

APRIL 2008
VOL. 46 NO. 4



Alert!

MAGAZINE

The Market Research Table Is Set:

Are You Hungry For The Future?




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OFFICES WORLDWIDE



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Alert!



Letter From The Editor

A Whole Foods just opened up near MRA National. This high-end, natural grocery store gives away free samples of its products in nearly every aisle. Why do they give out their \$20 a pound hamburger meat? Why do they hire a knowledgeable employee to dispense and educate shoppers on the products?


Samples, taste tests and product tests generate feedback and results that a survey or discussion panel cannot: an instant reaction to an actual product. Tasting the spiced ham gets a reaction from people that theorizing about spiced ham doesn't.


My involvement with the market research profession has made it abundantly clear to me the reasons behind food sampling.

The four tiny pieces of chocolate I paid \$8 for at Whole Foods, while small, are a part of a bigger picture.

Kathryn Blackburn's feature (page 24) on the past, present and future of market research sheds light on the breadth and depth of the market research profession.

Bruce Mendelsohn's article on social networking (page 20) suggests one direction in which the profession appears to be heading.

Speaking of heading, I'm off to the Whole Foods. I hear they're sampling Scharffenberger chocolate today. Now there's a product I could taste test all day! 

Connie Yan, Publications Editor, MRA
connie.yan@mra-net.org 



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 Listens to: Garrison Keillor, every Saturday
 Thinks: Her avatar's hair should be longer

Feels: Your client's brand...

"Gets me"
"Makes me feel good about myself. Reflects who I am and who I want to be."

As a marketing researcher, it's vital to understand Kelly. And to find others like her who are passionate about your client's brand. But people with eclectic interests can't always be found in homogeneous sampling sources. Just because they buy diapers or fly a particular airline doesn't mean they're right for your sample.

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Start Your Business NOW!

Seven Things Every New Business Owner Should Consider

By Alan R. Adelman, CPA

Hundreds of thousands of new businesses are started in the United States every year. Most begin with some good ideas and real passion on the part of the entrepreneurs who start them. What many lack, though, is a thorough examination of the essentials that make a business work. Maybe that is why so many new businesses fail within the first five years.

In my long experience as a certified public accountant, I have identified several key things that new business owners do not always consider, but that can make a profound difference in the success or failure of their business.

1. Your Business Name

Make sure that you like your entity name; you're stuck with it for a while and it will be on everything you hand out. If you want to change it later, it will cost you in some surprising ways. One corporate client wanted to change to a more global-sounding name to reflect the growing scope of their business. They racked up several thousand dollars in expenses to change their state registrations, file additional tax forms, reprint all of their stationery and business cards and recraft their Web site and their marketing materials.

(Continued on page 22)

MRA's Distinguished Service Award recognizes extensive and distinguished service to both the Association and to the opinion and marketing research profession.

- | | |
|------|------------------------------------|
| 1994 | Linda Tessar |
| 1995 | Mimi Nichols |
| 1996 | Ruth Nelson |
| 1997 | Howard Gershowitz |
| 1998 | Ellen Gregory |
| 1999 | Sharon Mutter |
| 2000 | Anndel Martin |
| 2001 | Donald J. Marek |
| 2002 | Elyse Gammer |
| 2003 | Joanne Robbibaro |
| 2004 | Foy Conway and J. Patrick Galloway |
| 2005 | Joan Burns |
| 2006 | Nancy Hayslett |
| 2007 | Michael Mermelstein |

Honorary Lifetime Membership Award
Throughout the history of MRA several notable individuals have played key roles in shaping the success of our Association and our profession. These current or retired members have been honored for their vital contributions of time, talent and energy by the granting of an Honorary Lifetime Membership in MRA:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Christine Adams | Sharon Mutter |
| Audrey Bowen | William D. Neal |
| William Callahan | Ruth N. Nelson |
| Howard Gershowitz | Mimi Nichols |
| Beatrice Gorbaty | Betsy J. Peterson |
| Patricia Heakin | Murray Sommer |
| Priscilla Kamrath | Peter Van Brunt |
| Donald J. Marek | Claire Viverito |
| Norman M. Michaels | Frank D. Walker |

The 2008 Awards Task Force:

Christy Reid (Chair), Colorado Market Research Services
Michael Mermelstein, Mktg., Inc.
Amy Shields, Nichols Research, Inc.
Paul Valdez, Nichols Research, Inc.
Kim White, Schlesinger Associates, Inc.

Candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Current MRA member in good standing
- National member volunteer for at least five years.
- Has demonstrated National, Chapter and Industry experience.

For a **Distinguished Service Award** nomination form, visit: http://www.mra-net.org/DS_Award.pdf
Fax completed forms to 860-682-1010.

The 2008 Honorary Lifetime Membership Task Force:

Merrill Shugoll (Chair), Shugoll Research
Donald J. Marek, MRII
Mimi Nichols, Nichols Research, Inc.
Shirley Shames, Performance Plus/Boston Field & Focus
Peter Van Brunt, ReData, Inc.

Please consider any current or retired member who meets the following criteria:

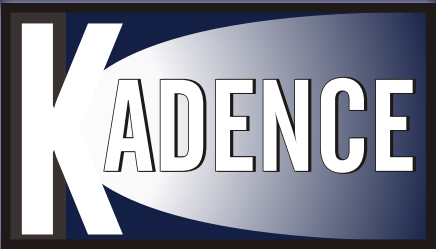
- Is in good standing with MRA;
- Has volunteered at the Chapter and National level for at least 10 years;
- Is an outstanding individual who has been in the profession for at least 20 years, during which a strong commitment was demonstrated to the Association and the profession.

Each nominee will be evaluated and considered by the Task Force. If a recipient is chosen, he or she will be honored at the MRA Annual Conference.

To recognize a fellow MRA member for the **Honorary Lifetime Membership Award**, e-mail sarah.walsh@mra-net.org or aisha.terry@mra-net.org or fax them at 860-682-1010.

Include name of nominee, description of the individual's contributions to the profession and MRA, and your phone number.

These awards will be presented during the Awards Luncheon at
MRA's Annual Conference, June 4-6 in New York, New York.



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Where: Park Hyatt at the Bellevue, Philadelphia
When: April 17-18, 2008
Cost: \$350 member
\$390 non-member
Visit: www.philadelphiamra.org to register

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Mark Your Calendar!

MRA Webinar
Title: Engaging the Research Respondent
Date: May 20, 2008
Time: Noon-1:00 p.m. EDT
Presenter: Jen Drolet, iModerate
Cost: \$55 - MRA members/
\$80 - non-members
Registration Deadline: May 18, 2008
PRC: 1 Contact Hour in Client/Supplier Interaction or Business Operations-Marketing

Chapter Event
Title: NorCal Spring Meet & Greet
Chapter: Northwest
Date: May 1, 2008
For more details, please visit:
<http://www.ncpnwmra.org/>

MRA's Annual Conference & RIF 2008
When: June 4-6th
Where: New York Marriott Marquis Times Square
For information & registration visit: <http://www.mra-net.org>
Early Bird Registration closes April 18th!!!

MRA Webinar
Online Behavioral Research/Tracking: Cookies, Spyware, and Online Privacy Issues

Stay tuned for more details!



'Mystery Shoppers Are An Important Resource.'

By Colleen Moore-Mezler, MRA President, Moore Research Services, Inc.

I dedicate this article to the ultimate mystery shopper, my mother, Peggy Moore.

Peggy has been in research for the past 39 years and has become the ultimate detective when it comes to shopping. My mother can ask more questions and find out more information than anyone I know – so you can see, I learned from the best.

Every shopping experience is like a secret mission to her – I can hear the *Mission Impossible* theme music playing now. She enters the store and observes how quickly she is approached, the cleanliness of the store and how well the store is stocked.

Ultimately, her goal is to let the owner/manager of the establishment know three things – number one, how they ranked in her world; number two, to find the best possible deals; and number three, to feel like a valued customer. She is not afraid to let people know exactly what she thinks of their products or services. If all shoppers were as vocal as my mother, we wouldn't need mystery shopping programs.

As consumers, we expect certain things from any business that we deal with. We obviously want to be treated fairly and with respect. We want to find cost-effective ways to shop and find products that will make our lives easier since these are things that, as consumers, we should receive. Employees are being paid to ensure that our needs are met, but when we don't get these things, we, as consumers, don't always speak up. Maybe the only reason why things don't change is because

we aren't speaking up. Doing so could make all the difference in the world.

Since its conception over fifty years ago, mystery shopping has become an important resource in our thriving business world and one that is on the rise. A variety of professional businesses, such as retail, manufacturing, hospitality (hotels, restaurants, etc.), property management and even medical offices/facilities

use the talents of mystery shoppers to discover consumer wants and needs.

Mystery shopping is a valuable research tool. It uses trained shoppers to evaluate anonymously customer service, operations, employee integrity, merchandising and product quality. This is a short list of what mystery shopping can and will do for clients:

- Monitor and measure service performance
- Improve customer retention
- Make employees aware of what is important in serving customers
- Reinforce positive employee/management actions
- Provide feedback from front line operations
- Monitor facility conditions
- Audit pricing and merchandising compliance
- Identify training needs and opportunities

I recently went shopping with my mother in Florida but we had a limited amount of time and, to my mother's dismay, my father was with us – she

(Continued on page 12)



Chief Executive Column

By Lawrence Brownell, MRA's Chief Executive Officer

While considering what I wanted to write about this month, I thought of two appropriate movie quotations. I could go with the strong statement from *Network* when folks are urged to stick their heads out their windows and yell "I am mad as hell and I am not going to take it any more!" Or, I could go with the desperate plea from *Jerry McGuire*: "Help me, help you!"

What has gotten me so agitated? Three things, which are at their essence one thing, are bothering me. There seems to be a general malaise in the market research profession about sustaining itself.

I have represented three other professions and the one thing I could count on is that they all would do whatever it took to protect the profession.

If there was a threat to the profession via media, government or societal change, it was a high priority and we worked together to find a solution. The research profession has segmented itself so much that there is no common flag to rally around, thus leaving it vulnerable to extinction. Yes, extinction. I know how incredibly valuable and important to society legitimate research is, but the average person does not.

The profession has been sheltered in the United States by politicians' use of polls and the government's desire for more information. This year when the polls should be shining brighter than ever, they are instead increasingly questioned.

I have been engaging in media interviews defending these polls and demonstrating how their misuse or over exuberant use is causing the discrepancies between the polls, and primary results. If we don't defend and improve these polls, there will be no reason for politicians to protect survey and opinion research from laws that restrict access to the general populace.

The other two major threats to the profession also have opportunities to advance

the importance of marketing research, but the profession does not seem interested in embracing them. The first is the issue of quality when it comes to online research. I challenge the academics and research scientists of our profession to address this issue. AAPOR members have voiced to their leadership that online research is not scientific and therefore not reliable or legitimate. I openly disagree.

Let me pose a fact to those of you who teach research. Online research usage is growing. So what will you teach in ten years, when online research has become a mainstay? Will you send your students out with insufficient knowledge or confidence in this dominant methodology?

Let me challenge you. If you believe that online research is unscientific, do what every great scientist or educator would do: find a way to make it scientifically valid and teach others how to apply the science. If you don't do this, what will you

be teaching? [Could you be teaching statistics with research being relegated to a chapter in the text book on potential usage or could many of your positions be eliminated, because what you wish to teach is obsolete?]

I know many of you don't want to dismiss online research. You need to muster your ranks and apply science to that which your peers find unscientific.

The final critical element that I feel most of the profession has neglected is government affairs. In every other profession I have represented there was one item above all else that needed to be taken care of: government affairs.

CMOR, in my opinion, the only organization in the profession that in the past four years has done something in this area.

(Continued on page 23)

A Tribute To The Ultimate Secret Shopper, Peggy Moore


(Continued from page 12)


says he "cramps" her style.

Our mission on this particular day was to find a fabulous pair of black sandals. We visited a great outdoor shopping mall and on our journey to find the ultimate shoes we stumbled across a quaint store that had unique jewelry. Remember, we were on a mission to find shoes – not jewelry. Then why on earth did two experienced shoppers like us go into this jewelry store?

Very simple – the store drew us in – the music, the unique way the jewelry was displayed and of course there was the sales associate that greeted us BEFORE we walked into the store. Neither one of us shopaholics could go past this store without checking it out. This store, FISH in Ft. Myers, Florida, had all of the elements of a great shopping experience.

As I reflect on this article, perhaps I realize that, like my mother, I too enjoy the ultimate shopping experience. I hope the need for mystery shopping as a research tool continues to grow; I need a few more pairs of shoes!!

Peggy Moore is the founder of Moore Research Services, Inc. Peggy is a seasoned professional with over 39 years in the marketing research industry. She began her career as an interviewer and then went on to start Moore Research in 1969. In June of 2007, Peggy had the honor of installing Colleen as President of MRA and the National Board of Directors. She has been married for 50 years to Dick Moore and has four children and eight grandchildren. She lives half the year in Ft. Myers, Florida and the other half in Erie, Pennsylvania. 

Colleen Moore-Mezler, PRC is the president of Moore Research Services, Inc. She may be reached at colleen@moore-research.com. 



MRA President Colleen Moore-Mezler and her mother, Peggy Moore
Photo Courtesy of Colleen Moore Mezler

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An International Perspective On Privacy

By Howard Fienberg, Director of Government Affairs, CMOR

CMOR's government affairs mission is:

- to monitor relevant legislative and regulatory activity;
- to ensure that the interests of the research community are protected and;
- to educate industry members regarding relevant legislative, statutory and legislative issues.

Our work is focused on U.S. activity however, as part of CMOR's continuing effort to "Shield the Profession," we work to keep abreast of major global legislative activity and alert the profession to legislative or regulatory activities that have significant potential impact. Below are recent examples in the UK and France.

- **United Kingdom:** The British Parliament is considering changes to the UK data protection laws that would make chief executives directly responsible for safeguarding personally identifiable information and criminalize the improper use of data.
Information Commissioner Richard Thomas, head of the body charged with protecting personal data, addressed the Justice Committee of the House of Commons in early December and sketched sweeping changes to the UK's data protection laws. Thomas' proposed legislation would include a requirement for certified confirmation from a company's chief executive that safeguards have been put in place to protect personal data.
This proposal follows hard on the heels of Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs' data breach, in which the agency lost personal financial data on more than 25 million people.
- **France:** President Nicolas Sarkozy proposed on January 8th to impose taxes on Internet access and cell phone usage in France. The new taxes could make research contacts using such modes more expensive and discourage respondent cooperation.
For the proposal to become policy, his government would have to draft a bill and get it approved by both houses of Parliament. Such measures would not likely take affect until next year, because of a busy parliamentary agenda and municipal elections in March.

CMOR
Shielding the Profession

CMOR will endeavor to keep our members informed about any developments, although we have no direct lobbying presence in Europe.


Globally, CMOR collaborates with like organizations to share information on government affairs activities in their countries. As part of this effort, CMOR works within the World Industry Network (WIN).


WIN is an agenda setting forum for global leaders in the research industry and serves as a communication platform to inform and update associations, aligning and involving them in industry projects. WIN holds regular international meetings, attended by CMOR, to discuss trends and critical issues and to develop collective responses/plans for action. WIN also distributes a newsletter to which CMOR contributes. For additional information regarding WIN, please see <http://www.esomar.org/index.php/win.html>.

Inside the US, CMOR actively monitors and responds to legislative and regulatory issues that impact the research profession. To assist us in effectively responding to legislation on the state level, CMOR is searching for **State Capitol Network Members**.


State Capitol Network Members' roles include working with CMOR staff to assist in monitoring and responding to negative legislative measures that impact the profession. While CMOR already has mechanisms in place to monitor such activity, this network will supplement CMOR's ongoing efforts to remain proactive and as alert as possible on all issues.

Member representatives would be the profession's observer for their state(s) and serve on behalf of the profession when any issues arise before their state legislature and assist in responding to such issues (see more information at http://www.cmor.org/pdf/Capital_Network.pdf).

For more information on government affairs issues, contact Howard Fienberg, CMOR's Director of Government Affairs at hfienberg@cmor.org. 

Howard Fienberg is the Director of Government Affairs. He may be reached at hfienberg@cmor.org. 

CMOR is the only industry association actively performing the duties of watch dog on federal and senate issues. CMOR's offices are based in Washington, D.C.

For more information, please write to information@cmor.org 

Disclaimer: The information provided in this message is for guidance and informational purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice. CMOR advises all parties to consult with private legal counsel regarding the interpretation and application of any laws to your business.

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| Kelly Hight, Flake-Wilkerson Market Insights, LLC | Adam Weinstein, Authentic Response |
| Kimberly Keller, Taylor Research, Inc. | George Wilkerson, Flake-Wilkerson Market Insights, LLC. |

These volunteers stepped forward to support MRA's initiative to provide training on a variety of cutting-edge marketing research and business management topics. Their time and dedication is much appreciated!

Education Update

By MRA's Education Work Group

Quality information isn't as easy to find as you may assume. Jump online and try to find content on any given subject and you'll find someone willing to offer their version of the facts. The other day I tried to find the "six steps of effective delegation" for a new supervisor and punched those words into a search engine. I got 12 million matches. Of the first 10 (which is about all we read, isn't it?) there was only one site that went into any depth. And it didn't match what I had been teaching for years, so it was back to the drawing board for me!

That was a search for general information...have you tried lately to get anything specific? Universities can help, but who wants to go back to school?

Yes, it can take a lot of work to find quality information, unless you have a trusted resource at your disposal...like MRA's Education Work Group. The EWG is comprised of research professionals who are passionate about the work we do. As part of our quality assurance to MRA's membership, we have established a Review Board to oversee all the educational content we deliver.

Debra Schlesinger-Hellman of Schlesinger Associates leads this team of experts who review and offer perspectives on the content we offer members online (via Webinars, white papers

and the like) and live at conference. Debby and her Board scrutinize every presentation submitted to the EWG prior to launch to ensure its rich and timely content, lack of sales approach, relevance to membership **and suitability** to the venue and audience.

Currently serving on this Board are the following research professionals:

- Scott Baker / Adept Consumer Testing
- Ann Brown / Gazelle Global
- Howard Fienberg / CMOR
- Mike Halberstam / Interviewing Service of America, Inc.
- Paul Kirch / Common Knowledge Research Services (Read more about Paul on page 32)
- Judith Langer / Langer Associates
- Jason Miller / Boston Field & Focus/ Performance Plus
- John Pryor / UCLA Higher Education Research Institute
- Jacqueline Rosales / Luth Research
- Jonathan Tice / Authentic Response

Together, this committee strives to offer the highest possible quality of education for our members. The EWG thanks these experts for offering their time to this important venture. Because of their knowledge, passion and concern for the profession, we know our content is in good hands. Their contribution to the EWG's continuous efforts to bring the marketing research profession meaningful educational offerings cannot be undervalued.

Unlike your search on the Internet, if you flip through the MRA's Education Central page or any of the other deliverables produced by this group (and approved by this Board of experts) you will get results you can actually use. The search is over folks; MRA is **the** place for quality education.

Remember, if you have a presentation you think might be suitable for a webinar or conference, we strongly encourage you to contact a member of the Education Work Group.

Note: If you're interested in working with MRA's Education Work Group, please contact Marisa Pope, Work Group Chair, at mpope@jacksonassociates.com.

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Social Networking:

Interactive Marketing Lets Researchers Reach Consumers Where They Are

By Bruce Mendelsohn, Director of Communications, MRA



Right now, somewhere on the Internet, someone is talking about you or your company. Maybe they're blogging about the great service your company provides... Or they're e-mailing their friends, asking about your product or service... Or—more likely—they're updating their personal page on MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, Bebo, Friendster, Twitter, Ning, Xanga, Second Life, or another social networking site.

If you don't know what your current and potential customers are saying about you, your company and your products or services, you're not aware of the power of social networking and its increasingly prominent role in interactive marketing.

If you still think social networking is a fad, think again. After all, if social networking is sufficiently valuable to the CIA (whose Facebook page has more than 2,500 friends), you cannot overlook its value to market research.

For many market researchers doing interactive marketing in social networking venues, the question is less about outcome and more about process.

Mary Ellen Gordon, PhD, President of Market Truths Limited (www.markettruths.com) states unequivocally that social networking is going to have a "huge impact" on market research and market researchers. Dr. Gordon

(Continued on page 28)

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Before You Start Your Own Business...

(Continued from page 6)

Make sure you really like your name – which reflects where your business is going, not just where it is.

2. Determine the Type of Entity You Will Create

Your four main choices are:

- ☐ Sole proprietorship
- ☐ LLC (limited liability company)
- ☐ S corporation
- ☐ C corporation

Each comes with specific advantages, drawbacks – and associated costs. Pick the entity that offers the most flexibility for your particular situation. For example, consider whether you need to protect personal assets, make expenses fully deductible, limit tax responsibilities when you sell your business or allocate profit and losses proportionately among partners.

For various reasons I often recommend

a C corporation even when conventional wisdom suggests another structure.

You and your CPA must keep an open mind and explore all the options. You cannot arbitrarily select an entity type.

3. Invest in Insurance

Going into business introduces a whole range of risks and potential liabilities that you do not have as an individual. In addition to insuring your business' property, make sure that the products and services you sell are fully insured.

There is a whole range of insurance products that cover "malpractice" in just about any industry. Remember, insurance isn't only an expense; it's an investment in protecting your family. Disability is a particularly valuable coverage to obtain because it could supplement the small income you would receive from the state-run

(Continued on page 49)

Help Protect Your Business, Careers, OUR Profession

(Continued from page 11)

Yet the number of members shows only modest participation. Why? Let me shatter the myths or illusions that some have.


- As stated earlier, only the use of polling stops research from being lumped in with other items that the general public finds annoying.
- Qualitative research is just as subject to regulation as quantitative.
- Large companies feel that if something big pops up, they will throw their corporate lawyers at it. Wrong! By then it is too late and expensive. If you are on the Honomichi 50 list or of this size, ask your legal council to look at CMOR. They will tell you it is the best and most affordable prevention you can purchase to protect your business.
- "I am not a corporate decision maker." Wrong! Take this article to your higher ups. No one wants their company to be pulled out from under them because of legal or regulatory changes.
- "I am an End User and my 'C' level people don't care." Wrong! They are in their positions because they make good decisions. They make those decisions based upon the best available information. As the profession is threatened, so is their base information source. Your department can provide information on consumer trends, market


changes, pricing, packaging, competitor offerings and a wealth of other areas that make it easier to make decisions.

In my entire career, this is the first time I've had to write an article to try and inspire a profession's members to protect themselves.

I have to say that it might be the segmentation mentality that is causing the issue. We do not need 14 associations to represent the industry. I completely understand as researchers the desire to segment, but when attempting to represent a profession there is no need for such segmentation. Everyone large to small from every area of the profession can have a voice at MRA. We continually create subgroups to address their individual needs.

Finally, at the risk of upsetting many of you, I have to say that while I love the research profession, many of you do not care enough about it to protect it.

Join CMOR and support their efforts, if you are an educator, work on applying science to online research to improve it and when you hear someone attacking polls talk about the proper use of them. Protect your businesses and careers! Protect OUR profession! 

To respond to this article, e-mail Lawrence Brownell at executivecolumn@mra-net.org. 

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Future Success Will Come to Market Researchers Who Honor Our Past

By Kathryn Blackburn, Irwin Research

Market research isn't going away. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that employment of market and survey researchers is projected to grow 20 percent from 2006 to 2016, faster than the average for all occupations.

As companies seek to expand their market and as consumers become better informed, the need for marketing professionals will increase. In addition,

globalization of the marketplace creates a need for more market and survey researchers to analyze foreign markets and competition.

In this article, Kathryn Blackburn posits that future profits will come to the forward-thinking researchers who incorporate past successes in future endeavors.

(Continued on page 30)





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(Continued from page 21)

should know: hers is one of the few companies conducting market research in social networking venues like Second Life (www.secondlife.com).

Because interactions online between researchers and consumers are highly informal, says Dr. Gordon, “we have to find a way to synthesize that information and aggregate it so that it doesn’t totally overwhelm the decision makers. We have to present the information coherently.

“From a marketing perspective,” she adds, “researchers may have to relinquish some of the control we’ve traditionally had over the data collection process. Consumers will have more ways to give information and we have to respond to their demands.”

When it comes to “more ways to give information,” consider these numbers:

- Worldwide (see chart, page 29), there are almost 400 million personal profile pages on the top four social networking Web sites (Source: InfoJuice)
- With 184.1 million active member profiles, MySpace is the largest social networking site. Over the past 12 months, MySpace grew at a

rate of about 157 member profiles every minute totaling about 82.7 million new profiles; this translates to 81.5% year over year growth. (Source: Pipl)

- Advertisers are avidly experimenting on niche social networks. In 2008, they are expected to spend \$1.6 billion (a 69% increase over the \$920 million they spent in 2007. (Source: eMarketer, *Social Network Marketing: Ad Spending and Usage*)

As defined in 1954 by J.A. Barnes, the term “social network” refers to how individuals or organizations are connected through various social familiarities ranging from casual acquaintance to close familial bonds. According to Wikipedia, social networks connect people at low cost – which can possibly benefit market researchers who are always eager to expand their contact base.

(Ed. Note: For a discussion of the impact social marketing may have on market research, please see the extended Alert! article at MRA’s Web site – www.mra-net.org. You’ll also discover there a partial list of social networking sites that will help you build your own online community quickly and economically.)

Since market researchers operate globally, social networks can make it easier to communicate with contacts around the world.

For researchers, though, that degree of accessibility is one of the many challenges of conducting research on social networking sites, says Colleen Moore Mezler, PRC, President of Moore Research Services, Inc. (www.moore-research.com). Mezler’s clients are increasingly utilizing venues like Second Life but “with a little bit of reservation.”

Although potential research respondents are accessible 24-7-365, she says, “the language barriers or just getting people who have the same technology in a room together so they can interact,” is often problematic.

While social networking presents intriguing possibilities for interactive marketing and the nascent interactive marketers, the operative word for using social media is “experiment.”

A worldwide McKinsey poll of B2B and B2C marketers found they were unsure how emerging vehicles such as blogs, social networks, virtual worlds and wikis may actually influence potential customers.

That lack of certainty, however, has not prevented many businesses from dedicating resources to leveraging “emerging digital-marketing tactics.” In 2007, 18% of the 816 respondents in a Forrester Research – American Business Media study had advertised in virtual worlds and 24% sponsored a blog or wiki for their customers.

About one-quarter of B2B marketers surveyed have tried a viral or participatory ad campaign, and 29% sponsored an online community or discussion site.


In spite of the growth and potential of social networking, some business analysts continue to urge caution.

One ‘Proceed with Caution’ sign comes from the ‘newness’ of social marketing: Because social marketing is still maturing, very little historical data exists upon which to base marketing decisions.

Moreover, the laws concerning protection of sensitive intellectual property and personal data are also evolving. These cautionary measures prompted Gartner to suggest – much to the chagrin of breathless social marketing proponents – that the hype around social networking doesn’t necessarily mean it’s a sufficiently mature technology to make it a critical business requirement.

There is also little evidence, the report continues, that social networking will be as beneficial for businesses as other Web-based communications technology, such as instant messaging.


The value of social-networking technology, concludes the Gartner report, comes from the

content rather than the product. Gartner analysts recommend that marketing and IT professionals plan their platforms very carefully before committing to expensive “social-networking white elephants.” 

Social Networking Is Worldwide
Size & Growth (through December 2007)

| | Profiles | 12 Month’s Growth | |
|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| Hi5 | 98.9m | 36.3m | 51.6% |
| Facebook | 50.1m | n/a | n/a |
| Friendster | 50.9m | 19.6m | 62.5% |
| MySpace | 184.1m | 82.7m | 81.5% |


Source: Pipl

Bruce Mendelsohn is the Director of Communications at MRA. He can be reached a bruce.mendelsohn@mra-net.org. 

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Market Research Has Come A Long Way

(Continued from page 24)

Writing this article transports me to the earliest days of market research. I think back to the days when I knocked on doors. Have you been in this profession long enough to remember those days? How blind I was to what I was doing.

Thirty years ago we went door-to-door leaving products. It was my first job in the research business and I didn't really know why I was sent out to give people instant grits (we are in the south you know) or offer them cash to eat something they couldn't identify.

For those of you who never went door-to-door I can assure you it was a memorable experience.

You're briefed at the office, you pack your car and head out to the specified starting point given to you by your supervisor. You are to go to the third house on the left side of the street, you know, the one with the No Trespassing sign on the gate or my favorite, the BEWARE OF DOG sign. No cell phones back then, so you couldn't call your boss for guidance...

Inevitably you trusted your instincts and moved on to the next house. There a nice woman

answered the door. After asking her myriad qualifying questions she didn't understand, you left her this mysterious product she consented to eat.

Once you reached your quota for the day you returned, exhausted, to your car (in the south you can get a full tan doing door-to-door) – but very pleased with yourself for completing the project.

Finished? Not quite. You still had to return in 10 days to do the 45 minute questionnaire, collect the diary – that is, assuming the kids didn't color in it or spill cereal on it – and retrieve leftover product.

It was a mystery, it was a trust, it was a blind adventure, and it was asking for their confidence. I asked myself, why don't they just sell this stuff at the grocery store? After a few years we moved on to malls, setting up card tables and opening our ice chests. We even rented spaces from local churches or VFW halls. Today we are in offices with waiting rooms and modern test kitchens.

How did we get to where we are now? One thing is certain: we needed people's trust and cooperation because we were asking them to do something that was then unknown.

“For those of you who never went door to door I can assure you it was a memorable experience.”

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The field of market research was new; many people did not realize that items are tested before they are placed on grocery store shelves... because companies want to know that a market exists for their products.

Most MR professionals are familiar with the mall experience because it remains a popular way to test foods and products.

“Evolving” from a door-to-door interviewer to a mall interviewer made me feel as if I had advanced in the world. Basking in air conditioned comfort, clipboard attached to my arm, I approached people as they strolled along. Easy, that is, until they saw me and not-so-subtly told their partner to move to the other side of the mall to “avoid that woman with the clipboard.” I’m sure many of you remember the little competitions to see who had the most completes at the end of the day!

Nowadays we have our own air conditioned spaces with high-tech test kitchens, sophisticated telephone banks, immediate-response computers and all the tools critical to modern market

researchers.

Instead of knocking door-to-door, interviewers recruit on the phone. Successful telephone recruiters have a professional and friendly approach – they make the people with whom they’re speaking feel important and needed. Trust re-enters the picture: ‘Recruitees’ must trust the invitation is genuine; recruiters must trust that their people will show up at the right place at the right time.

On the client side, taste tests have created some difficult situations for market researchers: Products must arrive on time and be in perfect condition. The count must be right, the date must be correct and the UPC code must match.

We all have horror stories about when things go wrong: Here’s one I’ll never forget. The product arrived on schedule but it was short some items. The client was on site and insisted the product was there (of course, the client is always right).

(Continued on page 46)

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Meet Paul Kirch

He Found a Career (and Love) in the MR Profession



1.) Tell us about what you do.

I work for Common Knowledge Research Services as Vice President, Business Development. Though our firm is best known for its Your2Cents Online Panel, we're actually celebrating our 20th anniversary. Therefore, we have experience and background outside of online research. In fact, that is one of the reasons I was drawn to Common Knowledge. My expertise is Internet-based research, but working for a firm with a diverse background like ours is invaluable. I joined the firm in August of 2007. In my role, I am responsible for managing and developing our firm's sales force. Essentially, my role is to provide leadership, direction and training to our existing sales team and any new hires. I'm fortunate that I have had good mentors who have provided me guidance in the past, many of whom I met through MRA.

2.) How long have you been in the industry?

I have been working in marketing research for nearly 18 years.

3.) What made you choose this field?

In November of 1990, I started working as a telephone interviewer at The Gallup Organization's call center in Lincoln, Nebraska. I was a student at the University of Nebraska and heard about the job through a friend. Though I only worked as an interviewer for two years, I ended up spending 11 years working for Gallup, where I learned a great deal about our profession by serving in various operations roles (Spec-writing, Project Management, Technical Consulting, etc...). It wasn't until 2001 that I moved into Business Development (Sales), where I have been ever since.

My passion for sales came from watching my uncle in action when I was just a teenager. He was a very successful businessman who was probably the most naturally gifted sales person I have ever known. He passed away in 2003, but I am grateful for all I learned from him. In addition, I was also fortunate to have worked under a great sales leader in our profession, whom I still consider a mentor.

Why did I choose marketing research? That is a harder question to answer. I don't really believe I chose this industry, instead, I believe it chose me. Before joining Gallup, I knew nothing about marketing or opinion research. Over time, however, I have learned to love this profession and feel that it has been a great fit for me. I owe a great deal to this profession and the people whom I have met along the way.

4.) What is your favorite part about being a member of MRA?

MRA has provided me so many opportunities and blessings that I have a hard time pointing out one 'favorite.' I first became involved in 2001 as a member and a volunteer. Since then, I have served on national committees, chapter boards and have attended various industry events at all levels. Currently, I am the President-Elect for the NorthWest Chapter of the MRA. Through my involvement, I have been able to provide exposure for my company

and give something back to this profession that has treated me very well.

Though I have tried to not view my involvement as 'self serving,' it has provided me recognition, career opportunities and many great networking contacts and friendships. In fact, if I had to narrow it down to one favorite, I would say that meeting my wife, Stacey, stands out above all else.

5.) Tell us a little about your MRA conference romance.

As I mentioned, it was through MRA that I met my wife. During the 2004 MRA Fall Conference in San Diego we first talked. I was a session volunteer and Stacey was there with her boss, who was presenting during this session. I ran into her several times during the event and enjoyed talking with her, but didn't expect that this would be the woman whom I would marry. Over the next couple of years, I saw Stacey at various industry events and we always said hello or briefly talked.

At that point, I can't say there was even remotely a connection between us. In fact, there

were times that we both probably disliked each other. That all changed during the MRA's SW, So-Cal, and No-Cal / Pac NW Joint Chapter event in Las Vegas during 2006. This was the first time we really had an opportunity to get to know each other.

It was there that we developed a deep friendship, which continued to grow. There was a real connection that had not been present before. At the time, she was living in Dallas and I was living in Seattle. It was not exactly the roadmap to the perfect relationship. Still, we stayed in touch after the event. Neither of us had any real expectations for a long-term relationship, but we enjoyed getting to know each other.

Though I am skipping over a lot of the story, we were provided a little gift from fate. I was offered an opportunity to work for a firm located in Dallas. It seemed like a good career move, so I accepted the position. I didn't move here because of Stacey, but

(Continued on page 36)

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Market Research Manager - CVS Caremark, RI Manage the attitudinal Market Research process, including bidding projects, vendor selections, and project design, implementation and execution. For more

information, please visit our website: **www.cvs.com/careers**, Requisition # SSC1840 Interested candidates should create a profile and apply online.

Sr. Director of Survey Executives

SurveyExecutives is a fast-growing market research company that specializes in gathering the knowledge and opinions of top business executives. The Sr. Director leads strategic planning and sales for the company. These activities include business development, conducting competitive intelligence, developing strategic marketing plans, and developing new products. Please email resume to **Melynda@vcsouth.com** if interested and for more information.

Product Marketing Strategist

Your responsibilities span product introduction to sustaining marketing worldwide: 1. Develop simple, compelling, relevant, differentiated, fact based content and customer ready messaging/positioning at a product and portfolio level. 2. Ensure content and messaging is "pulled through" internally and externally on schedule. You will work collaboratively with extended team members worldwide, driving both consensus and decisive action across MARCOM, PR/AR, sales enablement, and channel. Qualifications: •Deep knowledge in the commercial technology market, including knowledge of products, technologies, customer pain points, and market trends. •Education: MBA preferred. •Experience: 10+ years of professional experience preferably in Marketing, 3-5 years people management experience Qualified candidates should apply to **www.dell.com/careers** Requisition Number: 07000K9H

Research Associate, Research Analyst, Senior Research Analyst, and Research Manager Positions Available

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Interbrand (www.interbrand.com) is the leading brand consultancy and authors of the annual ranking of "The Best Global Brands," published by *BusinessWeek*. We combine the rigorous strategy and analysis of a management consulting practice with the entrepreneurial and creative spirit of branding and design. The successful candidate will be a creative

problem solver, designing and executing research which yields perceptive insights. Interbrand prides itself on using methodology – both conventional and not – to make an impact on our client's business. Typical projects might include both qualitative (focus groups, ethnography, one-on-one interviews, etc.) and quantitative (conjoint, discrete choice, max-diff scaling, latent class analysis, agent-based modelling, etc) research and analytical techniques. Requires a Bachelors degree and ten or more years of research experience in a multi-client environment, with experience leading teams to deliver qualitative and quantitative research projects. For consideration, you must submit a cover letter, resume (in Word or PDF format) and salary requirements to **resumes@interbrand.com**. EEO M/F/D/V

Research Manager - Loyalty

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Sr. Project Leader – Custom Research

This person will have two core responsibilities: 1) leading the development, coordination, and delivery of project based Custom Research opportunities and 2) supporting marketing and business development activities for Arbitron in general. To be considered we are looking for individuals with the following: • 7+ years project management experience and/or combination of new product development, marketing or media research • Proven experience with developing and managing information oriented products/services • Demonstrated knowledge of media and marketing research To learn more and apply for this opportunity please go to www.arbitron.com or e-mail your resume to **opsjobs@arbitron.com** Attn: Project Leader – Custom Research MRA

(Continued on page 37)

Paul Kirch Finds Love At MRA Conference

(Continued from page 33)



Paul Kirch and Stacey Weber at their wedding in Italy.

Photo Courtesy of Paul Kirch

knowing that she was here made the move easier. I still never expected things to work out as they have.


I started my new job in Texas on July 10th, 2006. Exactly 1 year and 2 months later (September 10, 2007), we were married in Positano, Italy. As we just celebrated our first Valentine's Day as a married couple, it was great to reflect on the journey that brought us together. When I moved here, neither of us what to expect or knew what direction our friendship would go. It's amazing how things have turned out and we both owe a great deal of thanks to the Marketing Research Association for helping make it possible.


6.) What is the best thing about having your spouse in the same industry as you?

To this day, my parents and family don't really understand what I do for a living. My mother still thinks I'm "in marketing." As often as I have tried to explain it, they just don't truly understand. I think this is true for many who are outside of our profession. I'd say the best part of working in the same profession with my wife is that we each understand what the other one does for a living. We understand

the long hours, travel and sacrifices that come with working in MR. Since we're both very career focused, it gives us a common bond, which has only brought us closer together.

In fact, we not only work in the same profession, but, now, the same company! Stacey has been working at Common Knowledge for more than eight years, serving as Sr. Vice President, Operations and Account Management. Many of our friends in the profession (and outside) thought we were crazy to work together; however, it has brought us even closer. We work very hard to separate work from personal, and there is a comfort that comes from being able to talk freely about any issues related to our business.

I think we have developed an even closer relationship since we now have more in common. We know there is risk spending so much time around each other, so it's always top of mind that we find positive ways to deal with any conflict that may arise. For us, we feel this is a formula for success. It was a very difficult decision and we both took a big risk. Looking back, I'd say we made the right choice. 

If you know of an MRA member we should get to know, please contact Connie Yan at connie.yan@mra-net.org or Kristina Labrecque at kristina.labrecque@mra-net.org. 

(Continued from page 35)

Market Research Analyst

The National Association of College & University Food Services seeks a market research analyst for its headquarters staff. The analyst will identify the research and information needs of members; prepare RFPs for commissioned research; design and conduct independent research projects, including surveys and focus groups; write research reports and articles; scan, evaluate, and report on industry trends; serve as staff liaison to the industry research committee. Position requires an understanding of the foodservice/restaurant industry; an academic degree and/or work experience in market research, data analysis, and survey methodology. Strong writing, editing, and computer skills required. Benefit package included. Salary negotiable. Please send cover letter and resume to: dshue@nacufs.org, or fax to 517/332-8144.

Senior Executive, Research/Polling

Qorvis Communications, one of the largest and fastest growing independent communications firms in the country, seeks a seasoned researcher/polling professional to manage and lead its in-house research/polling capabilities. As one of the key senior executives within the company, the individual will have valued strategic input into management of the organization. The ideal candidate will have more than 10 years of proven experience managing large-scale quantitative and qualitative research projects, leading teams and driving new research opportunities among existing and prospective clients. Successful candidates will thrive in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment where talent is recognized and rewarded. This position is located

in downtown Washington, DC, and it requires: • 10+ years experience in research and public affairs polling. • Excellent leadership skills with proven ability to grow business. • Broad management experience mentoring and managing staff. • Exceptional communication and client service skills. • Strong background designing research plans with a mix of research methodologies. • Team-oriented, hands-on approach with demonstrated ability to work on multiple client projects simultaneously. Thanks to our standard of excellence and unique approach to communications, Qorvis has become the destination agency for both talented personnel and clients. We do not have departments, practice areas or silos; we have eliminated bureaucracy and timesheets; and we have a flat organization with highly talented and results-oriented professionals. In addition, we reward success. Every employee is eligible for a bonus, which is based on individual and company performance. We offer individual career coaching, a professional development program, an outstanding personal leave and benefits package—including a generous 401(k) matching program—and parking/Metro benefits. Submit resume to: opportunities@qorvis.com or mail to attn: **HR Department at Qorvis Communications, 1201 Connecticut Ave, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036.**

To view more or place job listings please visit:
<http://www.mra-net.org/media/onlineclass.cfm>

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— Tapabi Chatterjee, NIELSEN, INDIA

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Alert!

IMRO Introduces iJOR

iJOR is a major platform for IMRO whose aim is to preserve and protect interactive marketing research as a viable information collection tool well into the future. Researchers can use iJOR to share information about practices and methodologies which produce accurate marketing insights and those which are ineffective. iJOR can help researchers understand the proper and ethical use of interactive research.

We hope that market researchers will submit their findings and insights to peer review in iJOR to permit us to build upon one another's work and continue to move the industry forward.

IMRO Board member Steve August, KDA Research, answers questions about iJOR.

transfer of knowledge between professionals in academia and the profession.

1.) What is iJOR? Why is it important?

The Interactive Marketing Research Organization's Journal of Online Research is an online publication devoted to publishing research papers, insightful information and thought-provoking commentary on topics of quantitative and qualitative online market research. iJOR is published solely in electronic, Web-based format.

3.) Why should your peers contribute to/and read iJOR?

Researchers should read iJOR to stay up to date on the latest practices, advances and thinking regarding online research.

2.) How does iJOR benefit the industry?

iJOR is a forum in which the online research industry may exchange ideas and best practices. It's a living archive of documented findings stemming from the professional study of research in online, interactive and computer-mediated environments. It also seeks to promote

4.) Where do you see iJOR in the next year?

iJOR will be published three times and will become respected as an interactive forum for practice and commentary in online research.

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Global Market
Research Services

Ford Campaign Removes 'Market Research' Reference

By Patrick Glaser, Director of Respondent Cooperation, CMOR

Several months ago, the Ford Motor Company began an advertising campaign entitled "Swap Your Ride" which included asking individuals to try driving a Ford vehicle and told them it was for "market research." These advertisements are still available on several video sharing Web sites, such as YouTube.

There is no way to know if Ford was actually attempting to conduct market research, but to many people in the research community, the advertisement was suggestive in indicating

"The YOC program aims to boost response rates for the individual organization."

that Ford was selling (or marketing) their cars under the guise of research.

Campaign Troubles CMOR, Research Profession

What is known about the "Swap Your Ride" campaign does not suggest that Ford was engaging in 'sugging' (selling under the guise of research). However, the manner in which the advertisement was positioned led many within the opinion research profession to worry that the public would interpret the

CMOR Shielding the Profession

advertisement as a case of research being used to sell products.

This concern, coupled with Ford's status as a major corporation amplified the alarm over the campaign – if Ford is perceived as a 'sugger,' why should the public believe this is not a common and accepted practice? This is a particular concern given declining respondent cooperation in recent years. Researchers struggle to boost participation to help ensure the validity of research results.

Moreover, CMOR has identified (through the Research Profession Image Study [Image Study]) that a substantial portion of the public refuses to participate in research due to the disbelief in the motives of researchers and fears of being confronted with sales pitches. For example, about half of respondents (45%) participating in the national Image Study refused to participate in a survey during the previous 12 months because they believed the survey to be part of a sales pitch.

Resolution

CMOR contacted Ford's Board of Directors over concerns that these advertisements might further erode the public's confidence in opinion research. In turn, Ford responded that the reference to "market research" was removed from their "Swap Your Ride" advertising campaign – a decision that bodes well for the survey research profession.

The survey research profession quickly recognized and responded to a potential problem area that might have adversely

affected the viability of research over time. Given energy and enthusiasm, the profession has the ability to tackle these types of tough problems. The key is to get involved! Aside from respondent cooperation issues, there are a host of looming legislative threats on the horizon – particularly on the state level.

Get Involved!

Join a CMOR committee or the CMOR State Capitol Legislative Network. CMOR offers a variety of volunteer opportunities, many of which require only a modest time commitment. For more information, contact Patrick Glaser at pglaser@cmor.org. 

Patrick Glaser is the Director of Respondent Cooperation, CMOR. He may be reached at pglaser@cmor.org. 

CMOR is the only industry association actively performing the duties of watch dog on federal and senate issues. CMOR's offices are based in Washington, D.C.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this message is for guidance and informational purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice. CMOR advises all parties to consult with private legal counsel regarding the interpretation and application of any laws to your business.



Marketing and Sales Operations
Tel: 313-206-4341
Fax: 313-540-9550
E-mail: bengle1@ford.com

Ford Motor Company
10N 422
16800 Executive Plaza Drive
Dearborn, Michigan 48126

January 11, 2008

Patrick Glaser
Director of Respondent Cooperation
CMOR
110 National Drive, 2nd Floor
Glastonbury, CT 06033

Re: "Swap Your Ride"

Dear Mr. Glaser:

Thank you for your letter of December 5, 2007 to Ford Motor Company's Board of Directors and for sharing with Ford your concerns. While Ford does not agree with the assertions in your letter, please be advised that our current Swap Your Ride advertising no longer references "market research."

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Barry L. Engle
General Manager
Ford Division Marketing

Attendees Speak Out About MRA's First CEO Summit

By Karyn Picchiotti, Conference Correspondent, *Alert!* Magazine



The CEO Summit was held at the Sanibel Hotel & Resort in Ft. Myers, Florida, February 12-13. It was designed by MRA to provide a learning environment that would inspire participants and give them solutions and relationships that foster professional achievement.

The conference offered a diverse mix of speakers as well as varied “think-tank” discussions that allowed attendees to make the most of the wisdom and expertise of their industry peers.

As Correspondent for *Alert!*, I spoke with several attendees and got their feedback on MRA's first ever, CEO Summit. Not surprisingly, the responses were very positive with a few helpful tips for the future.

Yvonne Campos, President Campos, Inc.

What did you look forward to the most?
I wanted to be at a conference that targeted the needs of CEO's and people that run their own business.

Is this your first conference? *No*

How many conferences do you attend each year?
Usually one that is industry related and maybe four others.

Do you see familiar faces or a sea of new friends?
Both, which is nice. I like the opportunity to see old friends. I recognize names more than faces. It's nice to finally meet face-to-face.

What do you think of the education offered at this conference?
It's very good. I like the concept of bringing CEOs together to learn about the business of research rather than the practicum of research. I think the incubator sessions have more potential. While some of the speakers were very good, there was one that I didn't find helpful. I really enjoyed Sanford Schwartz's model for growth.

What would you like to see more of at future

conferences?
The emphasis on how to grow your business as well as be a good business leader.

What is your favorite part of any conference?
Seeing/meeting people and mostly learning practical, useful tools that I can implement right away.



Mike Frank, Ebony Kirkland and Dave Caperton



MRA President, Colleen Moore-Mezler and Jim Bryson

Ted Watson, COO/Co-Owner Baltimore Research

What are you looking forward to the most?
Networking with other CEOs

Is this your first conference?
My first CEO conference and first conference in 2008

How many conferences do you attend each year?
Eight

Do you see familiar faces or a sea of new friends?
I knew about 50% of the attendees. I enjoyed meeting new friends that are MRA members.

What do you think of the education offered at this conference?
I thought it was fine; however, I would like to see more thought-provoking discussion in the future.

Anne Tancredi Brown, President Gazelle Global Research Services, LLC

What are you looking forward to the most?
Insights on expansion, how to run a business, how people deal with problems in our industry and WARM WEATHER!

Is this your first conference? *No*

How many conferences do you attend each year?
At least three industry-related conferences a year.

Do you see familiar faces or a sea of new friends?
Well both, but a lot of new people which I'm enjoying, it's really nice.

What do you think of the education offered at this conference?
Incubator sessions were interesting and we can build on them for the next conference.



Yvonne Campos and Merrill Shugoll

What would you like to see more of at future conferences?
I would like to see this conference held annually and at resorts different from the typical convention cities. I felt most of the speakers were interesting. Although some missed the mark with regard to our industry problems.

What is your favorite part of any conference?
I enjoyed getting to know the MRA members during the social/networking activities.



Sue McAdams, Karyn Picchiotti and Ted Watson

What would you like to see more of at future conferences?
People who can share real tools that can help us day-to-day. Tools to help us run our businesses, especially that can help us with the struggles we have with HR. More meaty information.

What is your favorite part of any conference?
Learning something new, new tools I can use.

(Continued on page 48)

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The Past, Present And Future Of Market Research

(Continued from page 31)

During our prep, we'd thrown the empty coolers in the dumpster. The client was so certain that we'd thrown away his product that I climbed in the dumpster and pulled out the empty coolers to prove him we hadn't. I then went home to change my clothes.

That wasn't the last time I dumpster dove: Another time I retrieved a batch of questionnaires that was thrown away by mistake.

We all agree that the MR industry is fascinating – and vital. Our challenge, as MRA President Colleen Moore-Mezler said in the January 2008 issue of *Alert!*, is to educate people about our industry. It is our first and most important step. People continue to be leery of us so we must help them to understand why our activities are so important.

Futurecasting: Factors that Will Influence Future Research

We've reached many milestones in the past 30 years. Where we will be in thirty years? What new technologies will we deploy? What trends will influence our processes?

There will doubtlessly be many changes and new ways of testing but our fundamentals will endure: successful market research will still require a blind test; we'll still need consumers' trust and their confidence in us as professional market researchers.

As we consider the uncertain future, we should futurecast: what type of research will we do in 30 years? How can we prepare today to produce meaningful and reliable research businesses will need in the future?

The costs of research have increased due to many factors – beginning with incentives. The \$25 incentive for an hour interview no longer exists. The consumer gives us his or her time; we must make it worth their while to help us complete our study.

Market researchers would also be wise to digest the fact that consumers are increasingly health conscious. Organic and low calorie foods are on the rise. Quick dishes are a must because



everyone is in a hurry – we need instant foods, easier packaging, more frozen foods. Changing diets, changing schedules, and the food we buy are forcing researchers to change research

methods.

Technology is also forcing market researchers to modernize: most companies have moved from paper and pencil questionnaires


to computers and online surveying. As a result, market researchers are increasingly aware of privacy laws and considerations (*Ed. Note: CMOR offers many resources to help market researchers*


remain current with privacy matters – visit www.cmor.org for more information).

Not only will we have to invest every several years in new technology to replace obsolete technology, we'll also need to make sure our facilities remain modern. In my budget, I'm always planning for new refrigerators, freezers, microwaves, stoves – the basics we'll need to stay on the cutting edge of kitchen equipment.

Finally, there is the ongoing need to keep the quality of our research high and our costs low. To do so, we will need to hire, train, retain and compensate skilled interviewers.

These days, my company is looking for a larger space. We're looking for a location that is convenient for both consumer and client travel. We need more storage space and more room to accommodate anticipated growth. We must plan for different types of equipment. To be cost effective, we're planning to serve larger groups. We are in the planning stages of a comprehensive new interviewer training program.

Even as we're excited about the future, we're always mindful of the past. 

Kathryn Blackburn is the President of Irwin Research. She can be reached at kblackburn@irwin-jx.com. 

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MRA's CEO Summit Re-Cap

(Continued from page 43)



Karyn Picchiotti, Stacey Zantini and Tim Sauer

**Jerry Haselmayer, Co-President
Seek**

What are you looking forward to the most?
Networking and learning from other CEOs

Is this your first conference? *No*

How many conferences do you attend each year?
Four or five. I would have to say the CEO Summit was at the top of my list because we could interact and discuss challenges/solutions together.

Do you see familiar faces or a sea of new friends?
Not many familiar faces. I'm pretty new to MRA.

What would you like to see more of at future conferences? *Same format.*

What is your favorite part of any conference?
Roundtable discussion

Karyn Picchiotti, PRC is the President of Fieldwork Chicago-Schaumburg, Inc. She can be reached at karynp@schaumburg.fieldwork.com.

Before You Set Up, Many Things To Consider

(Continued from page 22)

worker's compensation program in case you are injured or suffer from a serious illness.

Ask your CPA to refer you to a good insurance broker who will take the time to help you assess risks and secure the coverage you need.

4. Bookkeeping

Businesses need to keep far more thorough records than individuals. Bookkeeping is often an after-thought, but it is one of the most important systems you can put into place. Several computer-based systems are available that you can implement with minimal effort and expense. Many business owners decide to outsource this function, and most CPAs can take it on for you.

Your CPA will also help you decide whether to keep track of your income and expenses on a cash or accrual basis. Businesses that have outlays for inventory and generally have a lot of receivables tend to do better with an accrual system. The IRS also requires certain businesses to keep financial records on an accrual basis.

I strongly recommend that you consult your CPA about bookkeeping at the very early stages of your business.

5. Cash Flow

As an employee you have become accustomed to drawing a regular salary. As the owner of a new business, you probably won't be able to draw one for the first three months or so. The cash flow of any new entity is very slow. You and your CPA should work on a cash flow projection for the next six months. You should also make sure you have a cushion to cover expenses for a few months.

Plan ahead to avoid unpleasant surprises later.

6. Employee Expenses

While salaries constitute the biggest expense related to employees, two other categories can quickly add up. Fringe benefits and similar expenses add at least 15% of each employee's salary. Various government requirements – such as FICA, worker's comp and disability – add more.

Take full account of potential expenses related to employees before you hire them.

7. Other Money Matters

There is a whole range of other money matters you must consider:


- What should be paid from where
- Separate credit cards for personal and business uses


- What bank you use
- Creating a relationship with the bank's manager (who can often approve credit on the spot)
- Actual cost to acquire and build out your space

Take time to enumerate everything you might need to make your business run smoothly.

The Bottom Line

Your CPA's job is to help you dig into things

and build in flexibility. He or she has experience identifying potential issues before they arise. Start conferring with him or her as soon as you think about starting a business; it will save you time, trouble and money along the line. 

Alan R. Adelman is a CPA. He can be reached at www.akmcpa.com. 



THE BUZZ

Profession News/Announcements

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For more information on improving **respondent cooperation** and protecting the research profession, visit www.youropinioncounts.org.

eRewards has recently named **Craig Stevens** as Executive Vice President of Sales. **Kurt Knapton** has transitioned into the role of a founding member of the company's Board of Advisors.

National Data Questing has changed ownership and its name to **Thoroughbred Research**.

Gazelle Globalization Group (g3) hired **Alexander Veidt** as a translation project manager specializing in European and Asian languages.

Sample Czar has created **Translation Czar**, which will translate online surveys into 50 different languages.

M/A/R/C® Research has promoted **Gwen Amador, Lisa Smith, Jonathan Hook, and Dr. Frank Wyman** to Vice President.

Beth Mirzai, Head of Translation Services at **CETRA, Inc.**, achieved Certification in SDL TRADOS, one of the leading software programs in global information management.

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