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The research industry is expanding in fascinating directions and evidence of this will unfold before you on the following pages. Derived from our conferences, webinars, and blog posts, as well as the interests and expertise of practitioners you may not have heard from before, the articles here present an impressive array of themes and issues.

The diversity of topics in this Journal confirms that we are, indeed, a part of an interesting and stimulating industry. As Jim Heisler points out in his article on marketing research as a career: “The well-kept secret is that market research is fundamentally about human behavior, and that’s anything but boring. Look more deeply and it’s about thinking conceptually, thinking strategically, and rethinking how to just plain think.”

As you flip through these pages you’ll find plenty to make you think. Research on emerging research technologies and techniques, data security risks, the powerful influence of the unconscious mind, new ways to look at marketing measurement, the benefits of teleworking, the factors that go into valuing a research business, and even how to use humor to your benefit in a client presentation. There truly is something for everyone – no matter your business model, industry focus or job responsibility.

Thanks to the authors for sharing their perspectives with us.

We also thank the companies that have supported our Journal through their advertisements. Sprinkled throughout are a few ads from CASRO as well – they highlight some of the many initiatives we work on each day: Certification to the ISO research quality standards; the Global Research Business Network, comprised of industry associations from nearly 40 countries around the world; an industry-specific insurance program we developed that helps research businesses affordably manage risk. And, of course, our conferences and webinars, which have been commended for their objectivity and informational value. Across these many initiatives you will find something in common – CASRO’s goal to help our member companies grow their businesses.

If you are with a CASRO member company, please get involved in CASRO’s programs and initiatives. If your company is not a CASRO member, please learn more about us and consider joining or attending one of our events to get to know us. Or, you can contact me directly at diane.bowers@casro.org.

Thank you for reading our Journal. I hope you enjoy it.

Sincerely,
Diane Bowers
President, CASRO
WITH SSI, THESE NUMBERS ALL ADD UP TO A WINNING FORMULA
Introduction

There is no doubt that consumer mobile device usage is growing exponentially. In the United States, more than 50% of adults own a smartphone, and 65% of all email is accessed via mobile devices. Checking their wireless phones approximately 158 times a day, or every 6.5 minutes, consumers have integrated mobile devices into their day-to-day activities. During the next few years, a continued migration from desktop computers to mobile phones and tablets is anticipated, as some 2.5 billion people will own a smartphone by 2017. This shift also is impacting the way consumers participate in market research, with 30% of online surveys completed via mobile Web.

Increased consumer adoption of mobile applications and the increased number of features and functionality available on mobile apps create fresh opportunities to engage consumers in market research. The variety of information that can be captured beyond the standard survey format provides a powerful opportunity to augment typical survey questions. GPS-based location tracking and multimedia capabilities allow consumers to tell us about their experiences “in the moment,” and mobile app capabilities allow us to capture mystery shop-like data on the fly with relatively low overhead vs. traditional mystery shop programs.

However, just because researchers see the tremendous potential in this data collection methodology doesn’t mean consumers will. We must be realistic and note that many consumers may not allow an app to access their location

information and track their whereabouts. Yet we need to know more about those who are open to this approach and how they will participate. Which consumers are most likely to engage in mobile app market research? Do push notifications of survey opportunities increase response rates? Are consumers willing to complete a survey and document their experience via multimedia while they are in the moment?

Understanding the need to reach consumers where and how they want to be reached, J.D. Power conducted research to explore how consumers respond to surveys deployed via mobile devices while they are in the moment of an experience. The feasibility of using GPS technologies and mobile app surveys to capture consumer feedback was tested across several mobile apps.

**Research Design**

J.D. Power conducted two studies to test the feasibility of using mobile apps with geo-location to capture consumer feedback for low- and high-incidence events. For the first study, we collaborated with MFour to survey consumers who were shopping for a new vehicle (low incidence). The goal was to assess the response rate funnel and understand where in the process potential respondents were lost. Respondents were first pre-qualified via traditional online surveying as being likely to shop for a new vehicle within the next two months (10,033). Among those potential respondents, 9,073 agreed to install the geo-location app and receive push notifications on their mobile device. Respondents then had to be at a dealership for at least 15 minutes in order to receive a survey alert.

The second study also tested the feasibility of capturing consumer feedback via a mobile app, but using a high-incidence event. Moreover, the test aimed to understand the viability of capturing this feedback during the actual experience (mystery shop condition) vs. immediately following the experience (satisfaction survey condition). Through our collaboration with uSamp, Research Now, and MFour, three mobile survey apps were used to capture information from consumers who were identified by GPS technologies as being at a grocery store. Respondents who were just beginning to shop were asked to complete a brief mystery shop survey, while those who were already in the process of shopping or who had just completed their shopping were asked to complete a brief satisfaction survey about their grocery shopping experience.

Within the mystery shop condition, respondents were asked to provide feedback that is difficult to capture after the occurrence of the experience of interest, such as finding an item in the store or timing how long it took to checkout. Within the satisfaction survey condition, respondents rated various aspects of their experience, such as how long it took to checkout, the professionalism of the staff, and the layout and design of the store.

**Results from each of the mobile app tests were then compared with the results from a traditional online grocery store satisfaction study. Online panelists from SSI completed a full grocery store experience survey online one month after the mobile app surveys were fielded to compare respondent profiles and survey results.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Sizes</th>
<th>uSamp</th>
<th>Research Now</th>
<th>MFour</th>
<th>SSI (Online)</th>
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<td>466</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>264</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>2899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results: Study One

To assess the feasibility of using a mobile app to survey for a low-incidence study, we first examined the entire process, from survey qualification to completion. The majority (53%) of potential respondents were lost because they were not geo-located at a dealership.
Results: Study Two
Completion Rates

In the second study, response rates were examined for a high-incidence event, grocery shopping. Among respondents who received a push notification, 24% of respondents completed the survey. Completion rates were 12 percentage points higher when the survey was completed immediately following the shopping experience (satisfaction survey condition) vs. during the shopping event (mystery shop condition).

Profile Comparisons

No significant differences were found when comparing the profiles of those who did vs. those who did not start the survey. While mobile app responders did not differ on gender, education, ethnicity, or rewards program membership from traditional responders, they did differ on age. On average, mobile app responders were 35 years-old, compared with an average age of 40 among traditional online panel responders.

Comparing the Data

While obtaining respondents with generally similar profiles is important, it does not mean the results will be the same between traditional online and mobile app data collection. To make this comparison, we used the Customer Satisfaction Index approach developed by J.D. Power, which takes empirically derived estimates of importance weights and applies them to the corresponding experience ratings to yield a Grocery Store Customer Satisfaction Index that ranges from 100 to 1,000 points. Grocery Store Customer Satisfaction Index scores were found to differ by vendor, with the
highest scores among Research Now respondents (783) and the lowest among MFour respondents (722). Overall, combined mobile app scores were approximately 40 points lower than traditional online panel scores. These differences held when respondent profile was controlled.

Finally, we wanted to assess the feasibility of capturing additional qualitative data that is not possible to capture via traditional online research. Within traditional online studies, the primary source of qualitative information is verbatim, which are completed by approximately 40% of respondents. Mobile app data collection allows us to collect multimedia qualitative information, such as voice recordings, pictures, and videos of the experience of interest. Mobile app respondents were more than willing to provide this type of feedback and sent, on average, one optional picture/video of something in the store to highlight their experience.

Conclusions

Overall, our results provide a good first step in understanding how mobile app data collection can be used either as a primary or supplemental form of research. Additionally, we gained insights into the willingness of consumers to engage in this type of research and how these respondents compare with typical online panel respondents. Based on our findings, mobile app surveys with geo-fencing provide a means for capturing specific in-the-moment feedback, which would otherwise be impossible to obtain following the occurrence of the event of interest. That is, overall completion rates for both low- and high-incidence events were comparable with traditional online completion rates; the mobile surveys were perceived to be easy to complete; such operational metrics as time to checkout were more accurately captured; and respondents were willing to provide qualitative, multimedia feedback. Of course, caution should be taken when using mobile app data collection with geo-fencing, as we also found some notable differences in comparison with traditional online data collection—specifically, mobile app respondents were younger and overall satisfaction scores were lower.

In addition to understanding how this methodology impacts satisfaction scores, we also wanted to understand how it impacts the accuracy of self-reported operational metrics, such as time to checkout. We compared the reported checkout times (minutes) of all three respondent groups and checkout times were found to increase as the time span between the experience and surveying increased. When respondents timed the checkout during the process, it took 5 minutes. Respondents who completed the survey directly after shopping experienced a 10-minute checkout, while it took an average of 12 minutes for traditional online respondents to checkout.

“Mobile app respondents were more than willing to provide this type of feedback and sent, on average, one optional picture/video of something in the store to highlight their experience.”
About the Authors

Laurie Alexander
Laurie’s focus is on digital research and new product development with emphasis on mobile app technologies. She earned undergraduate degrees in Education and Computer Science and her MBA from the University of Colorado, Denver and has over 15 years of product development experience including extensive experience in digital marketing.

Gina Pingitore
Gina joined J.D. Power and Associates in 2002 and has more than 20 years of experience designing, implementing and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research. Previously, she was Director of Research and Planning at Publicis Dialog. At Publicis her responsibilities included identifying consumer insights to create compelling advertising messages; tracking effectiveness through statistical analyses; design and implementation of online research; and predicting the effectiveness of advertising executions. Earlier in her career, she worked in academia as a behavioral researcher. Gina earned a doctorate in psychology from Loyola University of Chicago and a master’s degree in psychology from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and has authored over 30 published articles.

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Chris has been involved in the innovation of research methodologies for more than 20 years. In 2007, his firm was recognized at the American Business Awards as one of the nation’s “most innovative” companies. Chris is the author of 27 Powers of Persuasion: Simple Strategies to Seduce Audiences and Win Allies. He also has been a featured speaker at Google and Microsoft Corporations, provided research and political commentary in the New York Times and USA Today, and appeared on national news broadcasts, such as NBC, C-SPAN and Fox News. He is a member of Young Presidents Organization (YPO).

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Every liar supposedly has a tell. This is patently true among children, whose first attempts at lying are laughable, but the belief that a person’s true intentions and emotions leak out in subtle cues is presumed to apply to adults as well. In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, Darwin even told us exactly where to look. “A man when moderately angry,” he wrote, “or even enraged may command the movements of his body, but . . . those muscles of the face which are least obedient to the will, will sometimes alone betray a slight and passing emotion.” The Supreme Court of Canada agrees, at least in principle: it now requires juries to view a witness in person in order to “adequately evaluate body language, facial expressions and other indicators of credibility.”

Cable news channels employ “nonverbal analysts” to decode the true meaning of political posturing, some of whom write books that promise to make you a “veritable lie detector” by honing your body reading to perfection. Sometimes this attention is comically overblown. As a sarcastic headline from the *Onion* jokes: “Nation demands more pre-debate news stories about body language.”

How much of our minds do our bodies really show? Of course, nobody expects to communicate complicated thoughts with one’s body, as if you could describe your life history, or articulate how it feels to be in love, or explain the Bill of Rights through pantomime alone. Bodies presumably reveal emotions rather than thoughts, but how much of our emotions do our bodies show compared to other channels of communication, such as our voices?

One way to find out is to make someone momentarily deaf or momentarily blind and test how accurately they can evaluate others. Thankfully, this doesn’t require any actual eardrum piercing or eyeball popping. All that’s required is to have a research participant watch a person on videotape describing an emotional experience with either the sound or the screen off. Researchers then compare the participant’s beliefs about the speaker’s emotions with the speaker’s actual reported emotions. In one such experiment, volunteers listened to someone describing either a very positive or a very negative emotional experience. Storytellers reported how positive or negative they were feeling as they were telling the story by moving a slider along a scale in front of them.
Volunteers used the same type of slider to predict how the storyteller was feeling at each moment. The more a volunteer accurately understood what a storyteller was feeling, the more closely their scale movements would align.

When the researchers calculated the volunteers’ accuracy, they found that those who could only see the storyteller were significantly less accurate than those who could only hear the storyteller. That is, emotions were carried primarily on the speaker’s voice. Those who could only see the storytellers were still more accurate than they would have been simply by random guessing, but not by all that much. Body language speaks, but only in whispers.

Jen and I learned to keep the importance of body language in perspective after bringing our adopted children home from Ethiopia. At the ages of five and three, they spoke barely a word of English beyond “mommy” and “daddy.” We knew only enough Amharic to understand whether they wanted to go to the refrigerator or to the bathroom. Our life shrank instantly when using only body language. We could discuss nothing with our new children beyond what we could point at or touch in the immediate here and now.

Anything that had happened in the past or might happen in the future was out of bounds. Time and space were lost. Where I went when I left for the office in the morning or when I’d come back, what I did while I was away, what we might have for dinner, what they might do this afternoon, and how we would now be their parents for as long as we live—all of that was off-limits.

We started exaggerating our facial expressions and body gestures to almost comedic proportions in the hopes that they would understand what little our bodies could show more clearly. We looked silly but got along fine, as any new parents do with preverbal children, but we had only the shallowest understanding of our new son and daughter.

Over time, all parents learn to decode their children’s bodily cues more effectively, going from almost no understanding to some understanding. You can see these gains from training in scientific research as well. Training to read body language and facial expressions through practice and feedback reliably increases one’s ability to recognize those same cues in the near future. The gains are modest and fleeting but reliable. However, even these modest gains tend to benefit only those who know the least or who are least motivated to do well to begin with. Those with autism, for instance, can benefit significantly from training in emotion recognition. In studies with nonautistic adults, men benefit most because they perform slightly worse initially. But if you’re already moderately accurate to begin with or are already socially adept, then the benefits are likely to be minimal, at best. You’re probably doing about as well as you can do.

Darwin’s hypothesis, however, was more sophisticated. He argued that nonverbal facial cues ran deep in our evolutionary heritage and were therefore guided by the reflexive neural machinery we share with other animals. One’s true emotions, such as fear and happiness, would then leak out in a quick expression and only be masked subsequently.
You get your PhD in mind reading, according to Darwin, by learning to compare what a person shows quickly with what they say slowly.

The modern legacy of Darwin’s inhibition hypothesis is what psychologists refer to as “microexpressions,” very brief flashes of emotion lasting less than one-fifth of a second and shown either on the entire face or in just a small part of it. When a man shows a microexpression of a frown while saying he’s happy, the idea goes, you learn that he’s lying. This seems intuitively plausible. When you tell a blatant lie, you’re aware of both what you know to be true and the inconsistent story you’re relating. It’s hard not to feel that the truth is leaking out, whether in microexpressions or other expressions that you can’t control completely. The intuitive appeal of this idea has lent it considerable credence outside the scientific community. For three seasons, the television show Lie to Me, for instance, dramatized how the ability to read microexpressions can be used to identify criminals. Although Lie to Me is clearly fictional, the Transportation Security Administration was deadly serious when it based a massive training program on the presumed validity of microexpressions. The program, called Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT), trains TSA agents to spot microexpressions and other purportedly subtle cues to deception. These “behavioral analysts” question passengers standing in the security line about seemingly innocuous topics. As of 2010, there were roughly three thousand trained analysts conducting these chat-downs at a reported 161 airports.

Despite this popular appeal, the scientific credibility of claims about microexpressions is currently weak, at best. First, our intuitive sense that our emotions leak out and are clearly visible to others looks to be more of an egocentric illusion than objective reality. In experiments, when people are asked to lie or to conceal strong emotions, they tend to think the truth will be detected by others significantly more often than it actually is. Most of us, for better or worse, are better liars than we think we are. Second, when researchers actively look for microexpressions that imply deceit, these clues not only seem to be exceptionally rare but also seem just as likely to be shown when people are telling the truth as when they are lying. In one experiment, researchers asked volunteers to look at a series of emotionally arousing photographs and to either express their true emotion or conceal it. Out of the 697 facial expressions shown in this study, not one revealed a full microexpression (shown on both the top half and bottom half of the face), and only 14 (2 percent of the total) contained a partial microexpression (appearing only on either the top or bottom half of the face). And of those 14 partial microexpressions, half came when the person was trying to conceal their true emotion and the other half when the person was trying to reveal their true emotion. These exceptionally rare microexpressions seem just as likely to mislead you about the mind of another as they are to reveal it to you. Of course, this does not mean that all emotions can be concealed. What’s surprising, though, is just how little our true emotions leak out, how often misleading expressions show up on our faces, and how hard any of these subtle cues are to detect accurately.

Even high-stakes lies do not seem to produce dramatically more distinguishing cues than tiny white
lies. One group of researchers summarized its findings this way: “Although high-stakes lies [may] be harder for liars to tell, their behavioral manifestations are neither obvious nor necessarily simply magnified versions of those of lower stakes lies.” Just because you can experience your own thoughts and emotions so clearly does not mean that they leak out anywhere near as clearly to others.

The SPOT program has been widely criticized as being built upon a weak scientific foundation. It’s hard to fault the TSA for trying anything that might detect dangerous terrorists or criminals more effectively, but SPOT does not appear to be such a program. In the Government Accountability Office’s report to Congress, of the approximately 2 billion passengers who traveled through SPOT airports between 2004 and 2008, roughly 152,000 were detained for additional questioning. Of those, 14,000 were detained further to be interrogated by law enforcement officers, eventually resulting in 1,083 arrests. This means that less than 1 percent of those identified by SPOT officers were actually arrested for a criminal offense, and 99 percent were needlessly detained. Ignoring the 151,000 people who were needlessly detained, were those arrested actually concealing guns, drugs, bombs, or terrorist information, as the program was originally designed to catch? Almost never (and not a single terrorist). The most common violation, accounting for 40 percent of these arrests, was categorized as “illegal alien.” The SPOT program looks like an expensive way of enabling racial profiling.

Bodies and faces can reveal thoughts and emotions, but the amount they communicate seems surprisingly limited, and the gain from learning to read others better seems minimal, at best. Learning to read others’ actions better does not seem to be a promising approach for understanding others better. Let’s evaluate the evidence for another method.

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**About the Author**

Nicholas Epley

Nicholas conducts research on the experimental study of social cognition, perspective taking and intuitive human judgment. In his new book, *Mindwise: How We Understand What Others Think, Believe, Feel, and Want*, he introduces what scientists have learned about our abilities to understand the most complicated puzzle on the planet—other people—and the surprising mistakes we so routinely make. His research has appeared in more than two dozen journals, including the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Psychological Science*, *Psychological Review* and the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. His research also has been featured by the *Wall Street Journal*, CNN, *Wired* and National Public Radio, among many others, has been funded by the National Science Foundation and has earned the 2008 Theoretical Innovation Award from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology and the 2010 Distinguished Scientific Award for Early Career Contributions from the American Psychological Association. Nicholas received a bachelor’s degree in psychology and philosophy from Saint Olaf College and graduated from Cornell University with a PhD in psychology, where he earned a Graduate Teaching Award from the Department of Psychology as well as a Cornell University Teaching Fellowship. He became an Assistant Professor at Harvard University and then joined the Chicago Booth faculty in 2004.
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Marketing is too important to be left to the marketing department.

—David Packard, cofounder and past chairman, chief executive officer and president of Hewlett-Packard

- “Marketing measures ROI [return on investment] in terms of marketing, such as customer satisfaction and brand value instead of the most relevant relationship, the one between spending and the gross profit generated from these investments...brand value! What in God’s name is this anyway? It’s not as if our shareholders care.” (CEO of a Spanish telecommunications firm)
- “There is a disconnect between our overall strategy and what marketing understands to be our customers.” (CEO of an Austrian retailer)
- “Marketers are, simply put, often disconnected from the financial realities of the business.” (CEO of a German financial institution)
- “Marketers make decisions based upon gut feelings rather than a solid ROI analysis.” (CEO of a U.S. professional services firm)

CEOs around the world have stopped trusting their chief marketing officers (CMOs). Our research proves it. The findings are sobering. The majority of CEOs can’t bring themselves to say that marketing is strategically relevant. Oh my God!

This is a major problem. Marketing’s job is to bring the voice of the customer to the company. Customers are the only reason companies exist, and marketing is charged with overseeing the customer experience. In fact, 90 percent of CMOs are personally responsible for the overall customer experience management efforts of their firms.

Unfortunately, for many corporate leaders marketing has become, to quote the CEO of an Italian telecom, a “function not on the top of my everyday priority list.” Or worse! CEOs often view marketing as a money pit. To quote the CEO of one U.S. retailer, “Marketing [has] great ideas but no clue how to measure its impact on what really counts...How can I allocate them a budget that disappears into a black box while others can deliver me an ROI for every dollar I give them?”

Marketing’s detractors likely don’t see a problem at all—and to be sure, there are lots of detractors. Ironically, for a management science charged with
managing the reputation of their companies, marketing has a terrible reputation among consumers and business professionals. Only 10 percent of the population has a positive impression of marketing. By contrast, 62 percent have a negative opinion of marketing. Moreover, detractors can rightfully point out that companies still exist and that companies must, by definition, have customers. So companies can exist just fine without much help from marketing. What difference does it make that marketing has lost strategic relevance with CEOs?

The reason is best summed up in the words of Peter Drucker, the father of modern management.

*There is only one valid definition of business purpose: To create a customer...Because it is its purpose to create a customer, any business enterprise has two—and only these two—basic functions: marketing and innovation. They are the entrepreneurial functions. Marketing is the distinguishing, the unique function of the business. Any organization in which marketing is either absent or incidental is not a business and should never be run as if it were one.*

Marketing’s failure will ultimately be reflected in the customer experience. In fact, it already is. Given the current CEO-CMO breakdown, it’s not surprising to find a corresponding breakdown between the way senior executives view their companies and the way their customers do. After all, it’s marketing’s job to be the champion of the customer for the CEO. What is surprising, however, is the enormity of the gap. A study reported in the *Harvard Management Update* finds that 80 percent of company executives believe that their companies provide a “superior” customer experience. Only 8 percent of their customers agree. This finding is confirmed in the Temkin Group report, “The State of Customer Experience Management, 2014” which found that only 10 percent of firms are customer centric.

Of course, positive change for customers will happen only when CEOs view their companies from their customers’ perspective. After all, there’s no need to change things when you believe you are already doing a superior job.

It is easy to blame CEOs for being shortsighted. The sad truth is that CEOs’ complaints about marketing are valid. Marketers do a terrible job of linking their efforts to tangible business outcomes. To be fair to CMOs, it isn’t for lack of desire or effort. The problem is more pernicious. All too often, the expected linkage isn’t there—and it never was! The underlying assumptions CMOs use to justify most of their investments in improving the customer experience are wrong.

**Satisfaction ≠ Share of Wallet**

*When is the ultimate customer-service-measurement number not enough? That’s what Jiffy Lube asked recently when the company discovered that its Net Promoter Scores—a popular customer-service metric known as the “one number you need to grow”—weren’t actually helping it grow...One of the initial head-scratching finds was that the overall NPS rating had almost no correlation to return visits. That meant customers who said they’d gladly recommend Jiffy Lube to friends didn’t necessarily return to the store themselves.*

—*Ad Age*

It is easy to understand why managers expect customers’ satisfaction and NPS levels to be strongly linked to the share of category spending that customers allocate to the brands that they use. Unfortunately, it is not even remotely true.
Without a doubt, numerous scientific studies show that there is indeed a statistically significant positive relationship between satisfaction and customers’ purchasing behaviors. Unfortunately, there is a problem with this relationship: Although it is statistically significant, it most definitely is not managerially significant.

Managers tend to misunderstand the concept of statistical significance. In everyday English, significant means “important.” In statistics, however, it means “probably not a random occurrence.” The problem for managers is that many things can be significant in the statistical sense without being important. That’s definitely the case with the relationship between satisfaction and customers’ purchasing behaviors. In fact, the relationship is so extraordinarily weak that it is managerially irrelevant.

This is not an overstatement. Satisfaction (and NPS) is so weakly correlated with the share of spending that customers allocate to the brands that they use that it is useless as a metric to drive higher share of wallet. This naturally raises the question, “Exactly how weak is the relationship?” In our examination of the relationship between satisfaction/NPS and share of wallet, we reviewed more than 250,000 consumer ratings covering in excess of 650 brands from more than a dozen countries; we found that the average variance explained is around 1 percent. In layman’s terms, this means that 99 percent of what is going on with consumers’ share of category spending is completely unexplained by knowing their satisfaction level or NPS. Worse still, the effect of the change in satisfaction on changes in share of wallet is even weaker. Our research finds that changes in satisfaction (and NPS) explain a miniscule 0.4 percent of the change in share of wallet over time.

Given that managers measure and manage satisfaction levels and NPS because they are thought to link to growth, this is disastrous. When the relationship is this weak, there is no reliable way to predict financial outcomes from improving satisfaction and NPS.

Most managers don’t want to accept this reality. In fact, we are often challenged by managers on this. Fortunately for us, it is very easy for managers to see this for themselves using simple spreadsheet software such as Microsoft Excel.

If your firm is collecting satisfaction and/or NPS data, simply create a spreadsheet containing customers’ satisfaction and share of wallet data. Specifically, input customers’ satisfaction ratings (or NPS classifications) for your firm or brand in one column and their share of wallet in another (see Figure 1). Now all you have to do is determine how much of the variance in share of wallet is explained by knowing satisfaction levels or NPS. This is done by computing what is called the R-square.

Fortunately, this isn’t difficult to do. Microsoft Excel provides a simple function to compute the R-square, so there is no complicated mathematics necessary to find out how strongly your satisfaction/NPS metric links to your customers’ share of spending with your brand.

Doing this always results in bad news. The percentage of variance explained will almost always be less than 5 percent—typically around 1 percent—meaning that 95 percent or more of the variation in your customers’ spending is completely unexplained by the satisfaction or NPS metric your firm is tracking.

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**Figure 1. It Is Easy to Prove that Satisfaction and NPS Are Very Weak Predictors of Share of Wallet**

It is easy for managers to see for themselves that the correlation between satisfaction/NPS and share of wallet is very weak by using simple spreadsheet software such...
as Microsoft Excel. Simply input customers’ satisfaction (or NPS) levels for your firm or brand in one column, and their corresponding share of category spending (share of wallet) in another column. Then compute the R-square, the squared correlation coefficient. The percentage of variance explained (i.e., R-square) is almost always less than 5 percent and is typically around 1 percent.

Note 1: In Microsoft Excel the formula for calculating R-square is =RSQ(column1, column2). Columns 1 and 2 correspond to customers’ satisfaction and share of wallet levels—when computing R-square it does not matter whether satisfaction is column 1 or column 2 in the Microsoft Excel formula.

Note 2: If you are using the Net Promoter Score, simply input “3” for Promoters, “2” for Passives, and “1” for Detractors.

About the Authors

Lerzan Aksoy

Lerzan is an internationally recognized expert on the science of loyalty management. She was recognized as the top young scientist of 2007 in Turkey and in 2012 received one of the most prestigious business and management awards in Turkey: the Management Honor Award (Yönetim Onur Ödülü), a lifetime-achievement award for research contributions that affect management across international boundaries. She also has received the Koç University Werner Von Siemens Award and the Fordham University Magis Award for research, teaching and social contribution.

Tim Keiningham

Tim advises senior executives across industry sectors in the areas of customer experience innovation, customer strategy development, and customer loyalty improvement. He has received over a dozen prestigious scientific awards for his work, including many Journal citations for best paper. His most recent book, The Wallet Allocation Rule, presents a revolutionary approach for winning the battle for share of customers’ hearts, minds, and wallets.

Luke Williams

As Head of Research Methods, Luke’s primary role is to utilize efficient and informed design methods to ensure that research is effective and engineered toward usable analytics and results.

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The changing landscape of the workplace is not so different from the evolution our industry finds itself in. Unless your company has a median age of 56, you recognize this 24/7/365 era we call work-life integration. As a result, our people strategies are constantly changing and evolving. A workplace of choice can no longer hang its hat on comprehensive health benefits and a lucrative 401(k) program. This is where the generation born between 1981 and 1996—Millennials—have challenged companies of all shapes and sizes rethink 20th Century people practices.

At Gongos, a healthy portion (forty-three percent) of our Michigan-based workforce is Millennials, and because of this we have committed to researching who they are, how they work and live, and what they need to thrive in the workplace. Not surprisingly, flexibility and work-life integration are at the top of their list. To support our findings, Forbes.com and The Intelligence Group cited that seventy-four percent value flexible work schedules and eighty-eight percent choose work-life integration.

Simply speaking, work-life integration moves beyond “work-life balance” in supporting the notion of a reciprocal relationship between one’s personal life and professional life. Embracing and acting on these emerging “values” positively impact the Millennial mindset when it comes to retention. In fact just this year, CNBC reported that, according to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, Millennials stay in jobs less than three years. Yet we feel it’s our calling—if not our duty—to cultivate a work environment that inspires tenure.

Enter the worlds of Telecommuting and Teleworking.

If there ever was a holy grail of work-life integration, it just may lie in our ability to offer freedom and flexibility to our people through telecommuting and teleworking. But first, let’s clarify the differences:

Telecommuting is working as a full-time employee from a home base or home office, often out of state or beyond a reasonable in-state commute; whereas Teleworking can be classified as more of a perk, granting any employee
who customarily works from the company’s office(s) the opportunity to work from home, one or more days per week.

While Gongos embraced its first telecommuter in 1998, we piloted our teleworking program in the summer of 2012. We actually did it because we were running out of parking space at headquarters, and we had to get creative. Much to our delight, our people really embraced it—while honoring the parameters. Swiftly, yet steadily, we developed policies and best practices around them. And where, you ask, has employee productivity and engagement netted out? It’s increased. Voluntary turnover? You guessed it, it’s decreased.

We realize such a proactive approach to institutionalizing telecommuting and teleworking may not be suited for every organization or employee. But it can work, provided there is a strong commitment, and a steady organizational strategy on multiple levels:

**Enterprise:**

- Embrace the risks and rewards from the top down
- Support through 24/7 tech support (video conferencing, webcams, instant messaging)
- Financially commit to telecommuters regularly travelling to headquarters; not only for work, but company wide activities, too
- Reinforce best practices with managers and employees

**Team:**

- Be aware of the potential of changing team dynamics and be quick to course-correct if alignment and cohesion seem to be slipping
- Whenever possible, interactions with teleworkers/commuters should utilize video capabilities to bring teleworker/commuters “into” meetings

**Manager:**

- Support managers in developing a meaningful “digital relationship” with their direct reports (IM, email, phone, webcam)
- Become more attuned to employee’s tone of voice, environmental and body language through to-camera interactions

**Employee:**

- Identify the “right” employees. A self-motivated mindset and willingness to embrace their “work day” in their personal space (i.e. disciplined hours, responsiveness to others’ needs) is key
- Outline appropriate expectations on the front end. Employees must commit to traveling to enterprise headquarters regularly, and invest in relationship-building when in office (i.e. flex seating and face-time with coworkers at lunches/dinners)
- Embrace flexibility in accommodating travel when the organization or team ideally need you there in-person
- Define the importance of visibility and encourage this through the use of video. Whether it is simple conversation or lengthy team meetings, employees must listen, be heard and seen, even when working from home

We have found that the biggest drawbacks telecommuters may face are feelings of isolation, and difficulty with turning work off at the close of their work day. Naturally, there also is risk in detachment from the company’s culture and subtleties of bonding that inevitably occur at “the water cooler” and in the hallways of any workplace.

At Gongos, while our “little pilot program that could”
quickly gained traction, we’ve learned that telecommuting and teleworking have empowered employees at all ages... not just Millennials. These strategies are now embedded in our culture; and the freedom and flexibility has transformed into a need rather than a want. So, as we integrate the best of both worlds—work and life—so too can every workplace of the future.

About the Authors

Chris Carmean

Chris believes in banking on the “human” in HR. Encouraging the growth of her fellow colleagues, she continually arms people of all levels within the Gongos Enterprise with the resources, tools and opportunity to become better colleagues and managers. Her warmth shines through every day through her approachable and accountable demeanor—that…and the large basket of candy in her office! Recruiting and talent retention are everything to Chris, as evidenced through her career path, which includes human resource and talent roles at ePrize and Compuware in Metro Detroit. Chris is also a devoted wife and mom to a teenage daughter and Bubba, the Labrador—and is a self-proclaimed zombie fanatic.

Cheryl Halverson

Cheryl’s natural strength in managing people and developing their skills has guided her success as a former Research Group Leader, and in her current role. She believes in leveraging people’s passions and talents to support the Gongos enterprise strategy, with focus and discipline as her guiding principles.

She encourages her colleagues to balance a strong consultative mindset with empathy toward their clients’ business objectives. Only then, she believes, can they develop enduring, strategic relationships.

Working from her Milwaukee home base, Cheryl paved the path for our growing team of telecommuters. And while her two children—years apart in age—keep her on her toes, she also continually challenges her endurance through triathlons and marathons.
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On March 13, 2002, a fire broke out in the engine room of an oil tanker about 800 miles south of Hawaii. The fire moved so fast that the Taiwanese crew did not have time to radio for help. Eleven survivors and the captain’s dog, a terrier named Hokget, retreated to the tanker’s forecastle with supplies of food and water.

The Insiko 1907 was supposed to be an Indonesian ship, but its owner, who lived in China, had not registered it. In terms of international law, the Insiko was stateless, a 260-foot microscopic speck on the largest ocean on Earth. Now it was adrift. Drawn by wind and currents, the Insiko got within 220 miles of Hawaii. It was spotted by a cruise ship, which diverted course and rescued the crew. But as the cruise ship pulled away, a few passengers heard the sound of barking.

The captain’s dog had been left behind on the tanker.

A passenger who heard the barking dog called the Hawaiian Humane Society in Honolulu. The animal welfare group routinely rescued abandoned animals—675 the previous year—but recovering one on a tanker in the Pacific Ocean was something new. The U.S. Coast Guard said it could not use taxpayer dollars to save the dog. The Insiko’s owner wasn’t planning to recover the ship. The Humane Society alerted fishing boats about the lost tanker. Media reports began appearing about Hokget.

Something about a lost dog on an abandoned ship in the Pacific gripped people’s imaginations. Money poured into the Humane Society to fund a rescue. One check was for $5,000.

Donations eventually arrived from 39 states, the District of Columbia and four foreign countries.

“It was just about a dog,” Pamela Burns, president of the Hawaiian Humane Society, told me. “This was an opportunity for people to feel good about rescuing a dog. People poured out their support. A handful of people were incensed. These people said, ‘You should be giving money to the homeless.’” But Burns thought the great thing about America was that people were free to give money to whatever cause they cared about, and people cared about Hokget.

The problem with a rescue was that no one knew where...
the Insiko was. The Coast Guard estimated it could be anywhere in an area measuring 360,000 square miles. The Humane Society paid $48,000 to a private company called American Marine to look for the ship. Two Humane Society officers boarded a salvage tugboat, the American Quest, and set off into the Pacific.

Air, sea and high-tech surveillance equipment were all pressed into service. With each passing day, the calls from around the world intensified: Had Hokget been found?

Under the guise of exercises, the U.S. Navy began quietly hunting for the Insiko—the tramp tanker was deemed a search target for a maintenance and training mission. By April 7, the search had turned up nothing, but the letters and checks continued to pour in.

“This check is in memory of the little dog lost at sea.”

“Thank you for pulling my heartstrings and for reminding me of all the hope there is left in this world.”

“This story is also great for the children. They learn to respect life.”

On April 9, a window of hope opened. A Japanese fishing boat had seen something that looked like the Insiko drifting far outside the Coast Guard’s projections and headed in the direction of Johnston Atoll, an unincorporated and uninhabited U.S. territory. Under public pressure to do something about the dog, the Coast Guard finally decided this was a good enough reason to intervene. It dispatched a C-130 aircraft and, after searching another 50,000 square miles of ocean by air, found the Insiko. A photo showed a brown-and-white blur running across the deck of the tanker—Hokget was still alive. The C-130 wasn’t equipped for a rescue, so the crew members dropped their own lunches onto the tanker for the dog—pizza, granola bars, oranges.

Two fishing vessels eventually reached the ship. But when the fishermen tried to rescue Hokget, the dog fled below decks in the direction of the engine room. The rescuers couldn’t follow. The fire had rendered much of the Insiko dangerous—it was still carrying thousands of gallons of fuel, and no one knew the extent of the damage. The fishermen eventually gave up.

Rusty Nall, vice president of American Marine Corp., was in regular touch with Coast Guard officials and fishing fleets. When he heard the dog had not been seen after it ran below decks, his heart sank. The engine room had a 10-foot drop. Had Hokget been inadvertently injured or killed? Nall felt like giving up, but when he went home each night, his 9-year-old daughter would ask, “Did you find the doggie, Daddy?” Nall would come back to work the next day and press on.

The story of Hokget is touching. Human beings from around the world came together to try to save a dog. The vast majority of people who sent in money would never personally see Hokget. It was, as Pamela Burns suggested to me, an act of pure altruism and a marker of the remarkable capacity human beings have to empathize with the plight of others.

There are a series of disturbing questions, however: Eight years before the Hokget saga began, the same world that showed extraordinary compassion for a dog sat on its hands as hundreds of thousands of human beings were killed in the Rwandan genocide. The 20th century reveals a shockingly long list of similar horrors that have been ignored by the world as they unfolded. Why have successive generations done so little to halt suffering on such a large scale?

The philosopher Peter Singer once devised a dilemma that highlights a central contradiction in our moral reasoning. If you see a child drowning in a pond, and you...
know you can save the child without any risk to your own life—but you would ruin a fine pair of shoes worth $200 if you jumped into the water—would you save the child or save your shoes? Most people react incredulously to the question; obviously, a child’s life is worth more than a pair of shoes.

If this is the case, Singer asked, why do large numbers of people hesitate to write a check for $200 to a reputable charity that could save the life of a child halfway around the world—when there are millions of children who need our help? Even when people are absolutely certain their money will not be wasted and will be used to save a child’s life, fewer people are willing to write the check than to leap into the pond.

Our moral responsibilities feel different in these situations; one feels immediate and visceral, the other distant and abstract. We feel personally responsible for one child, whereas the other is one of millions who need help. Our responsibility feels diffused when it comes to children in distant places—there are many people who could write that check. But distance and diffusion of responsibility do not explain why we step forward in some cases. Why did so many people feel an abandoned dog on a stateless ship in international waters was their problem?

I want to offer a disturbing idea. The reason human beings seem to care so little about mass suffering and death is precisely because the suffering is happening on a mass scale. The brain is simply not very good at grasping the implications of mass suffering. Americans would be far more likely to step forward if only a few people were suffering or a single person were in pain. Hokget did not draw our sympathies because we care more about dogs than people; she drew our sympathies because she was a single dog lost on the biggest ocean in the world. Our hidden brain—my term for a host of unconscious mental processes that subtly biases our judgment, perceptions and actions—shapes our compassion into a telescope. We are best able to respond when we are focused on a single victim.

We don’t feel 20 times sadder when we hear that 20 people have died in a disaster than when we hear that one person has died, even though the magnitude of the tragedy is 20 times as large. We can reach such a conclusion abstractly, in our conscious minds, but we cannot feel it viscerally, because that is the domain of the hidden brain, and the hidden brain is simply not calibrated to deal with the difference between a single death and 20 deaths.

But the paradox does not end there. Even if 10 deaths do not make us feel 10 times as sad as a single death, shouldn’t we feel at least twice as sad? There is disturbing evidence that shows we may actually care less. I suspect that if the Insiko had been carrying 100 dogs, many people would have cared less about their fate than they did about Hokget. One hundred dogs do not have a single face, a single name, a single life story around which we can wrap our imaginations and our compassion.

The evidence for what I am going to call the telescope effect comes from a series of experiments. Psychologist Paul Slovic of the University of Oregon asked two groups of volunteers shortly after the Rwandan genocide to imagine they were officials in charge of a humanitarian rescue effort. Both groups were told their money could save 4,500 lives at a refugee camp, but one group was told the refugee camp had 11,000 people, whereas the other group was told the refugee camp had 250,000 people. Slovic found that people were much more reluctant to spend the money on the large camp than they were to spend the money on the small camp.
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Intrigued, Slovic pressed further. He asked different groups of volunteers to imagine they were running a philanthropic foundation. Would they rather spend $10 million to save 10,000 lives from a disease that caused 15,000 deaths a year, or save 20,000 lives from a disease that killed 290,000 people a year? Overwhelmingly, volunteers preferred to spend money saving the 10,000 lives rather than the 20,000 lives. Rather than tailor their investments to saving the largest number of lives, people sought to save the largest proportion of lives among the different groups of victims.

We respond to mass suffering in much the same way that we respond to most things in our lives. We fall back on rules of thumb, on feelings, on intuitions. People who choose to spend money saving 10,000 lives rather than 20,000 lives are not bad people. Rather, like those who spend thousands of dollars to find a single dog rather than directing the same amount of money to save a dozen dogs, they are merely allowing their hidden brain to guide them.

Our empathic telescopes are activated when we hear a single cry for help—the child drowning in the pond, the dog abandoned on an ocean. When we think of human suffering on a mass scale, our telescope does not work, because it has not been designed to work in such situations. Humans are the only species that is even aware of large-scale suffering taking place in distant lands; the moral telescope in our brain has not had a chance to evolve and catch up with our technological advances.

“Our empathic telescopes are activated when we hear a single cry for help—the child drowning in the pond, the dog abandoned on an ocean. When we think of human suffering on a mass scale, our telescope does not work, because it has not been designed to work in such situations. Humans are the only species that is even aware of large-scale suffering taking place in distant lands; the moral telescope in our brain has not had a chance to evolve and catch up with our technological advances.”

Slovic once told volunteers about a 7-year-old girl in Mali who was starving and in need of help. They were given a certain amount of money and asked how much they were willing to spend to help her. On average, people gave half their money to help the girl. Slovic asked another group of volunteers the same question, except instead of the girl, volunteers were told about the problem of famine in Africa, and that there were millions of people in dire need of help. The volunteers gave half as much money as the volunteers in the first group.

Slovic took the experiment that showcased the little girl in Africa a step further. He told another group of volunteers about a little boy in Mali. One group of volunteers was asked whether they would give money to the little girl; another was asked whether they would donate money to the little boy. A third group of volunteers was told about both the boy and the girl and asked how much they were willing to give. People gave the same amount of money when told about either the boy or the girl. But when the children were presented together, the volunteers gave less.

Journalists sometimes talk about compassion fatigue, the inability of people to respond to suffering when the scale or length of the suffering exceeds some astronomical number. But Slovic’s work suggests that...
compassion fatigue starts when the number of victims rises from one to two.

“The feelings of sadness dropped,” Slovic said of the volunteers who were told about the two children in need of help. He added, “You can’t lock onto two people in need of help as closely as you can lock onto one person. You can’t make an emotional connection as strongly to two as to one. If empathy is putting yourself in someone else’s shoes, think of putting yourself in two people’s shoes. It does not work. It falls apart.”

After would-be rescuers from two fishing vessels frightened Hokget below decks, the effort to save the dog continued, but hope was fading. There was talk of dispatching the U.S. Navy to sink the Insiko as a way of ensuring that any release of hazardous materials would occur hundreds of miles from shore. This, of course, would kill the dog—assuming it was still alive. Facing intense public pressure to save Hokget, government officials concluded that asking the Navy to sink the tanker—750 miles from Hawaii, nearly 2,500 miles from the U.S. mainland, and drifting away from the United States—posed unacceptable environmental risks. The Coast Guard finally agreed to access $250,000 in U.S. taxpayer funds to recover the Insiko. It wasn’t officially called an animal rescue effort. Instead it was authorized under the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, based on the argument that if the aimless Insiko managed to drift westward for 250 straight miles, it might run aground on Johnston Atoll and harm marine life. (The environmental concern was a lovely touch, given that the United States used Johnston Atoll for decades as a nuclear weapons test site and a dumping ground for chemical weapons from various wars.)

The American Quest was called up again—this time funded by taxpayers—to rescue Hokget. On April 26, nearly a month and a half after the dog’s ordeal began, the tugboat’s crew found the Insiko and boarded the tanker. The 40-pound female was still alive, and hiding in a pile of tires. It was a hot day, so Brian Murray, the American Quest’s salvage supervisor, went in and simply grabbed the terrier by the scruff of her neck. The dog was terrified and shook for two hours. Her rescuers fed her, bathed her and applied lotion to her nose, which was sunburned.

Hokget arrived in Honolulu on May 2 (with the Insiko hauled in tow so its diesel could be salvaged) and was greeted by crowds of spectators, a news conference, banners welcoming her to America and a red Hawaiian lei. After a period in quarantine, Hokget was adopted by the family of Michael Kuo, a friend of the Insiko’s captain, who lives outside Honolulu. She put on weight and was signed up for dog classes.

About the Author

Shankar Vedantam

The focus of Shankar’s reporting is on human behavior and the social sciences, and how research in those fields can get listeners to think about the news in unusual and interesting ways. Before joining NPR in 2011, he spent 10 years as a reporter at The Washington Post. He has been recognized with many journalism honors. In 2009-2010, he served as a fellow at the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University.
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Hundreds of thousands of people work in market research around the world, yet it’s safe to assume that as a child not one of them ever uttered the words: “I want to be a market researcher when I grow up.” Moreover, very few had ever heard of the industry, or wondered about a profession with it, until they were in college or beyond.

Quirk’s Marketing Review reported the findings of a 2013 survey of 1,800 college graduates around the world about attractive career choices. Market research didn’t make the top 10 list, and only 13 percent said they would consider it. As an industry market research has done a poor job of career marketing.

Most people come to market research through a serendipitous path. Perhaps they hear about it in a college course, become aware of public opinion polls, ponder over some statistics in a news article, or are exposed to it while working in a related job. If they are particularly industrious, they may have done part-time interviewing to earn cash while in college.

The list of pathways is long and varied. A 2013 LinkedIn discussion among a number of market researchers focused on how each of them entered the field. The following are a sample of comments.

I found that at university I liked the research methods element of my degree best and also had a psychometric test indicating MR as my best career. Put them both together and there we go. I chose to go into the field. And happy that I did.

I used to be a chemist, I was doing research on new ingredients, and one day someone decide to hire me for market research. That’s how I started, and never stopped! I like human beings better than molecules!

I helped out at a MR company while studying—really enjoyed the environment and joined the company full time after completing my studies. 27 years later still doing market research.

Over the years I’ve asked many people how they ended up in market research. Most admit they just “stumbled into it.” Regrettably, once in the field, the career path is not well lighted. There is very little time or effort given to educating entry-level practitioners about the various job functions, their skill requirements, how to progress through the industry, potential earning power, and many other essential facts.
With this in mind, and with the perspective of 40+ years in the field, I decided to write a book called *A Job-Seeker’s Guide to Careers in Market Research*. While the book’s focus is on those who might consider market research as a career, I have included plenty of information of practical interest to market research employers looking to recruit new talent. Before diving into a discussion of the requisite skills, education, and training; how to get that first job, what one is likely to do as an entry-level employee, potential earning power, and the like, the book paints an accurate picture of the market research industry at the beginning of the 21st century including, among other things, its growth prospects, its value, and what makes the career exciting. The following are some key takeaways.

**Expected Industry Growth**

Today market research is a $39 billion per year global industry. Closely linked to the ups and downs of the world economy, the industry is reported to be growing, according to ESOMAR (the European Society for Opinion and Market Research) in its 2013 annual report on the state of the global market research industry. Year-over-year revenue grew by 3.2%. The U.S. Department of Labor also considers market research to be a growth industry. Much of this growth will be driven by the changes occurring in the space. The field is undergoing an enormous shift, moving beyond traditional structured surveys, embracing new data streams (e.g., Big Data, social media), and devising new ways to capture and report these data. These shifts alone will open the doors widely for new talent.

Finally, and significantly, market research offers an ideal career path for women. A 2014 study by the employee search firm CareerCast identified “market research analyst” as one of the top 12 jobs for women in the U.S. that year. The firm examined some 200 careers and made its selections based on the number of women working in the field, average annual salaries, gender equality in pay, projected hiring, and lifestyle factors like physical demands and stress. According to their study, the average annual salary for females in market analyst positions was $60,000. They also cited Bureau of Labor Statistics projections that the number of women in this career track would increase 32% by 2022.

**The Excitement Factor**

What makes for an “exciting job” let alone an exciting career is of course a matter of personal preference. Some find fulfillment commuting to an office five days a week and sitting behind a desk, while others may crave doing tough, physical work outdoors. Assuming one is closer to the first type of person than the second, what is it about market research that is exciting?

Here again the industry has done little to promote itself. “How can questionnaires and statistics be exciting?” is a typical view of the work from those on the outside. The unfortunately well-kept secret is that market research is fundamentally about human behavior, and that’s anything but boring. Look more deeply and it’s about thinking conceptually, thinking strategically, and rethinking how to just plain think. It’s about unraveling puzzles. It’s about collaborating with smart people, team building, and thought leadership. It offers opportunities to inform major decisions that affect the fortunes of companies and organizations, and in so doing affect daily lives. It’s about playing a key role in developing the next must-have digital device, the next-generation airplane, the next Starbucks. It’s also an ideal training ground for anyone whose ultimate goal is a successful career in marketing.

What was that about “unraveling puzzles?” Imagine looking at scores of disparate pieces of information. The task is to find and tell the “story” hidden in those pieces, a story that is going to answer someone’s extremely important business question.

**The Value of Market Research**

The legendary 20th century advertising executive David Ogilvy best summarized the value of market research when he said “advertising people who ignore research are as dangerous as generals who ignore decodes of enemy signals.” It is the rare organization that enters the fray without having done at least some research to understand its market, the optimal configuration of
features and functions of its products, how to best position and message its offerings, and/or assess how well it is meeting its constituents’ expectations.

Any mid-level researcher and up routinely finds himself or herself sitting in conference rooms of some of the best-known companies in the world discussing their biggest marketing challenges and being one of the people to whom they are turning for help. You have to be pretty jaded not to consider that an exceedingly interesting, even exciting, workday.

About the Author

Jim Heisler

Jim’s career in the market research industry spans 40 years. He has held senior positions with Market Facts, ORC International, and Harris Interactive and currently is a partner with Lodestar Advisory Partners, where he heads up the firm’s customer experience practice. Most of his career has been as a senior strategy consultant providing thought leadership on client engagements from program design through analysis, reporting and post-research consultation to help clients act on the research. Jim is the director of Fairleigh Dickinson University’s Certificate in Market Research program to be initiated in 2015. A guest lecturer at universities and frequent conference presenter, Jim is the author of an upcoming book, The Jobseeker’s Guide to a Successful Career in Market Research.

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Virtual or Augmented Reality – What’s Next for Research Leaders?

By John Carroll III

John is the Global Head of Clients for Ipsos Loyalty, a Glass Explorer, and a virtual reality fan who thinks there is at least a small chance that “The Matrix” could be real.

“A picture is worth a thousand words” is an oft-quoted adage which conveys the notion that images can efficiently transmit complex information. Professional researchers have known this for decades and for this reason often build pictures into their data collection efforts, analyses, and presentations. At the same time, a virtuous collision between imaging and information technology brings new and incredible applications in the realms of virtual and augmented reality. To help research leaders plan their approaches in these exciting areas of innovation, we will investigate two promising technologies—Oculus Rift for virtual reality and Google Glass for augmented reality—and discuss the implications for traditional and innovative research in the future.

My 90-year-old grandmother tries the Oculus Rift

How is that for a lead! With two million-plus views of this viral self-explanatory video and tens of millions of views of similar Oculus Rift demonstrations, it is clear that the 2015 consumer launch of “The Rift” product developed by Oculus VR will herald a new day in terms of broad usage of virtual reality (VR). Global technology powerhouses Sony and Samsung are bringing their own VR products to market shortly. Facebook’s (FB) two-billion-dollar acquisition of the 75-employee Oculus VR provides some sense of just how important FB believes VR will be. In fact, Mark Zuckerberg himself suggested that the company could sell 100 million Rift sets in the next 10 years.

The Rift product is a head-mounted virtual-reality display—essentially a set of goggles, which gives the user an immersive experience using an extremely wide field of view and hyper sensitive, real time, head-movement tracking. The natural and intuitive experience provided by The Rift makes it a natural fit for use in the lucrative video gaming market. Still, Zuckerberg already envisions using The Rift for educational and medical purposes. It may also be used for a wide variety of market research applications.

Envision shopper marketing, new product development, and ad-testing studies that happen within video games.
This is not the gamification of market research, rather it is the “market researchization of gaming” (TM John Carroll III).

Widespread deployment of virtual reality (on the order of 100 million users) creates an immense research panel for conducting projects, which can be varied as fast as coders can create new product, advertisements, and worlds. Connecting online virtual behavior to offline “real world” customer behavior including purchasing will provide faster, cheaper, and better research than ever before.

**We want Google to be the third half of your brain—Sergey Brin**

Google Glass launched in 2013 to a small set of Glass Explorers. It’s a wearable technology with an optical head-mounted display, which provides an augmented reality experience for users by overlaying images while still allowing near regular sight. Today, Google has partnerships with the makers of Ray-Ban, Oakley, and other eye wear brands, which has made Glass more widely available despite its hefty $1,500 price tag. Using touch and movement sensors along with voice controls, Glass provides access to a fast growing array of applications ranging from standard smartphone applications (think voice calls, email, web browsing) to true augmented reality features, such as instantaneous visual foreign language translation (which can quickly translate that sign in the Paris Metro from French to English).

Intrepid analysts already are actively using Glass in the market research world. Recruited respondents and researchers alike also are using customer journey mapping applications loaded to Glass devices to capture detailed information about customer experiences. Moderators can send real time requests and notifications to respondents based on geolocation, time, and other triggers. As Glass styles have become less obtrusive, researchers are noticing few, if any, differences in the way Glass-wearing respondents are treated, even in service environments. In the meantime, Glass applications are capturing, analyzing and reporting real time fine details of body movement, eye tracking, audio, video, and other behavioral data. In a world of Big Data, augmented reality tools like Glass are making the data bigger very quickly indeed.

**Virtual or augmented for research? The answer is both.**

As with many new technologies, there are already legions of dedicated followers forming around virtual reality products like The Rift and augmented reality offerings like Glass. Predictably, given the revolutionary nature of these innovations, opposition groups also are forming.

So, what should researchers do now? We recommend three immediate steps:

1) Buy a set of Google Glass, The Rift, and while you are at it a few wearable devices like FitBit, which capture bio-metric data. Ensuring you and your team know how these technologies actually work is critical in determining how and when to use them in research. Plus it’s fun!
2) Attend conferences where application developers for virtual and augmented reality tools are demonstrating new solutions. Developers are constantly showing off Alpha and Beta versions of their new products and you can see upcoming technologies at least two years before they will reach consumers.

3) Invest in trials that investigate the use of virtual and augmented reality technologies for research purposes. Challenge your current research partners to co-invest with you in practically applying these new technologies.

For researchers the answer is clear, both virtual and augmented reality tools should be part of experimentation and innovation investments as early as 2015.

About the Author

John Carroll III

John regularly speaks at major conferences (Beijing, Delhi, London, New York, Santiago, and Singapore in 2012-14), publishes thought leadership, and is interviewed by the media, especially in the areas of Big Data, Enterprise Feedback Management, and Customer Journey Mapping. A dual national of the United States and Ireland, he worked previously at McKinsey & Company and Deloitte and earned an MBA with distinction from Kellogg and a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University of Pennsylvania where he was a Benjamin Franklin Scholar. He can be reached at john.e.carroll@ipsos.com.

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Owners and managers want to know the value of a company for many reasons.Entrepreneurial owners, investors, or a corporate parent may be deciding whether or not to sell the business. Prospective buyers need to know what to offer. Founders may be considering offering stock to the second generation of managers. Estate or matrimonial situations may require a professional opinion of value. These, and other situations, can involve different “standards of value”—meaning the rules and considerations that go into determining value. In this article I will focus on what a company is worth in a sale, where 100% of the company is to be purchased by a prospective buyer. When we at Cambiar are working with prospective sellers, valuation is often one of the first steps in the process.

We’ve all been told that anything is “worth what someone will pay for it.” That’s absolutely true. However, in the real world and for perfectly good reasons, different someones may pay different amounts for the same thing.

**STAND-ALONE VALUE**

In the marketplace, buyers value professional services businesses like research and analytics based on the after-tax cash flow that they expect to receive from the company following their purchase of it. Buyer analysts use a technique called “discounted cash flow” where they develop projections of the company’s profit and cash flow a number of years into the future. They also make an assumption about the company’s level of profits after the specifically forecasted years. They consider the extent to which capital investments will need to be made in the future, and the extent to which additional working capital may be needed to support growth. Then they “discount” these future cash flows back to the present, using a required ROI that takes into account the cost of capital and the riskiness of the business. Finally, they make any needed
adjustments for financial debt in the business and for the extent to which net working capital on hand is higher or lower than they believe necessary.

This may sound technical and complicated, but here are the key words to remember: future, cash flow, and risk.

Value is not determined by revenue directly. Revenue that will not generate profit has no financial value.

Value is not determined by historic profitability. The profits of the past belong to the seller, who has or will have taken them out of the business. Past profit affects value because it is an important means for assessing the achievability of future forecasts. To the extent that past profitability is unsteady, future forecasts will be seen as more risky. You often will hear a company purchase price referred to as a “multiple” of previous year earnings before interest and taxes, but the multiple is a far better description of value than a way to determine value. EBIT multiples for marketing research and analytics companies can range from as low as 3-4 to as high as 8-10. This is a very wide range and demonstrates the importance of other factors.

The most important driver of value is expected future growth. A company with a track record of past growth, in an environment that does not raise obstacles to future growth, will have a high value. You can think of other factors that will drive future growth and thus value. These include:

- The growth trajectory of the client industries that it serves, and its specific clients
- The potential for it to expand its markets, as demonstrated by recent past achievements
- The strength of the national economies in which it operates
- The perceived ability of its management team to lead the company into the future and to adapt to future change as it occurs.

You will notice that these are mostly qualities of the company itself—or the environment in which the company operates. They are not dependent on the potential buyer and its particular characteristics. For this reason, an analysis incorporating these factors values the company on a stand-alone basis. It indicates what a buyer should pay who is planning to operate the company independently.

VALUE TO A PARTICULAR BUYER

Every buyer’s needs and situation are different. For this reason, the same acquisition candidate can—fairly and legitimately—have greater value to one buyer than another. For example:

- There may be cost synergies between the two companies that will lead to savings, or the ability for each company to cross-sell the others’ products and, thus, achieve more revenue together than could the two companies separately.
- The candidate company may fill in a weak area of the buyer’s capabilities, perhaps solving an urgent problem that otherwise would require investment by the buyer to fix.
• Specific talent at the candidate company may have value to the buyer in their larger organization.

• The buyer may have management, technical, or other depth that reduce the risks inherent in the candidate company, such that its achievement of forecasts is less risky when acquired by this buyer than would be the case with another or on its own.

Just because a candidate company has greater value to a particular acquire than it does on its own does not mean that the buyer will be willing to pay this full value. If synergies will come from resources that the buyer brings, it may feel that those are its assets and that it should not be paying to deploy them. But they do reduce risk, and thus increase buyer comfort with a higher price. Often the benefit of these synergies is shared between buyer and seller.

As you can see, many factors affect the value of a market research and analytics company. Like the research industry itself, there is a lot to consider.

About the Author

Michael Mitrano

Michael is a Managing Partner at Cambiar. Before joining Cambiar, he was a Principal at Transition Strategies, where he served as the Mergers & Acquisitions advisor to over thirty research companies—handling projects around the world and leading its consulting work. Before joining Transition Strategies, Michael was Executive Vice President and a shareholder at Response Analysis Corporation, which is now part of GfK.

As a CASRO member, the Market Intelligence Department of MetLife has pledged to abide by the association's Code of Standards & Ethics. We also value partnering with companies which adhere to these standards.
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SOME of the most popular CASRO webinars this year were those dealing with emerging issues in information technology. Peter Milla, a consultant to CASRO, hosted two sessions with fellow experts and shares these key takeaways.

**Data Security**

Co-presented with Gary Morse, President/Founder, Razorpoint Security Technologies.

Research organizations need to protect the privacy of the personally identifiable information (PII) that is entrusted to them. This is particularly important in healthcare and financial services research. Some of the primary data security risks that research organizations face include:

- Data breaches (a major issue)
- Lack of effective compliance programs
- Lack of encryption/weak encryption
- BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)
- Cybercrime
- Insecure applications (security architecture)
- Data privacy and data security in the Cloud
- Lack of situational awareness
- Accidental disclosure/loss of information
- Sharing too much information

As part of this, research organizations much also consider the “human risks” associated with:

- Phishing
- Passwords
- Sharing too much information
- Lack of situational awareness
- Accidental disclosure/loss of information

The requirement for data privacy means that research organizations must put sufficient data security measures and controls in place. These include:

- IT security policies and processes
- Security awareness
- Security assessments
- Security training and education
- Technology solutions
- Security testing (penetration testing, vulnerability scanning)

Key to this are security assessments, which typically include these methodologies:

- Requirement Study and Situation Analysis
- Security Policy Creation and Update
- Document Review
- Data Analysis
- Risk Identification
- Vulnerability Scan (and Penetration Test)
- Report and Briefing

Organizations that lack the required data security measures can face loss of business and reputation as well as penalties that include actions, fines and litigation.
Research & The Internet of Things
Co-presented with Aaron Holloway, Manager Partner, LiteKey and Pat Molloy, CIO, Salience Insight

The Internet of Things (IoT) refers to the ever-growing network of physical objects that feature an IP address for Internet connectivity, and the communication that occurs between these objects and other Internet-enabled devices and systems. The IoT extends Internet connectivity beyond traditional devices like desktop and laptop computers, smartphones and tablets to a diverse range of devices and everyday things (such as security systems, thermostats, cars, appliances, etc.) that utilize embedded technology to communicate and interact with the external environment, all via the Internet.

The IoT is potentially enormous. Consider computer device growth:

- 1990s fixed Internet wave = 1B devices
- 2000s mobile wave = 2B devices
- 2020s IoT could range from 20B – 30B devices

This growth is fueled by breakthroughs in cost of sensors, processing power and bandwidth that are enabling ubiquitous connections now.

Comparing the IoT with the Internet, as we currently know it, we see:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the IoT Does</th>
<th>How it Differs from the Internet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leverages sensors attached to things (e.g., temperature)</td>
<td>More data is generated by things with sensors than by people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adds intelligence to manual processes (e.g., reduce power usage on hot days)</td>
<td>Extends the Internet’s productivity gains to things, not just people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connects objects to the network (e.g., thermostats, cars, watches)</td>
<td>Some of the intelligence shifts from the cloud to the network’s edge (“fog” computing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customizes technology and process to specific verticals (e.g., healthcare, retail, oil)</td>
<td>Unlike the broad horizontal reach of PCs and smartphones, the IoT is very fragmented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployed pervasively (e.g., on the human body, in cars, homes, cities, factories)</td>
<td>Ubiquitous presence, resulting in an order of magnitude more devices and even greater security concerns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of course there are data security and data privacy risks associated with the IoT that research organizations must consider.

On the data security side these include:

- Disruptions and DOS attacks
- Understanding the complexity of vulnerabilities
- Identifying and implementing security controls

On the data privacy side these include:

- Personally-identifiable data (improper collection/sharing, data leakage, consent)
- Insufficient data breach response
- Non-transparent privacy policies and terms and conditions

Along with risk, there is tremendous opportunity for research in IoT, considering:

- Personal lives, workplace productivity and consumption will all change
• New businesses will emerge to analyze the reams of data
• New businesses will emerge to produce products and technologies we have not even thought of yet

**CASRO Webinars**

Part of CASRO’s mission is to educate its members and the industry through course offerings and training programs that elevate the high level of professionalism in the research industry. An essential component are webinars, which take place throughout the year and feature objective content from expert presenters on legal issues, research methodologies and techniques, as well as information technology for research. To access recordings of CASRO webinars, visit the CASRO Webinar Store.

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**About the Author**

**Peter Milla**

Peter is a consultant specializing in information technology and market research with specific expertise in Internet, mobile and healthcare market research. He also is an expert in privacy, regulation, security and quality. Peter has served on the CASRO Board of Directors and currently plays leadership roles in several industry association workgroups and committees in the areas of technology, government affairs, ISO (quality standards) and Internet research.

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CREATING CONNECTIONS LEADING TO RESULTS
Every day, billions of decisions are made around the world. Some of these choices are flexible—like what shoes to wear, or which latte to order—while others are far more constrained, such as what time you’re expected to arrive at work, or how much money you can afford to spend on non-essential items. The choices we make are largely dictated by the options available to us. When a decision has a limited set of options to choose from, we’re presented with fewer opportunities to make choices that best suit an individual need.

In the case of the coffee selection, having fewer choices might not be such a bad thing (no one wants to order a light-whip, spinach and tomato Frappuccino, after all!). But what about reward options? For many market research firms, the ability to offer the right incentive options is a key factor in keeping survey respondents engaged throughout the entire data collection process and for ongoing/future research initiatives. In most cases, market research panels that issue incentives will limit their available reward options, mandating how recipients receive their compensation through a rigid Sender-Directed distribution model. While this kind of incentive fulfilment model can be efficient for certain types of research projects, it can become burdensome when the rewards are non-recurring, need to be sent cross-border, and are of low value. The solution? Encouraging incentive choice through a Recipient-Directed distribution model – one that enables recipients to choose their own preferred cash-based reward. This can help mitigate a wide range of issues, accommodate future incentive needs, and ensure long-term cost savings, all while creating a user-friendly incentives experience for research respondents.

Understanding the Sender-Directed Distribution Model

In the Sender-Directed distribution model, the company mandates how rewards will be delivered and is responsible for collecting any information that might be necessary for the distribution of this compensation from the research respondents.

A common example is a direct-to-bank cash deposit reward program. In this scenario, the sender is responsible for collecting and securely storing all bank account details for the participating research respondents. While this reward distribution model might make sense for small,
domestic research projects, it can become unmanageable for large, multi-national undertakings. For one thing, international payments are typically sent via expensive bank wires and are subject to foreign exchange. These payments often are charged “lifting” fees at the recipient bank, which are both costly and difficult to reconcile (especially in a B2B payment situation). The only way to mitigate these fees is to open local accounts in each country—a costly and time-intensive process for all but the largest of companies. Each country has specific bank account formats and ACH file formats, all of which will need to be handled and managed by the sender’s treasury team. Additionally, there is now a liability to holding banking data should a breach occur. Talk about a headache you don’t want to have!

Currently, many research organizations avoid these issues of cost and administrative hassle by using such non-cash incentives as closed-loop gift cards. But is this the best fulfillment method for the sender or recipient?

According to research from Eleanor Singer of the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, monetary incentives increase response rates more than gifts, and incentives that are prepaid (or issued instantly) increase response rates even more than promised incentives or lotteries. So, even though this sort of short-term solution may be able to provide a temporary fix to incentive-issuing irritations, over time, it will erode the purpose of offering an incentive since the reward is no longer as desirable to the research respondent as the previous cash-based option.

A better alternative solution? A Recipient-Directed incentive distribution model.

**Recipient-Directed Distribution: Power in Your Payees’ Hands**

In a Recipient-Directed incentive distribution model the recipient (or respondent) chooses their preferred cash-based reward from multiple payment options. The payments experience therefore is controlled by the recipient. He or she chooses what type of cash-based incentive they want to receive. They also are responsible for managing their own contact and financial information.

While implementing this type of incentive fulfillment solution in-house would require a great deal of time, investment and expertise, many of these issues can be mitigated by partnering with an established mass payments provider. These providers combine the payment power of an established global financial network and the usability of a user-friendly incentive distribution interface in order to streamline the payout process and provide Receiver Directed distribution options.

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**About the Author**

**Mark Hughes**

Mark is the Manager, Global Payment Solutions at global payments provider hyperWALLET Systems Inc. During his tenure, Mark has helped hyperWALLET expand its mass payments services across a growing variety of markets and industry, including the launch of a revolutionary new recipient-directed incentive fulfillment solution for market research organizations. With hundreds of customers that touch millions of payees, hyperWALLET’s clients turn to us when faced with complex international payment challenges. hyperWALLET’s user-friendly incentive fulfillment platform and global settlement network enables companies to distribute funds across 170+ countries in more than 30 currencies.
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The Global Research Remedy. M3 Global Research offers an ISO 26362 Certified panel of more than **2.5 million verified**, worldwide physicians differentiated into more than **700** subspecialties, we can deliver accurate and cost-effective medical market research studies.
Individual privacy and data security have taken center stage in Washington this year, and we can expect these topics to dominate legislative and regulatory conversations throughout 2015.

Significant issues to watch next year will include the FTC’s continued use of its authority under section 5 of the FTC Act to regulate unfair and deceptive practices and increase oversight of companies’ data security practices. Recently, the FCC has also stepped into the privacy and data security arena by imposing hefty fines on two phone companies for failing to properly secure personal data. Is multi-agency regulation a redundancy, or is it necessary to ensure the safety of this highly sensitive information? Look for an answer in 2015.

Assuaging international concerns over US intelligence agencies may maintain some degree of priority. Since the Edward Snowden disclosures about US Government surveillance programs, a number of foreign data protection regulators, especially in the EU, began to question whether their residents’ data is secure when transferred through the US. As a result, the US has showed increased attention to adherence to the US-EU Safe Harbor as a way of demonstrating its commitment to protecting the personal data of EU residents. Is this mere window-dressing on the part of the US government, or will it take meaningful steps to ease international concerns?

On the domestic front, national data security and breach notification legislation that would replace the patchwork of state laws containing different requirements would be welcomed by industry. However, during the current congress six distinct bills were introduced and, in light of the many years of inaction on the issue, it is unlikely that a compromise will be reached in the next two years, especially with Republicans controlling both houses.

Will Do-Not-Track legislation continue to stagnate? With the retirement of Senate Commerce Committee Chair Jay Rockefeller, this issue likely will lose momentum in the
absence of a champion with Rockefeller’s seniority or committee chairmanship.

The continued interpretation of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act demands clarification, as the courts varied interpretations suggest the TCPA is ripe for revision and leave companies with little or no guidance when using modern equipment to contact consumers on their mobile phones.

The use and regulation of big data also will be a focal point of 2015, including the developing reaction to the White House’s Big Data and Privacy Review. Will the attention big data is receiving result in new obstacles for researchers? Look for these issues to be batted about in Washington in the year to come.

Issues affecting the research industry abound, and there is no question that 2015 will be a busy year! Time will tell whether the issues mentioned here, and many others, get the correct treatment in the coming year, especially considering our partisan government and upcoming presidential election cycle. Stay tuned!

CASRO members are encouraged to contact Abby with any questions they may have on these and other issues: abby.devine@casro.org; 631-928-6954.

The retirement of Senate Commerce Committee Chair Jay Rockefeller may stall progress of Do-Not-Track legislation.

About the Author

Abby Devine

Abby works with CASRO General Counsel Duane Berlin, the association’s GPA committee, and the CASRO team to advocate on behalf of CASRO members and the entire U.S. research industry. She also is working on CASRO’s U.S. Safe Harbor program. Abby’s background is in law, legislative and regulatory affairs, and public policy. Prior to joining CASRO, she was an Associate at Berkman, Henoch, Peterson, Peddy & Fenchel, P.C., a New York law firm. Abby earned a bachelor’s degree in international politics and economics from Middlebury College, and received her J.D. from Brooklyn Law School.
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Background

US internet usage continues to evolve from a “proximity-fixed” experience at a stationary desktop or laptop to a portable experience that allows internet connectivity nearly anywhere. Consumers also are evolving, viewing internet access as “always on” and available to meet their information and communication needs anywhere—on increasingly diversified internet-enabled devices.

Given this shift, researchers must adapt to surveys being completed on a variety of devices—including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktops. The percentage of surveys completed via mobile devices is growing rapidly, currently at 20%–33% or even more for some audiences. All surveys have become “accidentally mobile” as people now attempt completion on their device of choice. A lack of adapting surveys to all devices may create unintended data quality issues—likely exacerbated among certain population subgroups. To complicate matters, mobile devices take a variety of forms with screens ranging in size from 3 to 10+ inches. Usage both on-the-go and in stationary settings creates vastly different “mobile” experiences.

The good news is that mobile and survey portability not only engages new portions of the population, but it allows new approaches for gathering in-the-moment insight and extends the value of marketing research. The industry is demonstrating a spirit of innovation in simultaneously exploring and embracing mobile research, but two factors are critical to our long-term success: (1) quickly quantifying the impact of the new variables being added to our data collection equation, and (2) adapting our survey practices to mitigate data quality issues arising as a result of our changing ecosystem. With this in mind, we set out to examine the potential for bias under a variety of conditions found in typical survey data.

Methodology

Prior research-on-research around devices has focused on the sample compositions found in certain situations (e.g., mobile audiences are younger). The next step in expanding our collective learning was to focus on survey outcomes and data quality implications under a variety of conditions.
To examine multiple facets of the interviewing ecosystem, a survey instrument was created that included modules allowing presentation of one of three different survey experiences: a short, medium, or long survey. A pre-planned quota design ensured equal representation by experience, as well as the device respondents were using: a mobile phone, tablet, or computer. This 3 x 3 matrix gave us nine different combinations of survey length by device to explore.

Sample sourcing was the other item to explore, and providers that contributed to the research-on-research were categorized into one of three designations:

1. Traditional research panel
2. Virtual or managed panel (i.e., website relationships for “research and more” where respondent demos or characteristics are known)
3. Affiliate or river sampling (i.e., real-time engagement without a pre-existing relationship)

A total of n=1845 completes were delivered to a quota design that balanced variables for analysis. Respondents were allowed to complete the survey using their device of choice, with demographics controlled through the quota design. As a result, some quotas naturally filled more quickly than others (Age 50+ mobile phone respondents were slowest to fill). Since demographics were held consistent by device and source, it eliminated extraneous variables and allowed focus on our key areas of examination:

1. Which types of respondent attitudinal and behavioral segments might be more or less prevalent given the different combinations of survey length/device/sample source?
2. How do these segments behave under different survey conditions?
3. What are the unintended data outcomes (e.g., data quality issues) that may result through various combinations of our studied variables?

As part of the survey design, standard psychographic and behavioral measures were included to test for the possibility of bias. Respondent classifications were created from survey data for areas such as technology, shopping, and influence on others. Stringent definitions for the classifications were not needed, as the main objective was to evaluate the behavior of the classes AND assess the proportions of the classes that appeared (and how they changed) across the ecosystem variables being studied.

The components of survey data quality are multidimensional but are generally a function of comprehension and engagement – both the ability to comprehend the information in the questionnaire and the level of effort applied to providing valid responses. Other factors such as the environment in which the questionnaire is administered factor-in as well. With this in mind, our survey instrument was constructed to specifically assess consistency and engagement during the interviewing process. From examination of these items a composite Quality Score was computed for each respondent.

**Key Findings**

The survey itself provided many interesting attitudinal and behavioral measures for comparison. The analysis focused on the examination of (1) individual item responses and response patterns, and (2) changes in Quality Scores for segment classifications across ecosystem variables.

Among the items examined was time spent viewing a concept, which was inversely proportional to screen size. Multiple factors may have contributed to this, including:

- Due to the smaller-screen, respondents may have spent more time reading and concentrating on smaller print
- Some respondents may have spent time with display settings, manipulating the concept on their smaller screens to make it more legible

Regardless, time spent reading the concept was correlated to response quality across the entire survey. A short amount of time spent on the concept screen was a strong indicator of lower quality across the entire survey. Interestingly, it was hypothesized that an unusually long time spent on the concept might indicate inattentiveness and subsequent poor quality, but this was not true.
Somewhat counterintuitively, device size had little impact on open-end response length or quality. A text-based concept (no image) on “surgical implantation of technology for convenience” was a provocative open-end that generated an interesting and useful range of responses. From these we could clearly define poor and high quality open-end responses. Results included:

- 8% of people gave a “junk” response (invalid for the question): N/A, Yes, No, None, or gibberish
- 8% of people gave a valid but very short response of six or fewer characters, such as: OK, Sad, Wary, Fine, 666, YOLO and “1984” (referring to the novel)

Together, the above 16% of respondents were designated as giving a Low Quality response. The rest of the open-end comments were considered as High Quality responses. Some natural groupings occurred:

7-25 Characters: Represented One Thought (33%)
- “Not good!” “THAT’s very Cool.” “Way too syfy. Crazy!” “Invasion of privacy.”

26-50 Characters: One Complex Sentence, or Two Thoughts (18%)
- “I think that would be really amazing.” “No way. A little too Orwellian for me.”

51+ Characters: Multiple Sentences (33%)
- “It would be weird almost a big brother type world. The government could keep tabs on you 24/7. And how would you upgrade? Could you get a virus and could it become a REAL virus?”

Response length and patterns were very similar by device, with the only notable difference that more computer respondents (37%) provided answers of 51+ characters.

Along with concept viewing behavior and open-end response, the Quality Score was derived from stated responses (e.g., answer consistency, evidence of straight-lining, propensity to select many low incidence items) and other patterns of response (e.g., time spent on key items and in total). Here are some of the significant outcomes using the Quality Score to group respondents:

- Overall 23% of the sample was classified as “lowest quality” quartile
- Males scored significantly worse than Females (26% vs. 20%)
- Quality Scores improve with Age. Notably, Ages 18-34 had the worst Quality Score, nearly twice as poor as that for Ages 50+
- Quality Scores improved with time spent on the interview:
Asian, Native American, Hawaiian and Aleutian ethnicities indexed worse on their Quality Scores than did others.

Individuals with household incomes around the US median appear to be the most conscientious survey takers.

Interestingly, anyone answering “Prefer not to answer” at any demo question indexed for a much lower quality score than on-average. This should be a red flag to analysts.

The following chart summarizes the Quality Score indices (difference from 100) across key demographics.

Among the defined respondent segments, those with a Shopping Affinity appeared to provide the best data, while Tech Enthusiasts provided the worst.

When examining quality by device type and survey length, those completing interviews on tablets appeared to be most engaged and provided the highest quality data. Those completing on PCs provided the worst data on surveys of shorter lengths, potentially indicating this mode made it easiest for respondents to speed through the survey.

The best data outcome across all combinations of study resulted from: the Short survey, on a Tablet, among Females, with a Shopping Affinity.
Reflections

This study clearly demonstrated that certain subgroups are more predisposed to providing poor quality data, and that varies by conditions. While troubling (but not surprising) this confirms our pursuit of continuous survey improvement is well-founded. With the increases in diversification of internet-enabled devices and on-the-go survey taking it’s time for us to step-up our game.

As researchers we must work to improve the quality of respondents’ survey experiences. While there is hope in the advancement of real-time survey monitoring, and the implementation of algorithms that ensure only the highest quality responses, we are not absolved of responsibility. The internet has become an incredibly rich environment filled with deeply engaging content—where in comparison, online survey research for the most part remains antiquated.

Despite proliferation of other data sources, primary research surveys remain the only way to produce some insights—such as meaningful responses around attitudes, beliefs and emotions. Such measures are clearly needed both now and in the foreseeable future, and as such, we should continue to refine the craft of survey research. Surveys will remain an integral part of the insights toolbox, so we must vigilantly measure, analyze, and improve survey data quality to best meet client needs and adapt to our changing ecosystem.

Note: This is an abridged version of a paper Mark and Chuck presented at the 2014 CASRO Digital Research Conference. The complete paper is available upon request.

About the Authors

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Mark was a member of the team that founded TrueSample in 2008 and brings nearly a decade of experience in global business leadership, corporate entrepreneurship, and technology innovation to his current role as the CEO at TrueSample where he is responsible for the overall strategy and execution of the company. Mark graduated from the University of Washington with a double major in Marketing and Corporate Entrepreneurship and added a Certificate in Contract Management from the University of Washington Extension School.

Chuck Miller
Chuck is President of Digital Marketing & Measurement, LLC (DM2), an agency focused on communications and measurement in emerging media. During his 20+ years in research, Chuck has built significant capabilities in provider and end client organizations, including experience as a VP at AOL and Time Warner leading Consumer Insights and Business Intelligence functions. A pioneer in online research, Chuck is named Inventor on a US Patent associated with the first online river sample and survey router. As a recognized thought-leader in marketing research, he frequently publishes, speaks at conferences, and leads many industry initiatives.
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The rise in ‘unintentional’ mobile respondents using tablets and smartphones to complete web studies should not come as a surprise to anyone who attended a market research conference in 2014. Researchers now understand the need to optimize surveys to mobile devices, but still follow traditional online web design practices. Firms are increasingly required to identify the types of devices being used to access their surveys, as well as provide mobile-optimized versions that enhance the presentation of questions for those viewing their surveys on a smaller screen.

Here, we take a step back and look at how respondents actually use mobile devices, and then create surveys that allow them to use features they find familiar and comfortable. We know that respondents on a mobile device abandon surveys at a higher rate than those taking surveys on their desktop or laptop, for which the surveys were initially designed. And we believe that mobile completion rates would increase if respondents were allowed to complete surveys using the functions they are accustomed to using on their mobile devices. Thus, we tested several question presentations that make use of features unique to the mobile platform – such as touch functionality (slider scales and roller bars), voice-to-text and camera activation – in an effort to improve the mobile respondent’s survey experience.

We fielded a web-based, 60-question survey on auto insurance satisfaction and attitudes. The survey was fielded between April 4 and April 11, 2014, and respondents self-selected into mobile phone, tablet and non-mobile (PC) quota cells. Our research utilized a multi-cell design and is based on a total of 3,600 completes.

**Experiment One: Response Scale Tests**

For our first experiment, we looked specifically at scale points. Optimized for mobile phones and tablets, we presented both a 5-point scale and an 11-point scale to find overall satisfaction with the respondent’s auto insurance company. Furthermore, we tested the initial positioning of the slider, starting it: outside of the scale; to the far left of the scale (“Not at All Satisfied”); to the center of the scale (“Somewhat Satisfied”); and to the far right of the scale (“Completely Satisfied”). In Figure 1, you can see that slider position influences “passive” responses – particularly on a mobile device.

![Figure 1. Overall satisfaction with Insurance Company – Mobile](image-url)
the slider starting to the far right, we found that 43% of mobile users chose not to move the slider and continue to the next question, as opposed to 36% of tablet users and just 12% of PC users (see Figure 2). In our 11-point scale with the slider starting to the far right, 42% of mobile users chose not to move the slider and continue to the next question. However, only 23% of tablet users and a very slightly smaller 11% of PC users did the same. It should be noted that the mean score for this particular question was also towards the high end, or right side, of the scale.

Figure 2. % passive/missing – PC, Tablet, Mobile

We also surveyed respondents about their preference for scales. In Figure 2, we see that scale preference is heavily influenced by survey experience, where the majority of PC users preferred standard over sliders and had no further preference. Touch device users, on the other hand, had a preference towards sliders where used.

Findings and Implications

We must remain attentive to the fact that responses are sensitive to slider start position. When positioned near the latent mean of the question, this can result in passive responses—even more so on tablets and mobile devices. Based on this particular piece of our research, we recommend avoiding sliders for your mobile research. However, where necessary, it is best to anchor sliders on the outside forcing selection, and to keep scale types consistent throughout the entire survey.

Experiment Two: List Presentation Tests

For this experiment, we tested the use of radio buttons versus drop-down lists and found that the display of drop-down lists varies by browser on a mobile device. While the Safari browser is dominant on iPhones, browsers may vary more on Android phones (see Figure 4). Furthermore, we found that, because the default Android browser only shows the first three choices on the list and does not easily scroll, these three choices were selected far more often when shown in a drop-down.

Figure 4. Drop-down display on iPhone versus Android

Findings and Implications

For this particular piece of our research, we found that responses were similar when lists were presented with radio buttons and in drop-downs/roller-bars, and that primacy effects were similar across PC and mobile devices. However, it is important to note that longer lists will result
in primacy effects for both PC and mobile, and that mobile operating systems render content differently, creating control issues. Approach your survey with caution when using drop-downs and keep lists as short as possible.

**Experiment Three: Voice-to-Text Tests**

This portion of our research experiment was administered to mobile phone and tablet users only. Why should researchers care about voice-to-text? One of the drawbacks of conducting mobile research comes with open-ends. Typically, and not surprisingly, we see fewer open-ended responses on mobile devices than we see on PCs. And of those who respond on mobile devices, we typically see fewer words. Voice-to-text has the potential to improve the quality of verbatim responses on mobile devices.

When unprompted, we saw very few respondents (1.7% on a mobile device and 1% on a tablet) use the voice-to-text feature (respondents were presented the first open-end without any mention of the voice-to-text feature). Prior to the second open-end, half of our mobile respondents were prompted to use the voice-to-text feature: “When answering this question, please try to use the voice-to-text feature on your [tablet/phone]. Tap in the answer box and then tap the microphone key on your [tablet/phone] to start recording your answer.” In Figure 5, you can see that, even when prompted, the majority of our respondents did not use this feature. Furthermore, we see that roughly one-quarter of all respondents who used the voice-to-text feature had to make a correction to their registered response.

When we look specifically at word count and character count (see Figure 6), we see that respondents using voice-to-text gave just slightly longer answers. And when we asked our respondents about their intentions to use the voice-to-text feature for future surveys, the majority (53.6% on a mobile device and 64.2% on a tablet) was hesitant. Respondents noted inaccuracy and misinterpretation leading to having to type the response, taking surveys in a quiet area without being disruptive, and having an accent that is hard for the app to understand as common reasons not to use voice-to-text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Tablet</th>
<th>Mobile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typed</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typed</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 6. Number of words/characters used in voice-to-text versus typed responses**

**Findings and Implications**

For this portion of our research, we found that voice-to-text can result in slightly more commentary than a standard keyboard response and that some respondents like the novelty of the voice-to-text feature. That said, we also found that many respondents do not wish to use the feature – this is tied to the environment in which the respondent takes the survey, as well as accuracy of the translation. We should also note that not all mobile devices are equipped with a voice-to-text feature. Therefore, we conclude that it is premature to recommend voice-to-text for respondent audiences, but
don’t doubt that this technology will improve over time; plan for additional testing in the future.

**Experiment Four: Camera Feature Tests**

Similar to the voice-to-text piece, this portion of our research was also limited to mobile phone and tablet users. Respondents were asked to capture a photo or video showing “a glimpse of where you completed the survey” using the built-in function. In response, we received various images of airports, bars, bathrooms (yes, bathrooms), cars, churches, gyms, hospitals, kitchens, malls, offices, schools and stores. While 72% of our mobile phone respondents found it very or somewhat easy to download their photo, a smaller percentage of tablet users found it to be very or somewhat easy.

**Findings and Implications**

This type of research can produce candid, personal and “in-the-moment” data, and is very effective for qualitative insights. However, it is important to note that data needs to be reviewed individually, and that question wording is critical. Educate your respondents on the process to ensure successful participation. It also is important to note that this type of research cannot be carried out on feature phones or some older smartphones.

We believe this research will help the industry better understand the experiences and preferences of the ever-important mobile audience. Understanding mobile respondents’ preferences and allowing them to reply in ways that appeal to them will lead to more responses and, more importantly, higher quality data.

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**About the Authors**

**Melanie Courtright**

Melanie has nearly two decades of experience designing, executing and interpreting research for agencies and corporations, and is sought out for her thought leadership in the next generation of data collection. Melanie spent over a decade at a full-service research firm in Dallas where she developed her strong research background, followed by nearly a decade specializing in all forms of digital research, including online, mobile and social. Melanie has a Bachelor’s degree in business administration and marketing. She also serves on the board for the Marketing Research Association, and is a respected writer and speaker.

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Ted has been involved in all aspects of online and mobile quantitative and qualitative research in his seven years at MaritzCX. He has led several mobile initiatives and is frequently relied upon for his expertise in all aspects of mobile data collection including mobile web, SMS, native apps and other emerging technologies. Ted has presented the results of Maritz mobile research-on-research projects at the CASRO Technology Conference, The Market Research Event, the AAPOR Annual Conference, and to members of the American Marketing Association. He received an MBA from Washington University and a BSBA from Saint Louis University.
Jonathan Tice

Jonathan has 12 years experience in online marketing research and a background that includes executive and managerial leadership in sales, marketing, operations and product management. With the Market Research Association, Jonathan has served in the past as his local chapter president and as the online subject matter expert on a national level. He has also been a part of research-on-research initiatives with the ARF’s Research Quality Forums. Prior to joining Decipher, he served as vice president of Sales at Authentic Response. Prior to that, he founded the market research division for TechTarget. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Boston College.
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How To Kill, By A Standup Comedian

By Matt Ruby, Founder, Vooza

This article is based on Matt’s presentation at the 2014 CASRO Annual Conference.

“Did I mention I got my MBA from Harvard?”
“I am a THOUGHT LEADER.”
“I am Senior VP of Something.”
“Big data and the cloud and [insert buzzword of the day here].”
“My company has SO many employees.”
“I was having lunch with [name drop] and we were discussing [name drop].”

“I think the greatest thing that a performer can have if he’s going to be successful is an empathy with the audience.” — Johnny Carson

That’s the way people in the business world (and academia) love to talk. They want you to be impressed by them. They want you to know they ooze confidence. They want you to know they’re important. And smart. And respected. And intelligent. And blah blah blah.

The typical result: Whoever is listening wants to go to sleep. It’s just another suit bragging about stuff. Been there, done that. In fact, it usually makes you resent them a little. The word “douchebag” comes to mind.

But look at standup comedians. They take the opposite approach. They come right out and tell you how unimpressive they are. Rodney Dangerfield talked about how he got no respect. Louis CK talks about his body falling apart. Jim Gaffigan tells you he’s pale and fat. Chris Rock tells you he’s a high school dropout. Richard Pryor talked about his drug use. Doug Stanhope talks about his drinking. Woody Allen and Richard Lewis go on and on about their neuroses. Maria Bamford discusses her mental illness and various prescriptions. And the list goes on and on.

Why do these seasoned performers take this path that’s so foreign to business types? First of all, because it’s interesting. Anyone who hears “I want to confess something to you” is going to be intrigued. When you’re honest like that, audience members sit up and pay attention. No one really wants to hear the valedictorian’s speech. But a tape of their therapy session? Now THAT would be interesting.

Also, these performers are building a connection. They’ve honed their act in front of crowds night after night for years on end. They know what works. And they realize the best way to get an audience on your side is to open up about your faults. To be vulnerable about what’s wrong with you. To be honest about what you really think and feel, even if it’s kooky. This openness builds trust. The crowd empathizes with you. They’re on your side. (Well, as long as you’re not admitting to being a serial killer or something.) And once you’ve got them on your side, that’s when you can really take ’em somewhere. Johnny Carson once said, “I think this is the greatest thing that a
performer can have if he’s going to be successful: an empathy with the audience. They have to like him. And if they like the performer, then you’ve got 80% of it made.”

But don’t you need to seem confident? Yes, but you should realize that you can be confident and vulnerable at the same time. You can command the stage yet still let people see your flaws. “There’s something more interesting, more honest, and easier to connect with when there’s a little bit of that admission of loneliness sometimes, or insecurity, or self-doubt, or any of that kind of stuff,” according to comedian Demetri Martin. The things that people try to hide are the things we most want to hear.

So what if you took the approach of a comedian in a “real world” setting? After all, comedians aren’t the only ones who need to work the room. Maybe you’re giving a talk at a conference. Or you’re pitching a client. Or you’re heading up an office meeting. Or interviewing for a job. Or chatting folks up at a networking event. In any of those situations, you can use the same techniques that standup comedians use to kill.

Now, I’m not saying you should start telling dick jokes at your next job review. But here are some tips standup comedians know that could help you win over a crowd.

Open And Close Strong

The two most important moments for a comedian’s set are the beginning and the end. Your opener is when you set the table. The crowd figures out who you are. They get your point of view. They decide whether or not they trust you and like you. It’s the introduction to everything that comes after. That’s why many comics will start off by riffing on the room or the crowd as a way to ease into their set. Then they’ll move into a joke that’s solid, quick, and indicative of what’s to come.

The closer is crucial because it’s what the crowd will remember most. How they feel when you walk off stage is how they’ll remember you. Even if the majority of your set doesn’t go that well, a killer closer can leave them thinking it was a strong performance. Note: If you’ve got anything that involves music, video, or multimedia in some way, consider closing with that. Going back to plain old speaking after something like that can feel like a letdown to a jazzed up crowd. Once you do your big tap dance routine, call it a night.

Sandwich New Material Between Established Bits

If you’ve got new material, work it in between things that you know will work. That way, if it fails, you can quickly win them back with something that consistently kills. As Steve Martin said, “When I had new material to try, I would break it down into its smallest elements, literally a gesture or a few words, then sneak it into the act in its shortest form, being careful not to disrupt the flow of the show.” Even if your new stuff falls flat, it’ll just seem like a blip on the radar. Often, the crowd will give you credit for taking a chance and trying something new.

Make It Conversational

You don’t want it to sound like a rehearsed monologue. You want it to feel alive. Comedians like Mike Birbiglia and Louis CK are masters at telling a story dozens of times and yet still having it sound like they’re saying it for the first time. “I try to keep it as much like I would talk about it in life as possible,” says Paul F. Tompkins. “It’s the way you’re sharing something with a friend of yours. You’re not approaching your friend like they are an audience. There’s an intimacy there.” Sometimes it can help to pick one person out in the crowd and focus on explaining things to
that individual instead of a mass of people. Just make sure to keep looking around the room instead of locking in on your victim, er, target.

Get Physical

What’s the first thing a comic does after taking the stage? Grab the mic and move the stand out of the way. The reason: It blocks people from seeing you.

Yet conference speakers and professors tend to stand behind lecterns. “I am to be respected!” they seem to say. In truth though, it’s a metaphorical and literal obstacle that prevents the audience from connecting with you. Work around these kinds of obstacles. Move. Use your hands. Walk into the crowd. It gives the audience something to see and it gets you more involved with your material. Maybe you’ll even get a bit of a workout. Keep in mind how much we communicate via body language normally. If you’re just standing stiffly behind a laptop or lectern, you’re missing a tool from your toolbox. People who are writers tend to fall into this trap often. They emphasize words and ideas so much that they forget how much performance matters too. Eddie Brill, who used to book comedians for David Letterman’s show, once commented, “When you write, it’s usually just word, word, word, but it’s easy to leave the physical element out. How you look, how you act can play a major role in how an audience responds.”

Throw The Script Away

Avoid looking at notecards or a PowerPoint presentation. Those things are crutches that make you seem rehearsed and aloof. The crowd doesn’t want to feel like they’re hearing a canned presentation. A robot can press play, a human is in the moment. Make them feel like you’re right there with them. The less you rely on a scripted presentation, the more you can gauge the energy of the room. You can feel if people are with you and change course if they’re not. You can take questions. You can shift gears. All that gets you in a “front of mind” space (engaged, fluid, spontaneous) instead of a “back of mind” space (rote, stiff, rehearsed). Take the advice of Bill Hicks: “The act is something you fall back on if you can’t think of anything else to say.”

Screwups Are A Gift

Often, the biggest laugh of the night comes when something goes wrong and a comic recovers gracefully. How a comic thinks: If the waitress spills some drinks, talk about that. If someone’s got a weird laugh, discuss it. If the microphone cable cuts out, give the performance “theater style.” If some drunk yells stuff out, shut him down gently but firmly. If you fall off the stage – well, that one might be tough to recover from.

Crowds love that stuff. They know it’s real and in the moment. And they’re impressed when an obstacle is handled smoothly. It makes them feel they’re in the hands of a professional. Allstate and all that, ya know?

In fact, those are often the most memorable part of the show. Robin Williams once filmed a movie with Jeff Bridges and talked about it afterwards: “Something screws up and [Jeff] says to me: ‘It’s ok. It’s a gift. If something screws up, it’s a gift.”
Don’t be afraid of it.’ That forces you to make something special that you didn’t plan. You’re in that moment and you’re forced to deal with it and deal with it together.” If something goes wrong, embrace it. Now everyone in that room is having a shared moment. And if you bring ‘em out the other side, they’ll have your back the rest of the way.

**Take The Opposing Side**

If everyone agrees, try to argue for a different point of view. It’ll get people’s attention. Being a contrarian is interesting. Even if you’re just playing devil’s advocate in order to spark some debate, it gets people’s juices flowing. Besides, it’s like Mark Twain said: “Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it’s time to pause and reflect.”

This advice is especially important if you’re performing in front of a crowd that isn’t paying attention or seems distracted. Saying something outlandish or pigheaded or controversial will shut them up and get them intrigued. Now they’re listening. Once you’ve got them paying attention, you can explain yourself. Talk about your crazy views and see what happens. Sometimes, backing yourself into a corner that way forces you to think on your toes and come up with a creative solution.

**Always Leave ‘em Wanting More**

How they feel when you leave the stage is how they’ll remember you. You don’t them to be tired and waiting for it to end. You want them to be jonesing for more. Get ‘em to a high point and then get offstage. Jerry Seinfeld knew that when he walked away from his TV show: “I wanted to end the show on the same kind of peak we’ve been doing it on for years. I wanted the end to be from a point of strength.” The right time to end is a little bit sooner than they—good night!

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**About the Author**

**Matt Ruby**

Matt is the CEO of Vooza, a mobile web app that steals data from your phone and sells it to Eastern European spammers. Well, that’s not really what they do. Vooza is actually a video comic strip about the startup world. Or as one fan wrote, “It’s the ‘Spinal Tap’ of startups.” Each week, they release a new video at Vooza.com for our audience of tech-minded folks (i.e. programmers, designers, entrepreneurs, copywriters, social media pimps, etc.). Matt also is a standup comedian based in New York City. Prior to launching Vooza in 2012 he worked in the tech world and was employee #1 at 37signals. During his decade-plus working there he helped author the books REWORK and Getting Real, and the 37signals blog Signal vs. Noise. His current comedy blog is Sandpaper Suit.
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