for success

| By Matthew Walmsley



## snapshot

Tips for reducing survey fatigue among health care providers and other research respondents.

In late 2017 the British Healthcare Business Intelligence Association Response Rate Task Force released its report *Reversing the Decline in HCP Participation*, which addressed the industry concern around the willingness of health care providers (HCPs) to take part in market research. Our firm, SurveyHealthcare (SHC), is proud to have provided sample and fieldwork to help complete this research.

To take it a step further, I sat down with SHC's management team – Anel Radoncic, senior vice president, programming manager; Anthony Howard, vice president, technical operations; Mary Ellen Fasano, senior vice president, project services, quantitative; and Christina Pereira, vice president, project services, qualitative – to delve into some best practices for streamlining the survey process to mitigate respondent fatigue while maintaining data quality.

### Q: What is survey fatigue? How do you define it?

Anel Radoncic: Survey fatigue is the issue which happens during survey taking where the respondent becomes bored, exhausted or uninterested in the survey, which is usually due to repetitiveness of same/similar questions, poor survey design and/or survey length.

Anthony Howard: The consequences of survey fatigue are that a respondent might refuse to finish the study, might decide to stop doing research altogether for our panel or, worst-case scenario, enter thoughtless responses to a study and corrupt the data quality for our client's research.

### Q: How common is survey fatigue?

Radoncic: It is pretty common but more prevalent in poorly designed surveys and surveys that are longer than 45 minutes.

Howard: Common. My team handles the help desk, so we're on the front lines getting



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feedback from our panelists. If there is a study with a poor design, we hear about it. Panelists are not afraid to let you know they did not enjoy a particular survey. We try to submit all feedback to the project manager running the study so if they are having struggles with a study, they can present it to the client. Unfortunately, by the time a study is in field, clients are typically against making changes to questions.

Mary Ellen Fasano: Agreed, it is quite common and it's a problem both for maintaining the health of a panel and for insuring accurate data. When respondents lose interest, their responses become less trustworthy.

Christina Pereira: I would say it's more of an issue for quant. For qualitative, the issue becomes annoyance in being screened out or not scheduled for projects where they have gone through the screening process, since most of our screeners are a bit lengthy and take them through all screening before termination in case a client wants us to reach back out to a screened-out person who was close to qualifying.

#### **Q: What are the top reasons for survey fatigue?**

Howard: Poor survey design and poor questionnaire design – plain, boring screens with large blocks of text and repetitive questions are the easiest way to run a respondent into the ground.

Fasano: Interview length, types of questions and relevant subject matter are also factors.

Pereira: Repetitive questions, too many attributes on scales, trying to drill down too much, conjoint designs that seem to go on forever, not pre-testing to see what the respondent user experience will be like.

#### **Q: What is a good/recommended survey length?**

Radoncic: I would say the average health care research survey length is around 30-45 minutes. I wouldn't recommend going over 60 minutes, because then respondents would need to answer the survey in more than one sitting and we wouldn't accurately be able to track the survey length.

Howard: Depends on the topic and goal of the research. Generally, we find that studies over an hour long tend to be pretty brutal.

Fasano: I think the industry take is that an ideal survey length hovers around 20 minutes for consumer but longer, maybe 30 minutes amongst health care professionals. Much longer than that and you risk impacting the integrity of the data as respondents do get bored and lose interest. A couple of caveats are that if the topic is unique and/or particularly interesting to a respondent, they will remain engaged and provide valuable information for an hour-plus. The incentive or honorarium amount is also a factor. With an appropriate amount, most panel members will answer honestly and thoughtfully throughout the survey regardless of length.

Pereira: Really depends on the topic, expertise of the respondent and survey design. But 30 minutes max will get you the best results for HCP, 20 minutes max for consumer. If the survey is well designed, has different question setups and an interesting topic for the respondent, then you can likely keep them engaged for 45-60 minutes.

#### **Q: Is there a particular time or day that you notice respondents are more prone to take surveys? Is there a particular time or day that you notice respondents are more disengaged?**

Howard: The mornings are usually slow when it comes to responses but that's natural. People are at work and busy in the mornings. After the workday, responses increase. The weekends are very productive. Holidays in the U.S. are also a very productive time. I have not noticed any correlation between time of day and disengagement.

Pereira: I agree with Anthony. I also find that around big holidays that both qualitative response and patient response slows a bit. People find it harder to give us their scheduled or appointed time and tend to have more frequent emergencies or need to be rescheduled a little more frequently than usual.

#### **Q: How do you avoid redundancy when programming the questionnaire?**

Radoncic: We provide different visual formats to present the questions to respondents. For example, if there is a question that involves rating, we can present the question in few different visual formats – a table with radio buttons, slider rating, button rating, etc.

Howard: Switching up the way the respondent has to answer. Card-sort on one question, sliding scale on another, rank sort on the next, etc.

Fasano: This varies. If there are several similar types of questions, i.e., rating or rankings, mixing up the format as noted above is very helpful. Within a list of attribute ratings, however, the client may intentionally ask the same question with different wording. This is in part to validate results but also to make sure respondents are paying attention.

#### **Q: Talk a little bit about the importance of making a survey aesthetically pleasing.**

Radoncic: At SHC, we keep the survey page very simple and easy to read to avoid any distractions from the main focus – the content. Our surveys are screen-centered and are designed for optimal user experience, with the question on top, answer choices below, followed by the “next” button.

Howard: The need for an optimized survey interface is crucial. Luckily, Web design is going through a minimalistic stage so we don't have to be super flashy with the presentation. But nobody wants to look at bland, boring questions for 60 minutes. Small things such as animated sliding scales and card-sorting questions really help retain a respondent's attention throughout a long study. We tend to see less straightlining with studies where the presentation and design of similar questions are switched up as opposed to studies where the respondent thinks they're answering the same question multiple times in a row because the question and design are so similar.

Pereira: It needs to be clear and displayed neatly on the screen so they know at a glance how you want them to answer. Filling a screen with a lot of

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instruction and validation makes the survey tedious and difficult to go through.

**Q: What is considered best practice when you receive an open-ended response that clearly lacks thought?**

Howard: This usually depends on how the client reacts. If it's clearly gibberish or a poor response, SHC points it out and throws out the respondent's entire survey. We want our client's research to be thorough and accurate. If the client is happy with the answer, though, and there is no obvious or egregious negligence, the respondent's answers are left in the data. We usually go through and double-check the rest of their responses to ensure they're a quality respondent.

Fasano: Our project managers review open-end responses before sending data to client. When dealing with physicians, particularly unique specialties or topics, it's sometimes hard to tell if their responses make sense since we are not experts in their field. It's a bit easier to flag on the consumer side.

**Q: What is industry standard regarding having "N/A" and "I don't know" as answer choices?**

Radonicic: Nine times out of 10, the client will include an option such as "Don't know," "None of the above" or "Not applicable," which excludes any of the given options. It is a simple and honest answer and we don't want to compromise the integrity/quality of the data by forcing respondents to answer something they legitimately don't know or are not aware of.

Fasano: From a design standpoint, it does make sense to include a "don't know" option for most if not all questions. A "don't know" is often a legit response and respondents need a way to move forward in the survey rather than either dropping off or entering an invalid response to keep going.

Pereira: This is a point where I disagree with the team. In online quant research, I would not allow "don't know" unless it really makes sense to do so on the type of question we are talking about. On five-, seven-, nine- and 11-point scaled-type questions where you are providing means in your

tables it is best to not include a "don't know" option and force them to choose something on the scale. On other types of questions that are more behavioral than opinion, then the "don't know" option would make sense. The reporting team on the client's end should make these decisions based on how the data will end up being reported. It is all about the stats in quant data. Sometimes a valid response would be "not applicable" as well.

**Q: What are some techniques that are utilized to prevent survey fatigue?**

Radonicic: Speed traps. We can actually warn a respondent during the survey or flag their survey silently in the data so that our client can be aware of who is speeding and can make their most-informed decision.

Fasano: We employ some attention checks when needed, i.e., a long list of 10+ attributes might include an item in the middle somewhere that says something like "Enter 3 as the answer for this statement" in order to determine that they are thoroughly reading the content.

Fasano: Mental breaks. These are often used in surveys and with long surveys in particular. We provide a progress bar at the top of the survey screen that updates dynamically so that respondents can gauge remaining time needed.

Radonicic: As a precaution against straightlining, we have a script behind the scenes that will silently flag a respondent for straightlining for our clients to review and determine their outcome.

**Q: What about splitting long surveys into a series of shorter surveys?**

Radonicic: I actually don't suggest splitting the surveys in multiple sittings. I think respondents should have one consistent mind-set throughout a single survey.

Fasano: I think splitting the surveys into shorter series is often ideal but not our call to make as the data collectors. Our clients would decide whether or not they want to ask everything at once – which is more common – or split into shorter surveys. As much


talk as there is around survey fatigue and respondent cooperation rates, in the end budget and deadline are the driving factors for most clients.

**Q: What is the best piece of advice you would offer your clients to better streamline the survey process?**

Radonicic: Clients should ensure the survey content is clear, concise and easy to understand. Questionnaires should be error-free, written in a way that is easy to understand with clear programming instructions and specific requirements.

Howard: Keep the length-of-interview as short as possible. This helps with testing the questionnaire, testing the redirects and keeping respondents engaged. Vary the presentation and answering of questions. From a technical standpoint, eliminate as many variable pass-ins on entry links as possible. It takes a long time to populate on our end, slowing down the process, and it also asks for trouble. There are too many variables to keep track of and it causes technical issues when they're not passed in as expected. I'm referring to things like city, state, first name, zip, segment, etc. Those don't all have to be passed in on an entry link. They can be loaded on the back end. These things drastically cut down setup and fielding time.

Fasano: A few things. Keep the survey length down. Questions should be concise and clear. Vary the types of questions being asked and the structure of the questions. Be transparent about the expected length-of-interview. Be respectful of the respondent's time, i.e., offer an appropriate honorarium amount. And only ask questions that are relevant to the topic or for data analysis.

Pereira: I would also add that it is important to pre-test the quant survey and not only visualize the user experience but talk to a respondent about their experience going through the survey to try and correct any issue before launching. 

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... health care research

# Divide to conquer

Which segmentation strategy is right for your organization?

| By Chris Claeys



## snapshot

Using a health care context, Chris Claeys examines individual vs. account-based segmentations.

When conducting segmentation research, we tend to generalize the experience to one with a focus on understanding prototypes of individuals within the marketplace. This generalization is useful because it supports the traditional inbound leads-based marketing strategy (Figure 1) that most clients utilize as part of their marketing program. In principle, segmentation research of this kind helps throughout several critical layers of the marketing program (account selection, lead generation and lead engagement). However, for non-traditional marketing programs this characterization of segmentation is less useful. In essence, the way we conduct the research is no longer supportive of the client's sales and marketing strategy. For instance, when thinking about multifaceted purchasing chains like hospitals or clinics (primarily a business-to-business concern), a segmentation model centered on individuals is decidedly less useful as it fails to address the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders (pharmacy directors, clinicians, C-suite, etc.); the entire engagement function is no longer supported by the segmentation research.

One alternative to the standard individual-based approach is an account-based segmentation model where the objective focus is to discover heterogeneous groups of homogeneous accounts in the market. At a high level this objective isn't entirely different from the individual-based approach; however, it requires an approach to and application of the research that is almost entirely reversed (Figure 2). We're required to identify and focus on key accounts, decision makers and market dynamics from the outset of the research instead of uncovering them as part of the research.

In the health care market both approaches are necessary and share a degree of overlap that can be useful when creating procedural standards. We'll explore each in more depth to highlight the areas of overlap and, more importantly, the areas of differentiation.



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For **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**, SHC will donate:

**\$500 PER EACH ONCOLOGY STUDY BOOKED**  
to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

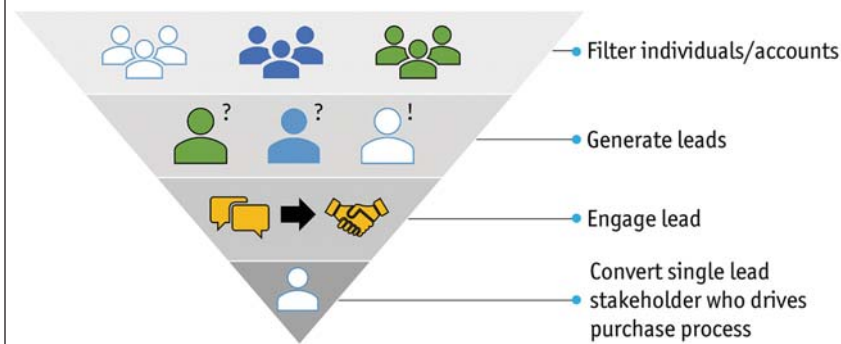


To redeem this offer and make your donation,  
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*\*Study must be > \$10,000. Project must be booked on or before 10/31.*



**Figure 1: Traditional inbound leads-based marketing strategy**



### Individual-based segmentation

Individual-based segmentation research largely encompasses the research process typified by what we, as market researchers, refer to as segmentation. Our client needs a deeper understanding of the personas that exist within their market, how to communicate with these personas and what messages will be most impactful for each persona. These needs arise from the marketing function within our client's organization and closely map to several critical layers of their marketing strategy. Therefore, the primary outcome of the market research isn't a segmentation model but more precisely a segmentation model that can strategically support the endeavors of the marketing strategy. So, the research objectives are:

- identify key segments of opportunity in the market based on some predefined objective criteria (e.g., likelihood to purchase the client's product, receptivity to key differentiators of the client's product);
- profile key segments with actionable demographics, behaviors and attitudes to develop targeted impactful messaging; and
- identify the most appropriate marketing channels to reach key segments.

To deliver on these objectives we identify the most appropriate segmentation methodology (attitudinal, behavioral, needs-based, values and lifestyle, demographic or preference-based), develop a survey instrument geared towards the selected methodology (as well as the objective criteria),

survey the appropriate demographic and then construct the segmentation model. This entire process is retroactively focused on the individual – the individual and their subsequent persona is studied as an outcome of the research, not as a consideration for the design of the research. Breaking this process down more explicitly, we trace the process and necessary outcomes of the research back to the client's marketing strategy. The stated objectives of the research aren't the determining factor of the research design and process.

Within the health care market this type of segmentation research is engendered by marketing strategies that are focused on reaching physicians, patients or both physicians and patients with respect to, in most cases, pharmaceutical products. This application is logical – physicians have their own attitudes and behaviors, related to prescription medications, that determine how they'll respond to various treatment options and, ultimately, what they'll prescribe for a patient on any given office visit. Assuming our client doesn't need to worry about formulary access or step edit restrictions, etc., the decision chain they need to consider is short and predominantly influenced by the physician. However, given the market, the patient may play just as important a role in the decision chain and so the marketing strategy (and subsequently the market research) may focus on their perspective as well. In both cases, the marketing strategy is operationalized around a business-to-consumer (B2C) sales paradigm for which an individual-based approach to segmentation is highly relevant. When the decision-chain can no longer

be thought of as B2C, both the marketing strategy and the market research become less relevant and actionable.

### Account-based segmentation

Account-based segmentation is thematically like that of an individual-based approach – our client needs a deeper understanding of the accounts that exist in the market, how best to communicate with these accounts and what messages will be most effective when communicating with them. These needs arise from the marketing function within our client's organization and closely map to several critical layers of their marketing initiatives. However, the primary outcomes of the market research and the way it is designed are critically different. This is because, as previously discussed, the marketing strategy, not the research objectives, is the determinant of the research design and outcomes and when considering accounts, it is no longer reasonable to operationalize a marketing strategy around a B2C model. In most instances our clients will be utilizing a business-to-business model and will need a market segmentation that helps them transition from inbound marketing to account-based marketing. Consequently, the process needs to be reversed and proactively focused on the unit of analysis (the account) as in Figure 2. Operationally, we can then think of the research objectives as:

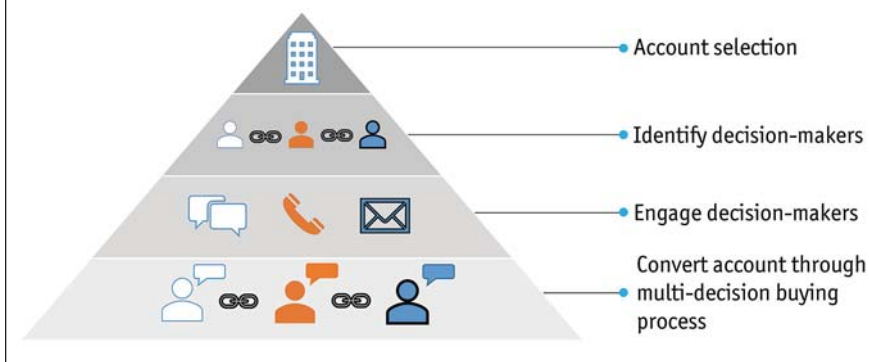
#### Design

- identify accounts for the research;
- identify key decision-making roles within these accounts;
- develop an understanding of the market dynamics that differentiate these accounts (i.e., accounts don't strictly have "attitudes" or "behaviors" so how do these lower-level ideas result in account-level outcomes?).

#### Output

- identify key account segments in the market based on some predefined objective criteria (e.g., their place in the transitional market model, product-portfolio mapping),
- profile key account segments with actionable demographics and decision-maker attitudes to develop targeted messaging for each account based

Figure 2: Account-based marketing strategy



can be developed. When the decision chain, necessitated by our client's marketing strategy, is more B2B-focused than B2C-, account-based segmentation leads to more relevant and actionable results for our clients.

### Critical piece

While market segmentation is a critical piece of any marketing strategy, it can create more barriers than it removes if the way it's conducted prevents an implementation that supports strategic business goals. The differences we've discussed between individual and account-based segmentation highlight the need to consider our clients' marketing strategies when we design and conduct segmentation market research. Ultimately this research is only as good as its application; so, fully assessing, understanding and thinking through the implementation at the beginning will ensure a successful research engagement for both vendors and clients. <sup>1</sup>

Chris Claeys is senior director analytics and consulting at KJT Group Inc., a Honeoye Falls, N.Y., research firm. He can be reached at [chrisc@kjtgroup.com](mailto:chrisc@kjtgroup.com).

on the decision makers within the account; and

- identify the most appropriate marketing channels to reach decision makers within key account segments.

To deliver on these objectives we identify the most relevant segmentation methodology (as listed above), develop a survey instrument geared towards the selected methodology (as well as the objective criteria), survey the appropriate demographic and then construct the segmentation model. Again, this high-level process is no different than an individual-based segmentation; however, there is more nuance in what we would consider as a "relevant" segmentation methodology. Since attitudes and behaviors of individuals don't constitute account-level outcomes it is important to reconsider the context in which we pose our questions, the questions themselves and the broader themes we're attempting to measure with the research.

For most account-level work in the health care industry, it is useful to focus on institutional outcomes and metrics – the larger strategic goals an institution wants to achieve to optimize performance under increasing utilization of value-based reimbursement models. This focus would be further narrowed depending on the client's product portfolio and marketing objectives but would, regardless, provide a direct link to the marketing engagement function that is critical for account selling. That is: what problem(s) is this account trying to solve and how can our products help them? Further, focusing the objective criteria on outcomes produces research that can be mapped to a

three-horizons business model; which accounts are the best fit for our client's core offerings, which are the best fit for adjacent offerings and which have advanced enough to be a good fit for transformational offerings? These kinds of considerations are principal for developing products in evolving markets and dovetail into purchase chain considerations that would commonly be part of an account-based marketing strategy. Once an institution's predominant operating concerns are identified, a deeper understanding of how to sell into these accounts

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Medical marketing research companies can provide you with the expertise needed to understand the expansive and important health care industry. Companies that specialize in medical research can recruit and give you access to a wide range of medical professionals including doctors, nurses, patients, payers and others who can help deliver insight into the medical, pharmaceutical and health care industry through interviews, focus groups, studies and surveys. While it's important to have expert opinions and responses when you're conducting research within these industries, it is necessary to also consider how you will gain access to patients. The right medical research firms can help you access and collect insights from patients, breaking them down by demographic as well as by their experiences with a number of illnesses and diseases, from the very common to the extremely rare. For assistance with any medical research needs, consider these companies.



[quirks.com/articles/2018/20181033.aspx](http://quirks.com/articles/2018/20181033.aspx)



## Applied Marketing Science (AMS)

Founded 1989 | 34 employees  
John Mitchell, CCXP

Applied Marketing Science (AMS) is a boutique market research consulting firm located in Waltham, Mass. With roots in the MIT Sloan School, our expertise in medical products and health care comes from nearly 30 years of providing results-driven, actionable insights to the world's best-known companies. Our experience spans medical devices, diagnostics, life sciences, pharmaceuticals and health care delivery across







nearly all clinical specialties. Clients trust us to execute high-quality market research to inform global product strategy, design and marketing, leading to improved patient outcomes, more satisfied providers and better financial returns. Partner with AMS to create innovative products and distinctive patient and clinician experiences.

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Founded 2009 | <100 employees  
John Feldcamp, Angela Wood, Partners



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## **Clarity Pharma Research**

Founded 2008 | Fewer than 100 employees  
Dr. Jack R. Gallagher, Ed.D., M.Sc., CEO



Clarity Pharma Research brings clarity to clients' business decisions via nationally representative, real-world research on pharmaceutical products, from prelaunch to patent expiration. We integrate anonymized patient records/treating physician research with national and other big data to size markets (epidemiology), measure product usage, enhance forecasting, describe treatment patterns, gauge clinical utility and fill gaps in secondary data. We find out the why behind physicians' treatment decisions through perceptual and empirical questions about real – not hypothetical – patients. The FDA has accepted our findings to modify a client's clinical trial and our scientists boast more than 100 medical journal articles and conference presentations.

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## Creative Consumer Research

Founded 1976 | 16 full-time; 60 part-time (76) employees  
Patricia Pratt, CEO

In 40 years, CCR has developed the expertise, knowledge and specific experience to conduct primary market research in the health care industry. Our partnership approach includes planning sessions, project design, project management, survey design, programming and qualitative or quantitative sessions. CCR is proficient in addressing customer satisfaction, branding awareness and usage and employee satisfaction studies.

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[www.ccrsurveys.com](http://www.ccrsurveys.com)



traditional and innovative approaches to reach various fields of medicine and health services. A full range of additional services include global and national recruiting, field management, screener development, moderation and more. Focus Crossroads is committed to the compliance of best practices in research standards and is one of only a few U.S. research firms to be ISO-20252:2012 certified.

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## Focus Pointe Global

Founded 1988 | 480 employees  
Laura Livers, CEO

With a deeply experienced, specialized medical project management and recruiting team, FPG has earned the trust of the health care research



community by providing unrivaled expertise, sampling excellence and proven results. Our double opt-in health care panel consists of 1 million patients, caregivers, physicians and professionals, offering limitless in-person and online research opportunities across every facet of the health care industry, including large- and small-scale clinical research. The FPG Patient Panel consists of 104 chronic medical conditions and the professional panel includes physicians and specialists from 99 disciplines. FPG has developed a proven technique over a 30-year history for understanding both the patient, physician and related health care professional sides of medical marketing research.

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[www.focuspointeglobal.com](http://www.focuspointeglobal.com)



## FocusVision

Founded 1994 | 400 employees  
Zlatko Vucetic, CEO

FocusVision is the only full-spectrum research technology business, with a complete suite of software solutions to capture real-time human insights and



analytics. Powered by FocusVision technology, our customers can make more informed decisions so they can hit the right mark with customers and employees every time. Our suite of solutions allows businesses to test creative and product concepts, understand customer opinion and sentiment, improve product usability and customer satisfaction, manage multiple projects with ease and keep their finger on the pulse of employee satisfaction. Because of this commitment, we're already trusted by 18 of the top 20 Fortune 100, all 10 of the top health care and 10/10 of the world's top CPG companies. Let us know how we can help you!

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## Focus Crossroads

Founded 2010 | 20 employees  
John De Biasio, CEO



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## Group Dynamics In Focus Inc.

Founded 1981 | 17 employees  
Robin Kaplan, President

Group Dynamics In Focus offers 37 years of experience and expertise in qualitative research. Located in suburban Philadelphia, we recruit to our facility as well as outside venues. With an emphasis in the health care area, our capabilities include national recruitment across a variety of methodologies including in-depth interviews (both phone and in-person), focus groups, bulletin boards and Webcam interviews. Our dedicated team provides insights and solutions for all of your research needs.

Phone 866-221-2038  
[www.groupdynamics.com](http://www.groupdynamics.com)



## HealthCare Research

### HealthCare Research

Founded 1991 | 20 employees  
Karl Weiss, CEO

HealthCare Research is a nationally-recognized research and evaluation firm, providing strategic analyses of a wide assortment of health care data for over 30 years. Through our customizable Art of Medicine® and Art of Service® programs, clients receive critical insights about their patients' experiences, delivering scores, comments and key drivers, tailored to each supervisor's area of care, at the right time, including daily alerts for critical issues, monthly updates to monitor performance and quarterly evaluative summaries. Results are available not only through a dynamic online portal but also shared with each supervisor via e-mail to keep the information front-and-center.

Phone 303-323-1900 ext. 202  
[www.healthcareresearch.com](http://www.healthcareresearch.com)



## HEALOGIX

### Healogix LLC

Founded 2004 | 23 employees  
Tim C. Edbrooke, President and COO

Healogix is a full-service marketing research agency with global reach. One-hundred percent focused on health care, we help leading and emerging pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies succeed in product development, commercial launch and throughout the life cycle of their brand. Our deep, senior team leverages a unique blend of experience, knowledge and proprietary methodologies to deliver to each and every client actionable market insights that go beyond the norm. Healogix is relied upon for the integrity and innovation that we bring to our clients, regardless of the challenges they face. For more information, visit [Healogix.com](http://Healogix.com).

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[www.healogix.com](http://www.healogix.com)







## Infomine Healthcare Research – Middle East

Founded 2008 | 36 employees  
Dr. Amr Mansour, Managing Director

Having successfully conducted the

largest-of-its-kind health care research project in the Middle East, with >34,000 respondents and twice given an honorable mention in the Journal of Respiratory Medicine



published by Elsevier, Infomine is the trusted Middle Eastern health care partner, including pharma, devices, hospitals, equipment, etc., with exclusive access including all HCPs, payers, health authorities through in-house teams in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. Our local and regional clients include: Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Novartis, Medtronic, BMS,

Amgen and Sanofi, among others. Our international clients rely on us to deliver flawless, reliable, robust data for their end clients, including QualWorld, Research Partnership and imsHealth (IQVIA). Dr. Mansour leads the team, having over 20 years in health care consulting and research with KPMG, PwC and GE Healthcare.

Phone + 20 1000 120 590  
[www.infominersearch.com](http://www.infominersearch.com)



## Jibunu

Founded 2003 | 18 employees  
Ken Berry, President

Known for their superior survey programming and research tools, Jibunu is a pioneer of technology-enabled research services.

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## JS Martin Transcription Resources

Founded 1995 | 30+ employees  
Jay Martin, Founder



JS Martin Transcription Resources has a particularly strong reputation in the realm of health care/pharmaceuticals. We are a go-to resource for many market research companies who are well known within the health care field and conduct research projects for their clients. The reasons for our success in this particular area include: the highest quality, timely transcription services with a truly client-centric approach; continual updating of extensive lists of terminology for every subject matter relative to the medical field; a dedicated team of transcriptionists and quality control specialists who ensure transcripts meet or exceed expectations and an FIPS 140-2 certified SFTP Pragma Server that meets the demanding government standards of security. Our rates are competitive and are based upon actual hours of audio (or video).

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## Karchner Marketing Research LLC

Founded 2014

Helen and Michael Karchner, Co-Founders



Karchner Marketing Research LLC is a full-service firm offering customized research, recruiting and a focus group facility for the health care, pharmaceutical, bio-tech and medical device clients. Since 2003, co-founders Mike and Helen Karchner have conducted research in 130+ therapeutic areas. Their proven successes precipitate from understanding their clients' needs, selecting apropos methodologies and engaging in articulate conversations with qualified respondents (HCPs and patients alike). Health care market research partnerships are often overshadowed by price, familiarity or brand recognition. Yet, KMR identifies the overarching quintessential focus as inter-communication with respondents, flexibility with clients and knowledgeability (not expertise) within a therapeutic area. KMR offers the best respondent-moderator dialogue skill set, engaging in unique activities, which illuminate and effervesce their innermost drivers of choice, opinion and action. Come and partner with KMR!

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## Olson Research Group Inc.

Founded 1995 | 60+ employees  
Charles Olson, CEO



Olson Research offers a full spectrum of qualitative and quantitative market research services with deep access to a robust proprietary database of 2.4 million U.S. health care professionals throughout the life sciences sector, including 960,000 active physicians. Precise targeting is available with up to 75 unique profiling fields. We are best known for: access – our unique and thorough reach to all facets of the U.S. health care decision maker population; experience – our team of seasoned PMs having on average 8+ years of industry experience; and approach – our flexible and collaborative approach to project design, fielding and final deliverables.

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[www.olsonresearchgroup.com](http://www.olsonresearchgroup.com)



## Pinnacle Research Group

Founded 2002 | 10 employees  
Tanya Mingione, CEO

Pinnacle Research Group is a think-tank of educated, intelligent, forward-thinking professionals (psychologists, sociologists, marketers) who specialize in the health



care/pharma industry. We combine psychological insight and theories with real-world experience to take your research efforts further. Our unique approach provides deeper exploration and understanding of motivations, behavior and perceptions. Our philosophical approach is simple: dig deep. Leave no stone unturned. Provide a fresh perspective to clients. Do it all while maintaining an intense focus on quality and excellence. We are seasoned professionals who are intuitive, sensitive, observant and have a thorough understanding of human behavior.

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[www.pinnacleresearchgroup.com](http://www.pinnacleresearchgroup.com)





## Reckner Healthcare

Founded 1991 | 225 employees  
David Reckner, CEO



Reckner Healthcare provides complete fieldwork solutions for pharmaceutical and medical marketing research projects. Serving clients for more than 25 years, the company specializes in delivering access to physicians, allied health care professionals, payers, decision makers and hospital administration across the United States and the world. Reckner has its own independently-maintained panel and internally-designed panel management system, making it one of the industry's most robust, respected health care panels. Providing fast access and easy platform linkages, Reckner offers recruiting and scheduling for qualitative and quantitative health care research projects. Services include list matching, recruitment, scheduling, verbal confirmations, programming, hosting and project, segmentation and honoraria/1099 management.

Phone 215-822-6220  
[www.recknerhealthcare.com](http://www.recknerhealthcare.com)



## ReRez

Founded 2002 | 10 employees  
Debbie Petermana, CEO

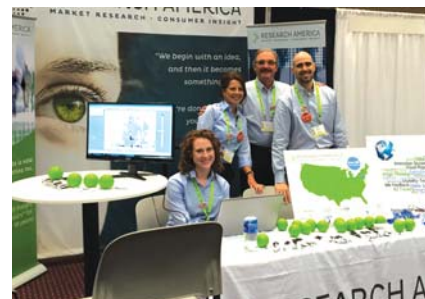
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Founded 1985 | 300 employees  
Robert Porter, CEO



Research America Healthcare group partners with health care clients to provide crucial insights from all health care industry constituents – patients, physicians, payers and integrated health organizations. We are flexible and responsive to keep pace with the “moving targets” brand teams face. Our project teams are deeply interactive to discuss, debate and share ideas to provide holistic views of the marketing challenges or problems at hand. We align manifold data sources and facts to illuminate solid decisions. We bring a vast array of quantitative, qualitative, digital and big data tools, including those used by colleagues serving other industries. Let's solve your problems together.

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Founded 1977  
Gary Laben, CEO

Research Now SSI is the world's leading global provider of first-party consumer and professional data based on extensive, proprietary market research panels. Around



this core asset of opted-in, managed data, the company has built innovative data services and solutions that bring the voice of the individual to the entire marketing spectrum, from research to marketing to advertising. Research Now SSI serves more than 4,000 market research agencies, media and advertising agencies, consulting and investment firms and health care and corporate customers in the Americas, Europe and Asia-Pacific.

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SCHLESINGER  
GROUP

## Schlesinger Group

Founded 1966 | Circa 600 employees  
Steve Schlesinger, CEO

Schlesinger is a leading data collection company specializing in pharmaceutical marketing research and offering a broad



range of qualitative and quantitative research solutions. Our top-rated facilities are located in key markets across the U.S. and the EU. Working in partnership with you, we provide outstanding recruitment and project management for any methodology.

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Founded 2004 | 24 employees  
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Founded 2003 | 60 employees  
Jerry Arbittier, CEO

For over 15 years, SurveyHealthcare has been a leader in health care market research, specializing in online survey data collection services that include quantitative and qualitative health care research, panel recruitment, programming and fieldwork management. We work directly with market research agencies and consultancies to support pharmaceutical and medical device companies in making decisions that affect health outcomes. We do this by providing access to our global panel of 2 million+ HCPs including physicians, allied health care professionals, payers, patients, caregivers and key opinion leaders from the U.S., Canada and Europe.

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## Taylor Research

Founded 1957 | 50 employees  
James Arcadiano, CEO



We understand that quality respondents are essential to the success of your project. That's why, with over 60 years in the industry, Taylor Research has the unique expertise, attention to detail and holistic approach that allows us to deliver quality results that will exceed your expectations every time. In addition to providing top-tier consumer and B2B recruits, we specialize in providing quality engaged respondents that the health care research community has come to depend on. Our extensive medical panel consists of but is not limited to physicians, nurses, hospital personnel, pharmacists, hospital administrators and low-incidence patients. Word-of-mouth in combination with our reputation is our key marketing tool and our ability to deliver consistent quality results keeps our clients coming back.

Phone 858-810-8400  
[www.taylorresearch.com](http://www.taylorresearch.com)







# Toluna

## Toluna

Founded 2000 | 1000+/- employees  
Frederic-Charles Petit, CEO

Toluna's Healthcare Practice has been providing health care and pharmaceutical research practitioners with access to a pre-identified, pre-screened and highly qualified



pool of global physicians, pharmacists, nurses and medical professionals of all specialties, as well as ailment sufferers since 2000. The practice is one of the leading providers of access to specialty respondents and applies many of the

same principles used for the company's 21+ million-member consumer community to health care respondents. Powered by the perfect fusion of technology, expertise and the largest global community of influencers at the ready, Toluna delivers rich, reliable, real-time insights to individuals and companies of all sizes.

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**WebMD**  
**Medscape**  
WebMD Professional

**Market Research**

## WebMD/Medscape Market Research

Founded 1995 | 1,800 employees  
Audrey Rosen, Vice President, Market Research

For over 20 years, WebMD/Medscape Market Research has provided indus-

try-leading recruitment and research solutions so that you can deliver dynamic market research to clinicians no matter the device. By leveraging first- and third-party data and utilizing our broad professional network of highly engaged health providers, we deliver the results you are looking for.

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[www.medscapemarketresearch.com](http://www.medscapemarketresearch.com)



# Q

## Names of Note

■ Consumer intelligence firm *Maru/Matchbox*, Toronto, has appointed **Todd Trautz** as chief innovation and solutions officer.

■ **Jared Schrieber**, CEO and co-founder of San Francisco-based consumer insights firm *InfoScout*, has joined the board of directors for *Market Track*, a market intelligence solutions firm and InfoScout's parent company. With Schrieber's change in role, **Alexander Rink**, Market Track's chief growth officer, will serve as general manager for InfoScout.

■ India-based research firm *MRSS India* has added **Satyen Sharma** to its team.

■ **Steven Wyatt** has joined *Compass Marketing Research*, Atlanta, as vice president.

■ **Dan Reilly** has been promoted to senior vice president and leader of research and consulting firm *SMS Research Advisors*, a division of Minneapolis-based PR and communication company Padilla.

■ *Kantar Worldpanel* has appointed **Lesley Ann Gray** as strategic insight director for Scotland.



Sharma

■ Data management platform *Lotame*, Columbia, Md., has promoted **Jason Downie** to chief strategy officer.

■ **Baileigh Allen**, founder and CEO of *ZigZag Research*, has joined Portugal-based consumer neuroscience platform *MindProber* as executive vice president in the Americas to help bring the company to the United States. Allen is based in Atlanta.

■ Digital data collection company *Lightspeed* has appointed **Valerie Torge** as senior account executive to support its expanding client portfolio on the West Coast. She will be based in the Los Angeles area.



Torge

■ Digital agency *Isobar* has promoted the following: **Sue McCusker** to chief client officer; **Caroline Dean** to chief marketing officer; and **Vikalp Tandon** to chief technology officer. McCusker and Dean are based in London and Tandon is based in Boston.

■ Durham, N.C., research firm *W5* has hired **Jona-  
than Morris** as a practice consultant.



Morris

■ London-based research company *Trinity McQueen* has appointed **Mich Preston** as research director to expand its qualitative consultancy.

■ **Ian Greenblatt** has joined Costa Mesa, Calif., researcher *J.D. Power* to lead the technology, media and telecom-

munications practice.

■ *Nielsen* has appointed **Andrey Dvoychenkov** as managing director for Arabian Peninsula and Pakistan, based in Dubai, UAE. He succeeds **Arslan Ashraf**, who will take on a new role as Nielsen's consumer insights leader for Southeast Asia, China, North Asia and Pacific, based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

■ **Beatrice Capestany** has joined Branford, Conn., firm *Touchstone Research* as senior research analyst.



■ *Campbell Soup Company*, Camden, N.J., has appointed **Diego Palmieri** as vice president and chief marketing officer, U.S. meals and beverages.

■ Los Angeles-based research firm *Alter Agents* has added **Miriam Bishay** to its team as research director.

■ Research company *SKIM* has named **Nicole Gardere** as vice president, global marketing, based in the Hoboken, N.J., office, and **Marjolyn Oudakker** as vice president, global human resources management, based in the Rotterdam, Netherlands office.

■ **Holly Edmunds** has joined qualitative research provider *Digsite Inc.* as senior business development executive.

■ New Orleans-based audience platform *Lucid* has appointed **Rick Pittenger** as its CTO to oversee the product and technology team. Additionally, **Brett Schnittlich** will be broadening his role as president to include the expansion of Lucid's audience and measurement businesses.

■ U.K.-based researcher *Maru Group*

has appointed **Dina Plahouras** as chief people officer.

■ **Catherine Ullman** has joined Nashville, Tenn.-based *Targoz Market Research* as a research analyst. She will be working with utility and energy clients focusing on energy use and electrification research.

■ **Eric Schauble** has joined Cincinnati-based firm *Directions Research* as vice president, client service on the company's health care research team.



Schauble

■ U.K. video insights firm *LivingLens* has added three new members to its customer success team. **Brett Henderson** will head the cross-territory customer success team and will be based in Toronto. **Juliana Almeida** joins the team in London and will focus on European relationships. **Jenna Boccia** will be based in Toronto and will focus on supporting clients in North America.

■ U.K. consumer insight agency *Join the Dots* has appointed **Phil Andrews** as a non-executive board member. The appointment coincides with the company's Managing Director **Quentin Ashby** taking on the role of chief executive officer and Director **Graeme Lawrence** taking on the role of chief client officer.



Andrews

■ In Chicago, consumer intelligence firm *Maru/Matchbox* has hired **Erica Ruyle** as VP of qualitative insights for

its consumer insights sector.

■ **Charles Gottdiener** has been appointed president and CEO of information services company *Neustar*. He succeeds **Lisa Hook**, who served as president and CEO and board member since 2010. Hook will remain on the board to help with the transition.

■ **Mitch Barns**, CEO and board member for *Nielsen*, New York, will retire at the end of 2018. The board of directors will immediately begin a search process to identify a new CEO. **James Attwood**, current chairman of the board, has been named executive chairman. Barns will remain through the end of the year to oversee the company and Attwood, a managing director at *The Carlyle Group*, will assume a more active role and direct the search for new leadership.

■ Albuquerque, N.M., research consultancy *Ameritest* has appointed **Abigail Hollister** as president.

■ The board of directors for India-based research company *MRSS India* has appointed **Dan Foreman** as executive director, based in the U.K.



Foreman

■ **Matt Becher** has joined Chagrin Falls, Ohio, research company *Opinions LTD* as sensory manager.

■ Research company *Market Strategies International-Morpace* has appointed **Stephan Schroeder** to its automotive team as vice president of business development.

■ *MFour Mobile Research*, Irvine, Calif., has added three new team members in survey operations and sales: **Stacy Hua** as a senior research consultant; **Nathan**

**Blush** as a survey programming and design expert; and **Ryan Houseman** as solutions development representative.

■ **Rob Mogerman** has joined *Ironwood Insights Group*, Chandler, Ariz., as director of programming.

■ Research technology platform *NAIL-BITER* has appointed **Amishi Takalkar** as its new CEO, while **Amit Dhand** will transition from CEO to EVP of client services and continue to serve on the board.

■ Sports data and intelligence firm *STATS*, Chicago, has appointed **Lisa Ackerman** as senior vice president of customer success.

■ Audience data firm *Eyeota* has hired **Pieter de Zwart** as chief technology officer. The firm also has expanded its Australia and New Zealand team with the appointments of **George Henshaw** as senior supply manager and **Laura Widdowson** as senior manager – demand.

■ *Research & Marketing Strategies Inc.*, Baldwinsville, N.Y., has promoted **Sandy Baker** to vice president for cor-



Baker



Maxsween

porate strategy and **Susan Maxsween** to vice president for health care consulting and analytics.

■ Digital agency *Wunderman* has appointed **Michael Murray** as president and chief product officer of Wunder-



man Data Products, the company's division that helps clients manage one-to-one relationships with customers at-scale. Murray will be based in Denver.

■ U.K.-based cross-media measurement firm *RealityMine* has appointed **Billy Grant** as product manager, a newly-created position.

■ **John Hitchcock**, associate professor of instructional systems technology at Indiana University's School of Education, has joined research company *Abt Associates* as a principal associate.

■ U.K. research company *FlexMR* has promoted four researchers, allowing the company to introduce a new client helpdesk that will provide client support for its online research platforms. **Grayling Ferguson** has been promoted to helpdesk manager, while **Amy Eborall** has been promoted to head of research and insight. **Iulia Ghindeanu** and **Mayra Munguia** have both been promoted to insight managers.

■ Nuremberg, Germany, research company *GfK* has appointed **Warren Saunders** as general manager for Northern Europe. Saunders succeeds **Ivar Michaelsen**, who was appointed senior vice president of market insights.

■ **Joey Doney** has joined research company *Kelton Global* as vice president, insights and strategy in the firm's Chicago office.



Doney

■ London-based translation and language services firm *GlobaLexicon* has promoted **James Heneghan** to associate director.

■ User experience research firm *UserTesting*, Mountain View, Calif., has

appointed **Michelle Huff** as chief marketing officer and **Carol MacKinlay** as chief people officer.

■ Research services firm *Fieldwork* has promoted **Aryn O'Donnell** to vice president. O'Donnell will continue to be involved in business development and corporate initiatives.

■ **Clare Chai** has rejoined digital research agency *MetrixLab* as managing director for Greater China. Chai previously worked for the company as senior client director.

■ *MarketVision Research*, Blue Ash, Ohio, has promoted the following team members: **Emily Reynolds** and **Kyle Crockett-Smith** to senior research associate; **Tricia Sypniewski**, **Abby Miller** and **Shannon Murphy** to research manager; and **Frank Gutowski** to vice president. In addition, the company has hired the following: **Aaron Baker**, **Melissa Barford** and **Deborah Nell** as research assistants in client services; **Meredith Comerford** as research assistant in graphics; and **Meredith Divine** as research assistant in online communities.

■ *Simmons Research*, New York, has added three executives to its team: **Dan Zislis**, VP, head of agency sales; **Jim Laiderman**, VP of product and custom analytics; and **Abhinav Kothari**, senior director, engineering.

■ *Branded Research Inc.*, San Diego, has added **Josh Mankiewicz** and **Will Luckey** as account executives to work out of the company's newly-established sales offices in Boston.

■ San Mateo, Calif., firm *Rakuten Marketing* has appointed **Stuart Simms** as chief executive officer.

■ *Complete Research Connection* in Columbus, Ohio, has promoted **Dina**

**Hartman-Wallace** to client services manager – facility.

■ London-based research firm *MESH Experience* has hired **Mark Thompson** as experience director, focusing on the company's retail banking study.

■ **Toni Green** has joined research company *Smarty Pants*, New York, as research whiz, responsible for designing, fielding, managing and analyzing research for several of the company's CPG, media and entertainment clients.



Green

■ Health care data and market intelligence firm *Decision Resources Group*, Boston, has appointed **Davis Walp** as chief strategy officer.

■ Research and analytics firm *GBH Insights*, New York, has appointed **Russell Winer**, the William Joyce Professor of Marketing at the Stern School of Business at New York University, to its advisory board.

■ San Mateo, Calif., survey software company *SurveyMonkey* has added **Erika Hayes James** to its board of directors. James is a researcher and consultant and has served as the John H. Harland Dean of Goizueta Business School since 2014.

■ Marketing solutions firm *V12 Data*, based in Wesley Chapel, Fla., has appointed **Andrew Frawley** as chief executive officer and vice chairman of the board of directors.

■ Research company *GfK*'s auto syndicated team in North America has tapped **Jim Ehrlich** as SVP and account manager. He will be based in Los Angeles and primarily work with West Coast automotive clients.



■ Marketing solutions company *Marketing Evolution*, New York, has appointed **Michael A. Cohen** as senior vice president and chief data science and analytics officer.

■ New York location intelligence company *Cuebiq* has appointed **Shane Wiley** as chief privacy officer. The firm has also named **Brennan Lake** as program director for its Data for Good initiative. The program allows researchers at universities and non-profit organizations leverage Cuebiq's location insights to drive innovation in community causes.

■ New York-based social media measurement firm *Shareable* has appointed advisory board member **Greg Dale** as chief operating officer.

■ Insights and analytics firm *Clarivate Analytics* has appointed **Timothy Neely** as managing director, Japan.

■ U.K. health care-focused advisory group *Cello Health* has added **Clifford Tompsett** and **Jo LeCouilliard** to its board of directors. They replace **Paul Hamilton** and **Will David**, who have both stepped down as non-executive directors.

■ Research company *Ipsos* has appointed **Suresh Ramalingam** as CEO of Southeast Asia, based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

■ Sterling, Va., information services firm *Neustar Inc.* has appointed **Brian Kober** as senior vice president and chief strategy officer.

■ In a Securities and Exchange Commission filing, research company *Gartner* announced that **Peter Sondergaard**, executive vice president of research and advisory, resigned from his position due to behavior in the workplace the company said was "inconsistent with its code of conduct and core values."

**Michael Harris** has been appointed as the new executive vice president of research and advisory.

■ Arlington, Va., research company *Fors Marsh Group* has appointed **Doug Chapin** as director of election research, responsible for leading the research, analysis and delivery of the company's election research programs and the staff in the field.

■ **David Hooper** has joined Princeton, N.J., consultancy *Strategic Research Insights* as principal and head of qualitative research.



Hooper

■ Los Angeles-based research and analytics consultancy *LRW* has promoted **Jeremy Sack** to president.

Sack will oversee several businesses, including *LRW*, *LRWTonic* and *LRWMotivequest*, which all provide research and consulting services to Fortune 500 clients.

■ U.K. agency *ResearchBods* has appointed 11 new staff members in the last six months, including **Robbie Stewart** as business analyst. New members of the insight and strategy team include **Hannah Downs** as insight director, **Jim Parkinson** as associate director, **Steven Bird** as senior insight executive and **Joe Woolley** as insight executive. New hires for the operations and development team include **Kirk Stevens** as scrum master, **Ben Jones** as trainee operations executive, **Michael Weatherby** as senior data engineer and **Lil Stanton** as junior data executive. For the PM team, **Chloe Emerson** has been appointed as senior project manager and **Angeliki Tzempetzi** as trainee project manager.

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# Research Industry News

## News notes

■ Plano, Texas, company **Research Now SSI** has resumed call center operations in Davao, Philippines, after the company suspended operations there in December following the NCCC Mall fire that killed 37 of its employees. The company has leased space for a new facility, which will initially accommodate about 300 telephone interviewers in addition to administrative staff. Employees who were active at the time of the fire will be offered employment and former employees will have the opportunity to be reinstated and retrained. The company will also give employment priority to qualified family members of those who died in the fire.

■ **CIRQ**, an ISO audit and certification body and subsidiary of the Insights Association, has awarded certification to **Copley Focus Centers** and **National Field and Focus**, qualitative research operations located in Boston and Framingham, Mass., respectively, for compliance to the ISO 20252 – Market, Opinion and Social Research Standard. ISO 20252 establishes globally-recognized terms, definitions and service requirements for project management in research organizations.

■ **ITWP**, the parent holding company

of research companies **Toluna** and **Harris Interactive**, has announced new members of the Insights on Demand Consortium, an industry-wide group established for the market research industry. The newest members to join during Q2 2018 include Audible, Dyson, Hill Holiday and Schroder's.

■ Boston-based consumer insights firm **Crimson Hexagon** has been reinstated by **Facebook** following an investigation into its data security. Facebook suspended Crimson Hexagon while it investigated the company's contracts with the U.S. government and whether they violated Facebook's policies. In a blog post by Crimson Hexagon CFO Dan Shore, he said to the company's knowledge, no government customer has used the company's platform for surveillance of individuals or groups.

■ The KMR internship program at **Karchner Marketing Research** is celebrating its 10-year anniversary. The company offers internships in the spring, summer and fall.

## Acquisitions/transactions

■ Market research firms **Market Strategies International** and **Morpace** have announced they are combining into one firm as part of an acquisition of both companies by private equity firm STG. The two companies will be fully integrated and co-located under a new brand to be announced later in 2018 and will remain headquartered in Michigan.

■ New York-based investment management firm **Elliott Management**, which owns an 8.4 percent stake in New York research company **Nielsen**, has urged Nielsen to sell itself. People familiar with the matter said multiple private equity firms have

expressed interest in Nielsen and Elliott Management could be one of the bidders. Nielsen announced in July that CEO Mitch Barns will retire at the end of 2018 and that its board of directors would be conducting an in-depth strategic review of its buy segment, which provided nearly half of its revenue last year.

■ London-based brand research agency **The Nursery Research and Planning** has acquired research consultancy **Arkenford** for an undisclosed amount.

■ **The Interpublic Group of Companies Inc.** has made a deal to purchase the **Acxiom Marketing Solutions (AMS)** business from Little Rock, Ark., database marketing company Acxiom Corporation for \$2.3 billion. The deal has received approval from the board of directors of both companies and is subject to Acxiom shareholders' approval and other customary regulatory approvals. On completion, Dennis Self and Rick Erwin will continue to serve as the co-presidents of AMS. The proposed deal does not include the LiveRamp business of Acxiom, which was acquired in 2014. The buyout is expected to close by the end of 2018.

■ Paris-based researcher **IFOP** has acquired sociological consumer behavior company **SOCIOVISION**.

■ Cambridge, Mass., company **Forrester Research** has acquired **FeedbackNow** and **GlimpzIt**. FeedbackNow is a maker of physical buttons and monitoring software for companies to measure, analyze and improve customer experience. GlimpzIt is an artificial intelligence and machine learning provider based in San Francisco. Through the acquisitions, Forrester plans to build a real-time CX Cloud, integrating a range of



inputs to help companies monitor and improve experience.

■ **S4 Capital**, Martin Sorrell's new venture, has acquired Netherlands-based digital agency **MediaMonks** for approximately €300 million (\$352 million), topping a rival bid from advertising agency WPP. Sorrell resigned as CEO of WPP in April following an investigation into allegations of misconduct.

■ **Radius Global Market Research**, based in New York, has merged with **Illumination Research**, expanding the combined firm's qualitative and quantitative research offerings. Illumination Research will maintain its brand name and headquarters in Mason, Ohio, and Founders Jeff Bass and Karri Bass will serve as directors at Radius. Financial details of the transaction were not disclosed.

■ U.K. research agency **MMR** has acquired creative video agency **Ideal insight**. Ideal Insight will continue to focus on growing clients across different sectors like education, health care and retail while developing a storytelling toolkit in the research arena.

■ **Publicis Health**, part of communications company Publicis Groupe, has acquired Morristown, N.J., health marketing agency **Payer Sciences**.

■ Online beauty and wellbeing company **The Hut Group** (THG) has acquired language translation and localization services company **Language Connect**. Language Connect will be added to THG's proprietary technology platform, THG Ingenuity.

■ Paris-based research company **Ipsos** has agreed to acquire four global divisions of Nuremberg, Germany, firm **GfK**'s custom research business

– customer experience, experience innovation, health and public affairs – for an enterprise value of €105 million. Nearly 1,000 GfK professionals will join Ipsos in 25 countries at the closing of the transaction, which was expected on or around Sept. 30.

■ **WPP Scangroup**, a subsidiary of WPP based in Nairobi, Kenya, has acquired a majority stake in **Research and Marketing Group Investment Limited**, a research agency that operates Kantar TNS in several African countries. Kantar TNS will become a subsidiary of WPP Scangroup, which provides market research services through Kantar Millward Brown. The acquisition will allow WPP Scangroup to align Kantar TNS and Kantar Millward Brown to enhance services for clients and increase operational efficiency.

■ Short Hills, N.J., data, analytics and insights firm **Dun & Bradstreet** has entered into a merger agreement to be acquired by an investor group in a transaction valued at \$6.9 billion. Thomas Manning will lead the company as chief executive officer through the closing of the transaction and James Fernandez, lead director, will serve as chairman of the board. The transaction is expected to close within six months, subject to Dun & Bradstreet shareholder approval, regulatory clearances and other customary closing conditions.

■ Plano, Texas, firm **Research Now SSI** has acquired Amsterdam-based digital media measurement company **DMA-Institute**, expanding its capabilities in cross-device digital audience verification and validation. Research Now SSI's collection of data from opted-in individuals will be combined with DMA-Institute's audience validation SaaS solution to provide a solution for brands, adver-

tising and media agencies, market research agencies and publishers.

■ Hoboken, N.J., software solutions firm **NICE** has completed its acquisition of behavioral analytics firm **Mattersight Corporation**. Mattersight's predictive behavioral routing will be integrated with NICE Nexidia's interaction analytics to provide organizations with a combined understanding of the customer journey with a view of the customer persona.

■ A consortium led by **Air Canada** has agreed to acquire the Aeroplan loyalty business of marketing and loyalty analytics company **Aimia**. The consortium also includes **The Toronto-Dominion Bank**, **Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce** and **Visa Canada Corporation**.

### Alliances/strategic partnerships

■ Stockholm-based research firm **Nepa** has formed a partnership with Snapchat parent company **Snap Inc.** Through the partnership, Nepa's consumer science platform will include information from Snapchat to help determine the impact of marketing investments on sales and brand. Snap will provide resources and training sessions to help Nepa's consumer scientists understand its product and data sets and will also provide access to data streams to monitor the impact of Snap ads at the market level. Nepa will be able to integrate granular product-level metrics like filter usage, lens and Snapcodes into marketing mix modeling projects.

■ **Google** has named Reston, Va., firm **comScore** to its Measurement Partner Program, which is designed to help advertisers source third-party measurement providers. The program aims to improve transparency and objectivity of measurement standards.



ComScore has been selected as a third-party measurement partner in two categories: reach and viewability.

■ Toronto-based research firm **Quantability** has formed a partnership with **True Impact**, a consumer neuroscience research and strategy group that focuses on emotion measurement using neural and biometric technology. The partnership will expand the list of custom research solutions offered by Quantability and will provide advertisers and marketers with scientific approaches to consumer data collection and interpretation.

■ Plano, Texas, firm **Research Now SSI** has been named a partner in **Google's** new Measurement Partner Program. The program aims to deliver a choice of measurement options across seven specializations: viewability, reach, brand safety, brand lift, sales lift, app attribution and marketing mix modeling. Research Now SSI's ADimension solution is approved specifically for measuring digital brand lift ad effectiveness on Google's YouTube marketing platform.

■ Costa Mesa, Calif., researcher **J.D. Power** has formed an alliance with connected technologies company **HARMAN**. HARMAN Ignite, an automotive cloud solution that provides a view into driver usage patterns, will be combined with J.D. Power consumer data to provide functional-level insights into how consumers interact with automotive systems and what they want from the in-car experience.

■ U.K. video insights firm **LivingLens** has formed a partnership with voice of the customer (VOC) company **Maru/edr**. The partnership provides Maru/edr customers with video data capture and analysis capabilities to use for a range of VOC programs. Through the integration, feedback from video responses is combined with Maru/edr survey data and other information to provide insight into customer experiences.

■ UX insights company **UserZoom**, San Jose, Calif., has formed a part-

nership with Canada-based customer intelligence software firm **Vision Critical**. The partnership allows customers of both companies to invite members of their Vision Critical-powered community to participate in UserZoom studies.

■ Reston, Va., firm **comScore** has formed a partnership with **Inscape**, a San Francisco-based TV intelligence company. Inscape's opt-in smart TV viewing data will be added to comScore's marketing solutions, bolstering ad effectiveness studies that help clients understand the extent to which their campaigns met ROI objectives, including purchase behavior and tune-in.

■ Audience data firm **Eyeota** and data science company **TwentyCi** have partnered to provide audiences to brands and agencies targeting U.K. consumers at key stages of home-moving and type of home ownership. TwentyCi's property data, which covers the entire house purchasing cycle, is integrated with Eyeota's proprietary heuristic onboarding methodology. TwentyCi property data is activated digitally through the Eyeota Audience Marketplace and made available across various platforms for programmatic advertising campaigns.

### Association/organization news

■ **The Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA)**, Toronto, announced that it ceased day-to-day operations effective July 31. In a message to members, the organization said its financial situation left "no other possible alternative," citing a steady decrease of membership revenues and a "significant shortfall" following its recent annual conference. After the announcement, an interim group of more than 50 researchers formed the **MRIA Transition Taskforce** to represent the needs of individual researchers across Canada following the MRIA's closure. The group's mission includes: finding and sharing answers about the state of the MRIA and communicating findings with the broader membership; creating a vision for a future organization

that will meet the needs of industry participants; creating a leadership and strategic plan for transitioning to a new organization; and, if necessary, facilitating building a new organization or rebuilding MRIA.

■ **The Insights Association**, Washington, D.C., made comments to the the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee for a hearing on the White House's proposal to consolidate the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis and Census Bureau, calling for a delay on any consolidation plans until after the 2020 Census. Separately, the Insights Association filed comments with the Census Bureau, calling for the removal of a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. The association says that introducing the question without appropriate testing could introduce accuracy risks by deterring legal or illegal immigrants from responding.

■ The following have been elected as new board members for the **Research Association New Zealand**: Geoff Lowe, Karin Curran, Carl Edkins, Ian Mills and Galina Mitchelhill (returning member). They will serve with existing members Carin Hercok and Catherine Frethey-Bentham.

■ **MFour Mobile Research**, Irvine, Calif., has joined **DPAA**, a digital out-of-home marketing association.

■ Los Angeles-based nonprofit **Women in Research (WiRe)**, in collaboration with **Keen as Mustard Marketing** and **Koski Research**, has launched the Best Places to Work Award, which aims to recognize companies that are promoting the well-being of their female employees. Separately, Women in Research announced several partnerships across the research industry as part of its 50/50 Conference Initiative. Partners include: **Quirk's**; **Insights Association**; **Market Research Society**; **Association of Market and Social Research Organisations**; **Australian Market & Social Research Society**; **GreenBook**; **CX Talks**; and **ESOMAR**. The initiative provides a set of guidelines to help industry conference

organizers recruit a diverse on-stage presence and improve speaker diversity ratios at events.

■ **The Association of Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO)** has launched Phish of the Day, a digital platform that highlights fake or illegitimate research activities. The platform allows AMSRO members and the general public to report scams or non-genuine research activities to the association. AMSRO will investigate the reports and, depending on the severity and nature of the issue, will attempt to work with the organization to improve its operational practices to comply with relevant legislation or report it to relevant federal or state/territory regulatory or enforcement bodies. AMSRO says it can also discipline its own member companies for inappropriate research conduct, including expulsion for serious offenses.

■ **The Southern African Marketing Research Association** has made changes to its board. Alexan Carrilho has concluded her term as chairman. Taking over for Carrilho as director and treasurer is Henk Pretorius, co-founder and CEO of Columinate, who will be representing large suppliers. Kanyisa Ngqukuvana, head of market research personal and business banking at Standard Bank, has been elected to represent large clients and takes over for Sheila Akinnusi. Yolanda Jordaan, head of the Department of Marketing Management at the University of Pretoria, has been elected as the representative for academia. The new board will elect a chairman at its first meeting and fill the vacant seat as soon as possible.

### Awards/rankings

■ Research company **Kadence Singapore** was awarded the Market Research Agency of the Year 2018 (Bronze). The award is organized by **Marketing Magazine** (Singapore) and judges agencies on four factors: performance, people, product and perspectives.

■ Berlin-based research company

**FactWorks**, together with **Research Now SSI**, received the German Market Research Innovation Award from **BVM** for a quantitative study in the U.K. and Germany that examined what audio captures in online surveys can reveal compared to text open-ends. The study found more context and detailed responses with audio versus text.

■ **Daniel Wiese**, president of Dan Wiese Marketing Research in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, has been awarded the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award by biographical profiles publisher Marquis Who's Who.

■ Auckland, New Zealand, research solutions firm **Infotools** received two awards at the 2018 Research Association Effectiveness Awards, an initiative of the **Research Association New Zealand**. The company was awarded the Gold Award in the Perceptive International Category and the Innovation Award in recognition of its work with telecommunications company Orange. Together, the two companies changed Orange's approach to market research by developing an analysis and reporting platform for global brand tracking and customer experience studies.

■ Stamford, Conn., research technology firm **FocusVision** has received the 2018 MarTech Breakthrough Award for innovation in customer experience management.

### New accounts/projects

■ Mumbai research company **MRSS India** has been selected as a country partner for **Associated Global Market Research**, an independent network of research companies across Europe, North America, South America and Asia. Separately, **Delhi International Airport** (DIAL), which manages GMR's Indira Gandhi International Airport, has renewed its contract with **MRSS India**. MRSS assisted DIAL in monitoring two key deliverables as per their agreement with Airport Authority of India: Airport Service Quality and Operation; and Maintenance and

Development Agreement. As a part of Airport Service Quality, passenger feedback was taken across domestic and international flyers on their experience within the Delhi airport on various aspects that help GMR act on areas pertaining to facilities and amenities.

■ San Jose, Calif., contact center solutions company **8x8 Inc.** has selected Oslo, Norway, research solutions firm **Confermit** to power its online and telephone surveys within its voice of the customer program. 8x8 will replace its existing software with the Confermit Horizons platform.

■ Los Angeles-based data science firm **Parrot Analytics** has announced a subscription agreement with **CBS Studios International**. The service will provide CBS Studios International with data to gauge audience demand for specific content.

### New companies/new divisions/relocations/expansions

■ Data analytics and anonymization firm **Truata** has announced plans to hire up to 75 personnel – mainly data analysts, data scientists and engineers – in 2018 for its newly opened headquarters in Dublin.

■ Atlanta-based research consulting firm **CMI** has created a behavioral science team consisting of strategists, researchers and data scientists who will work across all company verticals and focus on implementing its proprietary behavioral economics models, which are designed to identify, manage and disrupt habits that are used when making brand decisions.

■ New York-based marketing services and solutions firm **MBLM** has launched MBLM 3.0, the third evolution of its business. It aims to build stronger bonds between customers and brands using what the company has coined as brand intimacy.

■ **Rakuten Research Inc.** and **AIP Corporation**, online research companies and wholly-owned subsidiaries of Japan-based company Rakuten

Inc., have changed their respective names and rebranded under a unified service name and brand logo. Effective Aug. 1, Rakuten Research, which provides services to clients in Japan, changed its name to Rakuten Insight Inc., while AIP, which provides services to clients outside of Japan, changed its name to Rakuten Insight Global Inc. Both companies will rebrand under a unified brand logo and the service name **Rakuten Insight**.

■ **Dentsu Aegis Network** has launched a new Middle East and North Africa office for its marketing agency Merkle. The new office will be led by Rudy Banholzer, who was the managing director of social media agency Your Social prior to its acquisition by Merkle in the EMEA region. Your Social is being rebranded as Merkle. Banholzer will be supported by Vimal Badiani, who has been promoted to commercial director.

■ St. Louis public relations firm **FleishmanHillard** has relaunched its research, analytics and measurement practice as **TRUE Global Intelligence**. Natasha Kennedy has been named global managing director of the practice and will work in partnership with Mike Cearley, global managing director of social and innovation, and others to provide integrated intelligence based on data gathered from social and traditional media, public polling and proprietary market research. FleishmanHillard has also formed the Global Intelligence Council, which includes insights, analytics, social and technology professionals across the network to provide integrated best practices and thinking.

■ **Discovery Research Group (DRG)** has added a new call center in Houston to its network of U.S. phone centers. Richard McCaffery and Karen Garza will oversee the new center. All DRG locations have both English- and Spanish-language capabilities and are TCPA-compliant.

■ **Reuter Communications**, an Asia-focused luxury intelligence, communications and marketing agency, has

launched Reuter Intelligence, an in-house research and insights business that provides customized research and syndicated research products for luxury brands aiming to better understand China's luxury market. Lee Folland, former research director at Kantar, will lead the business as director of research and insights.

■ U.K. research agency **MMR** has opened an office in Sao Paulo, led by Ana Almeida and Carlos Chiba.

■ Seattle-based UX research and design firm **Blink** has opened a studio location in Austin, Texas, its fourth location.

■ **SIS International Research**, New York, has launched its beauty innovation consulting division for the beauty, skin care and hair care industries. The full suite of solutions includes idea generation; product testing and validation; go-to-market strategy; and consulting.

■ **Nonfiction Research**, a company based in Brooklyn, N.Y., has launched. The company was founded by Gunny Scarfo, former head of strategy for VICE Media's digital agency, and Ben Zeidler, former global head of CPG research at L2/Gartner. The new company aims to provide what it calls "uncensored research" and gain insight into what customers self-censor rather than reveal to researchers.

■ Marketing solutions company **Engine Group** is rebranding and restructuring, bringing its North American business units – ORC International, Deep Focus and Engine Media – under one brand as Engine. The company has also launched a new proprietary data platform, Engine Connect, which combines client data with Engine's proprietary data and third-party data integrations to provide an understanding of how consumer belief influences behavior.

■ **Grail Research**, New York, has reorganized as an independent insights consultancy and has rebranded as Grail Insights. The company began in 2006 as the strategic research arm

of Monitor Group and became part of Integreon in 2009. NewQuest Capital acquired Integreon in 2016 and recognized Grail as an independent firm. The company now has an independent executive team and separate sources of growth funding.

■ **SIS International Research**, New York, has launched a fintech strategy research and consulting division, which will provide services like market opportunity solutions, business model innovation, customer insights and competitive strategy.

■ **The University of South Florida St. Petersburg** has launched the **Consumer Insight and Sales Lab** at the Kate Tiedemann College of Business, allowing students to learn from and participate in professional consumer focus groups. The lab will also service clients in the Tampa Bay region and conduct its own research project: building a marketing database on Millennial preferences and habits.

■ Marketing agency **Merkle** has expanded its office in New York City, increasing capacity by 33 percent and accommodating the company's 22 percent increase in New York-based staff since Dec. 2017. Merkle's New York office now employs over 225 and is expected to surpass 300 by next year.

■ Los Angeles-based research and analytics consultancy **LRW** has launched LRW Digital Analytics, a new practice that provides analytics, modeling and consulting services to give clients digital-first growth strategies within the digital landscape. The LRW Digital Analytics team will provide insights tied to media analytics, digital behavior analytics and audience analytics. Heading up the practice area is Josh Verseput, senior vice president and general manager.

■ Data collection agency **VIGA** has launched a new division that aims to provide insights for financial institutions and consultancies through services like operational and commercial due diligence support; thought leadership creation; business development; voice of the customer research;



market sizing exercises; demand and volume trend analysis; and flash surveys. The division is based across VIGA London and U.S. offices and will be headed up by Steven Scott, senior vice president.

■ Leadership development platform **BetterUp** will invest \$15 to \$20 million over the next five years in BetterUp Labs, a behavioral research lab that combines business, academia and science to fund research for companies and employees. Planned future research includes investigations into what separates flourishing employees from others, what best practices support the most productive corporate cultures and how individuals and corporations can better plan for the future. The lab will be headed by Gabriella Rosen Kellerman, the company's chief innovation officer, and Martin E.P. Seligman will join the lab's science board.

■ Consumer insights companies **MarketCast**, **Insight Strategy Group** and **Fizziology** have been united under a new parent company, **MarketCast Group**, enhancing and integrating research and analytics offerings across the three companies. MarketCast Group has also debuted a new Web site as well as new Web sites for each of its portfolio companies.

■ High Point, N.C., digital and branding agency **Trone Brand Energy** has created Trone Research + Consulting (TRC), an agency that provides research and analytics capabilities, including brand health audits, prospect and customer insights, marketing claims validation, market potential evaluation, channel needs assessment and attrition evaluation and retention optimization. TRC will be led by Scott Layne as president.

■ Research company **ABN Impact** has opened an office in Manila, Philippines, headed by Managing Director Mark Alvarez.

■ Research company **Gongos** has opened new headquarters in Royal Oak, Mich., and has launched a new Web site.

## Research company earnings/ financial news

■ London-based translation and language services firm **GlobaLexicon** has announced a 25 percent growth in revenue in its latest financial year. The company increased global staff numbers to 75, implemented a new integrated project management system across its offices and has opened a base in Timisoara, Romania.

■ Audience measurement company **Verito Analytics**, New York, has secured \$13.4 million in growth financing. The company will use the capital to fuel continued growth in the media measurement market and boost its customer success program, its commercial account management and its Helsinki-based Verito Data Lab.

■ Boston-based television attention measurement company **TVision Insights** has secured \$11.5 million in new funding, led by Accomplice and Jump Capital. The company also appointed Luke McGuinness as its first president and chief operating officer.

■ Paris-based researcher **Ipsos** has reported €786 million in revenue for the first half of 2018, down 5.7 percent compared to the same period in 2017.

■ London-based research company **GlobalWebIndex** has completed its first round of funding, raising \$40 million from New York-based growth fund Stripes Group as well as other data, software and consumer technology companies. The funding will be used to accelerate product development and international expansion.

■ **Nielsen**, New York, has reported revenues of approximately \$1.65 billion for the second quarter of 2018, up 0.2 percent or down 0.7 percent on a constant currency basis compared to the second quarter of 2017.

■ Technology research and advisory firm **Information Services Group**, Stamford, Conn., has reported revenues of \$71 million for second-quarter 2018, a 4 percent increase compared to \$68 million last year. The company

reported first-half 2018 revenues of \$139.9 million, up 4 percent.

■ U.K. consumer insight agency **Join the Dots** reported revenue of £6.41 million in the first six months of 2018, a 12.7 percent growth from the same period in 2017.

■ Alpharetta, Ga., sample provider **P2Sample** has reported 62 percent year-over-year revenue growth for the first half of 2018. The company says it is also on pace to achieve 10 million survey completes by the end of calendar year 2018.

■ Reston, Va., firm **comScore** reported revenue of \$101.4 million for the second quarter of 2018, up from \$99.4 million reported in the same period of 2017.

■ Los Angeles-based technology company **Active Measure** has rebranded as **DISQO** and has raised \$13.5 million in a Series A financing round led by Alpha Edison along with participation from existing investor Bonfire Ventures. DISQO plans to use the capital to expand its current offerings by launching new analytic applications, developing its behavior measurement and mobile capabilities and building tools to provide a view of consumer behavior.

■ Investment advisory company **The Stagwell Group**, Washington, D.C., has secured a \$260 million investment from private equity investor AlpInvest Partners. The investment will support Stagwell's strategy of building a network of marketing and research companies.

■ Consumer behavior and location sciences company **SITO Mobile Ltd.** reported total revenue of \$8.4 million for second-quarter 2018, down 22 percent compared to \$10.8 million in the corresponding period of 2017. The company says the decrease in revenue was primarily due to a decrease in the average spend per customer and a decrease in lower margin TV revenue spend.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

... can't-miss activities

**AMA** will hold its 2018 AMA Marketing Week Live event on **October 3-5** at Caesars Palace in **Las Vegas**. Visit [www.ama.org](http://www.ama.org).

**SAPOR** will hold its 2018 Annual Conference on **October 4-5** at City Club Raleigh in **Raleigh, N.C.** Visit [www.sapor.us](http://www.sapor.us).

**Insights Association** will hold the 2018 Corporate Researchers Conference (CRC) on **October 8-10** in **Orlando, Fla.** Visit [bit.ly/2zuhH3Z](http://bit.ly/2zuhH3Z).

**Merlien Institute** will hold its Qual360 Asia-Pacific 2018 event on **October 10-11** in **Singapore**. Visit [apac.qual360.com](http://apac.qual360.com).

**Applied Marketing Science** will hold its Listening to the Voice of the Customer Workshop on **October 10-11** in **Chicago**. Visit [bit.ly/2nWIQ7](http://bit.ly/2nWIQ7).

**Pharma Market Research Conference Europe** will be held on **October 11-12** in **Basel, Switzerland**. Visit [bit.ly/2cheELU](http://bit.ly/2cheELU).

**KNect365 (IIR)** will hold the 2018 Market Research Event (TMRE) on **October 16-18** at the Westin Kierland Resort and Spa in **Scottsdale, Ariz.** Visit [bit.ly/2dp2JxE](http://bit.ly/2dp2JxE).

**Success Drivers** will hold a Webinar titled, 'Experience the new NPS AI: Learn how to quickly simplify your NPS programs, saving you money

and your customers' time,' on **October 17** at 12:00 p.m. CDT. Visit [bit.ly/2NUFVJ8](http://bit.ly/2NUFVJ8).

**KNect365 (IIR)** will hold its Back End of Innovation event on **October 17-19** in **Phoenix**. Visit [bit.ly/2dx0cB8](http://bit.ly/2dx0cB8).

**Society of Insurance Research** will hold its 2018 Annual Conference and Exhibit Fair on **October 21-23** at the Hotel Monteleone in **New Orleans**. Visit [bit.ly/2FBFvUV](http://bit.ly/2FBFvUV).

**AMA** will hold its Digital Marketing Bootcamp on **October 22-23** in **Chicago**. Visit [www.ama.org](http://www.ama.org).

**Research & Results** will hold its 2018 trade show on **October 24-25** at the MOC Convention Center in **Munich**. Visit [bit.ly/2FAo86I](http://bit.ly/2FAo86I).

**University of Alberta International Institute for Qualitative Methodology** will hold its Qualitative Health Research Conference on **October 27-29** in **Halifax, Nova Scotia**. Visit [bit.ly/2oFICW0](http://bit.ly/2oFICW0).

**LIMRA** will hold its 2018 Annual Conference on **October 28-30** at the New York Marriott Marquis in **New York**. Visit [www.limra.com/annual](http://www.limra.com/annual).

**CX Talks: The Customer Experience Summit Atlanta 2018** will be held on **October 29** at CitySprings Center in **Sandy**

**Springs, Ga.** Visit [cxtalks.org](http://cxtalks.org).

**KNect365 (IIR)** will hold its FUSE Europe event on **October 29-31** in **Amsterdam**. Visit [bit.ly/2LI9X23](http://bit.ly/2LI9X23).

**KNect365 (IIR)** will hold its Shopper Insights and Retail Activation International event on **October 29-31** in **Amsterdam**. Visit [bit.ly/2H2BLEr](http://bit.ly/2H2BLEr).

**Insights Association** will hold the Insights Leadership Conference on **November 5-7** in **San Diego**. Visit [bit.ly/2CNvWYr](http://bit.ly/2CNvWYr).

**NMSBA** will hold its 2018 Shopper Brain Conference – Europe event on **November 7-9** in **Amsterdam**. Visit [bit.ly/2vvGfUL](http://bit.ly/2vvGfUL).

**ESOMAR** will hold its FUSION 2018 event on **November 11-15** in **Dublin**. Visit [bit.ly/2qwITcn](http://bit.ly/2qwITcn).

**Worldwide Business Research** will hold its B2B Online Miami 2018 event on **November 12-14** at Turnberry Isle **Miami**. Visit [bit.ly/2LhH4x6](http://bit.ly/2LhH4x6).

**Pharma CI Conference and Exhibition Asia** will be held on **November 29-30** in **Tokyo**. Visit [bit.ly/2L2Q5pg](http://bit.ly/2L2Q5pg).

**IQPC** will hold its Customer Contact Week Executive Exchange on **December 2-4** at the Hotel Colonnade in **Coral Gables, Fla.** Visit [bit.ly/2J8J980](http://bit.ly/2J8J980).

**Insights Association** will hold its Converge event on **December 4-5** in **Los Angeles**. Visit [bit.ly/2M8N5M9](http://bit.ly/2M8N5M9).

**ESOMAR** will hold its Client Summit on **December 12-13** at the PepsiCo Inc. HQ office in **Purchase, N.Y.** Visit [www.esomar.org](http://www.esomar.org).

**KNect365 (IIR)** will hold its Media Insights and Engagement Conference on **January 29-31** in **Los Angeles**. Visit [bit.ly/2eyPzmx](http://bit.ly/2eyPzmx).

**QRCA** will hold its 2019 annual conference on **January 30 - February 1** at the Hyatt Regency Savannah in **Savannah, Ga.** Visit [bit.ly/2m68CGV](http://bit.ly/2m68CGV).

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## 10 minutes with...

**Araceli Hintermeister**

*Research Assistant, Consumer Insights, America's Test Kitchen*

### **How does your background in librarianship and information services impact your role as a researcher?**

Much of my background and training is to help others find the answers to their questions which allows me to better understand a client's research needs and identify a path to get there. Library and information sciences is quite a diverse field that focuses on not only research but facilitating research by providing diverse resources to fit everyone's unique information-seeking behaviors. The coursework reflects just that with classes on user experience research, data management, reference services and evaluation

### **What is the most challenging part of using MR to ensure America's Test Kitchen recipes are foolproof outside the test kitchen?**

Potatoes and chicken always make the favorite ingredient list when we conduct research but if we based our recipe development on that alone we wouldn't be serving our diverse customer base, all with unique taste buds. Rather, we use market research to help us make educated business decisions, even if there are sometimes risks. For example, we learned that while approximately 0.5 percent of the U.S. population is vegan, home cooks were still open to integrating vegan meals into their recipe repertoire and that led to our award-winning cookbook, *Vegan for Everybody*. Instead of creating a book about a vegan lifestyle, we created a book about integrating plant-based recipes into your life.

### **Do you have any tips for researchers looking to launch their first shopper survey?**

Research your product carefully and at the same time get rid of what you know and be open to new information. At ATK, we know a lot about food and care about the tiniest details in food, but we continue to learn and be surprised by how food is experienced and presented to our customers across the nation. When creating our shopper surveys, we build our questions to reflect what we know and are open to new information. For example, we may ask respondents to select from a list of common weight sizes which we believe chicken breasts are sold in, but we build a space for customers to tell us if chicken is not presented to them in this manner or perhaps inform us that it is not the most economical or convenient form for them to purchase chicken breast. What we learn can have a serious effect on our product and recipe development. We most recently learned from our customers that eight-quart multicookers were the staple in their homes and that led us to reframe our research and recipe development to fit that size.

\* Photo credit: EKF Studios

Read the full interview at [www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181022.aspx](http://www.quirks.com/articles/2018/20181022.aspx).



“At ATK, we know a lot about food and care about the tiniest details in food, but we continue to learn and be surprised by how food is experienced and presented to our customers across the nation.”



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