

Autumn  
'06

# THE Southern Researcher



Quarterly Publication of The Atlanta/Southeast Chapter, Marketing Research Association

## UPCOMING EVENTS

October 18-20

**CASRO**

31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Ritz-Carlton  
Marina del Rey  
Los Angeles, CA  
[www.cassro.org](http://www.cassro.org)

October 22-26

**IIR**

THE MARKET RESEARCH  
EVENT 2006

Hyatt Regency Century Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA  
[www.iirusa.com](http://www.iirusa.com)

November 5-7

LEISURE - MANAGING THE  
EXPERIENCE

Radisson SAS Hotel Rome  
Rome, Italy

November 8-10

MRA 2006 FALL  
CONFERENCE & RIF  
Sheraton Wild Horse Pass  
Phoenix, AZ  
[www.mra-net.org](http://www.mra-net.org)

January 17-19

JOINT SPRING CONFERENCE  
Double Tree Grand Key Resort  
Key West, FL  
[www.grandkeyresort.com](http://www.grandkeyresort.com)

March

SE CHAPTER  
MEET & GREET  
Atlanta, GA

*Be on the lookout for an email or  
check our website for dates!*

March

PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON  
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check our website for dates!*

You can check out our chapter  
events on our website:  
<http://www.atlantamra.org>

## Message from Janet Savoie Atlanta/SE Chapter President

### *What's In It For You?*

I am referring to volunteering. Associations like the MRA could not exist without their volunteers. We run the chapters, which are the closest link to the National organization for the vast body of members. We keep the members involved at the local level which is what keeps their interest alive and keeps them coming back year after year. There is a direct correlation between the strength and size of the volunteer leadership and the size and success of the chapter. Over the years I have witnessed chapters rise or fall, flourish or languish because of a change in the make-up and energy of the Board and the volunteers they recruit.

So, then, what's in it for you? At the highest level, it offers you an opportunity to give back to your industry. Strong local chapters insure a strong national organization. Whether you are helping to grow membership, recruiting great speakers, organizing events, keeping track of the Chapter finances, or writing the newsletter, you are not only taking your chapter to a new level, but also contributing to the ability of National to promote "excellence in the opinion and marketing research industry by providing members with a variety of opportunities for advancing and expanding their marketing research and related business skills."

On a personal level, there is much to gain. I polled my Board as to why they volunteer. Some of their responses:

- Opportunity to meet new people
- Networking to connect with new prospects
- Exchange of ideas about state of the industry
- Learn what's new in the industry
- Change of pace from regular job
- It's fun and creative
- Personal sense of accomplishment

The benefits are great but most Chapters are starving for volunteers. From my own personal experience, I have not always been a volunteer. I didn't get involved because I didn't know how, wasn't sure I had anything to offer, didn't think I had the time, and didn't have the support of my company. All that changed when I changed jobs and my boss told me that to really get the most out of my profession I needed to get more involved in the industry. He was right. I joined the MRA, I volunteered and it has enriched my professional life in ways I never imagined.

Please consider volunteering for the good of the Atlanta/SE Chapter and for all that you will personally gain from it. We need help at all levels. Members need to be called, events need to be organized, the newsletter needs articles and advertising recruited, and we need new energy and new ideas to keep our Chapter moving forward and growing. Please contact any Board member to discuss the opportunities. We are waiting to hear from you.

Warm regards,  
Janet

## Welcome New Members!

**Scott Buchanan**

Data Associates, Fortson, GA

**Jerod McCann & Julie Smithey**

Blue Cross Blue Shield of LA, Baton Rouge, LA

**Jennifer Nelms**

Jackson Associates Research, Inc., Atlanta, GA

**Nicole Tapp**

The Stevenson Company, Louisville, KY

**Jodi Walton**

ABT Associates, Inc., Durham, NC



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# UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

**Susan Hayes**

*Account Director, M/A/R/C Research*



*Tell us a little about your firm:*

M/A/R/C Research is a brand development research and consulting firm that helps clients identify the best marketing decision options with research insights that are linked to and predictive of future market outcomes.

*What does your job entail:*

Developing and managing relationships with client partners, by understanding their business and providing insightful research that impacts key decisions.

*Time you've worked there:*

Just started at the beginning of October 2006

*Where did you work before M/A/R/C:*

I worked on the client side of Market Research for 15 years at Hallmark Cards, Mead Johnson Nutritionals, and Kraft Foods. After leaving the client side, I opened Hayes Consulting and have served as an independent research consultant for the past three years, until recently joining the M/A/R/C team.

*Education:*

University of Georgia MMR (1988)  
Clemson University, B.S. in Administrative Management  
(Both ranked in the top 20 for Football!)

*Family:*

Pebbles and Tahoe – Two adorable dogs

*Live in what city:*

Old Hickory, TN (outside of Nashville)

*Prior to college:*

Lived in Upper Marlboro, MD (Washington, D.C. suburb)

*Downtime:*

Hanging out with the neighbors or at the lake (with the dogs)

*Hobbies:*

Hiking, Biking and Fantasy Football

*Favorite sports/sports teams:*

NFL & College Football  
College Basketball (ACC & SEC fan)

*Favorite TV shows:*

Boston Legal and all the Law & Order series

*Favorite Reality TV:*

Sports... Reality shows don't seem very real

*Favorite movie:*

The Godfather trilogy

*Favorite music:*

Motown and 70's

*Favorite snack food:*

Diet Mountain Dew and Skittles

*Favorite way to vacation:*

Being outside in a beautiful setting... hiking, biking, golfing, etc.

*Person you'd most like to meet:*

I'd like to travel back and meet Thomas Edison in his prime

*Biggest pet peeve:*

Lying

*Favorite childhood memory:*

Going to Disney World! It was my first big trip and one that I continue to repeat. The fun and fantasy there is unbelievable!

*Best thing about working with M/A/R/C:*

Great people! I look forward to sharing my experiences and contributing to the highly talented team at M/A/R/C.

*Funny:*

Early in my career I was made aware that researchers often possess a rigor that some business partners do not. I'll never forget a Marketing gentleman who was determined to combine and misuse data. He said... "I know its apples and oranges, but hey, it's all fruit isn't it?"



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# "Get paid \$100,000 a year for completing surveys!"

## PAID SURVEY SITES – HOW TO HANDLE THEM

by Rachael Krupek, 20/20 Research Online

By now we have all seen offers like the one above, and as market research professionals we cringe at the thought of respondents becoming research robots who mindlessly answer questions for money. But to unaware consumers, paid survey sites offer a "legitimate" way to make extra money while providing feedback to companies who want to improve their products and services.

Paid survey sites such as [sellyouropinion.com](http://sellyouropinion.com) and [surveyscout.com](http://surveyscout.com) offer respondents a list/report/database of research companies who use an online form containing demographic, household and purchasing questions to build their databases and respondent panels.

The problems start with the \$19.95-49.95 "fees" these survey sites charge for providing the list/report/database – respondents are being duped into paying to join market research panels. Almost all paid survey sites encourage members to join all 250-450+ research companies' panels on their list so their members can have the chance to participate in hundreds of surveys, focus groups and mystery shops. Some sites even offer software to "help you fill out your surveys **up to 300% faster.**" In essence, these sites teach people how to be professional respondents.

Nauseous yet? So what can we do?

Because these sites are legal as long as they deliver the list/report/database consumers are paying for, market research professionals have to be proactive in protecting the integrity of their databases by using some of the following practices:

- Add a "how did you hear about us" field on your online form, and track the responses.
- Decide if you will accept respondents from paid survey sites into your database at all, or conditionally.
- Consider adding information on your panel web page urging respondents to request their money back if they paid for a list/report/database of companies.
- Meticulously maintain your database, checking for duplicate household records.
- Implement strict past participation exclusions for all studies.
- Contact paid survey sites and ask them to remove your company from their list/report/database.
- Report any paid survey site using a pyramid scheme to build members to the FTC – [https://rn.ftc.gov/dod/wsolcq\\$.startup?z\\_org\\_code=PU01](https://rn.ftc.gov/dod/wsolcq$.startup?z_org_code=PU01).
- When screening participants online use passwords to control who can take your pre-screener; this also prevents participants from taking the survey more than one time.

Bottom line – the Internet can be a great way to build a database/panel as long as market research professionals work to educate respondents and take measures to handle unscrupulous sites such as those mentioned above. Good luck!

– Special thanks to Elyse Gammer for sharing information from the MRA.

### **Be a Buddy/Request a Buddy**

*Whether you are a first time attendee at an MRA national Conference or a seasoned veteran, you can benefit from the Buddy Program. The Phoenix conference is right around the corner and we need volunteers to show the ropes to the new attendees and make them feel welcome and comfortable. I have been a Buddy and it is a great way to volunteer, meet new people and share your experience. And, you can attend the New Member reception, which is always a great party.*

*If you want a Buddy or if you want to be a Buddy, all you need to know is a click away:  
[http://www.mrs-net.org/FC\\_06\\_website/Networking/Buddy.html](http://www.mrs-net.org/FC_06_website/Networking/Buddy.html)*

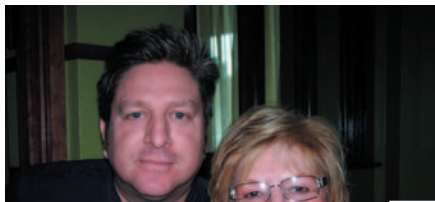


## Atlanta/SE MRA Chapter Meet & Greet

Atlanta, GA ~ August 17, 2006



Left, L to R: Janet Savoie (M/A/R/C) , Chris Berry (Accudata), Michele Shaute (Undercurrents), Greg Rathjen (Marketecture), Ravi Raina (Absolutdata)



Left, L to R: Tom Cheshire (MRT), Rusty Dugan (MRT)



Left, L to R: Stephenie Gordon (Schlesinger), Peggy Sheehan (The Marketing Workshop), Tiffany Hays (2020 Research)



Below, L to R: Chris Berry (Accudata), Tracey Howard (Murray Hill), Todd Costello (Eastern Research)

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**The Atlanta/Southeast, Chicago, Florida,  
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Invite you to their  
Annual Joint Chapter Conference...  
“Keys To Knowledge”  
Wednesday-Friday, January 17th-19th, 2007  
Key West, Florida**



**-ITINERARY-**

**Wednesday afternoon**—A scavenger hunt/team building exercise. It was a great hit in Orlando last year, so we decided to try it again. Come explore the old streets of Key West while working with your team to follow the clues, solve the riddles, gain the knowledge, and earn the most points. Your team will use a Polaroid camera to complete some photo challenges and create hilarious souvenirs for everyone. 1pm-5pm

**Wednesday evening**—Join us pool side for the key networking event—The Presidents' Reception. 6:30pm-8:30pm

**Thursday**—Seminar, beginning with a breakfast buffet and lunch is included. 8am-4pm

**Thursday evening**—Join us for an exciting optional networking event. We will take a cruise around The Keys and watch the breath-taking sunset. 6pm-9pm

**Friday**—Seminar, beginning with a breakfast buffet and ending with a fabulous lunch and raffle. 8am-1pm

**-KEYNOTE SPEAKER-**

**Merrill Dubrow, President and CEO M/A/R/C Research**

Over the years Merrill has become one of MRA's most accomplished and sought after speakers. He was the highest rated speaker at the Annual Conference in Washington DC. We are pleased that he will be joining us in Key West. If you missed him in DC, you won't want to miss him here.

**-HOTEL INFORMATION-**

Double Tree Grand Key Resort  
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Rates are available Tuesday, January 16th thru  
Monday, January 22nd

Call 888-844-0454 or go to  
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MRA conference rate.  
Hotel Deadline: Dec. 17, 2006

**-REGISTRATION-**

	<u>Chapter Member</u>	<u>Non Member</u>
1st Attendee	\$220	\$240
2nd Attendee	\$110	\$120
Optional Event	\$ 75	\$ 75
Reception Only	\$ 50	\$ 50


To receive the member discount, each registrant must be a GLC, Florida, Chicago, or Atlanta/Southeast member in good standing as of 1/1/07

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breakfast, lunch and seminar on Thursday;



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References will be furnished upon request.

## Romancing the Scone

by Mark Alison PCA, AnswersInc – Augusta, GA

Last week I was in California for a project. Being on east coast time I got up early and made my way to the coffee shop. In addition to a single black coffee, I ordered one cheese danish for me and one cherry danish for a colleague who was on his way. The cashier repeated the order to the bagger and I waited. It crossed my grumpy mind he might get it wrong.

"Would you like those to go?" he asked. "Yes," I was planning to sit on the patio. "Would you prefer separate bags?" he followed. "Why yes indeed," I replied, now more awake and surprised that he had even imagined there might be another person. This guy might be pretty sharp after all, I heard myself think.

He handed me the two bags and repeated the contents, "One cherry danish, one cheese danish and one blueberry scone." My negative expectations were confirmed. He got it wrong! "No, I didn't ask for the scone," I muttered. To which he replied with a smile, "I know, that one is on me. It's my favorite and I thought you would like it too."

Wow! That was great customer service and a very good experience. To compensate for acting like a schmuck, I considered calling his manager and telling him how surprised and pleased I was. Needless to say, I enjoyed several more morning blueberry scones at that little coffee shop.

So what does this have to do with research work? Well, everything. I think the researcher mentality is often wrapped around bagging up the data and forgetting the importance of the whole client experience.

Better service begins by assuming nothing. We can't assume the client knows what to expect from us, so we have to tell them. The bag guy asked me how I wanted the service delivered. "Here

or 'to go', one bag or two." Even clients who are educated in research need to be queried as to their expectations and then delivery follows those expectations.

Sometimes terminology needs to be explained. Apparently he heard my Southern accent and guessing correctly that I knew more about grits than scones, gave me a brief education. My pride wouldn't let me ask so his voluntary effort was privately appreciated.

*"Lagniappe, which means to give a little extra. 'The scone is on me,' he said, 'It is my favorite...' Now that was totally unexpected."*

Tell them what they are going to get, tell them what they are getting and then tell them what they got. This same effective technique used in public speaking also works in business to make sure our deliverable is clearly understood. The cashier repeated my order and the bag guy also repeated it as he handed it to me. I had no doubt what to expect.

Finally, there is something to be said for exceeding expectations. In Lafayette, Louisiana they have a phrase for it. Lagniappe, which means to give a little extra. "The scone is on me," he said, "It is my favorite and I think you might like it too." Now that was totally unexpected.

At our focus group facility in Augusta, GA, AnswersInc., we exist because of lagniappe. There's really no other way to explain why someone would go out of their way to travel down the one and only lonely interstate highway that passes through Augusta just to get to another conference room with a one way mirror. We take nothing for granted. We give our clients far more than they pay for making the whole client experience one they want to repeat.

The lagniappe is usually something they never would have asked for. And the response is a lot like mine with the scone which, by the way, I strongly recommend if you're ever at the Hyatt Regency coffee shop in Irvine.

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# 2006 Research Industry Trends Report: Opportunities Abound for MR!

by Leonard Murphy, COO, Rockhopper Research, Inc.

As a follow-up to our 2003, 2004, and 2005 surveys, Rockhopper Research, Pioneer Marketing Research, DialTek, and the GreenBook Marketing Research Directory sponsored this 2006 Research Industry Trends study among individuals involved with the data collection side of the marketing research industry. The main objectives of the research were to gauge trends in data collection for the coming year and to gather information on other issues that may impact the industry. This summary report presents the key findings with the hope that the information will aid the industry in maximizing effectiveness and sales in the coming year.

We believe that our study for 2006 shows that the industry is entering a period of exciting change. It will affect approaches to data acquisition, relationships between clients and providers, and interactions with the public.

## LEARNING TO DEAL WITH FAMILIAR CHALLENGES —

As in past years data collection professionals continue to embrace new technology and to seek innovative solutions. Over 65% said that “considering alternative methodologies” is their main solution to problems with response rates, sampling and data integrity, and cost pressures.

The difference this year? We believe researchers are becoming more confident in finding the right tools. Even more people than last year identify declining response rates as the single greatest challenge facing the industry. Fewer, however, felt a need to change methodology as a result – perhaps because they have already done so. This year we’ve seen the continuing rise in online research finally outdistancing CATI, for example. They appear unworried about the impacts of Do Not Call and anti-spam legislation, despite widespread expectation that they would spell big trouble. Rather, declines in respondent rates – a key concern for many – may need to be thought of more broadly: respondents agree that the problem is still a number one concern.

## THE INTERNET PRESENTS NEW OPPORTUNITIES —

In this 2006 study, the Internet has pulled well ahead of CATI as the primary method of data collection for both providers and clients. More than half of those on the academic or client side now rely on the Internet as their primary data collection modality.

In addition to increasing incentives, researchers are turning to opt-in panels to address declining response rates and sampling concerns. Clients and providers view internal panels as an answer not only to response rate and sampling issues, but to cost and budget constraints as well.

As in 2005, fewer than 30% of respondents foresee changing research providers in 2006. When they do look elsewhere, however, clients say that (apart from a deterioration of service) new expertise in new methodologies is the driver.

Forced to rethink the approach to data collection, the industry is building bridges and highways to connect data collectors to survey participants, clients to providers, and ultimately clients to customers. Just as the direct response industry learned to move from a saturation approach to more economical and vastly more effective relationship or database marketing, the research industry is showing signs of moving toward richer and more rewarding interactions among clients, providers, and the public.

The Internet has changed the process of fielding research and participating in research. Instead of staring into space while a telephone interviewer drones on with question after question, reiterating scales and instructions, a respondent can interact with a survey, taking it at her own pace, coming back to it when she is in the mood. Researchers have begun to realize that surveys present rich opportunities to foster continued interaction between clients and customers, as well as with providers. The race is to be better at it than the competition. Research firms who understand the technology, the process, and the opportunity are becoming highly valued partners with their clients.

Partnership, of course, brings pressures of its own.

*Continued on page 11....*

**Research Industry Trends Report**, continued from page 10....**A VERY GOOD YEAR —**

It is significant that larger full-service providers, clients, and advertising agencies all see strong growth and a bright future for 2006. Smaller firms, consultants, and qualitative research companies (generally small shops) are somewhat less optimistic. They may have yet to discover that the virtual presence and reach they can realize with Internet-based tools presents them with opportunities far beyond the apparent limitations of their smaller size. The emerging research environment will require investment, inter-disciplinary expertise, and the critical mass ("bandwidth" or "footprint" if you prefer) via extensive networking (if not physical presence), to be effective global research partners.

In terms of pure dollars, the data collection industry expects a good year in 2006, with domestic growth continuing at approximately the same steady pace projected in last year's study. The Far East, Western Europe, and the Pacific Rim nations promise the most growth – with the pace picking up in South America, Central America, and Central Asia. Eastern and Central European markets are expected to grow at a flat or diminished rate year on year, but they will be growing. Only Africa and the Middle East lag, presumably because of political and social instability and sputtering economies.

**ACCELERATING PACE OF CHANGE —**

We describe these developments as "exciting" because they are, and if you are reading this report, you agree. Why would "seminars sponsored by professional associations" suddenly emerge as the most important way to keep up with methodological developments? It is interesting enough that in-person conferences have jumped ahead of print journals, but it is remarkable that this year they have jumped ahead of industry websites as well. In all previous years, conferences lagged behind both.

We believe the answer is clear: the other ways are too slow and too passive.

The emerging leaders of the changing research industry are learning to use technology, social engineering, and approaches adapted from relationship marketers. Success means being effective simultaneously on at least four continents. They are becoming fast and sure-footed innovators or they are being left behind.

These researchers (you) don't want just to browse or turn pages (although obviously they do that too). They want in. They need to "be there." They need to challenge presenters with questions, find resources to implement more effective branded services and, (not least) to take the pulse of the industry and the players.

Although the pace of innovation is rapid and there seems to be a wild profusion of new developments every three to six months, we perceive a common thread that runs through everything. Online virtual focus group rooms, better/faster/cheaper survey approaches, hosted tabulation and analysis software, and panels, panels, panels: everything is about bringing the provider, the client, and the customer closer together and doing it faster and more effectively.

**OPPORTUNITIES IN COLLABORATION AND BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS —**

To share in this good news, research providers must understand that the world has changed. Clients must look for partners that not only see the challenges but also see the promise and how to get from here to there.

We can speculate about one more thing: to the extent that researchers recognize that their fundamental role is create a dialogue between a client and its customers, new criteria need to be brought to bear. What if good research was not just about high response rates, statistical validity and other traditional criteria? What if good research was also defined as engaging research that draws respondents in; that asks them questions in ways that make sense to how they view the world and make decisions; that shows appreciation for time and effort spent (not just cash); that reflects and emulates their natural decision processes (that do not, for all we may wish, follow straight lines of logic); that taps into topics people care about?

As we continue, in this industry, to pursue better-faster-cheaper, new ways of reaching respondents and maintain a focus on target group representativeness, we suggest the industry should look carefully at how effectively we create real dialogue between client and customer. In advance of our 2007 survey, we're going to think a lot about this: how do we put "the customer" back into the center of market research? What would, or should, we do differently?

Those of you who read this are welcome to send us your thoughts as well.

*Continued on page 12....*

**Research Industry Trends Report**, continued from page 11....**METHODOLOGY —**

The methodology was straightforward. A brief e-mail invitation was sent to just under 12,000 randomly selected individuals. Names and e-mail addresses were generated from our internally maintained list of research buyers and providers. As an incentive for participation, respondents were offered a complimentary copy of the 2006 edition of the GreenBook Marketing Research Directory. From this invitation, a total of 600 usable e-mail responses were returned and included in our analysis. However, compared with 2005, there are fewer full-service suppliers and substantially more qualitative research providers represented. The 2006 respondent mix is displayed below.

Organization Category	2006	2005	2004	2003
Full-service suppliers	43.3%	49.7%	43.7%	36.0%
Research consultant	14.5%	13.1%	11.9%	13.7%
Research client/purchaser in an enterprise	11.7%	8.9%	17.9%	21.8%
Quantitative provider/Data collection only ('03-05)	10.3%	11.9%	1.5%	3.7%
Qualitative research provider	9.8%	5.7%	3.7%	2.1%
Academic/non-profit/medical researcher	7.0%	6.5%	7.1%	17.9%
Advertising agency	3.3%	4.2%	4.2%	4.9%
BASE: Answered question	(600)	(336)	(720)	(431)

To stay abreast of the most current issues facing the data collection industry, we continue to modify the Internet questionnaire. Important changes for 2006 were separating the results for quantitative and qualitative methodologies on key issues and expanding the specific research services listed for each category. As is true with all self-administered survey instruments, not all participants answered every question. Consequently, the base for our analysis is the number of respondents who answered a particular question. The maximum statistical error for the total of 600 responses is  $\pm 4.0\%$  at the 95% confidence level. Across all questions, there are no interpretable differences in study results by the markets served – domestic or international. For consistency in analysis, all rating questions are scaled to indicate “the higher the number, the more positive the result.”

More complete details on the results of this survey may be obtained by contacting:

Leonard Murphy, COO, Rockhopper Research, Inc. • 866-545-3216 • [lmurphy@rockhopperresearch.com](mailto:lmurphy@rockhopperresearch.com)

A full version of the report is available for free download at: <http://www.rockhopperresearch.com/about/index.aspx?pageID=269>.

## Did you know...?

As long as your company has a MRA Company Membership (C1, C3, or C5), you can add an unlimited amount of Chapter Only members? This is a great opportunity to invite others in your company to join the Atlanta/SE Chapter...without breaking the bank (Chapter Only Memberships costs \$40 per membership). Chapter Only Members enjoy member discounts to chapter events, invitations to chapter socials, the quarterly newsletter ‘The Southern Researcher,’ networking opportunities, and the list goes on...

For more information on Chapter Only Memberships, you may contact Sara Walsh @ (860) 682-1000 or via email @ [membership@mra-net.org](mailto:membership@mra-net.org).



### UPDATE YOUR INFO....

If you recently changed your phone number, email, etc., please update any contact information by sending an email to the National MRA Headquarters at:

[email@mra-net.org](mailto:email@mra-net.org)





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# Focus on Employee Satisfaction

*"The three most important things you need to measure in business are customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and cash flow." Jack Welch – Lessons for Success, 1993*

## THE COSTS

"Most managers know that turnover is expensive, but two-thirds of 1,290 managers were unable to quantify the cost of turnover when asked in a recent poll. The cost of hiring and training a new employee can vary greatly—from only a few thousand dollars for hourly employees to between \$75,000 and \$100,000 for top executives. Estimates of turnover costs may range from 25 percent to almost 200 percent of annual compensation. Costs that are more difficult to estimate include customer service disruption, emotional costs, loss of morale, burnout/absenteeism among remaining employees, loss of experience, continuity, and 'corporate memory.' - F. Leigh Branham, Vice President and Director of Professional Services, Right Management Consultants (one of the world's leading firms in human resources consulting.)

## THE BENEFITS

"Between 40 and 80 percent of customer satisfaction and loyalty is determined by the customer-employee relationship, depending upon the industry and market segment. At Sears, employee satisfaction accounts for 60 to 80 percent of customer satisfaction." (Anthony Rucci, Steven Kim, Richard Quinn "Employee Customer Profit Chain at Sears" Harvard Business Review Jan.-Feb. 1998)

"When companies put employees and customers first, their employees are satisfied, their customers are loyal, their profits increase, and their continued success is sustained. A growing body of research is supporting the correlation between employee and customer satisfaction. More specifically, employee commitment is cited as a source of increased customer satisfaction. More committed employees stay with the company longer. The longer an employee stays with a company, the better the employee becomes at understanding its processes, its products, and its customers. Therefore, employee commitment increases the likelihood of customer satisfaction and therefore customer commitment".

"Conducting employee surveys is an inexpensive, sensible approach to monitoring if you are doing the right things to

earn that sense of commitment from your employees. The small investment of time and money in an employee survey will be repaid many times over through more satisfied and loyal customers and reduced hiring and re-training costs." (Satisfied Employees Increase Customer Loyalty, Scott Andersohn, SPHR, May 2004)

## THE RETURNS

By reducing the costs associated with employee attrition and increasing customer loyalty through improved employee moral companies can greatly improve their bottom line. 1. According to "The Loyalty Effect" by increasing customer loyalty by just 5% companies can increase profitability by 40-95%. The experts seem to agree that "companies won't realize the fruits of loyalty until usable measurement systems enable firms to measure their performance against clear loyalty goals – just as they now do in the case of profitability and quality goals." 2. Since employee surveys are the most accurate and cost-effective employee attitude measurement tool currently in existence, organizations of all sizes may wish to consider implementation of an ongoing employee survey program to better measure their performance against defined loyalty objectives.

- The Loyalty Effect: The Hidden Force Behind Growth, Profits, and Lasting Value by Frederick F. Reichheld, Thomas Teal. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.
- The One Number You Need to Grow, Frederick F. Reichheld HBR OnPoint Enhanced Edition Dec. 1, 2003

To learn more about using employee surveys as a tool to measure and improve the satisfaction of your employees, please visit the "Employee Surveys" page of the Infosurv website ([www.infosurv.com](http://www.infosurv.com)).



# Online Survey with Members Final Results



Prepared by



October 17, 2006

## RESEARCH PURPOSE

The Atlanta/Southeast Chapter of the Market Research Association (MRA) was interested in conducting an online survey with its current members.

The objectives for this research were to:

- Determine the satisfaction level among current members,
- Determine the importance of various aspects of the MRA,
- Gauge interests in possible topics, and
- Determine the demographics of the Atlanta/SE Chapter.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- The Board Members of the Atlanta/Southeast Chapter worked together to develop an online survey.
- Prince Market Research (PMR), an independent marketing research firm, programmed, launched, and monitored the online survey process.
- During the period September 21st through October 12th, 2006 PMR sent out a total of three email invitations to the chapter's membership.
- Respondents were asked to click on a link included in the email message that would take them to a secure site where they could complete the survey.
- The survey was sent to 207 people. A total of 40 members responded for an overall response rate of 19%.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Over one-half (56%) of members reported being satisfied with their MRA National membership; 66% reported being satisfied with the Atlanta/SE Chapter of the MRA.
- Forty-three percent (43%) of members said they receive a good value from the Atlanta/SE Chapter (relative to the cost they pay).
- Over two-thirds (68%) of members said they would be likely to recommend the Chapter to a friend or colleague.

- The Membership Roster/Directory emerged as the most important service provided by the Atlanta/SE Chapter, with 80% of members saying this is important.
- The Website emerged as the least important service provided by the Chapter. Even though the Website was the least important service provided, two-thirds of members rated this as being an important service.
- Members were most interested in having educational events or receiving materials regarding Online Research, with over three-fourths (77%) reporting being interested in this.
- Members were least interested in Language Barriers in the Industry as a potential topic, with only three in ten reporting this as being something they are interested in.
- The majority of members (78%) prefer to receive the newsletter electronically.
- Over one-third (34%) of members said they would be likely to advertise in the newsletter.
- Over three-fourths (77%) of members said they would be likely to attend a Meet & Greet in their area.
- Four in ten members reported being likely to attend the Key West Conference, while around one-fourth (23%) reported being likely to attend the Fall Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

## MOST VALUABLE BENEFIT OFFERED BY BEING A MEMBER

*What do you see as the most valuable benefit the Atlanta/Southeast Chapter currently offers you?*

- Networking emerged as the most frequently mentioned response, with approximately 40% of respondents naming this.
- Education, Blue Book, staying connected, and updates on legislation were each mentioned by approximately 5% of members.
- The roster and "ability of larger businesses to find me" were each mentioned by one member.



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# Prescription for Success

## MARKET RESEARCH BOOSTS HOSPITAL MARKETING POWER

by Dan Prince, President, PMR

**J**ust as early diagnosis and treatment increase the odds of survival in patients, hospitals are finding that an ounce of marketing research is worth a pound of cure in the survival of their business.

American healthcare is increasingly, “consumer-driven.” The various providers of healthcare services and products – including hospitals, doctors, insurance plans, and pharma companies – each retain significant power. Yet, the role and influence of the consumer is becoming more influential, and hospital management teams across the country are being challenged to change their marketing strategies to compete.

Thirty years ago, when we first starting doing work for HCA, hospitals directed 90-100% of their marketing efforts toward doctors, because doctors virtually controlled the decision on what services a patient would get and where they would go for those services.

Today, in healthcare, as in so many other industries, the consumer has more information and greater authority. For example, doctors routinely see patients who arrive with information printed from the Internet and who expect a collaborative role in their own care. More fundamentally, healthplans now offer consumers a greater array of choices among doctors, hospitals, and even diagnostic and surgery centers, and expect the consumer to make the decision.

And a potential change of direction is underway, with the likely widespread adoption of Health Savings Accounts. These accounts will mean that the first several thousand dollars spent on medical services by a family will come from right out of the health savings account. Then and only then will health insurance kick in. Many experts believe that this will make consumers more aware of the actual costs of healthcare, and more intentional in spending “their” dollars instead of the “insurance company’s” money.

As healthcare, in fact, becomes more and more consumer-driven, the need to understand the consumer’s viewpoint becomes ever more critical. In that sense, healthcare is becoming more like

many other consumer-oriented industries in America where marketing research is often central to making both strategic and tactical decisions.

Marketing research results are arming hospital management teams with the insights they need to make critical decisions. Just in the past year, we have seen numerous examples of how the voice of the customer is driving hospital decision-making:

- Should a county-owned community hospital sell to a private hospital management company?
- Are the television and radio ads being run by a hospital actually connecting with consumers?
- What should a hospital name a series of free-standing outpatient facilities?

The county-owned hospital learned via a phone survey that residents would rather see the hospital sold than see their taxes go up, even very modestly, to underwrite the operation and improvement of the local hospital.

In the second case, through focus group research, we found out that most of the ads were resonating very well with consumers. There was no need to create an expensive new ad campaign. But we also discovered that one TV ad was neither credible nor appealing – and it’s been dropped.

With regard to the name issue, we conducted focus groups with both consumers and healthcare professionals to understand the “equity” in the hospital’s current name. Then we tested ways to create a powerful brand name for the outpatient facilities. Research provided a market-tested answer and the confidence to make a decision with long-term impact.

We have seen our clients derive great value from the relatively modest investments they have made in primary marketing research. Looking ahead, we see even more opportunities to provide the “customer’s viewpoint” to healthcare clients. With consumers gaining more choices about where to go and feeling the power to choose, hospitals and other healthcare providers will need to invest in “customer listening” in order to remain viable and successful.

## What is PRC?

The **P**rofessional **R**esearcher **C**ertification program (PRC) is designed to recognize the unique qualifications and expertise of marketing and opinion research professionals. It was developed in part as a result of increased legislative regulations and marketplace pressures. The goal of PRC is to encourage high standards within the profession in order to raise competency, establish an objective measure of an individual's knowledge and proficiency and to encourage professional development.

PRC is open to all marketing and opinion researchers.\* It encompasses all segments of the profession – from End User to Interviewer. Grandfathering into PRC is available via application from February 28, 2005 to February 28, 2007.

*\* You do not need to be an MRA member to apply for PRC.*

*We would like to recognize the chapter members who are PRC certified:*

**Mark Alison** – Answers, Inc., Augusta, GA  
**Terri Clark** – MacConnell Research Svcs., Inc., Atlanta, GA  
**Melanie D. Courtright** – AOL/DMS, Lewisville, TX  
**Stephenie K. Gordon** – Schlesinger Associates, Inc., Atlanta, GA  
**Stacey Carr Ingram** – Southeast Research, Inc., Southern Pines, NC  
**Teri Leibowitz** – Leibowitz Mkt. Research Assoc., Inc., Charlotte, NC  
**Carla Lindemann** – Issues & Answers Network, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA  
**Debbie McNamara** – Research Inc., Alpharetta, GA  
**Erick Moore** – Survey Executives, Atlanta, GA  
**William D. Neal, Sr.** – SDR Consulting, Hague, VA  
**Cari Lee Pirello** – Focus on Food, Norcross, GA  
**Marisa Pope** – Jackson Associates Research, Inc., Atlanta, GA  
**Joyce Rachelson** – CfMC Research Software, New York, NY  
**Janet Savoie** – M/A/R/C Research, Nashville, TN  
**Karen Wells** – Johnston, Zabor, McManus, Inc., Durham, NC  
**Dr. Robert B. Williamson** – ABC Research LLC, Knoxville, TN

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