

Challenges and opportunities

Dear All,

I hope you have all had a good start to 2011. We are going through some interesting times with online media offering research to clients at low cost, there are also some 'DIY' research options available as a result of technological evolution that are easy to use and again very attractive to clients.

Where does this take us? These new techniques may be faster than the traditional data collection methods of F2F and telephone but it is questionable how representative the sampling is. It is up to the research community to understand these new techniques, 'add value' and interpret the results for clients. **There are the challenges and opportunities for us.**

Following the banking crash and the bailout by governments across the world, the banks do seem to have come through with their businesses intact and still handing out bonuses to their top staff.

What has this to do with market research I hear you say? I hope this means they will do their job and support businesses and help them grow, stimulate economic growth and thus more research opportunities. Banks have a unique position in the economy where they provide the grease which keeps the commercial wheels turning without getting their hands dirty involving themselves in the commercial workings of business but at the same time they can make or break a company.

More conferences planned

With inflation creeping up again we may be in for an interest hike from the artificially low levels we have enjoyed for the past year which will cause some pain in the economy as we try to reduce national debts.

I hear much grumbling about slow paying companies and in my experience it is often the bigger companies that are the biggest offenders and demand long settlement dates. Surely this is the wrong way around; credit should be in the gift of the vendor not the purchaser or am I just old fashioned?

I hope you are making good use of the 'E Group' we have set up on the Yahoo platform. I hope members will find it a **benefit once you get used to it.**

On a happier note we are looking forward to returning to Malaga in March where we will be discussing **"the future of international research in a cost conscious age"** and we are very pleased to welcome **David Smith to give the keynote address.**

We are currently planning the London conference on 1st July 2011 when we will be in London the day after the Insight Show where we will have our usual **"AIMRI Village"**. The topic will be **"Finding and combining resources"** and we would welcome your suggestions. The autumn conference takes us to Munich immediately following the Research & Results show and again we will have **another "AIMRI village"** and I hope you will be able to support us.

My thanks to Richard Chilton and Catherine for their work making **AIMRI**

what it is. I would also like to thank Viv Nuttall for her work with the member survey. The results will be available on the website and a report in the next edition of Synergie.



John Mackay
Chairman

AIMRI 'E Group' launched

We have launched the AIMRI 'E Group' – i.e. the electronic discussion group hosted for us by Yahoo.

The E Group is a forum in which members can compare views, ask for advice, offer advice or simply read what others have written on any aspect of market research. The E Group widens members' horizons simply from reading posts from other people. It also helps to build a sense of community.

If any of us needs to know something, or has a problem related to market research there are probably **members out there who have an answer.** Members can also nominate additional names and email addresses in their organisation. It is essential to be registered and we have done this for almost all members.

The way the E Group works is that if members have something to say, they email the message to the group's email address **aimrimembers@yahoogroups.co.uk** – or if replying to a message they can click on 'Reply'. The message is then automatically sent to all members.

For more information please contact Richard Chilton (tel +44 20 8780 3343).

Is the information already out there?

The summer 2011 **AIMRI** conference will be in London on Friday, 1 July 2011 following the Insight Show. The subject will be:

"Finding and combining resources"

Among the topics to be explored will be the following:

- **Desk research**, including syndicated reports & statistics from governmental & multinational authorities.
- **Depth interviews** with industry leaders (possibly combined with online follow up – see below).
- **Syndicated sample surveys**. These are normal in the media industry and quite common elsewhere.
- **Omnibus surveys**. Most countries have surveys of the general population and surveys of specialised groups are widely available.
- **Custom panels**. Many clients try to defray the cost of their panels by making access available.



Tower of London

- **Combined methods** such as mixing telephone and online research and mixing postal research with other methods.
- AIMRI 'E Group'. You can now put the question to all your AIMRI colleagues with one simple email.

We will invite the speakers to throw light on this plethora of opportunities and illustrate the benefits from their experience.

The conference will be in central London (venue to be announced) and will follow the Insight Show. This will take place on 29 - 30 June 2011 at Olympia and AIMRI will again host an international village. Visitors to London from other countries can combine both events.

For more information please contact Richard Chilton (tel +44 20 8780 3343).

Seeking value for money

The Spring **AIMRI** meeting will once again be in Malaga on Friday, 4 March 2011. The subject will be:

"The future of International research in a cost conscious age"

Organisations around the world are under severe cost pressures and all those involved in international research need to consider cheaper methods. Ideas for cutting costs include seeing if the population being considered can be found online, cutting sample sizes, increasing response rates, restricting open ended questions and looking for alternative sources.

Malaga

Since the opening of the already well acclaimed Picasso Museum in 2003, cultural tourists have been flocking to this museum and the now beautifully refurbished birthplace of the great artist, all in the heart of the historic centre of the city.

Other great historic monuments include the imposing Baroque Cathedral, popularly known as 'La Manquita' (One Armed Woman), referring to its rather lopsided appearance. High on the hill above the city is the Parador (state run hotel) of great historic importance. It was once a Moorish castle and is a wonderful place with panoramic views over Malaga city and out across the port to sea.

Conference location

The modern AC Malaga Palacio is situated near the Cathedral and provides **grand confort** (according to Michelin). This will be another stimulating conference in a charming environment.

For more information **please contact Richard Chilton (tel +44 20 8780 3343).**

Inside this issue:

- 'E Group' launched**
New communication tool **1**
- London conference**
Combining resources **2**
- Stretching research dollars**
Ideas from Zeldis Research **4 & 5**
- Internet & social media**
Review of Hampton Court conf **6 & 7**
- 20 years ago**
Launch in Bruges remembered **7**
- Adapting to change**
Preview of Malaga conference **8**



Malaga

New members - see also page 5

Busanalytics Consulting

Our mission is to provide world class solutions, analysis and services to our clients at most effective cost. Our vision is to become one of the top 20 consultancy services provider across the globe within next five years.

From our inception we have built a team of highly skilled professionals in media and marketing. While other companies invest only in equipment, we invest a lot in people as well because we strongly believe that people make the difference. The team consists of professionals from premier institutes like IITs and IIMs.

We have the experience of working with the top consultancies of the world and have provided consultancy services to various top Fortune 100 companies.

The team has developed and supported media auditing products and solutions to perform analysis on television and print media across various Countries globally including UK, US, Ireland, France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Germany and Ireland.

Busanalytics Consulting **Shubham Jain**
14 / 7 Main Mathura Road t: +91 129 410 8184
Mewla Maharajpur Crng e: shubham.jain
Faridabad 121003 @busanalytics-consulting.com
India w: www.busanalytics-consulting.com

Qureshi Market Research

Qureshi Market Research is a full service market research consultancy with a focus on delivering tailor-made solutions to strategic and tactical business issues.

The company is a specialist in providing business solutions on advertising, brand strategy, brand equity, product positioning, market segmentation and relationship management, brand tracking, customer satisfaction, new product development, trade-off analysis and pricing.

We have extensive experience in managing international research, co-ordinated on a global basis by working with established partner agencies. We've spent a lot of time exploring, researching and developing the values that underpin 'our' own brand – after all, we spend most of our time advising our clients on the best way to research their brands.

By the very nature of our belief in creative thinking, we have no set preconceptions or one formula that works for all. Our clients work in varied environments and seek more than overview of their markets, their customers or perception of their products or service.

We have no boundaries in our freedom to tackle issues that require tactical or strategic thought. We deliver business recommendations, which are insightful, actionable, and relevant. Our recommendations will always be balanced and underpinned by commercial objectivity.

In the development of a product from an idea to an International established revenue earner, a whole host of market research techniques may be called upon to define and then tease out the finer details of market structure, consumer needs and product performance.

Qureshi Market Research **Bob Qureshi**
15 Old Bailey t: +44 20 3170 8320
London EC4M 7EF e: bob.qureshi@qureshimr.com
United Kingdom w: www.qureshimr.com

m-s Teststudios

Competence and Reliability since 1982

At five central locations m-s teststudios all over Germany offer you some modern, very flexibly equipped group and customer rooms, shop simulations and over 80 test spaces for single interviews, online questionnaires and tasting stations, equipped up to the highest standards on a surface of about 3000m². Different separated watching areas for customers are situated outside the studios to guarantee a private atmosphere. We co-operate with eight partner studios in other German cities.

All studios are equipped with the most modern communication, video and sound technologies. Each room has a portable computer with high-speed internet access. Group discussions or individual interviews can be broadcast live via the internet on to any PC, worldwide.

This enables us to cover a wide range of target groups by doing CAPI-interviews, face-to-face interviews, group discussions, trade fair and visitors' questionnaires, more intensive interviews and explorations, as well as all types of studio tests.

A special highlight is our test kitchen which is partly equipped with two identical fitted kitchen units in one room. The preparation and cooking activities of the testers can be watched from special areas next to the kitchen. We are also able to record the testing activities.

m-s Teststudios GmbH **Ines Glöse**
Breite Gasse 58-60 t: +49 40 30 38 02 35
90402 Nürnberg e: ines.gluese@ms-teststudios.de
Germany w: www.ms-tesstudios.de

2011 Insight Show

The 2011 Insight Show will be on 29 - 30 June and **AIMRI** will host the International Village - again at Olympia, London.

Those wishing to take part should contact David Mallett - Sales Manager on Tel: +44 20 7970 4471 or email david.mallett@centaur.co.uk

2011 Research & Results

The 2011 Research & Results exhibition will be on 26 - 27 October 2011 at the M.O.C. Convention Centre, Munich and will again include the **AIMRI** International Village.

Those wishing to take part should take part should contact Simone Waller-Klink on Tel: + 49 71 51 27 08 91 or e-mail waller-klink@research-results.de



Five simple tips to stretch your research dollars

If you're like most of us, you have probably heard the phrase **"times are tough"** more than you care to. We are working in times of unprecedented economic conditions. As we all know, when companies are looking to tighten their belts, market research departments are often one of the first on the chopping block. Maybe you will be one of the lucky research departments whose budget stays the same or even increases, but if not (or even if you are!), we have a few **simple suggestions** for getting the most for your research dollar.

1. Methodology: Find the intersection between appropriate and cost-effective.

Quantitative

Check to see if the population you are considering can be found online first. The availability of **internet samples** is ever-expanding and includes many specialty panels (e.g. physicians, teachers, benefit managers). You may also want to consider initiatives to develop your customer database to include emails - client-sponsored internet studies often have **very high response rates** and offer a substantial cost advantage.

For low-incidence populations or hard-to-reach respondents, internet surveys may not work. However, when surveying broader populations, customers or certain specialty populations, the web can be **viable and less expensive** (it can also be more timely and give you more options in terms of visuals and complex designs).

Qualitative

While many of us are accustomed to gathering qualitative data using traditional focus groups, there are several other options that can provide the same or better information and provide a cost savings. Teleconferences, phone in-depth interviews (IDIs) and online bulletin boards (BBFGs) **work very well for gathering qualitative data**, and they eliminate travel expenses.

They also keep the benefits of focus groups (participant interaction, displaying materials, live client monitoring) while providing the enhanced features of national-versus-regional data collection; reducing influence or posturing (IDIs); including hard-to-reach or high-level participants; and a **fluid topic guide** that can be changed midstream (BBFGs).

Article abstract

Although the research industry appears to be recovering from the Great Recession, maintaining money-saving habits is still at the forefront of researchers' minds. The authors offer five ways to conduct effective qual and quant with thrift.

2. Don't over-design: Sometimes less is more.

Quantitative

If you are like many of our clients, you are always looking for the elusive magic number in terms of sample size. What we have found is that many times our clients insist on large sample sizes (500, 1,000 or more; at least 100 per subgroup) without appropriate rationale.

Key factors in determining appropriate sample size are acceptable margin of error, sufficient sample for subgroup analyses and the size of your population, but there are also practical concerns such as budget. In most situations, a sample size of 50 per key subgroup (and even as little as 30 for less-important subgroups), can go a long way toward saving money while maintaining **statistically-valid** sample sizes.

Qualitative

Don't forget that qualitative is just that - a qualitative read on your data. It is not usually necessary or helpful to conduct 50+ in-depth interviews with five or 10 per subgroup. In most cases, the **story does not change** after the first 10-to-12 interviews. Stay in contact with your research vendor and ask for a summary of findings after the first eight-to-10 interviews; you may find that the story is **90 percent complete** and that you are seeing diminishing returns with additional interviews.

3. Increasing response rates: The better the participation, the lower the cost.

You can reduce your costs dramatically by increasing the number of respondents who want to take your survey or participate in your focus group. The best way to do this, especially with customers or those with whom you have a relationship, is by **sponsoring the research** with your company name whenever doing so will not bias your results.

We see response rates of 50+ percent when the research is client-sponsored (versus 5-10 percent when it is not). In addition, if you send out an **advance letter or email** to your respondents telling them you are conducting research and asking for their participation (and preferably signed by someone senior in your organization), response rates can be boosted even further.

Of course, you can also offer incentives to respondents, but be creative with them. Offering cash is not always the most effective incentive - consider drawings for larger prizes or donations to charity. With certain business-to-business studies, offering a brief **summary of the research findings** can often be a great way to increase participation.

4. Reduce cost at the margin: A little can go a long way.

Quantitative

Try reducing the number of open-ended questions you have in a survey. There is often a great deal of overlap in different open-ends. Just one may do the trick, particularly in online surveys, as participants frequently give minimal answers to subsequent open-ends. This can reduce length and **save on coding costs**. Or, in a telephone survey, ask a question as an open-end but have pre-coded responses that are not read to respondents and another to capture responses that don't fit the pre-codes. This is especially effective on a tracking survey; you may choose to ask an open-end in the first wave and then use those responses to 'close up' the question for subsequent waves.

Qualitative

There are many little ways to reduce qualitative study costs. Recruit 10 instead of 12 for focus groups; show rates tend to be higher during times of economic difficulty, so you will likely have full groups and save on recruiting and incentive costs. Consider quality over quantity: Recruit smaller groups, but use a screener that identifies the **most articulate participants** who are more likely to add value to the discussion.

Use real-time videostreaming services such as FocusVision or ActiveGroup to watch the focus groups and reduce travel costs. If you are paying for transcripts, consider **summary transcripts**, which are less expensive and can eliminate any non-relevant discussion.

5. Alternative sources: Sometimes what you need is already out there.

Often the **answers to your questions already exist** in some form and using these resources, even if they are not customised to your needs, can save money. Perhaps someone in another part of your organisation has done this research before, or at least enough of it that you can shorten your questionnaire. Or, you can do a secondary search (or have a research vendor do a secondary search) to see what already exists through publicly-available sources. Alternatively, consider **syndicated or multisponsor studies** that may be less costly, especially if you have only a few questions that can be asked of the general population. Finally, if you do need a custom study, **outsourcing some of the project** can save money. Most research vendors will be happy to do just a piece of the process.



Amey Rey
Senior Research Director



Ken Zeldis
President

Zeldis Research Associates, Pennington, N.J. USA

This article was first published in *Quirk's Marketing Research Review* August 2010 (see www.quirks.com, then articles, then 2010)

New members ... continued

Richard Miller Associates

Since starting in the business of marketing research in the USA and Canada over 30 years ago, our companies have established themselves in the global arena by providing the North American perspective.

As we work with clients in the USA, Europe or Asia in providing marketing research services and analysis, we give input to the added dimensional challenge of cultural differences, language barriers, and foreign products and services.

More importantly, our companies perform at the highest levels of standards providing the finest marketing research services using

proven research methodologies in a timely, efficient, professional manner at a reasonable cost. It is our passion and it is what we love to do. Working with and representing the needs for marketing research in North America.

Specialist in Gangs, Moderating, FGDs, IDIs, In-Home, On-Line, Telephone, BTB, FTF, Desk, Conjoint and more.

Richard Miller Ass.

7183 Charleston Pnt Drive
Lake Worth
FL 33467
USA

Richard Miller

t: +1 248 672 1644
f: +1 561 963 9775
e: rmiller@richardmillerassociates.com
w: www.richardmillerassociates.com

The internet & social media

AIMRI meets in Hampton Court

On 15 October 2010 AIMRI met at Hampton Court near London to debate the impact of the internet and social media on research.

Following the chair's introduction, **Ben Marks** kicked off the session with a traditional talk about quality entitled "What would you do for 15 pence?" – describing some of the problems with on-line access panel based research and offering some thoughts on solutions. The quality of the sample matters in research and many on-line questionnaire panels don't offer it.

Furthermore, and this was reflected in the title of his talk, the incentives offered and questionnaires presented do not encourage 'real' people to respond. Ways of avoiding these problems included using the digital fingerprint to identify the computer to prevent multiple completions by a single respondent. Of course, one might feel that one of his solutions – increased respondent incentives – would aggravate one of the problems he identified – professional respondents. He mentioned a project he is involved with on the subject of 'Understanding Students' – a challenging objective indeed!

However, later in the day the problems of 'dodgy' panels faded into insignificance compared with the problems of the 'modern' social network so-called 'research' methodologies where the difficulty of getting a representative sample is ignored in favour of 'Wisdom Of Crowds' i.e. as long as there are enough respondents it does not matter who they are! **Tony Dent** pointed out in his rumbustious presentation "Do social media provide us with the message?" that Francis Galton, the original proponent of this doctrine, had only one example of this method yielding a 'correct' answer – guessing the weight of an ox at a country fair!

It almost appeared that there are **two schools of thought** – either to embrace the 'new' social media 'research' which clients appear to want because it is cheap (or even free, as **Peter Bennett** pointed out), fashionable (for how long?) and fast – or to continue the battle for quality research based on **representative samples**. There was some comment that these 'modern' so-called quantitative approaches can only provide a feel for what is going on and are more in line with desk research or, as some said, qualitative research.

It is worth noting that **Peter Bennett** described himself as a 'social media geek' rather than a researcher – he brought an interesting non-market research insight to the proceedings, showed with a practical example how Twitter can be used to get people's opinions about Boris Bikes for free.

Moving on to 'old fashioned' qualitative, **Robin Shuker** described his **on-line group methodology**. He said that the preparation of the pre-listed questions was key, although new ones can be written and the order changed in the course of the groups. It would appear that they are more useful for an **American style focus group** than for a European group discussion, where the skill of the moderator is to ask the questions which follow organically from what respondents say, and to encourage interactive discussion amongst respondents. However, his **Special Offer**, of a free group for AIMRI members to enable them to try out the system, will no doubt be popular.



Hampton Court Palace

Neal Sandin ("Internet & mobile research in developing countries") reminded us that there are more mobile phone users than either internet or landline users, especially in the developing markets such as China and India with huge populations rapidly embracing social media. His data came from the **CIA World Factbook**



Source Google Trends - 'Cloud Computing' volume index

On the next page John Attfield explains **Cloud Computing** and Oldrich Zajic talks about research in the **Czech Republic**.

Hampton Court ... continued

John Attfield (presenting a paper jointly prepared with Philip Rhodes) talked about Cloud Computing but your reviewers are not computer experts! He covered some interesting thoughts around the public scepticism about internet sites, issues of data protection and the opportunities and limits of the internet for researchers. For us, the most illuminating insight was the ability to search for Google Trends – see the trend in incidence of searches for the term **'Cloud Computing'** in the chart on the previous page.

The meeting enthusiastically welcomed a new member of AIMRI, SANEP, from the **Czech Republic** and Oldrich was brave enough, at his first meeting, to attempt to give an explanation in English (via an interpreter) of his unique Internet off-line system, for which he made some interesting claims. On the whole the talk appeared to raise more questions than perhaps it answered and some of the aspects appeared very specific to their national situation,

but no doubt we will be hearing more about this from **SANEP** in the future.

The day ended in traditional **AIMRI** style with an excellent meal at a local restaurant.



Charlotte Tatton-Brown
Research Quorum
Basingstoke, UK



John Peirce
Research Quorum
Basingstoke, UK

20 years ago

Our association was founded in Bruges (15 March 1991) as AEMRI (Association of European Market Research Institutes). In 2002 the European was changed to International and we became **AIMRI**

The following is an extract from the first issue of Synergie (April 1991) and was written by **Sylvie Nordmann**, Cabinet Sylvie Nordmann, Paris.

AEMRI is the result of two forces, one centrifugal and one centripetal:

- Centrifugal obviously because we are looking to **pool our knowledge**, skills and joint efforts, going beyond national boundaries and **leaving behind national standpoints**.
- Centripetal because we are completely convinced that only a national is capable of truly understanding what goes on in that country.

To be a member of **AEMRI** is to follow both streams of thought.

To be a member is to be basically patriotic and to defend one's own language and customs, including the manner of administering questionnaires, the conduct of groups or the interpretation of results.

It is also to be capable of communicating with the other members of **AEMRI** to transmit and apply this knowledge in other national contexts and to pass from pure translation to the sphere of interpretation.



Bruges

A Rolling Annual Plan

In future AIMRI will publish a rolling annual plan for the meetings for members.

Dates and venues

Date	Hotel	Venue	Airport
Fri, 4 March 2011	AC Malaga Palacio	Malaga	Malaga
Fri, 1 July 2011	tbc	London	London
Fri, 28 October 2011	tbc	Munich	Munich

Subjects:

For March 2011 the subject is:

"The future of international research in a cost conscious age"

For July 2011 the subject is:

"Finding and combining resources"

Anyone wishing to speak in London should contact Richard Chilton.

Market research adapting to change

Customer Insight Teams: do they deliver value and drive growth in this cost conscious age?

In today's tough economic climate the key is adding value, not just cutting costs. The focus should be on addressing the growing pressures on Customer Insight Teams to demonstrate that they are 'adding value' and driving profitable growth.

In this presentation it will be argued that despite the outstanding success of the insight industry in recent years complacency has set in. We have now reached a point where we need to ask ourselves: **Are insight professionals truly delivering value?**

We would argue that data is still being traded as insight. What marketers are being offered is not always that 'a-ha' moment. Some agencies and internal teams have come to believe that if they keep calling their data 'insight' long enough, it will somehow be accepted as an insight.

Re-energising the insight teams

In this presentation we will ask the question: is it time for senior marketing managers to re-energise their insight teams based on a grounded understanding of what insights really are and how they come about? We will look at a number of steps senior marketing managers and business strategists may wish to take to guarantee that their insight teams truly deliver.

First, we will address the issue of a 'fantasy culture' building up around insight premised on the idea that there must always be a supply of insights from every project. We will explain that insight requires a fusion of **smart insight professionals and smart insight users**. It is this mutually productive alignment that promotes the creative environment in which true insights can be cultivated.

What constitutes robust 'evidence'?

Next we will argue that insighters need to be liberated from operating within the straightjacket of classic data integration techniques. Senior management need to take some

responsibility for encouraging insighters to embrace more liberal and relaxed attitudes to what constitutes robust 'evidence' when building an integrated picture of the consumer and their world.

Strategic conversation needed

We will also argue that senior managers need to take responsibility for facilitating the 'strategic' conversation that actually triggers insights. It needs to be accepted that insights are rarely 'discovered' - they need to be 'created'.

We will explain that creativity is a very disciplined business: insights are created through the interplay of our right and left brain thinking, a process that needs to be managed and orchestrated.

'Wide angle lens' of their organisation

Finally, we will argue that if senior marketing management truly believe in the customer insight role then they should be more bold in empowering the insight function. Specifically we will explore whether the customer insight role should be recast as a 'insightpreneur'. This person will have the insight skills to be the 'wide angle lens' of their organisation. But he / she will also have the entrepreneurial traits of constantly challenging strategy and business teams to act differently and really listen to the voice of the consumer.

We would argue that such boldness will address the issue of data masquerading as insight. It is through the above initiatives that we will deliver **added value in this cost conscious age**.

Dr David Smith will be giving the keynote address on the same subject at the AIMRI conference in Malaga on 4 March 2011.



Malaga

Dr David Smith
Director,
DVL Smith Ltd

Professor,
University of Hertfordshire
Business School

