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CELEBRATING 21 YEARS OF MrWeb

MrWeb Ltd posted its first job ad on 29th November 1998, adding a source of revenue to a motley collection of home page and desk research links - while Daily Research News came along just over a year later. Since then we've posted more than 150,000 job ads and 28,000 news stories, establishing the service as the MR world's 'daily paper'.

Needless to say, things have changed a lot since then. Many of the first job ads were faxed to us and one or two were posted, while relevant jobs for registered candidates were initially picked out by Yours Truly and individual emails sent [no really, I used to think 'Barbara would like that one', and send a link to her. Luckily I was paid by a client to learn the basics of Perl programming, and automated it before we got much past 100 candidates]. In DRNO's first few years we were disorganised enough to publish many items we would consider mere self-promotion these days, and naïve enough to risk legal trouble on the rare occasions we published anything resembling 'bad news' about a company. We've learnt on the job, but we've had a good while to learn now, and with our 'core team' - Mel Crowther as News Editor and Ian Paterson designing and co-managing - in place since 2006, we're well set.

Nothing of course has changed so much as research itself, and we're celebrating the anniversary with a look at five techniques / technologies which would have been quite hard even to imagine in those days and certainly didn't account for much market share between them. I'm really pleased that online communities appear to be the single hottest thing in the MR world at present, and to lead off with this supplement developed with our friends at communities pioneer Verve. More than any of the other areas we'll be looking at in supplements over the next 8 months or so, communities seem to me the logical evolution of traditional MR, maintaining its values and core approach while really exploiting all that the digital revolution makes possible. The following pages include plenty of practical examples and we hope a fair mix of controversy and enlightenment for our specialist audience. Needless to say, we welcome feedback!

Nick Thomas, MrWeb

It was in 2003 that I came into the market research industry and it was Nick and MrWeb that enabled us to hire our very first research industry employee (we were at last a team of 3!) at the newly founded "Research Now". Thanks MrWeb for helping us get going and congratulations on your 21 years!

As Nick mentions above, Community Panels are one of the hottest areas in the research industry and it is my pleasure to kick off this supplement at a time when they continue to develop into ever more sophisticated assets.

What are Community Panels all about?
For as long as I have been involved in marketing services my clients have talked about how they should be more customer centric – yet it is so often said in a tone of guilt - as if it is more of an aspiration than a reality.

I have always loved Community Panels as a simple way of making that guilt go away – as they are like having a group of your customers in the room next door, who you can talk to whenever you want, about whatever you need to know.

With a Community Panel model there is no excuse for not integrating customer voice into your decision making – and thereby making better decisions. And of course if you don't listen to your customers – then your competitors will. It is this underlying benefit that has fuelled the growth of Community Panels over the last ten or so years.

And while the concept of a Community Panel is straightforward – the devil is in the detail. The contributors here will seek to share some of their hard earned experiences of how to make Community Panels really "sing" to decision makers, along with some of their exciting innovations which will continue to see the richness, and impact, of the insight a Community Panel model can deliver.

Andrew Cooper, CEO/ Founder, Verve

IN THIS ISSUE...

An Introduction:
COMMUNITY PANELS THEN AND NOW

By Andrew Cooper

The prevalence of online community panels within the market research space is now clear. However the level of sophistication which the very best community panels deliver – and others could aspire to – is not always well understood.

Verve set out over 10 years ago with the purpose to become specialists in online community panels. Back then, small online qualitative communities (300-500 members) were carefully nurturing digital relationships to deliver insight from small samples of consumers. Access panels were a big deal, yet clients were paying to access their own customers, research wasn't always respectful of the customer experience (45-minute online survey, anyone?), questionnaires were often robotically completed simply for payment or points, and all too often relationships between respondent, agency and client were transactional in nature.

With the desire to better connect brands with people who wanted to share feedback, our vision was to create an approach which allowed clients to access a (large or small) group of their own customers, however and whenever they wanted. In a dedicated online space, members would be profiled to participate in relevant, engaging projects, and collaborate with brands over time to help solve business issues in smarter, more agile ways.

We started working with clients to build community panels of anything from 1,000 to 30,000 (and more) members with the capability to deliver both deep qualitative insight and robust quantitative data, via a range of online, offline and on-mobile approaches. Selecting the right methodology with the right audience at the right time, combining this with customer data and 'remembering' everything members had shared previously, allowed us to deliver long term insight programmes in a genuinely new and different way.

human memory is limited, making it difficult for respondents to give accurate or non-biased responses to some questions.

The concept of 'right methodology' at the 'right time' has changed significantly over the years. While there is great value in capturing impressions and recall, human memory is limited, making it difficult for respondents to give accurate or non-biased responses to some questions.

The demand for, and shift towards, in-the-moment research helps address this bias. While developments in technology and the huge increase in smartphone usage provided the opportunity, community panels - with their always on access to customers - provide the solution.

FlexMR Launches 'InsightHub' Integrated Platform *September 4 2018*
In the UK, technology-led online research specialist FlexMR has launched an integrated platform called InsightHub, bringing together its range of existing research tools and services.

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Nowadays, gathering instant feedback when a consumer is researching a product or service, making a decision or using a competitor website, has become the norm and community panels - using push notifications or time / event / location triggers - have been at the heart of this change.

Community Panels have also revolutionised how customers can share their experiences and play them back in the most genuine and enlightening ways, making it easy to communicate through images, links, voice messages, videos, text and in-person activities. The end result is feedback that is pertinent to the specific experience at that moment, rich in sentiment and detail.

Alongside these developments in technology, there has been an exponential increase in the volume and availability of transactional and behavioural customer data. Using a Community Panel to integrate this passive data with member profiling information, and all actively collected research data customers share over time, opens up a broad range of exciting possibilities.

At the outset, the data allows more sophisticated activity targeting. For example, identifying customers with a certain behaviour or attitude, finding lapsed purchasers of a particular product, or pinpointing those who responded in a certain way 6 months ago and

At the outset, the data allows more sophisticated activity targeting. For example, identifying customers with a certain behaviour or attitude

seeing how that has changed. Misattribution can be reduced by knowing things that people can't remember and sampling based on it.

At the point of analysis, the data allows smarter ways of solving a problem. Integrating behavioural and loyalty data with profiling

information and attitudinal feedback creates greater richness and a more rounded view of customers: the data explains what happens, the research explains why and what you should do about it.

Future developments will see even more opportunities for data integration, increasing the level of sophistication with which you can marry multiple strands of customer information. With the right mix of technology and expertise, community panels are the ideal platform for making sense of all this in one place. We see a future where community panels link research and insight feedback directly with eCRM, enabling businesses to understand what is influencing behaviour, and using this understanding to trigger discrete interventions as part of a single ecosystem.

The approach also lends itself to more fluid ways of collaborating with stakeholders and customers to solve a problem, enabling a more flexible use of insight throughout a project journey, with the approach for each stage being dictated by the outcome of the one that precedes it. Looking ahead, brands will benefit from rethinking formalised project schedules, shifting to more fluid, agile, multi-method working approaches.

Community panels are also changing the way insight is shared, engaged with and ultimately acted upon. They enable us to create more interesting and emotionally engaging outputs – back to those images, links, voice messages, videos again – and also provide a platform that supports the easy sharing of different types of content with different stakeholders based on the need.

In our digitally-dominated world, it is inevitable that this type of insight communication will become ever more prevalent, with a much more dynamic approach to getting the the right content, to the right people, at the right time.

All of these benefits – better integration of multiple data sources, a more agile and iterative approach to project work, more sophisticated communication and sharing of insights – are in the more evolved examples leading to an escalation in the status of the insight team. Such teams can spend more time driving respected insight across the business, rather than struggling to get it done. ■

Andrew Cooper,
CEO / founder, Verve

Andrew loves disruptive change and the opportunities that provides for dynamic businesses. He founded Verve to help clients understand the ever changing needs of their customers and deliver insights which make a difference in a smarter, more agile, more compelling way. Prior to Verve Andrew co-founded Research Now, a business which in his 8 year tenure grew from 3 people in a dark office in Pimlico to be the leading online access panel company in Europe which on his exit was sold for $144 million. Andrew is a Chartered Accountant and prior to Research Now was a Senior Manager at PwC where he advised venture capitalists on acquisitions.

Maru/Matchbox Strengthens Retail and Tech Team *September 10 2018*
Consumer intelligence firm Maru/Matchbox has announced the promotion of Michelle Walkey to Managing Director, Retail and Technology and the appointment of Allan Dykstra as VP Business Development for the same team.

Fuel Cycle Partners with UX Research Specialist *September 7 2018*
Los Angeles-based MR and community intelligence specialist Fuel Cycle has announced a strategic partnership with UX research and usability testing company User Zoom.

A BIG YEAR FOR ONLINE COMMUNITIES

Top stories 2018-19

By Nick Thomas

It's almost a year since we published results from our own research - both survey and news analysis - suggesting that online insight communities were the hottest property in market research. The survey work was focused on the UK, but multiple sources suggested communities were growing fast in the US and other parts of the world as well.

It feels a bit like communities have gone 'under the radar' compared to big data, mobile methods, biometrics and social media analysis, in particular. In some cases this might be because they're not quite so sci-fi (eg as big data or neuroscience), in others because the associated technology providers are smaller and more specialist (social media, mobile), with less venture capital chasing after them. Most of the others have substance as well as hype, of course, but with communities you feel it's mostly substance - they have proven themselves over quite a long period already, are grounded in the things that always used to make for good MR (respondent engagement, efficient fieldwork, in-depth insight), and have some very passionate advocates, most from a traditional research background.

> They have proven themselves over quite a long period

Sure enough, the last year has seen plenty of activity in the area, including launches, M&A, appointments and expansion - a longer list of stories is set out along the bottom of the pages of this supplement. Product launches have focused around adding functionality to communities, not just in terms of better admin or faster processing, but plugging in whole new techniques or establishing the communities platform as the hub of a more comprehensive suite of options including the likes of social media or text analysis, apps and quant survey tools. In the UK, technology-led online research specialist FlexMR launched its integrated InsightHub last autumn, and in January consumer insight agency Join the Dots equipped its new 'Insight Ecosystem' with sophisticated question tools, social intelligence capabilities and powerful ethnography apps [see article section 4].

In Canada, pioneering firm Vision Critical added a Text Analytics & Sentiment Analysis feature to its Sparq insight platform; and launched an Application & Integration Center giving users access to data from third party providers. In 2019 Nashville, TN-based 20|20 has invested to develop its flagship QualBoard solution, giving it enhanced capabilities in

ABN Impact Names Singapore MD *September 11 2018*
Asia-based insight community specialist ABN Impact has appointed former Vision Critical exec Liz Berks as Managing Director of its Singapore operation.

Septemb

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areas including group discussions and long-term communities - see article section 4 - and later integrating it with quant surveys and other online data via the QualLink 4.0 API.

Unsurprisingly, the expanding specialism has attracted not just interest but investment from some of the major players in MR, including YouGov who last September paid an undisclosed sum for inconvo, whose platform helps companies to build conversations based around the 'passion points' of their audiences; while this August data company Potentiate announced it has conditionally acquired Vision Critical Australia.

Unsurprisingly, the expanding specialism has attracted not just interest but investment from some of the major players in MR, including YouGov

Others have focused this year on expanding their own global footprint, with Toluna opening an office in Melbourne, Australia and hiring in India, in December. Respondent access specialist Maru/Blue expanded its Qualitative Community to the UK, in May, while its sister company and community specialist Maru/Matchbox brought in former Kantar exec Brian James last October as Chief Client Officer (CCO) and President of Consumer Goods and Services.

It's still perhaps surprising that we haven't seen more bids for communities specialists from the very big research groups, although M&A seems to have a strong 'Me Too' factor (old-fashioned meaning, without the hashtag) and perhaps one

Mentions of hot topics per 1,000 UK job ads on MrWeb*
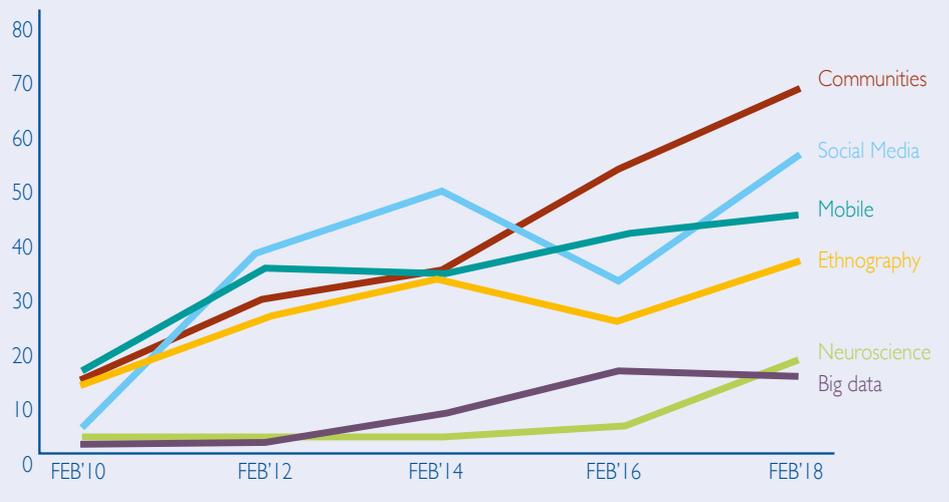
*Source: our own analysis of ads posted. Base for each year's figure: 3,000 ads

Research techniques used over previous 12 months vs expectations of next 12 months*
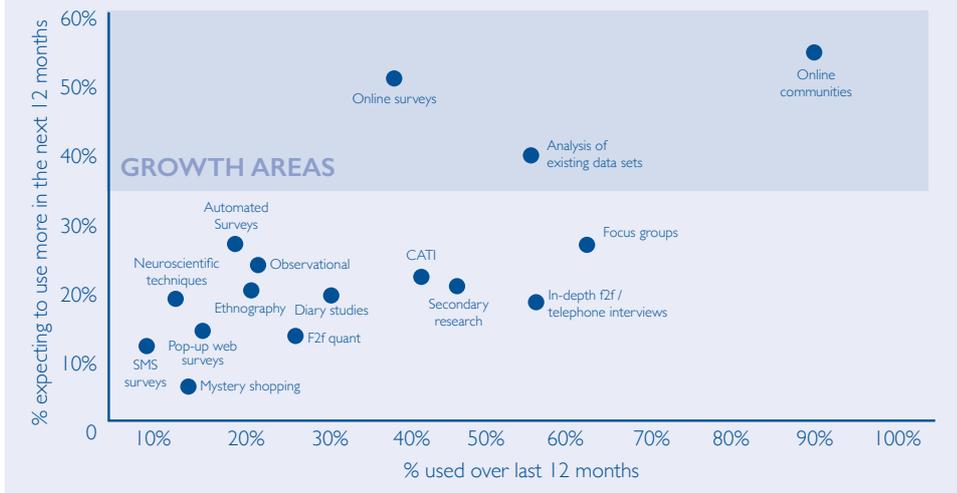
high-profile buy will set off a round of them. The biggest acquisition in the last year, from the perspective of insights rather than the tech side, is probably that of UK-based insight community specialist Join the Dots in July by Belgium-based global insight agency InSites Consulting - of which more in our interview with Kristof De Wulf on page 12.

InSites was itself majority acquired a year ago by investment firm Mentha Capital - and there are

other, larger firms around with deeper pockets recently re-filled by banking partners, including two of the traditional global 'big four' MR firms, who may be looking at communities expertise as a key potential buy. Watch this space - but don't watch it from too much of a distance, if you want to stay on the leading edge of research and insights. ∎

Nick Thomas

YouGov Buys Conversation Platform inconvo *September 13 2018*
UK-based YouGov has paid an undisclosed sum for inconvo, whose platform helps companies to build conversations based around the 'passion points' of their audiences.

Vision Critical Sparq Adds Text and Sentiment Analysis *September 14 2018*
Customer relationship intelligence software provider Vision Critical has added a Text Analytics & Sentiment Analysis feature to its Sparq insight platform; and launched an Application & Integration Center which provides Sparq users with access to data from third party providers.

PODCAST
in conversation: ISAAC ROGERS

Listen to the whole podcast at
https://happymr.com/isaac-rogers

Rogers on the Ranch

IR: for the last fifteen years of my upbringing we had a cattle ranch. We raised about 150-200 head of cattle and starting at age 12-13 that was what I did, I had a pretty instrumental role, starting running the place when I was 14-15. There's something about being raised on a farm or on a ranch... and I've met some other senior leaders and execs over the years and it amazes me what % grew up on or around a farm somewhere. It was about 500 acres, outside a little town in Arkansas - big enough to be a ton of work but small enough that our family could manage it and not have to bring in a bunch of people to do it. It taught me how to plan and think, and how you could do almost anything you needed to do, yourself … and most of the things you end up doing you've never done before - you have to figure that out. 'Though now I'm running a larger business that's one of my bad traits - thinking 'I'll go and do it myself' because as you get in a bigger and bigger organisation you have to kick that off - it took me a couple of years.

JB: Did you have a pivotal moment when you just had to let it go?

IR: yeah I kind of got told to [laughter]. I became a bottleneck... Being willing to say 'I'm not going to be able to exercise that muscle any more' is really hard, but once you've got a team of say 4 or 5 folks under you they're going to have to take some of it...'

We raised about 150-200 head of cattle and I started running the place when I was 14-15

ISAAC ROGERS
CEO at 20|20
See Isaac's Biography on page 30

Blockchain patents

IR: for several years I had concerns about some of the ways that we were collecting and monetising data and the ways we treat panellists - both 20|20 and the broader industry. Somewhere around five years ago I had a moment on a plane flying to Chicago… I was reading about a distributed application creating a registry for diamonds and what it was

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We 're in the diamond business

going to look like, and I had this moment: 'We're in the diamond business' - what they're trying to do in creating a registry that people can trust and look in and find out about a diamond and know that it wasn't a blood diamond or reharvested... that is just what we are trying to wrestle with in the MR space. I spent a couple of months with our development teams, talking to patent attorneys, found one in Nashville who already had experience with some blockchain stuff as it relates to healthcare - spent several months on creating the IP and some early stage products around that and around one and a half years later that patent was granted. It creates a marketplace - a lot of data collection is kind of a mess - a lot of steps. Taking a step back, what you have is a brand that wants to get an answer from a human - this type of marketplace shortens that gap, gives the respondent more control over their feedback. ...more and more of our brand partners recognise that when you put a survey out there that's really painful, it's an extension of your brand. I would like to get the industry to the point where one day I can turn round and say to my Mom, I would love it if you take surveys, it'll be a great experience, you'll be rewarded for your time, and the brand'll really listen to what you have to say. Today I wouldn't wish the average survey on an enemy.

Mom, I would love it if you take surveys

On 20|20 Research launches

JB: Your platform QualBoard has had a major upgrade this year...
IR: yeah, an upgrade of the kind where we just rebuilt the whole thing [laughs]. We've had to do that 4 times. The big unrealised dream for people building online qual platforms is… it's still not that much faster and easier doing qual online, there's still a lot of data that moves back

and forth, little tasks that need completing, a lot of set-up. Researchers just coming into it say 'Oh Good digital this'll be easier' and we say 'It'll be easier in ways and harder in others!' We realised what we had to do is to automate as much of the heavy lifting and menial tasks as we could... Right now we feel like we can give an hour a day, maybe up to 2-3 hours a day back to researchers, depending on how much work they're doing, and that's an enormous amount to put back into development, working with the respondent etc..
JB: is there a shining example of the efficiency gains from Qualboard..?
IR: No - lots of smaller ones! We looked for a silver bullet and asked the world's experts on machine learning and NLP and they said we were crazy. There's no silver bullet, what you can do is get these little helper apps that free up

Yeah... an upgrade of the kind where we just rebuilt the whole thing

these little pieces of time.
JB: how about the knowledge management aspect of it?
IR: I was on the marketing side of a team a long time ago and we did some focus groups and I got the final report and I never looked at it, I just threw it on my desk, and I've carried it with me ever since as a little token to remind me of how easy it is to do $100k of research, spend 3 days in research, wait 2 weeks for the report and then never really integrate that knowledge on an ongoing basis into product development. On QB 4.0 we've made it so that all your findings over time they all feed into one place...
JB: one thing you guys introduced this year… in May, the slow build, lean community. One of the more overdue products in the marketplace? *[see article in section 4 for Isaac's summary]*

Differences in 5 years?

IR: Digital qual right now is probably less than 20% of the market now in the US, but I think in 5 years it'll be half or more.
From the corporate researcher side, the really sharp insight departments are starting

to pull away from reactive - 'I have a business question…' - towards listening out for ripples of disruption which they bring back to the brand team and say 'Hey have you seen this, have you thought about it, how do we get in front of this trend'. I am hopeful that if we can pull that off it'll give us a renaissance in our industry... I think it can be wildly effective.
[but also, if we can just make qual fast and easy to do it'll grow like gangbusters]

I am hopeful that if we can pull that off it'll give us a renaissance in our industry

Your personal motto?

IR: 'Know the story. Have a villain. Be the hero.' I can't tell you how many situations in life those three simple sentences give me a structure to think about my role and what I need to do - it's one of the things that gets me up in the morning. I was told that when Steve Jobs died, those three sentences were written on a small piece of paper and it was the only thing on his desk - 'though I was not able to confirm that and I don't actually know where it came from!

Interviewed by Jamin Brazil of Happy Market Research

Investor Buys Lion's Share of De Wulf's Firm *September 27 2018*
Investment firm Mentha Capital has acquired a majority stake in global consumer insight agency InSites Consulting, for an undisclosed sum.

A VIEW FROM THE OUTSIDE

By Richard Millington

Using a community for market research? Now there's an idea. *Richard Millington* of *FeverBee* lives and breathes online communities and has helped build them for everyone from Apple to Lego to the UN, but he's not first and foremost an insights professional. Communities have many other uses, and if we know where we fit in the wider market, that's a key step on the road to fully exploiting the considerable opportunity it represents - so here's his take.

I first discovered online communities from playing video games back in 2001 and 2002 - every game had a big community connected with it. Then at university I had a year out and worked for a company with a client that used an online community, and a light bulb lit up. All the things that worked for video gaming communities seemed to work for other sectors as well! Here was an area with huge potential, in which I already had a good grounding and which I enjoyed. I did an internship and started to blog on the subject, and things just grew from there.

Market research / data collection and insight comes into most of the communities we work with, of course, but we don't usually come at it solely from a research perspective. It might be one of the key purposes of a platform but if I had to choose one thing communities have traditionally been about - over the last ten to twelve years - the word would be engagement. In a nutshell, the remit from most companies setting them up has been this: drive as much engagement as you can possibly get.

A lot of organisations have been indiscriminate about the kind of engagement they want. If it's something you can measure - anything - then it justifies the work and expense on the community. As a result, although FeverBee offers a very broad range of services, a lot of our work has centred around figuring out what kind of engagement really matters to the individual - refining the relatively crude model we find in place, or the client's ideas about how a new community should work.

On the whole, an organisation we work with will have a lot of engagement in their community, but they're not always using it in the best way they can. For example, we'll find they are using a community for customer support: in itself this works well. People find they can get answers to their questions in the community and they don't have to phone up the customer support line. And if someone is thinking of moving they can find other people that have had problems, find out how they've addressed them - so this kind of support-driven community can dramatically reduce churn, without specifically generating data or insight for the company itself.

That said, it's very easy to extend this and start generating amazing ideas as well, by finding out exactly what these customers think and feel, and crucially, the language they use to describe it all. Language is so valuable, and should be incorporated into everything from the promotional materials to the products themselves. So the ideation function is coming out more and more - that's one of the simplest things you can add on to a community that's been focused on customer support - it adds a lot of value and doesn't cost a lot more.

There are plenty of other uses too, however: two examples are advocacy - leaving reviews and testimonials for you; or as a place to recruit staff. It ties in with so many of these things at once, and that's what I think the true power of a community is - to expand and support as many areas of the organisation as it possibly can. If you just use them for one function, you're missing out on most of the value that a community could provide.

So where does insight fit in? I guess it might surprise some in the market research sector to think in terms of long-established and otherwise successful communities that don't even try to collect data and analyse what members are saying - but they are out there, and they represent an opportunity, as do the many, many communities where insight is a feature but it has not been built in by experts and it falls well short of what might be.

I would argue that this is one of the biggest opportunities that are around at the moment in the wider communities space - doing more with the data that's being generated. Coming back to the ideation, above, I'd say that a

> Start generating amazing ideas ...by finding out exactly what these customers think and feel

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list of ideas, by themselves, aren't that useful to anyone. Prioritising the feedback and interpreting the data is critical - and streamlining its delivery is very important too: engineers for example, developing products and services for the organisation, need great feedback but they really need it at the right time. There's no shortage of things coming out of the community that they could use, but they need help in prioritising those things. Very few of the communities that I see are doing it.

In some cases, this may be because they don't even know the kind of services provided by the insights industry exist - not in a communities context anyway. Or for those that do know, they don't see enough value in them. If you imagine a sceptical client, say an engineer, we'll talk to them and establish that they see a need for great feedback, and are happy to receive FeverBee's help (as communities consultants more generally) to know how to prioritise it. But for them to then reach out to somebody else to add more specific expertise, it's going to have to blow their minds. Maybe the challenge for market researchers is to sell themselves in a way we're more familiar with: we all know about focus groups in the real world and how they're valuable, but where insight from the community is concerned, the clients either aren't making the connection, or else they think they have it covered.
Might it be the case that in big corporations, people running communities have no contact with the internal MR team? Possibly, but it's not something I'm aware of. Possibly also the agencies with whom the internal MR people are working don't push their experience with communities enough to encourage the internal discussions to take place. Either way, there's a job to be done communicating, to tap this strong potential.

If that's helpful in putting insight in context within the wider field of online communities, great. Beyond that, there are things happening in that wider field which are worth looking at too - trends present and future. In the **past five years** the biggest change has been away from the focus on driving 'quantity of engagement', and it's partly because a lot of that functionality has gone to social media now. This leaves communities needing to work harder to prove the value of

I would argue that this is one of the biggest opportunities that are around at the moment

what they do - and a focus on driving the right kind of engagement - as above. The second big change - mostly in the last three years or so - has affected every sector: data, privacy, GDPR and so on. Organisations are far more concerned about the right way of collecting data, not violating the rights of the individual, and that's led to changes in the tech we use, and in how much research we do on our members.

More generally, this has made companies incredibly careful about how they gather data on their customers: organisations we work with like SAP get a lot of training in what they're allowed and not allowed to do. If you're in a data function, and used to take a huge amount of information, now I think you take as little as you need. It affects administration, for example making it easy for people to have posts removed; and what contact you have when signing people up in the first place. It affects how much analysis you do of who's in the community and how they're participating: but I would say it doesn't fundamentally change how communities are used.

At **present,** the many community platforms are very comparable in terms of the features they offer: increasingly, what distinguishes them is the level of support they provide to customers, their certifications, the level of training. But livestreaming and podcasts are certainly growing in popularity, being added to communities in new and exciting ways.

For the immediate **future**, I think communities people need more help with proving the value of their work - the analytics have to get a lot better, particularly in terms of integration. The hard part is integrating social media and community data with an existing database. At present for example, if Apple want to know if someone who's a customer and part of a community, remains a customer for a longer time than those not in the community, that's hard to assess. There isn't really a great tool that's widely used to bring all that data together in one place.

There are a number of opportunities, then, to grow the market for insight and analysis skills used within communities. I see it remaining a niche - I could be wildly wrong but I don't think it's going to explode, I think it's going to be a tool there for organisations that need it. However, the signs are that it's been growing steadily for some time and there is certainly scope for that to continue, and for it to grow its share of the overall insight market. Be aware of those using communities for all kinds of other purposes, and try and ensure that they are aware of you, and insight firms are well placed to continue making inroads in the sector. ■

Richard Millington is the founder of FeverBee and author of both 'Buzzing Communities' and 'The Indispensable Community'. Over the past 13 years he has helped more than 270 brands including Apple, Google, Lego, Novartis, The United Nations and SAP use powerful psychology to build thriving communities. Through his community management academy, he has also trained 1250 of the world's top community pros. Prior to launching FeverBee in 2008, Richard interned with renowned marketing author, Seth Godin, in New York.

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2018

INTERVIEW: KRISTOF DE WULF

On 2nd July DRNO announced the acquisition of UK-based insight community specialist Join the Dots by global consumer agency InSites Consulting. It's InSites' 4th company buy in 18 months, and its largest. Nick Thomas talked to its co-founder and CEO Kristof De Wulf about the deal, the company's plans and the future for online communities more broadly.

NT: Your general reasons for looking for a buy along these lines...

KDW: Our ambition is to become the global leader in online communities - we believe they will become the mainstream method of collaborating with and learning from consumers. We'll see how the industry evolves in the next few years! We're therefore looking for companies that have developed a strong reputation and a strong business in any local market or region that is complementary to our current footprint: so successful in their region, but also focusing in particular on communities as a leading method to conduct MR.

NT: Now focusing on why you chose Join the Dots (JtD) specifically:

KDW: I think lots of reasons are in play. 1. A very strong similar strategic focus on building and running ongoing communities for clients - so the buy will strengthen our community knowhow and business/ client list. 2. Within JtD there are also interesting strategic capabilities we can add to our offering. Their social media intelligence practice is very interesting; and their cultural trends practice, built over the years, is an interesting add-on to our business. 3. A very important one to us - the culture and the DNA of the company - vital for a good integration. We quickly realised that we think in very similar ways and we apply a set of values to our people, to the way we build the business - so there was a lot of commonality there. 4. Related

to this, the JtD leadership - we encountered a very experienced and very professional leadership and have embedded that leadership within our company to make sure we can grow a bigger international business. Using their knowhow, including some knowledge that we didn't have - that was very exciting.

NT: And the integration's going well, it seems?

KDW: So far so good; we have worked quite intensively on integration management - at the end of the day we want to build one integrated company. This has been our fourth acquisition so in the meantime we've learned a little bit how to deal with integration management and which

We believe communities will become the mainstream method of collaborating with and learning from consumers

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processes to put in place. We specifically bought JtD which is a bigger acquisition for us, around 170 people to become part of our group - and spent quite a lot of time on pre-integration management, in discussions with their leadership. We are nearing 500 people, 480 I think. These are quite exciting times for us - every few months there is a whole new company we need to integrate and run - so you need to reinvent yourself a bit.

In the last 18 months, we've had 4 acquisitions and probably doubled the business, and we'll probably do more by the end of this fiscal year... we are going to continue with acquisitions...

NT: For the next lot of acquisitions, are there particular areas of research that you're looking to buy in, or particular geographical areas to cover?

KDW: There are two main areas. One is geographical expansion, where we are predominantly looking for agencies that are well known for being great at building and maintaining communities for clients - not a lot of complementarity but a lot of similarity. We are looking at the biggest countries in terms of MR spend, as per ESOMAR stats. We are quite European as you know, we are Belgian, from a small country, so throughout the 22 years we've been running we've always looked to say: What steps can we take, can we internationalise? We did this through greenfield operations a lot of times, but now we have this new non-organic growth that sits next to it.

We are currently also looking to strengthen our tech, in the core. We think communities will be the leading platform, and one reason is that they serve as the aggregator of all kinds of different methods - a good way of 'joining those dots'; but also for clients that have quite a heavy research agenda it makes more sense not to set up each project separately, but to have this whole set-up that has been paid for, where you can reduce the cost and time, and do more through one single vehicle.

From an internal perspective, I also think communities are quite convenient - we are in this self-serve, DIY phase of research development - which will not go away - and what we see today is lots of clients needing to use all kinds of tools to help themselves. We feel the future will move quickly towards aggregators and integrators, where those clients can find all those tools in a one-stop shop.

The next step from that is to build the ultimate Do It Together space (DIT): there's a lot of talk about DIY, and we need to be ready for that and invest heavily to make sure our clients can

help themselves on the communities - we think the future is going to be a lot about DIT, where depending on their brands and approach, clients can either DIY or come to us when they need to. Which is challenging because on the one hand the available technology has to be really strong, and on the other we need to make sure that we have the best possible consultants and researchers in the industry. But we're up for a lot of challenges!

NT: Which areas are communities currently taking the most share from?

KDW: A good question. I think a little bit from everywhere, to be honest. Shall we look at traditional first - I would say clients are - very slowly indeed, you're right there - moving away from what we call traditional, focus groups, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, into something which we would say is more modern - a more diverse, hybrid way of working together with consumers.

Then there is the quant dimension: communities are obviously not going to replace all trackers tomorrow, because you know trackers need fresh samples, that's the one big drawback of any community - that's a limitation.

But even the more novel approaches, like social media monitoring, it can improve. We all know what some of the drawbacks of social media intelligence are - on the one hand, it's scraping data from big populations we don't know a whole lot about, so there's a lot of guesswork, that's one limitation; there's obviously the

Communities serve as the aggregator of all kinds of different methods - a good way of 'joining those dots'

language dimension, as the dominant language of the Internet is still English; but also what we derive from that is skewed to the profile of the channels - like Twitter, you're listening to Twitter users, you know.

NT: [laughs] Not normal people!

KDW: That's similar to the feedback we received back in the day when we started doing Internet research, we were told like 'those are not normal people', you know, they use the Internet... so a lot of that is still there, and our philosophy of how that can work alongside

Kristof De Wulf
CEO InSites Consulting

Kristof is co-founder and CEO of InSites Consulting, a global consumer insight & collaboration agency included in the top 10 of GRIT's global list of most innovative agencies. He started his career at Vlerick Business School where he spent more than 15 years taking roles as Associate Marketing Professor, Partner, and Member of the Board. With the recent acquisitions of Direction First, Columinate, eÿeka and Join the Dots, Kristof now inspires more than 450 people around their company purpose to empower people to shape the future of brands in New York, London, Manchester, Sydney, Johannesburg, Singapore, Dusseldorf, Paris, Rotterdam, Ghent and Timisoara. Kristof is 48, lives in Ypres (West-Flanders, Belgium) with his wife and two daughters, is taking his first steps in Krav Maga and loves taking good care of the family's 3 Shetland ponies and 3 chickens.

larger communities (less so for small ones) is: if we can build this social layer on top of all the activities we are doing with consumers, this is massively interesting because not only do we know those people, have we profiled them and have we been working with them for months or years, it also brings in a whole stream of fresh insights, because their day-to-day social media liking etc. is something that can be really interesting. That is something we'll be doing, building a layer of social media intelligence on top of the community - and you could actually say the same of big data, which has sometimes but not always delivered on its promise: we know what's happened, but we don't necessarily know why, we lack a deeper understanding. If we can pull in more behavioural and transactional data from community users, that's an interesting layer of detail we can add on top, but at the end of the day for us it would still be a community. Instead of thinking of [communities] as a method, it's more a hub for information.

A much fuller version of this interview appears on the MrWeb site. ■

ABN Impact Hires Exec Director for Hong Kong *November 6 2018*
Asia-based insight community specialist ABN Impact has appointed former CrowdEmotion MD Joe Wheller as Executive Director, Hong Kong.

Nov 2018

YouthSight Restructures, Promotes for MD Roles *November 7 2018*
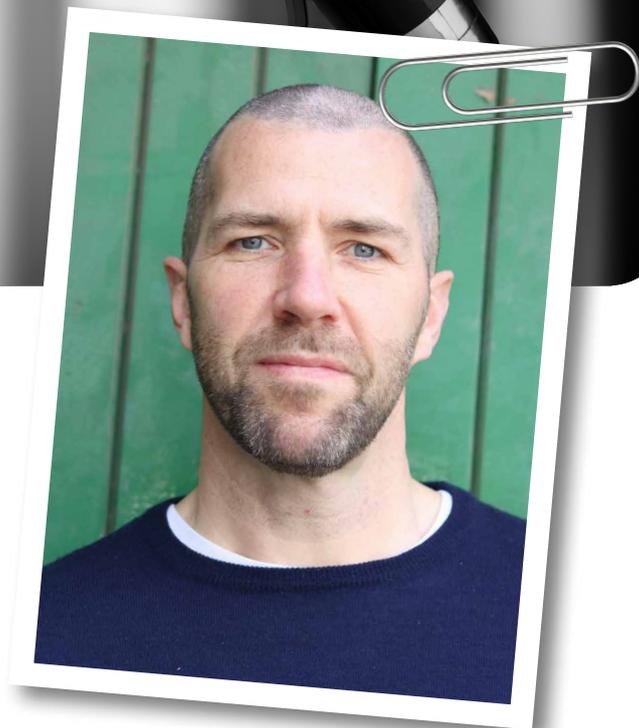In the UK, specialist MR agency YouthSight has restructured its business into two divisions: Insight; and Panel and Data Services - reflecting customer needs. The two divisions will be led by Josephine Hansom and Tatenda Musesengwa, respectively.

PODCAST
in conversation: STEPHEN CRIBBETT

Listen to the whole podcast at https://happymr.com/stephen-cribbett

We're only really consumers for two or three hours in our day

How I got here

Most of my family were or are involved in the automotive industry - and I studied engineering but very quickly decided it was not for me and I needed something a bit more right brain - creative. I worked in design and found there are a lot of aging rock stars in the design world - they tell their own stories without any rhyme or reason, and I wanted to add some insight to it. I came into research via ergonomics... human-centred design... and from there, how to gather the insight and then how to activate that. At Further we talk about human insight rather than consumer insight because we're only really consumers for two or three hours in our day. We have to try and understand what people really value in their lives... the tensions, contextual factors, what's shaping the relationships they have. We're marrying up the social scientists and psychologists with the business strategists.

The next big thing

…we're at a moment in time where we're looking at 'what's going to be the next revolution… what's just around the corner that's going to shake things up soon. Mobile came along, and when we first developed out technology mobiles weren't really entrenched within society so that's really changed our business. Analytics, AI and automation are now starting

STEPHEN CRIBBETT
founder & CEO of Further

…how research is done - that needs to be much more harmonious with people's lives and how they choose to give you their time

Maru Launches Voice UK Community *December 7 2018*
Respondent access specialist Maru/Blue has launched a community called Maru Voice UK, allowing members of the public to voice their opinions on a variety of topics and issues. The firm has also hired Izzy Nurdin and Deborah Horrocks as UK Business Development Managers

Join the Dots is BCC's High Growth Business of the Year *November 30 2018*
UK-based consumer insight agency Join the Dots has grown its headcount by eighteen percent in the last twelve months, and last night celebrated being named 'High Growth Business of the Year' by the British Chamber of Commerce at annual awards in London.

Nov - D

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to make a difference and it's about how we combine and mash up those things in a human way. It's interesting at the moment that people are actually showing a little bit more concern as to what we actually give our attention to. Some big social changes are going on which will obviously have an impact on consumer businesses, but also on how research is done - that needs to be much more harmonious with people's lives and how they choose to give you their time.

JB: Specific to your two key platforms, Tandem and Together:

[for Together examples see next article, beginning on page 16, plus more re Together in the podcast itself]

SC: Our newest love child if you like is Tandem - just over a year old. A much more thoroughbred mobile ethnographic tool - really just a one-to-one communication tool, specifically about understanding moments and observations, as well as adding a response to questions used in a drag-and-drop way on the platform itself. We focus a lot on two user bases - the participants and their experience is of paramount importance, but we build them also especially with the researchers in mind - our NPS of 77 bears this out - it understands how the researcher works and gives them more time to focus on the reporting and strategy derivation.

No Monkeys: the hard parts of good qual

We do a lot of work with start-ups - they are user or consumer-centred from day one, no legacy - but also no matter what market we're in, a lot of these digital start-ups they start off with great intentions, find it difficult to be profitable despite significant funding and end up being bought by a big corporate - the corporates are buying the innovation. That's interesting in terms of what it means for researchers - taking a consumer-sensitive approach to the solution and sometimes having to kind of retro-fit what the business needs and what the business model is and sort of overlaying that solution. So yeah I think of course tech has democratised research, anyone can pick up SurveyMonkey, but that's what I love about qualitative research - it's a science, it's not just about having a conversation - smart Marketing Directors know that and understand there's a lot more to it. That's the kind of work we specialise in.

Sampling is fundamental to doing good research

...Asking the right questions of the right people is important - sampling - a lot of people don't know who they should be asking the questions of - in qual where we are working with smaller samples it's so important to get that right. A lot of our client conversations start with sampling and... it lasts quite a long time - we love that - it's fundamental to doing good research.

A favourite project?

For me there's a project that stands out. A lot of people talk about changing lives but there's a project where we collaborated with someone who's now our Research Director, Dr Marie-Claude Gervais - looking at the experience of people with cancer in the UK to understand the inequalities in cancer care - including ethnic minority people and old people - what was the different experience of living with cancer in those communities. We followed them for two months, observed and engaged with them - I can't imagine how difficult it would be to get them into a focus group. When I think about it I still get goose bumps. We changed the lives of those people in so many ways - the project was for McMillan but it changed government policy. In particular, there was one lady who was living on the breadline, life was very very difficult and she realised there was a support community

A couple of years later this lady turned up at a presentation we were giving, unannounced, and came up to us at the end and just thanked us for changing her life

she could create for herself - this woman in particular created a new support community for black cancer patients. A couple of years later she turned up at a presentation we were giving, unannounced, and came up to us at the end of the presentation and just thanked us for changing her life - very special I think. The depth we were able to get through that community was absolutely incredible - we wouldn't have been able to get that any other way - but it really changed access to services in often fringe groups in society.

Qual vs Quant

JB: Quant can be a terrible way of looking at some human issues. Nobody on a date does an NPS! AI is opening up some more detail - do you believe there's going to be a lift in the proportion of qual?

SC: there already is - clients want the human story - consumers can easily sniff out brands that are completely tone deaf to what's actually happening at street level and that's where qualitative research plays out very very well. We ourselves (and also through one of my other businesses, Signoid) are able to analyse large quantities of unstructured data - I'm interested in how to apply this to qual res at scale, for example using bots for moderation but then being able to analyse it and get something quite tangible out of that in a small time - that's still qual for me. We're experimenting with that and using it for some of our clients - but the human side is already experiencing a significant uplift. Qual is much bigger in the UK than it is in the US.

There's no such thing as Win or Lose, it's always Win or Learn

Mottos:

1. there's no such thing as Win or Lose, for me it's always Win or Learn. 2. Never give up, fight that fight, get that insight across to the client, stay resolute.

Interviewed by Jamin Brazil of Happy Market Research

ec 2018

Harris Interactive Unveils Live Viewer Insights Tool *December 12 2018*
Harris Interactive has launched an online discussion platform called PopUP Live, to provide TV, radio and online broadcasters with in-depth viewer engagement insights in real-time.

WHY ONLINE COMMUNITIES PRESENT UNIQUE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

By Stephen Cribbett

Digital connectivity now enables every aspect of our lives, including the way we shop, bank, consume, get from point A to B and our health and well-being. Devices, apps and digitally- enabled services are facilitating all that there is. So, it's of no surprise then, that online research methods are now the norm and have fundamentally shifted the way research is conducted, and even who does it.

DRNO Timeline

Dec 2018

Toluna Opens in Melbourne, Hires in India *December 19 2018*
Online community and survey tech provider Toluna has opened an office in Melbourne, where it is relocating Roopam Bahl as a local contact for the company's presence in Australia.

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Research communities,

in particular, offer huge benefits in terms of agility, reach and speed for clients, aiding decision-making and rapid concept testing and iteration. But they are also hugely beneficial for researchers and participants who need flexibility and convenience when it comes to fieldwork and analysis.

For researchers, they facilitate new ways to ask questions. You can set creative tasks and exercises that capture moments and surface both implicit and explicit responses. Their asynchronous nature means researchers can carve out more thinking time, leaving room for more in-depth probing, facilitation and analysis that's devoid of the usual time pressures - which in turn delivers better data.

Whereas previously, participants had to be located within a certain radius of a focus group facility, now they can take part from the comfort of their home or when they're out and about, via their smartphones, thus removing the potential for participation bias. What's more, research community participants are free to share their own authentic views, experiences and opinions without peer pressures associated with focus groups.

Research communities excel when it comes to capturing natural, everyday behaviours. Through the activation of ethnographic activities via their smartphones, participants can share what they see, hear, think and feel in the same way they do on social media, thus being their true

> ## Participants can take part from the comfort of their home or when they're out and about, via their smartphones, thus removing the potential for participation bias.

> ## By way of their longitudinal and sequenced nature, researchers can connect, discuss and explore any number of topics and concepts, engaging people at critical moments.

self but providing the researcher a full view of the context of the behaviour. By way of their longitudinal and sequenced nature, researchers can connect, discuss and explore any number of topics and concepts, engaging people at critical moments. All of this results in more value for money, including engagement rates in excess of +90% and happy consumers that openly share how fun and rewarding their experiences have been and how easy it was to take part.

To understand what this means in practical terms, and to give you some inspiration - here are some examples of how Further's community research team and technology, Together *[View More Online: https://go-further.co/together]*, have achieved a depth and breadth of human insight that's hard to achieve using other tools.

What do Health and Wellbeing Really Mean to People in the UK?

Bupa wanted to understand what their customer needs were in relation to wellbeing, and what role they should play in meeting these needs. They asked us to help them surface the everyday challenges people face in this area, collaborating with them to develop insight they could use to inform the development of tools and strategies that would provide value to customers. Using Together, participants were encouraged to complete early activities using
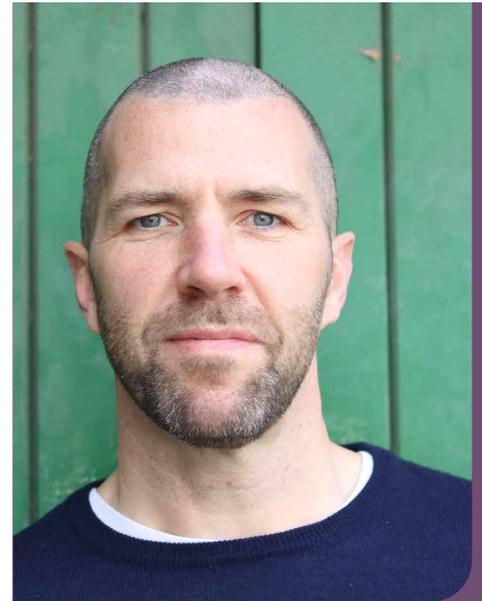
Stephen Cribbett,
CEO and founder, Further

Stephen is founder and CEO of Further, a Human Insight Company. He grew up in the clean air of Warwickshire before moving on to Nottingham and its beer-stained bars and clubs to study an unusual new degree course focussed on design management. It was only in middle-age he realised that running a research technology and insight business could mean fuelling his love for people-watching, making things better and making better things. He's built and grown creative, brand and tech businesses from the ground up, working on proposition development, sales, business development and product development. He's been part of creative strategy teams developing consumer brands and experiences, and finally, he's a consumer insight expert.

Join the Dots Launches 'Insight Ecosystem' *January 7 2019*
UK-based consumer insight agency Join the Dots has launched the 'Insight Ecosystem', designed as a more flexible and future-proof online community, incorporating sophisticated question tools, social intelligence capabilities and powerful ethnography apps.

– Jan 2019

Ipsos Launches Syndicated HIV Patient Community *January 10 2019*
Ipsos has launched a syndicated HIV Patient Community, to add patient views to the doctor's perspective already provided by its syndicated HIV Therapy Monitor.

video to ensure that first-hand experiences were captured then, on an ongoing basis, during the diary task later in the study. Mixing the use of 'in-the-moment' video with rationalised accounts and explanations of behaviours, allowed the research team to explore the nuances between what people did on a daily basis and what they thought they did. During our research collaboration, we uncovered a number of ways that Bupa can nurture their customers' needs and aspirations in this area, to support them in achieving their health and wellbeing goals. *(View More Online: https://www.go-further.co/further-resources/bupa-what-do-health-and-wellbeing-really-mean-to-people-in-the-uk)*

Using Insight to Develop a Disruptive Insurance Proposition

VouchForMe is a European insuretech start-up. Their innovative blockchain product and novel approach towards trust, and the power of social connections, has the potential to completely disrupt the consumer insurance market. The leadership team at VouchForMe approached Further for help in developing and fine-tuning their proposition for the UK market. With 30 carefully-selected consumers, we designed activities that surfaced people's complex attitudes towards trust, risk, friendship and family – and how these intersect with attitudes to money. We also combined a range of individual and group discussions, surveys, heat mapping exercises, projective techniques and media related tasks including video responses. The leadership team at VouchForMe observed the community in real-time, which in turn enabled our research team to quickly probe and deep-dive interesting topics as they surfaced. *(View more online: https://www.go-further.co/further-resources/using-insight-to-develop-a-disruptive-insurance-proposition)*

Developing Global Mission and Vision Statements

Reimagining 'mission and vision' statements is a challenge, even for small organisations. If you're one of the world's most successful publishing companies, where do you begin? Condé Nast International commissioned Further's crack online research team to help them develop a new global 'mission and vision' statement for the organisation. We had one week to have conversations with 60 employees, all with different titles and levels of seniority, across six countries in different languages. We designed and moderated a series of online communities in Brazil, Germany, France, Taiwan, Japan and Mexico, hosted on our advanced Together platform. We used group discussions, surveys, image sourcing, storytelling and projective techniques. Throughout the project we worked together with staff to refine and build on the potential mission and vision statements to ensure they were grounded in the heritage of the business and distinctive for all stakeholders, all whilst turning the gaze toward the future. *(View More Online: https://www.go-further.co/further-resources/reimagining-conde-nast-internationals-brand)*

Entering a New Market with Confidence

Keyhouse is a market-leading legal software brand in Ireland. They wanted to understand whether there was an opportunity to expand their practice management software and support operations into the English market. They asked Further to generate a deeper understanding of law firms' usage and attitudes towards case management software systems. The main approach involved interactive qualitative research using our online research community platform, Together. This was supplemented with

face-to-face interviews with senior partners in English law firms. As well as exploring current behaviours, the 24 carefully selected participants took part in a variety of exercises and tasks tapping into emotions around IT and practice management. We helped Keyhouse to understand the market for their product and services in England. We spoke directly to decision-makers within law firms as well as a host of other key stakeholders to discover what they would look for in a software management partner. Keyhouse can now move forward with confidence in their proposition and develop messaging and a sales approach that should deliver results. *(View More Online: https://www.go-further.co/further-resources/keyhouse-entering-a-new-market-with-confidence*

Using Online Research Communities to Capture the Social Lives of Consumers

One of the most creative approaches to an online research community that we've seen involved 120 design-savvy clubbers who were located in some of the coolest cities around the world. The purpose of the community was to unearth insight on the social behaviours and, in particular, their 'club lives' over a three-week period for one of the world's most famous beer brands. Participants were (typically) hyper-connected on social media, so we used these same behaviours to encourage them to share every moment and create a consumer journey map that visualised the needs, wants, hope and desires of clubbers. We were able to highlight clearly their experience and motivating factors. The client – a team of designers and innovation specialists – used the outputs to inspire design and innovation thinking, enabling a more human-centred design methodology and rapid prototyping. What's more, the online research community outputs created an itinerary of places to 'go see' for the design team who embarked on an extensive tour of nightlife hotspots! The overall approach inspired the client's design team to surface new consumer-centric concepts that challenged the current nightlife experience. By providing a 24/7 connection between the client team and clubbers, a fully immersive experience played out and provided a longitudinal view of the lives of the target audience as well as the opportunity to conduct consumer co-creation.

In summary, communities are a great way of exploring research subjects in some depth. They're intuitive and fun for both researcher and participant, as you go forth on a creative and immersive journey that will unearth authentic human insight. Using a platform like Together, communities can be completed anywhere in the world, normally inside a week. Because much of the data and information can be iterated, transcribed and extracted easily, the write-up and final report can be completed in a matter of days. Sound good? ■

Stephen Cribbett

> They're intuitive and fun for both researcher and participant, as you go forth on a creative and immersive journey that will unearth authentic human insight.
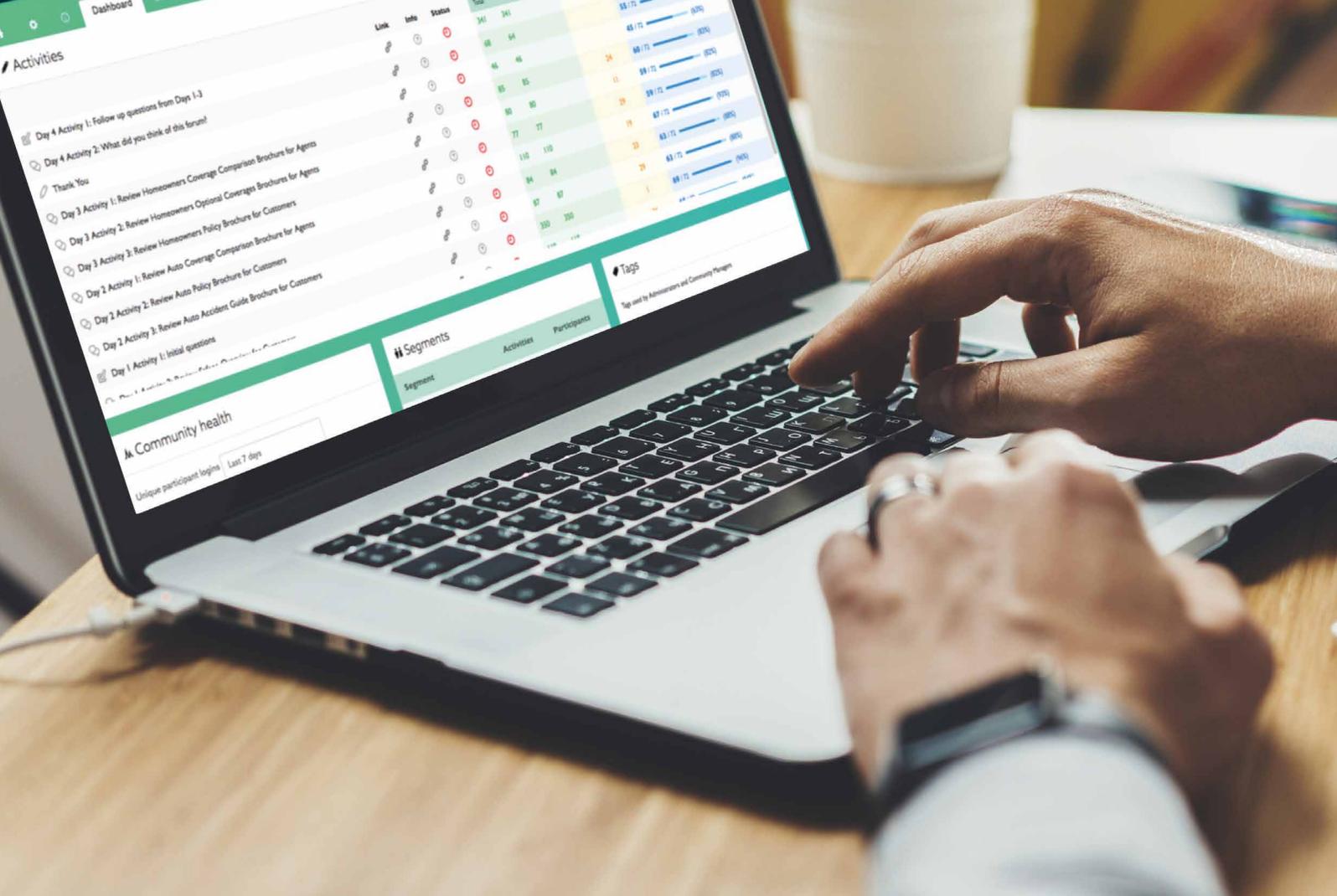
Together we go Further

Together is our tried-and-tested online community research platform that enables target audience research and insight generation at scale, anywhere in the world. Available in 35 languages, and with powerful research tools and functionality, Together makes it simple to set creative tasks, activities and questions that will engage participants throughout the lifetime of your online community.

"We especially appreciate how the platform offers a wide range of tools for asking questions, engaging with participants, and testing print and video materials. In addition, we greatly value Further's top-notch customer-service personnel, who are there for us every step of the way with their prompt, reliable and creative solutions.

John Whaley, *Goodwin SImon Strategic Research*

Further

BEING CUSTOMER CENTRIC, NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT IT

By Paul Lawson

The many great uses of a community panel

When you think about community panels, the chances are that, if you work in research and insight, you have a pretty clear view on what they are and what they're best used for.

If we asked ten people "what are they?", we'd get ten pretty similar answers: customer closeness, customer centricity and customer understanding will all feature pretty heavily. However, if you asked those same ten people "what are they best used for?" responses are likely to be more layered.

This is reflected in the briefs we see and the community panels we build. At an overarching level it's generally about customer centricity but the detail, and the use-cases that help build the business case, are always specific to that business, their challenges, their teams, and their future strategy. No two community panels are the same.

Before looking at some examples, a couple of housekeeping points. Firstly, try not to think about community panels as another 'methodology'. So much of the value of the approach is in its ability to integrate multiple audiences, methodologies and data points under one roof, so thinking about it as a methodology is limiting. Secondly, leave any preconceptions at the door. It's easy to say but the best work we do doesn't start with 'how can we do this through a community panel' it starts with 'how can we….?'. For example, 'how can we get a better understanding of customer experience during flights?' or 'how can we find out more about using music streaming platforms in China?'.

> Customer understanding is a good place to start, specifically exploring the attitudes and behaviours that relate to a particular market

So, what are the best use-cases?

Customer understanding is a good place to start, specifically exploring the attitudes and behaviours that relate to a particular market and/or category. Community panels are perfect for developing foundational insight, identifying emerging (and emerged) trends and understanding the implications and opportunities these deliver. Community members act as your 'boots on the ground', allowing you to see and experience the worlds they're living in. Back to that example of music streaming; running extended pop-up communities and individual music diaries generated real insight into how lifestyle and culture influence the success of online streaming services in China.

Community panels are an ideal platform for delivering customer-centric innovation. They allow customers to be much more closely involved throughout the process of creating, evaluating, refining and testing new

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ideas and propositions. They offer the freedom to call on customers whenever needed and the flexibility to quickly choose from an array of different methods – co-creation, qualitative or quantitative - based on a specific need at a specific time.

For example, it could be using a pop-up community to understand pain points and needs, in-the-moment mobile tasks to explore behaviours or experiences at a precise point in time or co-creating with customers, challenging them to come up with 'the next big thing'. What's fundamental is that the process is iterative and inclusive, and with stakeholders involved throughout, there's more collaboration and consensus in decision making overall.

Next, product and service development - this can be enhanced in various ways using a community panel, most notably through semi-templated approaches and getting closer to customer data. Investing time upfront to build and tailor a set of approaches to clients' specific requirements (key questions, profiles, ways of working etc), supports a leaner, more agile approach to a variety of qualitative and quantitative projects. Smart working practices such as these reduce lead times, are cost efficient and enable the benchmarking of results over time.

At the analysis stage, data can be calibrated to determine how research results are likely to relate to in-market performance. For example, the research tells us how well the product performed, data can then help us to understand how many people who said they would buy actually did so, and we can go back to those who didn't buy, to find out the reasons why not.

Community panels also help better understand the customer experience.

Community panels also help better understand the customer experience. An obvious advantage is their ability to connect with customers in-the-moment, enabling members to share photos, videos or anecdotes of their experiences as and

When you engage properly, your community panel members become living embodiments of your reports, presentations and segmentations

when they happen – such as experiences during a long-haul flight.

Another advantage is the use of rich customer data to identify discrete sample groups based on specific behaviour/s (e.g. those who have purchased a particular product at a particular point in time), using research to understand the path to purchase as well as more detailed reasons underlying decision-making. Overlaying past browsing data can add even further sophistication, for example identifying broader experiences, behaviours and the competitive set in the run up to a purchase.

The community panel approach – a targeted set of consumers available for on-going, multi-method research – can change the way tracking studies are delivered. Whether that's thinking differently about how the actual fieldwork is run with a greater focus on hypothesis development and testing on the back of measurement or using community panel members and their experiences to bring the findings to life.

That brings us to our final use-case: customer immersion. While customer centricity is one of the most commonly stated reasons for having a community panel it doesn't mean it happens automatically. You have to commit to working in ways that really put the customer at the heart of the business. When you engage properly, your community panel members become living embodiments of your reports, presentations and segmentations. They illustrate first-hand the human side of attitudes and behaviour that can sometimes be hidden behind data; helping to build genuine understanding, empathy and a greater emotional investment in customer issues overall. ■
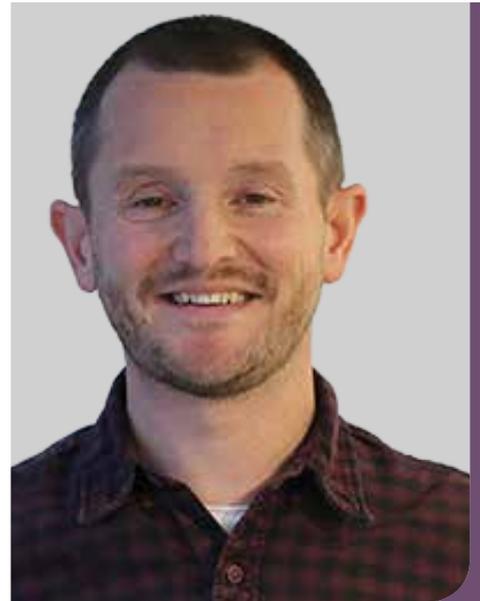
Paul Lawson
Verve Executive Director

Paul Lawson is an expert in communities and community panels, spending 10 years at Verve overseeing community research programmes with consumer and B2B clients in financial services, utilities, retail, FMCG, media, travel and tourism and many more. Paul has a particular interest in innovation and product and service development and how the use of communities and application of smarter, more agile insight approaches can elevate the role of customer research in these processes. He has worked in research for 20 years, previously at TRBI and Synovate.

Join the Dots Launches Consumer Trends Model *January 22 2019*
Consumer insight firm Join the Dots has launched an applied consumer trends model called UP Trends, designed to help clients with their mid-term planning cycles. It is currently aimed at UK brands, but the firm is planning to roll it out in other markets.

PODCAST
in conversation: GRAEME LAWRENCE,

Interviewed by Jamin Brazil of
Happy Market Research

Listen to the whole podcast at
https://happymr.com/graeme-lawrence

Disappointing my Dad

GL: My mum and dad were born in Edinburgh at the time of WW2. Dad left school at 15 and went into printing as an apprentice, and stayed his whole career, but was successful in his mid-30s and became a key business leader in a couple of companies... He was a little bit pressured on me being an accountant, but it just didn't kind of feel like me. I went into MR and for a couple of years he didn't really understand what I did, I think. But recently we have found we can talk together about running businesses as we've both done that. Once he got over the fact that I wasn't a Chartered Accountant!

> ## Once he got over the fact that I wasn't a Chartered Accountant...

On the launch of JtD's 'Insight Ecosystem'

GL: We had a sort of a relaunch in 2019 under the new brand of 'Insight Ecosystem', which was kind of a response to the way we feel the research communities market is changing and needs to change for clients. If I tell the story of what I think has happened in the communities market: in 2008-10 there were the early innovators in the space - some of them coming more from the panel side of things, some more qualitative, and we put our chips down on the table around Web 2.0, it's collaborative, embracing the times, it's adult-to-adult compared to the adult-to-child approach

GRAEME LAWRENCE,
Chief Client Officer, Join the Dots

represented by traditional surveys. With the banking crash and so on in Europe, by 2011-12 the nature of these research communities changed, which was disappointing in many respects, to emphasize speed and price aspects rather than a methodology that collaborated with consumers. That really disappointed me... We re-emerged from that I would say from 2014-15 onwards but I don't think we ever got the excitement and the buzz back around it. Our Insight Ecosystem launch was almost to try and regenerate that in a way: let's get away from the idea that our job lies in asking clients' questions, when our methods and tools are way beyond that. The Insight Ecosystem is based around 'asking listening and observing' *[see Andy Buckley's article below, starting on page 24]*, and saying 'Look, you're not going to get a great commercial outcome from just asking questions, asking questions, asking questions' - everything we know from behavioural science suggests that's not the best way of getting insight.

DRNO Timeline

The Student Room Buys Vincent Consulting *January 28 2019*
UK company The Student Room has acquired market research firm Vincent Consulting, for an undisclosed sum, and will use it as the base for a new research division, TSR Insight.

Jan-Feb

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On acquisition by InSites Consulting in June / July this year:

GL: we'd known each other for a long time [conferences, associations etc..]. Ultimately there was a backdrop of like-minded agencies - a slightly different global footprint - us being strong in UK and Asia, them in Western Europe and not being in Asia. Plus our largest clients weren't theirs and vice versa so there was a neat fit there. We have a similar outlook when it comes to online communities, similar tools but we've each got some that the other doesn't have - so it's really a nice fit overall. We both work for big global brands and work multinationally and we feel we can now be a scalable fit for them.

JB: ...generally there have been more acquisitions in the area lately..?

GL: there has been a move to more like the management consultancies buying, and also big data companies, taking on research agencies or research technology agencies... So it's slightly telling that we've fallen into bed with like-minded people that we've known for a long time, rather than any of those kind of scenarios: who knows what'll happen further down the line, but this is quite rare.

On innovation research & consulting:

GL: Everyone's desperate to innovate, all the big brands are looking at innovation opportunities because there's so much disruption going on from smaller companies and they feel they need to be part of it. Big brands find it hard to play in that space and it's interesting that they end up just buying the start-ups, but I think they are all beginning to feel that they need to get

That three-legged stool you mentioned? Don't just do the two legs, 'cos you'll fall down!

their acts together around innovation processes. But how this fits with consumer immersion and understanding people is very intriguing. You mentioned the 'three-legged stool' - price, speed and quality that everyone wants - well innovation's an area where you can't just do the two legs 'cos you'll fall down! Some clients can be too focused on agile ('speed - price - speed - price...'). You can throw 100 ideas against the wall but if you don't spend enough time talking about the quality aspect of it, it's just not going to work and we have to be careful about not going too quick.

Doing the new stuff, with some of the old ideals

GL: we see a lot of examples where clients let the good parts of the old MR principles begin to decay, and I don't want to sound like an old traditionalist but we don't want that to happen... I met a woman who had been working in social media listening, was a traditional researcher by trade, but she'd been in that space for a couple of years, and ... talking to her I was really intrigued by her passion for social intelligence because what she'd done was actually bring the principles of MR to social media listening, which I hadn't seen much of or done very effectively - and personally I had a little bit discounted social media listening as part of the mix of an agency like ours. The work that she was doing… when you link it back to the issues I was talking about before like sampling, getting the right data in, joining it up as part of your understanding of consumers, we've really integrated it into Join the Dots and are excited by it. Scraping, text analytics, sorting has been going on for ages of course, but doing that with a big qual head and some qual principles of understanding around analysis, from our 'past', is bringing some really interesting results.

Conversely...

I saw loads of social media analysis papers at conferences - 'we scraped, we did text analytics, and it said '24% of people don't chew gum in Seattle''! [laughter] Well done you - where's the insight in that? I mean I understand the people who run those social media scraping companies, the best way for them to make money is on the tech and get data to big orgs, I get that, but if you want to be a consultant, do something else with it slightly. So you ask me what's the biggest

Graeme Lawrence,
Managing Partner
Join the Dots | InSites Consulting

Graeme Lawrence has been in Market Research 25 years, starting life on the client-side in the Financial Services sector, then moving to agency side to specialize in Advertising research. He joined Virtual Surveys in 2006 and started to specialize in Communities from 2008 across consumer categories, including FMCG, retail, finance and leisure & tourism.

He was a Board Director and owner of Join the Dots following a Management buy-out in 2017.

Graeme plays an active role in the research industry, speaking and chairing at a number of conferences and sitting on conference programme committees, including ESOMAR, MRS, WARC and Marketing Week.
Outside of research Graeme has also held Non-Executive Director roles in the leisure industry.

issue facing the industry - the biggest issue is us not adapting, with our old principles, in the right way. But that's also the biggest opportunity.

Right and Wrong

JB: What is your personal motto?
GL: 'If it looks wrong it is wrong'. A nice start point at least in analysing client stuff.
The other one I really like is around this, although it's not really a motto I know: I'm a big believer in qual and ethnography work and it's bizarre that I was brought up on ad tracking quant, but MR started off by observing - let's watch what people are doing, because if we don't have a window into people's lives, we're not giving true consultation to our clients. That's the sort of agency I want to be involved in.

'Duopoly' Grilled over Privacy Violations *February 22 2019*
Facebook must answer questions from Congress about failures over the data security of users of its 'closed' health groups; and has also withdrawn its controversial Onavo VPN app. Rival Google is under fire over a hidden microphone in its 'Nest' security devices.

2019

Maru/Blue Launches Ailments Community *February 7 2019*
Respondent access specialist Maru/Blue has launched an 'Ailments Community', composed of pre-screened members across the US, Canada and the UK who suffer from a variety of medical complaints.

ASK, LISTEN AND OBSERVE:

The Transformation of Insight Communities

By Andy Buckley

Kantar Hires Former IHG Strategist as Qual President   *February 25 2019*
Kantar has named former InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) exec Kelley Baron as
President of its North American qualitative practice.

Feb

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Since their inception in 2005, online communities have continually adapted against a landscape of technological, economic and social change. Firstly they survived the Great Recession by meeting the need for faster and cheaper insights, then continued to ride the wave of technological and social changes brought about by the evolution of social media and the 4G network. Today, the political and economic uncertainties around Brexit present the research industry with new challenges, but we remain confident that online communities have a bright future if they can continue to bring the consumer voice to the heart of organisational decision-making.

Online communities have a bright future if they can continue to bring the consumer voice to the heart of organisational decision-making.

To achieve this, they need to retain two key ingredients of their success; an opted-in sample of well profiled and engaged people, and a retainer contract with the client which the agency supports with a dedicated account team. But communities also need to step up their game in terms of giving clients access to a much wider range of methodologies and tools in order to take advantage of the new waves of technology and social change. At Join the Dots | InSites Consulting, we're achieving this in three distinct ways: by asking better questions, listening to organic online conversations, and observing people's behaviour, often in combination on a single brief. Here are some examples:

Ask. Asking questions is the bread and butter of our industry, but we need to change how we ask questions of the digital generation, by integrating contemporary research techniques that mimic how people interact in a non-research world. Whilst long-form question types like diaries and discussions play an important role in insight generation, new tools like chatbots deliver a fun, fast and familiar interface, with additional AI features allowing real-time, intelligent prompts and response. We ask people to swipe, tweet and communicate in emoji, affording higher levels of participation and insight than ever before. These new asking techniques turn the mundane into the magical…

Case: Broadband provider Plusnet asked us to understand people's experience and views of Internet routers. Our approach combined a survey, quick polls and an online discussion using Scout, our Instagram-like tool which allows photo, video and web content uploads. Being a user-friendly, familiar and engaging tool, the Plusnatter community used Scout to deliver a rich multimedia feed

We need to change how we ask questions of the digital generation, by integrating contemporary research techniques

*Andy Buckley,
Head of Client Solutions
Join the Dots | InSites
Consulting*

*Andy Buckley has over 25 years' experience working in market research agencies, including ORC and Harris Interactive. With over 10 years' experience in online communities, he built multiple iterations of a community platform and a suite of mobile-first research tools for Join the Dots. Now Head of Client Solutions at Join the Dots | InSites Consulting, Andy develops new innovations and research solutions for the next generation of online communities.
A seasoned presenter to large audiences and conferences, Andy is also a published author in the ESOMAR Market Research Handbook, 5th Edition.*

Maru Rebrands LatAm Company   *March 18 2019*
Tech-enabled MR company Maru Group is renaming its Latin American business, previously Maru/Moto, to Maru/Matchbox, in line with its North American companies.

– Apr 2019

Acquisition for SAPinsider Owner Wellesley   *April 1 2019*
In Massachusetts, enterprise software market intelligence firm Wellesley Information Services (WIS) has acquired the Service Council, a community and information platform, boosting its Insider communities offering.

of router locations in their homes; from the uber-organised to the downright dangerous. We know that asking traditional questions is vital in research, but we also know that a picture paints a thousand words. Using a non-traditional asking method like Scout on this project gave Plusnet a window into customers' homes like never before.

Listen. The tools and outputs of digital listening have now come of age. Our own social intelligence approach combines organic social data with primary research and cultural context. This enables us to capture organic conversations at scale, explore further and validate using primary, and understand the bigger picture using our cultural contextual techniques. Qual at quant scale is the new mantra. When traditional 'asking' techniques alone don't suffice, adding social data into the mix helps us to understand people better than they understand themselves…

Case: A global confectionery manufacturer wanted to understand declining sales for one of its lines in Australia. We know that people can find it difficult to articulate why they buy or don't buy a specific brand, so as well as using their consumer insight community, we designed a listening approach to tap into online conversations about the brand, competitors and wider chocolate category. We reviewed Google search trends and qualitatively analysed posts on Twitter, Instagram and online forums/blogs to understand what people thought of the brand and competitors, what broader trends were impacting on chocolate purchase (e.g. sustainability and healthy eating), as well as reviewing how well the brand and competitors were engaging people on social media channels. This digital listening approach provided clear recommendations around marketing, digital communications and product development.

The tools and outputs of digital listening have now come of age.

Now more than ever before we have both the ability and the need to observe human behaviour to help answer those more immersive, strategic briefs

Observe. Now more than ever before we have both the ability and the need to observe human behaviour to help answer those more immersive, strategic briefs. Video-based research captures insights that asking questions alone cannot. It also provides

Online communities are the ideal research vehicle to embrace the new methods, thinking and technology that's being invested into the research industry. They provide clients with flexible, immediate access to an interested and interesting network of consumers who are eager to share their opinion.

clients with impactful, undeniable evidence of authentic consumer behaviour and enables them to activate the insights.

Case: Alcoholic beverages company Diageo wanted to understand the changing commercial and cultural landscape across key markets in Africa. Tapping into the technology already available, we observed the behaviour of people under 35 in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia and Cameroon, using a mobile

community called The Umoja Club. Within this private space, we observed commercial and cultural change in these cities through multimedia capture, including photo, video and online content. The Umoja Club was a huge success for the Diageo team in Africa, as it overcame previous challenges faced in conducting slow and poor quality research in a rapidly changing market.

Online communities are the ideal research vehicle to embrace the new methods, thinking and technology that's being invested into the research industry. They provide clients with flexible, immediate access to an interested and interesting network of consumers who are eager to share their opinion; so if the insights from a social intelligence piece require a quick, simple but robust validation a community can deliver that. Equally, if the next brief requires a more immersive approach, we can leverage the close relationships we've built with people on the community to let us look through the window into their lives, feelings and behaviour.

With clients under more pressure than ever before to deliver faster, high quality insights within increasingly tight budgets and resources, communities are ideally placed to deliver this 'holy trinity of research'. And by embracing a wider variety of methods, communities can drive even greater value in helping clients to understand people. ■

By embracing a wider variety of methods, communities can drive even greater value in helping clients to understand people.

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LEAN QUALITATIVE COMMUNITIES:

High Performance Tools and the Team Dynamics that Drive Them

By Julia Eisenberg & Isaac Rogers

DRNO Timeline

M3 Buys Healthcare Professional Network DailyRounds *April 26 2019*
Japan-based healthcare professional web portal M3 has acquired a majority stake in Neuroglia Health, which owns DailyRounds, a community-based platform for doctors and medical students in India. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

College Pulse Gets Funds for Student Platform *April 25 2019*
In the US, College Pulse has raised $1.5m in a seed round of funding, as it launches a real-time analytics platform to track and predict the opinions, interests and buying behaviour of US college students.

April - M

Across the industry, we're

witnessing a huge uptick in the usage of smaller, more tactical insights communities to help brands move faster when developing new products, launching marketing campaigns, or building brand platforms. Smaller, more agile qualitative communities typically last 3-12 months and include just a few dozen or hundred consumers. This approach stands in contrast to the larger and more quant-focused communities that many brands are familiar with, the kind that typically last for years and include thousands of panelists. At 20|20, we refer to these smaller, iteratively built qualitative versions as "lean communities."

There are two tailwinds driving this growth. First, qualitative community providers have now evolved to the point where they can deploy a new project in just a few days for a fraction of the cost of a traditional, large community. AI and machine learning have taken some of the tedious tasks required when running a community and automated everything from respondent engagement to analysis.

Second, the industry disruption many brands face in their marketplaces, with new entrants and rapidly shifting customer expectations, means their research must move faster and involve more members of the product or brand teams in research "sprints" that pulse in and out of their communities every few days or weeks.

Technology and services have risen to meet

Technology and services have risen to meet these new demands and work with the tailwinds.

these new demands and work with the tailwinds. The brands that realize the power of these qualitatively-focused, build-as-you-go "lean communities" can move faster and make business decisions more iteratively.

And yet, we still talk to a lot of clients who express angst around the idea of running a lean community, even when they know it's the right decision for their insight team. More often than not, they fear a few of the "unknowns" about how one of these agile insight communities will work inside their teams.

After seeing successful iterative communities, as well as engagements that struggled to gain traction, we believe there is a single common thread that has nothing to do with the technology platform, the size of the community, or how big or small the learning plan becomes.

We still talk to a lot of clients who express angst around the idea of running a lean community

80% Preparation, 20% Perspiration: Plan more for the internal dynamics, less for the research.

Corporate researchers are masters at running traditional research projects; they've honed their skills and can launch a project large or small, internally or with a supplier, almost from muscle memory alone. Corporate researchers are great at anticipating how typical projects will work, how long they will take, and how much they will cost.

But, as it turns out, most of that operational know-how isn't as important when running
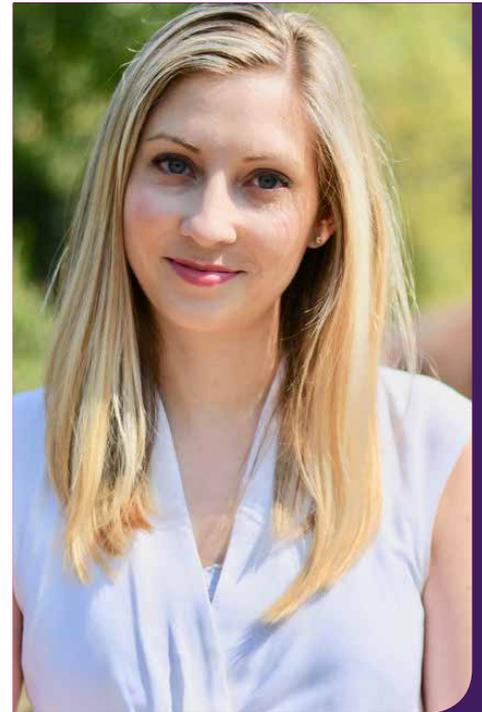
Julia Eisenberg
Vice President, Insights
20|20 Research

Julia Eisenberg serves as Vice President of Insights for 20|20, managing a scary smart group of strategic researchers. She is happiest when helping her team and clients use insights to drive growth. Julia has been working and learning in the research industry for 15 years – on the client side for Gap and Crocs and on the supplier side which led her to 20|20.

an agile community. It's more about Team Management, less about Project Management.

Most qualitative lean communities that fall short of expectations do so because the client team fails to adequately plan for the feedback loops and collaboration required to keep the community going on time and on target. An analogy we've heard a client use is that running a lean community is kind of like a Formula 1

Keeping to that cadence, and having a strict plan with the ENTIRE team involved in each sprint, is absolutely critical. We've seen plenty of cases where the respondents come in for "week 6," but the creative group got a few days behind and won't have the new ads ready. Or the brand manager is still looking at this week's discussion guide question, and the activity launches tomorrow. Having to pause the respondent experience or delay an activity

An analogy we've heard a client use is that running a lean community is kind of like a Formula 1 or NASCAR race

or NASCAR race. The respondents in the community are like the race car; they're going to go around the track a certain number of times, perhaps another cycle of research every week. Each time the community members complete an activity, the insights team needs to quickly get in the pit lane and adjust for the next few laps of learning. If the pit crew (the insights team, brand managers, creative team, etc) aren't all completely ready and know what adjustments they want to make, the race car will falter. If the pit crew is larger, the amount of coordination required is even more important.

Let's take a typical project for a lean community and show how critical it is to plan how the team will use and engage the audience.

A typical lean community is 6-12 months long and contains between 50 and 250 respondents. If the community is meant to support new product development, creative message testing, or a website redesign, we frequently see each iteration spaced out 2-4 weeks. The expectation is set up front with the respondents; this is the cadence, this is what is expected, this is what you're committing to. They opt into this "race" and know what it takes to fully participate.

Here, though, is where the race is won or lost.

Here, though, is where the race is won or lost.

massively harms enthusiasm for the community, and that's when we start to see significant attrition problems.

Once the "pit stops" are interrupted and engagement decreases, it can be hard to get the community back on track.

So how does a smart research team combat this? It takes a focused insights team to sit down and be just as diligent about planning the requirements for the "pit crew" as they are for setting up any important aspect of the project. A team calendar and expectations document, with drop-dead dates, clear boundaries about what is "too much" for any given research sprint, and a clear chain of command for who can delay a sprint (or penalize a team for missing an objective), can help ensure everyone knows how important it is to collaborate and contribute on time and on target.

Smaller, more agile qualitative communities are gaining momentum across our industry. And for good reason - they're a fresh, accessible way to learn from the right consumers in cyclical bursts. With community platforms that are smarter and more user-friendly than ever, research teams have both the structure and the space to plan strategically. It can feel counterintuitive to spend careful time planning a lean community upfront, but establishing this baseline is critical to success. Done right once, this setup and planning sets a team dynamic up to stay ahead of the forces of disruption and to not only win, but thrive, when it comes to gathering the consumer insights brands needs most. ∎

Isaac Rogers
CEO
20|20 Research

Isaac Rogers is CEO at 20|20, a global provider of online qualitative technology, respondent recruitment, and project support services. Prior to this role, Isaac served as 20|20's Chief Innovation Officer and was responsible for product strategy and development. During his tenure, Isaac has been instrumental in the launch of multiple solutions for online research and filed three patents with USPTO. Before joining 20|20, Isaac's career included roles in business intelligence consulting, e-commerce, and government technology contracting.

Done right once, this setup and planning sets a team dynamic up to stay ahead of the forces of disruption

20|20 Lean Communities

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PODCAST
in conversation:
DAVID GARCIA PAWLEY

Listen to the whole podcast at
https://happymr.com/david-garcia-pawley

Global Citizen

DGP: I'm half English, half Spanish - brought up in Spain, my mother is English, my father is Spanish, and I'm married to a Russian lady. So I have a very international background, and did lots of travel when I was growing up - I was at schools around the world. At home we speak mainly Spanish, but now I've moved over to the UK for my current Samsung role and have a 3-month old baby so I speak to him in Spanish, my wife in Russian, [and he hears English in nursery].

Work-life balance is very important to me. I do take my career very seriously but having a 3-month old baby puts things into perspective. One of my best decisions has been to spend my life travelling, I've been to over 100 countries throughout my life and that helps you to understand people better. It doesn't matter where you're based now, you need to be balanced and able to listen to people's points of view and communicate.

Agile / 'from one extreme to the other'

JB: you've seen the evolution that's happened as we've migrated from CATI and intercept paper-based surveys to a digital context, and the last few years 'agile' research. Applying it to consumer insights, it's become almost trendy or buzzwordy. What does agile research mean to you.. what do you see as the key differences?

DGP: I remember in the 1980s having to go to do ftf interviews at people's homes, on paper, and a whole methodology behind that... and now you can get the results within a working week and it's still not fast enough - everything is real time in industry. MR is at the service of the organisation - marketing is evolving, so we do as an industry need to

DAVID GARCIA PAWLEY
Director of European
Countries CMI, Samsung

evolve in line with that and deliver insights in a more timely fashion. But there are pros and cons of that: speed is becoming paramount together with cost-effectiveness, and sometimes that can be at the expense of… quality or reliability… I think that for years in MR we were so conscious about the sampling, the confidence level, having [representative] data: I have the feeling that over the years we have become a lot more lenient on this. The 80/20 rule seems to be predominant. I am quite happy to sacrifice some quality in order to be a lot faster, but it's a bit too relaxed - top managers are aware of that and so are we, but it seems to be the way forward [and is hard to push against].

JB: back in the day you would spend a ton of effort coming up with your sampling methodology, and the in-field element of the analysis was a big part of the whole.. That amount of thoughtfulness generated a lot of insights just during the fielding stage of projects.

DGP: Yes - there are some great things going on right now... but it's good to sit back and weigh some of these decisions that we are making. Getting the right balance on something is important - there are some projects where you can experiment and come up with some basic, fast areas of interest and there are others which require and should have sufficient time and resources dedicated for them.

Maru/Blue Rolls Out Qual Community in UK *May 31 2019*
Respondent access specialist Maru/Blue has expanded its Qualitative Community to the UK, where it will provide access to what it describes as 'articulate' respondents.

Insites Consulting Buys Join the Dots *July 2 2019*
Global consumer agency InSites Consulting has acquired UK-based insight community specialist Join the Dots, for an undisclosed sum.

Working with Communities and with Verve

DGP: Samsung invests a lot of money worldwide in research: we are very consumer-oriented in terms of product development, and communications. Verve are excellent partners and a very important thing here is the capabilities, both on the client and the agency side. In this context of evolution, newcomers into the industry may be missing some of the scientific approach to research, but we also need to adapt to the new technologies being developed, so it works from both sides. In the case of Verve, I'm happy with the level of expertise they have with research, but they also balance that with being very speedy and efficient: effective in terms of our demands. At Samsung, speed is of paramount importance and we are not the easiest partner to work for - we're very demanding, and [Verve] have adapted themselves well to our needs, which is something I value very much. With community panels, they've given us this possibility of 'always on', so we can react very quickly to some of the things our competitors are doing - if I launch a study on Monday I have some basic results on what is happening in the marketplace by the end of the week, which is something which few companies are able to deliver, and I think Verve with the community panel are able to do so. One of the big advantages is that we can set these panels across countries, and we can get comparable international results, in a very fast and efficient manner. We use the community panel a lot, but we also do a lot of add-on research - and we need to understand well when to move from one to the other. [On engagement:] Offering relevant projects is important, and I rely on our partner to make sure they are offering the right incentives - they have the experience because they are working on panels for other clients too.

The wrong fruit

JB: let's say you're sitting having a chat with a good friend from Apple or something, and they were considering starting their own community panel. What are the three things you would tell them, or considerations they should be thinking about as they make that decision?
DGP: you know considering that Apple is my main competitor I don't think I'd be sitting with them...
JB: [laughs] I apologise for the bad example! Not Apple...

DGP: Firstly, as with every project, you need to ask why are you setting up a community panel - as with all pieces of research you need to be very clear as to why, and that should help you decide who you're going to have on the panel - based on the insight you need for your business, what is the 'raw material' going to look like. Secondly you have to think in terms of engagement, what are you going to offer - money, fine; are you going to share the results with them or are they going to be confidential - people like to give their opinion but are they going to want to continue to be there - you need to be looking at the medium to long term - where do you see this panel in 3-5 years' time? - it's not going to be something you just set up and close down. Related to that, what kind of use am I going to get out of it on a project basis, and what on an ongoing basis? Thirdly, panels have quality checks as well: what kind of governance are you going to have in the ways things work, and how you deliver the insights to an organisation.

Corroboration... and Social Media

JB:. One thing I've been hearing from my brand [ie client side] guests is the need to validate a point of view based on outside data. Microsoft is a great example: you can't just go in and present primary research [in isolation], you've got to have that backed up by auxiliary sources - 3rd party or behavioural or whatever.
DGP: Yeah I think actually we talk about qual and quant research [complementing each other], and I think there have always been discussions within brands - you need qual and quant - the repetition of the point kinds of validates the idea. When you do a number of groups and the same overarching idea is present, you know that *something* is there. Twitter and Facebook [need corroboration too] - they are like huge focus groups, but I find it a bit harder to get metrics out of some of these tools - for example to measure sentiment in different European countries. Everyone has their own language and the value of humour and sarcasm plays a different role in different countries - it's difficult to measure that and quantify that so I do think we need to consider and be aware how we're using those tools.
I like to look whenever we're doing a launch or a follow-up, I do love to read all the tweets - in 20 minutes, that's going to give me the whole

David Garcia Pawley has worked for 23 years in Market Research both on the Client side (P&G, LG & Samsung) & Agency side (Qualitative Start-up & GfK) and at a local and international level, and as Marketing Services Director including Corporate Marketing and Brand development, media and communication, both on and off-line. Having travelled to 108 countries to date, he enjoys working and dealing with agencies and external partners Internationally for integration of knowledge into the business in this uncertain, and motivating, Global environment.

idea of what is going on, I don't need to know whether the sentiment is positive or negative to 17 or 37%, I will get the overall idea based on what I am reading from consumers. But then I need to think about the reliability of the data and the sources we're using.
JB: social media still hasn't been adopted at scale by researchers - it definitely has some purchase, but I don't think it has achieved the original idea.

Get out more!

DGP: from a brand's point of view, the biggest change we need is we need to get out a lot more! What we get from research should never be a substitute for common sense, and I find in many organisations that we're all stuck inside offices and we don't go to the point of sale enough. We need to speak to consumers informally, we need to get out. I'm not talking about the kind of thing research institutes could do with professional moderators: I've given training / teaching to marketing departments, on how to moderate - how to ask the questions and how to listen to consumers. It's useful for clients to actually sit around the table, or to do shopalongs. Ethnographic research, which has been there for ages, I think we need to do a lot more of that - not so much inventing new things but going in some cases back to basics to learn about those things.

Motto

DGP: I'd come back to work-life balance, my travelling, and my three-month old. 'A balanced person can go far'.

Interviewed by Jamin Brazil of Happy Market Research

y 2019

VILLAGE VOICE:

How ITV Uses Audience Feedback to Support Business Growth

By Hannah Downs

At the end of 2016 ResearchBods built and launched an online community for UK broadcasting group ITV, with the aim of helping them get closer to their viewers and put audience feedback at the heart of everything they do. ITV Village is a fully branded online community experience, designed to give members a voice by sharing their opinions with the knowledge that their input will help to shape the future of ITV.

Welcome to The ITV Village

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01:19

Home

The ability to combine data and technology with robust insight using a proprietary software platform, was key in choosing ResearchBods as a partner to help deliver this.

The online community has over 6,000 members and continues to grow with ongoing recruitment through the ITV Hub video on demand service. With around 330 research projects completed through ITV Village to date, that's over 90,000 individual answers from members since launch. The introduction of an online community platform has allowed ITV to significantly increase the volume and speed of turnaround for research projects and enhanced their ability to run multiple projects at the same time with greater ease.

The online community has over 6,000 members and continues to grow

The opportunities to engage with members are widespread across ITV, with multiple departments including commissioning, planning, commercial and strategy having input and exposure into research projects and results. As a broadcaster they are committed to delivering content that resonates with viewers and helps to grow their audience, whilst creating revenue streams through advertising and paid content.

DRNO Timeline

July 2

Maru/Matchbox Hires C Space Man Jonathan Stinnett *July 11 2019*
In Canada, communities specialist Maru/Matchbox has appointed customer insights strategist Jonathan Stinnett as President, Consumer Technology, Media & Entertainment.

Neil Mortensen, Director of Audiences at ITV comments: "The ITV Village is an extremely valuable research tool for getting closer to our audience. It helps us to understand our viewers' thoughts, feelings and behaviours, not only around television, but also brands, lifestyle and many other categories. The speed of turnaround has been hugely beneficial from a practical point of view, but also in getting buy-in from the wider business, involving other departments more easily in research projects, and ultimately enabling quicker business decisions."

As with all ResearchBods communities, ITV Village is hosted on our proprietary software platform ex-plor, maintained and developed by our in-house team. This means we can work closely with clients to develop enhancements and bespoke features to make sure everyone involved gets the best experience possible. Technology and the needs of customers are constantly evolving, therefore this agile approach can help clients like ITV stay ahead of the curve.

ITV use a wide range of quant and qual research methodologies in the online community to understand day-to-day and forward thinking topics. A recent project looked at when and how to broadcast programmes to maximise viewership, whether that's releasing episodes weekly, airing on consecutive nights, or releasing a whole series at once for those who like to 'binge watch'.

Our insight team have watched **programme pilots** live with respondents to capture in-the-moment reactions to see what makes them laugh, cry or switch off. We encourage video feedback from members across many of the methodologies as this captures verbatim responses and really helps to bring a human touch to reports and standalone outputs for ITV.

We use **single question polls** as a fast and an effective way to get results and keep members engaged. These are great for gaining feedback on current programmes and asking for input around storyline development, or simply asking how members are feeling today in light of any news headlines.

Longer surveys can be scripted for more detailed research projects and can include different stimulus like images and videos, and use multiple tools such as open question types, highlighters and dial tests to help test programme titles, synopses and promos.

Real-time chat gives a fast and smooth user experience, and functionality allows respondents to view concepts with ease

Forum discussions are used to engage groups of 10 or more members on a set topic and are left open for around a week. Members can post comments and upload photos, which helps to give a real sense of how the audience behaves day-to-day. These forums can use privacy settings to eliminate possible bias.

Focus groups explore topics in depth with up to 10 members in a 90 minute session. Real-time chat gives a fast and smooth user experience, and functionality allows respondents to view concepts with ease and annotate with their feedback. In a recent project we looked at marketing hooks for upcoming programmes, helping us to understand what piques a viewer's interest in getting them to tune in when a new programme comes out.

Diary studies use structured or unstructured diaries for members to complete over a set period, usually a week. These help to understand

Hannah Downs is Head of Insight at ResearchBods, having built up almost 20 years' experience in marketing and market research roles. She leads a team of 12 insight professionals to deliver a mix of quant and qual research projects for clients across a wide range of sectors including retail, media, finance, telecoms, hospitality and food & drink. Together they harness the power of online communities to deliver insight that affects positive change and drives business growth for clients.

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MaruMatchbox Hires Pharma and Medicines Leader *July 16 2019*
MaruMatchbox has appointed former Kantar / MaPs leader Rich Durante as Managing Director of Pharmaceuticals and Medicines, based in Boston.

2019

Toluna to Offer Influencers Bitcoin Rewards *July 11 2019*
Online community and survey tech provider Toluna has partnered with digital rewards company NeoCurrency to enable its 'influencers' to receive the latter's bitcoin gift cards in exchange for sharing their opinion on brands, products and services through the Toluna Community.

the reach of advertising or viewing behaviours on particular days, channels or genres.

Map studies involve members being recruited to take part in projects that capture their location, whether they're at a bar, in the bookstore or at the gym. This location data is then displayed on a map which can be categorised to understand their interests and lifestyle habits, widening our view of members outside of their television preferences.

We work with ITV on both a full service and also self-serve basis. Our dedicated inhouse community manager keeps members engaged on an ongoing basis, alongside our insight and project teams who manage, script, deliver and report on projects of various size and duration. The self-serve option allows the ITV team to create quick polls, simple questionnaires and discussion rooms, monitoring and moderating activity and then reporting and analysing results themselves. This creates a great balance, whereby they're able to work on extremely fast turnaround for many smaller projects but also

have the option of more complex and detailed projects from ResearchBods where required.

By recruiting members via the ITV Hub we can integrate data around what they've watched and what ads they've seen within the video on demand service. This allows us to sample members based on their actual viewing behaviour, not claimed. We can send them highly targeted surveys that match their viewing habits and preferences. ITV continue to enhance their VOD service as a revenue stream and have run alpha testing through the online community to help shape their future offering.

In addition to ITV Village members, there are some research projects that require a more diverse group of respondents to gain a wider view. In these instances, ITV can tap into our audience access panel to sample niche groups, non-viewers or nationally representative demographics. This hybrid approach gives flexibility and allows the research team at ITV to tackle any brief that the wider business may be interested in exploring.

Media is such a fast-paced sector, it's fantastic to work with ITV who believe in using data and technology to support customer driven growth.

We've got lots of other exciting projects in the pipeline for ITV, using both passive and claimed data to understand more about audience behaviour. Media is such a fast-paced sector, it's fantastic to work with ITV who believe in using data and technology to support customer driven growth. ∎

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PODCAST
in conversation: PAUL LAWSON,

Listen to the whole podcast at
https://happymr.com/paul-lawson

Empathise... but get on with it

My mum had a bunch of different jobs, in the public sector - in HM Revenue and Customs... and in the NHS in an eye department of a hospital. Often that meant she was interacting with stressed and vulnerable people. She actually got me a job in a hospital she worked in one summer, and what I noticed was how well she was able to empathise with people in tricky situations but also move them through the process, which obviously needs to be done in a busy hospital - how she managed to balance those two things.

...she was able to empathise with people in tricky situations but also move them through the process

Empathy is the big one with me - in my work I have a lot of conversations with people I've never met before, and I need to understand their point of view, so that at a business level I'm more likely to be able to have a proper conversation about how we can help. One of the key ideas of our business is of actually engaging people in the process - empathising with them is actually really important, but also you can't spend your whole time on that because the purpose is to get insight so you have to move it along.

My dad was a carpenter by trade, and that passed me by completely [in terms of aptitude]: I think one of the things my Dad gets frustrated

PAUL LAWSON,
Executive Director, Verve

with when I do DIY with him is my lack of attention to detail! Anyway he had a job as a carpenter in the Local Authority in Coventry where I was born - then he moved up through different roles to Contracts Manager, dealing with people working on their housing stock. We had a lot of conversations about work, but one thing that always struck me is how much of the time that he was there he really, really enjoyed it - a lot of his friendship groups went beyond the actual people he worked with to their extended family. You spend a lot of time at work and you may as well enjoy it - I think you can kind of make it your choice to enjoy yourself at work.

Toluna and Harris Parent ITWP Strengthens Senior Team *July 19 2019*
ITWP, the parent company of Toluna, Harris Interactive Europe and KuRunData, has hired Michele Morelli as SVP of Global Marketing Strategy; promoted Tsahi Ben-Yosef to SVP of Product Innovation; and promoted Mathilde Lelievre to EVP of Global Operations.

'Slow down to speed up'

JB: What I always remember from carpentry is: 'measure twice, cut once'. In other words, attention to detail up front will save you time later - which is very relevant to market research being used for decision-making...

PL: I think it's relevant to new forms of MR actually. We talk a lot about agile insight - but agile doesn't just mean fast. You need to 'Slow down to speed up' - agile means you spend a lot of time at the beginning working out what the whole process is, and that means when you get to it and repeat it, you can do it better and better and better because you've put all of the hard yards in up-front.

The marketplace now

JB: what are you seeing in the marketplace right now which is driving brands to want to invest in communities, and what are the barriers to them?

PL: There are differences depending on whether you're thinking about shorter term or longer term communities, 'though they have some things in common as well. Generally...
1. Clients are looking for the ability to do 'great quality in-depth work in a more scalable way' - and ultimately less cost - that's a good thing as long as we make sure there isn't a compromise on what we're doing. Organisations whose businesses go across geographies and want to deliver international research in a centralised way really like it. Organisations who have a lot of data, a motivation for building a community panel is that it allows you to integrate lots of data in an organised way and make it more than the sum of its parts - then every time people give you feedback and respond to an activity, all of that gets added into the database as well.
2. You can't avoid this one: they do enable you to respond more quickly. We're very keen not to just make agile and fast the same thing because they absolutely aren't. Agile is the ability to respond in an iterative way, the ability to be nimble and flexible, get really good info via a process that's lean. Fast is just fast. But also we can deliver results in hours. That's definitely a motivation for clients.
3. They can also create a more iterative and collaborative style - let's get a larger group of stakeholders, let's agree on some outcomes that we require, let's run some activities, then let's pause, then let's understand what we've heard,

understand whether that changes the kind of feedback we want to get next, then let's change it and adapt it a little bit. That sort of working style is more in line with the transformations that a lot of businesses are going through these days.
4. The ability to service multiple objectives under one roof - do quant, do qual, link the two things together, the ability to be able to service innovation, product development, brand communities, CX, journey mapping, UX, whatever it is - all in one place - is a huge motivator.

How can the industry do a better job of ensuring insights actually get used?

PL: It's a perennial question at every conference - get MR more of a seat at the table. One of the things you hear is that MR needs people who are consultants, not just deliverers of data, and I completely agree with that, BUT I do believe there are plenty of people in MR who can act as consultants - I think the challenge is how do you get there - that's all about having the platform, and I think it all comes down to partnership. The only way that you're going to get the platform

problems - the ones that they put in the briefs but also the ones that they don't, which are often really, really important… but also really critical is that we talk to their customers all the time. And when you've got that combination - you really understand their business but you also get to a point where you are the person who understands their customer or consumer, then that's a real partnership, and at that point you start to get that seat at the table and you start to get listened to.

The other big thing that as an industry we can do, is how we communicate the insights that we generate - there's a lot of really good research that gets done and insight that gets created that doesn't have the impact it should because of the way it's communicated. It comes back to planning at the beginning... We do a lot of work up-front on understanding the stakeholders, so when we do a research project and we have this great content and information, we're able to take all that stuff and build more emotionally engaging outputs. If we can emotionally engage stakeholders, if we can get them to understand that this isn't us as a research organisation standing there telling them to do something, this is us as your partner giving you the viewpoint of your customer, and showing you in an emotional way why it has the impact it does, I think we are more likely to influence the decisions they make.

> We sit in our clients' offices, we hear them talk, we kind of get to know their problems... but also really critical is that we talk to their customers all the time. And when you've got that combination... and at that point you start to get that seat at the table and you start to get listened to.

and going to be able to act as a consultant is if you are trusted by clients and by their stakeholders so that when you talk to people they listen. That leads directly to influencing what they do.

The community panel relationship can give us that platform. The reality of running community panels for us is that we sit in our clients' offices, we hear them talk, we kind of get to know their

What is your motto?

PL: if you're going to do something, commit to it fully, and show people that you really care about it.

Interviewed by Jamin Brazil of Happy Market Research

ARE COMMUNITIES BOOM-PROOF?

By Nick Thomas

The growth of communities continues to be steady, rather than explosive. Here MrWeb's Nick Thomas analyses why, with the help of published and unpublished comment from sponsors and contributors.

Leger Metrics Co-founder Named Group CTO *August 13 2019*
Canadian polling, MR and strategy provider Leger has named Steve Perrone, co-founder of its Leger Metrics division, as its Chief Technology Officer. He will now oversee tech development for the group's three digital divisions: Leger Opinion, Leger Metrics and Leger Community.

Online Community Specialist Influitive Names New CEO *August 9 2019*
Toronto and San Francisco-based online community and customer advocacy software developer Influitive has appointed Dan McCall as Chief Executive Officer, while founder Mark Organ moves to the role of Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors.
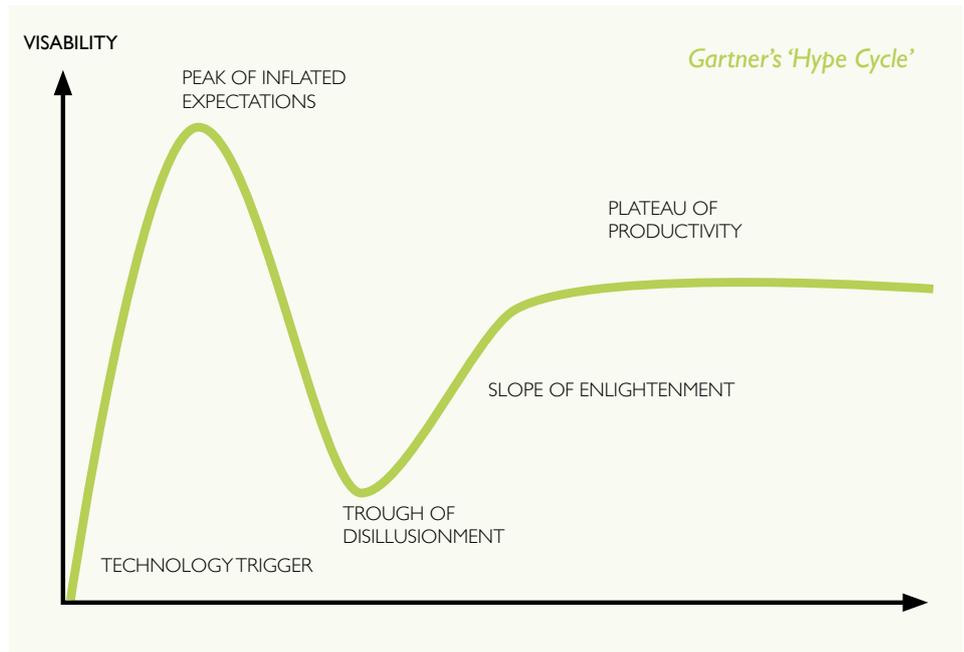
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Is it possible to have boom without bust? Some think not. If anything grows too fast - a technology, a company, an economy, a teenager - the received wisdom is that there are bound to be problems. Slowly and surely may not always win the race, but medium pace and steady is many people's choice over fast and furious.

Compared to some of the other techniques and technologies transforming or shaping to transform the insights business, communities have grown steadily. They've been low on hype, and relatively good thus far on delivery, compared to say big data or neuroscience: but is it their destiny always to advance at a sensible speed, and if so should we worry?

Compared to some of the other techniques and technologies transforming or shaping to transform the insights business, communities have grown steadily.

Clients

In part, it's because things advance at the speed of humans, not of technology - habits have to change and most research users are not in the 'caution to the wind' category, plus new tech doesn't replicate everything they get from traditional methods. 'I'd say communities are a 'significant' threat to older methods' says Further's Stephen Cribbett. 'In the world of qualitative research, we're seeing them substituting for focus groups, ethnographies

VISABILITY

Gartner's 'Hype Cycle'

PEAK OF INFLATED EXPECTATIONS

PLATEAU OF PRODUCTIVITY

SLOPE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

TROUGH OF DISILLUSIONMENT

TECHNOLOGY TRIGGER

and more traditional approaches to U&A studies... but the truth is they haven't replaced focus groups which, due to clients' appetite to sit behind the screen, are still alive and kicking ten plus years later'. (see https://info.go-further.co/furthermore/online-communities-vs-online-focus-groups for Further's comparative assessment). 'I'm not sure that communities will ever completely replace ad hoc / traditional MR because not all clients will have the mindset or perhaps the need for an ongoing source of insight' says Join the Dots' Andy Buckley, although he believes with the right resources they can replace the whole lot.

Our contributors generally feel the sector to be on the Gartner 'plateau of productivity' (see Hype Cycle above) or certainly on the 'slope of enlightenment' leading to it, but there's a qualifier: the trend towards plugging more data sources into the community 'hub' makes the picture more complicated. Says Buckley: ' In some areas (e.g. AI and social intelligence, use of culture and trends etc.) we are taking clients back into the technology trigger and early adoption phase. Traditional communities are being disrupted by these emerging methods, so

we have embraced and integrated them (rather than replaced communities wholesale) for a best of both approach'. See Andy's article in section 4 re insight ecosystems.

'There are still a lot of researchers and clients who don't yet fully understand or activate the potential in online research communities, but whose work could be transformed by it' says Stephen Cribbett. 'There are those still fearful of the technology or unable to think differently in terms of how they approach research design and moderation. Ultimately, we propose it as a complementary method and tool, rather than a replacement per se'.

It's possible that other developments and trends will play into the hands of communities, pushing clients towards greater use even where they are strongly attached to old methods. As Verve's Andrew Cooper points out in his introduction, one of these is the shift towards real-time feedback: 'While there is great value in capturing impressions and recall, human memory is limited, making it difficult for respondents to give accurate or non-biased responses to some questions. The demand for, and shift towards,

in-the-moment research helps address this bias... We see a future where community panels link research and insight feedback directly with eCRM, enabling businesses to understand what is influencing behaviour, and using this understanding to trigger discrete interventions as part of a single ecosystem'.

Agencies

It's the job of providers, of course, to make their services indispensible to clients, and it's also true that supply side professionals are still getting to grips with how to plan to get the best out of communities. Taking 'in the moment' as an example, 'agile' insights require an evolution in the way provider firms work, including setting up a team and platform in advance to make it easy to respond quickly - compared by Isaac Rogers and Julia Eisenberg at 20|20 to a Formula 1 or NASCAR race. 'The respondents in the community are like the race car; they're going to go around the track a certain number of times, perhaps another cycle of research every week. Each time the community members complete an activity, the insights team needs to quickly get in the pit lane and adjust for the next few laps of learning. If the pit crew (the insights team, brand managers, creative team, etc) aren't all completely ready and know what adjustments they want to make, the race car will falter... It takes a focused insights team to sit down and be just as diligent about planning the requirements for the 'pit crew' as they are for setting up any important aspect of the project'.

JtD's Graeme Lawrence talks in similar vein: 'My concern is we continue to hear stories that once communities are set up, half the job is done. We feel quite the opposite, once they're set up, the job starts... we need to work with participants on their terms, consider their motivations and keep them engaged to provide the inputs that will have an impact commercially.' Communities firms like all other researchers face an ongoing challenge in keeping respondents - Isaac Rogers' 'diamonds' - as happy as possible.

Talent

It's not unusual to hear that a new area of technology or business is being held back by a

lack of skilled personnel, and in compiling this publication it's been apparent from several different directions that we have a challenge in finding or training up execs who can make the most of what communities could be doing. Convergence on a large scale is one aspect of this - as discussed in this supplement by Kristof De Wulf, tech companies are moving into consulting and consulting firms getting more savvy with tech, requiring staff to combine skills to an extent, and this doesn't always run smoothly. A number of MrWeb's recruitment specialists reported working for a company with its roots in tech, which brought in experienced researchers only to lose them again: 'we couldn't get a good understanding of what sort of people they wanted' - and believe me it's rare to hear a good recruiter admit that, which suggests that perhaps the client didn't really know either.

Within the insights skill set, however, there is also a growing new requirement for people who can pull in and blend findings from an ever-wider range of sources

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Within the insights skill set, however, there is also a growing new requirement for people who can pull in and blend findings from an ever-wider range of sources - the 'chefs, not farmers' that Eric Salama talked about way back at IIeX 2015 [link to http://www.mrweb.com/drno/news20461.htm]. In Andy Buckley's words: 'Researchers need to be more open to embracing other sources of data (social listening, passive data tracking, culture and trends, video/observation, client behavioural data) to inform and enhance the primary'.

Yet this is tricky. Says Buckley: 'It's not easy to find polymath candidates - we think it's going to be a slow process of growing our own, and/or recruiting specialist roles within the agency' - examples are culture and trends specialists, data specialists and experts in social listening. It may

even be impossible to achieve this by training alone: Isaac Rogers says finding people who can 'look for issues before they become issues' is 'the single greatest challenge we have', and states frankly 'I don't think we have the right talent'.

Certainly there is no sense of pessimism among these companies, Rogers himself very much included. Whether, like Kristof De Wulf, they believe communities will become '**the** mainstream method' of research, or are just confident of its holding a good space in the proverbial 'toolbox' like some others, there's an energy with which to tackle the challenges, and a sense of rewards waiting for the profession. For Verve's Paul Lawson, 'I do believe there are plenty of people in MR who can act as consultants, not just deliverers of data - I think the challenge is how do you get there, and that's all about having the platform... If you are trusted by clients and by their stakeholders so that when you talk to people they listen. That leads directly to influencing what they do'.

Communities themselves can provide this platform. In Andrew Cooper's words: 'All of these benefits - better integration of multiple data sources, a more agile and iterative approach to project work, more sophisticated communication and sharing of insights - are in the more evolved examples leading to an escalation in the status of the insight team'.

That's been something of a grail for at least the thirty years I've been involved with market research. If the development of online communities, at its steady pace, is helping to move us in that direction, let's not worry too much about when the boom is coming. ■
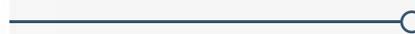
Nick Thomas

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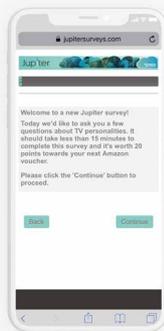
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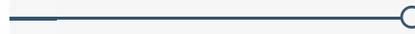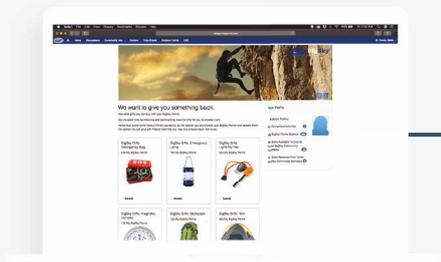
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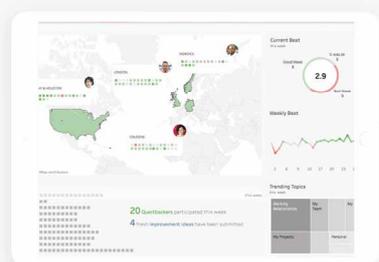
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CHALLENGE, VARIETY, FAST PACE...AND YES DEEP THINKING TOO

Verve's Talent Manager, Sarah Penny, on thrills, skills and misconceptions for those working with online communities.

Interview by Nick Thomas

NT: Was it a big decision to move away from a recruitment consultancy position and into a client company?

SP: It wasn't so much a decision really! It just happened - but I think in recruitment things happen for a reason. I saw that Verve were looking and my company was ticking along nicely so I said I was happy to help

On the research side we've still got the full diversity of roles.

out on interim basis. I went in for a chat thinking it was just for an interim position... and ended up being offered the job on a permanent basis. I had just moved to Wales and wasn't planning to get a job at Tower Bridge in the first few weeks! But fortunately they've been great in flexibility - I can work at home (on the Gower Peninsula) some weeks, and when I'm not I work three and a half days a week in London.

NT: How does working in this 'sector' of research compare... the people you're looking for now versus candidates for mainstream / traditional research roles?

Influitive Brings in Sales and Marketing Leaders *August 23 2019*
Online community and customer advocacy software provider Influitive Corporation has appointed Dan Cote as CMO and Rob Merklinger SVP of Sales.

C Space Launches 'Customer as a Service' Suite *Aug 29 2019*
In London, online community specialist C Space has launched a suite of solutions called 'Customer as a Service' (CaaS), which combines multiple sources of data, technology and commercial consultancy to understand the customer and place them at the heart of the organisation.

SP: to be honest it's not as different as might be assumed, because we recruit a wide range of people. I'm used from my consultancy days to recruiting a very wide variety, as we have that within the research industry: now I have that within one company - a lot more variety than I imagined. Obviously we have the people who keep the business ticking along - roles I'm not so used to recruiting like the design team, the office manager … but on the research side we've still got the full diversity of roles. Yes as a company we have a focus on communities, but we offer qual and quant full service research, and for example we've just finished doing our graduate recruitment...

NT: That's a regular intake?

SP: Yes, and it's been very successful in the past. It's a formal induction scheme - they will go through every part of the research process you can think of - from the basics to how to deliver on quite complex research projects, teaming up with the RMs, ADs and so on. The induction programme has been tried and tested well before I arrived and the people who came through it previously are now doing well as REs and SREs.

NT: Is there a big separation between people specialising in different aspects of research, or a lot of jacks of all trades?

SP: we do have research teams, design teams and so on… there are distinct roles within the business, but in terms of research No - there isn't a community team and a traditional team. If you are on the research side you will be involved in working on a great variety of projects with a number of clients and methodologies.

NT: I've heard it said there are people who work as specialist communities researchers who never get involved in the back end of projects, and therefore recruiters are not looking for

analysts or people with back end skills.

SP: I would say that's nonsense!

NT: I've heard it from more than one source...

SP: I speak mostly for Verve, and we may be different from how another community company might work. From our point of view it's a big misconception - you get to do both - yes there's a lot of very quick turnaround work, but that will feed into bigger, meatier projects. We help our clients understand what customers are getting from their experiences, what's missing, what can be improved, and projects are a range from short answers gathered rapidly to longer form, deeper engagements. But even with the former, the knowledge and experience we get from this helps us work out what's good for clients in the longer term. And it's the same people working on the longer-term bits and on the quick turnaround projects, so researchers are not missing out.

NT: How would you summarise the up-side of working for a communities specialist vs a more traditional agency?

SP: it depends on what sort of person you are and what you're looking for. if you're the kind of researcher that likes working on… how can I say this nicely… if you like naval-gazing projects,

> ## Yes there's a lot of very quick turnaround work, but that will feed into bigger, meatier projects.

if you like writing white papers, communities can be fast-paced and probably they're not for you. But is that a reflection on research as a whole? Because if clients have a question they often want the answer fairly quickly and the industry hasn't always worked in the right way

to deliver that - that's my personal view and not necessarily that of Verve. So yes, we might spend less time on process but we'll spend that time in analysis and reflection on what it means for our clients, so we're doing at least as much 'back-end'.

NT: Would you say you're generally looking for candidates with experience of working with communities - or at least panels of some sort - or are Verve prepared to bring good researchers in and train them up?

SP: Experience is not perhaps the word. A person needs to be adaptable and able to work in a very nimble way. Comfortable with the idea of things being changed along the way - the more agile you can work, the better, but having said that I wouldn't want candidates to be intimidated by the talk of a fast pace - not everyone wants to work in that environment and there is a variety here, as I've said.

NT: So it's more to do with personality than experience? With 'fit'?

SP: I think it's both. Often for the research teams it will be people used to working in a reasonably fast moving environment, but we do need people with traditional research skills. On the project management side we would be looking for people with a fast-paced mindset but with good solid project management and client management skills.

NT: [for the research teams] would you actually prefer someone with traditional research skills, then, to someone who's always worked in a panel or community company?

SP: I look at both - we look at a lot of people. The key thing is we engage with people, have a chat with them - it's very much an individual thing. Also, we need to find out what we can do for each other. There's no point in bringing someone into Verve if it's not a two-way thing.

Maru/Matchbox Names SVP, Client Activation *September 5 2019*
In Canada, communities specialist Maru/Matchbox has appointed former Kantar TNS exec Mona Makhijani as Senior Vice President, Client Activation, based in its Vancouver office.

NT: Now looking at the marketplace - what's it like trying to find candidates for these roles? Given that it's never been particularly easy, in my two decades involved with recruitment, to find candidates for research roles generally!

SP: as you say it's never been easy. The research industry as a whole has a lot of talent in it, a lot of different roles and different types of company. But demand for good talent is even higher than it has been - every year I say this and I've been in it for a long time! Finding the right candidate for the job is always hard and it's only going to get harder. Good people quite rightly are protected: when you offer something to a candidate because you think they're great, you *know* you're going to get counter-offers because great people with the right blend of talent and skills are in short supply.

NT: I agree totally, although I look at the fact that people don't stay any longer in the average job in research than in other industries, so they are moving around plenty, and that's not a contradiction but it does make it slightly odder that it's so much harder to find people in MR. It may be connected to a shortage of people coming into the profession?

SP: that's a factor. Of course I don't have much experience of recruiting outside the profession to compare this with, but I have recruited for say an Office Manager, and when I've advertised those roles I've been inundated - to the point where you put the ad up for a day and you get 300 people

SP: not at all, that's not what I mean. But I think communities are there, they're part of research, and I don't think the gap is as big as it was.

NT: ...so a typical shortlist might include some people with communities experience and some who haven't?

SP: yes... and that's true at all levels I think (from limited experience so far). Senior researchers are not going to be any more specialist than junior, at any rate.

NT: Another quote for you from a recruitment consultant I've spoken to in the last few weeks: 'People used to come to me and say "I want to stay in qual but I don't want to work in the evenings any more", and 'I used to try and find a nice way to say, "Good Luck with that then!" But maybe now there's a chance it might be possible, thanks to online methods'. Is that something you'd recognise? Controversial?

SP: It's true that as a company we spend less time travelling around, but we are here to talk to people, at whatever time and wherever they are, on a train or a boat. That can also apply to the moderators working with them - they don't have to be in a studio somewhere, you can be wherever, and still do the work. So in terms of place - having to be in a viewing studio - certainly there's less emphasis on them. In terms of time, no - I'd say it's contentious if they're saying you don't need to work evenings.

We do have research teams, design teams and so on but in terms of research No - there isn't a community team and a traditional team. If you are on the research side you will be involved in working on a great variety of projects

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[no it's not what you want]. But if I put a Research Manager job up there and I get 3 good candidates that's a good day. You can see why - every type of business has an Office Manager, a Finance Manager, an IT Manager, but where do you get a researcher?

NT: so bringing it back to your current role: is it a tougher job now that you're focused on communities?

SP: not at all - communities are very much part of research now. I would expect most candidates now to have communities or panels as part of their wider experience.

NT: ...so would it ring an alarm bell if they haven't?

NT: Is the communities sector growing as fast as we at MrWeb seem to think?

SP: I don't know if my 3 months has just been a bonkers 3 months, but it's certainly buzzing. It seems people are recognising that there are many and varied uses of communities. In my view they're not replacing one research approach any more than another one, they're just part of a wider remit, and from a client point of view they can be used for a whole range of challenges they may have.

NT: let's turn around a question from a couple of minutes ago: if I'm a candidate, is it hard to get into the communities area, being trendy?

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SP: [laughter] I never said it was trendy… I'm sitting here in my socks. But no, fundamentally, we're just looking for good solid research skills so it's not harder.

NT: but there might still be more competition

> I never said it was trendy… I'm sitting here in my socks. But no, fundamentally, we're just looking for good solid research skills

for the places, because lots of people want to work in a new and fast-growing area... want to work at Verve?

SP: yes but then again not everyone will want to work in this kind of environment. I don't think it's harder or easier. I have noticed a big change in the volume of applications: as a recruiter you don't always get the level of feedback you do as an in-company recruiter: I've found people more responsive, they like to get feedback from you and in return they communicate more. I don't want to make a sweeping generalisation, but because they know exactly what job they are applying for, with whom - whereas with a recruiter they don't know which company the job is with, and there's always a level of hesitation there when sending a CV.

NT: Looking at skills in the broadest sense, I want to quote you something from elsewhere in this publication. Isaac Rogers from 20|20 says the 'single greatest challenge' for researchers and insight firms is to respond to the client need for critical and proactive thinking - to look for issues before they become issues *[see page 9 under 'Differences in 5 years']*. It's not in researchers'

DNA and we either have to bring in more of that kind of talent, or take the talent we have and train them how to problem solve. Would you agree?

SP: One of the big factors in this is the type of relations you have with your clients. There are people in the industry who can do it, but you have to have the platform, to be trusted by clients to go into this. Our clients [at Verve] tend to give us the opportunity to develop real partnerships - so yeah we have to have people who can sit round the table with our clients and get involved in that.

NT: ...but is there generally more need to train people up for critical thinking?

SP: Everyone is different - for some people training will help, for others it will come naturally. I don't think you come into research without having a certain level of critical thinking - curiosity etc.. so there's a basic level of it there already, the rest just depends on what clients are demanding.

NT: You're evidently enjoying the new role anyway. What's been your biggest surprise moving over to an internal recruitment function?

SP: not being able to work in my pyjamas! No, the biggest surprise is actually the diversity within the company, the range of clients, of roles within the business. As a recruitment consultant

> ...But then again not everyone will want to work in this kind of environment. I don't think it's harder or easier.

Sarah Penny
Talent Manager
Verve

After a brief spell recruiting for media clients such as Carlton Television, Sarah Penny worked in recruitment consultancies finding market research staff for almost twenty years before joining Verve this year. This included two spells at RP Cushing, and then two start-up firms, Soho Search and Hasson Associates. For the last four years before joining Verve she ran her own consultancy, Penny Cross Recruitment.

you get told what the client wants you to know, it can be in-depth depending on the project but on the whole it's reasonably superficial, and this is my first in-house role and I'm seeing firsthand now exactly what these researchers do [laughs] - I always had an idea, believe me! - but I'm seeing it firsthand now and of course that's different.

NT: Do you wish you'd made the move before?

SP: Well, No in that I enjoyed my time as a recruitment consultant and don't regret any of it. But in terms of perspective and intellectual challenge… yeah I probably could have done with doing this sooner from that point of view.

See the next two pages for information about careers with our four sponsor companies - and the following pages for current Communities job vacancies from Verve and a dozen other employers. ■

Promotions and Hires for Maru/Blue *September 12 2019*
Maru/Blue has announced a dozen appointments, including the promotion of Tara Caughlin to Senior Director of Operations in New York; and in Canada Angela Tang to Senior Director on the Sample and Feasibilty team and Lauren McHoul to Sampling and Feasibility Manager.

COMMUNITIES-CHEST, OR CHANCE?

There are lots of options for those wishing to join this successful sector (see job listings on the following pages!) but how do you find the treasure and minimise the risk? Nick Thomas taps the experience of four of the sector's recruitment specialists to help you pick all the right cards and avoid the blues.

So you want to work with insight communities? In general terms it's a sound decision, because the area is fairly fast-growing but also well-established - not a 'boom and bust' or over-hyped technology - and yet the skillset has much in common with traditional research. Future-proofed, as far as anything can be these days, but also rooted in something that's been proven useful and resilient over many decades, and unlikely to be 'replaced by a robot' any time soon. 'Human insight' is here to stay, and very hard to do - perhaps impossible - with a computer.

Move on from that general declaration of intent, however, and there are a number of questions to ask and decisions to make. Within the sector there are many different types of company:

- some are mostly or entirely technology specialists, helping clients set up their own digital communities but then leaving them mostly to their own devices (or seeking help from third parties) in order to make the most of them

- others offer research and analytics skills and consultancy, either to run communities for clients, to use them to tackle specific business needs and challenges, or at the very least to help ensure they get the most from them

- this latter group, which can use proprietary technology or bring in someone else's, can be further split between insight specialists, and those with a broader remit - for example FeverBee (see article in section 2).

Even among the insight specialists, the approach varies very widely.

Note that even among the insight specialists, the approach varies very widely. As you'll see

from Sarah Penny's thoughts in the previous article, Verve employs many people from a traditional research background and promises deep thinking and analytical nous, as well as the ability to conduct agile and iterative projects taking advantage of all the speed and flexibility the latest tech can offer. You'll find some other companies much more focused on the speed and cost benefits, and not requiring hefty analysis from their research staff.

While the latter is absolutely fine with some clients, it may not be what you're looking for if you have a keen interest in long-term strategy

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The most important piece of advice I'd give, therefore, is **not** just to think of a company you're applying to as 'a communities specialist', but to 'probe fully' and find out as much as you can about the nature of the projects you'll be working on

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and complex analytics. Researchers who have **only** worked on digital methodologies can be viewed as less rounded, as opposed to those converting a base of traditional skills into a career in 'digital'. The most important piece of advice I'd give, therefore, is **not** just to think of a company you're applying to as 'a communities specialist', but to 'probe fully' and find out as much as you can about the nature of the projects you'll be working on and the input you'll have, when you go for interview. That said, here are some general thoughts after talking to four recruiters with experience in the area.

The Skillset

As above, many of the skills involved in working with communities are the same as for traditional research - the ability to think about business issues and define them in terms of the information needed; the knack of framing questions clearly and so as to engage

respondents; energy and discretion for dealing with individual respondents; skill in interpreting and weighing up evidence gathered, with business objectives and realities in mind. On the whole, however, there is more requirement for quick thinking, rapid changes of direction and

organisation, than in traditional research - top end project management skills are useful even when the role is not pure project management (and there are some of the latter in the communities field as well).

Technical skills are not as important as you might think - familiarity and comfort with modern communications certainly helps, but is not the core of the role for most community researchers. Sinead Hasson comments: 'In our experience they're not overly techy, and most products and platforms will be supported by a tech team'.

Sound qualitative skills are very likely to be key. Some communities are set up to deliver quant-style numbers and findings, and in the US - the home of 'qual on a quant scale' - you may well be blurring the lines a bit: however one of the big advantages of communities over other digital methods such as social media analysis is the depth of insight they offer, and the chance to dig deeper into attitudes and behaviour. If you don't have qual skills or like qual, choose your communities role very carefully.

Client handling and communication skills are likely to be important. 'Some communities roles can resemble [traditional] continuous research projects', says Bonnie McAlpine, 'with a long-running client, and mostly incremental changes to questionnaires. This means it's more like an account manager role, with very regular client contact, and feedback dripping through rather than one big tranche of back-end analysis to get your teeth into'. She adds: 'Comparing

to a tracker, both require the exec to stay smart, but the communities person will field more constant requests from the client, with changes made in real time and short projects sometimes added in'.

Specialist or Not?

One area on which all our recruiters are agreed is that you don't have to be a specialist or already have specific experience to break into the field. Almost all firms looking for someone to work on communities will at least consider people with no prior experience of them, and

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Almost all firms looking for someone to work on communities will at least consider people with no prior experience of them, and most will not see it as a particular disadvantage.

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most will not see it as a particular disadvantage. Core research skills are much more important. 'Generally we find those with traditional research training can move fairly easily into online when they want' says Andrew Goobey. He adds: 'This is true for people at all levels - those at senior level are far from being set in their ways in this respect - they have generally surprised us with their willingness and ability to learn various digital skills'. 'From their side', says Sinead Hasson, 'companies are always happy to retrain, so it often comes down to how willing 'traditional' researchers are to let go of the older methods'.

So is communities experience 'part of the toolkit' for a well-rounded researcher? Yes says Hasson: 'We suggest that all researchers try to gain as much experience as possible across methods... however there are specialists, and you do need to be clear because if you spend 5 years moderating online communities it might be hard to make the transition back'. McAlpine agrees: 'In some cases the lack of back-end analysis can put researchers off. It can be harder to recruit for senior roles, although the scale of responsibilities, the other challenges and the big client names can all help to counter this'.

For junior researchers, McAlpine says the experience is good, although they need to ensure they are still getting a broad education. 'In communities roles, juniors can control projects from start to finish more. There are some good challenges at the design stage eg how to get people to use online diaries. But be careful in case it's a narrow niche, exciting but not that intricate. For example you'll often miss out on the 'big presentation', the trip to the client with eagerly-awaited findings - purely because you've been feeding back results to them throughout'.

The Job Market

'Finding junior level people for communities roles - up to 5 years, say, is relatively easy', says Hasson. 'Then it can get harder because some

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For a good candidate, it's not hard to 'get into communities'. This should come as no surprise: MR in general is a candidates' market. Bonnie McAlpine

more senior candidates feel it won't give them the balance they're after'. None of our recruiters disagreed with either side of this.

For a good candidate, it's not hard to 'get into communities' says McAlpine. This should come as no surprise: MR in general is a candidates' market. Good people are **always** in short supply and always have been for the 21 years we've been watching. Even if you're looking to work in one of the big names, the fact the jobs are sought after is often balanced by the fact the companies are growing fast.

How attractive is it as an option? Well, given the provisos above - especially that of looking carefully at the individual company and the nature of the work you'll be doing - it ought to be firmly on the jobseeker's radar. For quallies, it may indeed promise something they've been seeking for a long time: 'We used to struggle with candidates who said they wanted to stay in qual but didn't want to do evening groups', says Andrew Goobey. 'We found nice ways to say ''Good luck with that!'' - but nowadays digital qual is an option for them so we can be more help'. This is certainly true in terms of **where** you spend your evenings, if not for how late you work - see Sarah Penny's comments on page 46.

That leads on to one thing we haven't mentioned - quality of life. Some of the fast-growing communities firms are truly progressive in their working practices and generally great fun to work for. On the following pages / in chapter 7 of the communities supplement you'll find both general descriptions of careers at some of the companies sponsoring this supplement, and a listing of current vacancies at these and many other employers, taken from the 2,500 ads in MrWeb's index. Of course you will find the supplement's list goes out of date whereas the index won't, but we hope the ads here whet some appetites. ■

Recruiter contacts:

andrew@spalding-goobey.co.uk
bonnie@hanneliusrecruitment.com
s.penny@addverve.com
sinead@hassonassociates.com

Some of the fast-growing communities firms are truly progressive in their working practices and generally great fun to work for.

VERVE

The Agile Insight and Community Panel Specialists

WORKING WITH VERVE

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We believe that if our people learn, progress and grow – so will our business, so we know how important it is to offer the best development opportunities. Verve Academy covers over 50 internal and external training sessions, teaching a range of skills across the whole business.

We are expanding internationally with current opportunities in London, Chicago and Iasi - if you want a stimulating, rewarding career with lots of opportunities, come and join us!
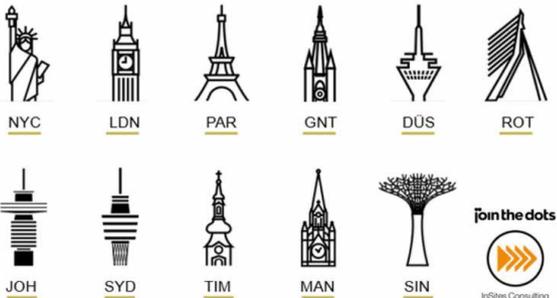
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# 20|20 Research

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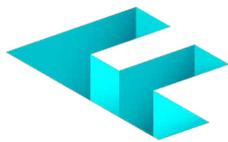
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UK - Junior / RE

Quant Research Consultant - FMCG / Media / Retail - Innovative Agency, London
£24-28,000
Via Resources Group

Junior Research Consultant, Quantitative, London
£ negotiable
InSites Consulting

Project Executive - Retail, FMCG, Travel Clients (1 month contract), London
£110-175 per day
Via Resources Group

Research Executive - FMCG, Client Side, London
Up to £28,000 (DOE)
Via Hannelius Recruitment

Research Executive, Clientside - Gaming, Central London
£ Competitive salary
Via Spalding Goobey

Project Assistant - Travel, Retail and FMCG Sectors - Independent Research Agency, West Midlands (UK)
Up to £20,000
Via Resources Group

UK - SRE & RM

Senior Research Consultant, London
£ Negotiable
Join the Dots

Research Manager, Manchester (UK)
£ Negotiable
Join the Dots

Research Manager, London
Up to £40,000 DOE, plus benefits
Verve

Senior Research Executive - Quantitative or Qualitative, London
£25-32,000 DOE + Bonus
Verve

Marketing Effectiveness Manager, London
up to £41,000 plus benefits
NEST Corporation

SRE - Quant - Huge Variety - Award-winning Independent Agency, Central London
To c.£32,000 + excellent benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Senior Project Manager, Consumer Clients - Online Insights Community, London
£35-38,000
Via Resources Group

Research Manager - Maternity Cover Contract with an Award-Winning Agency, Remote Working
£29-40,000 pro-rata (depending on qualifications and experience)
Listen + Learn

Senior Research Executive, Consumer Insight - International Research Consultancy, London
£30-34,000
Via Resources Group

Qualitative Senior Research Manager - Online - International Consultancy, London
£35-45,000
Via Resources Group

Qual Research Manager, Consultancy - Sport, Utilities, Tech, Retail, Gaming, London
£35-40,000
Via Resources Group

Research Executive, Consumer and FMCG - Boutique Online Research Agency, London
£24-26,000
Via Resources Group

Head of Project Management and Online Communities, London
£30-38,000
Via Hasson Associates

Senior Research Executive - Media, Brand and Comms, Quant, Big Budgets, Central London
£28-33,000 plus benefits
Via Pollen Recruitment

SRE, Qualitative - Digital, Traditional, Integrated - Insight Consultancy, Central London
Up to c.£35,000 doe + benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Project Consultant, London
£35-40,000
Via Hasson Associates

Consultant - Bilingual Hindi / English - Communities, Co-Creation, Central London
£30-40,000 + benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Consultant - Multi Award Winning Agency - Communities, Co-Creation, Innovation, Central London
c.£30-40,000 + benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Consultant, Bilingual French and English - Communities, Central London
c.£30-40,000 + benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Qualitative Consultant, French Markets, London
£32-36,000
Via Hasson Associates

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UK - AD and above

Associate, Qual and Quant - Cultural Insights, Online Communities, Full or Part-Time, Central London
c.£40-65,000 + profit share + benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Qualitative Associate Director, London
Up to £47,000 + benefits
Verve

Qual Senior Consultant, London
£45-55,000
Via Hasson Associates

Qual AD - FMCG, Retail, Tech - International Research Consultancy, London
£45-50,000
Via Resources Group

Divisional Head, Retail Vertical - Customer Insights and Experience Agency, Central London and/or Hampshire
c.£70-90,000 + excellent benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Account Director - Media Clients - Global Digital Research Group, London
£50-60,000 + very strong commission / bonus
Via Resources Group

Head of Project Management, Quant and Qual Online Research - AI-powered Start-up, Central London
Up to c.£45,000 doe + benefits
Via Spalding Goobey

Quant AD - Technology, Charities, Healthcare, Current Affairs, Tourism, London
£40-50,000
Via Resources Group

Europe excl UK

Research Director - FMCG Rotterdam, Netherlands
£ negotiable
InSites Consulting

Market Research Intern - Qualitative Ghent, Belgium
£ negotiable
InSites Consulting

Market Research Intern - Quantitative Ghent, Belgium
£ negotiable
InSites Consulting

Senior Research Consultant Dusseldorf, Germany
EUR Negotiable
Join the Dots

Research Manager - Qualitative Ghent, Belgium
EUR Negotiable
Join the Dots

Research Manager - Quantitative Ghent, Belgium
EUR Negotiable
Join the Dots

(Senior) Research Manager Dusseldorf, Germany
EUR Negotiable
Join the Dots

Junior Research Consultant - Qualitative Ghent, Belgium
EUR Negotiable
Join the Dots

USA

Vice President / Senior Vice President, Market Research Chicago, IL, USA
$US DOE + equity available
Verve

Director - Online Communities, Cincinnati, OH, USA
$ salary TBD
Ipsos North America

Director - Online Communities, New York
$ salary TBD
Ipsos North America

Community Research Manager - SMX Team, Culver City, CA, USA
$ salary TBD
Ipsos North America

Client Development Manager Nashville, TN, USA
$ salary TBD
20|20 Research Inc.

Mid-to-Senior Front End Engineer Denver, CO, USA
$ salary TBD
20|20 Research Inc.

Mid-to-Senior Front End Engineer Nashville, TN, USA
$ salary TBD
20|20 Research Inc.

Australia & New Zealand

Customer Success Manager - Research Technology, Sydney
$AUD 70-80,000 + SUPER
Via Resources Group

Qualitative Insights Client Director, Auckland
$NZ 140-170,000 + benefits
Via Resources Group

Qualitative Research Manager - Corporate Reputation / Management Consulting, Sydney
$AUD 100-120,000
Via Resources Group

Market Research Officer, Top City Council - Community Research, Sydney
$AUD 80-85,000 + super
Via Resources Group

Qualitative Account Director - Insights Powerhouse, Sydney
$AUD 100-130,000 + super
Via Resources Group

BACKWORD

We hope you enjoyed the supplement as much as we enjoyed putting it together. More, in the case of the 2am finishes this last week. We were certainly impressed with the dynamism of our contributors, and their willingness to share the odd secret and talk in detail about their work. Chances are we'll do another communities supplement in the second half of next year - get in touch if you're interested in sponsoring.

Particular thanks go to Ana Garcia at Verve for her energy and enthusiasm in helping us put this together; and to Chris at Fullpoint Design for his great patience, flexibility and his creative skills.

If you saw early ads for the supplement and are wondering what happened to the Directories section, we decided that such things work better in html on our web site proper - but watch DRNO for announcements as it'll be appearing soon. There are a *lot* of firms out there saying they work with communities.

In two months' time we're aiming to give the same treatment to the next trending area, mobile data and insights - again, please contact us on ads@mrweb.com if you want to be a part of it.

In the meantime, keep looking at DRNO (www.mrweb.com/drno if you're not already a subscriber to the MR world's daily paper), and watch out for features of a slightly different nature as we approach the actual date of 29th Nov.

Thanks for reading - and please give us any feedback good or bad on hello@mrweb.com.

Nick Thomas,
MrWeb

MrWeb
21
YEARS
1998 - 2019

NEXT ISSUE
NOVEMBER 2019

Following this issue's look at online communities, we're turning in November to probably the most transformative technology of them all - mobile - and we'll cover research with, and about, the use of mobile devices. Mobile survey platforms and techniques; passive data collection; apps, games and utilities; sharing and reviewing. The opportunity for agile and in-the-moment research, geolocation, targeting and tracking. Case studies; use in specific market sectors; analysis of the big news stories of 2018-19; salaries, skills and job opportunities including listings and careers items from sponsors; interviews (video and text) with some of the big names; and results of a survey of contributors.

Insight in the
Mobile Age