

MAY 2008
VOL. 46 NO. 5



Alert!

MAGAZINE

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46 The Buzz

News/Announcements



Letter From The Editor

It was a lazy July afternoon and I was soaking up the sun at Scargo Beach in Cape Cod, Mass.

Just as I figured it was time to turn over to get some sun on my other side, my phone rang. It was Tasha Jackson with the MRA. She was calling because she had received my resume for the Publications Editor position to which I had applied.

After a few minutes of discussing the position and my previous experience in publishing she asked me to come in for an interview. I was ecstatic; the job sounded perfect for me.

After reading Colleen Moore-Mezler's column (page 10) about technology she can't live without, I thought back to that sultry July afternoon and how different my life would be if I did not have a cellular phone.

I might not be here if I had not received Tasha's call.

The point is for several years now we've been free from land-line telephones, network television schedules and radio broadcasts. All of this affects what we do every day.


Almost anywhere we go we can take phone calls and send e-mail. We can digitally record television shows and only listen to our favorite songs. So what's next?


Virtual offices, for one, which Nancy Domenichelli and Lori Porte discuss in their thought provoking article on page 20. As gas prices shoot upward, many forward-

thinking businesses are more seriously considering virtual employment and eliminating the office commute altogether.

Certainly technology has changed the way we communicate and interact. It's also changed the way we consume and spend money. On page 22, Kate Alany reviews a book that explores the mindset of the "new consumer."

You'll discover more about "new consumers" and the increasing significance of technology in market research at MRA's Annual Conference, June 4-6 in New York City – at the back of this issue you'll find a special conference program guide you can use to plan your time at the conference in advance. This issue also features MRA's 2007 Annual Report – which shares with you the strides your Association took last year to advance the profession and some of our plans for 2008.

Technology will play a key role in much of the information we provide to you in 2008 and beyond: This issue underscores some of the trends of which you need to be aware. 

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



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Age: 37
Profession: Mother, Web Designer
Earnings: \$38,000, part time
Location: Park Slope, Brooklyn
Reads: Architectural Digest
Watches: Never Mind the Buzzcocks on BBC
Listens to: Garrison Keillor, every Saturday
Thinks: Her avatar's hair should be longer

Feels: Your client's brand...

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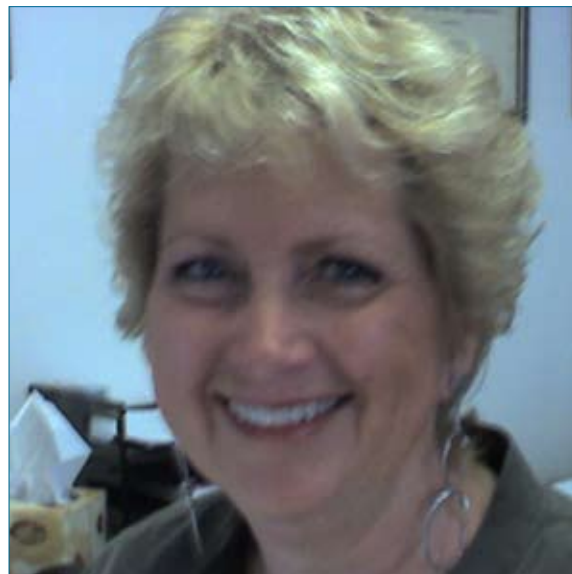
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Saying Goodbye

**Long-Time MRA Supporter
Harriett Huntley Bids Adieu**



After 20 years of loyal, dedicated service to the profession and Taylor Research, Inc. Harriett Huntley retired on March 28, 2008. In a career that spanned almost 40 years, Harriett was involved with the MRA on the national and chapter levels. She served as President 2001-2002, Director-at-Large for Membership 2005-2006 and Advisor on the board for the MRA Southern California chapter. She also served on several national committees for MRA, including the Research Forum Committee.

Alert!: How long have you been in the market research profession?

HH: Since summer 1969. I got started through a neighbor of mine – we were both housewives, and one day she asked me if I wanted to do some phone work from home, you know, to make some extra money. That's how I started – with Jean Van Arsdale of San Diego Surveys.

Alert!: Why did you choose this field of work?

HH: Like most people, I just fell into it. I was offered a chance to make some extra money and I had the time to do so. My career just took off from there!

Alert!: What is your most memorable market research milestone?

HH: When I was president of the Southern California Chapter of the MRA (2001-2002). At that point in my career this position represented reaching something I didn't think I'd be able to do. I was basically a very shy person and in that role I had to move beyond my shyness.

I've actually enjoyed a memorable milestone almost every day for the past 18 years at Taylor – and that's carpooling with my daughter (Taylor's

bookkeeper). Working with her has been a wonderful bonus.

Alert!: How did you manage to spend almost 40 years in market research and be shy?

HH: [Laughs]. Simple: Making phone calls, people couldn't see me. It was easy for me to make phone calls – when people hung up on me, I'd call the next person. Doing door-to-door for Hazel Elder Enterprises was somewhat harder for me.

One of the biggest challenges in my career was in the early 70s, when I worked for Donald Clothier and Associates. I traveled across the U.S., interviewing managers about cell phones – that was when cell phones were these huge bricks – and I asked them if they'd be interested in using cell phones. I had to fly into different cities, rent cars, find my way around – that was tough for a young and shy housewife.

Alert!: What are some of the factors that contributed to your success in this profession?

HH: I have an easygoing personality, and people have always found me easy to talk with and to talk to. I was also very fortunate to move up – my

supervisors gave me lots of chances to succeed.

Alert!: What was your favorite trade show or conference and why?

HH: My favorite was my first conference to NYC – that was in the mid 90s. I'd never seen New York so that was a great experience. I was impressed with the conference and with the attendees. I was especially excited to meet people with whom I'd only spoken on the phone.

I firmly believe that attending industry conferences is key – not just for the educational benefits, but also for the networking opportunities – that's an area where MRA really does a good job.

Alert!: What are some of the most influential changes you've seen in market research?

HH: Everything about technology has revolutionized the way market researchers work: Fax machines, the 800 number, e-mail, copy machines. I started out using a mimeograph machine, so when the Xerox copier came along that really saved me a lot of time. Nowadays with e-mail, we can start a job the same

day a customer calls.

As technology has made things easier, it's made our work more challenging because people don't wait. People want results now. Plus, the pace of work has picked up tremendously. That's one of the biggest things I've noticed.

Alert!: Name some of the most memorable people with whom you have worked.

HH: Hazel Elder was my most important mentor. She taught me the importance of being a good supervisor, how to organize and prioritize my work. (ed. note: Harriett worked for Hazel Elder Enterprises during the late 1970s and early 1980s.)

Susan Taylor offered me a chance to work for her and with her I really grew as a market researcher. I'd watch Susan work rooms at conferences and meetings and learned a lot from her about how to be a professional. Without her faith in me I wouldn't be able to retire where I am now. (ed. note: Harriett

(Continued on page 37)

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"Too Many Notes": Are There Too Many Research Associations?

By Peter Van Brunt, PRC

For those who know me, you won't be surprised when I declare my belief that there are too many research associations in the U.S. The last time I looked, there were more than 10, and I am sure I missed a few.

I tend to group the associations into two types: those that appeal to the entire profession, and those that specialize or target their appeal to a particular segment. The specialty segment, I further split into those that appeal to a particular type of research (qualitative, public opinion, etc.) and those that target a particular market (pharma, travel, insurance, etc.). For a profession which has probably fewer than 30,000 practitioners, there are far too many associations. Even if everyone belonged to a single association, it would still only be small/mid-sized. The largest of the associations (MRA) has 3,000 members, and most of the specialty associations each have only a couple hundred members.

Why do we have so many different associations? That of course is an unanswerable question. The more important question is why do we continue to support all these groups, and which ones are really contributing to the profession? I am not sure why researchers continue to support them all, but they each must be providing something that the others don't.

My next question is, why do all of these associations seem to insist on having a conference/seminar between Labor Day and Thanksgiving? Most of them seem to ignore the rest of the year.

For those of you who didn't recognize the quotation I used as the title to this article, it is attributed to 18th century Austrian Emperor Joseph II after hearing one of Mozart's operas. In the movie *Amadeus*, where this famous line is quoted, Mozart asked the emperor which ones (notes) he should cut.


My easy target among the research associations would be in the specialty segment. The very existence of all the specialty groups would seem to point to their providing an opportunity to network or learn that is not being provided by the larger general appeal associations. Couldn't these opportunities be incorporated into the larger groups through tracks/SIGs or divisions? Of course they could, and at the same time their members would have more opportunities to learn, network and grow outside their segment. All of this would make them better researchers.

I have lived in the D.C. area for enough years


to recognize the persistence of bureaucracy, and how difficult it is to remove. Extended bureaucracy is probably the chief impediment to these groups becoming part of a larger general appeal association.

"Why can't we all just get along?"

To return to Mozart, his response to the emperor's criticism went to the fact that all of his notes completed a single masterwork, and to delete a single one would be to change the entirety. That is not the situation we face with research associations. The researcher associations don't integrate into a single cohesive work, and in fact barely get along with each other. They can't even agree to support educational standards and advocacy efforts which benefit the profession as a whole. Their animosities and lack of cooperation goes back to a point I made in my opening paragraph: the small size of the profession in general. There are too many in the same feed trough, and not enough food to go around.

So what can we as researchers do? We can refuse to attend 10 conferences in an eight to nine week period in the fall; we can insist that our leaders cooperate more with other groups and work to improve the research profession instead of working to keep their groups in existence. Consider joint conferences with separate tracks, consider following IMRO's path and become a division within a larger association. I have heard plenty of reasons/excuses why this can't happen. In response I say become part of the solution, not the problem; be creative. There are ways we can create if not a masterwork at least a well integrated entity or series of entities to better our profession. 

Peter Van Brunt, PRC is a Past President of MRA and is an Honorary Lifetime Member.

About this column. This is an "Op-Ed" column for Alert! Magazine. This column is a bi-monthly feature. Please keep in mind that my remarks do NOT reflect the opinion of MRA or necessarily their authors. This column is intended to inspire comments and dialogue. Send your praises/comments/rants/objections to counterpoint@mra-net.org. 

*Select responses may be chosen for publication in Alert! Magazine.

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Technologies I Can't Live Without...

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

A couple of weeks ago, in my hometown of Erie, Pennsylvania, I experienced an ice storm that knocked out my Internet service at home. I do not know about any of you, but Internet access at home is almost as important to me as Internet access at work. I felt helpless as I was unable to remotely connect to my computer at my office and continue any work that might have been left unfinished. It caused me to pause and think, what did I do before the Internet?

Not a day goes by during which I do not use the Internet in one form or another. Could any one of us go back in time to the days before e-mail? I know I couldn't! If there is something I need to look up or if something catches my eye from a television show I am watching... I hit the Internet to explore that topic. Some of the Internet sites I visit on a regular basis include the following:

- mra-net.org
- abcnews.com
- oprah.com
- people.com
- weightwatchers.com
- grammar.quickanddirtytips.com
- travelocity.com
- mrweb.com
- idolonfox.com
- linkedin.com
- zillow.com
- weather.com

The loss of my Internet access got me thinking... What other technological advances could I not live without?

Without question, at the top of my list of technologies that I could not live without would be my SmartPhone. I was called a "Crackberry" by

many people when I had my first Blackberry, but my Samsung i760 Smartphone is even more addictive. When that sound goes off, I'm like Pavlov's dog – my heart flutters and I just have to see who e-mailed or texted me. This technological advance that gives me the freedom to move from city to city and remain in constant touch with my office and business. Oh, yes...it also allows me to keep in touch with my family. In addition, I can surf the Internet, take

pictures, play games and manage my schedule. This updated information is then synched to my desktop computer at my office so that I always have the most up-to-date contact information and schedule.

My phone is also personalized for my favorite contacts by assigning a specific ring tone and picture to each contact. For example, my husband's ring tone is our wedding song, *A Whole New World*, while my parents' ring tone is *I Am Walking On Sunshine* since they live in

Florida. How cool and fun is that?!?

What has really caught my interest is Apple's new iPhone. Unfortunately, the iPhone is not on the Verizon network, but my husband informed me that many people have hacked the iPhone to work on any carrier's network. I might have to think about that one.

My second favorite advance would have to be the DVR (Digital Video Recorder). I personally do not believe that I could ever go back to watching television the old way. I purposely will not watch one of my favorites shows the night it is on so I can watch it later and zip through the commercials. Not to mention with all the travel I've done this year, my DVR has kept me up-to-date with all of my favorites.

(Continued on page 31)



Chief Executive Column: Advancing The Research Technology Consortium's Agenda

By Lawrence Brownell, MRA's Chief Executive Officer

This issue is dedicated to technology, which could be the topic of every issue. Technology in our profession has become synonymous with "change." I cannot recall a conversation in the past five years where change in the industry hasn't been either a derivative discussion from technology or didn't directly involve technology.


Two years ago MRA recognized this relationship and began creating the Research Technology Consortium (RTC). This unique body has finished forming and is now populating. The group is comprised of research companies, technology


equivalent to open source specifications and other advancements. This is our goal. We desire to create the next generation of technology to advance the various forms of research. Those participating will be on the inside track, but the advancements will be shared with the entire profession. The first expanded meeting is scheduled for June, a day prior to our Annual Conference. If you are interested in joining this group, please e-mail me and I will put you in touch with the leaders of our effort.

There is a great sense of pride as this project takes flight. It symbolizes the next stage in MRA's evolution. Five years ago the leaders of your association decided to lead the profession and to rise above the sometimes segmented mentality that prevents the industry from advancing. In June we will begin our conference week with this great advancement. During the week we will also facilitate our now longstanding End Users forum, which provides an environment for clients to address their needs. This conference we will also conduct our third offering in 12 months for CEO/Owners of research companies to coalesce on their priorities and challenges.

All of this will occur within the larger framework of our conference, which will bring together the entire profession for networking and education. For a complete look at the Annual Conference program, please turn to the end of this magazine where you will find a handy tear-out guide.

Certification has been a key component of MRA's ongoing efforts to bring together the profession. In 10 years the individuals of our profession will be known as PRCs, giving us an identity to outsiders. This is an important step in the evolution of our profession.

So, to those who feel that one organization cannot represent the entire profession, I would have to disagree. Our leaders' vision and passion have proven this a myth. As the profession's leader, MRA will continue to work for the longterm betterment of the profession. 

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

"Five years ago the leaders of your association decided to lead the profession and to rise above the sometimes segmented mentality that prevents the industry from advancing."

providers to research companies and mainstream technology companies.

These companies come together to drive the future technology of the profession. An example of this concept is the consortium that formed in the 1980's to collaborate on one set of standards and technology specifications related to the production of compact discs.

Companies like Sony, Panasonic and Magnavox formed a non-competitive alliance. This alliance or consortium expedited the development process of the compact disc by 10 years.

Since the media consortium, many others have been formed to advance other industries or thought processes. These collaboratives create the

CMOR's Actions In Louisiana Shield Profession

By LaToya R. Lang, Esq., State Legislative Director, CMOR

Earlier this year, CMOR – aided by Jude Olinger, a new member of CMOR's national volunteer grassroots State Capitol Network – helped defeat Louisiana House Bill 58. The bill potentially threatened political survey and opinion research with residents of Louisiana.

HB 58, which would have required disclosure of a poll's sponsor at the beginning of a call, passed the State House February 18. It came up for consideration in the State Senate on Feb. 28. The prompt action of CMOR staff and Olinger helped to defeat the bill that same day.

“The challenge with legislation like this is that you have to catch it when it's in committee. Because legislators ‘copy and paste’ these bills from state to state, you have to get your language into a bill early.”

The bill's sponsor eventually passed legislation

regulating only election communications – sparing survey and opinion research any noticeable impact.

Olinger, CEO of the Olinger Group and the newest member of CMOR's volunteer grassroots State Capitol Network, played an instrumental role in helping CMOR to defeat the legislation. He drove to the State House in Baton Rouge, and there – using his contacts

CMOR *Shielding the Profession*

and information provided by CMOR's government affairs staff – personally appealed to legislators on behalf of the research profession.

Olinger's familiarity with CMOR reaches back almost a decade, to his activity in 1999 with the “Do Not Call” list.

He says, “The challenge with legislation like this is that you have to catch it when it's in committee. Because legislators ‘copy and paste’ these bills from state to state, you have to get your language into a bill early. It doesn't matter if a bill fails; what's important is that it contains the language you want. When the issue comes up again – and it will – if your language is in there, you're protected.”

As proof, Olinger points to CMOR's pre-emptive actions concerning Do Not Call legislation: even though the legislation ultimately passed, the industry was protected.

When trying to influence legislators, Olinger offers fellow State Capitol Network members this guidance:

- 1) As quickly as possible, find out about potentially negative legislation. “CMOR does a good job of keeping the industry

(Continued on page 18)

Welcome New Members!

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How Many Spanishes Do You Speak?

By Jiri Stejskal, Ph.D., CETRA, Inc.

¿Habla Usted Español? Which one? Spanish comes in many flavors, which poses a problem for marketing researchers. Is it OK to devise a single survey and distribute it to a panel in Spain and in Argentina? Do Hispanics in the United States speak the same dialect as Mexicans? My client asked for a survey in Castilian; what does it mean?

Like other Romance languages, Spanish derives from Latin. It originated in the north of today's Spain and from there it spread throughout the Kingdom of Castile and eventually to Africa, South America, North America and Asia Pacific, as the Spanish colonial rule expanded between the 15th and 19th centuries.

Today, there are more native speakers of Spanish in the world than of English, and Spanish is the main language of 21 countries. The black areas on the map below show where Spanish is spoken as a primary language. The lighter gray indicates where it is not primarily spoken, but widely spoken as a second language (courtesy of Wikipedia Commons). Spanish enclaves not shown on the map include Canary Islands and Western Sahara, and also what was called the Spanish East Indies (Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marianas, Palau and the Philippines).



For marketing research companies, the sheer number of Spanish-speaking countries poses a challenge, since each country has its own flavor and peculiarities of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and colloquialisms. Below are some tips on how to navigate this *jungla*.

Spanish or Castilian?

In Spain, people call their language *español* (Spanish) when contrasting it with other languages such as English or French, but they call it *castellano* (Castilian - the language of the Castile region) when contrasting it with other languages spoken in Spain such as Galician, Basque, or Catalan. Similar distinction is made in the Americas.

In South America, the term *castellano* is widely used to describe the language as a whole rather than a regional variation. *Castellano* can be used as a generic term with no political or ideological links, the same way the word "Spanish" is used in English. Some speakers in the Americas use it to differentiate their own variety of Spanish as opposed to the variety of Spanish spoken in Spain.

When preparing surveys for Spanish-speaking countries, marketing research companies are sometimes bewildered when they are asked to use "Castilian." Rightly so, because without context it could mean just about any variety of Spanish. The only foolproof way of figuring out what flavor of Spanish is needed is to determine what country or countries are involved.

Spanish Dialects

The regional variants of Spanish can differ to a significant degree, particularly in pronunciation and vocabulary, but also to some degree in grammar as well. Examples of Spanish dialects in Spain include *canario* (from the Canary Islands), *andaluz* (from Andalusia), and *madrileño* (from Madrid). In Latin America we can speak of an Argentinean, a *porteño* (from Buenos Aires), a Chilean, or a Colombian dialect, among many others. The main difference is

between European Spanish and Spanish spoken in Latin America, but there are also variances within each region. The good news is that all Spanish dialects use the same written standard and that they are mutually intelligible. That does not mean, however, that a single version of your Spanish document or survey will do in any of the Spanish-speaking countries.

The differences in pronunciation are important in phone surveys and it is wise to select speakers of the given region to conduct the interview. For example, the word "Madrid" is pronounced in the capital of Spain as "Madrith," whereas in the bilingual areas of the East coast, and because of the contact between Spanish and Catalan, it becomes "Madrit." In the south, however, people tend to eliminate the final consonant and say "Madri".

Another example is the different pronunciation of "y" and "ll." "Ll" can be pronounced in Spain as English "j" ("calle" = "caje"), as English "y" ("calle" = "caye") or as "ly" ("calle" = "calye"). These three variants exist in one form or another in Latin America as well, even though in most Latin American countries the predominant sound is like English "y" and there is no difference between the pronunciation of "ll" and "y."

Vocabulary is another area of differentiation between dialects. An example of word variation within the Spanish peninsula is "candle." Candle is referred to as "vela" in the northern and center parts of Spain, but as "candela" in the South. Another example is a ballpoint pen, which is "un bolígrafo" in Spain, "una birome" in Argentina, "un lapicero" in Peru and Central America, "un esfero" in Colombia, and "una pluma" in Mexico.

One of the main differences between the dialects of Spain and those of Latin America is the use of pronouns. In Spain, the informal pronoun for the second person singular (in English "you") is "tú." However, some Latin American countries, (Argentina, Uruguay or Paraguay, for example) use "vos." The plural "you" also varies: in Spain people differentiate between an informal "vosotros" and a formal "ustedes," whereas this difference does not exist in Latin America.

Spanish in the United States

There are about 50 million people in the United States whose native language is Spanish. The map adjacent shows the concentration of Spanish speakers by county (courtesy of the Modern

Language Association). Not surprisingly, the highest concentration is in Texas and California. Logically, the local variety of Spanish depends on where the Hispanic immigrants are mostly coming from. Thus the Mexican dialect is prevalent in California and Texas, whereas Cuban dialect prevails in Florida and Puerto Rican in New York City.

Spanish in the United States is not only shaped by the recent immigrants. As a matter of fact, Spanish was spoken in the areas that now make up the continental United States before English was introduced, and for centuries the two languages coexisted on equal footing. Linguists have identified a number of unique Spanish dialects within the United States, each traceable to 16th and 17th century Spain.

Other Spanish varieties in the United States (New Mexican, Arizonan, Texan, etc.) evolved independently of Spanish on the Iberian Peninsula and in Latin America and are distinctive because of their unique contact with Native American languages, with vocabulary enriched by indigenous languages, particularly in the Southwest.



Standard Spanish?

It is not always practical to localize your English text for every Spanish-speaking country you target. For example, it would be silly to localize your Web site into 20 different Spanish dialects; as a matter of fact, it would be hard to find a Web site even with two different Spanish versions. This is where standard (or neutral or common or international) Spanish comes in handy. The concept originated with the film industry, which, in an effort to

(Continued on page 42)

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CMOR Stops Harmful Legislation From Regulating Polling

(Continued from page 12)

informed," he explains.

- 2) If it appears in one place, it's going to appear elsewhere.
- 3) Get your language in whether or not the legislation passes, because it's going to come up again.

Olinger also turned Representative Neil Abramson (Democrat, District 78) into an active advocate for the profession. Rep. Abramson will be working with him and CMOR staff to introduce legislation to protect the use of automated political polls (those using Interactive Voice Response and similar systems) and to restrict persuasion calls (also known as "push polls") during Louisiana's regular session starting March 31.

"The bottom line is that this doesn't directly affect me right now, but it eventually could," concludes Olinger. "This kind of legislation could affect other people in the opinion research industry. It boils down to our pocketbooks."

How HB 58 Threatened the Research Profession

LA H.B. 58 would have required stating at the beginning of any telephone poll regarding a political candidate or proposition:

- (1) Whether or not it was paid for by a candidate or political committee (or such entity's agent); and
- (2) The name and contact info of the sponsor or candidate/committee.

It would also have required reports within 24 hours to a supervisory committee regarding payments or expenditures for such polls.

Disclosure of who paid for or commissioned a poll and their relationship to a political candidate or ballot initiative (especially at the beginning of a research call) can completely distort or bias the answers respondents provide to research questions.

In most instances, the interviewer administering the questions is unaware of who sponsored the poll, or why. The bias that would result from such disclosure would make it extremely difficult to produce scientifically

and statistically valid data – an essential tool in political campaigns.

"From the wording of questions to the accent of interviewers, researchers strive mightily to eliminate bias from all aspects of the research process," clarifies Donna Gillin, Executive Director of CMOR. "With the help of concerned and motivated profession leaders like Olinger, CMOR continues to advance the survey and opinion research profession and protect it from threats like Louisiana House Bill 58."

About the CMOR State Capitol Network

Volunteer members of CMOR's State Capitol Network work with CMOR to protect and promote the survey and opinion research profession. They help to monitor and respond to legislation that impacts the profession and to foster positive relationships with policymakers and their staffs.

Olinger's swift response underscores the impact State Capitol Network members can have: "there are a lot of unintended consequences of this kind of legislation – the role of State Capitol Network members is to inform and educate legislators about these unintended consequences."

"I think it's critical that the State Capitol Network be in every state," says Olinger. "These volunteers must have relationships with legislators who can help influence the process. It's all about relationships – having relationships with legislators is critical to participating in and influencing the process. I really think that me being there and saying something to the legislators got their attention and motivated them to change the language."

Researchers participate in CMOR's State Capitol Network (online at www.cmor.org/scn) to get involved in policy and politics, to protect their business and research and to stay informed. Through the Network, members of the research profession make their voices heard on issues that impact their businesses while networking with their peers who share similar concerns.

For more information on state legislative, regulatory and legal issues, visit CMOR's Web site (www.cmor.org).

LaToya Lang is the State Legislative Director at CMOR. She can be reached at llang@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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Alert!

Are You Ready To Operate A Virtual Company?

By Nancy Domenichelli and Lori Porte, Domenichelli Business Services

What would be the compelling reason(s) for transitioning some or all your workforce to home-based offices? The potential to reduce company overhead could be attractive and some staffers would be happy to eliminate the time, stress, and expense involved in a daily commute. How, though, do you allay overarching concerns regarding accountability, productivity and connectivity with and among your staff?

Perhaps you currently operate a virtual business that seems to be faltering. Is what seemed to be a good idea at the time now a nonfunctioning, unworkable entity in need of repair? Perhaps you have learned the hard way that working from home isn't for everyone, that some of your telenetworked staff just cannot get a job done effectively or efficiently.

When it comes to the successful operation of a virtual business, there is no magic formula. However, there are steps you can take to improve greatly the

likelihood of success. Allow yourself the time necessary to think through each aspect of operating in virtual mode. Construct a workable plan and commit yourself to the fact that operating a virtual business will require a good measure of self-discipline, follow-through and the realization that running a virtual business is just as time-intensive as is its brick-and-mortar counterpart.

The following are suggestions I've developed after a decade of personal experience in operating Domenichelli Business Services (DBS) as an e-business. DBS provides a myriad of transcription services to academia as well as to marketing, marketing research and other research professionals. Not only is the entire DBS workforce virtual, but all our work product is delivered through the Net. Over

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Note: You cannot rate your own company... but you can ask someone who's hired you to rate you!

Alert! Book Review ★★☆☆

The Soul of the New Consumer

By Kate Alany, USA Today

How much would you pay for a green glass bottle that was found near a garbage can in a city park? Would your price go up if you knew that the bottle originated from the ruins of Pompeii and was buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D.?

In seeking to prove that “New Consumers” are in search of one thing – authenticity – David Lewis and Darren Bridger present the results of this, among many other experiments, in their book *The Soul of the New Consumer*. As expected, those who believed the bottle was a relic were willing to pay much more for it than those who considered it to have no meaning, or authenticity, at all. And while many of the studies presented are obvious in their results, they are nonetheless intriguing if not for methodology alone.

Lewis and Bridger attempt to define a “New Economy” using case studies that demonstrate companies which have successfully navigated it. These case studies offer insights into innovative approaches that manufacturers and marketers can use to more

Title: *The Soul Of The New Consumer*
Author: David Lewis and Darrin Bridger
Publishing: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, Rev Upd edition (April 25, 2001)
Pages: 256
Price: \$19.95

effectively reach consumers and find success in an environment where time, attention and money are scarce.

Priceline.com is lauded for its success bringing buyers to sellers by allowing consumers to establish their own price. The movie *The Blair Witch Project* exemplifies success in word-of-mouth marketing by creating buzz using the Internet. The “New Economy” is one in which consumers’ roles have transitioned from consumption to creation.

Lewis and Bridger surmise that the “New Consumers” are chameleons. They change in their desires and tastes at a rapid rate, yet always long for the authentic.

Lewis and Bridger frequently reference history to show what came before and to build upon the credibility of their counsel. They compare the “Old Consumer” to the “New Consumer” explaining that the latter does not make purchases motivated as much by external status like their former counterparts once did; rather the new consumer is motivated by internal gratification. They point to times in history that changed the fate of commerce as we know it, such as the birth of television commercials and consumer loyalty programs. They use these examples to show how the traditional supply and demand economy is changing dramatically and therefore, so must the approach of manufacturers and marketers.

According to Lewis and Bridger, “the companies most likely to succeed are those that enable ‘New Consumers’ to make investments of time, attention and money simpler to perform and more rewarding to experience.”

(Continued on page 33)

Change Brings Opportunity


By MRA’s Education Workgroup


The Education Workgroup is excited to announce some changes for the upcoming Fall Conference in Las Vegas. Not to worry, the conference will still be packed with skilled presenters, fresh topics, hard work and dedication. However, there will be a minor overhaul to the structure, flow and content of the conference.

Some of the changes include having fewer overall tracks and a clearly defined path that attendees can follow (think Beginner to Expert / Practical to Theoretical). We visualize the conference as MRA’s Interactive/Immersion Conference with tracks that will be broader in scope and will lead to more flexibility in development of content.

Attendees can expect tracks such as *Research Trends and Processes, Tips and Techniques, The Business of Research, Back to Basics, Relationship Management, Communication Technology Trends and Quality Ideas and Innovation* as a handful of possibilities. Some of

these topics will be further developed to explore the “Do’s and Don’ts” or the “Analysis and Reporting Techniques of...” along with take-away information that can be used in our members’ day-to-day business operations.

While MRA’s increasing member base believes in the educational value for both themselves and their staff, the content will continue to follow the requirements of Professional Research Certification (PRC). Selected content may be reused from time to time as highly scored content/speakers are needed by our members to achieve their PRC credits. Rest assured, this repurposed content will still have a fresh twist and attendees will walk away energized and motivated! The Fall Conference is envisioned as the place to get practical and theoretical educational content with unsurpassed value. 

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


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New CATI Software: The Best Way To Adopt It

By Karl G. Feld, D3 Systems



It is inevitable in the course of a research call center's lifetime that its management will consider changing or upgrading its Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software. What many don't realize is that the fierce competition amongst providers creates many alternatives to consider. The options can be bewildering, and many managers simply choose to upgrade what they already have to save the time involved in the selection process. However, looking at all options often provides superior alternatives.

There are more than 36 commercially available (CATI) software applications in the global marketplace today. The Internet and the increasing simplicity of programming have eased the entry of many fine, new competitors to the traditional core software applications. As with anything tied to computer programming, CATI platforms also continue to improve and evolve at a dizzying rate. This keeps pricing and features in constant flux.

In general, proliferation of CATI platforms has been good for buyers, as the platforms tend to differentiate themselves from one another through a combination of their various add-on features and their pricing.

A call center's CATI platform is its heart. The options available in CATI systems today reach into every facet of business management; not just sample and questionnaire administration. To date, this author has managed the use of seven different CATI systems and been through the process of choosing new ones four times. A good selection has accelerated the center to new levels of business and research success.¹ A poor choice can weigh like the proverbial millstone around the center's neck for years to come, hampering productivity, financial performance and scientific ability.

The first step to upgrading or replacing a CATI system is designing the replacements technical specifications (tech. spec.). The tech. spec. should be as deep and detailed as necessary to assure all the users of the software application will have their needs met. The tech. spec. should also address the different needs of project types run by the company.

Newer platforms often include features which range outside the traditional CATI application's

capabilities. This means that it may be productive to involve key stakeholders beyond those originally involved. For example, some newer applications include labor scheduling and payroll management functions or tabulation features to testing data in realtime. As a result, today's CATI software key stakeholders often include upper management, data processors, analysts, production floor staff, client service staff and human resources.

Comprehensive, well-considered tech. specs. built with group consensus are critical to the success of a new platform. **The operational needs of staff and projects need to be considered well in advance to avoid rework later.** The process of building the tech. spec. is also the opportunity for the buyer organization to resolve or prevent any resistance or objection from internal key stakeholders; resistance which can otherwise frustrate adoption of a new platform at any point in the process.

With an accurate tech. spec. it becomes possible to shop for the best fit. The most comprehensive resource the author has encountered for this process is a research software guide written

"Today's CATI software key stakeholders often include upper management, data processors, analysts, production floor staff, client service staff and human resources."

and updated annually by Tim Macer, Managing Director of Meaning Consulting. Tim has produced this guide for many years, first in the United Kingdom where it is released by the Association for Survey Computing. More recently, he has hopped the pond

and the guide now appears in the February issue of *Quirk's* magazine every year, free of charge. He now also offers it as a searchable database on his company Web site at www.meaning.co.uk.

The guide is easy to use, presenting tables of various features. With tech. spec. in hand, a potential buyer can simply run his or her fingers across the X and Y axes and see which packages offer the basic features required.

For many years Tim has also written excellent, independent 1-2 page reviews of research software packages of all types. These reviews appear from time to time in *Quirk's* magazine and can be searched on Quirks.com. Tim also maintains an archive on his

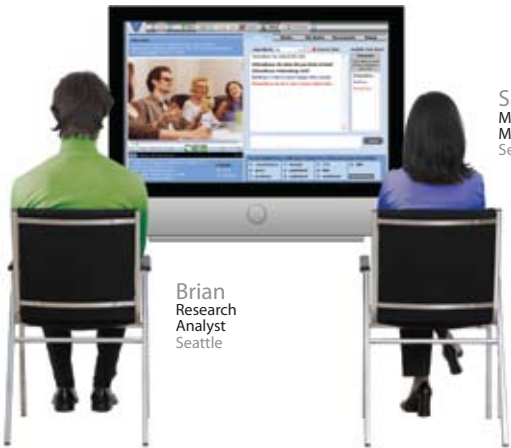
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Alert!

Before You Empty Out The Board Room...

(Continued from page 20)

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Established in 1994, DBS forged new business frontiers and went where few had "virtually" gone before. The company began as a single

TABLE OF COMMUNICATION TOOLS

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owner/operator transcription service; but today it is comprised of nearly 50 independent contractors working from home-based offices throughout the continental United States. From this vantage point, much has been learned about what works (and what doesn't) when creating a "well-run machine" out of a disparate virtual community.

Put on your CAP (the three essential requirements of running a virtual company):

Connectivity: Alienating team members from the company at large is a valid concern. To address feelings of isolation or tendencies toward unaccountability, centralize your communications via a secure online message board. Open source solutions are available free over the Net, including the highly touted online bulletin board system, phpBB, www.phpbb.com. When communicating your directives, include frequent reminders of the virtual team's mission and create a sense of partnership by acknowledging that each team member is a vital part of a larger objective.

Accountability: Working virtually could easily morph into "virtually working" if expectations aren't clearly laid out to your virtual workforce. To ensure regular attendance, start each work day with a simple roll call post and mandate that each team member log on. Gauge activity based on the quality as well as the quantity of messages each team member posts to your board. It may also be appropriate to have each team member briefly outline the day's progress at the end of each day.

(Continued on page 30)



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MANAGEMENT'S ROLE IN MAINTAINING A VIRTUAL WORKFORCE

Note: It will take several Team members to fill each role in most organizations.

Training

- Train your entire virtual workforce in the use of e-technologies (FTP Client Server instructions/navigating online forums).
- Provide project overview and clear, concise instructions to each team member.

Monitor and Support the Virtual Staff


- Content specialist(s) will facilitate online discussions around Management's project goals.
- Managers should possess the art of delegating and use it to control the workflow.
- Team members should be directly accountable to designated project managers and communications should flow accordingly.
- Ensure that team members know where to get various types of help.
- Often one or several team "cheerleaders" emerge from the virtual community. Though they're rarely identified from the outset, Management is well served by recognizing and rewarding enthusiastic conversationalists who encourage and inspire wider online participation.

Supply the Virtual Toolbox

- Documentation and direction: templates, guidelines, project-specific resources should be available online via secure FTP site or other platform.
- Similarly, all training materials should be kept current with each phase of a project and easily accessible to team members.
- Develop IT contingency plans. Communicate the basics to team members and the full plan to executive staff.

Running A Successful Virtual Company

(Continued from page 28)

Productivity: Move your virtual workforce into action by posting daily assignments on your forum. Communicate work assignments, specifications, deadlines, and other expectations for individual team members and for the project group as a whole. The capabilities of the bulletin board software are vast and will allow you to manage your projects and discuss issues with the full team in greater depth within the forum site. Frequent visits by management throughout the day will generate activity, cross-communication, and synergistic support among the team. 

QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL WORKER

- Works independently
- Is a dependable team player
- Has a strong work ethic
- Is proficient in basic computing techniques
- Exhibits strong language and communication skills

Nancy Domenichelli is President/CEO of Domenichelli Business Services. She can be contacted at nancy@moderndayscribe.com. 

Lori Porte is QA Editor at Domenichelli Business Services. She can be reached at lori@moderndayscribe.com. 



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Corporate Member 

Colleen Moore-Mezler; Technology Addict

(Continued from page 10)


Do you even remember the days of telling a VCR to record at 9 p.m. for two hours on channel 4? I mean, come on! It is so much easier now to just say record all *American Idols*. Even the simplest feature of pausing and rewinding live television are features I love.


Another device I have recently fallen in love with is my Creative Zen Vision:M. This is a must-have in my carry-on bag. If you don't know what a Zen is, just think iPod. The Zen holds my favorite music, photos and yes, video to take wherever I go. The days of lugging a portable DVD player with a DVD case are gone! I can download (ok, my husband does!) full length feature movies from online services like Amazon Unbox, or I can download past episodes of television shows I didn't watch when they were on the air, but now enjoy. Or better yet – I will stop watching my favorite shows for a week and transfer the video from my DVR to my Zen so I can watch them while I am sitting and waiting for my next flight.

My digital camera is also very important to me because I love to capture memories. I have taken pictures since I was very young and surround myself with pictures of loved ones. With a digital camera I can view the picture immediately without waiting to develop the picture. Today, you have the option to make prints of the ones you want, pick the size of the photo, and you easily crop out unnecessary space (or people). Not to mention, there is always the delete option when you're unhappy with a picture. Oh, and someone tell me... when were we ever able to take 500+ pictures with a regular camera? The possibilities are endless!

Some other advances that have made my life easier are:

- GPS (Global Positioning System) – with turn by turn directions, I will never get lost again!
- Microwave – ok, not exactly new, but come on! Hasn't it changed the way we prepare our dinners?
- Online Banking – no stamps, no late fees, no problem!

Technology is no longer only for the tech-savvy and to be honest, I am lucky that my husband is into all these technological advances. For me, the use of technology has become a necessary component of my every day life. Embrace it and you can move ahead farther and faster in 2008. Which technologies can't you live without? 

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



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Alert!

Soul Of The New Consumer Book Review

(Continued from page 22)


The authenticity that the "New Consumer" is seeking is found in two arenas: spirituality and, luckily for manufacturers and marketers, retail therapy. In order to achieve true consumer loyalty, though, companies must provide both an authentic product in an authentic manner; one or the other won't work.


Throughout *The Soul of the New Consumer* Lewis and Bridger look deeply into the psychosocial elements that define the "New Consumer." They use research methods and craft analyses that any marketing professional would admire, yet too rarely get the opportunity to employ. They emphasize the importance of looking at consumers as individuals rather than as members of segments and encourage research that aims to understand the psychological relationship between people and why they make certain choices.

The ability to do such research seems to guarantee success in keeping up with the needs of the consumer; however the reality in most companies today is that there is not enough time or money to look beyond standard demographics and psychographics. Still, Lewis and Bridger show examples of organizations that have

made it work and, while not practical for every company, their recommendations are thought-provoking at the very least.

The Soul of the New Consumer is an easy and entertaining read for any marketing professional and is full of useful information, anecdotal and scientific. The only question one might raise is whether the "New Consumer" is actually new anymore. It is important to note that *The Soul of the New Consumer* was first published in 2000. We know that the economy in the United States and abroad was a very different place pre-9/11, pre-iPod, pre-social networking sites and so forth. Fortunately, many of Lewis' and Bridger's theories have come to pass adding a strong sense of reliability to the wealth of comprehensive information provided.

Rather than seeming outdated or obsolete, *The Soul of the New Consumer* is perhaps more relevant today than ever. It begs one further question: can we look forward to a second edition? Let's hope so. 

Kate Robinson Alany is a Marketing Research Analyst with *USA Today*. She can be reached at kralany@usatoday.com. 

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Network Your Way to International Market Research Success!

By Ana Lucia Mendes, Albar Pesquisa de Mercado

Most of you will agree that in marketing research, as in other professions, networking is a key element. Networking opens doors, revealing new professional and personal relationships. As a MRA member, I – and my business – have benefited tremendously from the networking opportunities available through MRA. In this article, you'll discover some new doors MRA is opening to expand our networks internationally.

In our broad field, we regularly conduct studies in many different cultures, so we all realize how important and sometimes challenging it is to connect with people in each country.

One of the most important things I have learned in my 15 years in marketing research is that we need to adjust our research guidelines to each location and culture. The world is getting smaller; as it does, we need to be more culturally literate and sensitive. This is easier to accomplish when we communicate and learn from each other.

At MRA conferences, I have met people from all over the world and have developed relationships with other researchers that have proved both professionally and personally rewarding. These relationships have opened my eyes to different cultures and what I see is expanded business opportunities.

To facilitate more learning and communication among members, MRA recently introduced new ways members can exchange experiences, knowledge and business opportunities. As the international representative on MRA's Board of Directors, I'm pleased to share with you the following new MRA initiatives:

- MRA's 2008 Annual Conference, in New York, June 4-6, features a special international track permitting attendees to increase their perspective of the marketing research world. Also, attendees

(Continued on page 36)



Ana Lucia Mendes

Ana Lucia Mendes first learned of MRA six years ago through Bette Anne Champion, GfK Strategic Marketing. At MRA's 2004 Fall Conference in San Diego, Ms. Mendes participated on a panel discussion addressing international market research. From that event, she was hooked. She joined MRA because of the "great opportunities I believed membership would bring me. I could not have been more correct in my expectations of MRA membership. Not only for education presented through the courses and seminars, which are by themselves completely worth the price of membership, but also for the great networking opportunities."

Ms. Mendes started her business, Albar Pesquisa de Mercado, in 2004. It is a small company with 10 full-time staff (six are fluent in English). Most of Albar Pesquisa de Mercado's business is in healthcare; their main clients are international agencies involved in global work. Albar Pesquisa de Mercado also conducts marketing research throughout Brazil and in Argentina and Mexico.

Albar Pesquisa de Mercado has worked with companies in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, U.K., France, Spain and Germany, on several types of research including qualitative (focus groups, IDIs, tele-depth, etc.) and quantitative (CATI, internet, and F2F). Ms. Mendes says, "We try to work very close to our clients and to explain cultural differences and to adapt the research to Brazil."

Ms. Mendes' goal as the Board's international representative is to increase awareness of MRA among international market researchers who are not yet involved in MRA and to increase awareness of MRA's outreach efforts among U.S. members.

Networking Internationally


(Continued from page 35)


- will build international connections through the Speed Networking session on Wednesday, June 4 and at "international networking" tables during lunch on Thursday, June 5.
- MRA is developing an international Web landing page on its Web site that highlights the products and services available to persons outside the U.S. It will also highlight other efforts to build international support and allow visitors to sign up to receive information as we continue to develop the international section.
- Through *Alert!* MRA will strive to bring advice from international members and from U.S. based members who have experience with multi-country work.

As one of the main individuals responsible for expanding MRA's international outreach efforts, I invite you to participate in these promising

initiatives. This is your chance to bring your own experience to our growing international membership, to exchange ideas and raise awareness of needs and expectations... and to develop invaluable business contacts throughout the world.

I'm Brazilian, and we Brazilians are known for our socializing prowess. I've had the great fortune to join and benefit personally and professionally from my MRA membership. I hope that you'll share with me – with us – your ideas for expanding our international network so that we can truly address the international business needs of the membership.

So we open this space for you to use. We welcome your contributions and look forward to your help in broadening our international MRA family! 

Ana Lucia Mendes is the President of Albar Pesquisa de Mercado. She can be reached at analucia@albar.net.com.br. 



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Huntley Retires From MR After 40 Years

(Continued from page 7)

worked with Susan Taylor from 1988 through her retirement.)

I also watched many of MRA's past presidents – I looked up to them and learned from them, including Mimi Nichols and Adrienne Goldbaum (Past President of Southern CA Chapter). These influential leaders showed me that you can have fun and work hard at the same time.


Alert!: What will you do next?

HH: I'm going to enjoy time with my mother while she's still young (she's 85 and healthy) and my family – including my seven grandchildren. My partner Tom and I are going to see parts of the U.S. that I haven't seen in my career. In my spare time I hope to do a little gardening.

Alert!: As your last word, what advice do you have for younger market research professionals?

HH: You need to be easy to talk to. You need to be a good listener. You need to engage the people with whom you speak. You need to follow through on your promises. You need to understand how to prioritize your tasks. You'll benefit by listening well and observing even better.

On the practical side, my career really took off when I decided to "Eat the Frog": That is, take Brian Tracy's advice in his book (*Eat That Frog! 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time*) and first do things you don't want to do and then move on to other things.

It's vital to attend as many conferences as you can. Volunteer as much as you can – you'll meet new people and learn new things. Accept that it's ok to fail, as long as you move on to the next challenge. 

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New FCC Ruling on Autodialer Calls to Cell Phones: Are You in Compliance?

By Howard Fienberg, Director of Government Affairs, CMOR

On January 4, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a new "declaratory ruling" on the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA). As it applies to the research profession, the TCPA is the federal law that prevents us from using an automatic telephone dialing system to call a cell phone, any emergency line, or more than two lines of the same business at the same time, without "prior express consent."

The new ruling clarifies that debt collector calls to debtors using an autodialer or prerecorded or artificial voice message are assumed to have prior express consent. While this clarification should prompt a sigh of relief to that industry, survey and opinion research professionals should take this moment to remember the various restrictions for research calls.

Autodialers & Cell Phones Don't Mix

Autodialers, including predictive dialers, may not be used to contact numbers assigned to cell phones without prior express consent. This rule applies to all uses of autodialers, including survey and opinion research calls and applies to intra-state, interstate calls and international calls. Accidental calls are not exempt.

The TCPA regulations state that, "(a) No person or entity may: (1) Initiate any telephone call (other than a call made for emergency purposes or made with the prior express consent of the called party) using an automatic telephone dialing system or an artificial or prerecorded voice ... (iii) To any telephone number assigned to ... cellular telephone service."

Such restrictions pose a growing problem for the research profession because of the increasing number of American households that have abandoned their landlines. The latest



data from the National Center for Health Statistics* indicate that at least 13.6% of American homes are cell phone only. Furthermore, since 2003, the public has been able to port or take their landline number with them when they change carriers – including changing to a wireless carrier – meaning that a landline number one day can be a respondent's cell number the next.

Identifying Cell Numbers

Although sampling companies can remove cell phone prefixes from samples, and NeuStar has a useful service for recognizing wireless numbers that have been "ported" from landlines, their methods may not be a perfect solution to the problem. CMOR suggests that researchers keep in mind these identified limitations whenever using autodialers.

For further information about the issue of identifying cell numbers see www.cmor.org.

Consent

How do you acquire consent? In its 1992 Report, the FCC acknowledged that express prior consent would be in evidence if the person provided their cell phone number as a number where they wanted to be reached. "However, if a caller's number is 'captured' by a Caller ID or an automated number identification device without notice to the residential telephone subscriber, the caller cannot be considered to have given an invitation or permission to receive autodialer or prerecorded voice message calls."

CMOR recommends that the only certain method to ensure compliance with this federal law, in the absence of express prior consent, is to manually dial cell phone numbers (where a human being physically touches the buttons on the phone to dial the number).

Autodialers & Emergency Lines are Bad News

The TCPA also prohibits autodialer calls without express prior consent to "any emergency telephone line, including any 911 line and any emergency line of a hospital, medical physician or service office, health care facility, poison control center, or fire protection or law enforcement agency ... [or] To the telephone line of any guest room or patient room of a hospital, health care facility, elderly home, or similar establishment."


While it can be difficult to scrub completely calling lists of cell phone numbers, avoiding these kind of emergency and hospital lines can be more taxing. Although prefixes used by cell phone providers are publicly known, and the NeuStar service can provide researchers with most landline numbers that have been "ported" to cell phone lines, no such databases exist for emergency and hospital lines.


According to Linda Piekarski, Vice President for Vice President Database and Research at Survey Sampling International (and a member of CMOR's Telephone Subcommittee), main lines belonging to medical facilities are usually found in yellow page directories or on business lists and can be suppressed as non-residential numbers. Associated unlisted numbers, like those in hospital rooms are usually assigned within the same prefix or 1000-block as the primary number.

Most such institutional numbers would not be on a list-assisted frame since all the numbers would be unlisted and determined to be in non-working 100-blocks. Unfortunately, says Piekarski, "to the extent that FEMA, medical and/or burglar alarm emergency numbers have been assigned in 100-blocks with directory-listed residential numbers, they can appear in RDD samples."


Researchers must be mindful of all these limitations and ask careful questions about their samples they develop, or those with which they are provided.

For more information on autodialers, cell phones, and other laws and best practices impacting telephone research at the state and federal level, consider purchasing the CMOR Compliance Guide's Telephone Component.

* "Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey, January – June 2007" by Stephen J. Blumberg and Julian V. Luke: www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless200712.pdf 

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

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Seize Your Chance To Join A Workgroup!

By Amy Shields, PRC, Nichols Research, Inc.

In case you didn't know, there's a wonderful group of volunteers known as the Membership and Chapter Workgroup (MCG), which I proudly chair. The primary focus of our efforts is on membership and chapter relations (hence the name of the workgroup) and all that these things consist of, including: Awards & Recognition, The Buddy Program, Leadership Training (in-person and via ongoing conference calls), New Member Reception, Membership Recruiting & Retention, etc. Additionally, it is particularly important for us to provide conflict resolution and to act as a resource for all members and Chapter leaders.

We have been collecting feedback from Chapters regarding areas in which they have had success in the past year or two, so we can report

MRA National has three Workgroups. Membership and Chapter, Education and Business Services are great ways to get involved.

it in *Alert!* to share with all Chapters/members. We hope to cover some areas that are a struggle for certain geographic issues, thereby offering applicable solutions via this article. The following ideas/success stories were submitted in the past two months:

From Joan Burns, President of the New England Chapter: "Another way to accomplish this "leveraging" an event to provide opportunity for members to participate over a wider geographic area] is to create an event that can be duplicated in more than one area. We did this in February. For the past few years, we have held an event in Rhode Island discussing and evaluating Super Bowl ads. We have the ads on disc, and a leader

or facilitator manages the discussion. This has been quite successful. It has an educational element, but is primarily great fun and provides a discussion focus for a group and many laughs. We held this again in February (following the Super Bowl by a few weeks) in Rhode Island, and on the same evening in Portland, Maine. The Maine event had a different leader, of course. We drew members from two geographic areas: Southern Mass., Rhode Island, Northern Connecticut to the Rhode Island gathering; Southern Maine and New Hampshire, and Northern Mass. to the Portland, Maine event. Another point: they were both held at a Ri~Ra Irish Pub, providing a similar image for both programs."

From Adam Berman, President of the Northwest (formerly Northern California/Pacific Northwest) Chapter: "We've gone to a yearly sponsorship structure so we can better plan our programs and marketing efforts for the year. In return, sponsors become more visible to our membership throughout the year instead of just at a single event. We also have special event sponsors which will ultimately give our members more value for the events they attend while also giving special recognition to specific sponsors."

From Dusten Lorenz, President of the Philadelphia Chapter: "Increased membership of over 200 in 2008; an average of 15 additional new members this year! That's almost a 10% increase. The Membership Chair makes monthly calls and sends out personal handwritten notes to all new members. We've also added more networking with 'Meet and Greets' [Thirsty Thursdays]; free to all members and non-members which encourages locals in marketing research to get together in a casual setting."

The MCG is not, however, the only MRA National Workgroup! There are also 2 others:

The Education Workgroup (EWG), chaired by Marisa Pope of Jackson Associates, provides MRA members with the most thought provoking and productive education that can be found in our profession using the most flexible methods available. They coordinate all the speakers for MRA conferences, as well as assign SMEs (subject

matter experts) to design educational content for Webinars and the "On Demand" educational modules. The National liaison ensures current links to applicable content are always available on the Education Central page.

The Business Services Workgroup, Chaired by the Ed Sugar of On-Line Communications, Inc., provides, advertises and promotes products and services to members (individual and business) that enhance the value of their membership. This includes many affinity programs, business resources and forums for exchange of business strategies and opportunities.

In upcoming issues of *Alert!*, we will contribute articles which communicate in more detail some of the initiatives that each group is working on for the association and our members.

Overall, our Workgroups play a strategic role in MRA:

- Set Workgroup tasks based on the National Board's strategic plan.
- Determine how our goals will be accomplished (process).
- Plan collaboratively with Board and Staff to achieve desired outcomes and activities to accomplish them (used to develop the annual Business Plan).

- Establish necessary Committees and Task Forces to accomplish activities.
- Monitor progress towards established outcomes.
- Recommend policies and position statements for the Association.

Workgroups include:

- A Chair
- A Vice Chair
- A Staff Liaison
- Volunteers who sit on Committees and Task Forces.

We look forward to the opportunity to serve you, the MRA members, and to communicate some of the exciting things we are working on. (Please feel free to contact any of the Chairs with questions, concerns, suggestions, or if you'd like to volunteer for a Workgroup): www.mra-net.org/about/board.cfm.

Amy Shields is the Vice President of Operations at Nichols Research, Inc. She is PRC Certified – Expert Level and the MCG Chair. Amy can be reached at ashields@nicholsresearch.com.

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So, You Speak Spanish? Which One?

(Continued from page 15)

save costs, started producing Spanish movies that worked across political and geographical borders. However, there is much controversy around this concept. While some linguists see it simply as the lowest common denominator for all the dialects, others view it as a correct educated standard for the Spanish language, and there are also those who claim that there is no such thing.

From the translation standpoint, it is possible to use "standard" or "neutral" Spanish. While there is no good workaround for the different uses of Spanish pronouns "vosotros/ustedes" or "tú/vos" (you just have to pick one, depending on whether the majority of your target audience is in Spain or not), it is always possible to use generic terminology and to avoid using colloquial phrases and idioms specific to certain countries. In particular, it is important to consider terminology and phrases that may be offensive in certain countries. For example, in some Spanish-speaking countries, words like tortilla and papaya are slang expressions for male and female unmentionables.

Best Practices

If your target audience covers Europe, United States and Latin America, you should definitely use two different versions of your survey: one for Spain and one for the rest. It is

not necessary to use multiple versions within the Americas, unless your client specifically requests it or unless you have a really good reason (such as conducting a linguistic survey).

On the other hand, if your panel is concentrated in a particular area, it is advisable to localize your survey for the specific audience. This could mean using Cuban dialect for a panel in Miami or Mexican dialect for a panel in Los Angeles. When working with a language services provider to localize your survey or other marketing research materials, make sure these questions are answered at the outset of the project. A professional provider will offer you advice regarding what dialect is the most appropriate for the given panel and will select the right team of translators and editors for your project.

Jiri Stejskal, Ph.D. is the President and CEO of CETRA, Inc. He can be reached at jiri@cetra.com.

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* (with notice/when available)

New Advancements in CATI Systems

(Continued from page 25)

company Web site.

After reviewing the basic feature list of the potential packages and their independent reviews, the next step is to speak with the companies themselves to assure that the features listed actually meet the call center's tech. spec. All these companies have sales representatives eager to hand out as much information as is desired. Their willingness and responsiveness to servicing requests for information is also usually a good first indicator of the type of ongoing support this company will provide, so don't be shy about stretching a sales representative's service to the limit. Submitting the tech. spec. in writing to each company is an excellent way to get full, documented responses.

The key at this point is to narrow the list of potential applications down to two or three. The full review process inside the buyer's organization will require another significant investment of labor from all the company stakeholders. It is in everyone's best interest for the person in contact with the software providers to do as much initial pre-screening as possible to narrow the list to a few highly relevant options. This by definition means the person contacting and discussing potential software needs to have a fairly comprehensive knowledge of the tech. spec., CATI software in general and the company's business needs. It should be a fairly senior person.

Once this senior person has narrowed the list to two or three options, it is time to have the software provider visit the buyer's offices and run a realtime demo with all stakeholders present. This is a critical step. Running the demo in office with all stakeholders present in realtime:

- Tests the financial resources and commitment of the software provider to winning and supporting your account;
- Provides an opportunity for all the buyer's internal stakeholders to see the product in action and raise any objections before it is acquired. This is important, because disgruntled key stakeholders can sabotage the adoption process through resistance even after the group has agreed to acquire and install a new platform;
- Demonstrates how the software performs in the hands of experts. If it has any flaws or limitations when the software company staff runs it, they will certainly come out when the buyer runs it;

- Tests the software with buyer-specific projects. Usually, the software company will agree to program one or more actual buyer studies to use in the demonstration to display fully software capabilities. Be sure to give them one of your most difficult projects to work with;
- Allows stakeholders to think about how they would physically use it every day in their current work processes, rather than thinking about how the features solve existing problems.

Once a selection has been made from the platforms on the short list, **it is normal for a software supplier to provide a buyer a free trial period**. Often they will also provide the programming they completed for the demonstration for free. This is an excellent way for the buyer to begin to transition one of their most difficult projects from the old system. The programming has been completed by experts and thoroughly tested by them before launch, so the learning curve for the buyer's programmers before launch on this particular project is significantly lessened. Programmers can instead focus on other aspects of the transition.

During that same trial period it is important to program and transition as many different types of projects as possible to test fully software features and on-call support and educate all buyer stakeholders on the nuances of the new platform. This requires a commitment of time and leadership within the buyer's company which should not be underestimated. Appropriate commitments of labor and management attention should be planned in advance for this critical stage.

Assuming all goes well, the intense scrutiny of the trial period effort will have gained the cooperation of all internal stakeholders, proved the software will meet the needs of the tech spec., trained everyone involved sufficiently to begin using the new application fluently and successfully transitioned key projects to the new platform. It can be a long and painful process, but the end result can be well worth the effort.

(Endnotes)

1 For a good discussion of how technology accelerates business performance, see Jim Collins, *Good To Great*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc, 2001.

Karl Feld is the Research Manager of D3 systems. He can be reached at karl.feld@d3systems.com.

Researchers Gather In Las Vegas For RC Workshop

By Patrick Glaser, Director of Respondent Cooperation, CMOR

Many of the biggest names in research gathered in Las Vegas this March to attend and present at the 7th annual CMOR Respondent Cooperation Workshop. The event boasted around 100 research stakeholders and was geared toward a small, expert-level group of practitioners.

2008 Workshop Features

The CMOR Respondent Cooperation Workshop is unique among conferences in that it focuses on practical solutions for organizations. Different topics that affect respondent cooperation are identified and given priority each year.

This year, central issues included conducting research in multiple languages and across multiple cultures, the pros and cons of doing mixed modes (and mixed samples), and new and future technologies in research.

Attendees engaged in conversations led by prominent opinion research leaders including:


- **Don Dillman, Ph.D.** (*Professor, Washington State University*) led a special 90-minute session focusing on multiple modes of data collection. Dr. Dillman illustrated problems and solutions in moving from one mode of data collection to another. Particular emphasis was placed on the way language and symbolism is received through different mediums.
- **David Haynes** (*Chairman & CEO, Western Wats and Opinion Outpost*) reviewed business and research considerations behind off-shoring data collection. Numerous considerations were reviewed, including technological, infrastructure and cultural issues. Haynes evaluated the business tradeoffs as well as issues that relate to research methods and validity.
- **Donna Neal** (*Director of Special Projects, Market and Business Insights, Miller Brewing Company*) guided attendees through an interactive discussion on how to communicate effectively with End Users of research. The session included a brainstorming activity in which groups of attendees developed and then presented their own solutions to other participants. Neal's segment highlighted complexities in the often overlooked but critical process of communication between research users and providers.

CMOR Shielding the Profession

Year after year, workshop attendees note that the conference is unique in that the interactive format encourages discussion between presenters and attendees. The result is that attendees discuss and debate the merits of various techniques and operations and, moreover, learn critical information about the latest trends and practices within the research profession. In fact, a special feature of the workshop is its brainstorming sessions – formatted to encourage interaction and discussion among attendees.

Keeping with the overall spirit of the event, the workshop closes with a four-hour call center management summit – a vibrant discussion driven by attendees to ensure that they are keeping in line with best practices in managing their telephone data collection operations. Participants in this regular session consider it so essential to their organization that they now meet regularly throughout the year via a conference call (hosted by CMOR's Respondent Cooperation initiative).

2009 Workshop: Next Spring!

Programming has begun for the next workshop, planned for Spring 2009. We hope you'll join us. Additional information will be posted on the CMOR Web site (www.cmor.org) – be sure to check for updates! 

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.

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Profession News/Announcements

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Join **MRA's Growing Social Network!** Connect with MRA – and Your Peers – 24-7-365 Via MRA's New Sites on MySpace, LinkedIn and Facebook. Visit www.mra-net.org for more details.

EMI Surveys has promoted both **Aaron Walton** and **Jason Scott** to Vice Presidents of Client Services.

CETRA, Inc. has welcomed **Barbara Egger Maldonado** who joined the team as a project manager.

De la Riva and Pearson has created **Kitelab**, a regional company specializing in the Latin American consumer.

Quick Test/Heakin has promoted **Iris Blaine** to Director, 3Q Research Solutions.

Directions Research, Inc. has promoted **Dianna Carthew** to project manager, **Julie Haydu** to research analyst and **Joe Buchanan** to senior research manager

MediMedia has recently appointed **Camm Epstein** as Vice President, Market Research.

Proudfoot Consulting has recently promoted **Channing Rollo** to Head of Business Identification for North America. She will continue to serve as the Head of Marketing for North America.

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2008 Annual Conference Program		
Wednesday, June 4		
11:00 a.m. – Noon	Speed Networking (Organized by ASDE Survey Sampler, Inc.)	
	12:30 – 3:45 p.m.	Are You Prepared for the Future of Market Research? - Michael Mermelstein,PRC VP of Business Development, MKTG, Inc.; Mary Ann Packo, CEO, Millward Brown North America; Doug Usher, PhD, Senior VP, Widmeyer Research & Polling
	12:30 – 3:45 p.m.	Finances & QuickBooks User Session (Pre-Registration Required) - Craig Vanokur, CPA, Partner, Adelman, Katz & Mond LLP; Kim Larson, PRC, President, Information Alliance; Tasha Jackson, CFO, MRA
	12:30 – 2:00 p.m.	21st Century Tools for 21st Century Trends - Robin Albing, President, Albing International Marketing
	2:15 – 3:45 p.m.	Privacy in the Real World - LaToya Lang, State Legislative Director, CMOR
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Keynote: Quality - What's Love Got To Do With It? - Robin Pearl, VP Market Research Worldwide, The Estee Lauder Companies	
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	New Member/First Time Attendee Reception	
	End User Reception	
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.	President's Reception (Sponsored by e-Rewards Market Research); Featuring entertainment by Jay and the Americans (Sponsored by Advanced Focus)	
Thursday, June 5		
7:00 – 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	General Membership Meeting	
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	General Session: Market Research & the Presidential Election: Lessons from 2008 - Kathleen Frankovic, PRC, Director of Surveys, CBS News Election & Survey Unit	
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	RIF Activity (Exhibit Hall)	
11:00 – 12:15 p.m.	International	Offshore Telephone Data Collection: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly - Joe Rafael, PRC, Chairman, Opinion Access; Jim Weber, SVP Operations and IT, Opinion Research Corp.; Larry Schneider, SVP of Operations, GfK NA; Lance Hoffman, VP Business Development, Opinion Access
	Quantitative	American Idol: The Anatomy of an Opinion Research & Public Relations Media Explosion - Julie Litzenberger, VP of Public Relations, Sage Communications; Melissa Marcello, President, Pursuant Research
	Qualitative	Project Looking Glass: Re-discovering the 55-plus Generation - Laurie Aulenbach, PRC, Director of Research, Leap Research
	End User	The Value Proposition for Preferred Provider Partnerships in Qualitative Research (End User Only) - Mark Wolf, PRC, Director of Market Research, The Guardian Life Insurance Company; Andrea Schrager, PRC, President/CEO, Meadowlands Consumer Center
	Online/IMRO	What's the "Catch": Does Sample Sourcing Matter? - Melanie Courtright, PRC, VP DMS Research
	Business Strategies	Technology and Research: Will the "Old" Analog TV Spectrum Change the Way Future Research is Conducted? - Joseph Bates, Director of Research, eBrain Market Research & Panel; Ellen Konar, Head, C-Labs at Google; Sean Wargo, President/Principal Consultant, The Market Sage; and Peter Mackey, VP of Research and Business Development, Invoke Solutions
12:30 – 1:45 p.m.	Networking Lunch (Sponsored by Western Wats)	
2:00 – 3:15 p.m.	International	Ethnography: Myths and Realities From Around the World - Siamack Salari, EverydayLives International Ltd.
	Quantitative	Marketing Research On A Shoestring Budget - Meghan Langlais, Brand Insight Manager, Au Bon Pain
	Qualitative	Stand on Your Head & Open the Door: A Modern Guide to Exploratory Research - Liz Torlée, Managing Partner, TerraNova Market Strategies Inc.
	End User	End User Roundtable Discussions (End Users Only)
	Online/IMRO	Panel Discussion: Online Community Culture – As It Relates to Market Research - Misia Tramp, Founding Partner & Joint Managing Director, Intrepid Consultants; Michael Westcott, President, The Concentric Group; Ali Moiz, COO, Peanut Labs; Moderator: Larry Fisher, Assistant Professor of IMC, Roosevelt University
	Business Strategies	CEO/Owner Session (Invitation Only)
3:45 – 5:00 p.m.	International	Market Research in Europe: A Journey Through Differences – Fernand Wiesenfeld, Managing Partner, EFG/MV2 Group
	Qualitative	Experiential Research - A Catalyst for Powerful Brand Insights – Dan Prince, PRC, President, Catalyst Healthcare Research; Mike O'Neil, VP of Strategic Initiatives, HealthSpring
	Quantitative	Where 2 Next: Using Visual Stimuli to Help Cruisers Choose Among Alternative Designations for Future Trips – James C. Fink, Ph.D., President, Infinia Analytics; Heidi Rodgers, General Manager, Strategy, Sterling Group; Kara Wallace, Manager, Marketing Research, Royal Caribbean Cruises
	End User	End User Roundtable Discussions (End Users Only)
	Online/IMRO	Mindreading & Measuring Emotion in Quali-Quant Research: It is NOT Smoke and Mirrors! – Brent Snider, Client Director, BrainJuicer
	Business Strategies	CEO/Owner Session (Invitation Only)
6:00 – 10:00 p.m.	Chapter Event at Tavern on the Green (Hosted by the Greater New York Chapter)	

Friday, June 6		
7:00 – 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	General Session: Marketing, Marketing Research - Neil Marcus, Director, Market Research, Metropolitan Life Insurance Group	
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	RIF Activity (Exhibit Hall)	
11:00 – 12:15 p.m.	International	Going Mobile in Europe & Asia: What Lessons Can We Learn? - Rob Favini, EVP Client Services, Research Results
	Quantitative	Results From a Pilot Test of "Cell Phone Only" Telephone Survey Respondents: How are They Different From "Landline" Respondents and What Does It Take To Reach Them? - Jeanne C. Wintz, Ph.D., EVP, Gilmore Research Group; Katrina Wynkoop Simmons, Ph.D., BRFSS Coordinator, Center for Health Statistics, Washington State Department of Health
	Qualitative	Focus Group Fatigue: How Researchers & End Users are Recreating Qualitative Research for the 21st Century - Pam Loeb, Principal, Edge Research; Andy Hessabi, Senior Manager of Market Insights, Network Solutions
	End User	Hiring The Right Person for the Job - Karen Morgan, President, Morgan Search
	Online/IMRO	Using Ethnography Research Methods to Illuminate Online Communities - Lisa Galameau, Ph.D., Research Director, Intrepid Consultants
	Business Strategies	Building & Maintaining a Marketing Research Sales Force - Tim Sauer, President/CEO, Delve; Chris DeAngelis, VP Sales, Survey Sampling International; Thomas Mularz, Sr. VP, Synovate; Moderator: Paul Kirch, VP Business Development, Common Knowledge
12:30 – 1:45 p.m.	Awards Luncheon	
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	General Session: Anatomy of a Research Project - A Working Laboratory - Ed Sugar, VP, On-line Communications; Jon Last, VP Corporate Marketing & Research, The Golf Digest Companies	

While you are in New York, visit the top 10....

- Central Park:** With 843 acres and covering 6% of Manhattan, Central Park contains walking tracks, two ice skating rinks, a Zoo, the Central Park Conservatory Garden, a wildlife sanctuary, a reservoir with a running track, an outdoor amphitheater and a large area of natural woods. Central Park is the perfect place to relax from your busy day and take a break from New York's relentless hustle and bustle.
- The Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island:** The Statue of Liberty welcomes visitors from near and far to New York. As a gesture of friendship from France, the statue stands as one of America's most famous landmarks. Take the Circle Line ferry tour that passes by the Statue (and circumnavigates Manhattan Island) or hop a regular ferry across New York Harbor to Liberty Island. Walk inside the statue and view the city from the pedestal observation deck. While you are there, don't miss the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, one of the nation's most popular historic sites.
- Times Square:** With its illuminated jumbotrons and around-the-clock crowds, "the crossroads of the world" is a notable world landmark. Major corporate facilities, restaurants, shops, theatres and galleries align the streets of this midtown Manhattan area. Check out ABC studios, shop at Virgin Records, look at the famous NASDAQ sign, eat at the Bubba Gump Shrimp Company or take a picture with the naked cowboy. Times Square promises to keep you entertained.
- Coney Island:** Take a short trip to Brooklyn to visit famous Coney Island. Stroll along the boardwalk or sit on the beach and enjoy the refreshing Atlantic Ocean breeze. If you like adventure, visit one of the amusement parks, with more than 35 rides and attractions. No trip to Coney Island is complete without eating a hot dog at the original Nathan's Famous or viewing the Friday night fireworks. Coney Island is a great laid back alternative to the city.
- United Nations Headquarters:** Head over to Turtle Bay on the east side of Midtown Manhattan to enter "international territory." Take a tour for a brief overview of the UN organization and structure. Visit the areas where council meetings occur, where peacekeeping operations are planned and see the famous general assembly hall. The UN compound is also famous for its resplendent gardens and outdoor sculptures. The UN Headquarters is the perfect place to complement the international perspective you'll pick up at MRA's Annual Conference.
- Rockefeller Center:** The 22 acre block of buildings is home to the iconic skating rink, Radio City Music Hall, NBC Studios and much more. Although you will not see the Christmas tree or skaters, try to catch a glimpse of the Today Show being filmed. Be sure to make a sign and say hello to your fellow MRAs.
- Grand Central Station:** If you're weren't lucky enough to arrive in the Big Apple through Grand Central Station, be sure to visit this landmark. Shopping, dining, transportation and history are all under one roof. Gather up a few of your MRA colleagues and arrange for a group tour.
- Ground Zero:** Pay tribute at this site of unparalleled heroism. See the site and visit the new Ground Zero Museum Workshop with images and remnants from the site.
- Broadway:** What good is sitting all alone in your room at the Marriott when you can give your regards to Broadway? Squeeze in a show after your last educational session or grab a bite to eat at Sardi's with Liza and Bette. Be sure to get cheaper tickets at off-Broadway booths and online venues. The glitz and glamour of Broadway—it's what NYC is all about.
- The Met:** Soak in some culture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Located at 5th and 85th, the museum is easily accessible by subway and bus. The museum houses Rembrandts, Vermeers, Egyptian, Asian, Islamic and European works. Photography, sculptures, musical instruments, antiquities and arms are also among the Met's permanent collections. The Met offers brochures and assistance in more than nine languages for international visitors. Last year more than 5.2 million visitors came to the Met! Please keep in mind the galleries are closed on Mondays, so plan your visit accordingly.



>> Featured Education Session



Market Research & the Presidential Election:
Lessons from 2008
Presenter: Kathleen Frankovic, Director of Surveys,
CBS News Election & Survey Unit

What is your session about?
It is about what public opinion research has taught us thus far in the 2008 election. Has the process raised questions about the value of public opinion polls? I'll include examples from both national polls and exit polls and much more.

What will attendees take away from this session?
Attendees will be able to understand the role of polling in this election campaign, see where the election may be headed and learn the difficulties of measuring public opinion under pressure.

When can we hear your presentation?
I will be presenting on Thursday, June 5th at 9:00 a.m.

Hear Kathleen and many more leading market research professionals!

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(Note: You cannot rate your own company... but you can ask someone who's hired you to rate you!)

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Upcoming Conferences

June 4-6, 2008: MRA Annual Conference and RIF
Marriott New York Marquis

Nov. 3-5, 2008: MRA Fall Conference and RIF
JW Marriott Las Vegas

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