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Exploring the effect of social media and
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People power



Jane Bainbridge
Editor

Consumer power – what an alluring concept. The idea that we – the individual, the nobody – can bend and direct the businesses we buy from, be they local shops or global companies.

When did we consumers start believing we held such sway? Does it stretch back to the UK’s flurry of denationalisation in the 80s when we were told greater competition would give us more choice? Certainly the post-Brexit dialogue has been full of references to free market trade and the concept of greater consumer say, once the EU is no longer controlling us. Or did we start believing in our power when businesses told us we held it?

Championing the consumer cause is de rigueur in marketing speak but it can be hard to determine whether it’s a genuine movement or another clever tool in the marketing box of tricks – more myth than reality.

CEO Anthony Fletcher has made buyers’ power a central premise of healthy snack brand Graze, with customer feedback dictating the very products it sells. In our profile with Fletcher (p20), he says “customers want their way, and if you’ve gone through all the trouble of building a brand and coming up with the relevant products, why would you not want to explore how to give it to them in all the

different ways they may want it?”

Of course not every company’s business model is based on receiving tens of thousands of ratings every hour on its products and using that data to ditch the unpopular and develop the new.

But every company does have to manage the power that people have been handed, thanks to the rapid response mechanism known as Twitter. As our special report (p26) explores, the rise of social media and internet access in our pockets has been a major disrupter, and many consider this to be the point where the power balance truly shifted from the brand owner to the consumer.

That may be a claim too far, but social media does mean previously private grievances are now played out in public, and the way firms choose to treat any criticisms are witnessed by the world at large.

This does allow ordinary people to monitor – if not entirely control – business behaviour, which is definitely a form of power.

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A former deputy editor of Research Magazine, *Impact's* forerunner, Bain has written about Twitter's use of research on p38.

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Rob Gray



Gray, a journalist and author, met David Evans of CNBC to discuss researching the broadcasters' business audience on p44.

Jane Simms



Simms is a former editor of *Financial Director*. She interviewed Anthony Fletcher of Graze for our Profile piece on p20.

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Playing the long game

"Because the purpose of business is to create a customer, the business enterprise has two – and only two – basic functions: marketing and innovation. Marketing and innovation produce results; all the rest are costs."

It's a famous quotation but I think Peter Drucker misses one important final conceptual leap – when you define them properly, marketing and innovation are the same thing. Or, at the very least, two sides of the same coin.

Two years ago, Stewart Butterfield, a Silicon Valley innovator and co-founder of Flickr and Slack, told colleagues: "The best – maybe the only – real, direct measure of 'innovation' is change in human behaviour...Innovation is the sum of change across the whole system, not a thing which causes a change in how people behave. No small innovation ever caused a large shift in how people spend their time and no large one has ever failed to do so."

Butterfield is almost certainly right. Marketing and innovation are simply two complementary means of achieving the same end: to give people the technological and psychological conditions under which they can satisfy new desires. Achieving this by creating new products or new desires (or both) is an irrelevant distinction.

Thinking this way both enhances the stature of marketing and increases its scope. It also changes the ways we should measure the efficacy of what we do. Traditional financial metrics focus on a narrow measure of success. An online ad that encourages me to stay at the Crowne Plaza rather than the Marriott is notionally just as 'effective' as one that encourages me



"Real economic value comes from behaviour change"

to stay at the Crowne Plaza rather than taking a taxi home. More broadly, the second ad creates a far more significant change in behaviour. Current online metrics seem blind to this distinction – and often define as 'effective' communications that simply reach people who are disposed to buy the product in any case.

A similar debate is emerging in transport policy and infrastructure investment.

I have long been baffled by the logic of building HS2. (I don't dispute more capacity is needed on that route – but I would favour slower trains, which could stop at intermediate stations.)

My great beef with spending £60 billion on reducing the journey time from London to Manchester is that, nice though it would be for the travelling public, it would not change behaviour much. I have never woken up and thought: "Hmm, I would travel to Manchester today, but alas it takes 40 minutes too long".

The economic case for investment in transport infrastructure is predicated on cuts in journey times. Time spent on a train now is rarely wasted, so time saved is a poor metric for assessing the value of transport investment.

By obsessing over journey time, you end up focusing on reducing the duration of journeys that people are already making. By contrast, real economic value from transport comes from behaviour change – getting people to go on journeys they would otherwise not make. What really makes transport valuable to the economy is when people can establish homes and workplaces where it was previously impossible for them to do so. Speed has little effect on the likelihood of undertaking infrequent journeys.

On the other hand, a minor innovation like Advance First Class tickets has had a huge effect on my behaviour. Now this ticket exists, I use trains for most long journeys. (Put bluntly, first class rail is generally nicer than driving, while standard class rail isn't).

If you want to see the economic value of HS1, don't look at time savings for people already living in Canterbury; focus instead on what has happened to property prices in Canterbury or Folkestone – a 90-minute commute was reduced to 57 minutes. It took a decade but it is here that the real gains lay.

Marketers and transport economists may be guilty of the same vice – rather than focusing on change in the long term, they concentrate on easily measurable effects in the short term. At least it's good to know that we're not alone in this failing. I suppose. ■

Rory Sutherland is vice-chairman, Ogilvy & Mather UK

UK – p12

The UK's decision to leave the EU has polarised the nation, says Zoe Fenn of Flamingo. She offers guidance for brands on bridging this gap.



Europe – p14

The complexity of managing multi-country studies is often underestimated – and the difficulties go further than language barriers. By Claudia Strauss of Future Thinking.



Global briefing

News, views and insight from around the world – from the importance of status in the Middle East to the surprising success of Budweiser in China. Edited by **Bronwen Morgan**

China – p10

American beer brand Budweiser has achieved surprising success in China, thanks to its adaptation to local culture, says William Landell Mills of TNS.



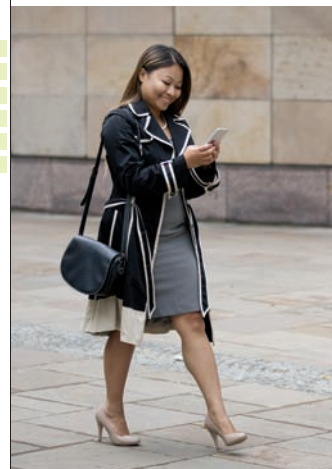
Middle East – p16

Status plays an important role in Middle Eastern society, say Ziad Skaff and Rumana Sadekar of Hall & Partners MENA. This means luxury purchases are often more of a habit than an extravagance.



Philippines – p18

The rapidly growing Filipino market is boosted by consumer optimism, but hindered by poor working conditions, writes Bronwen Morgan.



CHINA

Cultural chameleon

Budweiser has adapted its all-American image to fit the Chinese market with startling success, thanks to its understanding of how the 'ideal man' differs between the two countries, says **William Landell Mills** of TNS

A few years back, management guru Peter Drucker wrote that "culture eats strategy for breakfast". American beer brand Budweiser has been living this mantra for some time now; it has achieved huge success in China by stepping aside from its iconic American forms and adapting to the local culture in a way that is both impressive and surprising.

It's surprising because it so forcefully underlines the fact that a familiar global brand can mean such different things in different places. It puts paid to what remains of the idea that with our Nikes and Apples, humankind is merging into some shared digital culture. It suggests that, ultimately, successful global brands need to be as much vectors of cultural difference as icons of universality.

A recent Chinese Bud TV spot illustrates this well. It's set in an expensive western-style restaurant in a Shanghai skyscraper. A young Chinese yuppie in black tie sits at an impeccably laid table, gestures to the waiter who, with an

acknowledging nod, brings our hero a bottle of the restaurant's finest Budweiser.

The bottle is tall, almost like a wine bottle with a gold neck. It looks expensive. He sips, the room becomes bathed in light and a beautiful woman arrives. With his suave smile, he offers a glass of Budweiser to his gracious western-looking date, they touch glasses, taste and we then cut away to a fireworks display as they float off across the night sky in a delicate suggestion of what lies ahead. We cut to an elegant image of what looks like a chef preparing the hops and then the final pack shot.

In the UK this ad might be seen as a spoof. And to give you a sense of how different this is to the way things are playing out back in the US, consider Bud's recent Super Bowl ad, which caused huge controversy with a Trump-style attack on craft beers. To the sound of industrial rock and quick-cut images of blue collar machismo, words flash in block capitals stating how Bud is (unlike craft beer) NOT A HOBBY, NOT SMALL, NOT SIPPED, NOT IMPORTED, NOT A FRUIT CUP, NOT FOR EVERYONE and how Budweiser is NOT BACKING DOWN.

Let's leave aside the irony that AB InBev has itself been investing heavily in craft brewers, it is clearly the case that it is deeply pragmatic about the need for geographies to pursue local strategies. Budweiser in China sells for three times the price of local beer. So, we can immediately see that as a super-premium product in China, it makes sense for the setting of the Chinese Bud ad to be

about young millionaires in a posh restaurant, however unlikely that would seem elsewhere in the world.

But there is a great deal more to the cultural difference than the level of 'premiumness' and – to really understand what is going on in the Chinese ad, and why something that looks cheesily surreal to European eyes works so well in China – it's useful to look at the ad through a cultural lens.

At TNS we have developed a semiotic framework that tells us how 'the ideal man' is constructed distinctly in different markets. By looking at the ad through the codes, we can see that the Bud ad fits with deep instincts about how a Chinese man should be.

The framework has six lenses, but for our purposes we will talk about just three: how he is embedded in society; his consequent modus operandi; and the character of his masculinity, in contrast to femininity.

Embeddedness refers to how a man is expected to align to his social environment – his essential way of being. In this regard, the Chinese ideal man is 'circumspect'. He does



not force himself onto a situation but must be hyper-aware of social interplay. In the ad we see that our hero fits perfectly to the cosmopolitan westernised setting, immaculately (and suitably) dressed, scrupulously polite, a consummate insider who, though high status, does not overplay his hand. He stands out by fitting in.

Modus operandi is all about the way a man should behave and, in this respect, the Chinese ideal man is strategic and prudent. He holds back from action until he is guaranteed success. In the TV spot our hero prepares the ground for his quarry and captures her while barely lifting a finger.

The masculinity code is about how he acts towards women. While the American is rugged/romantic, the ideal Chinese man is harmonious/caring, and here our hero treats the woman with great solicitude and gentleness. He raises his glass slightly lower than hers in a sign of respect, even though we know that he has won her - a victory confirmed by the softly exploding fireworks (another very characteristic Chinese touch) and the copious use of red and gold.

This same analysis can be used equally to show how Budweiser's Super Bowl ad is as deeply American as the restaurant ad is Chinese. The embeddedness code for the US male is that he should have righteous purpose. Suffice it to say that NOT BACKING DOWN is full of righteous purpose; indeed it is an ad that sets out to take back the moral high ground from craft beer by wrapping the brand in blue collar patriotism.

But, as we look at other codes, from the 'can do' of his modus operandi to the 'ruggedness' of his masculinity, NOT BACKING DOWN ticks every box of the American ideal.

What Budweiser shows us is that in managing a global beer brand - even one with a provenance heritage as rich as it has - local success is contingent on a willingness to define the brand in terms that make sense locally. The irony is that aligning to the culture is even more important if you are a prestigious foreign brand that charges a premium because it is foreign. Budweiser may be a premium foreign brand, but it's a foreigner that is being very smart about winning local hearts and minds through implicit alignment with local codes.

William Landell Mills is qualitative director at TNS

LENS	US	CHINA	INDIA	UK
Embeddedness Core orientation towards others in society	Righteous purpose	Circumspect	Role-bound, dutiful	Decent, appropriate
Modus operandi Way of approaching problems	Honest endeavour	Strategic, prudent	Egotistic, proud	Moderate, good-natured
X factor Mental secret of success	Can-do optimism	Self-improving	Smart, innovative	Pragmatic, imaginative
Ultimate purpose The meanings of life and death	Leaves his mark on the world	Bank capital	Transcendence/dissolution	Lives a good life
Masculinity As contrasted to femininity	Rugged, romantic	Harmonious, caring	Macho	Respectful, ironic
Men together Guys hanging with guys	Supportive, back up	Ebullient excess	Unleashed	Witty banter



Bridging the Brexit gap

The EU referendum result has left UK consumers feeling polarised, says **Zoe Fenn** of Flamingo. She offers guidance for brands on how to transcend the battle lines

“I couldn’t believe the [referendum] result, I deleted Hailo and downloaded Uber that day” (Male, 27, London, Remainder)

This was a quote from a respondent of Brexometer – Flamingo’s panel that tracks European consumer sentiment in a post-Brexit world, and what this means for brands. Initial research, focused on the UK, also involved meeting leave and remain voters from all corners of the country: from Machynlleth to Barnstaple via Canterbury, Sheffield and Dunfermline.

Among those we met, comments like the above were typical. The picture the quote paints is a binary one: that on the one hand you have remainers, who are young, affluent, urban and culturally enlightened, while on the other, you have leavers, who are older, rural, more working class and insular. We heard leavers brand remainers an ‘out of touch elite’. And remainers call leavers ‘duped racists’.

Polarising

Such radical and extreme perceptions of those who voted differently are not surprising given the referendum question was: “Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?”

Unlike elections, where we vote on a manifesto, this was an either/or, in or out decision. In fact, there was a palpable lack of vision around what a post-referendum world would actually look like (both from the leave and remain camps), and we’re still trying to work that out. ‘Brexit means Brexit’ is a clever piece of rhetoric because it is as committed as it is non-committal.

But through spending time with people, listening to their stories and standing in their shoes, we quickly saw that this binary view of the world was far too simplistic. In fact, it was a fragile veneer, propagated by politicians and the media

to whip up votes and sell papers.

The picture emerging from our research is a far more complex and nuanced one. The underlying emotional driver was a feeling of powerlessness. As one of our respondents put it: “It doesn’t matter if you’re in Europe or not, none of them are going to give a shit about us.” And this was why the argument around taking back control resonated so strongly. It spoke to people on an individual level, promising them a voice. And this is a universal need – everyone (leave and remain alike) has a fundamental need to feel represented, heard and understood.

Shared values

Of course one person is different from the next; we drive different cars, support different football teams, drink different beer. But we are not so divided. It’s not ‘us and them’. We are not two camps of people, just like we will not neatly fit into four or six segments. In fact, we all share some powerful ideas and values – resolving a problem over a cup of tea, the childish joy of jumping up and down in a muddy puddle or singing in the shower.

So how can brands transcend the fictitious battle lines that have been drawn? And why should they care about this?

Commercially, if brands want growth, they can’t ignore 52% of the population. When pubs recognised the opportunity for women and families to enjoy relaxed get-

together, the 'style' bar (think Pitcher & Piano) and the gastropub were born.

The power of we

And culturally, we need shared experiences, values, beliefs and practices in order to communicate and be understood. The more we have in common with others, the closer we feel and the happier we become.

As Mark Earls, author of *Herd: how to change mass behaviour by harnessing our true nature wisely*, said: "We are a community species; we want to be together; we are made to be together; we are made by being together; and we are happier by being together"

When it feels like there is more that divides than unites us, and when moments of synchronicity feel increasingly rare, brands can provide these anchor points – but they need to play by the new rules.

Re-framing our view

We need to recognise that what the creative industry sees as aspirational might actually be alienating: trying exotic new cuisines, cycling to work and playing Pokémon Go – these things can be framed as democratic (it's street food, it's not a car, it's a smart phone game), but actually are still the preserve of the elite, targeted towards urban dwellers with fast-paced lifestyles and generous data packages.

Finally, we need empathy. We are not consumers. We are humans, who share a common humanity. Shows like Channel 4's *Gogglebox* and *First Dates* are so successful because they show us the world through someone else's eyes. We stand in their shoes, and even if we don't agree, we understand.

Zoe Fenn is head of UK practice at Flamingo

EUROPE

Anatomy of a global study

Designing and managing a multi-country study is fraught with potential pitfalls, and the deeper you look, the more complicated it gets, says **Claudia Strauss** of Future Thinking

Few things are more disorientating than stepping into a country for the first time. Everything is unfamiliar: the sounds; the buildings; the trees; even the air. The tiniest, most trivial things can be completely different (like a Royale with cheese at a French McDonald's). It's no wonder that conducting a global study can be one of the biggest challenges market researchers face.

Beyond the difficulties that come with organising a study of this scope and scale,

you also need to ensure that your study is sensitive to the cultural differences of each country that you survey.

It's easy to forget, for example, how much of a wonderfully diverse and fascinating place Europe is. And, if you overlook this when conducting research, that diversity will become a major obstacle.

We all have some sense of what we need to do. We know that languages don't translate precisely and that we have to be conscious of cultural attitudes to different concepts when designing the questionnaire.

Yet the scale of the challenge and the sheer complexity of these barriers are often understated. So much of what we know about the world has become so engrained

in us, that we often forget that it might be different elsewhere. We spot the obvious differences and overlook the more subtle ones. Understanding these cultural nuances are key if we're to interpret and understand data correctly.

What makes countries different?

Take a simple true/false question:

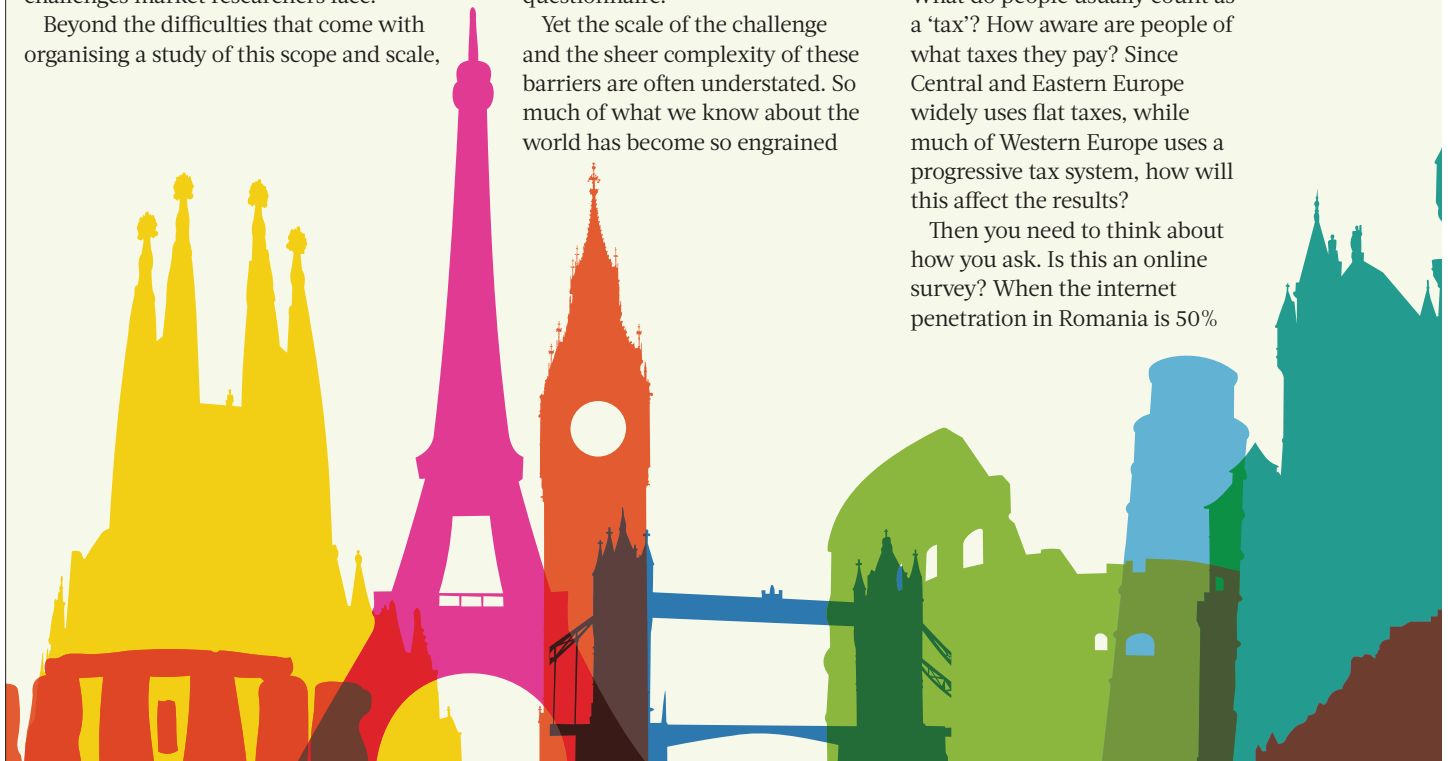
'Taxes are too high'

- a. True
- b. False

In just six words, you've made a whole host of assumptions about the country you're researching. And these assumptions had better be accurate, as they will determine the validity of your research.

Do you know how taxation works in each country you're surveying? What do people usually count as a 'tax'? How aware are people of what taxes they pay? Since Central and Eastern Europe widely uses flat taxes, while much of Western Europe uses a progressive tax system, how will this affect the results?

Then you need to think about how you ask. Is this an online survey? When the internet penetration in Romania is 50%



while in the UK it is 90%, you may need to think about what groups of people may be under-represented in the sample. And what country-specific factors may affect the response rate? Are phone surveys popular in that country? What does a well-designed survey form look like in France or in Germany?

If you want to go deeper, even the concept of truth can vary between cultures. You will get more 'don't know' responses from societies where people tend to be more careful and cautious about what they believe, than those where you're more likely to get strong views that people are committed to.

The picture is a complicated one, and the deeper we look, the more complicated it gets. Being aware of these factors and how they can affect your results is absolutely fundamental.

How to make the most of local knowledge?

While Europe may be a beautifully perplexing place, there are ways in which we can make it understandable. We may not be able to grasp every single nuance, but we can know enough to make the results authoritative and accurate.

Building relationships with local stakeholders and making the most of their knowledge is key. When Future Thinking conducted a global healthcare study across 23 different nations (including 14 European countries) our membership of IRIS – the world's largest network of independent research institutes – proved extremely useful. We partnered with local IRIS members and learned from

their experience of conducting research in their territories for many years.

Accessing that local insight not only lets you learn about the country, it also helps you spot the unknown unknowns – the things that you don't know that you don't know. This helps you to avoid unknowingly making assumptions that affect the capture and interpretation of the results. And, when you eventually present the findings, having people on board who understand what your various audiences believe and what they are expecting will be very useful.

Remember that Romania has a significantly lower internet penetration rate than the UK? That could help explain why our study found that only 23% of people in Romania consult websites for healthcare advice compared with 66% in the UK; infrastructure rather than culture may be the primary factor for this result. Similarly, France's popular public/private hybrid system may explain why most (41%) felt that private individuals (through insurance or out of their own pocket) should mainly pay for healthcare expenses.

Ultimately, research is about getting to know people. Building relationships with local stakeholders is the first step to doing the same for several thousand respondents throughout Europe. When you're stepping into unfamiliar territory, always make sure that you have that local insight to guide you.

Claudia Strauss is managing director at Future Thinking



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MIDDLE EAST

Expensive habits

Luxury purchases are more of a habit than an extravagance in the Middle East, say **Ziad Skaff** and **Rumana Sadekar**, of Hall & Partners. They discuss the local nuances that drive this behaviour

Wealth in the Middle East is a relatively new phenomenon and, as a result, consumers tend to put their luxury possessions on display. The appeal of luxury goods – be they cars, yachts or beauty products – has risen steadily in the region. How did this happen?

The development of the oil industry in the 1960s led to wealth filtering across the Gulf. Urbanisation followed and, increasingly, nations around the Middle East embraced western-style consumption habits. The need to possess and show off your wealth stimulated the expansion of the luxury industry – one of the fastest growing in the world.

So how has this segment in the Middle East developed? Many factors influence the changing

face of the luxury-goods audience in the region today. Among them is the large disparity in demographics between countries – tipped largely towards youth – and booming economies giving rise to a larger middle class, representing higher levels of disposable income available in the market. Despite these changes, however, the forces that drive luxury purchases appear to remain unchanged – suggesting that these buying decisions are more of a habit than an extravagance here.

As modernisation continues to sweep through the region – and the standard of living becomes more lavish – luxury is now engrained in many Arab consumers' behaviours. So it's no surprise that this segment of the market has blossomed, propelled by the ultra-wealthy, with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia leading the way. In the UAE, particularly – with a society that boasts the biggest and most luxurious infrastructure – great value is placed on exclusivity and standing out from the crowd.

According to Knight Frank's *Wealth Report 2015*, the number of ultra-high-net-worth

individuals – each with a fortune of more than \$30m – is expected to grow by 40% over the next decade. The market is also being supported by a growing middle class – understandable considering its burgeoning wealth.

Euromonitor International reported that the disposable income of people in the Middle East and Africa has grown by 2% in the past year, and will continue to enjoy steady, year-on-year growth, reaching 9% in 2019-2020.

Despite these positive factors, however, the market has actually slowed because of global currency fluctuations and the general state of the world economy. So brands have still to innovate continuously to provide discerning consumers with the latest, most exclusive and aspirational products, taking into consideration their distinct preferences and behaviours.

To gain a better understanding of the factors that drive purchases, we have identified four major factors that shape behaviours around luxury in this region:

Familiarity: Consumers have a stronger affinity with luxury brands that they already know. The higher the affinity, the more likely consumers are to engage with them and make impulse purchases. This is



particularly true for men, who follow the brands whose products they own online. Interestingly, limited edition products enjoy higher purchase rates than those from regular lines.

Validation: People who make luxury purchases are largely motivated by the potential of these products to influence what other people think. The need for belonging originates from their tribal heritage and is still strong in the local culture. Through its distinctive signature, luxury helps define a person's place in the community.

Engagement: UAE and Saudi nationals justify their luxury purchases as long-term investments. However, they also purchase frequently – up to four times a year – to keep up to date with the latest trends and to stand out in their

social circle. They love choice and are stimulated by having a wide range of colours and designs from which to choose. These consumers know what they want and, as a result, brands can find value in gathering and acting on their feedback. For example, men push for luxury brands to embrace technology, while women want to see more diverse product lines.

Localisation: While Gulf consumers have a high affinity with global brands, they also expect them to be relevant to their unique culture and tastes. A lot of value is placed on how these brands embrace the local language in their communications – something the luxury sector has just started to realise. Furthermore, consumers increasingly expect the inclusion of local fashion trends into existing product lines.

One underlying theme in all of these factors is the use of luxury and fashion to express oneself against a conservative backdrop.

Status continues to play an important role in Middle Eastern society and luxury goods are,

undeniably, one of the strongest ways to display it.

As regional markets become increasingly affluent, the growing middle class is starting to join the upper tiers of society in the consumption of luxury goods and services. If brands are to appeal to this emerging segment, they first need to understand the local nuances that influence people's purchasing behaviours. Fortunately for them, these are quite distinct and pronounced in the Middle East.

Ziad Skaff is managing director, and **Rumana Sadekar** research consultancy manager, at Hail & Partners MENA (Middle East and North Africa)





PHILIPPINES

In confidence

Recent figures have revealed Filipino consumers to be the most optimistic in the world. **Bronwen Morgan** explores what is behind this confidence, as well as the potential risks facing this growing economy

According to the latest consumer confidence research from Nielsen (from the second quarter of this year), Filipino consumers are the most optimistic in the world.

In August, the country recorded its highest consumer confidence index score of 132 – the biggest quarter-on-quarter increase among the 63 countries included in the survey – topping the world optimism league for the first time.

In August 2015, CNN Money forecast that the Philippines would be the fourth fastest growing economy for that year, after China, Qatar and India. The Asian Development Bank reported that the country's GDP grew by 5.8% last year, and estimated it would rise to 6% this year.

These figures were cited in a report on the Philippines from global business intelligence firm RepRisk, published in July as part of its series on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a regional group made up of 10 states. The report claims recent growth has mostly been fuelled by strong domestic demand and remittances from Filipino workers living abroad.

Another report, from market research company Euromonitor, predicted that in 2030, the population of the Philippines will reach almost 128 million – an increase of 32.1% from 2012. This growth, says the report, will be driven by increases in all age groups, but with particularly fast growth in the 60+ age groups.

But, the report goes on, the Philippines will

remain an overwhelmingly young country in 2030, with 71.4% of the population aged 40 years or under. The urban population is forecast to overtake the rural for the first time in 2016 and, by 2030, it will make up 56.3% of the population, Euromonitor claims.

The Filipino confidence outlined in Nielsen's research is also reflected in another Euromonitor report on the country's economic status. It showed traditionally frugal, confident Filipino consumers have increased spending in line with the country's economic performance.

They have more money in their pockets and are buying higher-quality goods, such as food and household products, as well as bigger items like vehicles. Demand for these big-ticket items has also been boosted by a wider availability of consumer credit and greater use of financial cards by the growing middle class, the report says.

However, according to the RepRisk report, which also explores the environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks facing the country and the subsequent impact on its economy, the Philippines'

personal and household goods sector is the most vulnerable. It highlights the example of a fatal fire at a factory in May 2015, which exposes the country's 'lax implementation and enforcement of labour laws and occupational safety regulations'.

The report also shows that there have been repeated allegations of poor working conditions in Filipino factories, and that the International Peace Information Service has criticised labour rights violations and poor occupational health and safety conditions.

The mining sector – another key driver of the economy – is also identified as a potential risk, with reports of major protests against mining projects over fears of negative environmental impacts.

Nevertheless, the Nielsen figures showed that, of the three confidence indicators measured – job optimism, immediate spending intentions and sentiments around personal finances – job optimism had increased the most among Filipinos, with a jump of 16% in the second quarter of this year. ■



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The risk taker

With a customer feedback model that allows for almost instant product tweaking, Graze's **Anthony Fletcher** has big ambitions for the healthy snacking category, including conquering the US. By *Jane Simms*

Anthony Fletcher is a bit of a rebel. When he strides into the meeting room in Graze's riverside headquarters in hot and leafy Richmond, my first impressions are of his firm handshake, a throaty chuckle redolent of Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson (the similarity stops there) and his bare feet.

"I knew you were coming in, so I wanted to be smart, but I was in town yesterday in my shoes, in the heat, tramping around, and... I'm sorry, I just didn't want to wear shoes today," he laughs.

"Years ago I got an award from Prince Charles and I wasn't wearing a tie, and my mother has never forgiven me," he confesses conspiratorially.

At 34, and running one of Britain's most successful and fastest-growing young companies, Fletcher clearly relishes taking on the Establishment, challenging the status quo, being an iconoclast.

Educated at the universities of Oxford and Princeton, he decided he wanted to work in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment and nagged Innocent Drinks until he got a job. While his friends were stapling together documents in law firms, he was working out how to make thousands of litres of smoothies and building new factories. He spent five years progressing through the ranks – from production planner to innovation manager – before jumping ship.

Deceptively simple

Fletcher had become fascinated by the potential of the fledgling Graze business, knocked on the factory door and asked for a job. He was appointed head of marketing, sales and innovation in November 2009, became chief marketing officer nine months later, UK managing director four months after that, and CEO in December 2012 – the same year he led the sale of a majority stake in the business to private equity company Carlyle Group for an estimated £50 million.

The Graze concept is deceptively simple: the company sends customers letter-box-sized, four-portion, healthy snack boxes tailored to their expressed tastes. While the original core market was office workers, the customer base now encompasses suburban housewives and children, and the original subscription model has been augmented by the online shop and a presence – since August 2015 – in more than 5,000 stores.

In addition to trying to make Graze the No 1 healthy snack business in the UK, Fletcher and

his team have also taken the concept to the US, the graveyard of many a blue-chip British business. It has not been an easy transition, but the early signs are highly encouraging: US sales were \$34m in the first year of operation, making the company profitable within 12 to 14 months of launch, and figures for the second year – though not official yet – are much higher.

Graze was founded in 2008 by a group of friends, including the co-founders of film rental company LoveFilm, which used to dispatch DVDs to customers through the post. While Fletcher judged the Graze concept "brilliant", he thought the product was "terrible" – the early product was a box containing a few dried apple slices and a handful of salted cashews. "Originally, Graze was very focused on fresh fruit and on convenient delivery as the benefit to the customer," he recalls. "That is definitely not the key to the business today."

Graze's unique selling point is getting people excited about making healthy choices – and that excitement extends beyond the vast, constantly changing, range of snacks on offer. It is about engaging customers in making the choice themselves, or enjoying the element of surprise when Graze chooses for them, and providing feedback to help inform new product development. Graze gets around 15,000 product ratings an hour, and most people respond within 24 hours of receiving their snack box.

Technology is at the heart of the business: it helps the direct relationship with consumers and provides a rich source of market data. Because the company has its own factory and an automated supply chain, it can innovate on a sixpence, launching new products within 48 hours and discontinuing unpopular ones even faster.

Graze has invested in world-class automation, including: what it claims is the fastest and most accurate weighing machine in the world; a robot that can fold cardboard boxes in 16 different ways; and a unique taste algorithm that uses customer behaviour and feedback to determine the optimum type and portion of snacks to send to every individual.

Its business model means that if a new product fails it costs the company nothing. "We just don't make it again, and there is no blame attached," says Fletcher. Being data-led allows the business to see quickly what works and what doesn't work, and why, and it unleashes creativity. "Data is crucial to us, but it's not the be all and end all; you need intelligent people who can look at the trends and who are inspired to try out different



UK AND US TASTE PREFERENCES

Graze identified three principal differences between UK and US tastes:

The taste profile – “Indian taste profiles are very popular in the UK, but went down poorly in the US. They like Mexican tastes – things that come from their cultural heritage. There were one or two British taste profiles that did pretty well in America – our chocolate, for example.”

Products’ health claims – “In Britain, we tend to be quite subtle in terms of the cues we give, but Americans want the entire list clearly displayed on the front of the pack.”

Cultural allusions – “We quickly realised that we had a number of things rooted in our communications and products that only made sense to Brits. I was on a CNBC breakfast show, and I’d taken in a load of products, and the interviewer picked one up and went ‘banoffee pie?’ It meant nothing to them. One of our bestsellers in America now is turtle pie, which is a dessert they associate with their childhood. So the insight is the same – tapping into cultural nostalgia, and creating a ‘deconstructed’ dessert that is tasty, indulgent, and made of fundamentally healthy ingredients – but you have to express it differently.”

ideas. You can delegate. You say, ‘as long as it fits within this model of fast innovation – as long as it’s not going to cost us a lot of money – if you’ve got a hunch, go and try it out’.”

However data-led Graze is in its day-to-day operations and innovations, its approach is underpinned by a number of insights – not least consumers’ rational and emotional needs for healthy ‘treats’ and snacks that help bridge the gaps between irregular meals.

“Can I tell you why we are really doing this?” asks Fletcher earnestly. “I love the food industry, but customers are moving faster, they are becoming more demanding, and social media means that messages and trends take hold quicker; and I think a lot of organisations are struggling to deal with this. Graze is an opportunity to explore a different way of thinking about these trends, a different way of using technology, which is incredibly relevant to running any consumer goods business.”

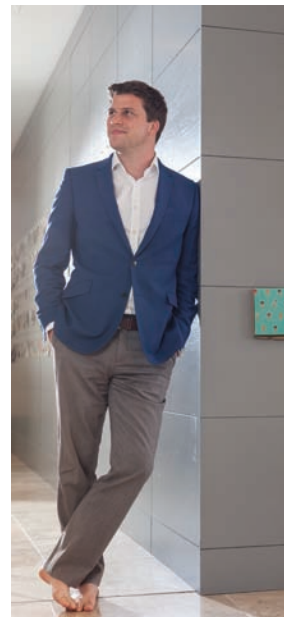
Multichannel advantage

The direct relationship with consumers can, he says, “improve everything your business does, because the quality of the data it gives you affects all your decision-making. It lets you innovate quicker and in different ways; it means you have more products, you build your brand better, and you can create different experiences for your customers. In essence; it is about your organisation’s ability to adapt to your customer – and it makes your entire business stronger.”

The novelty of Graze’s approach was manifested in supermarkets’ bewilderment when the company told them it wanted to de-list one-third of its range six weeks after launch. “But we said, ‘we have 400 products in our online range and, after six weeks, we understand more about your different stores and your customers, and what they want, so we can propose a better range and we can bring those to market very quickly’.”

Being able to refine the range in supermarkets as a result of data gathered online is an example of what Fletcher calls “the multichannel advantage”. Other examples include being able to build the brand more effectively, and affording customers a choice. “Customers want it their way, and if you’ve gone to the trouble of building a brand and coming up with relevant products, why would you not want to explore how to give it to them in all the ways they might want?”

The way British customers want it is not the same as the way American ones do. “We launched the business in the US with the UK range, not





because we thought it was the right set of products but because we wanted feedback from our customers about what they wanted. That approach allows you to move faster and, I think, be more correct in the long run. It is very hard to work out what customers actually want, and rapid prototyping of your customer experience and your product – and getting rich data back – is what we try to do.”

To ‘de-risk’ the move into the US, Graze began an eight-month trial in January 2013 to identify the main challenges of a full launch, test its hypotheses, and get answers to some of its main questions. “We could have spent six months debating whether Americans wanted a larger portion size than British people, but we felt the best way to find out was to test it,” Fletcher says.

Graze launched its test in every state at the same time; within 24 hours it had a customer in every state and, within three weeks, had so many orders – 30,000 – that it had to limit sales on its website. “We had marketed ourselves as a beta deliberately, so our customers would understand that they were part of something new and exciting, and their expectations would be set at the right level,” says Fletcher.

“Oddly, the scarcity pushed up demand. We didn’t actually shut the website – we just made it incredibly hard to order.” He guffaws. “People

clamoured and colluded on social media, and we became the hot ticket in town. But we certainly didn’t plan it that way.”

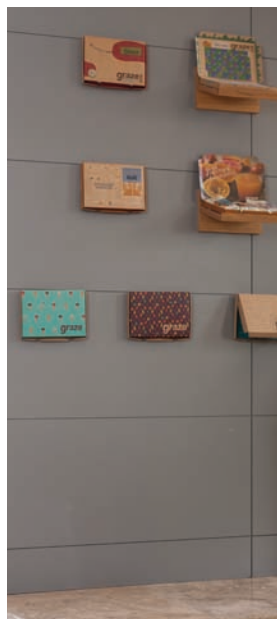
Had the same thing happened in a larger organisation, Fletcher admits, someone might have lost their job over it. “But they shouldn’t; within eight weeks of launching we were getting valuable data on the US market.”

A far bigger challenge than the different US food preferences (see box) was the US postal system. The trial had shown that it was far slower and less reliable than the UK’s: a box could take two weeks to get from the distribution centre in New Jersey to an address in Manhattan.

So Graze developed a ‘Postal Brain’ algorithm to help it navigate the problem. It sent 30,000 dummy packages, with tracking barcodes, across the US, to work out how and when to post its boxes. The data it collected helped establish a strong working relationship with the US Postal Service and premium carriers such as FedEx, and ensured that its direct-to-consumer business model was viable.

Unknown unknowns

Fletcher admits that, although it makes “a really good story”, the postal system issue was highly stressful. “If we couldn’t post our boxes cost effectively and at high quality, the entire business ▶





► model would have crumbled.” As, presumably, would the business’s American dream.

“One of the biggest problems with going overseas as a consumer goods company is that you often don’t realise what the real issue is – the unknown unknown – and it takes you so long to diagnose why something isn’t going quite right, and then change your strategy and respond, that you can lose a lot of money or momentum,” says Fletcher. “Our trial meant that at least we knew this was the major issue in going into America.”

The trial ran in parallel with getting the US business up and running, so Graze was trying to solve the postal problem while buying warehouses, spending millions on capital and hiring a team. It was a risky strategy, Fletcher admits – “but far less risky than the strategy most people use when entering a market like the US; certainly the polar opposite of what Tesco did.”

Tesco spent 20 years considering the move, and did two years intensive on-the-ground research. It built secret test stores and even investigated the contents of American fridges – but ultimately ignored much of what the research told it.

Over the moon

Fletcher wants Graze to be the No 1 healthy snack brand in the world, but admits that the US – where it is working to move the business offline too – is still “an all-consuming challenge”. “The financial numbers are exciting, but you would need to come back to me in five years for a definitive answer as to whether or not we have cracked the US. If we can, the opportunity is on a completely different level.”

Graze is a work in progress, and Fletcher admits he would enjoy it far less if it was “all worked out”. What’s more, he says: “I’m over the moon that we have investors who are excited by the fact this is all a bit experimental, a bit different, and are not scared that occasionally we get burned.” ■

FACTS AND FIGURES

In the UK

Graze has more than 100 available products on its website, and additional formats include sharing bags (a major driver of growth in the UK snacking market) in stores, and single-element big bags online.

The worst performing product was fennel and caraway seeds; the best is lemon drizzle flapjacks.

According to Mintel, consumers are increasingly rejecting crisps in favour of healthier alternatives such as popcorn, meat snacks and nuts, with 40% of category users preferring to eat more nutritious snacks. Its ‘Straight to You’ trend highlights the growing demand for products to be brought to them directly.

Mintel found that, while 54% of consumers are interested in healthier versions of their favourite snacks, the motivations for snacking are largely indulgence-led.

Sainsbury’s, Boots and WH Smith asked Graze to develop the range of ‘Good to Go’ snacks – which are stacked near the tills – after a voluntary ban on ‘guilt lanes’ dented add-on sales. The company sold more than 12m snacks in retailers in the first year to July 2016, with value sales of Good to Go predicted to reach £12m this year.

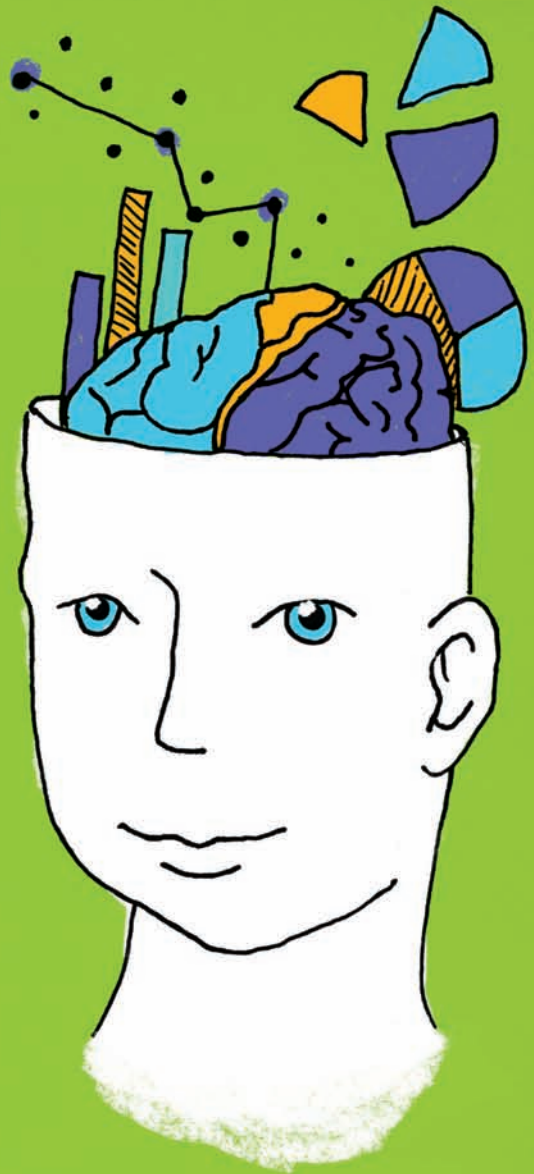
In the US

The salty snacks category has enjoyed steady growth in recent years, with sales increasing 29% between 2010 and 2015, to reach \$10.2bn in 2015, according to Mintel, based on data from IRI.

Around 96% of Graze’s original range no longer exists in the US, replaced by American specials such as cinnamon roll topped with poppy seeds, and pretzels. Graze has localised 90% of its US range.

Graze’s success in the US has spawned a raft of copycats, including Nibblr, which was pulled by owner, General Mills, after only 18 months.

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RIDING THE WAVE

Social media has changed the face of communication, giving everyday people the chance to speak up and be heard. Is it also changing the face of research? By **Bronwen Morgan**

On a Friday evening in July 2016, protesters released hundreds of cockroaches and locusts into two central London branches of burger chain Byron, forcing their closure.

The act was part of a backlash following the company's alleged involvement in an immigration sting against its own workers: 35 members of staff had reportedly been told to attend a Monday morning health and safety meeting, but immigration workers arrived and started interviewing – and arresting – Byron staff on suspicion of breaches in immigration laws.

As news of the arrests spread, Twitter erupted with angry messages aimed at the chain. According to media monitoring platform Visibrain, in the first 24 hours alone, Byron received nearly 17,000 tweets, and the hashtag #BoycottByron was used more than 8,000 times. Twitter was also used – alongside other social media platforms – by activists to mobilise numbers for the insect stunt, as well

as other protests against the chain.

Georgina Parsons, head of communications at Visibrain, says Twitter – more than any other social media platform – has become central to this type of consumer activism. “According to Visibrain’s research, one in five public relations

“ According to Visibrain’s research, one in five public relations disasters break on Twitter, while 94% spread as a result of the platform ”

disasters break on Twitter, while 94% spread as a result of the platform,” she says.

“In spite of its smaller user base, this makes Twitter more influential than Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and even blogs as a tool for activism and consumer complaints.”

Parsons points out that while the ▶



THE GROWTH IN MOBILE CONNECTIVITY

By Sara Ballaben, senior technology analyst at Mintel

Despite a gradual plateauing of smartphone ownership over the course of 2015, the period from September 2015 to April 2016 saw penetration edge upwards again and reach more than eight in 10 UK adults.

Improved software and bigger screens have allowed for a wider and wider range of activities to be performed on smartphones, which has led them to gain an ever more central role in consumers' daily routines. Back in 2013, screen size was identified as being a major barrier to smartphone shopping. However phablets – smartphones with a screen of 5" or larger – now account for 46% of smartphone owners in the UK, and this has broken down the barriers to m-commerce along with many other brand-related online activities, including reading product reviews and liking/following brands on social media.

As consumers increasingly buy into mobile devices, growing

demand for mobile data connection is putting pressure on global wireless capacity, which is likely to accelerate R&D investments into 5G technology. While mobile connectivity has not represented a threat to fixed broadband so far, thanks to lower data speeds, this could change when 5G hits the market in 2020. Competitive speeds of 1Gbit/s could significantly undermine consumers' need for a separate fixed broadband connection, further encouraging mobile connectivity and internet access via smartphones.

Growth in social media use is also fostering the mobile connectivity trend, with 58% of smartphone owners having accessed social media via their handset in the three months to December 2015, and 23% of users choosing a smartphone as their primary access method, rising to 42% of 16- to 24-year-olds.

Such popularity of social media and mobile connectivity strongly

destabilises existing marketing paradigms, as the reach of branded content on these platforms is still limited, and always-connected consumers are consistently challenging brands' claims and choosing rather to trust the opinions of their peers.

While, initially, the growth of peer influence led to the increasingly critical importance of user reviews in arriving at a purchasing decision, bad publicity related to fake reviews is driving scepticism about their authenticity and validity. This is paving the way for an increase in the importance of 'influentials' – consumers that have established themselves as online personalities – for instance through a blog with a considerable number of followers whose choices they are able to influence.

Brands are therefore trying to overcome consumers' reluctance to interact with them on social media by fostering second-degree exposure, either by hiring these

internet personalities to post and share on their social channels to endorse a brand, or by publishing fun and entertaining content that appeals to social media users and effectively creates 'virality' – which can significantly broaden the audience that is exposed to a brand's message.

Furthermore, fast-spreading, end-to-end encryption for messaging services is also likely further to reshape brands' relationships with consumers, as the enhanced security of such services should positively impact trust and confidence in using them. This, coupled with ongoing developments in automated interaction through chatbots, could position messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger as the go-to media for brands communicating with consumers, taking the emphasis away from brands' apps and mobile websites as communication or even transactional channels.

► Byron story is a classic example of bad behaviour being called out by “the Twitter mob”, it’s also an example of the public not necessarily having the full picture before commenting.

“As Byron’s PR team later revealed, the burger chain was simply one part of a much larger immigration initiative organised by the Home Office,” she says. “While it was clear that Byron could have handled the raid better, Twitter’s damning reaction came before all the facts could be released; a common problem with such a real-time social network.”

Regardless of the legitimacy of the uproar against Byron, it’s a stark example of the PR storm that brands must now be prepared to deal with should they put a foot wrong (or appear to, at least).

There are many who believe that this ability to call out perceived bad behaviour represents a shift in the power balance between consumers and brands. According to Dr Nick Baker, managing partner of research agency Quadrangle, this shift has been enabled by the explosion of connectivity – which in itself has evolved with the advent of mobile broadband and increased ownership of mobile devices (see box on p28). He calls it “the second wave of digital”, and thinks it’s one of the biggest disruptors to the world of marketing – and market research – to date.

“It’s actually a much, much bigger change than on the first wave of digital, although it would be impossible without it,” says Baker. “Because what we [researchers] do is try and understand people so that we can direct brands, organisations, the government – whoever it is – in terms of the potential impact of their communications, their plans and their strategies.

“At the core of that are people – customers – who essentially because of the second wave of digital have now got exponentially greater power

in the game. It’s completely transformed relationships between brands and customers; what technology has enabled and what social media has enabled, is an open voice for stuff that was previously private.”

Sharpened focus

Iain O’Neil, digital director at Nuffield Health, is all too aware of how easily brands can be tripped up by this, and the importance of staying alert to the threat.

“It definitely sharpens your focus,” he says. “I know that in the past I’ve done things that were sub-optimal on the basis that I wouldn’t personally hear from people that had been impacted by the decision I’d forced upon them.”

“What technology has enabled and what social media has enabled, is an open voice for stuff that was previously private”

At the time of speaking to *Impact*, Nuffield Health was launching an online class booking tool for 35 gyms the company had recently purchased from Virgin Active. “If it doesn’t work,” he says, “it’s highly likely that the first thing anyone is going to do is tweet about it.

“That’s why we’ve got teams working on a Sunday. We’re not willing to let it go live unless it’s the best possible thing we can ship. The risk is too great. Your personal risk is too great – can you imagine the conversation with the chief executive tomorrow if Twitter is awash with people who are moaning about their digital customer experience?”

Social media as a tool for business

The growth in social media use has

not been restricted to the consumer side. A review by McKinsey of its own survey data between 2005 and 2015 looking into business use of social media (and other related social technologies) suggests three distinct, progressively more sophisticated phases of use of these tools.

According to McKinsey, companies began in the mid-2000s with ‘trial-and-error’ applications, including using platforms like Facebook and YouTube to expand their marketing mix to attract younger consumers, and to interact with existing customers. Around 2010, the focus switched to fostering collaboration, which encompassed using internal platforms to connect employees, as well as gathering insights and managing knowledge.

In the most recent phase, McKinsey’s research suggests that social technology has been ‘supporting and shaping strategy’ – meaning that it has been used to forge both internal and external networks that allow many stakeholders (including those outside a company) to engage in strategy development. More than half of the companies surveyed ‘see further blurring of boundaries among employees, vendors and customers, as social technologies create new processes for marshalling ideas’.

Digital labour

Given the clear opportunities for brands in having these blurred boundaries, Dr Lina Dencik, a senior lecturer in the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University – who specialises in developments in new and social media, civil society and political activism – questions how far the balance of power has really shifted.

“I teach a class on social media and politics and we look at corporations within that, and we look precisely at this question: has it actually made corporations more

ethical because they are now supposedly more accountable to consumers through being more visible?”

Dencik refers to the concept of ‘sousveillance’, which is the notion of monitoring from below, as opposed to surveillance, or monitoring from above. Social media – along with digital and wearable technologies – gives ordinary people the ability to monitor institutions of power in a way that hasn’t been possible before, as it allows people more easily to record the world around them. This, of course, encompasses corporate misbehaviour as well as that of public bodies – such as police violence (see box on p34).

“A lot of people would argue that corporations need now to be more ethical, and behave more properly because their practices are being monitored by consumers, and if consumers don’t like something that they do, not only can they see it, but they can also use social media to campaign around it and make it visible,” Dencik says.

But while she recognises that there are instances in which consumers are empowered by social media, she believes the fact that corporations have been able to use social media to extend their brand – by using consumers as advocates – means it has also been a very useful marketing tool.

It’s been particularly useful, she says, in enhancing the ability of companies to shift the focus of customer communication to be around experiencing their brand, rather than just selling products. And beyond this, she says, companies are using social media to turn consumers into a form of ‘digital labour’.

People data

“Corporations have been able somehow to take advantage of the fact that you now have a whole crowd that you can source knowledge and information from,” she says. “Like Coca Cola inviting users to design its bottles, for example. It’s essentially free labour. Consumers end up feeling like

they’re part of a brand, but they’re actually doing work for it.”

Beyond this surface benefit, Shawn O’Neal, former vice-president of global marketing data and analytics at Unilever, and founder of SO-Analytics, believes the availability of social media information is of huge benefit to brands. He says that ‘people data’, which he defines as “the personal and social media information that is being collected every day by every transaction that we as modern human beings are making in the world around us” allows greater personalisation than ever before.

“Making advertising a reportable, trackable, measurable currency overturns 100+ years of scattered spending and hopeful intentions,” he says. “This concept began with the internet bubble, but has been significantly limited by technology until storage became almost costless via Hadoop [an open source distributed data storage and processing framework] and cloud solutions over the past eight or so years.”

TURNING SOCIAL MEDIA NEGATIVITY INTO POSITIVITY

By Ruxandra Mindruta, community manager, Brandwatch

According to *Harvard Business Review* the volume of tweets targeted at brands and their Twitter service handles grew 2.5 times from 2013-2015. Similarly, the percentage of people who have used Twitter for customer service leapt nearly 70%, from 22% to 37% from 2013-14. Research from McKinsey shows that 30% of social media users prefer to contact via social media than by phone (17% of those over 55). With this many people engaging with companies on social, there is a high potential for negative comments to be directed at your brand. Here are a few tips to manage this:

Respond quickly to complaints

Because of the immediacy of social media, there is an expectation of a quick response. Even if a brand isn’t able to resolve a query directly, it should respond by acknowledging the customer to

prevent things escalating. A quick response can also turn an easy-to-solve complaint very quickly into a positive, and ultimately you may create a brand ambassador from a complainer.

When phone company O2 came back to customers with a human touch after its Twitter account became flooded with complaints during a service breakdown, it dramatically changed sentiment towards the brand.

Don’t delete comments. Don’t get defensive. Don’t pretend you were hacked

Keep your cool no matter how far you are pushed by a customer, and never forget, it is a public forum. It’s tempting to delete or respond angrily if a customer criticises your business, but this rarely helps your cause. After Amy’s Baking Company appeared on an episode of *Kitchen Nightmares* its

Facebook page was inundated with complaints from customers detailing their own personal experiences. The owner firstly responded with “Most of your icons show you to be fat, overweight losers with nothing in your lives but disgusting people”. After continuing the rant for a few more posts, Amy then claimed to have been hacked and that the FBI was investigating the issue.

Acknowledge mistakes

Depending on the seriousness of your mistake, speed is also crucial. When a KitchenAid employee accidentally tweeted a derogatory tweet about president Obama’s grandmother, meant for a personal account, speed was important, as was elevating the authority from where the apology came. Its head of brand Cynthia Soledad responded personally – via the company account – within eight

minutes of the original tweet and KitchenAid was ultimately applauded for its swift action, rather than berated for the foolishness of its initial accident.

Keep complex issues offline

If you can’t resolve the problem within a couple of responses, it’s usually better to offer to continue the conversation via a more appropriate medium.

Monitor your chosen platforms carefully

If you don’t have the capacity to monitor a particular platform, then don’t set up a profile. You’re not obliged to be present on all forms of social media and customers will expect to use it as a two-way channel if you are. There are various options for monitoring your brand, including robust social media monitoring platforms with alerts so you never miss a mention.



HOW TO STAY RELEVANT IN THE ERA OF BIG DATA

By Frank Hedler, director of advanced analytics at Simpson Carpenter

With the continuing rise of big data, the landscape of the insights industry is changing dramatically. For decades, market research professionals have been the main providers of consumer insights, but now it seems that big data has turned insights into a commodity. With the rise of digital, businesses have access to increasing volumes of enterprise data from various sources. Paired with Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence, insights can be created almost automatically.

In this era of big changes, the market research industry faces three major challenges in the struggle to stay relevant:

Accessibility – The majority of successful big data stories involve data that market research agencies do not have access to: enterprise data such as website traffic,

customer information and transactional data are all used to create tailored propositions and to predict consumer behaviour. These data sources are owned by our clients, and they usually do not share these with agencies. Instead, they keep investing in technology and human resources to use this data internally, and to generate insights from it without external help.

Skillsets – We, as an industry, are still catching up in terms of technology stack and skillsets. Many market research firms have introduced the role of the data scientist, and started hiring professionals with computer science or similar degrees previously not found in market research. But we cannot tackle this issue with recruitment alone. We all have to become more tech savvy.

Mindset – We still depend too much on traditional survey methods, because this is what we know and what we feel comfortable with. And so, millions of surveys are completed every year, most online, and increasingly on mobile devices. We are relying on online access panels to supply ever fresh samples for often extremely small target groups. And we are still boring respondents with ratings scales and matrix questions, despite the talk about gamification and creating engaging survey experiences. A change in our mindset is needed; we must free ourselves from survey research and look for new, fresher sources of insight.

One possible route, of course, is social media. But we need to look beyond the main platforms. Social media is wherever users create and share content. There are countless

product and service review sites, consumer forums and blogs offering a vast range of consumer experiences and personal views on all aspects of everyday life.

Product reviews, for example, are an increasingly important source of information for consumers. When deciding which phone to buy or hotel to book, we are more and more influenced by the opinion of others, as we research and compare alternatives. It is therefore essential for businesses to know what consumers are writing and reading about their services – and how they stack up against their competitors. Using text mining and analytics, data from customer forums, blogs and review sites can provide richer and deeper insight about a business's strengths and weaknesses than any quantitative survey could ever offer.

► O’Neal believes that the combination of evolving computing power and software, the growth in the options available for analysing and transforming data, and the recent EU GDPR law change – which aims to give citizens back control of their personal data and simplify the regulatory environment for international business by unifying EU regulation – together make a “perfect storm for the creation, access and use of people data for dynamic algorithmic decision making at scale”.

The research revolution

What’s more, O’Neal also feels that the widespread access to this information has the power to transform ‘traditional’ research.

“Research has always tried to harness and understand people, narrowing the field of vision to consumers and statistically significant segments,” he says. “With people data, it becomes a question of simplifying incredibly robust data sets and insights, rather than attempting to harness enough data to create a simple takeaway.”

A compelling example of the power of this freely-available data is Football Whispers, a football transfer predictor built by research firm MMR International.

Developed alongside the Department of Computer Science at the University of Sheffield, Football Whispers uses big data, social listening and a specially designed algorithm to take transfer rumours from the web and social media, and use this information to calculate the actual likelihood of each rumour coming to pass. The algorithm takes account of the volume of ‘chatter’, the authority of the sources and the recency of the story, to produce this calculation.

MMR International is now working on replicating the approach within the financial services sector. This would see the company using social media to understand what ►



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TOP TEN TWITTER MOMENTS OF 2015

While social activism and displays of solidarity dominated the Twittersphere in 2015, there were also some more light-hearted trends.

#PrayForParis and #JeSuisCharlie

In January, terrorists attacked the offices of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris, leading to people across the world rallying around the phrase 'Je Suis Charlie' to show their support and grief. Ten months later, in November, Paris saw further attacks on its cultural centres, leading to the hashtag #PrayForParis emerging as a top trend, and #PorteOuverte, a hashtag intended to help people in Paris looking for shelter, also becoming popular.

#BlackLivesMatter

This hashtag, a unifying message encompassing a number of incidents involving police and black citizens, was tweeted 9m times in 2015.

#HomeToVote and #LoveWins

The #HomeToVote hashtag became popular when Irish citizen expats shared their experience of returning home to vote in the gay marriage referendum on May 21, while #LoveWins represented the Supreme Court's decision to legalise gay marriage in the US on June 26.

#RefugeesWelcome

People around the world used this hashtag to call on European countries to grant entrance to refugees seeking asylum from the Middle East and Africa.

#IStandWithAhmed

Fourteen-year-old Ahmed Mohammed from Texas was detained and handcuffed at his school for bringing in a homemade digital clock that authorities feared was a bomb. In less than six hours, the hashtag was used 370,000 times worldwide, and garnered responses from public figures including President Obama.

#BBCDebate, #ArgentinaDebate, #elxn22, #GE2015, #IndiaVotes

Discussions on major elections around the world were a big part of the Twitter conversation in 2015.

#FIFAWWC

Tweets about the FIFA Women's World Cup were viewed 9bn times between June 6 and July 5, making the tournament one of the largest global sporting events of the year.

#PlutoFlyby

Buzz around the NASA New Horizons spacecraft, which came within 7,750 miles of Pluto's surface and captured close-up images, generated 1m tweets on July 14.

#BlueandBlack or #WhiteandGold

More than 4.4m tweets were generated on February 26 and 27 as people around the world argued over the colour of a dress shown in a picture that had been shared online.

@Caitlyn_Jenner

In June, Caitlyn Jenner's Twitter account gathered more than 1m followers in just over four hours, breaking the record set by @POTUS (President Obama).

(Figures sourced from <https://2015.twitter.com/most-influential>)

► customers want, and big data analytics to apply the algorithm to identify which needs – if addressed – would have the most impact on customer experience.

Social listening

Beyond these complex algorithms, Ellie Osborne, research director at MMR International, is a strong believer in the future of social intelligence for unlocking passive insight in a way that is more comparable to traditional primary research.

Osborne's clients – in her role at a previous agency – had mostly been relying on trackers to gauge customer sentiment, when she came across a project where another agency had set up a Google + group to gather similar types of insight.

She felt that the approach addressed a challenge that she had frequently come up against – of stakeholders querying how questions had been asked, and therefore doubting the validity of the subsequent responses.

"The great thing with social media and making use of online discourse is that it's direct, it's not framed at all," she says. "You're getting that in-the-moment spontaneity and I feel the commentary that you can find is so valuable. There are so many insights to be drawn from it."

Osborne concedes that there is, as she puts it, "a bit of a snob factor" related to this approach – she's heard many dismiss it as "just a form of desk research".

"And if you strip it back to bare bones, yes, I suppose it is desk research," she says. "But you've got all that spontaneity and commentary and in-the-moment feeling that people share these days. The world has changed and there's so much out there we should be making use of as researchers, as part of our toolkit. We shouldn't be ignoring it."

Firefighting

Another aspect of using this approach is that organisations monitoring sentiment analysis – big organisations often have whole teams dedicated to this – are not only able to track any negative feeling towards their brand, but can intervene to try to change the conversation (see box on p30).

Peter Markey, brand and communications director at insurance provider Aviva, sees the importance of staying abreast of this. He says that the rise in popularity of price comparison websites has left insurance companies less able to rely on repeat custom, and so more reliant on brand advocacy. He also has experience to draw on from his previous role at Post Office.

"One of the things I introduced at Post Office was that if we had a specific amount of feedback about a certain branch in a given timeframe, we set up an immediate response

mechanic, where we would get people on the ground to investigate and help sort it out,” says Markey. And, he adds, this information is useful not only from a PR perspective, but also from an insight perspective.

“ The what and why is the crucial distinction of why there will always be a role for market research – to help understand why people did stuff ”

“Part of the challenge in retail particularly – and Post Office is a great example of this – is that there are clearly certain hours that are pinch points, which your data won’t always show you because it gets smoothed a bit, unless you’re looking at it forensically.

“So you may find that while NPS [Net Promoter Score] overall is good, it’s because between the hours of 8am and 11am and 3pm and 5pm it’s terrific, but it’s awful over lunchtime. And that’s where this sort of immediate feedback is actually quite helpful – to help you get under the skin of what customers are feeling. The data is one thing, but you can’t beat real everyday stories.”

Industry implications

For Quadrangle’s Baker, the ability to do this has implications for the research industry, not just in how information is collected, but for the whole insight model.

“If you look at the research industry you need to consider two basic lines of thought,” he says. “One is around methodology in terms of how we collect– or can collect – information because the old or the traditional research model

says: ‘ask questions, get answers’. Well, actually, the original research question was: ‘have a look’. Mass observation – now, in a way, that has already come back. It’s mini observation rather than mass observation, but it’s the same principle, right?

“So I think there are massive implications in terms of moving away from a relatively binary mode of: ‘ask questions, get answer’. What we now know from behavioural economics is that some of the answers that you get if you ask questions aren’t right.

“Now, you can derive questions that really are what we traditionally use research to help us answer, from that data. But you can’t tell why people did stuff. That’s the critical part. The what and why is the crucial distinction of why there will always be a role for market research – to help understand why people did stuff. ▶



► “It’s just that that role will change because lots of stuff you’ll already have the answer to, because everybody will start to go ‘data first’.”

Be a part of it

Tim Britton, head of strategy and transformation, r2i at PwC UK, and former UK CEO at YouGov, agrees that the role of researchers has fundamentally changed, and he sees it as part and parcel of the big data movement (see box on p32).

Where previously brands had to rely on primary research – and perhaps some transactional data – to understand their customer properly, he says the advent of social media has meant that they can now hear the voice of their customers very directly. As a result, the production of data – something that he feels researchers have historically got caught up in – is becoming not only a less useful skill, but a less significant part of the business. What’s more, he says, it would be foolish for market researchers to ignore the power of social media as a source of data.

“We have to understand it and be part of it,” he says. “It’s not about it being separate and other – as an industry we need to be able to draw upon social media data; we need to understand what it means and we need to understand how to access it. It’s another tool that we need to have at our disposal. It’s not a question of this thing happening over there – it should be part of what we’re doing.”

But, he warns, brands relying on social media data must be wary of “squeaky wheel syndrome” – that is, not having an understanding of how important the noise that’s being made on social media genuinely is for the brand. And you can’t understand that, he says, unless you have a more detailed view of what’s

happening. Which is where market research comes in.

“If you’re only listening to people on Twitter or Facebook or wherever, you get their opinion at that moment in time on the particular issue they’re talking about.

“What you don’t know is how they act more generally as consumers, citizens, voters, whatever it is that you’re interested in. And that’s what research can give you. That’s where we’re able to say: ‘that really matters because they’re not just a loud group of consumers, but they’re economically active over here and therefore they have a disproportionate impact over there’.

“In other words – knowing whether they need to take this seriously and do something, or instead realise that while the people they’re listening to are of course important – in so far as they are their customers – they are not a particularly influential group.

“It’s that kind of understanding that our industry can bring to bear.” ■

THE SECOND WAVE OF DIGITAL

Kick-started by the launch of the iPhone in 2007, the defining truth about the second wave of digital is that it makes personalisable technologies almost universally accessible. This is driving a permanent and irreversible transformation in how we live, work, play, communicate and, most crucially, consume.

For some sectors and brands it is not too alarmist to describe this as an existential threat – one well captured in the brutal Silicon Valley mantra that ‘If you’re not a start-up, you’re a turnaround’.

What makes the second wave of digital so powerful and empowering for people is the way that three distinct developments have come together to create a new consumer reality:

1 The emergence of mobile as the ‘third computing platform’ (after mainframes and PCs) across a wide range of connectable – and, therefore, networkable – devices. Mobile’s significance is

growing exponentially as both the capabilities and global penetration of smart devices continue to increase rapidly. In less than a decade, the demand side has become networked, with consumers able to connect to each other and with supply-side organisations as they choose. Increasingly, consumers expect to do business on their own terms – deciding who, when, where and on what basis – as the norm.

2 The widespread availability of fast, high bandwidth connectivity (broadband, WiFi, 4G) and the apparently unlimited appetite among consumers for being continuously connected. Ongoing improvements in speed, bandwidth/network capacity and what smart devices can do are feeding this appetite.

3 The exponential growth of social media and other platforms across connected, often mobile devices. These networks are

always on, enabling any number of people to come together, communicate, and to discover, receive and share information of all kinds in real-time. The speed at which consumers have not only absorbed these networks into their lives, but have also learned to use and leverage them for their own benefit, is remarkable.

The combination of these three factors is game-changing for brands in a way that the first wave of digital never was. What we are seeing now goes beyond disruption; it is a permanent and irreversible shift in market power to the demand-side.

But the second wave of digital isn’t really about digital, it’s about customers. And it poses a profound challenge to our industry, calling into question established thinking and approaches, and raising important questions about how, through insight, we can best interpret a consumer world that is increasingly fluid, fickle and fast.

The need isn’t for yet more digital research methods; it’s for a better insight system and set of tools that bring together research and data to help clients stay close to what matters to customers – tools that show the ways consumers perceive value in different buying modes; how attitudes towards traditional concepts such as loyalty have moved on; how expectations and behaviours are impacted by rational and emotional influences; and how emerging concepts such as popularity and engagement are becoming more important to measure.

In the second wave of digital, where insight is a strategic imperative, our ability to take the lead on providing the answers to these types of questions will define our continued relevance and value as an industry.

Alison Camps, deputy chairman and partner, Quadrangle



7.43pm, Silicon Valley, Northern California.

On June 29, 2007 the first iPhone went on sale, kick starting the second wave of digital.

The second wave of digital profoundly and irreversibly changes what customers know, think and do.

The deep underlying consumer truths have not changed. Nor has the real world become any less vital.

Yet the second wave of digital is transforming the way people do business and engage with brands.

Consumers now do things and expect things and leverage things as the norm that simply weren't possible just a few years ago.

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How #research helped @twitter conquer the world

As Twitter celebrates its 10th year in business, **Jake Steadman** and **Matt Taylor** of its research team talk to *Robert Bain* about helping the social media giant prove its value

You've seen the photo. Ellen DeGeneres, accompanied by Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence, Lupita Nyong'o and a crowd of other A-list stars, grinning into the camera for a group selfie at the 2014 Oscars ceremony. DeGeneres tweeted the image with the message, 'Best photo ever. #oscars'. More than three million people have since retweeted it.

The very language that it takes to describe the incident reveals the impact Twitter has had on our world: tweets, retweets, hashtags... before 2006, none of this meant anything to anyone.

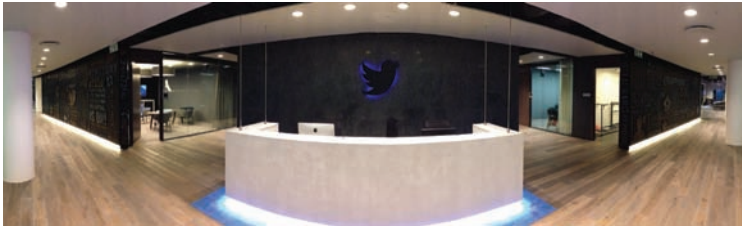
For a quirky social network whose original USP is what it can't do – namely, send messages of more than 140 characters – Twitter's cultural influence has been astonishing. It has helped bring down governments. It has created superstars. It's the first place to look for major public announcements – everything from political resignations to celebrity deaths – and the current US presidential election is the third to have had Twitter at its heart.

Half a billion tweets a day are sent by 313m monthly users, helping to make the site a \$2bn (£1.5bn) ad platform, with a further \$224m (£168m) a year coming from data licensing. But it still needs to grow these numbers if it is to become profitable (the company's own adjusted figures show a profit because it excludes the cost of share issues but, officially, Twitter is still a loss-maker).

To support this effort, the company has a 60-strong global research function, including teams at the company's San Francisco headquarters that focus on user experience and product development research, rolling out new features to 1% of users and seeing what happens. Other teams look at ways to make the site safer and deal with misuse and abuse.

The international research team, which numbers about 20 – including 12 in the UK – has a simple mission: to 'prove and improve' the value of Twitter in each country.

Jake Steadman and Matt Taylor were among the first researchers to join Twitter outside the US. Steadman began by leading research in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and now also oversees the Latin America and Asia Pacific regions as international research director. Taylor has just moved from European head of research to consumer insight lead. Both are prolific tweeters. A neon sign on the wall of their office says #lovewhereyouwork – and they do. "We do ▶



ABOVE Research team members, 12 based in the UK offices, are out to 'prove and improve' the value of Twitter



an intellectually stimulating, creative job for a company we're passionate about," says Steadman. "It doesn't get much better."

Twitter's research addresses three big questions: what the platform can do, who's using it, and whether ad campaigns are working. A big chunk of the work is thought leadership research to explain to the world what Twitter is for and why it matters – particularly important in markets where the platform is less well established.

So what is Twitter for? "Twitter is news," Taylor says. "It's as simple as that. Twitter's not for the people around you in your life – there are other social media platforms for that. Twitter is for what you're most passionate about. I'm a massive football fan, and all of the best news and the most exciting content happens first on Twitter. If you're into food or politics it's the same."

The current business challenges facing Twitter's research team are reflected in three words that keep cropping up in our conversation: mobile, video and live.

Mobile has been Twitter's main focus for a while: 80% of its traffic comes through mobile devices, significantly ahead of the trend for internet use generally. As a result, everything Twitter does is 'mobile first', Steadman says.

"The big shift for us – and the industry in general – is the move to video," says Taylor. "Mobile video is one of the biggest growth areas, not just for advertisers, but for people using

TIMELINE: KEY MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF TWITTER

2006 Twitter's co-founder Jack Dorsey (@jack) sends the first tweet, with the immortal words: "just setting up my twttr".

2007 Thanks to a suggestion from developer Chris Messina, the hashtag is born.

2008 Barack Obama tweets heavily during the US presidential

election campaign, and becomes the most followed person. He has since been overtaken by @katyperry, @justinbieber and @taylorswift13.

2009 US Airways Flight 1549 lands in the Hudson River – the news is broken in a tweet, before traditional media sources know about the story.

2010 Twitter launches Promoted Tweets, allowing advertisers to place their messages in users' feeds.

2011 The Arab Spring pro-democracy movement in Egypt unfolds on Twitter.

2012 The election victory tweet of @barackobama, simply saying "Four

more years", with a photo of the President and Michelle embracing, becomes the most retweeted tweet.

2013 Twitter goes public on the New York Stock Exchange, with a market valuation of \$25bn.

2014 Ellen DeGeneres (@TheEllenShow) tweets the famous

Oscars selfie and gets more than three million retweets – beating President Obama's record.

2015 Google Search incorporates relevant tweets into its results.

2016 The ability to include live video streams from Periscope – which Twitter acquired in 2015 – in tweets is introduced.



LEFT Jake Steadman and Matt Taylor adhere to the message in the neon sign that adorns their Twitter office wall

their time. We've seen huge increases in people posting video."

And now video is going live. Twitter recently acquired the live-streaming app Periscope, through which users can broadcast live to the internet from their phones. Separately, it has begun to host live streams of major TV shows and events, including the Wimbledon tennis championships, NFL American football games and the Democratic and Republican party conventions, with video streams accompanied by curated feeds of relevant tweets.

Steadman is quick to point out that Twitter doesn't just analyse its own data. "We are Twitter's research team, which is different from being a team that just researches Twitter data," he says. Analysing data from Twitter and other social media probably represents about 10% of the team's work, he says.

Twitter data offers a number of specifics – speed, raw 'in-the-moment' insight, huge global reach, and an ever-growing longitudinal dataset. But it's just one tool in the research team's toolkit, and it's most powerful when combined with other sources.

Taylor says: "The most important thing we do with our data is try to integrate it into other types of research. As soon as it all comes together it becomes amazing. For example, it elevates qual because you can combine it with behaviours. You can say, let's take everybody who's tweeted about Brand A in the past six months; we know that they're interested in it because they've talked about it, so let's take

them all off to a separate room and talk about it. It just connects everything in a really cool way."

Taylor describes the range of research techniques Twitter uses as "almost anything". "Everything from neuroscience to implicit attitudinal testing to research communities, quant, qual, everything else."

Observational research has helped the team understand how people use Twitter in a way that surveys couldn't. One piece of research conducted with the TV marketing body Thinkbox showed how people carefully redrafted and honed tweets about TV shows, to

“The most important thing we do with our data is try to integrate it into other types of research. As soon as it all comes together it becomes amazing. It just connects everything in a really cool way”

try to make them funny enough to earn a retweet. When asked about this in surveys, however, users denied doing it – even though they believed that a majority of other people probably did.

When evaluating clients' campaigns, it's important that Twitter is able to speak the language of the rest of the media research world, says Steadman. "There's an assumption that it's about social data and, therefore, we're just looking at our own dataset, but we don't at all. When it comes to measuring the effectiveness of advertising, there has been 100 years' worth of thought that has gone into that, and the thought



ABOVE Twitter is 10 years old this year, and has had a meteoric rise since Jack Dorsey sent the first tweet in 2006

▶ that was applied to TV in the 1960s may well apply to Twitter today. We apply all that learning that our industry has.”

The Twitter team deliberately works with a wide range of agencies and makes sure it gets multiple pitches for every project. Researchers in each country select local suppliers to cover their market. In the UK, Twitter has worked with, among others, Nielsen, Millward Brown, TNS, Crowd DNA, Research Now; qual agencies Flamingo and Firefly Millward Brown; neuroscience specialists Neuro-Insight; and

“ You have a fact about consumers that will lead you to improve your business's health. If people listen to that and apply it, you can change the business. But you have to be able to persuade them ”

online community provider C Space.

As always, new research projects are in the pipeline. A piece of semiotic research conducted with Flamingo sought to uncover the secrets of effective tweeting, and eventually boiled it down to ‘the 11 tweets that work’.

More things along these lines are on the way, Steadman says. “The semiotics project is a really good example of pioneering research work that is being applied to Twitter data, and there will be a lot of really exciting things to come – particularly from the Twitter UK research team – in the next few months.”

For future research, Steadman wants to look into how people use Twitter in different markets – in particular, in Japan, where language differences mean Twitter is a very

different beast. “One hundred and forty characters in Japanese gives you a lot more freedom, and it has created a different user case in the way people use Twitter there. It’s fascinating – we’re doing some work to understand how people use that, and what that adds for them, in a way that it doesn’t in other languages.”

A key element of the research team’s culture is its creativity, Steadman says. This means experimenting with innovative methodologies, and coming up with interesting and unexpected ways to communicate the findings. Steadman encourages all the company’s researchers to ask themselves: “What if Keynote and PowerPoint didn’t exist? How would you get your story across?”

Taylor agrees that it’s vital to make the communication of research powerful and memorable. “There’s no other discipline I can think of in business that can be as impactful as research,” he says. “You have a fact here about consumers that will lead you to improve your business’s health. If people listen to that and apply it, you can change the business. But you have to be able to persuade them.”

Often, that means doing something different. “Every single marketing director in the world comes into work and they’ll have pitches from media owners, from agencies,” he says. “They see a sea of PowerPoints. The only way you can stand out in that is by attempting to be as distinct as possible.”

That’s why they have done things such as making a documentary film about music fans on Twitter, to present the results of an ethnographic study. And it’s why Steadman recently found himself sitting on a stage wearing a neuroscience helmet, with his brainwaves being displayed live on a screen, to report the results of a piece of research on people’s emotional responses to Twitter.

Steadman knows that his live brainwaves didn’t actually reveal any insight – but that’s beside the point. “It’s the theatre of it. It makes people remember it in a way that they wouldn’t do if you give them a bunch of charts that technically explain it.”

The result is that when Twitter’s researchers have something to say, they always have their colleagues’ attention.

“In some businesses you invite 30 people to the debrief of the project and eight people turn up,” says Taylor. “Here, you invite 30 people and 30 people show, take notes and listen.” ■

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“ CNBC is not a sit-back experience. It is something people are watching to help them – to give them that competitive edge ”

The broadcast business

At business broadcaster CNBC, **David Evans** has an enviable source of data on its C-suite audience – and, with the right insights, it can build that audience as viewing habits change. By *Rob Gray*

The EMEA headquarters of CNBC International is exactly where you'd expect to find a leading business broadcaster – an impressive skyscraper in the City of London, close to St Paul's. With the button-free lift interiors, it took me a moment to realise that if I wanted to rise like a bull market I had better step back out again in search of some numbers. It's always a numbers game in the City.

But once the high-tech lift system has been navigated, everything – reassuringly – appears just as it is supposed to on arrival at reception on CNBC's floor. The channel's live content plays on TV screens and a state-of-the-art broadcast studio is visible through soundproof glass. Earlier in the day, CNBC's morning shows *Squawk Box Europe* and *Street Signs Europe* were broadcast from here. But it's midday now, so the studio is deserted; America has woken up. By combining programming from EMEA, the US and Asia, CNBC positions itself as providing the perfect 24-hour global business briefing. To deliver that, of course, it must understand both its audience and its advertisers. With this in mind, CNBC International appointed David Evans as head of data and insight in April 2016.

Evans has a huge amount of experience in the media sector, having cut his teeth at broadcaster Eurosport for six years and, more recently, working with clients such as the Content Marketing Association and Digital Cinema Media through his own consultancy, DRES.

"My role is, primarily, commercial – so the main purpose is to serve the commercial team in helping them win business," Evans explains. "That means working at the beginning of discussions with clients to prove the value of



CV
DAVID
EVANS

2016
Head of data and insight,
CNBC International

2009 – 2016
Founder, DRES Consulting. Clients included Content Marketing Association and Digital Cinema Media

2008 – 2009
Business director,
Mediatel Group

2004 – 2008
Director of media and advertising,
BDRC Continental

1998 – 2004
Head of research,
Eurosport Television

CNBC, demonstrate the quality of our audience, and demonstrate the quality of our advertising solutions as well. Where, probably, a lot of media owners in this space have concentrated simply on the reach argument, I think it is very important to show the quality of our audience. That is key."

That audience is a collection of the world's business elite, looking for breaking business and financial news – and hoping to see it before anyone else. According to CNBC, its output reaches more CEOs, CFOs, and decision-makers than any of its closest rivals, and members of its core audience are earning €225,000-plus a year, predominately.

As influential business decision-makers and high-net-worth individuals, this audience is attractive to both B2B and upscale consumer advertisers. Unsurprisingly, CNBC's major advertising verticals are finance, luxury goods, technology, foreign direct investment and travel.

Evans is working on beefing up effectiveness programmes "to justify the investment and prove that what we are saying at the beginning is actually true". In particular, he is putting benchmarks in place to provide "some tangible answers" on the delivery of specific advertising objectives – something CNBC International has not done before.

Viewer strategy

Although Evans' main focus is on working with advertisers, he is also involved in audience strategy. The central question he is wrestling with here is, how to increase consumption of CNBC content. Should the emphasis be on attracting new people or encouraging current consumers to view more often? ▶

▶ Another burning issue centres on moving viewers from watching programmes just on TV to consuming them digitally as well. In the week beginning 11 July 2016, CNBC experimented by streaming its flagship morning show, *Street Signs*, on Facebook. Clearly, for commercial reasons, CNBC could not run its ads on Facebook, so its social media team used the ad breaks to deliver immersive content, including a behind-the-scenes look at CNBC's headquarters and the chance to 'meet' some of its journalists.

"It's about approaching things from a different angle," says Evans. "We are trying to reach not only the business leaders of today, but also the business leaders of tomorrow. Facebook is not a natural habitat for top-tier CEOs. If you look at our audience via Facebook, it is much more in that 25 to 34 age bracket – aspirational people who are, perhaps, studying at the moment, or in the early stages of moving up the career ladder. Whereas the TV product is much more geared to the people who are at the top of the tree."

At the time of writing, CNBC is poring over the metrics and weighing up how to proceed with its social and digital evolution – but, one way or another, proceed it will. Changing viewing habits make this inescapable. According to Ofcom, 16- to 24-year-olds are embracing on-demand TV enthusiastically; live TV accounts for a mere 36% of their daily viewing, a decrease of 14 percentage points in two years. It is obvious which way the wind is blowing. "Our mobile play has got to be a lot stronger; our digital play has got to be a lot stronger," says Evans. "You have to play in that playground."

From audience to events

The day after Evans joined the company in April, CNBC International announced the launch of CNBC Catalyst, an in-house full-service agency. Under the auspices of CNBC vice-president, Max Raven, Catalyst has been created as a single destination for brands targeting the C-suite. It brings together ad sales executives, brand strategists, the content studio and, of course, data and insight expertise.

The latter is evidently a crucial part of the mix. Evans was, in effect, the final piece of the jigsaw and Catalyst's menu of services can be summed up in the shorthand ABCDE: audience, brand consultancy, content, data and events & experiences. "Because we are targeting such a

specialist, niche audience, once you reach them via one means, it makes sense to extend that by other paths," says Evans. "The client can come to us and we can have a macro approach with advertising, but it can be micro as well, because we have got the influence."

"We have 5,000 CEOs coming through our offices every year, so if we need to open our black book and get a roundtable of 12 industry experts that our clients want to speak to, we are able to do that as well. Our data and insights help underpin all the different aspects. We can deliver the data, which helps devise the brand strategy."

Increasingly, briefs arriving from clients are about thought leadership and brand

positioning. While TV advertising may be part of the solution, it is not necessarily so. The whole point of Catalyst is to broaden the client offer and CNBC is reaping some dividends from this way of thinking. It has, for example,

launched events and Facebook content for the oil company Total, around its energy challenges of tomorrow, and is working with professional services firm EY on seminars and events looking at the implications of Brexit.

Live events are of interest to Evans, not only as a revenue stream, but also as a potential means of getting "up close and personal" with the CNBC audience. With the proviso that it will always be a comfortable experience for event attendees, he is keen to have "observational, ethnographic-type conversations with people", and gather information in an engaging way.

CEOs are people too

This is all part of Evans' desire to further CNBC's understanding of business leaders. The goal is not only to find out more about how they consume news content, but also to build a broader perspective and learn more about how they behave as individuals.

"We want to explore the life of a C-suite executive a lot more deeply than we have done in the past," says Evans. "We are mining everything we have on that, internally, producing the story. Once we have exhausted what we've got here, then we can work out where those gaps are, and lay on top the other areas that we need to explore."

The likelihood is that, once the team has a clearer picture of what is required, it will hire a specialist agency to further its insight into ▶

“Our mobile play has got to be a lot stronger; our digital play has got to be a lot stronger. You have to play in that playground”



FACTS AND FIGURES

CNBC is the No 1 business and financial news media outlet (TV+Online) in Europe, reaching 6.9m consumers each month (Source: Ipsos Affluent Europe 2016, 2015).

CNBC has three headquarters – Englewood Cliffs in the US, London in EMEA, and Singapore in APAC.

There are two shows broadcast from CNBC's London office – *Squawk Box Europe*, with Geoff

Cutmore, Steve Sedgwick and Karen Tso, from 6am – 9am BST; and *Street Signs Europe*, with Louisa Bojesen and Julia Chatterley, from 9am – 10am BST.

With a cross-platform monthly reach of 13.4% in the Jan-Dec 2015 fieldwork period, CNBC is ahead of Bloomberg (11.7%), Time (10.1%), Financial Times (10%), Economist (9%), International New York Times (7.7%), Forbes (6.9%), Wall Street Journal (6.3%) and Fortune (4%).

The CNBC network has grown its total reach by 3% year on year. CNBC TV viewership increased year on year in key markets such as: the UK (+15%), Germany (+12%), Spain (+22%) and Switzerland (+33%).

In the days after the UK's EU referendum, "unprecedented levels" of people turned to CNBC for information. Unique visitors to the website increased by more than 300%, and social followers grew by more than 10%.



► C-suite executives. “It’s for us to be experts in that and for us to educate our clients,” Evans elaborates. “I am especially keen to create the kind of insight that tells stories.”

While the parameters for this bespoke research are still taking shape, CNBC is not short of access to other information. It buys the syndicated Ipsos Affluent Survey for Europe, US and Asia and uses GlobalWebIndex (GWI) for digital insight. Given its mix of at-home and in-office viewing, CNBC does not regard TV metering as particularly useful.

As well as subscribing to GWI’s main survey platform – where it can glean information on 300,000 respondents every year across its main regions – CNBC also tags up its website to monitor actual, as well as claimed, behaviour. Users are sometimes re-contacted, either to delve deeper on advertising effectiveness work or to assess the impact of other content.

Advertising content

In its many forms, content is vital to the success of the business, so – in the first week of May – CNBC launched a new international series, *Marketing.Media.Money*. Airing as a 30-minute, monthly TV feature with companion digital and social content, it aims to navigate the \$600bn global advertising market. Rather than focus on the creative side of advertising, it explores how advertising meshes into the global economy. One major trend it addresses repeatedly is the

ABOVE Content is crucial to CNBC, which has recently launched a new programme, *Marketing.Media.Money*, exploring how advertising meshes into the global economy

“Our Facebook audience is much more in the 25 to 34 age bracket – aspirational people, studying or in the early stages of their careers”

need for media owners to adapt their business model in response to competitive disruption and changing patterns of media consumption – issues with which CNBC is itself wrestling.

Charlie Crowe, the media entrepreneur and chairman of global publishing and events company C Squared, is a regular guest contributor to the programme. In his view, by producing a show that analyses the changing media landscape, quizzes senior marketers on the tough calls they make, and tells the financial

story of the sector, CNBC is bolstering its credentials as an expert in this complicated field. “If the show does its job and offers insights that cannot be found elsewhere – and manages to make the link between the

finance and investment community and the media business – then that should rightly confer a halo effect on the show, and so on CNBC,” says Crowe. “And that’s not a bad thing.”

CNBC’s data shows that viewers watch the channel for a purpose. “It’s not a sit-back experience,” says Evans. “It is something they are watching to help them – to give them that competitive edge, whether they are personal investors, or from a business perspective.”

The challenge for Evans and his team in the future is to take insight to the next level by unearthing tangible examples of how content has given people competitive advantage, and to get an even better handle on how the titans of the C-suite live their lives. ■

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Making a choice



As head of marketing for reproductive health charity Marie Stopes UK, Vix Proctor has to ensure accurate information is accessible to women and men while facing down the protestors and managing minimal budgets. By Jane Bainbridge

There are easy jobs, there are difficult jobs, and then there are challenging jobs. It's safe to say Vix Proctor's role – as head of marketing at Marie Stopes UK – falls into the latter category. Not that she comes across as someone struggling with her challenge. Proctor is full of enthusiasm as she talks about the importance of giving accurate information to people so they can make appropriate choices about their reproductive health. It's a point she reiterates throughout our interview, and it ensures any controversy around the role of Marie Stopes is very firmly dealt with.

This month, Marie Stopes celebrates its 40th anniversary, which means Proctor has a valuable promotional hook for fundraising. "As a charity, I want us to celebrate what we do and how we're here for women," she says.

However, the history of the organisation extends further back than 40 years, to 1921, when Marie Stopes set up the first family planning clinic in the UK. Her interest in this area came about when her first marriage was annulled after five years because it had not been consummated. Stopes realised that if she – as an educated, middle-class woman – lacked sexual knowledge, then others, especially less-educated women, were probably in the same boat.

The charity bearing her name came into being in 1976, when Dr Tim Black took over the clinic that Stopes had set up and which, by then, was in financial difficulties. In his early career, Black had worked as a doctor in the Papua New Guinea jungle; here he came to understand that "preventing birth could be as important as saving a life".

Black's vision for the organisation was based on a business model in which those using its services were treated as clients rather than patients. He saw it as a 'social business' offering contraception, pregnancy testing, screening, abortion and sterilisation.

Initially, Black built up the enterprise in the UK – opening more clinics – but he then began

working with overseas partners, initially in Sri Lanka and Kenya. So, today, there are two strands to the organisation: Marie Stopes UK and Marie Stopes International, each with different business models.

"The international side operates as an NGO [non-governmental organisation] and it gets funding from programmes that could be sexual-health orientated," explains Proctor. "But, in the UK, we've been working with the NHS for more than 30 years and that's very much about providing the [abortion and vasectomy] service on its behalf. We've got about 130 contracts with the NHS in England and our fastest-growing contract area is vasectomy."

Indeed, vasectomies have been the focus of Proctor's recent marketing activities, with a campaign that ran at the end of the 2015/16 football season designed to get men and women talking about this form of contraception (see box). It was driven by an insight into who was using which services.

"Everyone thinks the typical age of someone coming in for an abortion is fairly young, but we're talking early 30s now as the average age, and the women have got a child already," says Proctor. "So we have a real opportunity to engage with the vasectomy market because it has to be talked about as a form of contraception. I felt it was time in the UK for men to start discussing their reproductive options."

The limited budgets of Marie Stopes UK mean its focus is usually on the referrers – engaging with GPs and ensuring they have the right information. But accessing women and men, to help them make informed decisions, runs in parallel with that. For some, however, abortion is a

controversial subject, and the pro-life, anti-abortion lobbyists are organised and prolific. Not that this daunts Proctor, having come from an HIV and sexual health background. "I'm used to that stigma and dealing with a topic that people don't want to talk about," she says. "It's about enabling them to have that open discussion."

To this end, Marie Stopes has started using social media to stimulate debate and extend its support, seeing it as a good platform to encourage people to talk about things they might previously have avoided. "We only joined Twitter and Facebook in 2014, and we try to use the social media platform to access people who are hard to reach."



“I'm used to stigma and dealing with a topic that people don't want to talk about”



► An interesting dynamic with social media, Proctor says, is that people engage with questions: “If we put a post saying that we have a service in Manchester, and someone says ‘who would want their balls touched’, someone else will go ‘hey, having a vasectomy is the best thing I’ve ever done, don’t be so stupid’ – and then others comment, so you get this amazing conversation.”

NHS service

Because of the dual business model Marie Stopes operates, fundraising and fund allocation works in a specific way. While the majority of the UK’s work is supporting the NHS – and that money is ring-fenced to remain within NHS work – the organisation also operates private services and that profit is reinvested in NGO projects.

“Our fundraising is mainly based around helping women in Ireland. The NHS is extremely good at helping women in England – it funds services, complications and makes sure women have all the support they need with follow-up contraceptive options. But in Ireland – because it’s illegal – that system doesn’t work. So what we do is help fund women’s travel. We will help in any way possible; that could be discounting our prices – which are already significantly

discounted for Irish women – or sending them taxis from the airport,” says Proctor.

There are no protestors staked outside the Marie Stopes offices when I do this interview, but they are a common sight outside many clinics. “The protestors have a right to freedom of speech. Unfortunately, I think some of the information they have is a little misguided,” says Proctor. “They have a fundamental right to stand up for what they believe in – but standing outside a clinic is not going to do any good.

“Once a woman is coming to the appointment, you’re going to make very little difference to her – you’re just going to make a bad day even worse. The protestors will never get in the way of our service.”

Quality standards

When it comes to information, the Marie Stopes marketing team follows very strict NHS guidance laid out in its Information Standard. “That’s an evidence-based scheme, so all the health information that may result in a health decision is the best possible. It’s evidence-based, user-tested and peer-reviewed, so goes through a huge process – it takes a long time and then it’s reviewed regularly,” explains Proctor. ►

HAVE YOU GOT THE BALLS?

Marie Stopes UK's football-focused campaign to promote vasectomies and family planning to men and their families was timed to coincide with the end of the 2015/2016 football season and the build-up to Euro 2016. The organisation worked with sports media and digital marketing agency Sports Revolution to target 35- to 45-year-old men, and couples who already had a family.

The aim was to use a humorous creative to encourage men to talk about contraceptive options – and vasectomies – with their partners and friends. Over the past decade, the number of vasectomies had fallen by 58%.

Men were targeted with LED pitch-side and static media sites at end-of-season Premier league, Championship and Conference league games, while ads on grassroots football network www.clubwebsite.co.uk – linking with local Sunday team matches – were designed to reach couples. The campaign reached about one million fans in the football grounds, while two million ads were served online.

Tom Fogg, associate director at Sports Revolution, said: "With the subject of vasectomy being quite a sensitive one, going into a trusted environment where the audience would be fully engaged was very important. Men talk a lot about football – at the game and online – so we wanted to use this campaign to find a way into those social interactions."

Fogg explains the choice of media to reach the right audience: "We were very specific with targeting via club websites, advertising to 'vet' teams of men aged over 35, and to parents with children in teams. It was also important to reach women because they, obviously, have a big part to play in the decision and the discussion with their partner. The online element allowed us to reach this audience, connecting with more women than we could in stadia."

For Vix Proctor, using humour in these ads was key. Taglines such as 'Have you got the balls?' and 'Are you ready to tackle your tackle?' were designed to spark interest and discussion.

"Within our industry, there's not much you can have a bit of humour around, and if there's one thing in particular that guys like, it's humour – especially toilet humour. So if we talk about their balls, we've got them engaged. This was a great year to do a campaign around sport, because what do the majority of sports have? Balls," says Proctor.



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MARIE STOPES INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

For Marie Stopes International (MSI), research and insight is carried out on a global level and on a country-by-country basis. Everything is geared to increasing people's access to family planning, and quant and qual are used to identify factors affecting this – such as contraceptive uptake, discontinuation and misunderstanding.

To measure impact of its core family planning programmes, MSI uses the metric of 'couple years of protection' (CYPs). George Hayes, impact analyst in its evidence, strategy and innovation team, says: "CYP values vary depending on the effectiveness and duration of a contraceptive method. They are an important metric for us to measure the scale of our service delivery in a standardised way."

MSI also has a socio-demographic mathematical model, Impact 2, which

allows it to estimate its contribution to increasing national contraceptive rates and averting unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions and maternal deaths. It developed the model in-house and this was then peer-reviewed by partner organisations in the sector, including PSI, Guttmacher Institute and Avenir Health.

But with so many requirements across multiple countries, MSI has had to focus its effort, so it has identified 12 priorities based on organisation-wide consultations and feedback from sexual and reproductive health experts.

The charity is rigorous in evaluating projects, applying practical epidemiological methods to track success. This may, for example, involve monitoring data on clinical quality and friendliness towards clients.

While much of MSI's insight work is

carried out in-house, some teams outsource, and it often uses agencies with large-scale data collection.

It has recently created a model to estimate the impact of changes on the task sharing of family planning services.

Hayes says. "We developed a Microsoft Excel-based model that looks at different scenarios: the current task-sharing policy framework in a country, and a scenario where the policy is changed. If key data – including number of health workers in the country and their average salary – is added, the tool can be used to show how, for a set salary budget, task-sharing of services could lead to more women being served and greater health impacts being achieved. Additionally, it can estimate how serving a set number of clients could cost less, in terms of salary spend, under task-sharing."

▶ "We find information and make sure we have a research aspect to every campaign. We have innovation developments where we interview internal and external stakeholders; we have different audiences, segregate them and give them different personas."

With its limited budgets, all this is done internally by the marketing team, with minimal outside agency involvement. Beyond that, Marie Stopes carries out audience research among those who attend its clinics, and is currently looking at ways to improve this. Much of the

insight the organisation uses to develop its work comes from its call centre in Bristol, looking at the main queries raised by callers.

So, if money was no object, how would Proctor spend her marketing budget? A celebrity promotion, she says. "Jamie Oliver said he'd never have a vasectomy, because his wife doesn't like it, and his mate had it and it went wrong. So I'd love to invite him to do one with us – to do something end to end to show how easy it is, and how simple it is to make a difference to your life and relationship." ■

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IT'S GOOD TO SHARE

DRUMMOND GILBERT FOUNDED CAR-SHARING WEBSITE GOCARSHARE SIX YEARS AGO AND IS A CHAMPION OF THE SHARING ECONOMY. *IMPACT* CAUGHT UP WITH HIM TO DISCUSS HOW THIS BUSINESS MODEL HAS GAINED GROUND



Digital was the catalyst for the sharing economy, but what else has been important in establishing it as a viable business system?

Drummond Gilbert: The last recession was a massive driver for the sharing economy. It induced a very real cut to household disposable income and this – combined with the uncertainty about people's future prospects – made them very creative about how they tried to make (and save) money.

The Stern Review of climate change in 2006, which largely disproved objections to climate change – and a millennial generation that demonstrably valued experiences over ownership, driven by the proliferation of social networks – meant that there was an audience in place to engage.

Technological developments also played a significant part. For the first time, sharing-economy platforms were able to leverage the social graph from networks such as Facebook, to create trust between users. What this means is that the idea of someone you don't know being a stranger is rapidly dying out.

There is an argument that the sharing economy is simply digitisation – how would you counter that?

DG: There is a valid argument that the behaviour of the sharing economy existed before the proliferation of apps – but what is new is the scale. People would stay in B&Bs before Airbnb existed, and people might have hitchhiked before GoCarShare. But what the sharing economy has enabled is for this to take place, and for a market to 'clear', at a much larger level than was previously possible.

There may be hundreds of people who make the same journey at the same time, for example, but without an online platform they would never be aware of other people travelling the same way, and wouldn't have a way of contacting them, or knowing whether they could trust them.

What drew you to car sharing as a business model?

DG: I was walking down the street near to where I live, in west London, and noticed that pretty much everyone stuck in the traffic jam was the only person in

their car. I was struck by the ridiculousness of the situation, and the potential impact that car sharing could have, both on reducing carbon and congestion. It was only later that I realised the scale – there are an estimated 38 million empty car seats travelling around the UK.

What hurdles, in terms of customer behaviour, have you had to overcome?

DG: I hear it quite a lot when I start telling people about GoCarShare – at first they say 'good idea', but then they follow that up with, 'what if I was to get in the car with an axe murderer?' It's hard to say exactly where it's come from – maybe American horror films – but there is definitely a stigma of getting in a car with someone that you haven't met that is hard to shake.

What has helped are testimonial videos of people who have used the service, talking about their experience; we found that this humanised it and brought it to life.

One thing we will probably have to accept is that there is a certain group of people, mainly an older generation, who are proud of their car; they value the time on their own; they probably listen to Radio 4 – they'll never use our service.

Have there been any regulatory issues?

DG: Companies such as Airbnb and Uber employ a team of legal experts and public policy advisers because they often find themselves in legal grey areas.

We don't have any regulatory issues as such, but we do have a law – dating back to 1981 – that means people can only cover their costs by car sharing, not make a profit from it.

With congestion expected to cost the UK economy an estimated £300bn over the next 16 years – and the saving made from car sharing often cited as the most popular reason for people to do it – we're hoping that this will one day change. We are already having a dialogue about this.

Have you faced any open animosity/ lobbying from the car or car rental industry?

DG: No, although we have a French competitor who launched in the UK with an aggressive promotional campaign without understanding the dynamics of the market. It did have a lot of problems, particularly with taxi drivers commenting on their social media posts, saying that – if customers used the service – it would invalidate their insurance.

There are some lofty claims associated with the sharing economy – such as its sustainability – but those who often make money out of it have assets already, so does there need to be an added element of purpose?

DG: Most marketplaces will have underused supply that the platform distributes in a more effective way, allowing new people to access it.

We have our supply – empty car seats for journeys; our drivers, typically, are a bit older and better off than our

passengers – but, importantly, we are helping both sides of the market benefit economically. Also – another important point – building a marketplace is hard work and takes so long that, without a team with conviction and passion, it will never get off the ground.

You helped set up the UKShareCo trade body – why do you think there is a need for an organisation of this sort?

DG: A few of us who were setting up sharing economy platforms started to realise that – although we were all moving in slightly different areas – we had a lot in common, and a lot of the challenges were the same. By sharing our learnings, we could all improve our chance of succeeding. We started to have monthly meetings and organised joint marketing and events.

Also, when it came to lobbying government, we could have little effect individually, but, collectively, we could start to have a real impact.

Where next for the sharing economy?

DG: What I have noticed is that, to date, the platforms with most traction have been the ones that use high-value items.

Airbnb lets people monetise their house, their highest-value asset; Uber (and GoCarShare for that matter) allow people to make money from their car, often their second most valuable asset.

Platforms that allow people to borrow or rent household goods from each other are, generally, yet to hit critical mass because, I believe, people perceive the value saved from borrowing the goods to be less than the time cost involved in borrowing them.

As more and more people become involved in the sharing economy – and the friction decreases – I expect this to change and for the sharing economy to enter more and more aspects of our daily life. ■





THE GUESSING GAME

AT A TIME WHEN SHOCK ELECTION RESULTS ARE BECOMING COMMONPLACE, **JUSTIN CHARLTON-JONES**, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BLINC, AND **JAMES ENDERSBY**, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF OPINIUM, GO HEAD TO HEAD TO DISCUSS THE RESPECTIVE MERITS OF PREDICTIVE MARKETS AND OPINION POLLS FOR FORECASTING OUTCOMES

Justin Charlton-Jones:

In both the Scottish Referendum in 2014 and the General Election of 2015, opinion polls suggested that the final result was too close to call. In fact, both votes resulted in decisive outcomes, and the poll results were so far removed from the actual General Election outcome that a formal enquiry was carried out by the National Centre for Research Methods to try to understand why.

However, an alternative research methodology – predictive markets – accurately forecast the outcome of both elections (months in advance) and has shown itself to be more accurate than conventional polling at anticipating the outcomes of a raft of other events.

The earliest prediction market – The Iowa Electronics Market (IEM), which has primarily been used in the political domain – was developed in Iowa University in the late 1980s and is still running. A research paper from Stanford University (*Wolfers and Zitzewitz, 2004*) asserts that the market has both yielded very accurate forecasts and outperformed large-scale polling organisations.

Indeed, in June 2008, *The International Journal of Forecasting* looked at prediction market accuracy vs. traditional research techniques and concluded that ‘the market is closer to the eventual outcome 74% of the time’.

James Endersby:

At Opinium we’re method-neutral and big fans of advancing new techniques. In fact, we’re in the process of developing our own predictive market methods. But, of course, we’re also one of the major players in the political polling arena and it’s important to recognise the role of each approach.

Our recent success includes the most accurate final polls for both the London Mayor in May, and the EU referendum, when we were within 1% of the final result.

But political polls are snapshots of public opinion at the time that they are conducted and not a prediction of future events. Even polls that are conducted the day before polling day itself could be completely accurate in what they set out to do, but be made to look foolish by last-minute ‘on-the-day’ swings, as is believed to have happened in Scotland in 2014.

The judgements by those making the predictions are based on the available information at the time of the prediction and – in the context of any election – the most relevant information will be polling results. Predictive markets are simply an add-on to the information that polling companies provide, and an extrapolation into the future based on history and what polls tell you at a given point.

In some cases this judgement will produce an accurate prediction while in others it may not, because ultimately those making the predictions are susceptible to unconscious biases, social norms and a vast range of other factors.

JC-J: All research is essentially a snapshot, whether it is a conventional survey or a predictive market. Nevertheless, the purpose of research generally – and of polling in particular – is usually to allow the user to make judgements about which idea to take forward; which product to launch; or what plans to make in the event of a particular election outcome.

What is concerning about some polling results recently is that, despite asking the

question on the day of the event, when all the factors that might influence people are in the public domain, the polling results have not reflected the results that they are attempting to measure.

Predictive markets provide a greater degree of certainty than conventional research, because: of the way the questions are framed; they ask for outcomes not opinions; there is jeopardy involved (the individual will lose money if they are wrong); panellists only answer a question that they want to, because they think that they know the answer and can win.

The panellists who take part in our predictive markets are indeed subject to the unconscious biases, social norms and other factors that we are all prone to, but the methodology mitigates against this, and consistently offers greater accuracy than conventional research methods.

JE: Prediction markets do not give a greater degree of certainty; they offer the illusion of certainty and this is what is more attractive than the reality of uncertainty. At present, polling agencies are quite upfront about margins of error and uncertainty. The same cannot be said for the way prediction markets and betting markets are presented in elections.

While predictive markets can be a useful technique for brands, the approach had a particularly poor time in the EU referendum.

While Opinium, ICM and TNS's final opinion polls successfully called the right outcome, predictive markets fared less well. The day before the referendum, Hypermind gave Remain a probability of 75%, and Brexit only 25%. An hour before polls closed, PredictIt showed a 65% chance of a Remain win. And, rather amusingly, at 8.29 the next morning, after the results were conclusive, they had a 25% chance of a Remain win.

Ultimately what we are talking about here is what is more useful to clients who need to plan for all eventualities, and this is not served by implying certainty where none exists.

Polls may have their flaws but, like democracy, they're the worst way of predicting things, apart from all the others.

JC-J: I certainly don't mean to imply that predictive markets are infallible, just that they seem to predict the actual outcome of questions more reliably than other methods. Prediction markets deal in probabilities: a 70% probability doesn't mean total certainty – it means a strong likelihood – like a 70% chance of rain. In fact, if we look at predictions over time that were 70-30, the data shows that the confidence levels are calibrated, meaning that the alternative outcome does happen about 30% of the time.

At Bline we ran two questions on the referendum. The first: "Will the UK vote to leave the EU or remain in the EU when the referendum is held on 23 June?" ran for 12 months and consistently showed a probability of the UK leaving of between 25% to 30%. However, in May, we added a new question: "Will the Leave campaign motivate more people to go out and vote for them than the Remain campaign?"

This question never showed less than 50% probability that the Leave campaign would get out more voters. The average was 57%. Why one question predicted the referendum outcome correctly and the other not is currently the subject of a more detailed analysis.

JE: Fascinating questions, with interesting outcomes, but neither of your questions predicted the outcome of the EU referendum correctly, because asking about which campaign was the most motivational is different to asking which side will attract more votes.

Your second question would have correctly applied to the pro-independence side in the Scottish referendum; it arguably motivated more people than the pro-Union campaign, but still lost because so many people already knew how they planned to vote, regardless of how the campaigns were conducted.

Ultimately though, the real issue is whether or not predictive markets would work at all in this space, if their participants didn't have any polling data available to establish the lie of the land.

The Oldham West by-election last year was a useful test case of what happens when you have an election informed by no polling whatsoever. The conventional wisdom was that UKIP would run Labour very close and perhaps win the seat. The extrapolated prediction, based on bookies odds, was of Labour narrowly beating UKIP by 41% to 38%.

Labour ended up winning by 62% to 23% and we saw how, without any data to ground things, pundit predictions and the conventional wisdom can go seriously off the rails. ■



FORESIGHT FROM INSIGHT: RE-FRAMING EFFECTIVENESS

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE INAUGURAL EFFECTIVENESS WEEK AT THE END OF THIS MONTH, **SERA MILLER** DISCUSSES THE INSIGHTS BEHIND ITS CREATION AND WHAT IT SETS OUT TO ACHIEVE FOR THE WIDER INDUSTRY



Take a look through the programmes of the past few major international conferences you attended or were on your radar. Beyond the natural trend-driven themes and ‘next big thing’ narrative, key words like ‘creativity’ and ‘data’ are prolific. Probably notable by its absence is ‘effectiveness’.

With the exception of where it is combined with the word ‘creative’ to make everyone feel a little more comfortable around it, effectiveness is generally left out in the cold, pressing its perceived sensible little nose up against the glass when the hipsters and cool tech kids are all inside at the party. Why?

When Effectiveness Week was first conceived by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) team and the member-led effectiveness leadership group, its genesis was in direct response to this question. Initial industry-wide research had framed the paradox: client capability building and internal focus around effectiveness had never been more prevalent, but the disconnect surrounding marketing communications effectiveness endured.

Going deeper than the initial feedback, where the perception prevailed that agencies were still ‘marking their own homework’, we discovered a much more dynamic meta theme to explore – the creation and promotion of a shared culture of effectiveness as a success factor in business transformation.

This focus on effectiveness culture and business results at an organisational level led us to realise that this was not a challenge that the IPA and its members wanted – or were

equipped – to solve alone. Collaboration, consultation and dialogue with every major representative trade body at a UK level including: the Market Research Society; several key partners from the global community; leading academic partners; and, most crucially, a client Advisory Board comprising 18 leading marketing professionals, ensures that the Effectiveness Week programme and format we are now presenting meets this challenge head on.

At a marketing level, we have collectively moved on from the idea of effectiveness as a retrospective proof point obsessed with links to KPIs as a proof point for the connection between creativity and effectiveness, or the nonsensical debate around creativity versus data – effectiveness is at the intersection of all of these and each feeds the other.

But beyond marketing and into the wider C-suite, the challenges remain. Organisational culture is built on values, beliefs and behaviours; the only way to evolve is to alter behaviour to change attitudes. Effectiveness offers an unrivalled framework and shared language for the CFO, CMO and CEO to engage in

dialogue. Unifying rather than divisive, effectiveness frames how value is created, delivered and captured – the entire business model – embedding business benefit, not communications results.

Effectiveness Week is intended to be the beginning, not the definitive end; the focus is on evidence-based decision-making, not awards and measurement. This doesn't mean marketing – or business – without creativity, or a retrospective research-driven culture devoid of instinct and risk.

A culture of effectiveness, driven by insight, actionable foresight and creativity, is now a business transformation necessity and the most powerful value-creation tool across the C-suite. Balancing long-term investment and short-term activity has never been more critical for brands; a culture of effectiveness provides a framework for decision-making in this context.

But while creating and building such a culture does not mean a shift away from traditional or established business values, it is important to recognise that the fixed narrative of driving shareholder value no longer applies to every scale-up or established business (if indeed it ever did). For some businesses, at best, this is a distraction, at worst, an irrelevance.

Moving beyond these well-understood chronicles of shareholder value creation or re-writes of Lord Leverhulme and/or Wanamaker, we have a collective opportunity to harness the foresight-driven

superpower of effectiveness and take steps toward addressing our shared core issues and challenges in a way that neither looks away from, nor apologises for, their complexity.

From the CEO through to all ranks of the business, we must understand the opportunity to create real change that comes with using the learning from problems solved and what impacts and outcomes have been realised – and using this knowledge to plan strategy.

Effectiveness Week is not a time to look inward or to cling on to some mythical, now non-existent, competitive advantage or proprietary position. To be truly effective in itself, we must relentlessly aim to create this culture industry-wide.

What happens on the stages in London and in the conference and board rooms around the UK is just the beginning. Collaboration and building on each other's learning is essential, as is embracing the spirit of open source and co-creation that are so closely linked to those worlds of tech and data with which we are so engaged.

But it is also important to remember the role of conflict and constraint in the process, and in creativity itself: new connections; perspectives from outside 'our world'; thought leadership; hypothesis; experimentation; and exploration.

Inspiring stories, actionable insights and dissenting voices, united by points of passion, will ensure that Effectiveness Week signals the start of the genesis of a new chapter for the industry at a truly cultural level. ■

Sera Miller is an elected member of the IPA Council and deputy chair of the IPA's effectiveness leadership group. She is CEO of the material group and a board member of Disruptive Insight



EFFECTIVENESS WEEK

Effectiveness Week takes place 31 October to 4 November 2016 with the core two-day thought leadership conference at BAFTA on 1 and 2 November. Delegate information, the full programme, ticket purchase and details of all events taking place around the UK can be found at www.effectivenessweek.com



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Inside the Consumer Mind™

Brexit and the bull

A year after the great fall of China and global markets are testing new highs, with all three US indices hitting a record and the FTSE 100 flirting with the psychologically important 7,000 level – a record reached in December 1999 and only momentarily touched again in April 2015.

The backdrop to this bull market? Why, Brexit and lower interest rates for longer. Dire warnings from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Monetary Fund and the Bank of England (BoE) – and even Barack Obama’s threat of ‘the back of the queue’ if the UK voted to leave the European Union – have given way to monetary stimulus from the BoE, and a widely expected fiscal loosening in the Autumn Statement. The City is expecting a reduction in stamp duty to boost the property market, spending on infrastructure projects to bolster growth and employment, and lower taxes. So how did we get here?

The former government’s Project Fear turned to Project Terror the week before the EU referendum, when the previous Chancellor, George Osborne, threatened voters with higher taxes and lower spending if they voted Leave. Some in the City saw that as the political equivalent of a CEO (for whom read the Prime Minister) and a CFO (the Chancellor) threatening shareholders with a dividend cut if they voted against their strategy. In situations like this, it is the dividend that survives, not the management team – and it turned out to be the same with the referendum and the electorate. The market closed up 43 points (+0.75%) on that fateful day, as Project Terror began to backfire.

The Remain campaign failed to articulate any positive reasons for staying in Europe. From the outside, it appeared that the former leadership – after an unexpectedly positive result



“Dire warnings have given way to monetary stimulus”

in the Scottish Referendum in 2014 and in the General Election last year – pushed its luck with an early referendum, and that luck ran out.

Political views across the City were clear cut: those who worked for a bulge-bracket bank, a multinational organisation or a global professional services practice were Remainers, who believed Brexit would be the end of the world as we knew it. Those who had risked their own capital to create a business, and who despised bureaucracy and a lack of accountability, were Brexiteers who saw a world of opportunity and growth beyond Europe.

So why are the markets so sanguine, given an uncertain backdrop and division of opinion? Well, it was always a political crisis, not a financial maelstrom, and the Brexit-induced weakness in sterling was a positive for the market (70% of FTSE 100 profits are dollar-denominated), for tourism and staycations, and exports. Further, the BoE stepped in early – in late June – to stabilise the market with the prospect of stimulus and a

promise that it would do “whatever is needed” to support growth. Then, in early August, it lowered interest rates to 0.25%, boosted its quantitative easing (QE) scheme by £70 billion and committed an extra £100bn to encourage banks to lend. The prospect of cheaper money and easier credit pushed the FTSE 100 up 105 points (1.6%) on 4 August, to within a whisker of a new 12-month high.

This was followed by data that showed the unemployment rate had remained stable, at 4.9%, in the three months to June and total employment had risen to a record high of 74.5%.

The UK’s retail industry grew in July, with a 1.4% increase in volume over the month compared with June, and an increase of 5.9% from the previous year. Further evidence of consumer spending picking up came in July, with the Visa consumer spending index increasing +1.6% year-on-year in July, the biggest rise in three months.

Additional data showed that UK industrial production remained stable in the run-up to the Brexit vote and, in late August, the CBI monthly Industrial Trends Survey showed manufacturing bolstered by exports and output growing while orders remained solid.

So actions spoke louder than words and demonstrated that, post-Brexit, consumer confidence was undented.

At the Rio Olympics, Team GB won more golds than any nation except the US, the world’s biggest economy. With long-term planning, investment and focus, GB has become a sports superpower. Now, the same kind of meticulous preparation and planning must go into forging new trading relationships and exiting the EU. With currently more Olympians than trade negotiators, however, we need to find more of the latter. ■

Lorna Tilbian is executive plc director and head of media at Numis Securities

TAKING HOLD

PRODUCT AND PACKAGING DESIGN IS ABOUT MORE THAN SHELF-STANDOUT, ACCORDING TO RESEARCH ON HOW TOUCHING A PRODUCT AFFECTS PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR. BY **JANE BAINBRIDGE**

Shoppers often pause while perusing the supermarket shelves, product in hand, mulling their next purchase. Touch has long been considered an important aspect of product evaluation – for instance, in increasing choice of the product – and the reason people touch products is usually down to one of two factors.

“Either it’s an autotelic issue – so it’s touch as a fun factor – or it’s an instrumental factor, so it provides information for the buyer,” says Mathias Streicher, from the University of Innsbruck, Austria.

But new research conducted by Streicher and Zachary Estes, from Bocconi University, Milan, Italy, shows that grasping a product also affects a person’s choice of other products on display – not just the one being held. Their study found that holding a source product increases the visual fluency of a haptically similar product – so a shopper is more likely to buy a product that is the same shape as the one they holding.

“Haptic research is still one of the most under-researched parts of marketing, so there are a lot of things to learn. Also, the haptic sense is the only sense where we start connecting in a physical way to

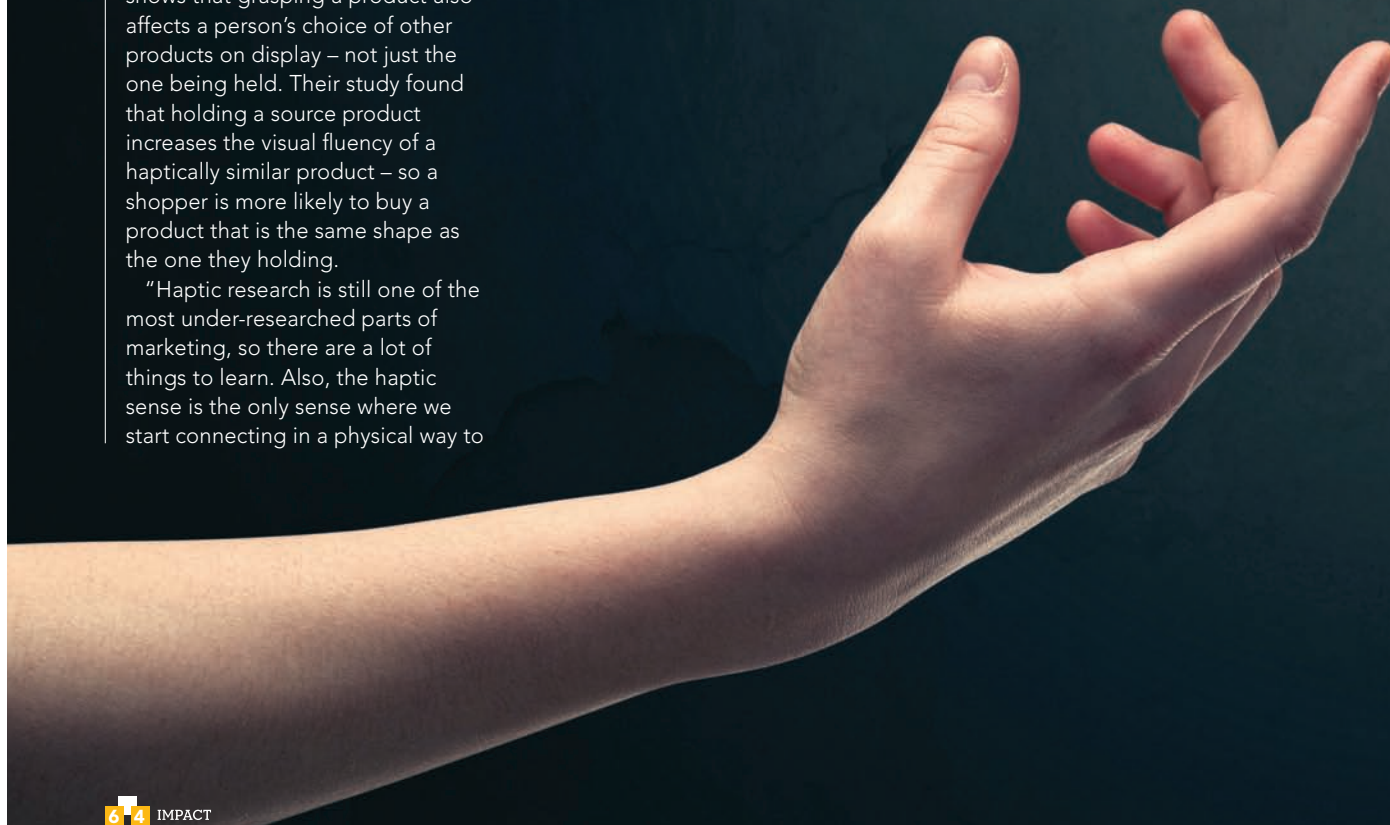
products,” says Streicher as he explains why they decided to investigate this area.

Building on existing research, Streicher and Estes explored how visual fluency spilled over into other products in the environment – and the results make interesting reading for brand marketers to consider.

Their first study involved participants grasping a product – either a bottle or a can of Fanta – with their right arm extended straight out to the right or straight behind their back, while viewing and then choosing from products directly in front of them.

“We have to exclude any other explaining variables or mechanisms. So by getting people to stretch out their arm, and keep their gaze straight to the monitor, we could put an object in their hand without them seeing it. We wanted them to look at the screen or the product display. It allowed us to control the stimuli exposure,” explains Streicher.

For marketers, the implications are considerable, not least that unique and unusual-shaped product or packing design should be protected by brand leaders and first to market.



"Take the classic Coca-Cola bottle, for instance; it's a unique haptic signature and this research is saying that it's a good thing to maintain those haptic signatures. Once you have created one that is unique for your brand, you should at least trademark it.

"If you look at Red Bull, it pioneered the market for energy drinks, and it was also the first one to use slim cans. Twenty-odd years ago, no-one else used those, but nowadays almost every energy drink brand is in a slim can," says Streicher.

He did research five years ago into haptic signals – and researched the slim cans – and found that Red Bull was still strongly associated with that can shape. However, because Red Bull couldn't trademark the shape, it meant rival brands could copy it. "Nowadays the picture is

probably different – other brands are also associated with that slim can," adds Streicher.

"So let's assume that the market leader is touched a lot – shoppers take it in their hand, maybe they're not really confident with their purchase decision, and as they peruse the shelf they discover those other energy-drink brands. Because they have the Red Bull container in their hand, they start perceiving, visually, those other brands being sold in the same format.

"That can harm brand loyalty for Red Bull because, if you start perceiving something more fluidly, you also start liking it more – and this can sabotage brand loyalty if the copycats are using the same shapes and packaging," says Streicher.

Grocery products in the same category typically follow the same design cues – so how should product designers respond?

"It could be a call to product designers that they should use their creativity and that, in the long run, it makes sense to spend more money on unique product packages that are associated – and that you own – as a brand."

In addition, Streicher and Estes looked at the effect of crowded or sparse product displays. The first part of their research showed that, when people hold something in their hands, the shape becomes loaded in their visual cortex, which affects how they perceive an object – but that is when the visual conditions are clear. What if the visual conditions aren't clear, such as with a crowded display?

The scientists found that the effect of touch on product choice is accentuated by crowded product displays – they may overload the visual system and so increase reliance on haptic information.

"The more the visual conditions become poor, the more the haptic sense is being used to compensate for the lack of clear information from the visual system," says Streicher. "That's very relevant to marketplaces because they are typically crowded – supermarkets are visually dense. So the haptic shape-priming effect becomes even stronger." ■

'Multisensory interaction in product choice: grasping a product affects choice of other seen products', by Mathias Streicher and Zachary Estes, Journal of Consumer Psychology, 2016.

IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE

SCIENTISTS HAVE FOUND THAT THE WAY IN WHICH SHOPPERS LOOK AT, AND ASSESS, PRODUCTS ON THE SHELF CAN INFLUENCE THEIR RESPONSE TO THE GOODS. BY **JANE BAINBRIDGE**



Eye movement, when scanning supermarket shelves or viewing items online, is often directionally specific. In shops, people look at products in a particular order. Online or when watching TV ads, people often look in a particular direction when processing text, animation or dynamic product images.

But what Hao Shen from the Department of Marketing, Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) Business School, and Akshay Rao from the Department of Marketing, Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, US, have discovered is that if the direction of eye movement used during a product evaluation is perceived by the brain as 'easy' then the product evaluation is enhanced.

The researchers carried out three studies to show that when people re-employ a directional motor procedure – used in a prior, unrelated task – to evaluate a product, it results in a sense of fluency, which is then misattributed to the product under evaluation.

"There is a lot of research showing that the ease with which people process information can influence their judgement. For example, when fonts in an ad are easy to read, people evaluate an advertised product more positively, as they misattribute the feeling of ease resulting from reading information, to their liking of the product (Schwarz 2004). Here I think even unconscious eye movement might influence product evaluation," says Shen.

So the experiments that Shen and Rao

set up were designed to manipulate eye movement, such as numbers moving in certain routes on a screen or showing pictures moving in a particular direction.

Overall, the findings from their studies showed that as well as repetition of eye movement enhancing fluency, a hand or arm movement (gross motor movement) accompanied by eye movement can have the same effect, which can go on to affect how the person feels about a product.

Shen explains further: "If product evaluation requires people to employ a similar eye movement to one rehearsed before, it will be easy for people to evaluate the product. For example, usually it is easy to move eyes from left to right, as this is consistent with our habit. So, we can predict that a picture of a product that moves from left to right

on a screen will be processed more fluently than a picture that moves from right to left.

"In addition, when something is easy to process, this ease of feeling is pleasant. People may misattribute this pleasant feeling to the product being evaluated. They may ask themselves unconsciously: 'Why did I feel good when I saw this picture? Maybe I like it.' Consequently, they may like a product more when it is easy for them to process."

And, what surprised Shen most from this research was that even unconscious eye movement can generate feelings of ease which can then be misattributed to the liking of a product.

So what does all this mean in terms of applications in the real world?

"The position in which a product is located, or the way a product moves, can influence the ease of attending to the product, which can usually influence product evaluation. For example, when marketers show dynamic product images, it is better to make them move from left to right. When they show a product with directional cues (such as a car or shoes), it is better to make them orientate toward the right," says Shen.

"Sometimes irrelevant experiences might influence consumers' eye movement and their processing of products that are presented visually later. For example, during online shopping, consumers typically swipe leftward or upward to move the pictures of products on the screen of an iPad or a smartphone. As a result, they might be more likely to move their eyes toward the left side or the top of a product description. So marketers should present key messages in those areas of the visual field," says Shen, adding that this could be explored in more detail in future research projects. ■

Looks good to me: How eye movements influence product evaluation by **Hao Shen**, of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and **Akshay Rao**, of the University of Minnesota, US, in the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 2016.



A QUESTION OF TRUST

WORD OF MOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE VERY PERSUASIVE, BUT BRANDS LOOKING TO USE THIS TYPE OF ADVOCACY SHOULD BE VIGILANT ABOUT WHO'S DOING IT, AND HOW SIMILAR THEY ARE TO THEIR TARGET MARKET.
BY **BRONWEN MORGAN**

In an age where social media and online review sites have made potential critics of everybody, the power of positive word of mouth is well known. In fact, research from the Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) has suggested that one offline word of mouth impression can drive sales five times more than one paid media impression (up to 100 times more for higher consideration categories), and that it drives as much as 13% of consumer sales.

Linked to this, a recent study from a group of academics in the US and Canada, published in the *Journal of Consumer Research*, has looked into the effect of 'self enhancement', or boasting, on both persuasion and social perceptions.

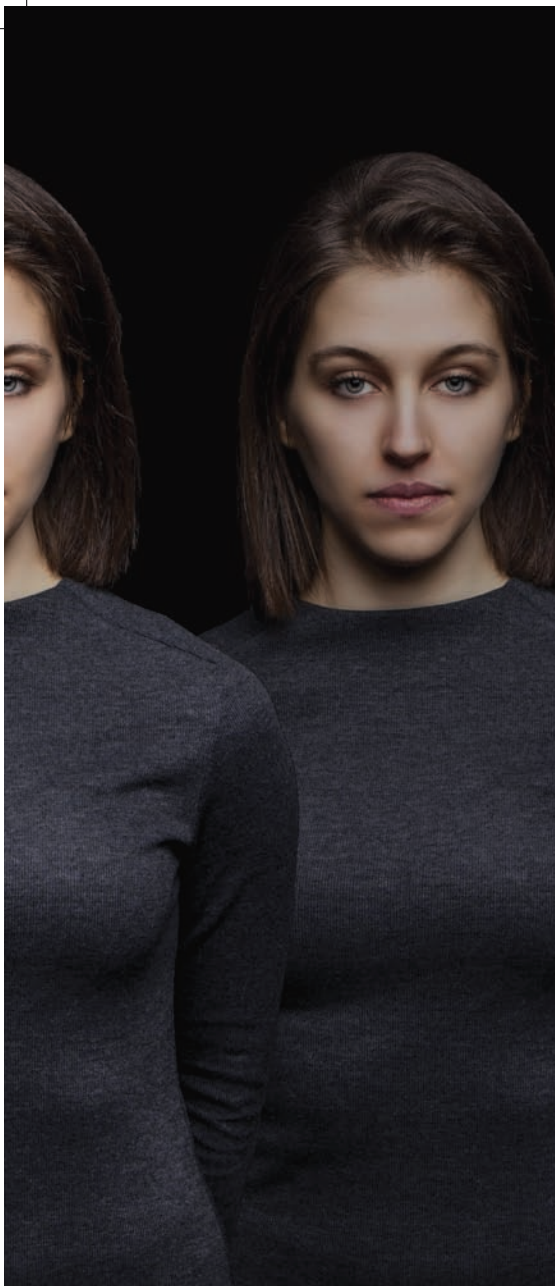
This, said the academics Grant Packard, Andrew Gershoff and David Wooten, is of significant importance as boasting is often a key motive for people sharing word-of-mouth recommendations. In fact, previous research suggests that as many as one in four reviews contain boasting elements. For example, a consumer's online review about a hotel is likely not only to give information about the hotel's rooms or service quality, but also hints at that person's travel expertise.

To build on this existing theory, the group looked into how boasting behaviour, combined with varying levels of trust, might subsequently have an impact on levels of persuasiveness.

MIRROR, MIRROR

In the first of three studies, the researchers used the established relationship between demographic similarity and trust – that is, that people are more likely to trust people they believe to be similar to them – to manipulate trust levels in order to test their hypotheses.

Study participants were asked to imagine that they were shopping online for a holiday, and had come across a hotel review. One version of the review was written in such a way as to portray the reviewer as an expert in travel experience, while the other claimed to come from a source with an average level of knowledge of the area.



There were also two similarity conditions. In the first, the reviewer's profile described a 21-year-old student from a nearby location, attending the same university, and being of the same gender as the study participant. The second described the reviewer as a 31-year-old worker of the opposite gender, from a distant location.

The results showed that boasting could have either a positive or negative impact on persuasiveness, depending on the participant's perceived similarity to the reviewer. If the reviewer and the recipient of the review were demographically similar, then boasting behaviour led to a higher likelihood of the recipient

saying they would book the hotel. However, if they were dissimilar, that same boasting behaviour had a negative effect on their likelihood of booking the hotel.

REVIEWER RATINGS

The second study saw a more direct manipulation of trust cues through use of reviewer ratings information (similar to those used on peer review sites such as TripAdvisor and Yelp). Reviewers were presented as either 'not at all trustworthy', 'moderately trustworthy' or 'extremely trustworthy'.

Interestingly, reviewers who weren't trusted by others were rated as being more boastful (compared with those who were moderately trusted), while those who were highly trusted were seen as no more or less boastful than the moderately trusted group. The researchers noted that, in contrast to the first study, the more direct trust signal of reviewer ratings seemed to make respondents more vigilant of boasting when the trust cue was negative, but not when it was positive.

Unsurprisingly, results also showed that when a source was not seen to be trusted by others, boasting led to a lower likelihood of the respondent choosing the hotel. When a reviewer had only a moderate trust rating, their boasting had no effect on how likely the participant was to choose the hotel. But, if they were seen as highly trusted, the likelihood of choosing the hotel increased if the source boasted in their review.

TRUST IN ME

The final study looked into how observing the behaviour of people in a generally trusting or mistrustful state of mind might shed light on exactly how trust impacts on the effect of boasting behaviour on persuasiveness.

Research participants were primed to feel trusting or mistrustful by being given one of two news articles to read. One described a play in which an actor portrayed a character who was selfish, dishonest and deceptive; the other described the same actor portraying a character who was altruistic, trustworthy and honest. Participants were then asked to carry out a similar task to those in the previous studies; this time coming across a review while shopping online for wine.

They were asked to list thoughts that came to mind while reading the review and were given eight text boxes and told to write only as many thoughts as they had. This exercise tested the theory that when given cues that lead to someone feeling mistrustful, they are more likely to generate negative thoughts about a boasting source. For example, if a salesperson is thought to be self-interested – perhaps driven by wanting to make the sale), they are seen as less sincere and less trustworthy.

Results showed that when participants were primed to feel less trusting of others generally, negative thoughts about a boasting source led to negative perceptions of the source's motives. But when they were primed to feel more trusting, positive perceptions of the reviewer's expertise came about without thoughtful consideration. That is, when participants were primed to feel less trusting, they generated significantly more thoughts when the source was boastful than in any of the other conditions. This suggests that when trust is low, boasting behaviour leads to greater general vigilance.

The lessons for brands looking to capitalise on word of mouth, then, are clear. The academics themselves suggest that brands and companies looking to take advantage of these consumer-to-consumer interactions should carefully consider whether to include reviewers' demographic information. The study's results corroborate previous findings that having no demographic information at all may be more persuasive to a potential customer than being presented with a reviewer who is demographically dissimilar.

More generally, they stress the importance of taking simple actions to improve general trust cues, such as ensuring that the use of third-party trust certification could help to boost word-of-mouth persuasion. ■

AT THE TOUCH OF A NON-EXISTENT BUTTON

ONE STEP ON FROM GESTURE TECHNOLOGY, ULTRAHAPTICS IS USING ULTRASOUND TO SIMULATE THE FEEL OF CONTROL KNOBS IN THIN AIR. BY JANE BAINBRIDGE

For years, the turn of a knob or the press of a button gave us the physical satisfaction and intuitive understanding that an on/off, increase/decrease type action had taken place. Then we adapted to the computer mouse and the way in which a horizontal movement could translate into a vertical one.

A further leap was required with the rise of gesture technology, and while it has only been adopted in a limited number of situations, people are generally at ease with the wave of a hand turning on a tap in public toilets, or guiding a computer game.

But what if the mid-air movement of gesture technology was combined with the tactile sensation of the push of a button?

That is precisely what UK start-up Ultrahaptics is offering with its system manipulating highly accurate

puffs of air to give the user a tactile experience without either a physical button or needing gloves or attachments.

It is the brainwave of Tom Carter, who in 2013 was studying computer science at the University of Bristol. While working in the Bristol Interaction and Graphics (BIG) Lab his professor suggested that for his final-year project he might want to look at ultrasound and how to manipulate it, based on research first done in the 1970s.

The project turned into a PhD and, in his third year, Carter won a prize awarding him a small amount of funding. This he promptly spent on flights to Las Vegas to attend the annual global consumer electronics show, CES. The result was £90,000 of seed funding from IP Group.

The technology uses 256 transducers or speakers in an array, to emit ultrasound waves at a rate of 40kHz. The sound waves combine and the force vibrates the surface of your skin, which simulates the sense of touch. It can go as fine as 4mm and the transducers are the same as those found in rear parking sensors.

Carter, now chief technology officer at Ultrahaptics, says: "We have an array of ultrasound speakers and what we do is very precisely control the timing between the speakers so that all of the sound waves arrive at the same point at the same time. This displaces the skin on the hand ever so slightly, simulating the sense of touch. We can target each fingertip individually and we can create a different texture on each different fingertip."

So, for example it can feel as if you're touching a ball or cube, that your hand is passing through a force field, or that you're popping bubbles.

"We get that immediate click feeling and that's something that you can't get with gesture recognition on its own," adds Carter. "The feeling of touch is essential if you

want to control your devices quickly and efficiently."

To push the technology out into the market and allow firms to incorporate it into their own products, Ultrahaptics created an 'evaluation programme'.

It took this to the following year's CES show, where it instantly sold out. In October 2015 the company raised £10m in funding.

At the time that Carter was starting out, people were still struggling to give up their BlackBerrys – with button keyboard – for the iPhone touchscreen. Typing was slower on the touchscreen keyboard as there was no haptic feedback. Ultimately, the iPhone





LEFT Steve Cliffe, CEO (left) and Tom Carter, CTO of Ultrahaptics

BELOW Applications for the technology include in-car devices and virtual reality



introduced an element of haptic feedback so users sense when the device is responding to them.

The evaluation programme – which was officially launched in January 2015 – costs \$20,000 to join, so it is predominantly appealing to high-end manufacturers. Ultrahaptics’ business model is to work with partners to develop customer sensations and switches on non-recurring engineering expense (NRE), a one-time cost to research, develop, design and test a new product.

After that, a manufacturer will pay for a licence to produce hardware using the software, as well as Ultrahaptics receiving a royalty for every product sold. The company is currently exploring creating a more accessible developer platform, so

more companies could try and incorporate the technology in their products.

So where is it most likely to appear first? Inevitably, there is much secrecy about who is testing this technology, with Jaguar Land Rover and the University of Tokyo the only organisations willing to be officially acknowledged.

However, the company is confident it will appear in a product on the market by the end of the year, probably in the white label category.

It sees the two areas where the tech is most likely to be applied as control – knowing when your gesture has actually worked (especially important in the car environment so you don’t take your eyes off the road), and augmented reality/virtual reality (AR/VR) – offering a further level of immersion into a virtual world.

Steve Cliffe, CEO of Ultrahaptics, says: “What’s really remarkable is that this technology can be used anywhere we interact with technology. Think about how many devices are now controlled with touchscreen: computers, car dashboards, TVs, sat navs, phones, and even the latest kitchen devices and parking meters.

“Our technology removes the need to touch devices physically, but still gives us that vital recognition that we are interacting with our devices, making that communication two way, and intuitive. And that’s just the control applications for the technology. We believe that touch is the missing piece to make virtual worlds more real. At the moment, despite sophisticated graphics and audio, the spell is still broken in VR once you reach out to touch something.” ■



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CILLA SNOWBALL IN SEVEN

CILLA SNOWBALL CBE IS GROUP CHAIRMAN AND CEO OF AD AGENCY AMV BBDO. SHE JOINED AS THE AGENCY'S FIRST NEW BUSINESS DIRECTOR IN 1992 AND, 24 YEARS LATER, OVERSEES THE THREE UK-BASED COMPANIES IN THE AMV GROUP – AMV BBDO, PROXIMITY AND REDWOOD. SHE ALSO CHAIRS THE WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL



1 The Female FTSE Board Report 2016 showed that just 9.7% of directors in the FTSE 100 (5.6% in FTSE 250) are female. Why is big business so slow in this area?

As part of the Davies review, the number of women on boards doubled in four years, so big business has demonstrated its willingness to change when there is a clear target, strong leadership and an infrastructure of transparency and support. But we must be even more ambitious in developing non-executive and executive

representation in the FTSE, matching our intentions with our efforts. The Hampton Alexander review will examine in detail how to improve the representation of women at the executive level and in the all-important executive pipeline. Their examination will, I'm sure, yield valuable learnings.

2 Where do you think most effective action can be taken when it comes to policies such as flexible working and maternity leave?

The work we are doing on the Women's Business Council (WBC) will explore solutions from classroom to boardroom. We have extended our reach across more sectors to provide what we hope will be valuable insight into tackling barriers to women's progression, building partnerships with schools and colleges, and developing solutions by business, for business.

3 Are we having the right conversations about women in the workplace? Is the focus in the right places?

There is no silver bullet. We need to look for ways to support and increase the executive talent pipeline. We will take action to close the gender pay gap. We want to broaden girls' aspirations to consider STEM [science, technology, engineering and maths] subjects, creating greater partnership between schools, businesses and parents. We have to encourage talent; offer flexible working arrangements to support working parents and carers; promote the needs of older women in – and returning to – the workplace; increase the number of female entrepreneurs; and, most importantly, encourage men to become change agents for the development of women in the workplace, challenging inequality and increasing transparency.

4 Would it be better to talk about flexible working for all and broader parental leave, or does the focus have to remain on women only?

Good question – and we have already provided valuable insights on the rights of

men and women to request flexible working and shared parental leave. Real behaviour change will occur when both sexes adopt these programmes.

5 Do you think the 33% target for FTSE 350 boards by 2020 is feasible? Can turnover of roles be fast enough to support this?

To meet the 33% target for FTSE boards by 2020, a constant turnover is required with an appointment rate of one in three positions going to women. Rigorous gender metrics and voluntary targets have proved to be effective tools. So this target is, as my boss is fond of saying, 'tough but achievable', and we will do everything we can to ensure it is met.

6 As chair of the WBC, how do you ensure this push for greater equality in business doesn't just become a box-ticking exercise, but is actually an endemic cultural shift?

By offering up meaningful solutions, relevant role models, evidence of best practice and, most importantly, proof of the business case. This isn't just important for women – it is critical for our economy.

7 What has helped you most in your career to rise to the top of an industry most typically led by men?

I think it is a combination of 'what' and 'who'. I have always had the ambition to succeed and to do my job well. I chose the 'who' carefully, opting to work for a company and clients who support and nurture that ambition. Along the way, I have had great support, encouragement and motivation from the men and women I work for and with, and even more from those who work for and around me. There is a very strong pipeline of female talent emerging in our Group, which is a source of huge pride and joy. ■

A PICTURE PAINTS A THOUSAND WORDS

USING SKILL SETS NOT USUALLY FOUND IN THE SECTOR CAN BRING NEW THINKING TO IDENTIFYING INSIGHTS, AS ONE CONSULTANCY DISCOVERED WHEN IT CALLED ON THE TALENTS OF A PHOTOJOURNALIST.
BY JANE BAINBRIDGE

There are ways and means of doing things in market research that become engrained and second nature. While there is always a need for established methodologies, familiar systems, recognised practices and continuity, new thinking and approaches are also required, whether to address changing technology or to probe people's behaviour and motivations in a different way.

It was a desire to get such an outside perspective that led Hall & Partners' in-the-moment mobile agency Tempo and photojournalist Simon Walker to work together.

There was a degree of serendipity about the two coming together. Richard Owen, founder and CEO of CrowdLab, and strategic adviser at Tempo, explains: "As part of Tempo's offer we thought 'what is the biggest cultural phenomenon of our time?' It's photography and sharing photos – and how can we harness the power of photography in research?"

This is where Walker came in, because "if we're going to develop this idea, why

don't we talk to someone who's spent their entire career taking and understanding photographs", adds Owen.

Walker's background was old-school photojournalism – covering world news for *The Times* for 15 years and then as its pictures editor – but he had tracked the changes in technology and adapted accordingly, setting up his own social media photographic business selling on everyday images that people were capturing on their smartphones.

"Far from being fearful of change, my career had developed and moved on with those changes in technology and the social adoption of technology. So when they [Tempo] said they had this app and wanted to use photography as a research tool – but with an intrinsic understanding of photography as a communication tool – it was an interesting adjunct to everything else I'd been doing," says Walker.

The result was Walker working with Tempo to develop its methodology and an analytical framework to assess the image content.

"With two billion photos uploaded on the internet every day, the idea that businesses aren't looking at those to better understand their clients, the services they're offering and the world at large, would be ridiculous," says Walker.

"There's a paradigm shift and we record and validate our whole lives through photography. Using very specific tools for research to understand that was a creative and intellectual challenge I was keen to be involved in."

He describes the outside skill set that he brought to market research as 'photo semiotics'. "The processes we use to communicate photographically – some learned, some cultural and some instinctive – mean communication has just been made easier. What is the research seeking to achieve? It's there to find out what customers feel or want or need, and most people struggle to tell you and write that down.

"The joy of simplifying that process to an in-the-moment photographic element is that it opens up an emotive response, rather than a rational one. As a picture editor, I expect the world to give me irrational, emotional responses. That's where I find my stories – understanding the essence and the underlying feelings and messages."

Finding the stories is where this non-traditional market research view becomes so useful in picture analysis. Owen explains: "What we're finding is insight that we wouldn't have known to ask about."

He cites a project the agency did on software development, which was about understanding the adoption of the client's versus rivals' software. It involved participants documenting their lives as software managers and, when Tempo looked at the photos, what stood out was the use of Post-it notes. "That was a photographic reveal of something we'd never thought to ask," says Owen.



Simon Walker, understanding photography

▶ Tempo is also using this technique to adapt and enhance traditional research methods. “For a depth or focus group interview, we’ll get people to document their lives around the group in question for a week before the meeting. Then our traditional qualitative moderators – instead of opening with ‘let’s talk about your last shop in Waitrose’ – can say ‘you took a photo at 4pm last Thursday in Waitrose; this happened and you said you felt like this’. Rather than relying on memory, you’re taking people back.”

But with photographs now so ubiquitous, and people carefully filtering what they share as they adopt a social media persona, how can they be sure the pictures being sent for research purposes are accurate and honest?

Walker says: “What’s important as a research tool is to separate the white noise from the specific stuff we’re asking for. Which is why, when a client wants xyz, we haven’t tried to syphon bits out; we’d be making too many subjective judgements. We’ve taken the behaviour pattern that everyone’s so comfortable with and said let’s focus that behaviour on a specific task. Respondents filter out the white noise for us.”

Owen adds that you naturally lose some of the persona because these photographs are for a specific project.

“A lot of the work is keeping a two-week mobile record of a certain topic; it’s a very individual ethnographic experience, so they present what’s really happening. In any project, it feels like a rule of thirds – a third over-share (all the good stuff, but also all the other stuff too); a third are really focused on the task; and a third you have to chivy along a bit with push notifications.”

Walker says that while working with Tempo has reinforced his feeling that people are really keen to share, “it has also surprised and delighted me that businesses are prepared not just to stand outside and look in, but to be involved and engaged with it.” ■

THE JOB MARKET THINKING OUTSIDE THE ‘BOTS’

Machine learning is all the rage, so should researchers fear the rise of the robots, asks Sinead Hasson

Humans aired on Channel 4 last year, telling the story of an ordinary suburban family that recruits a ‘synth’ – a human-like robot – to help around the house. The trailer for the programme prompted viewers to inquire where they could purchase such a robot. Demand was high, expectations higher – and, I suspect, disappointment higher still when viewers realised the trailer was simply for a fictional drama. But hiring an automaton to help with domestic chores is no longer a dream; you can buy robots to mow your lawn nowadays. But they are not just replacing gardeners – they are allegedly set to replace a host of white-collar workers too. So will every formulaic role eventually become robot fodder?

Much has been written lately about machine learning and its benefits in market research – primarily that a machine, without any agenda, may identify trends and behaviours that the human analyst may not. It can sift through far more data than a human and trace gaps in the process based on the trends it has already identified. It can then reveal patterns, make forecasts and influence decisions – even make better judgements, perhaps.

Where does that leave the researcher of the future, and does it spell the end for market research professionals who could be relegated to the back office while bots do all the clever analytics? Thankfully not. Machine learning lacks one invaluable quality – robots aren’t human.

Researchers all have something unique; they have their own bank of experience and expertise upon which to base their interpretation of results. A human analyst’s innate bias is a



“Computers don’t rule us. We need researchers to assess the social, cultural and economic situations”

good thing, even if it does narrow the parameters. Insights cannot be gleaned from pure logic alone, and computers don’t rule us. We need researchers to assess the social, cultural and economic situations, something a machine will never be able to do as well as humans can. Possessing and understanding the nuances of human motivation, desires, rewards, emotions, humour and sometimes even egos equips us with skills that machines will never have.

Machine learning lays out the bigger picture – the biggest and broadest picture possible – but it is our human qualities that allow us to make the best decisions, independent from an operational analysis or statistical forecast. The best decisions are not always made on data without room for interpretation, so we can all take comfort that a robot will not be replacing market research professionals any time soon, if ever – but it can work alongside you.

Around 90% of decisions made in major commercial organisations are operational in nature, so you can see why people are getting so excited – machine learning’s potential to increase efficiency is huge. But understanding an audience that consists of you and me – each with our own wonderful and unique set of illogical, emotional quirks – is something quite different.

Robots are there to help, to ease some of the heavy work, leaving the researcher of the future free to create, innovate and drive real-time change. So embrace the robot, and remember – robots don’t kill employees, people do. If you are going for a new job soon, ask your prospective employer how they are approaching machine learning. This will give you an indication of how progressive they are. Companies that relish change will adapt to the new realities we face in our industry. Those that can’t, won’t – so you might want to work elsewhere.

Sinead Hasson (@SineadH) is the founder and managing director of recruitment consultancy Hasson Associates



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DATA SHARING: NEW DAY OR FALSE DAWN?



NEW GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE DATA SHARING ARE OF POTENTIAL BENEFIT TO MARKET RESEARCHERS, SAYS **DR MICHELLE GODDARD**. PROVING THE PUBLIC VALUE OF RESEARCH PROJECTS WILL BE KEY TO GRASPING THIS OPPORTUNITY

Sharing existing data sets can improve the delivery of services to citizens, as well as the robustness and rigour of statistics, helping people, organisations and government to make more informed decisions.

There is untapped potential in recent government initiatives, opening up new opportunities for private sector researchers to access a wealth of useful statistical data in a responsible and ethical manner.

DIGITAL ECONOMY BILL

The provisions in the Digital Economy Bill, which was introduced in parliament in July 2016, include a wide range of measures, but – importantly for researchers – offer a new approach to data sharing. This is intended to help with de-identified data, to support accredited researchers to access and link data in secure facilities to carry out research for public benefit.

The bill proposes that a code of practice be developed to set out how to de-identify data so it may be shared without identifying individuals. This code will contain guidance on processes for collecting, storing and supplying information to the Statistics Authority, and will set out conditions that researchers will have to meet to gain access to data. The Statistics Authority will accredit individuals who are allowed to process personal data.

As the bill goes through the legislative process, it is likely to be shaped further and will be an important area to monitor to see how it can be used to improve research outcomes.

ACCESSING STATISTICAL DATA AS AN APPROVED RESEARCHER

Under the revised Approved Researcher framework, commercial researchers now have greater access to unpublished statistical data produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The ONS has allowed private sector access through the scheme, subject to specified safeguards. The approval process is largely similar for all researchers, requiring the submission of a single application in order to be accredited for a fixed period of five years. Specific criteria include at least three years' quantitative research experience and completion of prescribed training.

As is to be expected, the scheme is underpinned by transparency of participation and publication of results. Researchers must agree to be included on the list of accredited research projects published on the ONS website, and to publish results of all research projects completed through the scheme.

Some additional restrictions are placed on accredited researchers from the private sector. These include approval of research proposals by the National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee and a requirement that research results be published before commercial use can be made of them, such as through development of a value-added product.

A key hurdle for qualified researchers in the commercial sector to make use of the scheme is likely to be the need to ensure that the research project meets the 'public good'. As the ONS Approved Researcher scheme develops, it will be interesting to see whether it delivers for commercial researchers and the type of projects that meet the criteria.

PUBLIC BENEFIT IN COMMERCIAL RESEARCH?

A key concept underlying the Approved Researcher scheme and the data sharing proposed in the Digital Economy Bill is public benefit, which acts as a gatekeeper concept in allowing access to the data by researchers.

However, there is a danger that policy-makers will construe public benefit too narrowly and exclude the work of private sector researchers. Public-private partnerships, increasingly important in the delivery of services, must be factored into the development of the data-sharing approaches.

Principles defining public benefit or public good need to include efficiency improvement, and the development of new and innovative goods and services that serve public needs/demands:

- Market research plays a key role in helping business to better understand consumers, and to develop appropriate goods and services that are essential for economic efficiency, innovation and progress within the UK economy.
- Social and opinion research, also carried out by researchers in the private sector, is used widely by government and public bodies to understand citizens' preferences and behaviours, measure impact, and develop appropriate policies used, for example, in improving educational, healthcare and police services.

Clearly, public perceptions and concerns about private sector commercial users making profits from secure public data – or a lack of trust in commercial use of data – need to be taken into account properly. But data sharing, with appropriate ethical and legal safeguards, should allow all researchers to make more effective use of existing data sets.

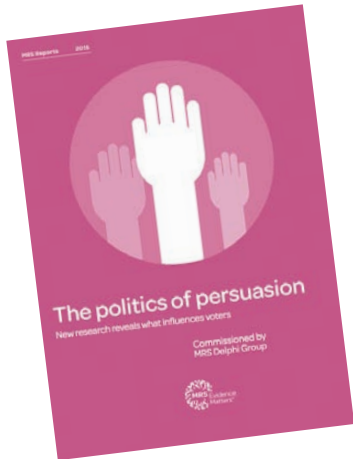
Approaches in this area need to be tailored to reflect these concerns without creating an uneven playing field between private companies and academic institutions. The data-sharing debates will continue, but it may be time to explain the public benefits of the wide range of projects undertaken, and the adherence to ethical standards and best practice that are the bedrock of the sector. ■

Dr Michelle Goddard is director of policy and standards at MRS



MRS highlights in 2015-16

"We have identified two future challenges. The first is to bridge the gap between data and qualitative to create an integrated evidence and insight base. The second is to develop the skills of employees to meet the demands of a market driven by data intelligence," writes **Jane Frost** in the MRS Annual Review 2015-16



April 2015

MRS and the Research Network launch the **oral history project** – a series of interviews with some of the most accomplished practitioners since the research sector first emerged.

May

MRS supports the British Polling Council inquiry into the performance of the opinion polls before the 2015 General Election.

June

Thomas Kerr, Simon Patterson and Trish Stuart Parker receive **MRS Fellowships**.

July

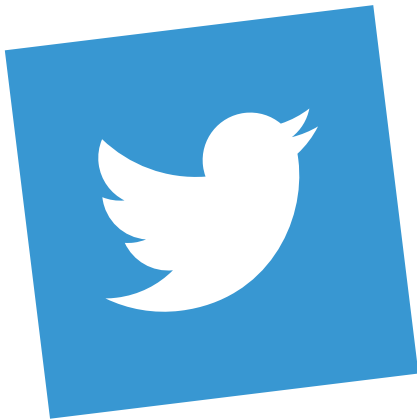
The Times' *Raconteur* publishes a special report on '**The Future of Market Research**' led by Jane Frost's opinion piece 'Delivering a data revolution'.

September

The MRS Delphi Group publishes ***The Politics of Persuasion*** with new research into what sways voters.

October

MRS promotes the first **MRBA week** to the sector – and hosts its own activities to support market research's only independent, registered charity.



The UK business of evidence
market currently generates

£4.8bn

in gross value
added (GVA)



November

Four hundred people attend **MRS training** across all our platforms (online, webinar, face-to-face), the highest number in a single month.

December

Miles Jupp, host of BBC Radio 4's *The News Quiz*, presents to an audience of 849 – the largest attendance at **MRS Awards**.

January 2016

MRS turns 70: 'Curiosity is where we begin. Insight is what we do. Revolution is the change we can bring,' writes Jane Frost.

February

MRS launches its first **Consumer Health and Wellbeing conference**.

March

PwC reports that the **UK research market has grown** by 62%, to £4.8bn.

Twitter sponsors new **MRS Award for Social Media Research**.

Bill Bryson is awarded an Honorary Fellowship (pictured).

Impact 2016 scores highest ever delegate satisfaction score.

For the full
review visit

[www.mrs.org.uk/
annualreview](http://www.mrs.org.uk/annualreview)



Are you 'Future Fit'?

Future Fit. Despite looking like an unassuming word pairing, this infinitely potent phrase is the theme for the Annual Conference 2017 – 'Future Fit: Strategies for Better Business and Stronger Society'.

'Future Fit' means taking the great leap of faith that is required to pause and reset. It's having the confidence – amid the rush of daily deadlines – to reflect and assess where you are, what you are doing, and how you and your organisation can embrace opportunity and change.

It's being the key link to the outside, the face of the consumer, and reminding people of the missing voices and unspoken emotions with the power to disrupt. It's building a team with the perfect complement of skills – a team that can both turn data and research into insight and communicate with clarity and clout to the executive board. You can reflect the communities you talk to and your teams represent the diversity of voices to which you listen.

Future Fit is seeing technology not as an intruder into the marketplace, but as the extension of everything you are doing – the enabler that, when coupled with insight and acumen, can change the game forever. You experiment, you know that great insight is methodologically neutral – it can come from almost anywhere.

To become Future Fit yourself, you need to absorb the widest range of thinking from the world around you. That's why we have devised a year-long programme of events and conferences, training and learning, to give you the tools to embed the principles of Future Fit into everything you do.

Finally, we couldn't talk the talk if we weren't walking the walk. MRS has always been transparent about its progress as an organisation and our Annual Review 2015-16 (see previous page) presents an organisation that has re-imagined itself – with the help of its members – to become one that will remain relevant to the sector for another 70 years to come.

Jane Frost CBE, chief executive, MRS
jane.frost@mrs.org.uk



MY SOCIETY



MRS Awards

The finalists have been announced, and you can now book yourself a place/table for the MRS Awards 2016 at the glamorous Supernova venue beside the Thames, on 5 December. Let's beat last year's record of 849 attendees!

mrs.org.uk/awards

A roadshow near you

MRS is taking to the road from now until spring 2017. This is our chance to get to know you, and your chance to ask questions about MRS, our work and your membership. We'll be focusing on a handful of topics, including: data regulation and the impact of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); a new MRS Delphi Group industry report; and the young researchers network, RNet. Please come and join us and meet other MRS members in your neighbourhood.

mrs.org.uk/roadshow

Calendar

Member events

November

- 1 – IJMR Lecture: Social media, London
- 9 – Mini-conference: Consumer behaviour, Leeds
- 10 – MRS Advanced Analytics Symposium, London
- 23 – Media Research: The future – is the past irrelevant? London

December

- 5 – MRS Awards at Supernova, London

Training highlights

October

26 – Design Training for Market Researchers

The core principles of design, how to use PowerPoint properly, how to find and use appropriate imagery, and how to create a simple infographic in PowerPoint.

November

2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 – Advanced Qualitative Practice

Five modules covering psychology, facilitation and paths to insight all come together in a challenging, fulfilling and very practical programme.

11 – Using Co-Design in Focus Groups

An accessible way to introduce and frame group design activity, and gain a new level of insight into customer values and needs.

14 – Data Science – A Practical Approach

The data, questions and tools that quant researchers, analysts and data scientists use to tackle increasingly sophisticated questions.

23-24 – Advanced Semiotics

Understand how to decode and creatively reconfigure brand communications in their cultural contexts for competitive advantage.

December

5 – Writing to Achieve Results

Principles of effective writing, and how you can adapt your own writing style to meet the needs of diverse audiences.

Conferences

October

- 27 – Customers Exposed, London

November

- 17 – Financial Services, London
- 24 – Methodology in Context, London

January 2017

- 26 – Kids and Youth Research, London

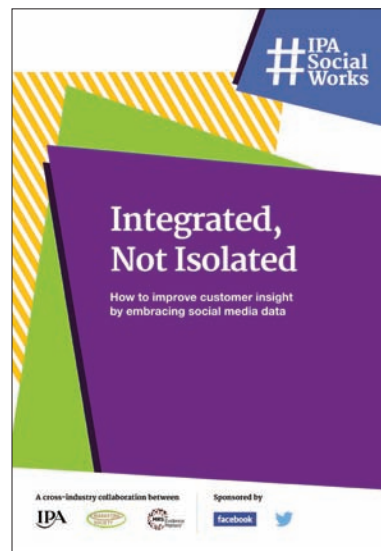
Find out more at mrs.org.uk/events

Guide to social media insight

MRS works with several industry bodies across marketing, communications and advertising to ensure that the research and insight function retains its key role in decision-making for businesses. A notable initiative this autumn is the publication of a new guide from #ipasocialworks, which is run by the IPA, MRS and Marketing Society, with sponsorship from Twitter and Facebook.

Integrated, Not Isolated: How to improve customer insight by embracing social media data is co-authored by Tom Ewing at Brainjuicer and Jess Owens at Face. Member discount available.

mrs.org.uk/socialmedia



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Where next?

You've reached the end of *Impact*, but there's plenty more original content to enjoy in the MRS's family of publications, including Research Live and *IJMR*



The personal touch

Using psycholinguistics together with text analytics to predict online behaviour from social media activity is known as personality scoring. James Blake, of Hello Soda, argues that – combined with social listening and big data – it could be the next big thing in personalisation.

<https://www.research-live.com/personal>

Predictions and people: innovation in market research

Jack Miles, of Northstar Research Partners, offers his opinion on how, if it is to innovate successfully, the market research industry must improve its external image in order to attract the right talent.

<https://www.research-live.com/predictions-and-people>

The role of research in social inclusion

Desiree Lopez, CEO of TNS BMRB, is quizzed as part of a series of video interviews with industry leaders. She discusses the value of social research and what the commercial sector could learn from it, as well as how it could be used to improve social inclusion and cohesion.

<https://www.research-live.com/lopez>

Could Brexit be good for brands?

Zoe Fenn, of Flamingo, thinks that the uncertainty, such as that surrounding Britain's decision to leave the EU, can often force change, which in turn is good for innovation and new business thinking.

<https://www.research-live.com/brexit-good-for-brands>

IJMR

The big opportunity in big data

Colin Strong explores the opportunities for market researchers offered by the data trails that track our lives and behaviours, and presents market research as the gateway between academia and industry.

mrs.org.uk/big-opportunity-big-data

Device use in web surveys: the effect of differential incentives

Aigul Mavletova and Mick Couper look at how conditional differential incentives – including offering higher incentives to mobile phone users – can affect overall participation rates and the proportion of respondents who use a particular device in web surveys.

mrs.org.uk/device-use

IMPACT ONLINE

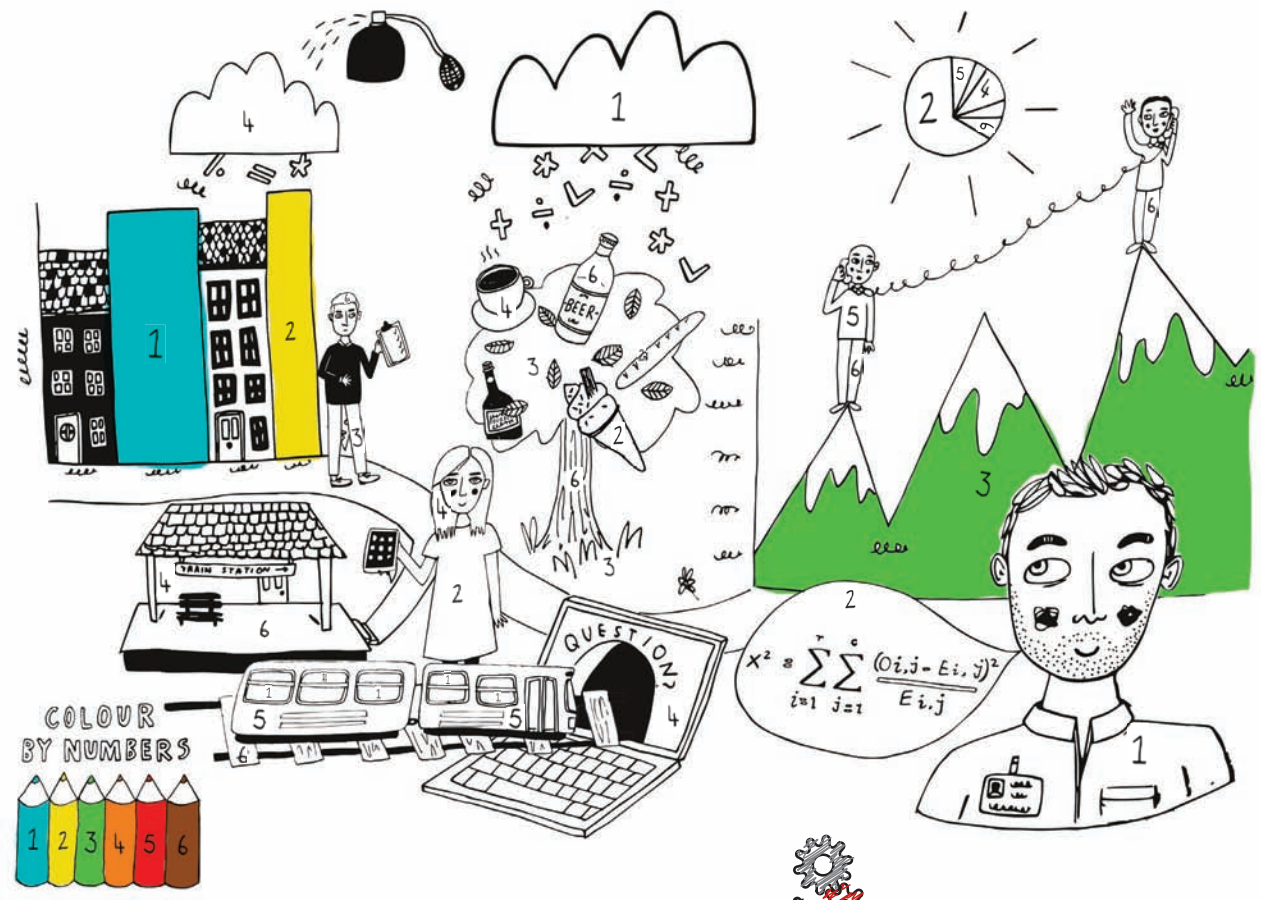


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