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FOREWORD

Data Viz 2022 is here, just a fraction over two years since the last such special issue. There is continuity as well as change in the field: consolidation, integration and investment were all features then and have all picked up pace considerably since. We're delighted to have worked on this one with title sponsor Forsta, who we note from the News Summary in section 1 below have been quite exceptionally busy in all these respects - a true powerhouse in the gathering, analysis and display of actionable data.

Andrei Postaca's 'Iceberg' piece in the last issue, focusing on AI's rapidly growing role in data viz, has turned out to be prescient, and Ipsos' views are well-represented in this issue too. Below you can read more practical examples of its use than last time - many of them in Sandro Kaurlatz's interview.

Humans can learn, as well as machines, and as usual I feel considerably more up-to-speed having worked on this one. I've particularly enjoyed talking to Jami Pulley from innovative data collection firm Veridata Insights; and to Torben Laustsen from OfficeReports, whose refreshing take on continuity - in this case PowerPoint, the grandfather of Data Viz - has guaranteed it success. In the 2020 issue we included our first video interview: now it's the norm. Please dip into the text of each below, but also consider watching!

Kyle Ferguson says in his interview, 'Where I think this will ultimately end up is in a world where you're going to be able to determine outcomes before they even happen'. Well, I predict with some confidence that you'll find something to entertain and inform you below, and that you'll be in good company with around 5,000 viewing and downloading it. Please give us your feedback, share with colleagues and contacts, and contact our advertisers and contributors for more information.

Nick Thomas, MrWeb

Welcome to the 2022 edition of MrWeb's Data Visualization. In the pages that follow, you'll find tips, solutions and inspiration from Forsta and others to help you innovate in your approach to data visualization.

With over 2.5 quintillion bytes of data generated every day, gathering, analyzing, reporting and visualizing findings can be overwhelming. But with the right tools, data can tell a story that enchants its audience, letting you focus on action and impact.

Researchers deliver results in a variety of ways, from basic cross tables to PowerPoint decks to online dynamic dashboards. They need modern tools that provide the ability to efficiently produce and effectively report these results. In the end, the most important piece is the final report or dashboard.

In this issue, we explore key trends that will impact data analysis and visualization in 2023. These include the continuing revolution in artificial intelligence (AI) to drive better understanding, increased business value and tangible profits; as well as augmented analytics, which use machine learning, natural language processing, automation, and more to support faster discovery of relevant insights and greater data democratization.

We also look at how corporate researchers can enable self-service data analytics, empowering their teams to share and combine quantitative and qualitative data across business functions via cloud-based infrastructures and workflows. In a world where everyone can participate in data analysis, richer insight and powerful action can unlock potential and drive results.

Finally, in an interview with MrWeb's Nick Thomas, you'll hear from Forsta CEO Kyle Ferguson on how his career as a professional athlete influences his leadership, and how a series of M&A deals have enhanced our suite of solutions, all housed on our Human Experience (HX) Platform.

At Forsta, we prioritize giving our customers the solutions and guidance to showcase their data and insights in full color.

We hope you find inspiration and ideas in this special issue. We invite you to get in touch any time to discuss your needs.

Torbjorn (Tobi) Andersson
Managing Director, Market Research, Forsta

FROM GOOD TO GREAT

Four trends that will accelerate your success in using data visualization technologies
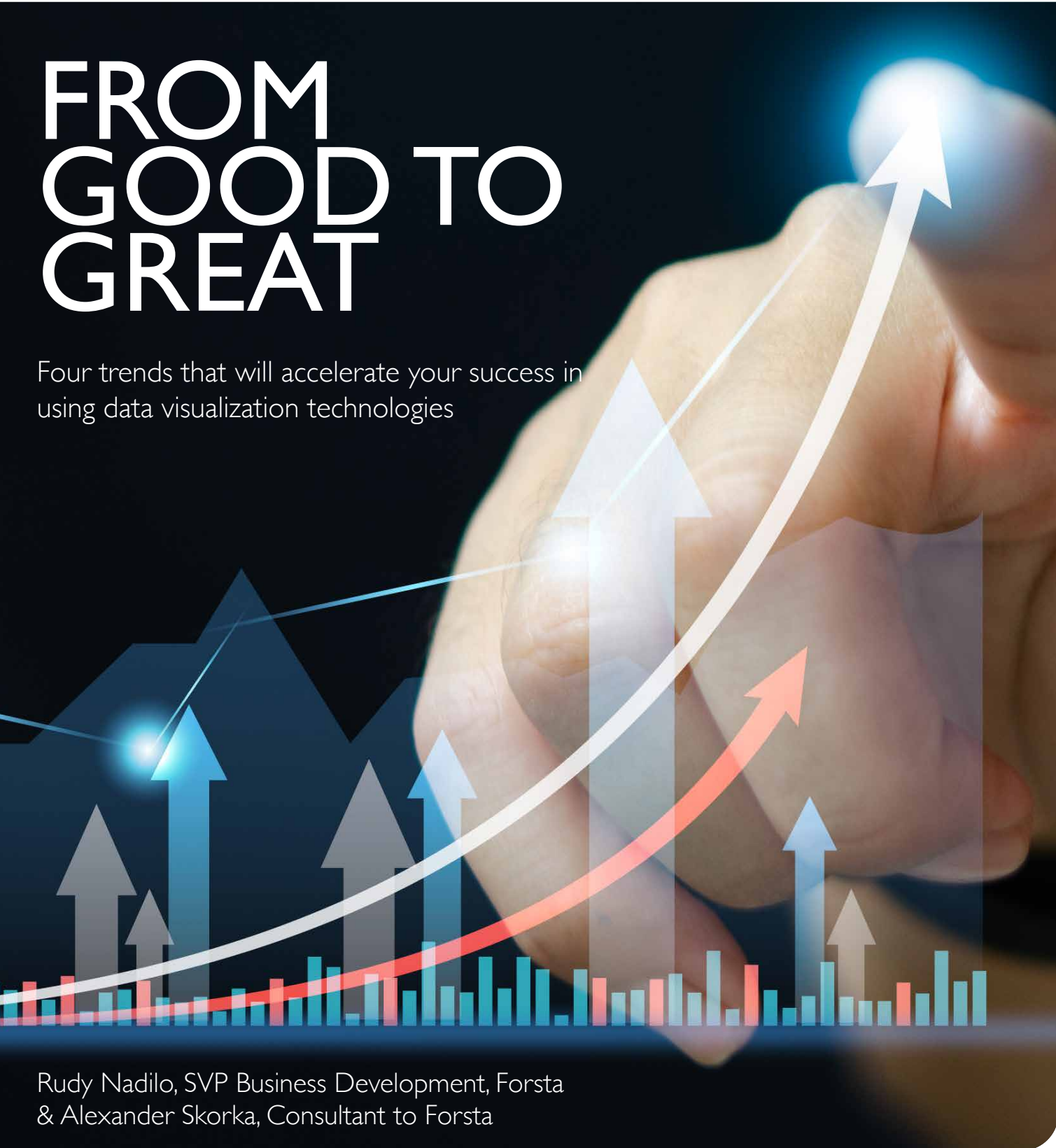
Rudy Nadilo, SVP Business Development, Forsta
& Alexander Skorka, Consultant to Forsta

Forsta Partners with Analytics Tech Firm Lumoa *Nov 1 2021*
CX and research technology company Forsta is partnering with AI-powered insight platform Lumoa, whose software has been integrated with Forsta's to offer clients advanced AI-driven analytics.

DRNO Timeline

Data visualization applications are an extremely powerful way to gain business insights and make data-driven decisions. The way data has been visualized has evolved over time from the simple, static charts of the past to the interactive and engaging visualizations of today.

The number of interactive data visualization solutions and dashboard applications is growing rapidly. More and more, market research projects can no longer do without these applications. Corresponding initiatives are underway in a wide variety of departments within companies. One quickly gets the impression that every data source is being used and packaged into a corresponding data visualization application. Unfortunately, the result often falls short and does little to increase the strategic value of the data in the company.

So, what do we need to do better in the future to avoid drowning in well-intentioned but poorly crafted data visualization applications? What are the key trends that will help us along the way?

#1: Management application instead of data visualization

Many data visualization applications follow the approach "more data equals more value". The creator is unsure what data is needed and therefore creates a solution that tries to do one thing above all: cover all conceivable scenarios.

But does such an approach deliver the required and necessary added value that justifies the investment?

Value is added when a product or service satisfies a specific need. In the context of a data visualization application, this means: What concrete needs exist on the company and user side that can be (better) met in the future with the help of the application?

So how can we better meet the needs of decision makers and thus ...

- use the available data in the company more intensively?
- secure the data assets sustainably?
- better align the organization around common goals?
- gain more insights from the data?
- derive more effective measures and ensure implementation?
- comply more easily with regulations, standards, and laws?
- improve transparency and objectivity in decision-making processes?
- respond more agilely to change and shorten decision cycles?

Visualizing data is not an end in and of itself, but rather a means to help users perform their tasks efficiently and effectively. Instead of an application with a lot of data and many filtering options, we need to develop a solution that seamlessly integrates into the user's work processes. The goal is to create a management application that optimizes decision-making processes and is perceived as making work easier.
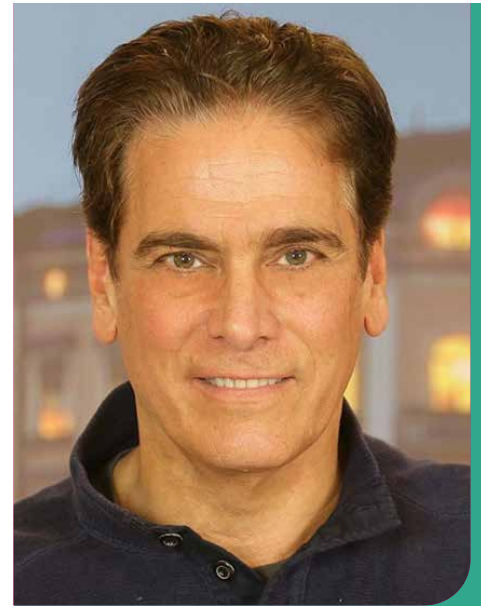
Rudy Nadilo,
Senior Vice President,
Business Development

Rudy is Senior Vice President, Reporting Solutions for the Americas at Forsta. He has served as CEO, CMO, technologist, motivator and turnaround expert, as well as the sales "force" behind the sales teams where he has been engaged. He has helped transform the marketing research industry not once but twice with his pioneering work as CEO of Greenfield Online, and by launching Dapresy (now Forsta) to the North American market.

Nielsen Rolls Out Enhanced Media Spend Tracker *Nov 2 2021*
Nielsen has launched an enhanced version of its Ad Intel Digital product in Singapore, allowing clients to monitor competitors' media expenditure by product across screens and formats including social, video and general display.

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Alexander Skorka, Consultant to Forsta

Alexander Skorka is an expert in visual analytics. In his role, he advises companies worldwide on the design, development and implementation of professional analytics and dashboard applications in marketing, market research and experience management. He has worked as Managing Director and CPO at Dapresy (now Forsta), led the market research operations unit at Kantar Germany and was the CEO of a data visualization agency. He is the author of several articles and books on storytelling, data visualization and data-driven decision making. His consulting benefits from his 30+ years of practical experience in market research, marketing, analytics, data visualization, and business management.

User-centered design (UCD) is an important trend and success factor.

In this context, so-called user-centered design (UCD) is an important trend and success factor. The user is put first, followed by the context and the data. Regardless of the industry, UCD follows the same thinking process: first, it is important to understand the specific tasks and problems to be solved. What problems are users trying to solve, what tasks do they need to complete, and what potential obstacles do they face? What information and functionality do they need to do their job in the best possible way?

Users want a simple, straightforward user experience that gives them the information they need with as little effort and complexity as possible. They are looking for active support for their daily work so they can focus on more strategic and valuable tasks. Few users have a strong interest in analyzing data in

Customer Journey

First contact

Time till servic information provi

ABC POWER
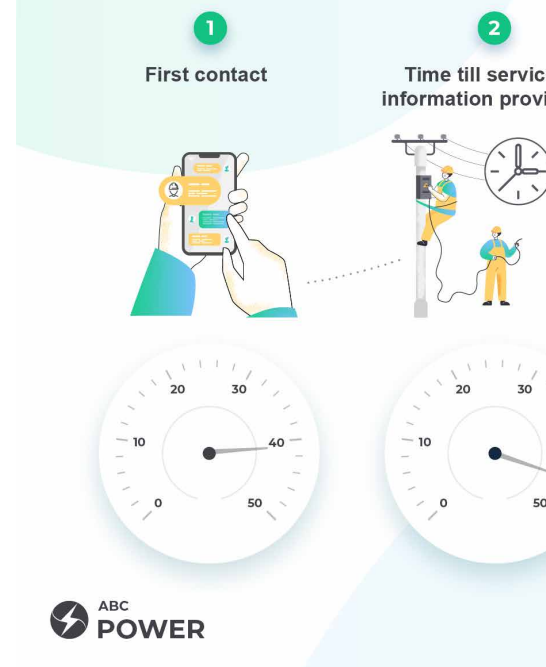
detail. The ever-increasing volume of data forces them to set priorities. This means that the solution must be oriented to the users' workflows and not the other way around. Applications that think out

DRNO Timeline

we already know the problem to be solved. But what happens if we don't know what situations we will have to react to tomorrow and what information is needed in this context?

In the future, users will need to engage in dialog with data: to ask the data specific questions and not have to think about which interactions to perform and in what order. Instead, working with data must feel like an active dialog, where the user asks one question after another, and the data provides the most precise answers possible.

Of course, users will increasingly be able to formulate questions in natural language.

In the case of complex questions, even this method of communication will quickly reach its limits since extensive questions cannot be answered directly by the data. They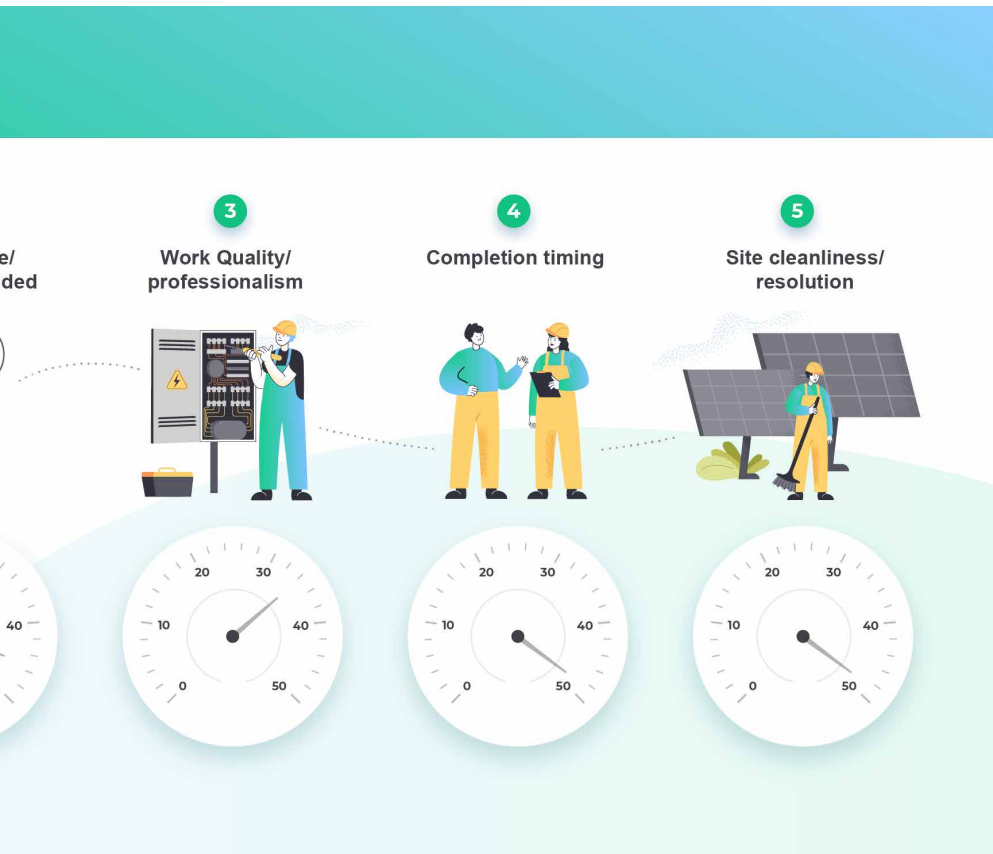 must be broken down into a meaningful sequence of individual analysis steps, each of which can be answered separately by the data. The result is a structured user-data dialog. At the same time, the sequence is automatically adapted to the individual needs and questions of the user. The application ensures that only the information necessary to answer the question asked is displayed in the sequence. Instead of reading a firmly defined story, the user enters a situation-based and results-oriented dialog with the data.

The creation of such dialogs may seem costly. However, it is a convincing method of bringing decision-makers together with data and business information in a targeted manner, especially in the case of complex and extensive questions. Practice shows that data visualizations that rely on dialogs significantly facilitate the work of users, as they bring decision makers together with data in a targeted manner.

Instead of reading a firmly defined story, the user enters a situation-based and results-oriented dialog with the data.

of the data are a thing of the past. The future belongs to solutions that precisely know the individual information-gathering and decision-making processes of users with all their facets, and map them as efficiently and effectively as possible. The better this succeeds, the more value is created from data for users and the company.

#2: Storytelling becomes dialog-based

When people hear stories, they feel

emotionally addressed and remember them better than dry facts. The idea of using data visualizations to tell stories and give meaning to numbers and data continues to grow in popularity. To do this effectively, you must give the data a clear and compelling voice. Consequently, you must first explore the data yourself, gain insights, and derive actionable conclusions. Only based on this groundwork can you tell a story that makes sense to the user.

In a world in which more and more decisions must be made under increasing time pressure, such an approach quickly reaches its limit. Stories work well when

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#3: AI takes on the role of a personal assistant

In the future, fact-based decision-making will increasingly require consistent access to a large amount and variety of data, without decision-makers having to deal with the immense challenges this entails. Users need insights that facilitate their daily work and optimize decision-making processes.

Conventional approaches only work to a limited extent in this environment. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) can help collect, process, and analyze these vast amounts of data at a speed that humans cannot match. In doing so, AI does not pose a threat to users. Rather, these techniques must be seen as supporting decision makers. AI takes on the role of a personal assistant, allowing users more time to do what really matters: focus on tasks that drive the business forward. Artificial intelligence and machine learning make fact-based decision-making smarter, not harder.

Natural language processing (NLP) using machine learning already enables, for example, easy analysis and interpretation of unstructured data, including text, audio, and video. Data sources that contain an enormous treasure trove of actionable insights.

AI takes on the role of a personal assistant, allowing users more time to do what really matters: focus on tasks that drive the business forward.

Medallia Hires for Asia Pacific Growth *Nov 9 2021*
US-based customer and employee experience management firm Medallia has appointed Denise Miura as Vice President leading growth in Japan and elsewhere in Asia Pacific. She is based in Tokyo.

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In the future, artificial intelligence will also sustainably improve the dialog between users and data by supporting users in monitoring business processes. AI can independently analyze data streams, search for changes, innovations, and trends, keep users up to date and actively alert them to important events. There is no need for ongoing, manual monitoring of metrics and data streams. AI can support decision-makers in prioritizing areas for action. It can independently search for causes of observed problems, derive potential alternative courses of action, and make or at least prepare decisions.

In short, AI can analyze information in the context of the items that are currently most relevant to a particular user. It can help separate the wheat from the chaff and support decision-makers in coping with the ever-increasing data streams and complexity of decisions by compiling information and insights individually and focused according to target group and need, like a personal assistant.

#4 The democratization of knowledge

Employers today expect a certain level of familiarity and comfort with data, its analysis, visualization, and interpretation, not just from select employees, but from their entire organizations. Consequently, we will increasingly see tools aimed at providing everyone with easy, fast and secure access to data. Data visualization tools play the crucial role here. They enable the democratization of data and analytics and make data-driven insights accessible to everyone in an organization. As a result, new business opportunities and solutions to challenges can be identified more quickly, ideas developed, and innovations driven forward.

However, the ever-increasing complexity of many decisions requires more than

The "knowledge is power" mindset that often still exists must change into a culture of "knowledge is for sharing,"

just consistent democratization of data. Decisions must leverage an organization's knowledge and best practices. The "knowledge is power" mindset that often still exists must change into a culture of "knowledge is for sharing," and the democratization of data gives rise to the democratization of knowledge.

In such a world, digital collaboration becomes a critical success factor. Questions, information, insights and knowledge must be easily shared. Teams must be able to jointly analyze data, discuss findings and potential actions, and document decisions made without

leaving the data visualization software they are using. Seamless integration with the organization's knowledge and communication technologies becomes a must.

This also requires that every team member must be able to participate in decision-making using the device of their choice, be it a desktop computer, laptop, or mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet - at any time and any place. Therefore, a consistent policy of "mobile usage must also be supported" is critical - especially to include those employees who only use smartphones due to their workplace.

The above trends and approaches will ensure that the strategic value we can extract from data continues to grow in the enterprise. We must be prepared to embrace these trends and approaches - even if implementation seems challenging at first. As a result, we will find that we are making the most of the available data assets, meeting user needs, and making decisions more effectively. ■

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THE YEAR IN DATA VIZ

News summary and commentary by
Nick Thomas and Mel Crowther, MrWeb

Product Analytics Firm Mixpanel Raises $200m *Nov 16 2021*
Product analytics firm Mixpanel has raised $200m in a Series C round of funding, valuing the company at $1.05 billion. The firm will use the investment to accelerate product development and scale its team in North America, EMEA and Asia Pacific over the next 12 to 18 months.

DRNO Timeline

Two years on from our last supplement focusing on data viz, many of the same themes emerge from DRNO's daily coverage - big investments; partnerships and integration with other parts of the research process (traditional and new); and the contrast between companies trying to round out an end-to-end offering by buying in data viz skills or adding their own solutions in the area, and those focusing entirely on visualization and data sharing.

Yet, much is different - two years ago, in autumn 2020, economies were in limbo, coming out of a first lockdown but still totally uncertain about how many more there might be and how long we'd have to wait for a recovery: and while macroeconomic uncertainty seems to be permanent these days and new reasons have emerged for cutbacks and caution, there is more of a feeling of normality, and the feeling a year ago of 'having to get on with it now' has given way in a few cases at least to 'having forgotten that we ever really paused'.

This year we've seen money coming into data viz on a slightly different scale to 2019-20: some of the large software-focused specialists are now huge, or their bankrolls are; the process of consolidation is further along; and AI, or what's generally referred to as AI is more front and centre in the evolution of the sector, which is reflected in the articles elsewhere in this supplement as well as in the news.

The big research firms are responding to change in different ways. Two mega-mergers have shaken up the top ten: NielsenIQ and GfK, and IRI and The NPD Group. Ipsos is back in healthy growth mode, and confidently tackling changes in the sector in its own way, further rolling out its .digital offering and winning accolades for innovation. 'Next-gen' firms, some of whom already seem like they've been around the industry a while, are also in expansive mode - Dynata, Qualtrics and Zappi, for example illustrate the diversity in this category.

Very large customer and user experience specialists which have crept onto the radar also continue to boom. Sprinklr and Contentsquare particularly caught our eye this year, and one of the reasons why Google has shelved its Surveys and Surveys

360 solutions may be the crowd of hi-tech companies pushing into the sector, making it highly competitive. There are unicorns and 9-figure investments everywhere you look - Collibra valued at $5.25bn, ThoughtSpot at $4.2bn, Invoca at $1.1bn, and funding for Mixpanel ($200m), Medallia (recently acquired for $6.4bn), audience insight platform GWI ($180m funds), business analytics firm Pyramid ($120m), creative analytics platform VidMob ($110m), AI and advanced analysis firm Fractal ($360m) and market intelligence provider AlphaSense ($225m) - we did say the list was long, 'though the above is incomplete.

Most of these are companies where data viz and data sharing play a large part, rather than being the core activity, but more focused firms like Reltio and Yellowbrick Data, Opendatasoft, Karlsgate, Indico Labs, Zing Data, Snowplow Analytics, Dropbase and Datawisp, Explo, Sightfull, StarTree, Employee Cycle and Notably are also getting multimillion dollar backing. Phew - and yes, again, that's just a selection.

Medallia, whose sale to investment firm Thoma Bravo was completed a year ago, is one of several companies constantly rounding out its offer with services complementary to its current range, aiming for an all-in, end-to-end service / solution. This is often done by buying: this year Medallia bought Thunderhead, while Dynata snapped up machine learning firm

There are unicorns and 9-figure investments everywhere you look

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Optimus Analytics, and software firms from outside the sector (think ad tech, digital transformation) added analytics power to their arms with the acquisitions of Evolytics, netRivals and Martin.

Three sponsors of our publications past and present were particularly active in this way, QuestionPro buying qual software firm Digsite and CX and journey mapping company SuiteCX, while Forsta added Local Marketing Platform Rio SEO and employee ideation platform HelloIgnite and was itself acquired by healthcare experience specialist Press Ganey - plenty more about these last acquisitions and mergers in Kyle Ferguson's interview below. Ipsos, with continuing growth in revenue and a rising share price continuing to buck the general bear market, has a war chest as part of a recently announced Four-Year Growth Plan, and accordingly promoted 24-year company veteran Jean-Michel Mabon to Head of Mergers and Acquisitions - watch this space.

It's perhaps slightly rarer for one data viz-focused firm to buy another, but it does happen, as when Canada's Dundas Data Vizualizations was acquired by insightsoftware, in August.

When it comes to offering a broad range of solutions, some companies prefer partnerships and integrations to acquisitions, while some do both. In the summer, insights platform Stravito partnered with search-based survey analysis specialist KnowledgeHound to help clients centralize all their insights and survey data in a single platform, and Stravito also announced a range of other integrations. Retail data and research firm VST (Virtual Store Trials) promoted in August for a new role, Chief Research & Partnership Officer, and teamed up with dunnhumby to launch Planogram Publisher. There were tie-ups for Australian firms DBM Consultants and geospatial specialist RDA Research; and for streaming insights provider Conviva

Rounding out an offer with services complementary to the current range... is often done by buying

and computer vision specialist VISUA in the US. Forsta were also active here, striking deals with analytics tech firm Lumoa, voice analysis company Phebi, text analytics specialist Canvs AI and ad tech and data company Big Village.

As you would expect in a sector so busy in other respects, there have been a mass of product launches and extensions. Dashboards and systems for monitoring media spend and success account for a good proportion of these: in the Spring, digital media measurement and verification firm Integral Ad Science launched a product giving a Unified View of campaigns, and a suite measuring the ROI of contextual targeting, while location intelligence and marketing software company Reveal Mobile launched Mira, a self-service platform for out of home (OOH) campaign measurement. In June, Comscore's Total Digital solution brought UX data together with social media and other digital measures in one dashboard, since when Mediatel has launched an app and Appsumer a dashboard offering channel measurement data.

Elsewhere, verbatim coding and more general text analytics were addressed in launches by US firm Ascribe; while Medallia's new Athena promises to create custom AI models and analytics for unstructured data. Visual tools to help with user and customer experience were launched by WEVO, Klaviyo and three times by Qualtrics (Employee Experience, social media response and XM Benchmarks). Forsta added a Digital
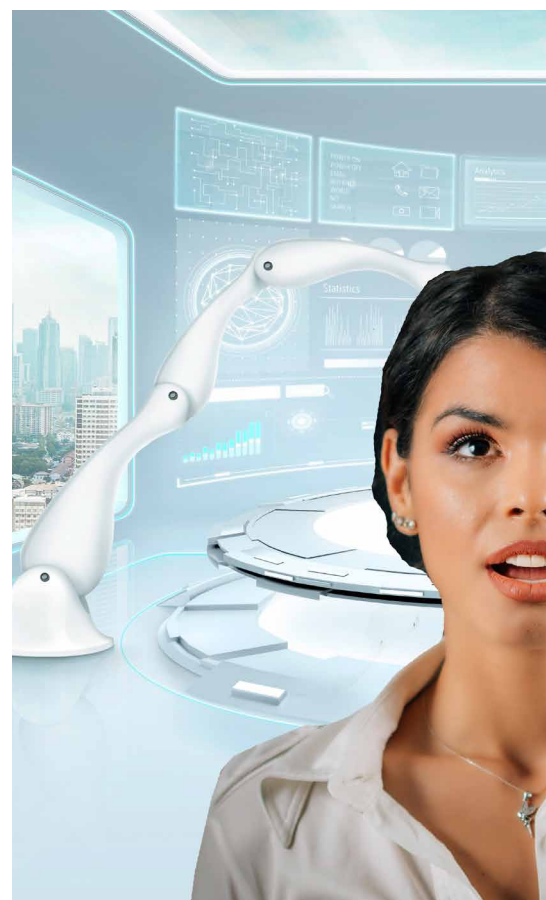
Diaries ethnography app, upgraded its InterVu online groups solution and perhaps most significantly launched a 'Human Experience (HX) Partner Program for MR Agencies', allowing clients to white label integrated VoC programs hosted on its platform. New York-based end-to-end consumer insights platform Suzy integrated a data visualisation tool, Data Explorer, into its suite at the same time as adding options for video open-ends and Max Diff choice rankings.

There were also dashboard and analytics platform launches for Stravito, location intelligence firm Kalibrate, US healthcare MR firm InCrowd, digital optimization software firm Amplitude, full-service agency E2E Research, Aha! Insights Technology and Stamford, CT-based technology research and advisory firm ISG. Big players Nielsen (media spend

Nielsen Launches Sports Insights Tool STADIUM *Nov 25 2021*
In Australia and New Zealand, Nielsen has launched a client engagement platform called STADIUM, offering a solution for media evaluation, advertising intelligence and consumer behavioural data all in one place.

DRNO Timeline

admits in his interview below [NT page 40], a little bit in awe of technology, and we should be more confident in asserting what we personally bring to the party.

Elsewhere in this publication you'll find plenty of talk about hybrid solutions, in this context meaning not a variety of fieldwork types, or indeed cars ambivalent about their fuel, but companies offering clients the use of leading edge software to analyse and present their data, alongside human expertise to set up the systems, exploit their full potential and interpret their analysis. Technology - often in the form of machine learning software (much that's promoted as 'AI' would more properly be described as machine learning, in our opinion - other forms of genuine AI are still pretty rare) - is indeed reducing the need for certain traditional market research skills: but this has always been the way, from the days when widespread use of telephones for research displaced some ftf work - insight skills needs change and if one were to examine them every ten years or so, there would always be new categories appearing and newer categories taking major share away from previously dominant groups. If anything is in short supply, it's not careers for well-trained researchers, it is - still - well-trained researchers for the jobs. In particular, at the moment, there are too few people skilled in helping businesses to use the new technology, not at the level of merely operating it, but in making the best use of it to address information needs, accurate interpretation of its findings, and imaginative use of the insights it can help to uncover.

For us, looking at the past year's news from a data viz perspective has only served to underline this skills gap. Part of data visualization takes place not on the screen, but in the head, and minds that do this really well are - and seem likely to remain - gold dust. ◾

and sports) and Kantar launched features with interactive reporting, while new tools from Amazon promised sellers more insights to help to launch new products and increase sales. If you wanted new ways to look at data about physician behaviour, consumer attitudes to wine, or the online presence and performance of your hotel, new services from sector specialists tackled these.

One general conclusion from the above is that it's all about software - the money follows it, our headlines are often dominated by it, and even the quotes we get from CEOs - generally so well-schooled in opining that it's the people that make their organisation great - are somewhat more likely than they used to be, to focus in their announcements on the amazing tech they bring and not the amazing people there to help clients use it properly. We are, as Sandro Kaurlatz

Mel Crowther, MrWeb

Mel Crowther became MrWeb's News Editor in 2006 after nearly seven years leading ORC International's marketing team in London. Since then she's gathered and written the majority of Daily Research News stories, driving and consolidating its position as 'the MR world's daily paper'.

Nick Thomas, MrWeb

Nick Thomas founded MrWeb in 1998 after working in B2B research for London-based IFF and then as an independent. In addition to managing the company as a whole he writes a proportion of the news, and compiles and edits feature publications.

Funds for Tethr, Passbase and Datasembly *Dec 9 2021*
Analytics and digital ID firms Tethr, Passbase and Datasembly have announced VC wins of between $7m and $15m this week; while Twilio will invest $50m in customer engagement start-ups via a new fund of its own.

Nov - Dec 2022

VIDEO INTERVIEW
in conversation:
KYLE FERGUSON

Watch the full video at mrweb.com/drno/kyleferguson.htm

KYLE FERGUSON, CEO, FORSTA

Kyle Ferguson joined Forsta as CEO in 2020 with over 20 years' experience in technology, banking and payments industries. Prior to joining Forsta he was Chief Executive at Fraedom, a global financial technology company, where he successfully led the company's sale to Visa Inc. in 2018. Prior to this he also served as Chief Commercial Officer and Managing Director at the company, and previously spent 11 years with American Express. Kyle is a seasoned executive with a track record of developing and leading high performing teams in the SaaS technology space, while supporting these businesses through necessary investment and growth stages.

Forsta Adds Phebi's Voice Analysis to Platform *Dec 9 2021*
Forsta, the company formed through the merger of Confirmit, FocusVision and Dapresy, has announced a global partnership with London-based Phebi.AI, allowing clients to make use of Phebi's advanced voice analysis technology for qual and quant research on Forsta's end-to-end platform.

DRNO Timeline
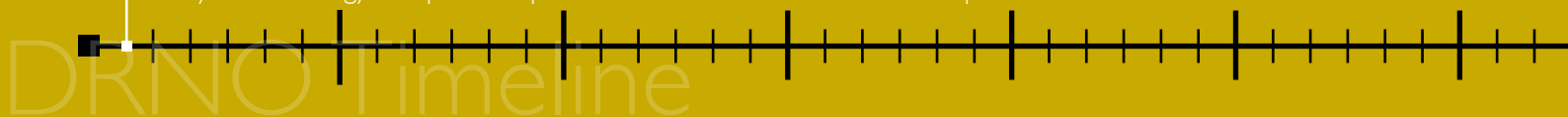
Parents

KF: I consider myself lucky in terms of the experience and opportunity I had growing up in a middle-class environment in Toronto in the suburbs. My childhood was centered in family values. My parents created a space for my older sister and I so that we could learn, be curious and make mistakes along the way. It opened up opportunities for us, whether that was through sport, academia or travel and culture.

That creates a well-rounded view. But for me, I think the biggest thing I learned through my parents is empathy. As a leader today, I think it's one of the most important virtues: to understand what's going on within your organization. So, getting that dose at an early age, I think, has gone a long way in terms of shaping my career choices and getting me to where I am today.

I owe a lot to my family. We're very close, we spend lots of time together. Every opportunity I have to get back to Canada to go and see them, I certainly try and do so.

NT: What work did they do, your father and mother?

KF: My mum was a schoolteacher who later in her career turned into a guidance counsellor. She would come home every evening and share with me what was going on with some of the kids that she was mentoring. My father was an architect, so I'd be sitting there watching him constantly thinking, sketching and creating. The combination of the two, juxtaposed against one another, has been a real light in my life. I think about the bond they've forged – they're coming up on almost sixty years of marriage, so that gives you some sense of the environment I was exposed to, which was very helpful in shaping me.

NT: Lots of empathy and understanding - but was there any sense of steering or guiding you as to what you should do for a job?

KF: The guidance that I got from my parents is: "choose the path that brings you the greatest joy and interest, and you can always learn from that." No real steering, other than support, and when you're playing athletics or focused on academics – my family was incredibly supportive, driving me to practices and training – you name it.

Life On The Ice

I chose early on in life to pursue an athletic career at the same time as an academic one. I got into elite sport at a relatively early age and followed that path for a very long time. I was exposed to some incredibly strong leaders and coaches and mentors, and peer leaders. When you play elite sport, you're surrounded by the best of the best. Leadership and role playing – understanding your role for the common good – is absolutely critical to build high-performing winning teams.

NT: Which elite sport?

KF: Well, I'm Canadian, right? So it has to be ice hockey, of course. I played ice hockey fairly competitively into my twenties, and then realised one day that there's always someone bigger, faster and stronger, and therefore I might want to lean back on my academic choices.

NT: Do you get the big personalities in ice hockey that need a lot of management, as in many other sports?

KF: On every team, you've got different personalities. Knowing your role is critical because – a hockey analogy – you can't have twenty of the best goal scorers on a hockey team. You need people who can keep the puck out of the net, you need defenders and you need people who know how to set up plays and who can be more supportive. So, as they say, it takes a whole village to raise that child.

> You can't have twenty of the best goal scorers on a hockey team. You need people who can keep the puck out of the net, you need defenders...

December 2022

Many Mergers

Before the pandemic, I had been approached by a company called Confirmit, looking for someone to help lead them in this next phase of their evolution. I'd had quite a bit of success previously in taking companies from growth stages and developing them into high-performance operating businesses, and bringing in talent - and developing talent from within - to make that happen. I had a track record of doing that in the fintech space. The thing that really intrigued me about the market research landscape and the experience landscape is not only the history, but also the technology itself, and the customer relationships.

This company, Forsta, has roots that go back almost thirty years. They were the pioneers and the people who effectively digitised traditional market research methods. That really interested me. Not only did they have what I would say is the best-in-class platform to serve both the research and the experience landscape, they also had some fantastic and phenomenal people to do that. But at this stage, like any company, they had to evolve because the market was evolving. So that's when I joined.

The one thing that I worked out very quickly when I joined Forsta a couple of years ago is that our customers and their

Forsta has roots that go back almost thirty years. They were the pioneers and the people who effectively digitised traditional market research methods

customers – whether you're a market research agency or you're an enterprise brand – are all looking to do the same thing: to compete, to win, to create value for your customers, to reduce operational costs and drive efficiencies in your organization. And data doesn't do much unless it leads to some kind of action. This is why we've made the decisions that we've made over the last couple of years. Bringing Dapresy into the fold and joining forces with FocusVision, and later joining forces with Press Ganey. At the end of the day, if our clients can't benefit from the technology and the data that we're able to bring to them, then it doesn't really serve any purpose at all, does it?

Press Ganey (PG) is at the forefront of what we call patient experience and practitioner or care worker experience in the healthcare industry. They've got an incredibly strong market position in North America with over 41,000 clients - whether they're health systems, hospitals or surgery centers. If you're a patient in North America and you've had to go and visit the doctor, or you've had to go to a hospital for surgery, you will have come into contact with PG at some point. We had also been working with them for a number of years as a strategic partner. They took our technology and white labelled it on behalf of their customers. So, bringing together these two big players in their respective industries made absolute sense for Pat Ryan, who is PG's CEO and Chairman.

Pat was actually one of the first people I met after the pandemic. The story I like to tell is that Forsta went through a number of mergers and acquisitions, and we evolved the business and changed ownership and brought in new investment, and we went through this complete transformation in less than eighteen months - but I hadn't met anyone actually in person throughout that entire time. Interestingly enough, the first person that I met in person here in London was Pat,

But I hadn't met anyone actually in person throughout that entire time

because we saw an opportunity in our respective industries where we could join forces and catapult both our businesses into the next phase of evolution.

The combination gives PG access to best-in-class SaaS-based technology that will leapfrog them in their industry by three to five years. On the Forsta side, we're getting access to operational scale and leverage and investment that will accelerate our strategy and the plans we already have. In less than six months since we announced that to the marketplace, we've acquired HelloIgnite, a crowdsourcing firm; and a company called Rio SEO that is at the forefront of what we call local experience, focusing on the first thing you do when you're trying to work out what services or products you're going to buy, ie to go online and run a search.

Looking at HelloIgnite: we had been using this crowdsourcing tool, internally for some time now, and it became obvious to us that this was a capability that our customers would love. We were using it to crowdsource innovative ideas across our entire company population - at that time 800-900 people. Within a global organization like Forsta, where we're not able to meet up like we used to as a result of the pandemic, having a tool that is able to synthesise and succinctly draw down on great ideas, to be able to vote them up and then take those ideas and turn them into action and stories for our technology teams to put into the product road map... that was revolutionary for us.

We've also upgraded one of our qualitative tools, a tool called InterVu, running focus

Dynata Buys Data Science Firm 0ptimus Analytics *Dec 13 2021*
First-party data platform Dynata has acquired AI and machine learning company 0ptimus Analytics, whose platform connects, models and transforms insights into activation in real time. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

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groups and projects through the cloud to help our customers where things have shifted post-pandemic, especially in the qualitative space. And we've launched our digital diaries mobile app, which is a tool that helps our customers run ethnography and understand what's happening with the products and services of their respective customers in that lifecycle, and that journey.

And then, most importantly, the uniqueness and robustness of our platform means we can now white label both customer experience and employee experience tools for our partner and customer agencies, so they can go out there and offer those to their respective customers.

So, in this combined company, you now have Press Ganey, which is really the driving force in the healthcare world globally, and then you've got Forsta, which will continue to service market research as well as commercial and enterprise brands across insurance, technology and finance and so on. The combined scale, and what I would call operating leverage, in this company is unparalleled in our industry.

NT: Does being bought by a healthcare specialist mean that the balance will be changing between the sectors you're working in?

KF: No. [Forsta is] getting access to greater investment scale, so that we can continue to drive growth in… [all] the commercial verticals that we service, and, most importantly, market research. I'm going to continue to lead the charge of the Forsta business, and my colleague Darren Dworkin, who is now leading the healthcare side [PG] – we both have a mandate to grow our respective lines of business. The only way we're going to do that is by using this shared human experience platform and to continue to invest in that.

Investing In Tech

We make big bets in terms of bringing on new engineers. In the last six months alone, we brought 100 new developers into the Forsta organization. We're going to continue to make big investments like that. But it is a finite amount, and like any technology business, whether you're Google or whoever, you have to be very smart about how you prioritise. You do that by effectively seeing the wood from the trees, because there are a million things that you could be doing. You could be servicing technical debt, you could be building on the platform itself, you could be bringing new features and functions to differentiate. The most important thing is to look at what you are. You've got to stay true to what your vision is, what your mission is, and how are you going to line up your resources and your assets behind that so you get the best bang for buck - so that your customers can benefit from the decisions you make. That's really, really critical.

Funds for CX Management Firm Medallia *Dec 14 2021*
Following its recent $6.4 billion takeover by software investment firm Thoma Bravo, customer experience management specialist Medallia has received an undisclosed amount of minority funding from UAE-based Mubadala Investment Company.

December 2022

Data Viz and SmartHub

We're really excited that we've been able to integrate all of the different data collection assets we got through acquisitions and mergers onto what we call a SmartHub - our version of a data lake or data repository. Again, very unique in the space where we operate. I like to say things like 'all roads lead to SmartHub'. Why? It doesn't matter whether you're a patient, an agency, a brand - what you're trying to do is get a 360-degree view of your respective industry, your customers and your people, all into one single platform. So we're spending a lot of time and energy integrating through API and connectors into SmartHub, so that we're able to then take that data, turn it into a story and visualise it. Thanks to the acquisition of Dapresy, we're able to showcase all this data - across employees, across customers, across patients, across industries - in one centralised place, and synthesize that into stories so that customers can make decisions, drive action and change the trajectory of their respective businesses.

To me, data visualization is a core tenet and focus for our business, and one of the reasons why we brought Dapresy into the fold and made this a significant player in our strategy. We continue to invest in this because I firmly believe that data visualization is the calling card to getting companies and people to act. When you're trying to synthesise millions and millions of data points - again, no matter what your data collection method is, whether it's a focus group in the cloud or in a facility, or you're trying to run a survey in a particular region or country or demographic, or you're trying to collect data straight through social listening or through off-line methods - if you can't take that data point, humanise it in some way or another to try and drive an action, it doesn't really have much value, does it? That's where data visualization can absolutely help, and why

> If you can't take that data point, humanise it in some way or another to try and drive an action, it doesn't really have much value, does it?

we're placing a lot of emphasis on what we're doing.

We help customers with their journey maps. We will sit down with them and say, 'Okay, what is it you're trying to achieve, what is the ideal journey that you want your customers to take?' And then we will actually overlay an infographic or picture of what that journey looks like, with all the key data points, so that for leaders like me when I'm walking into my next board meeting, I can then bring that up on screen or hand that out and immediately have the impact. It allows you to draw your attention to the moments that matter and the key metrics that will ultimately help you make decisions to drive different business outcomes. Data visualization is a critical element making that happen.

2-3 Years In The Future?

KF: We're hearing a lot about AI, machine learning and NLP, right? And if I think about the investments that we've made and joining forces with Press Ganey, and the journey that we've been on over the last couple of years, we've also been making big bets and big investments in those areas through the different acquisitions. So we're already on the forefront, whether it's text analytics or running machine learning to help our customers, driving efficiencies in terms of survey creation and those processes. Where I think this will ultimately end up is in a world where you're going to be able to determine outcomes before they even happen. You will see the signs that

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learn a new skill. Try and understand the next move. Make it easier on your boss by doing the work in advance.' That's something that, again, I've learned through trial and error.

Work hard: I mean, it's not a revolutionary concept, is it? But certainly, in my experience, those individuals who have progressed their careers, if that's what they want to do, have tended to put in the extra effort and to really work hard. To me, it's a bit of a no-brainer.

The last one, which probably is the most important one: *Don't be a jerk.* What I really mean by that is, 'stick to your values, to your core.' It's one of the things that we're very, very passionate about here at Forsta. We have a set of values, and it starts from the top down. It's about leading by example, and it's about exhibiting values such as empathy and understanding, what's going on with the people that you're working with, getting to the depth. Everyone has lives inside and outside of work, and so trying to understand a bit more about what makes people tick - you'll get more out of them in doing that. I think there's a way that you can do it and conduct yourself in a very respectful way. You will get more in return.

NT: (laughing) It sounds like a tough motto... do you ever actually point to it on the wall and say 'Don't be a jerk!' to people?

KF: Well, you know, we published our values, and we take great efforts to ensure that we are walking the walk. We hold each of us accountable in internal meetings, online. Making sure that we're all subscribing, and we all agree that these are the things that we're going to sign up for, I think is really important, and it's been intrinsic to the success of the Forsta organization in a very short period of time. It's based on everyone stepping up and being willing to do what it takes in order to make that happen. ◼

Turn up on time, work hard, and don't be a jerk... Let me unpack that for you a little bit.

matter, before the event actually happens, through mountains of data. But again, you can only use these technologies if you have all this data in one single place. So that's why it's so important that we put such an emphasis on bringing that together through SmartHub. And we will continue to do that in the future.

Motto

KF: Based on trial and error and successes and failures over the course of my career, I've got a pretty simple mantra. I brought this to the Forsta organization a couple of years ago - in fact apparently, they've printed up T-shirts out of it. It's pretty simple, right:

Turn up on time, work hard, and don't be a jerk.

Let me unpack that for you a little bit.

Turning up on time: what that really means is 'be ahead of the curve, be proactive, go and seek information now. Go and

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Little Replaces Hammer as Bloomfire CEO *Jan 10 2022*
In the US, knowledge management platform Bloomfire has appointed Ben Little as Chief Executive Officer, as Mark Hammer moves to an advisory role, for personal reasons.

Dec - Jan 2022

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USING AI TO DISCOVER INSIGHTS AND TELL VISUAL STORIES

Allen Bonde
Chief Marketing Officer,
Synthesio, an Ipsos Company

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Artificial Intelligence is transforming how companies do consumer research, track their brand, and even spot new product needs. And at the heart of each of these examples are specific AI and machine learning (ML) techniques that make it easier to discover insights – and present them more effectively to colleagues or clients. How? By automatically spotting trends across a universe of data points, then automating certain tasks required to prepare insights. And perhaps most compelling to those of us who grew up as data viz nerds, AI can also help to sort and label insights, and even edit or generate visualizations.

Allen Bonde
Chief Marketing Officer, Synthesio, an Ipsos Company

Allen is a long time AI and data nerd, holds a US Patent for a novel data fusion approach developed during his time in the telecoms sector, and has written for numerous publications on data-driven marketing and AI-enabled consumer intelligence. He is a McKinsey and Forrester alum, and has held leadership roles at several SaaS start-ups. Allen was also VP of Marketing and Innovation at OpenText, and co-founder of social marketing firm Offerpop (now Wyng), which powered the first Super Bowl hashtag campaign in 2011 for Audi. He has given talks on 4 continents, and is a graduate of WPI and the University of Virginia. In his spare time Allen enjoys hanging out at the beach and plays bass guitar in an almost famous blues rock band

These use cases fall under the umbrella of an emerging category of insights solutions that Forrester has branded as "AI-enabled consumer intelligence" – or AICI. The goal: blending machine intelligence and human expertise to combine data from outside sources like social or search with data that companies own, and providing tools for exploring it, spotting trends, and turning insights into visual stories. AICI has roots in social listening, as well as customer analytics, text analysis, and of course business intelligence and data visualization.

The story of AICI has been developing for some time. Along with decades of market research, advances in machine learning in the natural language understanding domain are making it possible to decode the true meaning of human language at Internet scale, and not only see what you are missing, but answer questions you don't yet know to ask. These are the unmet consumer needs you haven't yet discovered, or so-called "unknown unknowns."

AI enables new types of discovery

The cutting edge of applying AI in market research is using semantic analysis and machine learning to process and visualize what consumers are saying and doing. At Synthesio we call this Topic Modeling, and it's a direction we see more companies heading as they look to understand the

Not only see what you are missing, but answer questions you *don't yet know to ask*

Medallia to Buy Customer Journey Analyst Thunderhead *Jan 20 2022*
US-based customer and employee experience management specialist Medallia is to acquire the UK's Thunderhead, which develops enterprise technology for real-time customer journey 'orchestration' and analytics. Terms of the deal have not been disclosed.

January 2022
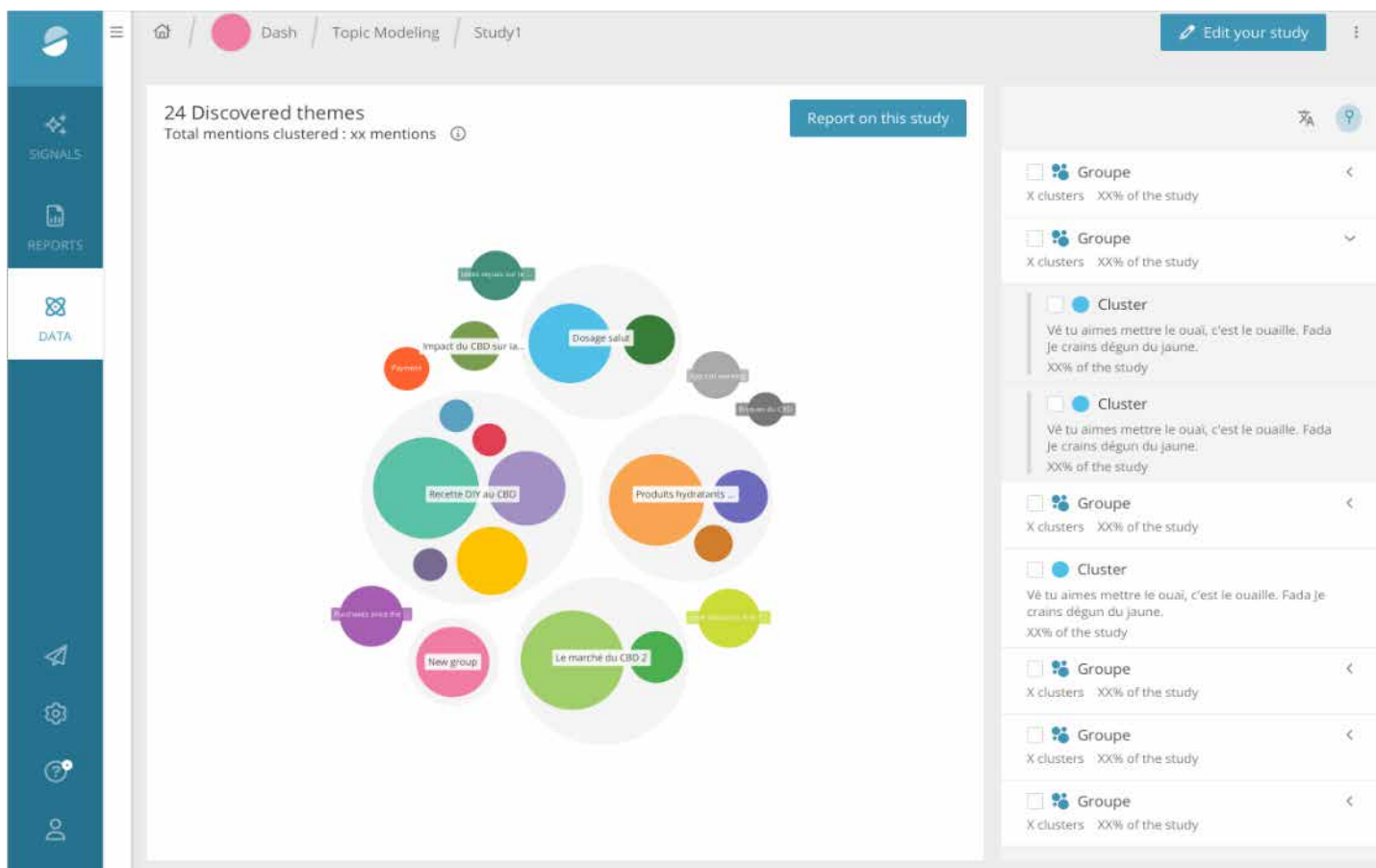
conversation landscape and harness the expanding universe of online and offline data sets. This approach helps them do this more efficiently, at scale, without the natural human biases that can creep in.

Topic Modeling uses a bottom-up analysis of conversations (from any source, including social media, survey responses, search data etc.) using Natural Language Processing (NLP) to understand what users are saying. This goes beyond basic keyword analysis to include context and domain-specific libraries to link similar comments even when they have few or no words in common. The clustering algorithm then categorizes conversations, producing a topic landscape, as shown above.

Topic Modeling uses a bottom-up analysis of conversations (from any source...) using Natural Language Processing (NLP) to understand what users are saying.

Our approach was co-built with our Ipsos colleagues to productize more than 5 years of research methodology related to trend detection. Solution providers often leverage relationships with universities and open source from cloud providers as well.

While our Topic Modeling solution is delivered as part of our AICI platform or as a new managed service, we are exploring additional ways to bring the power of machine learning to everyday work.

Automation shortens the path to insights

While AI (and especially machine learning) is great for spotting trends in data, and even building predictive models, one of the classic applications for AI is in automating tasks that are hard for

E2E Debuts Raven Dashboard for Smaller Projects
Jan 25 2022
In New York, full-service agency E2E Research has launched a dashboard solution called Raven, designed for small market and consumer research datasets.

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humans, or those that are repetitive, and humans would rather not do. In research, there are a number of tasks that fit this mold, especially when working with online data sets.

Here are 2 examples where AI and advanced data science can help to shorten the path to insights:

- **Clean your data sets and reduce noise.** Online consumer data is filled with noise. From traditional spam to bots on social sites, advertisements, and games, dirty data not only wastes resources, but also muddles your view of what customers are saying, and produces confusing

visualizations. An AI-powered noise reducer can automatically remove irrelevant mentions from your data set so analysts can zero in on genuine consumer expressions.

- **Analyze image and video content.** Most online conversations are not solely text-based; social media content today contains images, gifs, videos and emojis. If you are visualizing brand mentions for example, you are missing many (most!) if you just look at keywords. For example, 80% of all brand-related images don't reference brands in accompanying text. Data science-powered capabilities like automated logo detection and

scene recognition help researchers understand visual signals – and provide critical context about how and when consumers are using products, what activities are associated with their brand, etc.

AI can label and edit, and even help you dream up new ways to visualize

Moving from humans applying machines, to machines taking over more analysis (or design) tasks is the future. This could start by applying an approach like Topic Modeling to analyze social conversations, or other AI techniques for building
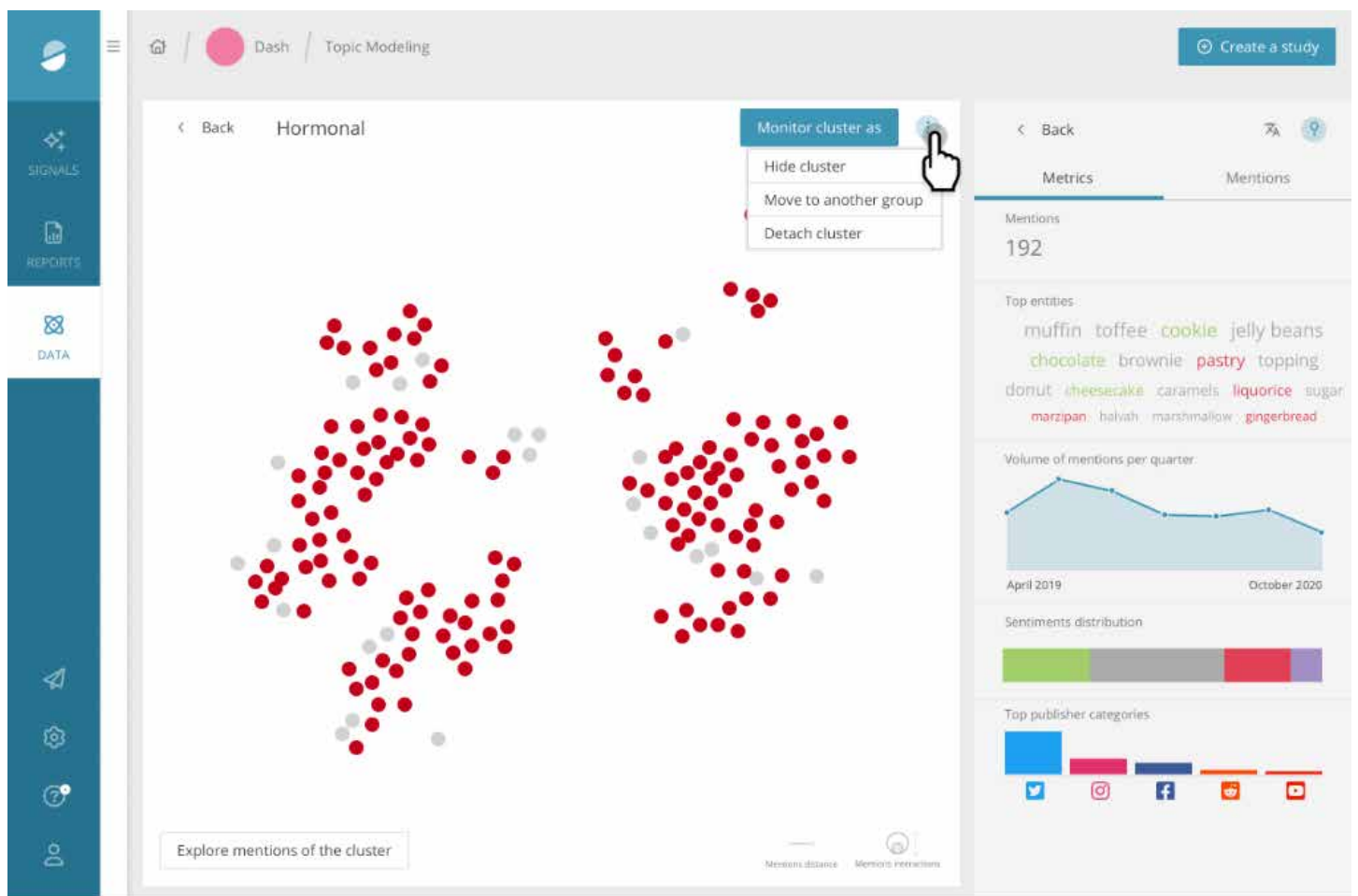
predictive models that help to see into the future. Beyond these examples, there are some emerging use cases that illustrate what is possible when AI services provide key capabilities for researchers to create better visualizations, or for designers to improve their visual storytelling with multimedia or even immersive experiences.

Here are 2 examples where AI-powered functions do the heavy lifting – allowing researchers to focus on follow-on analysis, and designers to push the limits of animated and even immersive visual experiences:

- **Automatically label conversation clusters.** Just as NLP is essential to finding meaning in online conversations (or processing large volumes of open-ended survey responses), Natural Language Generation (NLG) algorithms can apply this understanding to produce written or even spoken narratives from a data set. In our Topic Modeling example, Synthesio uses this approach to generate labels for conversation clusters, to

help teams identify and focus on emerging trends and remove bias in related visualizations (in this case the algorithm doesn't have an opinion, it just generates a label that best fits the conversation attributes).

- **Automatically edit or transform visuals.** While Synthesio and other AICI providers offer a range of visualizations (we especially like our new treemap widget for displaying hierarchical data and giving a quick view of the most important topics in a particular study, as shown below), the leading edge of using AI in visual design is annually on display at Adobe MAX, and in particular the firm's SNEAKS showcase in LA. Some highlights of the most recent show include using AI to fluidly bind shapes to text and using AI to project 2D design assets onto 3D environments.

From ML-powered analysis to generative design, AI is already shaping how researchers do their work, create insights, and work with designers to better tell

visual stories. And with new "as-a-service" options, we can get the power of tools like our Topic Modeling in the hands of everyone - allowing researchers to simply submit their question or area of interest to our team, and get back a visual snapshot of social conversations and suggestions on emerging themes in as soon as 24 hours (contact me to learn more about this new offering).

There's never been a more exciting time to be working with data, as the science driving both analysis and visualization accelerates – freeing up the insights professional to think more creatively, focus on key tasks, and zoom in on opportunities to drive proper business value. ◼

AI is already shaping how researchers do their work, create insights, and work with designers to better tell visual stories.

Top 10 hashtags (in volume) by country
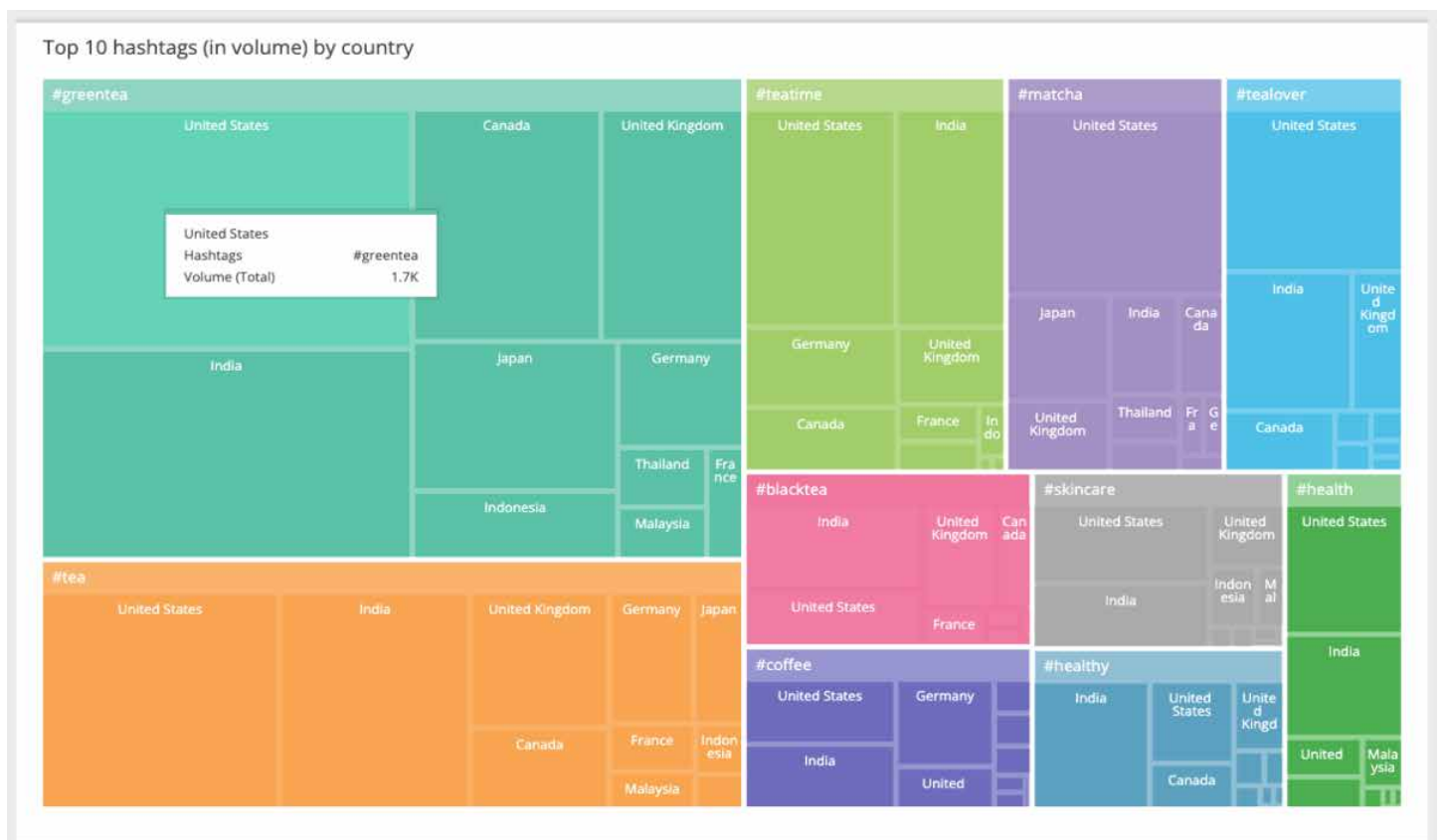
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The Forrester New Wave™: AI-Enabled
Consumer Intelligence Platforms, Q3 2021

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VIDEO INTERVIEW
in conversation:
JAMI PULLEY

*Watch the full video at
mrweb.com/drno/jamipulley.htm*

Veridata Insights is a global data collection and panel company, and recruitment expert for both qualitative and quantitative. The firm is headquartered in Dallas, Texas but is a virtual company with employees worldwide.

JAMI PULLEY
CEO AND CO-FOUNDER,
VERIDATA
INSIGHTS

Ascribe Adds to CX Inspector Text Analytics Software *Jan 28 2022*
US-based verbatim analysis software firm Ascribe has extended its text analytics software CX Inspector, adding new capabilities for analyzing open-ended responses, creating dashboards, and exporting results uncovering key topics, sentiment and insights.

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Parents

JP: I grew up in West Texas. Neither one of my parents graduated from college, and towards the end of their careers they were both leaders in multi-billion-dollar organizations, and actually had to hire people that only had college educations. They were able to gain that success by extreme work ethic; positive attitudes, making decisions that were fair for both the company and the teams that they were building; and also, being very stable and creative with how they developed the businesses and the teams around them. I can remember my father saying that there's a solution to everything: sometimes you just have to look a lot harder. He said the same thing about being positive and finding something positive about every situation. And we know with some of the crazy stuff that happens both professionally and personally that sometimes you do have to look really hard to find the positive nuggets in those situations. But be assured it's always there, and you have a good foundation. Veridata is really built on creating solutions with a positive attitude.

My mother was the only executive within her organization - and this was in the 1990s - that didn't live in California, where the company headquarters was located. She kept her home office in Odessa, Texas, and would travel back and forth as needed and she was a phenomenal example of how to work hard... have determination to figure almost anything out... And yes, you can do it all. So, I learned that from a very young age.

NT: What was your parents' actual work?

JP: Well again, in West Texas I'm sure this will be no shock to you, but my dad was in the oil and gas business! My mom actually worked for a cosmetic company which back then was called Jafra and was later bought by Gillette, but it was a direct sales company.

NT: Did they gently encourage you in a particular direction?

JP: I've always had a natural curiosity for the world - learning about different cultures and understanding all the phenomenal things that make this world unique, depending on where you go... and it's not that I got a lot of encouragement from my parents in that area, again being in West Texas! I'm the only family member that actually studied abroad - twice - but at the same time when I brought those things to my parents and said, 'Hey I'm really interested in this' they always supported me and encouraged me: 'Hey go! Go learn new things, like it's not our thing, but you should go for it'.

I can remember my father saying that there's a solution to everything: sometimes you just have to look a lot harder.

Rapid Expansion for Data Collection Firm Veridata *Feb 1 2022*
Texas-based data collection firm Veridata Insights has reported 150% year-over-year revenue growth and fifteen recent hires, having opened offices in Canada, Bulgaria, India and the UK.

Jan - Feb 2022

Setting up the company

JP: I spent thirteen years at eRewards, which then became Research Now. Then I left the organization and joined Critical Mix where Tom (Littlejohn) was also. We began working together there and when Critical Mix was acquired by Dynata we both took a step back and said, 'you know we really share a lot of core beliefs and thoughts on how to build a company, how to build successful teams, how to treat employees, how to build a panel and how to treat clients'. So, we created Veridata Insights and in the process because we did have so many core beliefs that were the same, we also ended up getting married! So here we are.

We just celebrated our three-year anniversary this summer, and I'm very proud to say that we have over thirty employees and we're in five different countries. We started off as a virtual organization not knowing that Covid would be hitting us a few months later, but we were already set up with the right strategy and growth plan to still achieve our business objectives, and we had the right people to be able to work through the challenges. So overall, we've had a very successful three years, and we've had zero outside funding. So, we've built the teams and the revenue and the technology from the ground up and those three things will continue to be a focus this year. We will hit double digit revenue numbers and have zero debt, which is something to be proud of. But we've done that through the people, through the sampling solutions and through technology.

Veridata USP

NT: Everybody wants to differentiate their companies - a USP or a particular niche they're trying to grow. So, what were you trying to do that was different to other data collection specialists?

JP: There are a few things. Technology is one: we want to be able to empower our teams more through technology. We built our project management system, Sample Tap, from the ground up to do alerts and operational things, freeing up our project managers to spend more time thinking about the projects. So, we're building a system where they don't have to constantly push the buttons. That way when there's issues, where interviews aren't coming in as we expected, or we're not getting the response rates we thought we would, they can go in and really be problem solvers. And again, they're empowered to make quick and nimble decisions to make sure the clients are happy with the results.

We really share a lot of core beliefs and thoughts on how to build a company

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The technology also helps us with sample consistency, so everything is stored within our system. So, if you call me in a year and want to do the same study, you know I can go into our systems very easily and go, 'okay, we need to keep the sample mix the same', and our system allows us to do that.

Since the inception of Veridata, we aim to get technology to do the basics and allow people to be the thinkers and to focus on the more complex parts of the business. And so, we're in the process of building a CRM system on top of our project management system. It was the best way to do it from both the timing and monetary standpoint, it takes a ton out of the double entry, which as you know does create an opportunity for human error. And then once that project is complete, it's notified in the project management system, then it will automatically be sent over to our financial system which will then invoice the client - and if we have partners on the project it will set up the partners for invoicing and for payment as well.

We built our project management system, Sample Tap, from the ground up to do alerts and operational things, freeing up our project managers to spend more time thinking about the projects.

With data visualization, some of it is making sure that you take out the noise, defining what information is useful, what information is nice to know

Data Usage Offering

NT: I've read that you offer to clients to go into their existing data and help them work with that - sort out what they have and analyse it?

JP: Over the last ten years companies have become a lot more aware of all the information that they have in their internal organizations, and one of the challenges is they don't know how to use it, or organise it where it's useful, so depending on what the company needs are it might be as easy as just going in and taking the data and creating custom dashboards, or creating knowledge centres. A really good example is very early on in my career, I can remember Microsoft being one of our largest clients and we would do the same project for multiple offices across Microsoft because they didn't have access to all the data and all the studies that they were doing globally, and now with knowledge centres and dashboards you know that can be fixed.

NT: Where do you get the expertise for that - is that distinct people who know about dashboards and things within the company, or are all the staff people who do everything?

JP: You definitely need experts in that industry, right, because some of it deals with data visualization, some of it is making sure that you take out the noise, defining what information is useful, what information is nice to know, and then really creating clear objectives across the different teams that are going to have access to it. We have data experts that are much smarter than me, that will go in and make sure that we clearly define what our objectives are, and then how to organise it and do the data visualization or create the knowledge centre so it's useful and powerful - sometimes across the globe with different offices and regions.

NT: Did you bring people on board to do that after you started the company - was that a more recent development to launch that?

JP: I would say we had a network with people and contractors and experts in that industry since the very beginning, we've had relationships with them for ten plus years - they've helped us with various projects whether it's data visualization, knowledge centres, custom dashboards or whatever, so we basically brought those relationships [in-house] - that part was very seamless.

Healthcare Experience Firm Buys Forsta *Feb 7 2022*
Less than a year after its formation from software firms Confirmit and FocusVision, research tech pioneer Forsta has been acquired by healthcare experience specialist Press Ganey, for an undisclosed sum.

February 2022

Technology and Hard-to-Reach Respondents

NT: In those cases where you've got a large but hard-to-reach audience to find, how does technology help you?

JP: The technology expands over fifteen to twenty different social media groups - we're recruiting through WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, the list goes on. Basically, we can target on over five thousand different variables for this type of recruitment, and the way that we do it wasn't even possible five or six years ago, not at this level, because you're using technology to make it scalable to have a wide range of all of these different social media groups.

NT: ...and at the other end of the scale, when it's a very small number of target individuals, I assume that's when it makes sense to have manual input to it, to have people working to find just a few?

JP: Correct.

We train people to provide proactive communication - and if we ever see a client coming to us asking us questions like hey, what's the sample plan or hey, what's the next steps, that's always a red flag

Zappi Reports on Boom Year *Feb 7 2022*
Automated insights platform Zappi has reported $50 million in sales in 2021, representing more than 30 percent growth in twelve months; and the hiring of more than 100 new employees during the year.

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Customer Service

NT: A broader issue now: I know you pride yourselves on offering considerably better customer service than the average data collection company. How do you define that and how are you able to make the customer service much better?

JP: Great question. There are a few things.

1. We train people to provide proactive communication - and if we ever see a client coming to us asking us questions about like hey, what's the sample plan or hey, what's the next steps, that's always a red flag. We should be proactively communicating where we are with the project and what our plan is.

2. Creating systems internally that allow our project managers to still manage several projects at one time, but then also to remain focused on the challenges and to create solutions to those challenges. That has been extremely helpful from an efficiency standpoint.

3. Ensuring that we're empowering our employees, you know, they don't have to go ask fifteen different people on how to switch up the same plan to get to an audience that we're having issues with. They can look at it. They've been doing this for eight years plus and they can say 'here are some other ways that we can sample and get to and target this organisation or these people, let's do it'. So that allows them to be very nimble and quick versus having to work up fifteen different decision-making channels and never really getting an answer.

NT: Do your clients themselves have access to your systems? Can they keep track of their projects via some sort of online portal?

JP: Not now. So that is one of the things that we're working on. When our sample management system is at its fullest and reaches its full capability, our clients will be able to go in and basically have a project view: here's Project X, here's how many completes we need, here's what we're seeing, here's the incidence, here's the expected out of field day - if they wanted to pull the data they could. We're working on that user interface.

NT: Can you pick for me a recent project that you've worked on, of which you're particularly proud, where you've managed to do something revolutionary or different for a client and tell me about it?

JP: A global AATD caregiver recruit. Our client communicated to us that we were one of the only companies that provided a full solution, and it wasn't on a 'best efforts' basis. We went into the different countries, went very manually into the patient support and advocate groups - and once we were able to get one or two recruits per geo, we then implemented a 'refer a friend' program to be able to hit the number of recruits in the different countries we were going after. The client was ecstatic that we were able to do that on time, on budget and get the number of recruits we committed to. I think when you're one of the only companies that provides a quote - that says, hey, we can do this - a client is naturally very hesitant about how it's going to turn out, but again, they were ecstatic with the results.

Feb - Mar 2022

The Future

NT: What are the new developments that are really changing research, on your side of it?

JP: For my opinion, the marketing research industry has never been quick to adapt to new technology and to new recruitment methodologies. I can remember working way back when Greenfield and Ciao were the only online panels and everybody was in uproar, like, 'We don't know about the quality, the biases. We don't know if these people are who they say they are' - so it's taken a really long time for the industry to transition to that. I think we have to be very open about the new technology, the different groups out there, the different audiences and be open to finding these people where they naturally live, breathe and exist and getting them to participate in marketing research. And again, that's done through real-time recruitment and validation. And I think as that gets better and more powerful, I don't know if we will always have the need for these extremely large global panels. But I think we have to be comfortable with surveying people in their natural state. A really good example is that we still work with a lot of companies where their surveys aren't mobile-friendly, and yet they really want to get to the eighteen to twenty-four-year-old age groups or have sub quotas, oversampling for African Americans or Hispanics, and the issue is that our social media recruitment traffic is eighty percent mobile, so we have to be better as an industry at making sure our questionnaires are designed and compatible with how our business professionals or consumers want to talk to us and give us data.

NT: If a client isn't ready for a mobile survey, do you have to push them down

I think we have to be comfortable with surveying people in their natural state.

that route - to tell them it's impossible without it?

JP: It depends on the sample size and the geo, right? The smaller the sample size, the less creative you have to get. So, it really just depends. But we're very honest and we always provide that feedback - we even make the offer to our clients, 'If you send us the questionnaire and you're open to it, let us take a look at it and see if there's some things that we could do to make this mobile friendly'.

NT: Still looking at the future, do you think it's going to get more difficult to remain a company focused on data collection?

JP: Maybe, if you're not open-minded about learning about the different techs, you know, and the different modes of communication that people want to speak to us through, I think it's going to be extremely difficult. If you look at the marketplace and even with online panels, we're fighting for the time and engagement for people to continue to participate in research. Think about yourself, how many hours are you in front of your phone, your computer?

How many things do you do on a daily basis? I mean hundreds, right? And so, we're fighting for that time and attention for people to participate in research. I think that part of the industry has gotten really used to very cheap and very fast sample, and I really believe there's a time and place for everything, depending on the research objective and the audience and whatever. But I do think that we're going to have to be open-minded - maybe a little bit longer timelines - and more expensive sample, when we have the need to pay higher incentives to engage some of these harder to reach audiences.

NT: There's a point of view that survey research per se is a shrinking niche, and to do well in it, you're fighting for a larger share of a smaller niche, to survive. Do you share that view?

JP: Yes, I do think that's true. But I also think that as we get better at things like the behavioral data - which is really good at telling you what people do (I love that because it's not self-reported data and a lot of times people aren't trying to lie through surveys but they truly can't remember) - there will always be a need because that answers what people are doing, but we still have to understand why people do it and what are those motivations. So, I think there's going to be a balance, and a need for understanding what that balance is and how much information you could get through passive data versus ad hoc data.

Motto

JP: For a company that's been around for such a short amount of time, we have several. So, some of our favorites, that we live by, are things like 'make it happen', 'No isn't an answer', 'Work hard, play hard' and 'continuous improvement is mandatory'. Personally speaking, I like 'find the solution' and 'continuous improvement' - and the latter also includes making sure you're learning about different technologies and different recruitment methodologies, testing them, and learning about them, and being open to change. ■

HOW TO AUTOMATE AND SIMPLIFY DATA VISUALIZATION IN POWERPOINT

Torben Laustsen, CEO at OfficeReports
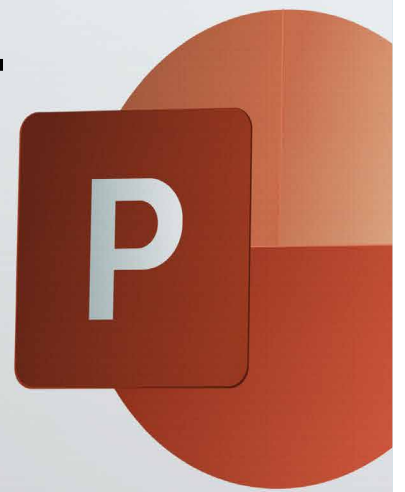
Medallia Launches Unstructured Data Platform *Mar 15 2022*
US-based customer experience management specialist Medallia has launched a solution called Athena Studio, allowing organizations to create custom AI models and analytics for unstructured data, without any coding.

DRNO Timeline

Subscribe to Daily Research News

In the market research and insights world, PowerPoint is indispensable for researchers who want to present their data and results in a straightforward yet engaging way. Although online reports and dashboards play a role, PowerPoint is often the winning choice when it comes to reporting survey data, because data reporting needs to be widely accessible and in a format that all stakeholders support.

As readers, we expect a well-thought-out report design and selection of tables, graphs, icons, colours, images and text, and a clear and distinct communication of results. At OfficeReports, we help researchers achieve all these in an easy and time-efficient manner. Note that in the panels around this article you'll find some tips for making best use of PowerPoint yourself, whether or not you're using our software.

Leave the "copy and paste" behind

Copying and pasting results from Excel into PowerPoint is possibly the most time-consuming part of any research reporting assignment. Extracting results from crosstabs in Excel and translating them into well-communicated infographics in PowerPoint is all too often a manually handled process that is tedious, expensive and, above all, fraught with error. On top of that, usually, these crosstab reports look outdated. So if you're presenting fresh new data, you don't want it to look like it's a report from 30 years ago.

So, suppose you want to avoid the expensive, inefficient and inaccurate process of picking the correct data from huge tables and adding them to PowerPoint. In that case, you can turn to automation for so much of your reporting process.

Automate to improve your workflow

Although PowerPoint is a simple tool, it requires specific skills and time to produce optimal results. OfficeReports helps you unlock its full potential efficiently. Wasting time should be a thing of the past. By automating your reporting process, efficiency will increase, speed will increase and the quality of the final result will improve. Icons, images, dynamic colours and texts, and infographics can be included in your PowerPoint presentation with no extra time. OfficeReports tools can reduce your reporting turnaround times by 60-70%.

Use your time efficiently

2021's GRIT report looks at how researchers are spending their time. The executive summary shows that insights and data analytics professionals are spending nearly half their time on "tasks related to collecting and analyzing data." By replacing manual steps with automated solutions and processes, researchers can free up more precious time to take a consultative approach, which "is a key activity for the industry to further define and deliver."

PowerPoint Tips:
Using Icons and Image Files in Reports

PowerPoint includes a long list of icons that are easy to use in your report. (Insert > Icons). Search 'male', 'female', 'car', 'smiley' etc. - these can easily be added.

When adding, it is clear in the selection pane that these icons by default have a 'technical name', like 'Graphic 10', 'Graphic 13', etc. If you edit the outline and color of the icons so that they match your design, you can save them in an image folder, with a logical name that matches category texts from crosstab input to reports, and you can easily automate replacing the text with images in the report.

Aha! Unveils Moderating, Analytic and Dashboard Tools
Mar 18 2022
In the US, online qual research platform Aha! Insights Technology has launched a range of new features, including moderating, analytic and dashboard tools.

March 2022

PowerPoint Tips:
Customizing the Quick Access Toolbar

The Quick Access Toolbar is available on the top corner of the ribbon. The toolbar contains a few commonly used commands in PowerPoint, and most users just leave it as this. This is a pity, as this toolbar can be customized according to your requirements. You can access this toolbar irrespective of whatever tab you are currently using which can be a time saver when building reports in PowerPoint.

In my personal Quick Access toolbar, I have added these commands, which means that I can do most of my work in PowerPoint from my OfficeReports tab, from where I have easy access to PowerPoint commands that I am using constantly:

- New Slide
- Add Table
- Add Chart
- Add Shapes
- Add Text box
- Align Objects (left, right, vertically, etc)
- Send to Back (organizing overlapping shapes)
- Eyedropper (add colors to object based on other colors used on the slide)
- Selection Pane (activate a pane, showing all objects on the slide)

So, if previously creating a report took you up to two weeks to complete, with automation you can deliver it in a couple of days with fewer manual steps. By being more efficient when creating reports, researchers have more time to bring added value to their clients.

In practice

So, how is it different from the traditional reporting methods? With OfficeReports, users can access the worksheets with crosstabs directly inside PowerPoint. There is no need to go back and forth between different windows. All data can be seen in a single work-pane. Just one window to create charts, graphs and tables.

The data from crosstabs is directly implemented into the PowerPoint window, and data selection is made quickly and easily. If you need to go back and change your data, then the graphs, charts and other visuals will update automatically. Using our single-step process, multiple slides with varying degrees of information can also be created at once.

And what type of data set can you import? It doesn't matter if your input is raw data in SPSS files or crosstab data; we can manage the visualization of the data in PowerPoint.

The first version of OfficeReports aimed to simplify the processes from data to reports in PowerPoint. We built it thinking that this process would always start with raw data. So, our first app can import data, produce cross tables, statistical tests, and present the results in PowerPoint.

However, we realized that in some cases the user's starting point is cross tables, and data that have already been calculated. Our new product can now efficiently produce PowerPoint reports based on process data such as crosstabs produced in SPSS, SurveyReporter or similar traditional crosstab tools. With this version, researchers can work with input in the form of raw data as well as already produced cross tables. The visualization of results in reports has also been improved. For example, you can easily convert brand names in tables to logos, graphs, and numbers in tables to icons; you can add emojis, colours, and more.

By embracing automation, researchers can be more efficient. Avoid complicated, time-consuming implementations of new solutions; gain the ability to add data dynamically to a traditional static format and visualize data to meet clients' needs. ■
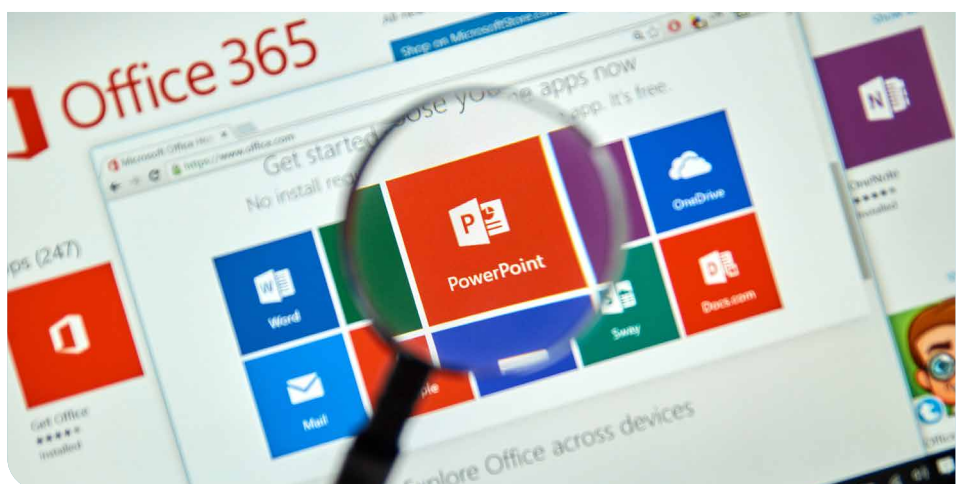
DBM and RDA Link to Launch New Data Tools *Mar 21 2022*
In Australia, financial services insights and consulting firm DBM Consultants has partnered with geospatial specialist RDA Research to launch tools for mapping and audience finding; appending variables to databases; and appending and profiling large databases.
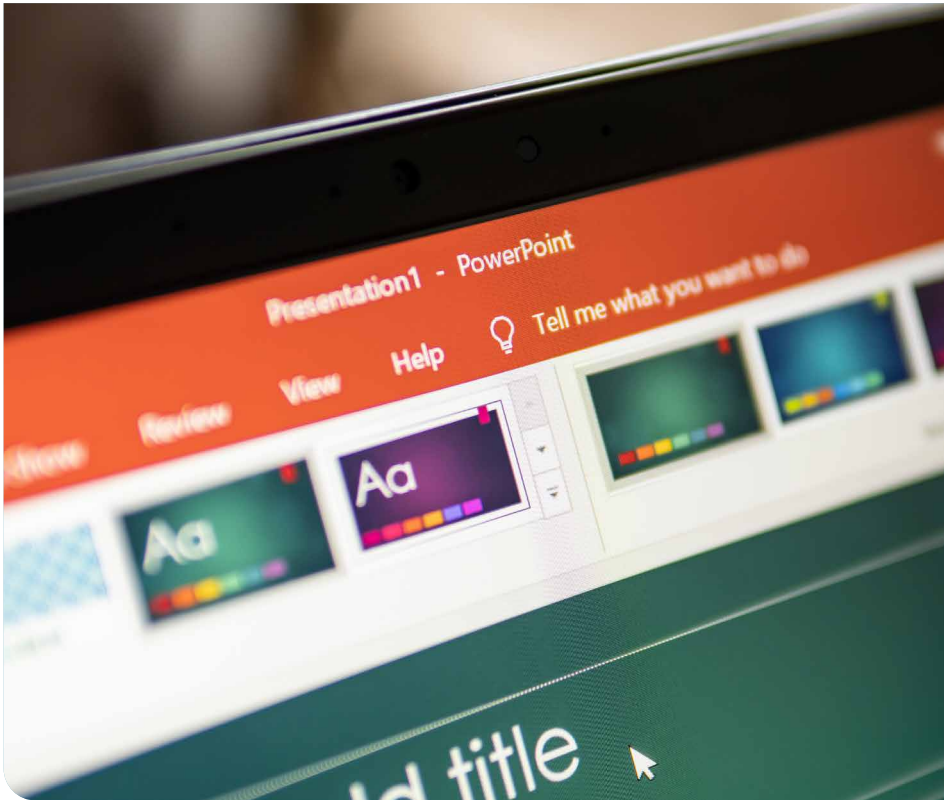
PowerPoint Tips:
Adding Sections to Organize the Report

Right-click between slides, select 'Add Section' and type a section name.

If the PowerPoint presentation contains many slides, and maybe groups of almost similar slides focusing on for example different segments, then this feature is very useful as it is easy to collapse a section, copy a section, reorganize the report by moving sections up/down in the report, etc.
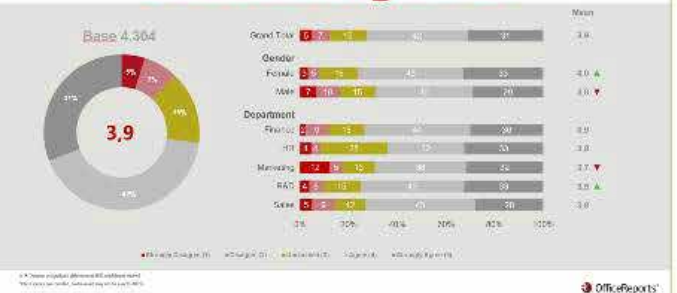
Funds for Compliant Data Sharing Firm Karlsgate *Mar 28 2022*
New Jersey-based secure data collaboration specialist Karlsgate has closed an oversubscribed $4 million seed funding round, which it will use to develop its compliant data connectivity network (DCN) solution.

March 2022

VIDEO INTERVIEW
in conversation: SANDRO KAULARTZ

Watch to the full video at mrweb.com/drno/sandrokaulartz.htm

SANDRO KAULARTZ, CHIEF INNOVATION AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT OFFICER AT IPSOS SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE ANALYTICS

Sandro is part of the global leadership team at Ipsos SIA & Synthesio, where he oversees innovation in the domain of Semantic AI and analytic frameworks applied to digital consumer data.

Ipsos' Synthesio Joins Twitter Partner Program *Mar 31 2022*
Ipsos-owned social media intelligence and listening platform Synthesio has joined Twitter's Official Partner Program, with the goal of creating new insight services and jointly building new relationships with client marketing and insights teams.

DRNO Timeline

Parents

I grew up in the countryside in West Germany, literally at the border with Belgium, and I was born in a fairly small village that is located in the High Fens Nature Park. So deep forest wildlife, and usually the number of cattle would outnumber humans in the village back then.

My dad grew up on a farm with eight siblings, so social life in my family was always busy and being self- sufficient - very popular theme these days - was pretty much the norm. Growing, cultivating your own food.

My dad worked for the German railway company. My mum worked in the healthcare industry. But it was really countryside, and to go to work you would usually travel one and a half hours by car.

My parents are pretty open-minded and they brought us up with a large degree of freedom. Today they regret it because apparently I was trouble as a kid! But I can't remember this part of the story...

It was very clear to me as a countryside boy that life wouldn't hold many free lunches for me, so working hard to really follow your passion and your ideas was very clear to me from the start. And while this country life as a boy was obviously amazing, when you turn into a teenager your ultimate goal is really getting a driver's licence, escaping and exploring big city life.

My Grandpa was someone that I always looked up to: he was a mechanical engineer and in the fifties and sixties he travelled over many continents. I could listen to his stories about foreign cultures and places that I'd never heard of, with great admiration, so I knew that education and ideally getting a university degree is important. He was probably something like a role model,

My dad grew up on a farm with eight siblings, so social life in my family was always busy

and I went to study macroeconomics and consumer psychology.

Then the classic career path would have been to end up at a management consultancy, but I experienced that as rather dry and dull during an internship. Eventually my diploma professor nudged me towards market research because he spent a short period of his career in research - and I'm very happy that he did.

North Star

Until 2018 our practice was very much report-based, like a classic market research cycle where you get a brief, you process data, you analyse it, you send a report back - but with the acquisition of Synthesio that year we wanted to change our practice and defined a new 'North Star'. Synthesio was and is a very solid platform in terms of data collection and has very good coverage with diverse data sets across the globe, but what we truly wanted to bring to the market was integrating best in breed data science and all the AI models, taxonomies and analytic frameworks we had developed in the past. It was a fundamental change for us also from a business model standpoint - it's an SaaS model but we wanted to introduce services to it - and it's still a journey that we're going through right now, by developing more bitesize use case specific dashboards.

I think there is quite a significant shift in the market going on. Clients are looking for

Digital Analytics Firm Evolytics Acquired *Apr 1 2022*
Kansas City digital analytics firm Evolytics has been acquired by Minneapolis-based technology consulting and digital transformation firm Concord USA.

Mar - Apr 2022

access to insights, versus data with some analytic tools attached to it, because they very often neither have the time nor the resources to manage that themselves, and scale a platform across the globe. So our vision is to become the leader in AI-enabled consumer intelligence. Last year was really a landmark year for us because we established all the enabling technology that is needed to do that, alongside best in class predictive analytics, so we're getting pretty close to reaching that North Star.

Data hybridization is a very important aspect of it. So almost in each and every use case that we work with - trend detection and prediction, brand health, CX, product performance - we actually combine social data with other digital data, and more often than not search data because each data source really brings its individual strengths to the mix. Currently we do a lot of work in predictive modelling for our clients and so diverse data sets are naturally very important to us.

This year, we started to introduce survey data systematically into the platform. Now we are alpha testing with a few selected large clients, the integration of search data in particular for the trend use case. We are constantly expanding the data ecosystem that we are working with.

So we're constantly optimising, but the North Star is to become the leader and set new standards with AI-enabled data science approaches that operate on real-time data, which ultimately aims to cater for insight professionals, and I believe that's what sets us apart. There are many platforms out there, but not everybody's focusing on insight functions which is what we are really trying to do and well. Forrester recently recognised us as one of the few leaders in this new category that they defined, AI-enabled consumer intelligence (AICI).

Almost in each and every use case that we work with... we combine social data with other digital data, and more often than not search data

There are many platforms out there, but not everybody's focusing on insight functions

Integral Ad Science Offers 'Unified View' of Campaigns
Apr 11 2022
Digital media measurement and verification firm Integral Ad Science has announced reporting enhancements which it says give advertisers 'a unified view of their global campaigns'.

DRNO Timeline

PAGE 42 | MrWeb | Data Visualization & Presentation Software | November 2022

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Topic Modelling

Last year we introduced topic modelling which is really a milestone for us. Topic modelling enables you to model, map and size the topic landscape without any human annotation, after you collected a very large data set - lets say thirty million signals around Veganism by means of an example. Now we are able to discover the entire domain, so not just the dominant themes but also really the niche topics, hundreds of really small granular topics from vegan ingredients, recipes, vegan fashion, animal welfare and motivation - why consumers turn vegan. It's a really an important change for us and our customers compared to rule-based NLP approaches, where somebody has to write rules based on keywords. It now models and clusters topics autonomously based on context and the meaning dimension.

Essentially the job is to discover semantic similarities and neighbourhoods ... and that way it can discover what is the context this person is talking about here

Let me give you a quick example to make that a little more tangible. If Bill says 'Swiss cheese is very rich and savoury', and Bob says 'I love Gruyere for an umami boost', there's not a single word in common in these two sentences, but the algorithm will be able to identify that on a meaning dimension they are quite similar, semantically speaking, so they would get clustered together.

NT: It's spotting that because it's got libraries which will associate Gruyere with Swiss cheese? Specialist for this piece of research?

SK: Yes. Taxonomies are important, but what this algorithm essentially does, it's a transformer based bidirectional machine learning model, a deep learning technique, and it looks at the entire sentence to try to understand context and how often words that are translated into vectors appear next to each other. Essentially the job is to discover semantic similarities and neighbourhoods in this gigantic vector space and that way it can discover what is the context this person is talking about here.

We now can understand context and meaning from language - and getting that working really for large data streams and real-time data is an engineering challenge as well. You can do that on a data set, but doing that constantly with just a few clicks was really a very important change for us.

When you have a rule based approach, you as a human create rules that say if I'm operating in banking and I want to measure the topic of trust, here are the forty-seven words that I'm looking for, but what really bottom up topic modelling does, is the machine gives you suggestions first, and then you can curate it, you can modify the terms, you can turn them into trackable entities. A very beautiful blend of bottom up / discovery first, a purely data-led approach, but then as an analyst you can turn them into top down topics that you want to continue tracking. You want to modify the suggested topics and turn them, because obviously machines are not always right and then human intelligence is very critical, but it's very powerful. It also adds something new to it, which is the contextual layers that are often hidden to the human eye - so it rules out a lot of subjectivity and it takes a very neutral look at language data, and that's what we are very excited about.

It rules out a lot of subjectivity and it takes a very neutral look at language data

Machines Have Limitations...

It's interesting because for many years we had this tendency, in our research industry, to over-glorify machine intelligence - and I think we are now in a post-hype phase where we're having a very close look at what is actually useful and powerful and how we can blend that nicely together with human intelligence. We were never pretending that machines do all the work - I mean these are important tasks that they take over by modelling topics for really large data or having a highly efficient machine learning based prediction model that you simply couldn't do with classic econometric modelling work. All interesting aspects - but we should never ignore that it's even more important to have humans in the loop. I don't want to have a machine learning-based prediction model that helps me to understand future shifts and sales unless there is really this solid data scientist behind it. Really normalising things and discovering outliers. And we need to have that knowledge within [our day-to-day] processes otherwise we just lose the human backing up.

NT: Do you get / can you give me some examples of where the machine produces something and you think, whoops, good job a human is looking at that, because that's not the right interpretation?

SK: Sure - a good example is predictive

April 2022

modelling. We do a lot of work on really discovering nano-, micro- and sometimes meta-trends: we look at five years' historic data and then you build a model, you predict, and at some point you look at the first output from this model and it's suggesting a major increase in interest from search and social data. But then you discover that this is just based on some events that happen in historic data where somebody was trying to sell stuff on Twitter - an undiscovered outlier with strong influence on the data corpus at a given moment in time. There's a constant back and forth with our local teams who can understand context and our data science team to develop clean models. It's dangerous to believe so much in what the machine spits out that you don't spend time looking at it. That's the entire idea of explainable AI - you need to know what the prediction was about and how it came about before you put your trust in it.

In the third wave... people understand what's useful and use it, but nobody wants to start from scratch all the time

Tailored Dashboards and Interpreting in Context

NT: Tell us a bit more about the use case-specific dashboards you're developing, and why that's a growth area as you said.

SK: Over the past decade that people have been involved in social listening, the first challenge was just collecting this data corpus; then the next wave we call social intelligence, it was beyond collecting data, let's propose some analytic tools such as sentiment, emotion analysis, maybe tracking some topics and so on; and now I believe we are in the third wave, where all that is established, people understand what's useful and use it, but nobody wants to start from scratch all the time.

[To illustrate] Let's take an offering that we call product intelligence that specifically looks at review data - product reviews with the star rating attached to it - to turn it into product performance insights. Over time we developed a driver analysis because if you take a product and you look at Amazon reviews, let's assume you're a premium brand - it's maybe not a huge surprise that many people say they're not happy with the price point they have to pay. So affordability may appear to be a negative driver, but in the grand scheme of things, it may not mean much. Is this negativity about price actually a dissatisfaction driver in the true sense? So when you then use the star rating as a dependent variable to look at what are the product features that truly move the performance needle, that's a different perspective on it. We developed all these models and all these analytics and now we are really in the process of bringing them into the platform, so that if you know that your use case is mainly to understand product performance, you can choose this template / turnkey dashboard and then focus, and you spend a fraction of the time that it would take you to create that yourself or have our teams doing that.

DRNO Timeline

Obviously these case-specific models take a little bit of time in engineering, because every use case is slightly different. Brand health looks very different from trend detection and prediction, market exploration and so on. We have a great many use cases: now we are in the process of bringing that to our clients for efficiency and simply to decrease the time to insights, because that's the core problem. Platforms are nice when the user experience is well designed, but in the end it's too often just a huge corpus of data and analytic tools, and you really need to be pro in managing them until you get to something that I would consider an added value insight.

NT: Otherwise it could just be a distraction - they've got lots of fascinating data, but it's not focused on the thing you're trying to obtain.

SK: There's also a risk that if you're a large corporation, you like that service, you want to scale it, but it's quite hard to make sure that everybody has the right understanding on how to look at this data. What does it actually mean to see a spike in search? That only makes sense after you've understood what are the intent layers behind search: Are people searching for my brand? Imagine you're Coca-Cola - are people searching because they want to find the best price, where to buy it; because they are concerned about the nutritional value of the product; or are they just searching for funny videos where people drop Menthos into the bottle and it explodes? It's important to understand what the drivers and layers are. It does take a ton of time to educate entire organisations on how to look at this data and draw your conclusions. Solving this problem I think is the ultimate

Or are they just searching for funny videos where people drop Menthos into the bottle and it explodes?

goal - and it may be a no-brainer for more classic market research domains, but for us it's quite new because the business was all about collecting data and having new analytic tools, but now I think there is a little bit of a paradigm shift in our industry also where we really need to come closer to high value insights.
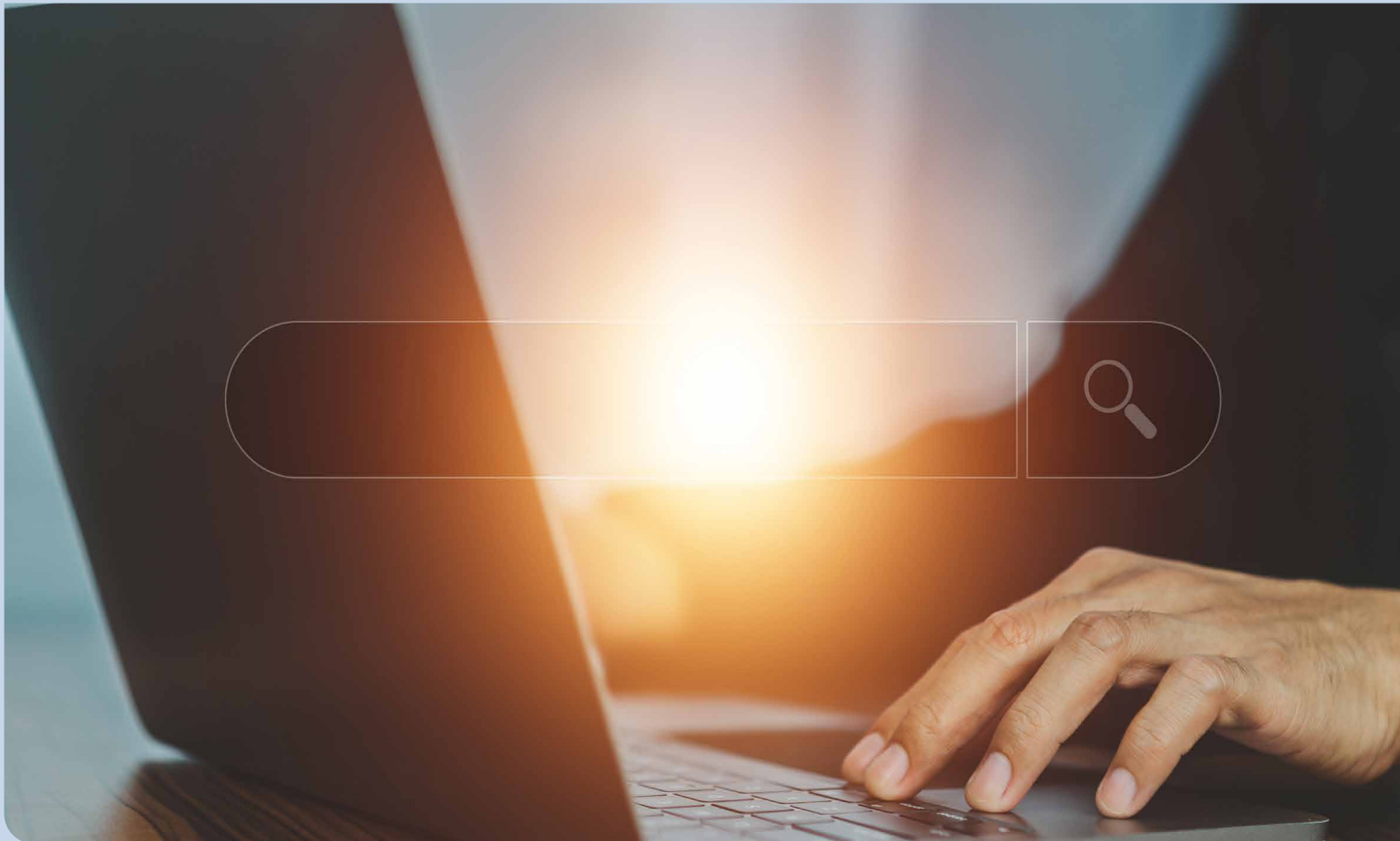
Thornton Takes Chairman's Role at Ops Firm Ayda
Apr 25 2022
In London, all-in-one research operations platform Ayda has appointed former Cint exec Richard Thornton as Chairman and Advisor, following a successful investment round.

April 2022

> But you also give really tactical insights on KPIs that a company should watch because there is a relationship from an increase in search and an uptake in in sales data six months after

Linking Sales and Social / Search Data

We're doing a lot of very interesting work in the trend and early innovation insights discovery domain with large clients. We have a partnership with MIT, with whom we work to bring rigour in terms of innovation science to it because I think the mistake that people make is thinking that just because something is trending, it's also a platform for innovation. Let's take activated charcoal in food. It was a big thing three years ago until the scientists said, 'Hey guys, maybe you stop introducing charcoal into food because at some point it'll cause cancer.'. So the mistake that I see is that corporations get too focused on things that are trending and translate them directly into an innovation opportunity, but actually successful innovation that is there to stay needs to solve a valuable consumer problem, and that's what we tried to bring together. This trend domain, as I mentioned earlier, really requires you to work with a diverse set of consumer signals - not just social data, but a lot of search data because they supplement each other really nicely.

In a recent case for a leader in the food category, we looked into the new food ecosystem with a focus on plant-based foods, and discovered all the nano, micro and meta-trends. We predicted what's going to happen in the next twelve months but then the really exciting bit happened when we introduced sales data into the model, to discover what were actually the correlations between social and search signals, and

sales data. Then it gets quite impactful because you introduce a powerful mix of highly strategic insights when it comes to where future innovation platforms may live, because we also blend in a perspective on how particular trends address the unmet needs that people have and their pain points; but you also give really tactical insights on KPIs that a company should watch because there is a relationship from an increase in search and an uptick in sales data six months after.

NT: In other words there may be something there that's being heavily talked about and is growing very fast, but it's not going to impact sales if people aren't happy to pay for it?

SK: Precisely. And it's certainly not an easy task for a data scientist to do that well - that's the key challenge. But I think this will grow and it's an obvious prediction to predict that predictive analytics will continue to grow further! Because we have been talking about it for quite a while, but now it's possible even for very large data sets. Discovering correlations is fine, but you can turn that into something very tactical to say, okay, there is a five-week difference between the pickup here and something happening on sales - and we can say that with confidence because we looked at five years of very granular data, so I'm not talking about a survey wave that happens once in a year, but really weekly data signals. The moment you can do that, the data science model is quite solid and then things become really interesting.

User-Based Innovation

NT: You mentioned MIT...

SK: That's a very specific group that is located in the Sloan Management School, a group of scientists who looked into the domain of open innovation - the idea that users likely are better innovators than companies. The interesting idea here is not just discovering unmet needs or jobs to be done, pain points etc., it's to discover the hacks and solutions that people create for themselves - and that's a very strong signal early that there is something happening because those who are capable of creating something and build their own prototypes are pretty much your first access to what might happen to the market majority. There's so much we can learn from what people do, the real life challenges they're experiencing, and sometimes we don't focus enough on the negativity of things, but usually in negativity you have the most compelling things to learn about.

NT: You're talking about people having a problem and trying to solve it themselves...

Price and Market Intelligence Firm netRivals Acquired *Apr 26 2022*
Paris-based eCommerce automation platform Lengow has acquired Barcelona-based price and market intelligence software firm netRivals, which it says will help it shape the 'next generation of digital shelf analytics'. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

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SK: Exactly, so it's user innovations from 'Lead Users' - that's the term that this academic group uses, and we have been working with Eric von Hippel, the founding father of this idea who published many books, a professor at MIT. We had the pleasure to work with him on a novel AI-based method for user innovation discovery, to pilot and publish about it. An example is kitesurfing, where we knew there was a lot of user innovation happening, so there was a lot of academic study, and so we tested it, we collected a ton of data and the question was, would we be able to discover through algorithms the big disruptive innovations that users created for themselves in kitesurfing? Because that was not a sport that was introduced by a corporation, it was really windsurfers and wake boarders and skateboarders coming together, exchanging equipment - so essentially for the first years everything in terms of innovation was user-based, and so we tested that and it proved to work quite well, and we turned it into a methodology that we now apply for quite a number of clients to help them to discover innovation opportunities a little earlier.
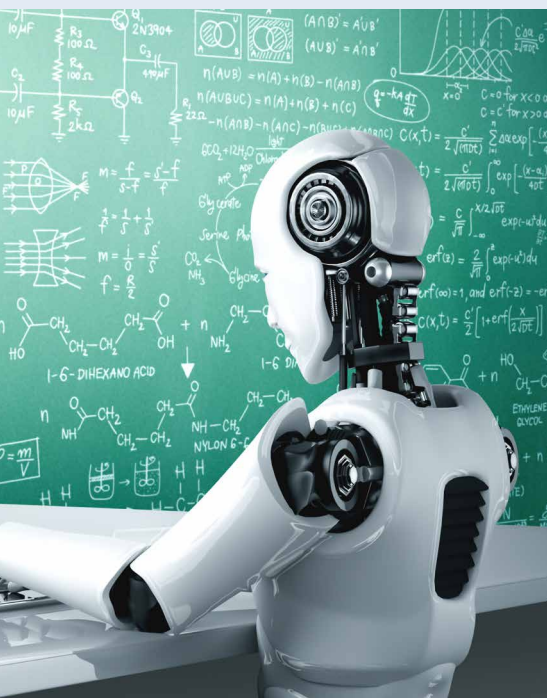

Three Things to Watch

NT: We've been talking quite a bit about your views of what's happening, what's trending at the moment, but look a bit further ahead for me, what might we be talking about in five years' time?

SK: Five years is a long period, but I think what will happen in the next couple of years in our industry is real depth and efficiency in terms of data science. Clearly video intelligence... I think we made really good headway in analyzing pictures with machine vision techniques, to discover logos, subjects and objects, as well as context from pictures. But now with things like Tik Tok and Reels, which you see across all the platforms, I think moving content will become dominant across platforms. So we need to find good answers for that - technically speaking in terms of machine learning it's not too different from analysing pictures, but obviously processing power is an issue - when you think about how many frames a video has, it's quite a different Pandora's box that we need to open at some point soon.

NT: Turning computer vision into 'computer viewing' kind of thing... spotting movement in the picture and not just analysing the individual frames?

SK: Yeah exactly. And there are good models, like Google does incredible work on that front but for us and our industry overall it's always a challenge. It needs to happen in the live SaaS model, and it's a key challenge but we're doing some tests and you know we believe it's getting somewhere. So at some point video intelligence will become important.

Then, we truly believe in data hybridization: I think it won't be enough to look at social data in a siloed way. I think we need to propose more context and it's different to just hosting and populating different kinds of data. That's really not what we are after. I think there are better tools like Tableau for that. For this use case we want to build meaningful connection points and analytic lenses that combine search and social data - not just doing it for the sake of doing it, and introducing more data into the platform, but really building these strong connection points that lead to value added insights. So that's something that I would foresee.

Next, the entire domain of democratising data science with things like low code or no-code solutions that already exist. Enabling any insight professional to use a machine learning model without having a degree in data science. Mind you, that also means from a human resource standpoint that we need more people that I would call 'data to insight transformers', because you need to understand what an algorithm spits out and turn it into something that can be acted upon and that's maybe a profile that the industry is missing right now, or at least it's not that visible in our day- to day work.

Motto

In general I'm not a big motto person, but a good one in this context is: 'The best way to complain is to create things'. It really brings me back to how I was brought up because I could hear my dad saying something like that. I'm also now the proud dad of three-year-old twins so there's quite a lot of complaining happening in my private life too, and when I use this quote with them they seem to get the idea! I think it's a very nice one that gets attributed to Seth Godin actually, but originally it came from James Murphy, a great musician and producer. ◾

Qualtrics Launches Unified Employee Experience Tool *Apr 28 2022*
Experience management platform Qualtrics has launched a solution called Employee Experience ID, providing organizations with a unified view of their employees' experience with the company over time, and measuring employees' preferences, engagement, performance and feedback about work.

April 2022

USING THE S.E.E.D. APPROACH FOR SUCCESSFUL DATA VISUALIZATION

Manny Rodriguez, VP, Global Sales, Forsta

Qualtrics Launches Social Media Response Tool *Apr 29 2022*
Experience management platform Qualtrics has launched a solution called Qualtrics Social Connect, to enable contact center, marketing and CX teams to capture, analyze and respond to the millions of customer service requests they receive through chat, e-mail and social media.

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Continued and advanced engagement with existing and prospective customers has never been harder. Not only have we all fallen victim to shortened attention spans, we also now handle increased information and resultant data fatigue, mixed with myriad media through which to consume it.

But we can cut through all this noise and clutter, with eye-catching and transcendent data visualizations. Market research agencies must broach the creation and distribution of these visualizations in specific ways to reach their audiences, tap into their mindset and encourage them to make a move. We call this the SEED approach: Strategize, Explore, Educate and Drive Action.

Let's delve into what each stage encompasses and how, when compiled, they can further engage existing customers, streamline operations, and catch the attention of new prospects.

Phase I: Strategize

Before a market research team begins down the path of actually creating a data visualization, they need to understand what they're looking to accomplish with it, and what their broader KPIs include. This will require a long, but necessary, list of questions that need to be answered, such as:

1. How are clients accessing these visualized stories? Dynamic dashboards or static PowerPoint presentations?

Before a market research team begins down the path of actually creating a data visualization, they need to understand what they're looking to accomplish with it

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2. What problem are you fixing for your clients with visualized stories? Better understanding? Increased engagement across the client's business?

3. What problem are you fixing in your own business? Have visualized stories opened any new opportunities or new revenue streams for your business?

4. How are you using your data visualizations to improve your efficiency? Are you saving time not having to explain complex data sets to clients?

5. How are your clients benefiting from data visualizations? Are they taking action and producing results more quickly?

6. What insights are clearer when they are delivered visually? Can you easily provide better context visually than you would have been able to provide using alternate methods?

7. What metrics are you using to measure your success?

Once the answers are determined, you can outline tactics and move onto the next step – the Explore stage.

Phase II: Explore

Data in its raw form can be messy at best, and at worst misleading. As such, this stage largely serves as the opportunity to get your data in working order. The first component of this is the compilation of both structured and unstructured data, and subsequently mapping out what value and insights could be gleaned. While you're likely going into any research project with a specific objective in mind, consider what variables could be hiding your next 'aha' moment. For all intents and purposes, at this stage, you are the scientist hypothesizing what new and exciting information or context you may be able to uncover. Here is a simplified example of the hypothesis you could make:

• Price of the product: Can we get away with a higher price? If we combine this with other data, might we find that gender or generation impact consumers' willingness to buy at the current price? Do people consistently buy product X with another product?

Once the above has been solidified, it must be tested and cross-referenced with some of the unstructured data you have on file. Manually sifting can be arduous, but fortunately there are tools to automate this process. In addition, particularly for long-term and iterative projects, utilizing dashboards can be key for reducing admin and seeing trends over time. This is an easy way to have both clients and suppliers involved in the process and on the same page throughout.

Growth Funds for Multifamily Property Data Firm Radix *May 5 2022*
In the US, Radix, an industry data provider and visualization platform for the multifamily residential property sector, has raised $11m in a Series A round of funding, for use in scaling its technology.

Apr - May 2022

1   **Strategize**
- Define your objectives
- Understand your target audience for the visualization
- Prioritize insights for visualization

2   **Explore**
- Design a hypothesis relevant to your objective(s)
- Test your data against this hypothesis
- Cross reference with your unstructured data

3   **Educate**
- Craft the story you want your insights to tell
- Outline the structure, content, and conclusions
- Bring the story to life with data visualization

4   **Drive Action**
- Review your original objectives
- Identify quick wins that require easily completed tact
- Explore significant issues that require more strategic th

Forsta

Phase III: Educate

This is perhaps the most important step in the SEED approach because, as we all know, action without insight is often foolhardy. Fortunately, with approximately 65% of the population identifying as visual learners, the visual aspect of this entire exercise allows for easier education and understanding on the part of your clients and stakeholders

– something that was certainly missing ''back in the day'' when data was presented in Excel files and text slides. Now, with visually engaging charts and dashboards to compare, contrast and cross-reference like the one pictured below, the opportunities are endless.

Even so, the key to a good visualization is the narrative it depicts. Therefore, the most important part of the Educate stage is

crafting a story that you want your insights and visuals to tell. To do this, create an outline to establish what you will include, what order the story will be told in, and how the story will flow from insight to insight; once you have this outline, you can leverage simple, powerful and secure application programming interfaces (APIs) to programmatically access your already-existing data and tell your story with visualizations.

Business Analytics Firm Pyramid Raises $120m *May 9 2022*
Dutch firm Pyramid Analytics has raised $120m in a Series E round of funding, which it says it will use to continue developing its decision intelligence platform, expand its global presence, and capture a larger share of the big data and business analytics market.

DRNO Timeline

should be inspired to take action on the information presented; but sometimes, even the most inspired clients need one last push. Of course, as is the case with all customers, a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't always work, so you must cater to individual needs (and refer back to Phase I, and the initial understanding of what your client is looking to get out of this exercise).

Typically, the next steps will be depicted by one of two routes:

- Tactical Actions: This refers to addressing individual customer issues that can be tackled easily. These are quick and important wins, but the return on investment is generally relatively small.

- Strategic Actions: These are significant, deep-rooted issues that require sizable organizational change with cross-functional groups. While these take more time and resources, the return on investment is generally much larger.

While it's easier to only focus on one or the other, the best practice is to have a healthy mix of both tactical and strategic actions in play at any given time. Regardless of the mix, the key to success is managing and tracking the necessary actions. You can provide technologies for your stakeholders to manage, track and measure the impact of actions. Solutions like these keep your clients on track to achieve ROI by acting on insights.

By taking these outlined steps, your company and market research team can both ensure that key data and insights are being utilized to their best ability and that clients are understanding of a broader picture and holistic goal. Ultimately, well-executed data visualization will lead clients to turn insights into action that produces results, making market researchers the proud heroes of customer retention and acquisition. ◼

Manny Rodriguez, VP, Global Sales, Forsta

Manny Rodriguez is the Vice President of Global New Business for Forsta. He is an experienced Senior Sales Executive with a demonstrated history in the information technology and services industry.

Sometimes, even the most inspired clients need one last push

ical actions

hought before taking action

By tapping into this deeper connection and providing clients with intel and advice in a way they prefer, we're encouraging action in the next (and final) step.

Phase IV: Drive Action

Theoretically, if the aforementioned steps were completed correctly, your client

Reveal Mobile Launches Mira OOH Measurement Console
May 13 2022
Location intelligence and marketing software company Reveal Mobile has launched a self-service platform for out of home (OOH) campaign measurement, known as Mira.

May 2022
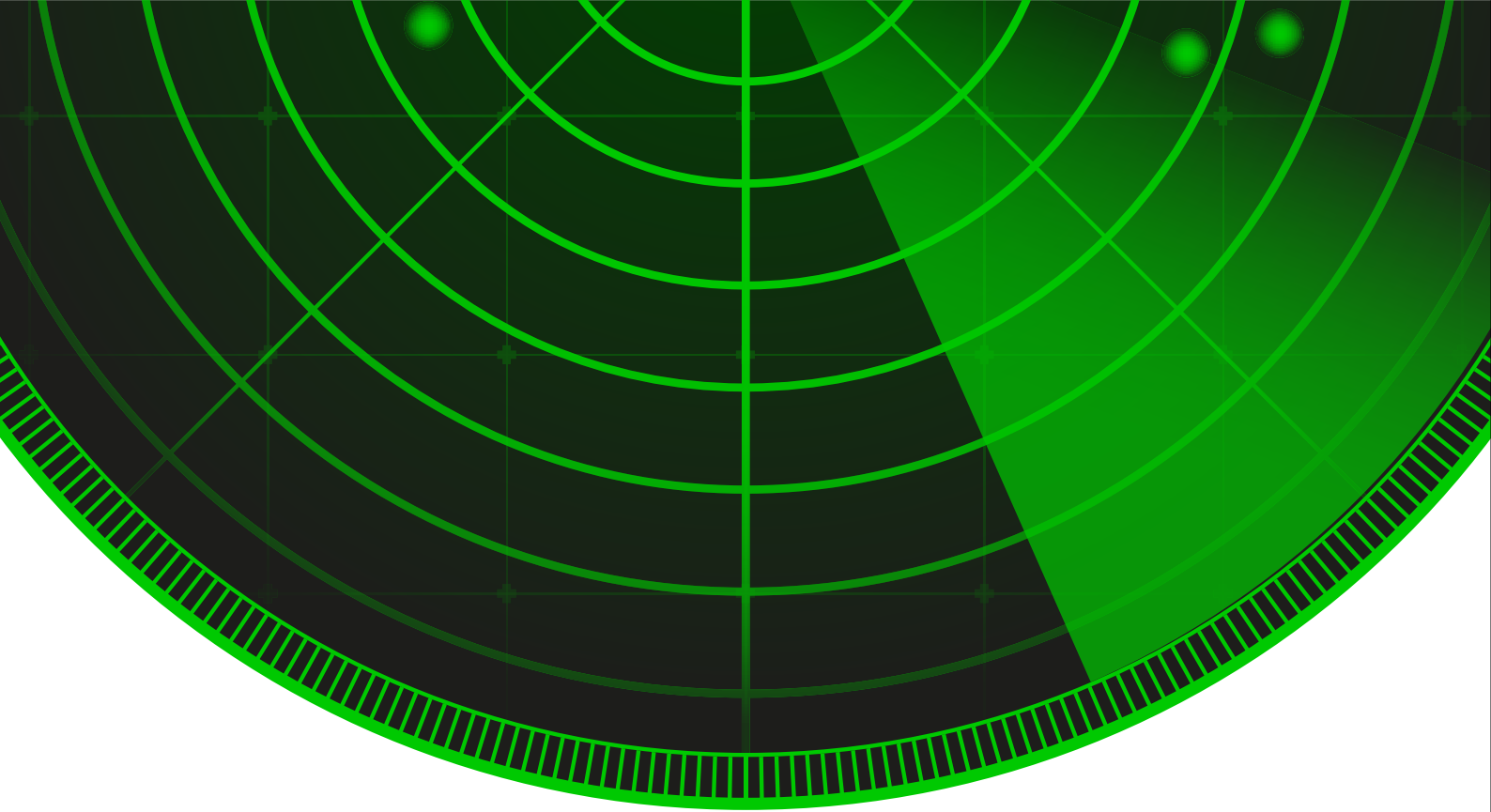
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minus **20%** for packages **$22,500+**

Daily Research News Emails (DRNO)

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Carl Wong, CEO & Founder, Medallia LivingLens

(C) upper row 'trio' $2,175 / 2 weeks
(D) middle row 'trio' $1,595 / 2 weeks
(E) lower row 'trio' $1,015 / 2 weeks

(F) and (G) Video Spot - top right banner
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Didier Truchot,
Founder & Chairman, Ipsos

As a long time advertiser, working with DRNO has been hugely impactful at building global brand awareness for my firms. Now, as an advisor to many research and technology companies looking to scale quickly, I consider DRNO a key element of my clients' sales and marketing mix.

Kristin Luck,
ESOMAR President;
Managing Partner, ScaleHouse;
Founder, Women In Research

Without fail the DRNO email is the first I open every morning. I know it will comprehensively cover the latest and most relevant research stories and it means I am always up to speed with the developments and breaking news.

Ian Dowds
CEO, UK Online Measurement

A BLEND OF ART & SCIENCE

Why industry leading data visualization involves a perfect blend of the two fields – and how to achieve that balance

Ant Franklin, CEO and co-founder of Infotools

New IAS Suite Measures ROI of Contextual Targeting *May 17 2022*
Digital media measurement firm Integral Ad Science (IAS) has launched a suite of reporting and planning tools called Control Panel, to enable clients to understand the value and return on investment (ROI) provided by its Context Control contextual targeting solution.

Most intellectual pursuits land in two broad categories: the subjective field of art, rooted in beauty, aesthetics and emotion, or the objective field of science, guided by hypotheses, testing, and data. Data visualization is a rare exception.

The best data visualizations successfully distil information, presenting it in ways which make it easy to relate. It does this straddling the two aforementioned disciplines: the rigorous, scientific investigation of data to pursue new understanding about the world, plus an artful approach to uncovering the most important findings, which are subsequently shared with others. This may not be easy, but it is just this blend that gives market research and insights its intrigue and value.

Art and science can coexist and complement one another, but it requires a careful, considered approach. However, the temptation lies in emphasizing one element over the other. We find a happy medium using storytelling.

Storytelling makes science accessible

The Science Council defines science as the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence. Art, on the other hand, tends more toward subjectivity, using various mediums to communicate ideas to stimulate thought and trigger emotion. Something truly special happens when these two are intertwined.

In the words of Margaret Atwood, author of The Handmaid's Tale: "You're never going to kill storytelling, because it's built into the human plan. We come with it." The market research and insights sector has been talking about storytelling for decades. This is not set to change.
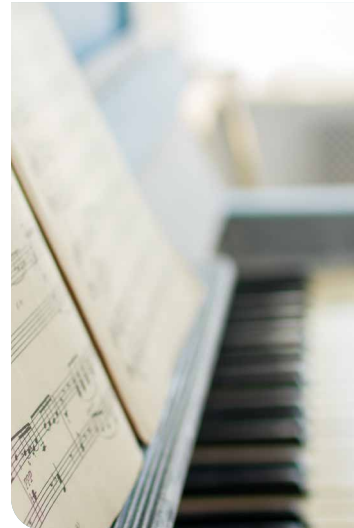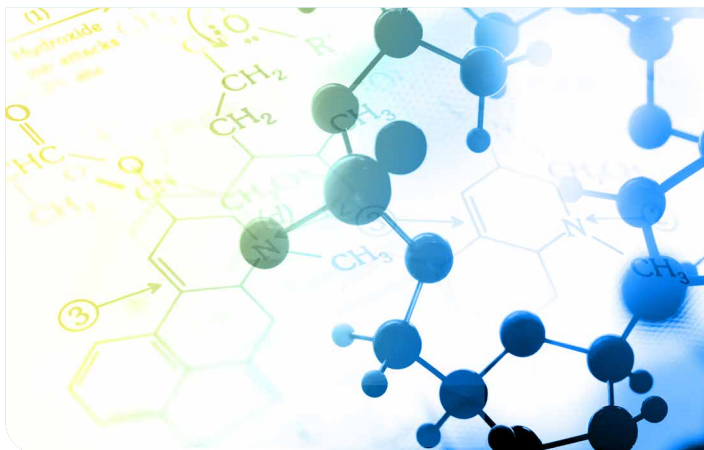
> After a decade or so of the world skewing towards big data... we are seeing a correction of sorts - a push back towards visualization.

Storytelling elevates data visualization in some key ways for market researchers by helping us tell stories that resonate, simplify complex data, and illustrate to achieve deep audience understanding. As researchers, it's our job to enlighten by cutting through the clutter, and balancing art and science enables us to do this.

Data quality: It's a matter of credibility

After a decade or so of the world skewing towards big data, to that which can be measured, we are seeing a correction of sorts - a push back towards visualization. Amidst this recalibration, we need to realize that our data visualizations are only as good as the data they represent. One may get away with the most striking of visuals for a time, but if these visualizations are not accurate or reflect business change, our credibility as insights professionals will be on the line.

Reliable data sets are essential to this work in order to influence stakeholders or provide value as intended. This requires constant investment in lifting the quality of our data sets, especially with the prevalence of fraudulent behavior in data collection. Once our data (science) is reputable and trustworthy, we can focus on the visualization (art).

Conviva Adds VISUA Computer Vision Features *May 24 2022*
Silicon Valley-based streaming insights provider Conviva has added technology from computer vision specialist VISUA, giving clients access to brand impression data across their social media campaigns.

May 2022

Ant Franklin, CEO and co-founder of Infotools

Infotools is a collaborative investigation platform for market research data. Ant's passion for market research stretches back over 35 years and he's proud to have pioneered the use of innovative analysis and visualization tools in the market research industry, which are used by insights teams from the world's biggest brands.

Beyond static visualizations: Interactivity is the norm

Historically, the insights sector relied on static visualizations in the form of cross-tabs and PowerPoints to communicate insights. Thankfully, we are no longer constrained by rudimentary systems that limit creativity or customization.

Today, there are plenty of software tools to make data look appealing, but it takes more than pretty pictures to make visualizations meaningful. These software tools push past static representations of data, enabling employees to further investigate the data, find more valuable insights, and experience more of those "aha" moments that market researchers crave.

Storytelling at its best is when someone finds a thread of an insight, starts pulling on it, and sees where it goes. Rather than waiting for agencies or data processing to recut the data, those investigating market research can now do it themselves, on the fly, letting their curiosity run wild, and keeping their critical line of questioning flowing.

By employing the right technology, it is easy to challenge the status quo, try something new with our visualizations, and see patterns in our data that were previously hidden. With beautiful, interactive, dynamic reporting that is

easy to understand, use, and remember, our insights stand a better chance of influencing important decision making and creating real value.

Collaboratively setting the narrative

To truly engage organizations from within the insights function, we have to involve others in the process and encourage further discovery. Decision makers can be participants in crafting the story, taking the work that we've done to the next level by feeding their experience into the process. We shouldn't view this as 'losing control' of the narrative but making sure we have the best possible insights in the market.

This collaboration and teamwork, at minimum, needs to happen within insights teams, so that multiple team members are able to work together, using their unique, individual approach to finding the stories in the data. Importantly, each person has a different experience and perspective to create relatable insights that enlighten and influence.

Furthermore, most individuals needing regular insights reports as part of their jobs have to go through the tedious process of asking someone else to generate them, every time. Using

Stravito Launches Visual Insights Tool, Hires CPO *May 25 2022*
Knowledge management platform Stravito has launched a visual insights tool called Atlas, allowing clients to explore and integrate their market research findings, and present insights in a 'bitesize' visual format. The firm has also hired Steffen Bilde as Chief Product Officer (CPO).

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interactive dashboarding tools that allow others to find the stories in the data is just one way to create efficiencies, and further the storytelling function to apply to each person's expertise.

Finding the balance between substance and flair

Making data visualizations engaging, dynamic and easy-to-use is an art form – the aim of which is to encapsulate ways to support business stakeholders in their decision-making. The best storytellers - and the best data visualizations - successfully distil information, presenting it in insightful ways which make it easier to relate.

With technology or science taking a front seat in most discussions, it is important to remember some of the foundations of our industry: curiosity, compassion, and understanding. The curiosity of the researcher is what uncovers the stories the data is trying to tell us; the platforms and technology simply help facilitate this process.

Finding a balance between the science of data and the art of finding the best stories is key. Without it we'll end up with all art and no substance, or all science and no flair. Either way, the magic is lost and an opportunity is missed. Natural creativity and curiosity, coupled with the speed and power of the latest solutions, give us opportunities we've never seen before. Human creativity permeates every aspect of our lives and has been responsible for the most powerful breakthroughs – and this holds true in market research data visualization: a discipline rooted in both art and science. ■

We shouldn't view this as 'losing control' of the narrative but making sure we have the best possible insights in the market

Launch of Amplitude CDP Solution *May 26 2022*
Digital optimization software firm Amplitude, Inc. has launched an insights-driven customer data platform (CDP), which collects and analyzes event data with a built-in product analytics solution, avoiding the need for third-party analytics.

May 2022

VIDEO INTERVIEW
in conversation:
TORBEN LAUSTSEN

*Watch to the full video at
mrweb.com/drno/torbenlaustsen.htm*

Torben Laustsen, co-founder of
OfficeReports, a Denmark-based
provider of presentation software
established in 2013

*Automating report productions saves a lot of time and reduces
the risk of errors. There are plenty of things in life that are far
more fun than messing around with tedious manual copy and
paste and control procedures, where the best possible result is
not to overlook mistakes, says Torben Laustsen, co-founder of
OfficeReports*

Onclusive Buys Media Tracker Critical Mention *May 26 2022*
Recently-formed PR and comms monitoring group Onclusive has announced
the acquisition of US-based media monitoring platform Critical Mention, for
an undisclosed sum.

DRNO Timeline

Parents

I had a lovely childhood in the countryside where my parents ran a small independent family farm. As a child it's quite natural that you contribute to the daily work, and through this you probably learn quite intuitively, both about the importance of being able to fend for yourself, and being able to be a part of a team - you learn about the value of being able to help others.

I believe I was first in my family to go to high school and later on Business School, which was a completely different world to the one I came from: nevertheless, I'm convinced that these basic values that my parents gave me have helped me to navigate into new environments.

NT: That's fascinating, actually, because I think you're at least the third person that I've talked to out of maybe two dozen podcast interviews who has started out on a farm. We should start some kind of interest group...

Did your parents have any ideas about what they wanted you to do? Any encouragement to go into the family business or not to?

TL: Absolutely not. It was expected to be a part of the daily life, as I said before, and it was a collective thing, making the farm work, but there was no pressure on me as to whether I should take over something there or if I should continue in school as I did.

NT: You've ended up working with software. Is there anything in the family background that could have pointed you towards that being a likely outcome?

TL: (laughing) Not at all.

Business School to OfficeReports

TL: I went to a Business School and my first encounter with market research was during my first year there: I took a part time job as an interviewer and my interest sparked, and doing the Masters program I actually started my own [interviewing services] business within this industry, which I then passed on to fellow students when I had to get my first consulting job.

After that I had my first job in a consulting company. I went from Jutland where I grew up to Copenhagen, and well, I've never left Copenhagen since.

NT: What was the actual course you were doing?

TL: Marketing, which includes market research and statistics. That was the main focus in my Masters. So my first job was for a consultant company in the marketing area and there was a sister company to that, which was the biggest market research provider in Copenhagen at that time. So I already had a number of colleagues there that were working in this particular industry, but for a few years I was more focusing on the consultancy part of it.

I think I've always had an entrepreneurial mindset and vivid curiosity. So a few years later after the Business School, together with two colleagues, I founded my own research company here in Copenhagen, which is now a part of Norstat - and in that time we focused very much on being cost-effective through simplified and streamlined workflows. But we had difficulties in finding IT solutions that could support that process and solutions that were targeted for our industry, so we had an idea and we started to develop our own IT solutions to simplify the work processes in the industry. That development was led by a young, talented software engineer, Fred Balkenende, and based on our collaboration we later founded OfficeReports - in 2013 we launched the first version of the OfficeReports app that we know and use today.

Forsta Adds White Label Option for MR Agency Partners *Jun 6 2022*
Research, CX and employee experience (EX) technology provider Forsta has launched what it calls a Human Experience (HX) Partner Program for Market Research Agencies, allowing them to fully white label integrated VoC programs hosted on its technology platform.

May - June 2022

What does OfficeReports do?

TL: So, we know that the vast majority of all survey data is reported in PowerPoint, and it has been for quite some time now. And we know that the workflow from data to report includes many, many manual processes. So we developed an app that simplifies this process from survey data to infographic based reports in PowerPoint. That is still what we do today: but in the early years it was more presenting things in charts and in tables, and automating that process to get it into PowerPoint - now it involves a lot of more complex things.

NT: Did you do any research beforehand, to make sure that you were right about the size of the PowerPoint market and that people would stay in it - to back up the idea?

TL: I think at that time we read a lot of reports done by Tim Macer in London - he did a very good job every year, a report on the industry - how do you collect data, how do you present data etc. It confirmed what a big proportion of all delivery was based on PowerPoint, and that it was the king of reporting in the industry. We have seen many times people predicting that PowerPoint [will give way to] other platforms, to cloud-based reporting and such like, but the fact is that we [still] don't see a strong tendency in that direction. PowerPoint is still the king in reporting and I think we considered that meant 'if you can't be with the one you love, love the one you're with'. So let's add functionality to the PowerPoint suite that can ease the process.

PowerPoint is still the king in reporting and 'if you can't be with the one you love, love the one you're with'

NT: I guess it's also true that while people are always saying 'PowerPoint will get superseded by something else', PowerPoint itself is being updated all the time, isn't it - it's not like Microsoft are ending development / support for it?!

TL: Right. I also think that the combination of our deep knowledge about the market research industry and the technical ability means that we know how to build applications that are completely integrated with the Office suite, and is what enabled us to develop tools that reduce reporting times and turnaround times by - I would say - 60-70%, so it is really significant what we can do there. It's based around making what people already do more efficient.

The industry has had a tradition of taking data from a survey tool to traditional tools like SPSS and from SPSS to Excel, and then we copy and paste all the time from the one to the other, to the third, before we end up in a PowerPoint presentation. And that includes a lot of manual work, especially when it comes to data visualization. If you just add a table or a chart to a presentation we can automate something but if we include changing text into images, changing numbers into emojis, etcetera and handing all that stuff, it gets more complex and it really has to be automated.

NT: Who uses OfficeReports within companies, and do you tend to have big overarching contracts with a company to use it, or lots of individual users inside large agencies?

TL: It is primarily corporate companies in the market research industry. Kantar, Ipsos, or it can be smaller companies in the industry, but it can also be firms in the consultancy industry who are doing a lot of research work. EY or

Comscore Unites Digital, Social Media and UX Measures *Jun 14 2022*
Comscore has launched a platform called 'Total Digital', which combines the firm's digital and social media measurement tool and user experience (UX) data into a single dashboard. Users get a cross-platform view of how consumers are engaging with content and advertising.

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other companies doing that are using OfficeReports so you can say it's a broad group of people working with research data.

NT: ...and they tend to buy a corporate licence or do individual users or groups decide to buy it in..?

TL: We can provide both. We can provide floating licenses that you can use throughout the organization or individual user licences so it very much depends on the specific user patterns that you have.

NT: Is there anything built into OfficeReports that helps people share their data?

TL: I think the good thing is that we are so integrated with the Office suite, so if you are in a SharePoint environment you can just take advantage of all the functionality that you have available there.

NT: People are always saying about Microsoft packages that there's a lot in them that they never use. For example, Excel - there's a heck of a lot in that top bar where I still don't know what it means after twenty years or whatever - does that affect the way you design? Are you encouraging people to make more use of the features that are in there already?

TL: Absolutely yes, I mean there might be a number of features that we have been considering adding to OfficeReports where you have something similar in PowerPoint. It could be something about aligning things correctly in your report that might be a bit far away in the ribbon in PowerPoint. We can give more attention to things that are directly relevant, in combination with OfficeReports.

Latest Developments

NT: What's happening in the company that's exciting right now?

TL: The idea of making researchers' day-to-day easier is constantly evolving. Our fight against time-wasting is absolutely ongoing. The first OfficeReports version was aimed at simplifying the process as I said from data to reporting in PowerPoint, and we built it thinking that the process would always start with raw data - so the first app we built can import data, produce cross tables, statistical tests, and present the results in PowerPoint - but we realised also that in some cases the user's starting point is cross tables data that has already been calculated. There might be something in the procedures of research companies that say you have to divide steps in a certain way, and we cannot [expect them to] just change the way that works and say that has to start with raw data, so now you can use OfficeReports to work with raw data or where you have already produced cross tables.

Our fight against time-wasting is absolutely ongoing

Klaviyo Launches Unified Customer Data Platform *Jun 24 2022*
In the US, e-mail marketing platform Klaviyo has launched an enterprise solution called Klaviyo One, helping large brands bring all their customer data together to drive personalized experiences at scale.

June 2022

Also, the visualization of data in reports has been improved - for example you can easily convert brand names in tables to logos, graphs and numbers in tables to icons, you can add emojis, you can add colours and much more. And as an additional time-saving functionality, once you've decided and finalised your deck, it can work as a template: so when you add new sets of data or add new tables inserted then reports can be updated in minutes. Researchers can now be more efficient - they build reports based on preliminary data sets, and as soon as the data collection is completed, you can produce an updated report.

NT: OK so you can start now with different sorts of data, with the raw data as you say with SPSS or cross tabs or whatever, but the final result is always PowerPoint, is that right, and was there ever any temptation to broaden out from that, or is that what you're sticking with?

TL: We are one hundred percent focused, I mean the more you have a broader focus the more you get in the direction of designing a Swiss knife. You might always be able to find better tools to do whatever each feature on the Swiss knife can do, so we are very much focused on making the process easier from your data, whether that's raw data or already created tables to PowerPoint presentations.

NT: And plans for further changes in the future?

TL: Instead of me trying to predict key trends I would rather promise that we will always be responsive to our users and in relation to the wishes and the demands that our users may have to face in the future - we will try to deliver on that.

Data Viz and Automation

NT: Tell me in general terms, why do you think good data visualization is important?

TL: There are many reasons. First of all, I believe it's about good communication. It helps businesses to better digest the vast amount of insights and understand new patterns in the data. If the data is visually pleasing and easy to read, users will pay more attention.

If for example I had to communicate 5.76 as a mean value in a table then it's up to the reader to decode whether the result is good or bad, but if I want to convey that 5.76 is a perfect or maybe an average result, an icon or a colour can simplify the message and immediately communicate that idea.

Data is numbers with a story. Data visualization helps telling that story by curating data into a visual form easier to understand. Good visualization removes the noise from the data and focuses on useful information.

NT: How do you think automation is helping researchers?

TL: Well, we all talk about automation and sometimes it can feel like a kind of a buzzword these days, but why professionals in the market research industry benefit from automation is because it simplifies the workflow without losing the precision and the value of the data. Automation boosts

If the data is visually pleasing and easy to read, users will pay more attention

All these platforms export their data into SPSS sav- files

productivity and helps keeping your processes in house by providing solutions to repetitive problems and saving money and time. Which is vital for a research company in today's fast- paced world. And another important aspect of automation is its constant evolution to deliver better results and improve efficiency.

That is where tools like OfficeReports can come in handy and speed up the process. When we released the first version of OfficeReports Lenny Murphy, the Chief Editor of Green Book, commented 'it doesn't reinvent the wheel, but makes it so much better' - and since then we have constantly striven to develop functionality that simplifies work flows for better and simpler data visualization. I'm convinced that this focus along with a high level of service are the main reasons why we score 95% in likelihood to recommend on software review platforms like Capterra.

NT: As you say one of your current developments is being able to pull in data from different types of software, not just the raw data. Does your product integrate with other market research software?

TL: Yes, we have a direct integration to things like SurveyMonkey and other broader platforms. The fact is that all these platforms export their data into SPSS sav- files, a standard format for market research data, and that's used as well, but we can also integrate directly with the databases. Alchemer, for example, and SurveyMonkey are two of the broader platforms we integrate with, and we can get data from Qualtrics too.

Black Swan Data Raises Funds for Expansion *Jun 30 2022*
In London, data science and consumer behaviour prediction specialist Black Swan Data has raised $18.5m in a growth funding round, part of which it will use to expand further into the US market.

DRNO Timeline

Close to Microsoft?

NT: What about Microsoft themselves? You are potentially providing a great service to them by improving the way that people can use PowerPoint, helping them to keep it very much in the forefront. Do you have any dealings with them?

TL: No, although I've heard many people saying that it is so obvious because we are so well integrated with Microsoft Office that it almost looks and feels like something Bill Gates invented. But I think the fact is that Microsoft Office is used all over, in all industries and if they spent much time on each one individually to make that ideal, that would be some Tower of Babel they would be building there. So instead they have added general functionality that makes it easy to implement an application like ours to the Office suite, and that's the beauty of that I think.

It almost looks and feels like something Bill Gates invented

Acquisition & Partnerships?

NT: Do you have interest in the company from people who say 'We could build OfficeReports into our own suite' - do you have takeover bids or interest from people wanting to integrate it into what they do as part of an end-to-end package? Either as an acquisition or a partnership?

TL (laughing): Well that I mean we are open to. There might be a lot of different angles here and interests and if someone wants that dialogue we would be happy to have it. But until then we again have our main focus on doing what we are doing, and I believe that we're doing that well - and instead of spending half our time on searching for new ideas, we try to focus on what we are good at, and stick to that.

NT: OK, not the acquisitions but the partnership side, you must have had companies coming to you and saying can we integrate Office Reports more into our own packages?

TL: We have added ourselves to survey software as a way to present things, but not so much the other way around.

Motto / Last Thought

TL: Not really a motto, but I like what Lenny Murphy wrote: 'It doesn't reinvent the wheel, but it makes it so much better'. If that nails the DNA of our company, I would be happy to make that mine.

NT: (laughing) ...and I'm sure Lenny will charge you a small fee for commercial use of his words. I would do the same!

And a last quick question, do you think we'll be having a similar sort of discussion in ten years' time, or rather that other people in our place will be having the same discussion, like why is PowerPoint still king?

TL: I will not predict on this, I have made a lot of mistakes in predicting the future. I think we will try to adapt to whatever is happening - we will not be idle. I think that's the best we can do. ■

BI App Zing Data Gets Seed Investment *Jul 1 2022*
In the US, business intelligence (BI) and visualization app Zing Data has raised $2.4m in a seed investment round, which it will use to continue building its platform empowering 'data users on the go'.

June - July 2022

DISPELLING THE MYTH THAT "REPORT AUTOMATION IS ONLY USEFUL FOR TRACKERS"

Benjamin Rietti, CEO of E-Tabs - specialists in report automation solutions and consulting for the Market Research industry

DRNO Timeline

According to Carrie McCracken, former Research Support Team Leader, and Automated Charting specialist at Kantar (USA), some projects are easy candidates for report automation: those that are large in size and scope; those involving multiples such as multiple countries, markets or category/branch reports; and those that place heavy demands on resources - even if only for limited amounts of time..

Tracking studies are a "no brainer" for report automation. Any study which is repeated wave after wave should see a return on investment in the short to medium term. One could argue that set-up for the first wave of reporting may take a similar amount of time compared with manual methods. However, it's populating the reports on subsequent waves where those savings come into play. Automating those waves takes up only a fraction of the time invested in originally setting up the first wave.

There is a common misconception that report automation is only for the "big" players, or that it is only useful for tracking studies. Projects that are large in size and scope are clearly well suited for it - however, there is good reason to go beyond just the "big" and to explore the wider benefits of automating your charts and reports.

Report automation solutions enable researchers, without technical programming skills, to populate charts, graphs and PowerPoint presentations directly from their data tables. Eliminating manual data entry tasks can reduce project turnaround times; ensure data accuracy and lower operational costs. Let's take a look at how this technology can impact other types of projects.

A key benefit when we consider syndicated projects is that multiple clients buy into the same survey. Typically each client would receive an identical (or near-identical) report: hence the value associated with the syndicated approach. However, using report automation could enable you to easily add value to each member's individual report. You could automatically tailor each of them according to their brand; re-rank tables and charts to place their brand on top, highlighting it, comparing the difference of their brand versus competitors, even re-formatting each report with their own colours, logos, branding, and more. Essentially providing the client with a custom report for the price of a syndicated one!

Reporting on Omnibus surveys couldn't be made simpler than setting up a master template/shell, and automatically populating it with the relevant number of charts for each question asked. The presentation will then grow according to the questions and charts needed. The same can be true for copy-testing and ad/concept tests – use a master template and automatically customise it for each test report.

Studies requiring multiple outputs are a pleasure to automate. Whether multi-segment, multi-country, regional, departmental, category or product, you would simply set up a single master report, and then re-populate it over and over again according to the number of reports required, each with its relevant 'slice' of the overall data. The biggest gains in this category are likely to come from loyalty research and customer or employee satisfaction studies.

Sure automation can be described as "cookie cutter" style, but that doesn't mean that your reports can't be customised!

Comparisons against norms, performance targets, regional or national values, highest, lowest, you name it – and the automation can calculate and then automatically highlight those values and differences with the appropriate graphical indicators or formatting.

Another common myth highlighted by Carrie is the belief that report automation is in direct opposition to any kind of customisation and storytelling. "As an end user I really don't feel that way. Nothing breaks my heart more than spending time generating hundreds of slides for a report, to find out later that only 35 were shown in the presentation to the client. I'd much rather press 'run' on the reports I've set up and return from my lunch break to 150 slides that we can then comb through, picking out the meaningful pieces to make the story. This doesn't mean next time you won't have a totally new story! You've got all that data to work from, you have it sooner rather than later and you can craft your story or stories after that."

"Every researcher has at least one project that comes to mind, when we talk about report automation, that they couldn't even have started without the help of some new process."

Forsta Launches 'Digital Diaries' Ethnography App *Jul 5 2022*
Forsta, the company formed last year through the merger of research software firms Confirmit and FocusVision, has launched Digital Diaries, a mobile ethnography app designed to obtain qualitative insights at scale.

July 2022

Benjamin Rietti
CEO and founder of
E-Tabs

E-Tabs is a provider of report automation, online dashboards, PowerPoint charting and data visualization, with offices in the UK, Europe, North America and Asia Pacific. Benjamin's innovative approach has seen the company provide reporting services and solutions to the MR industry for over 25 years. With over two decades of industry knowledge, Benjamin is a talented entrepreneur who recognises the integral role technology plays in market research. A doting family man, he enjoys spending time with his children and grandchildren, and has a passion for skiing.

Sure automation can be described as "cookie cutter" style, but that doesn't mean that your reports can't be customised!

When it comes to the not so obvious project types, ad hoc projects still make good candidates for report automation. Of course each project is different, of course the charts will change, of course you will need to "build the story line" as you go along, but why should that prevent you from taking advantage of the efficiencies offered by report automation?

What are you going to do when the ultimate delivery date cannot be moved, fieldwork has dragged on to the point that DP won't be able to run the final tabs until Friday afternoon, and your finished deck of 100 slides is due to the client on Monday morning?!

There's always the option of having a couple of researchers donate their weekend for the better good, and risk the typo errors that will inevitably creep in due to having to burn the candle at both ends….

Automating the reporting process would enable you to actually use fieldwork time to prepare the report template and set up the charts and formatting. You'd be able to simply click GO on that Friday afternoon and sit back and enjoy watching each and every slide, chart and table come to life with the final numbers. Nice thought, eh? And it's very real, and very attainable.

Carrie recounts another typical scenario:

"So your original delivery's been turned in, all was well until you received a phone call from the client requesting that same report, only for a different target group that they have a meeting about tomorrow. Having taken the time to set up things properly you can meet your client's expectations and your answer can be a resounding YES!"

Create time!! How about utilising fieldwork time to prepare report templates? This means any extra requests or follow-ups will have significantly shorter project turnaround times. Within an hour all 100 slides can be re-populated, values re-ranked, indicators automatically calculated and re-positioned.

Even when it comes to ad hoc projects, report automation creates time, reduces the risk of error and enables you to offer your clients added value. "After all if the meeting is tomorrow the meeting is tomorrow. You cannot deliver the report 2 or 3 days later."

Research companies of all shapes and sizes have utilised the time savings and improved accuracy brought on by report automation to add value to a range of different client projects - fulfilling extra requests, providing additional insights and including valuable recommendations in their conclusions.

Research companies today are juggling their need to respond to tightening budgets with the need to add value to client offerings to remain competitive. By boosting efficiencies, report automation offers a way for research companies to remain focused on the business of research, enabling them to meet or exceed client expectations and take on additional or complex projects without the need for further resources.

Automated reporting continues to harness new technologies and overcome changing needs in data visualisation too. No longer restricted to just pulling data into regular charts, graphs and tables, but data-driven InfoGraphics within PowerPoint too. Even automation of Google Slides and Sheets is now possible.

Our experience has shown that clients report their project set-up can be completed much quicker using automation versus manual hand-posting of numbers, and when taking accuracy of data entry into the equation, and the various scenarios described above, this provides a compelling reason to consider the software for all types of projects, not just "trackers". The bottom line – A massive Return on Investment time after time. ■

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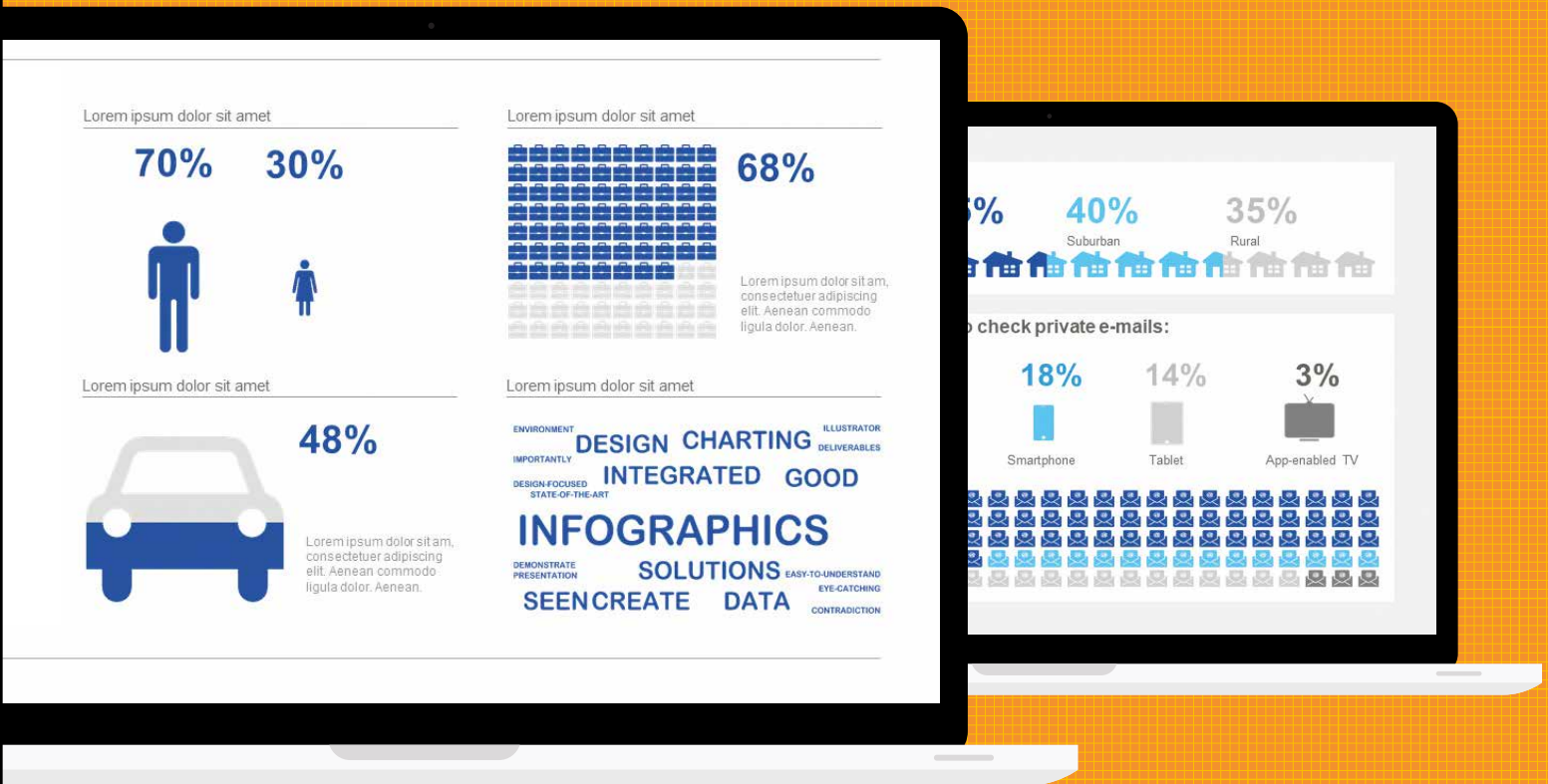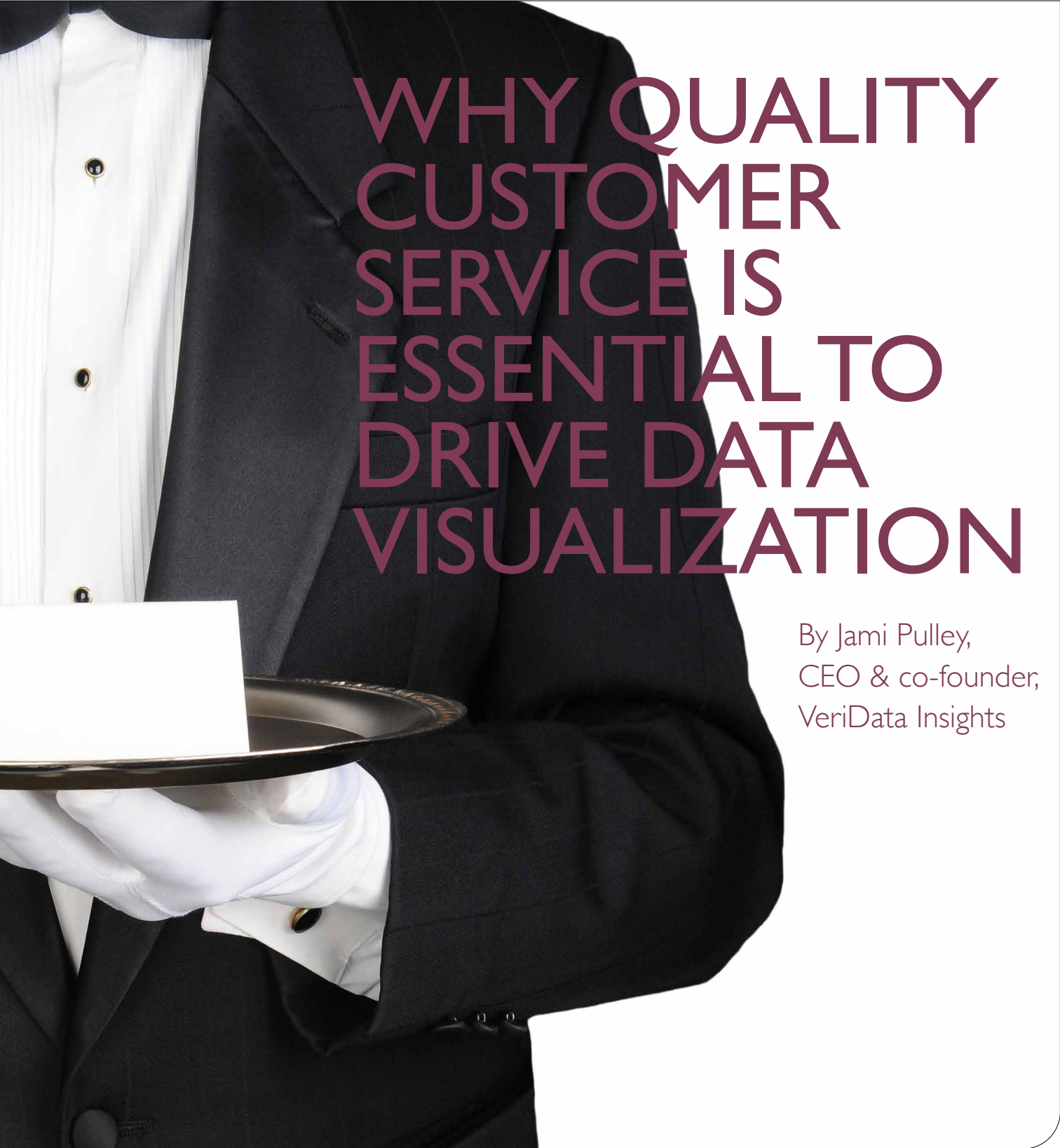
WHY QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE IS ESSENTIAL TO DRIVE DATA VISUALIZATION

By Jami Pulley,
CEO & co-founder,
VeriData Insights

VST Teams with dunnhumby for Planogram Software Launch *Jul 21 2022*
Retail data and research firms dunnhumby and VST (Virtual Store Trials) have teamed up
to launch 'Planogram Publisher', which promises to make retailer Tesco's planogram data
accessible to CPG brands.

DRNO Timeline

From manilla folders to bells and whistles

We have come a long way from when I first started in Market Research in 2003. In my early years, our project folders were actually *manilla* folders. And you had to track each folder's chain of custody, signing for it like you would see at the evidence locker in your favorite police drama.

That manilla envelope held all instructions, targets, pricing, notes, everything. You would have to leave it with the tech team to have them send out email invitations to the panelists. Back then, emailing panelists was something only the tech team could do!

The technology today is incredible. With a few clicks of a button, you can not only program a survey, but set up quotas, launch it, and be reviewing the data before your coffee has gone cold.

And for data visualization, building custom dashboards has never been easier. Technology allows us to produce singing and dancing colorful representations, with graphics and more bells and whistles than we'd have previously imagined possible.

Today, it is easy to forget that technology should only be an asset to assist in providing excellent customer service

You don't have to speak to a single person or trade a single email to do this! It's truly remarkable. However, this sort of automation, while great and seemingly limitless, can come at a cost.

Customer service can often fall casualty to such technological revolutions. And without excellent customer service as your foundation, technology only leaves you with all the gear but no idea.

Customer service should never fall to the wayside

It would be inaccurate to say customer service is no longer considered important in the market research space. However, we're now at an increasing risk of customer service suffering while we try to "WOW!" customers with the latest shiny new technology.

This is especially true when it comes to data visualization and presenting data to clients. Who doesn't want the promise of a colorful representation as opposed to an excel table or a 100-slide PowerPoint presentation? But back when I had my manilla folders, customer service was all we had at our disposal to impress clients. Today, it is easy to forget that technology should only be an asset to assist in providing excellent customer service.

A fundamental problem we see persisting across a variety of clients, is that too much attention goes toward the development of data visualization. Not nearly enough time and work go into understanding the specs, goals and purpose of your visualizations. This is dangerous, not only to the core research objectives, but likely to the pocketbook and timeline as well.

Jami Pulley
CEO and co-founder, Veridata Insights

Jami Pulley has attained over 25 years of experience in the market research industry.

Beginning at Common Knowledge, Jami would advance in her career to become the first female sales Senior Vice President of e-Rewards (aka Research Now, aka Dynata), managing their largest revenue producing region and launching the LATAM region.

Jami's passion for providing unsurpassed value to clients led to the inception of Veridata Insights, a global data collection and panel company. At Veridata she embraces the latest technology, complimented with a little creativity, to earn the right to be a valued partner to her clients. Utilizing Veridata's internal panel, BizKnowledge, in addition to phone and social media recruitment to support qualitative and quantitative research, Jami's enjoyment lies in delighting clients with outstanding customer service.

By applying her passion for team building, Jami leads Veridata to develop creative solutions to complex challenges, proudly delivering on the promise of fulfilling projects "on time, on budget, and stress free".

Stravito and KnowledgeHound Integrate Tools *Jul 25 2022*
Enterprise insights platform Stravito has partnered with search-based survey analysis specialist KnowledgeHound, to help clients centralize all insights and survey data in a single platform.

July 2022

Bank Performance Summary Dashboard
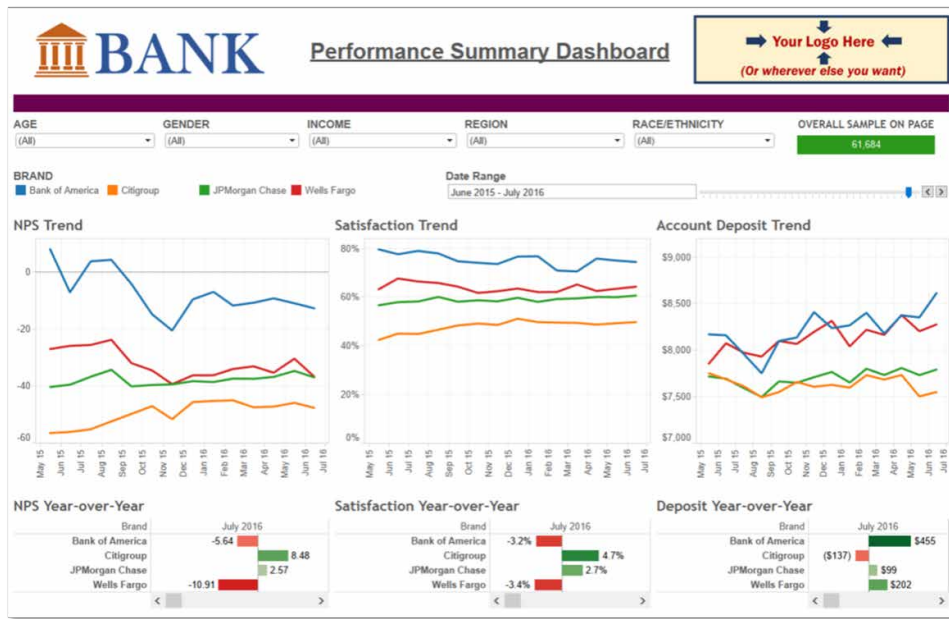
A case study: right and wrong times for a dashboard

To give one example of how it pays to keep customer service at your core, we recently closed a study for a client where we had scoped out a custom dashboard build for them. The dashboard was awesome! I'll unapologetically state we are phenomenal at building custom dashboards. It is something we learned how to do very early on, and it is always a strong talking point when we're trying to win over new clients.

However, custom dashboards can be expensive, and we do not have the opportunity to build them as much as we'd like. But when we first began discussing a custom dashboard with this client, it made the most sense. While they would be sharing a comprehensive report back at the close of the study, which would span multiple international markets, they also knew that the C-suite would be interested in certain key points along the way.

However, the scope of the project evolved before launch. While we had planned on using the dashboard, and the client had been able to secure the additional budget to do so, we realized after final questionnaire approval that the dashboard would no longer make sense.

Dashboards are attractive tools for longitudinal studies. When you are tracking anything and looking to potentially build upon that data in a way where you can compare results over time, they are great.

Similarly, as was in this case, if you are starting within a few markets, interviewing multiple months (or even years) you can add in the additional markets quite easily. With each new addition, you not only

What do clients actually need?

A picture is worth a thousand words. Yet the biggest problem we have seen at Veridata Insights, is that people aren't spending enough time with their clients to understand if the picture illustrates their research objectives.

So, how do you overcome the allure of just picking the most visually stunning representation? How do you guide your clients, be they internal or external?

It's fundamental, really - Listen! You can't help your client if you don't listen to their goal.

Who is their audience? What is important to the key stakeholders? How many people will be reading the results? Are they planning on expanding into other markets? If so, what key variables can be consistent across the different markets? Will there be different levels within the markets that you'd like to drill down or roll

up? Is it longitudinal? What is the budget? What is the timeline? All of it is relevant to understanding the right solution. And sometimes the right solution is also the less expensive one.

Truly listening to our clients has been the backbone of Veridata Insights since we were founded in 2019 when it was just myself and my co-founder. Because we have always focused on customer service, we have experienced organic triple-digit growth every year thus far. We now have over 30 employees across five countries worldwide, to support our clients in online survey programming, sample recruitment for qualitative and quantitative work, data processing, and of course in data visualization.

Sometimes the right solution is also the less expensive one

can easily see the new market stats in the same visually appealing format, but you can roll up the data and compare with what you have already.

The other appealing use case for dashboards, is when your clients want to disseminate results across multiple stakeholders with different interests and levels of expertise.
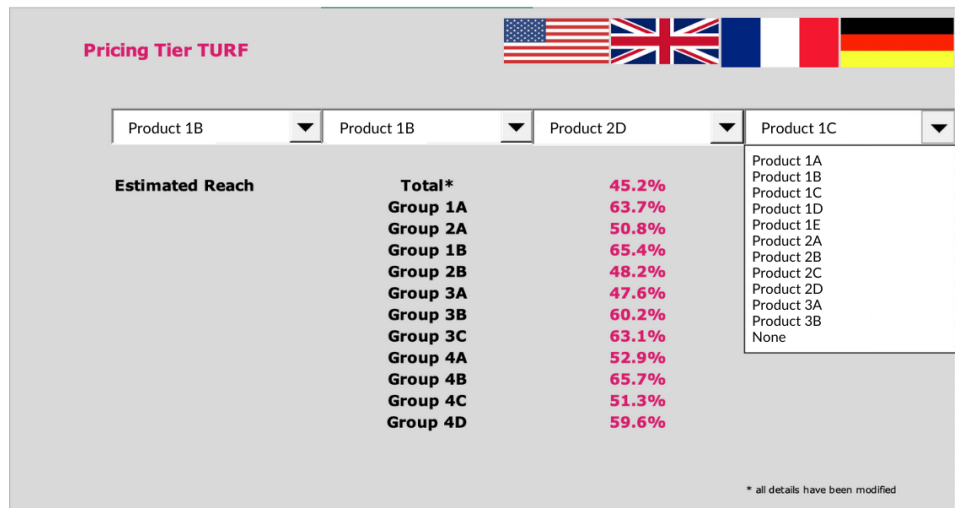
For example, if you have a large national customer satisfaction survey where you will want to view hierarchies at the state level, the regional level and the national level, the dashboard will allow you to segment the data accordingly. It will also make it relevant to your unique stakeholders. Keep in mind that it's tough to share a PowerPoint. And pdf files, while much smaller, are static. But with a dashboard, it's super easy to just send out the link.

Alas, our client realized that their executive team was less interested in rolling out across new markets. They were more interested in pricing out certain packages and understanding the tradeoffs in offering some newer products within the current suite they had for their customers.

Longitudinally there was no longer any reason for the dashboard. In addition, the project had evolved to such a specific point of focus that there wasn't a need to create something with so many options to view the data. The execs now only had one focus – price optimization.

This is why TURF Analysis and a TURF Simulator became the logical choice. TURF allows you to compare the combinations of packages and products, running the math behind the scenes, so you can see what the lift or decrement would be if you made changes to one or more of the variables.

Essentially, it would tell us how much or

how little the products would cannibalize the different sub-groups. My client was looking for the optimal group, which would reach the most people and meet the most needs. TURF allows you to do just that. Moreover, not only was it exactly what they needed, but it was significantly less expensive than the dashboard. It just made sense.

By truly listening, we succeeded in delighting our client. We resisted the urge to immediately opt for the most elaborate data visualization solution, instead providing what was best for them.

Embrace technology but don't lose sight of the bigger picture

We've come a long way with data visualization and technology, from manilla folders to extravagant custom dashboards. However, we must never forget that technology is only a tool to assist us in what we do.

We may be tempted to use the most cutting-edge tech and the latest shiny new 'toys'. Resist temptation. Listen to your clients. Understand their needs. Make decisions based on what solutions are best for your clients.

Sometimes it will be the most elaborate data visualization solution; sometimes not. But when you succeed in keeping customer service as your focus, you can rest assured knowing that you and your clients will reap the rewards. ◼

Our client realized that their executive team was less interested in rolling out across new markets. They were more interested in pricing out certain packages and understanding the tradeoffs... TURF Analysis and a TURF Simulator became the logical choice

Forsta Buys Employee Ideas Platform HelloIgnite *Aug 9 2022*
Research software firm Forsta has acquired crowdsourcing and innovation platform HelloIgnite, which helps companies collect, share and manage innovation ideas from employees in order to improve experiences for customers. Terms of the deal have not been disclosed.

July - Aug 2022

DON'T JUST VISUALIZE YOUR DATA, DEMOCRATIZE IT

Jill Martin, Vice President of Global Customer Success, Forsta

Funds for Dropbase, Datawisp, Merkle Science; Buy for NinjaCat *Aug 12 2022*
VC funding continues to flow for data firms in the US. Collaborative data platform Dropbase has raised $1.75m, no-code data exploration platform Datawisp $3.6m, and crypto intell specialist Merkle Science $19m; while marketing and analytics platform NinjaCat has acquired Shape.io.

DRNO Timeline

Subscribe to Daily Research News

No matter the industry, no matter the customers, visualizing data is now a vital business function that provides easy-to-understand insights that can lead to innovation, greater efficiency, and more informed decision-making. For many organizations, this is just right. Those with more complex needs, however, may find it challenging to extract the full value of their data collection from a few charts or even a PowerPoint presentation.

To best organize and interact with complex data sets, market researchers should seek to build dynamic and intuitive dashboards that can go beyond the typical data visualization (in its more literal sense) and provide engaging, interactive environments to dig into. Not all dashboards are created equal, though. Many data visualization platforms and providers focus heavily on the design elements of a dashboard without investing properly in the data processing on the backend. And the opposite can often be true, as well, making some dashboards a mess to navigate with clunky visuals. Think of it as a sports car – market researchers want a vehicle for their data that's sleek on the outside, with an impressive amount of horsepower under the hood.

The most important aspect of a dashboard, though, is the actual structure and content. This will dictate the ability to piece together a coherent narrative with the data and can be the difference-maker for research teams working to put together easy-to-follow reporting for their clients. This requires a thoughtful approach, as every client has different needs. It should be a bespoke process, with any given dashboard built with the right tools that can answer a business's most pressing questions about the marketplace and their customers.

Some of the most useful pieces that can be added to a dashboard's toolkit are simple, but when they're built to go beyond standard data visualization, they can offer so much more:

The most important aspect of a dashboard, though, is the actual structure and content.
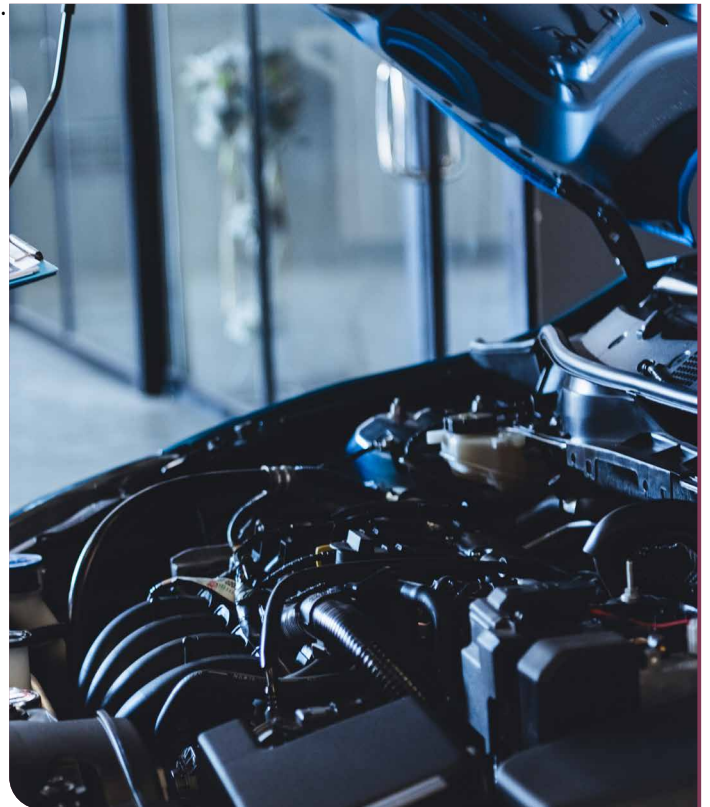
Think of it as a sports car – market researchers want a vehicle for their data that's sleek on the outside, with an impressive amount of horsepower under the hood.

VST Promotes for Research & Partnerships Role
Aug 12 2022
Retail data and research firm VST (Virtual Store Trials) has promoted Charlotte Kiddle to the newly created position of Chief Research & Partnership Officer.

August 2022

Jill Martin, Vice President of Global Customer Success at Forsta.

Jill is an experienced Customer Success Manager and leader with a demonstrated history of working with technology and software across industries. She is an expert in data reporting and visualization and was one of the original Dapresy North America management team members. She has a Master of Business Administration (MBA) focused in Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies from University of New Hampshire Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics.

Data repositories: Pull together multiple data sources into one centralized database, allowing for a synchronized analytics experience that allows for more freedom in visualization and exploration under a single "roof" to create a single source of truth.

· **Data processing:** Access the powerful "back-end" of Forsta Visualizations where you can easily create complex weighting schemes, apply global text changes, create global nets, and build custom variables to use in your reporting. Rest assured knowing the changes you make in the back-end update automatically in longitudinal studies!

· **Cross tabulation:** Get into the weeds of the data in an organized setting that allows for seamless drag-and-drop experimenting, filtering, stat testing and more through an easy-to-use and intuitive interface. Save your work into either reusable templates or into exportable and sharable Excel workbooks.

· **Live infographics:** Static infographics begone. Create a compelling

infographic template that taps into a live data source, so that clients can get real-time updates on valuable metrics without the need for manual changes. Save and reuse infographic templates across multiple studies to save time on unnecessary re-work.
·

Automated PPT reporting: Easily create PPT reports in record time by eliminating the need to create aggregated tables. Build engaging and delivery-ready PPT reports using respondent-level data to get the reports in the hands of your clients faster and more efficiently.

With living, breathing dashboards at their disposal, the stage is already set for anyone to jump in and gather valuable insights without the handholding.

Mediatel Connected Debuts 'Performance' Marketing App *Aug 12 2022*
UK-based Mediatel Connected, which aggregates media research data from a variety of sources to track trends across digital and traditional media, has launched Performance, an app allowing users to channel digital marketing spend based on trends, performance scores and modelling.

DRNO Timeline

Adding such dynamism to data visualization gives teams the opportunity to take on projects with a more iterative approach,

An underrated aspect of these more engaging data visualization dashboards is that market research teams need not worry about carefully scripting storylines around their clients' data. With living, breathing dashboards at their disposal, the stage is already set for anyone to jump in and gather valuable insights without the handholding. With this, individual reports can be phased out in favor of a consistent back-and-forth dialogue between analysts and their clients. Adding such dynamism to data visualization gives teams the opportunity to take on projects with a more iterative approach, providing updates as they go instead of putting additional (and unnecessary) effort toward a singular bloated report that's both daunting to put together and to read through.

In the same vein, these dashboards empower market researchers to collaborate more closely with each other and with their clients daily. Bringing tools like live infographics and data repositories into the mix removes the barrier of offline data processing (which keeps workflows stunted and sluggish), meaning teams can function more seamlessly and take informed, decisive action quicker.

Looking toward the future, artificial intelligence is almost guaranteed to play a more significant role in data-driven decision making for businesses worldwide. That's not to say that market research teams will be replaced,

though, as AI (Artificial Intelligence) is already being integrated in quantitative and qualitative research platforms like Forsta's. Data visualization will be able to grow alongside the progression of AI technology, improving the way live data is gathered and organized while potentially making data more accessible for companies that may not currently know where or how to begin utilizing data at a high level.

All the talk about dynamic dashboard creation doesn't solely exist in theory, either. Companies like B2B market research agency Yonder, teeming with data experts, have high standards for their own market research work and the value they offer their clients.

In collaboration with Forsta, the Yonder team was able to build forty unique dashboards for forty different clients, each one adapting to their individual needs and individual data sets, as well as providing more time for everyone to dedicate their attention to the big picture, rather than the tedium of manual data management. What made the creation of these unique dashboards possible was the creation of a portal for each of the forty clients, each with their respective sets of historical data and new data. This combined with powerful data repository capabilities, the crosstab solution, the infographic templates and the charting solution.

Data-driven companies are the first to thrive in today's marketplace, regardless of industry. Those who are empowered by more than just the availability of data, but the ability to effectively organize and interpret it, can go a step further. For data analysts looking to bring their own companies or clients into a new age of market intelligence, the path forward will run through interactive data visualization. Not just static images and charts, but hands-on tools that unlock the next level of market research. ■
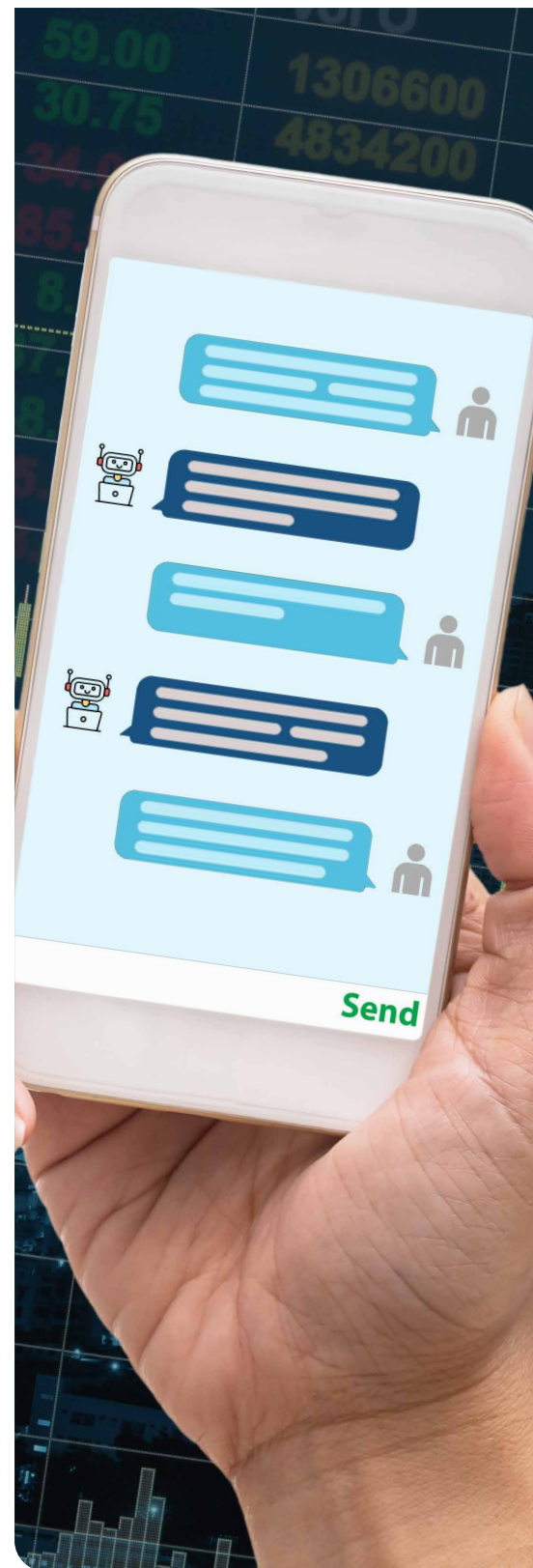
CHEFS AND FARMERS REVISITED

by Nick Thomas, MrWeb

Wine Data Firm Quini Adds Product Consumer Insights *Aug 18 2022*
Wine consumer sensory and attitudinal data and analytics platform Quini has updated its self-serve QUINI DATA platform, with the addition of a dashboard delivering topline consumer insights about a product, at a glance.

DRNO Timeline

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In producing this supplement, as usual I've had a good time interviewing some of the fascinating and dynamic people who are helping to shape our sector, including a look at their upbringing which is perhaps my favourite part of it.

Two of them linked the country or region where they lived to their or their parents' choice of profession: see above Kyle Ferguson 'Well, I'm Canadian right?' (ice hockey) and Jami Pulley 'In West Texas, I'm sure this will be no shock to you' (oil and gas). The other two talked about family farms, and they weren't the first in these supplements to do so: in my talk with Torben Laustsen I've jokingly suggested we set up an interest group for 'researchers-who-grew-up-on-farms', and I'm not sure I'll follow up on it, but it did set me thinking about skills, mindsets and 'what kind of person makes a good researcher?'

In particular, I went back to some comments by Eric Salama in a speech at IIEx as long ago as 2015 (plus ça change...) - and as memories can deceive I'll quote directly the write-up I did at the time:

… research managers need to move from being farmers, to being chefs, according to Salama, bringing in a much wider array of different ingredients and knowing how to mix them.

Clearly he's speaking figuratively - I understand that, OK? - but could it be, that the people I'm interviewing, or (particularly in Sandro Kaurlatz's case) their influential parents, represent a generation where farming did suit the research mindset, and that the personal responsibility, the sense of knowing your subject matter intimately, setting up / planting and nurturing the sources you have with love and attention, all made these ideal people to move into a career in MR? And would that mean that my replacements in ten or twenty years' time will be interviewing the offspring of a bunch of chefs?

There's a point to this, honestly - and it even relates to data viz. The business of insight requires a new range of skills, and I agree that bringing the right elements into the mix is more front and centre these days - also that there are a much wider range of ingredients to consider, whether we're talking about the proliferation of media itself, the exploding number of non-survey data options, or indeed the vast number of different research software platforms and packages out there, many of them duplicating each other in most respects but often with a slightly different angle. To keep track of it, and make the very best use of it, a researcher with chef's skills is perhaps crucial - but the very best chefs have an understanding of where their ingredients come from, quite a detailed one in fact. If you source your fish, or your steak,

or your asparagus, from the wrong supplier or even the wrong country, no amount of culinary skill is going to make your dish a masterpiece.

The same is undoubtedly true of research professionals. Data viz perhaps represents the 'chef' end of things more than other parts of our work: it's taking the stuff you have and making it visually appealing, but also making sure it's tasty - that it actually addresses the business problems it's supposed to. And - see Manny Rodriguez' 'SEED' article above - ideally it requires thought up-front, before data collection, assessing what's going to be useful. If you really can make the time to think about how you're going to display results before you finalise how you're getting your data, you'll see the benefit.

Research managers need to move from being farmers, to being chefs, according to Salama, bringing in a much wider array of different ingredients and knowing how to mix them.

There's a good-sized niche within the restaurant industry that thrives on sourcing of ingredients and on the end-to-end knowledge of the chefs, and there's plenty of space in insights for people who understand data collection, 'though their principal role might be putting it on display. It's impossible to have deep specialist knowledge in all areas, but simply to conclude that a top insights firm needs to get specialists to work together using clever technology is incorrect, I think. Broad educations and broad understanding will continue to be invaluable in getting the most insightful and the most business-enhancing results from your business intelligence partners - and as we're always hearing that things only get more competitive, getting the very best is vital. Let's not allow the specialists, and the tech, to supplant the broad-based researcher whose overview of everything happening gives her/him the best chance of finding that proverbial 'aha moment'. That moment is really the insight - I read an awful lot of press releases where someone's said 'insight' and I swap in the word 'data', because that's really all they're talking about.

To the next generation of researchers therefore, if you want to reach the very top of this profession: by all means you will do well to choose a specialism, or two, and keep your knowledge of it deep, and fresh - but do also keep your interests broad and your understanding, at some level of depth at least, broad and yes - well-grounded.

The answer's in the soil. ■

August 2022

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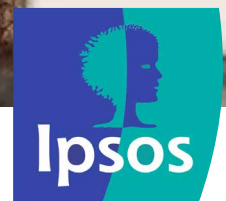
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Forsta

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Front-End Software Engineer
Tbilisi, Georgia
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Forsta

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Sydney
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$ Salary negotiable depending on experience
Veridata Insights

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$ Depending on experience
Chadwick Martin Bailey

Product Designer
Vancouver, BC, Canada
$ competitive
Forsta

Front-End Software Engineer (React+Node)
Vancouver, BC, Canada
$ competitive
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Qualitative Project Coordinator
Fresno, CA, USA
$ competitive
Forsta

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Currently, we are particularly interested in recruiting:

Project Managers that can:

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- Have fun at work.
- Work fully remotely to US hours.

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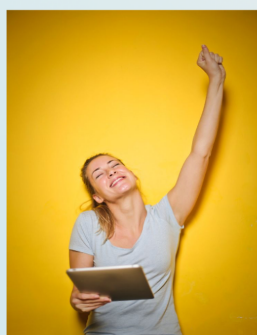
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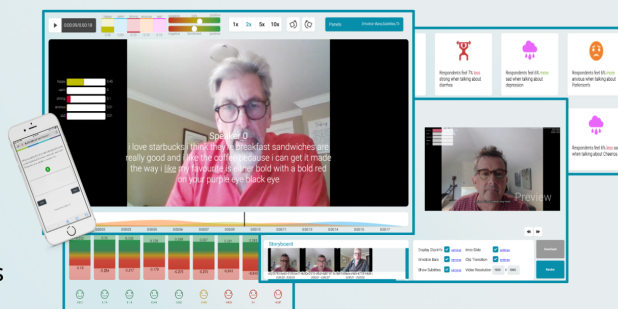
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BACKWORD

After a slightly elongated gap between supplements, it's been good to get back into it all for this issue - and Data Viz is one of the most rewarding of the topics. Thanks to our five sponsors, who represent great variety in company size, function and geography, and all of whom have provided great content.

A particular Thank You this time to Meghan Witthaus at Press Ganey, who has been a huge help in pulling together the content for title sponsor Forsta, and co-ordinating the back-and-forth with editing, adjusting and approving for me. As usual Chris at Fullpoint has turned mere text and a few of my vague ideas for visuals into a great-looking publication, all in short order and with great patience: he is recommended to anyone and can be reached on **chris@fullpointdesign.com.**

For the first time we ran all the interviews through Phebi's platform - see above - and saved a bunch of time that way.

You can find our MRT features section with the full range of these publications at **www.mrweb.com/mrt** . To be in next year's Mobile Age or Online Communities issues, contact us on **ads@mrweb.com** . Maximum six sponsors including the title sponsor, so we nearly reached it this time. I won't commit to more than those two at the moment, as there are at least three other big announcements pending from MrWeb and that's taking up time and energy.

Feedback on these or on DRNO **(https://www. mrweb.com/drno),** welcome any time. Thanks for reading!

Nick Thomas,
MrWeb

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THANKS ONCE AGAIN TO SPONSORS
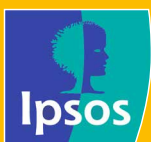
Funds for Data Sharing / Visualization Solution Explo *Aug 22 2022*

Explo, an analytics solution for visualizing and sharing data with customers across any platform, has raised $12m in a Series A round of funding, which it will use to accelerate the development of its product roadmap.

Dynata Launches Global Centre of Excellence
Aug 22 2022

Dynata has announced the formation of a Global Research and Data Sciences Center of Excellence (COE), led by Steven Millman and bringing together the expertise and methods of its Research Delivery, Panel Sciences and Data Sciences teams.

Location Intel Firm Kalibrate Launches Footfall Tool *Aug 22 2022*

In the US, location intelligence software provider Kalibrate has launched an online platform called 'Competitive Insights', through which retailers can obtain a real-time view of consumer footfall traffic patterns at a given location.

KM Firm Yext Appoints Global Marketing Chief *Aug 25 2022*

New York-based knowledge management firm Yext has Raianne Reiss as CMO, leading an ambitious growth plan and reporting directly to President and COO Marc Ferrentino.

$18m for Business Data Analyst Sightfull
Sep 15 2022

Business data analyst Sightfull has raised $18m in a Series A round of funding, which it will use to accelerate product development and expand its team across a number of departments.

Amazon Adds Customer Insights for Seller Analytics *Sep 16 2022*

Amazon has added new features to three tools, 'Manage Your Experiments' (for product content optimization), Search Analytics Dashboard and Product Opportunity Explorer - giving sellers customer insights and analytics data to launch new products and increase sales.

Qualtrics Rolls Out XM Benchmarks
Sep 16 2022

Experience management (XM) platform Qualtrics has launched a system of XM Benchmarks, to help organizations compare their customer satisfaction, patient perceptions and employee engagement levels against industry peers and competitors.

August 2022

Canada's Dundas Data Viz Acquired
Aug 25 2022

Toronto-based Business Intelligence (BI), analytics and data viz platform Dundas Data Visualization, Inc, has been acquired by insightsoftware, a provider of reporting, analytics and performance management solutions.

QuestionPro Buys Qual Software Firm Digsite *Aug 25 2022*

Online survey and research services provider QuestionPro has announced the acquisition of Madison, WI-based Digsite, which provides qualitative research capabilities and a collaborative insights platform.

New Funds for Enterprise Analytics Firm StarTree *Sep 5 2022*

In the US, real-time enterprise analytics platform StarTree has raised $47m in a Series B round of funding, which it will use to accelerate product development, expand sales and marketing, and continue to drive adoption of its platform.

PubMatic Buys Media Measurement Platform Martin *Sep 20 2022*

In the US, digital ad tech company PubMatic has acquired media measurement and reporting platform Martin for an undisclosed sum.

InCrowd Debuts Syndicated Tool for Life Sciences *Sep 20 2022*

In the US, healthcare market research firm InCrowd has launched a syndicated MR solution called 'Essentials' to provide life sciences companies with ongoing, real-time access to market performance metrics.

Trilliant Health Rolls Out Real-Time Intell Tool *Sep 22 2022*

In the US, healthcare sector predictive analytics and market research agency Trilliant Health has launched an analytics tool called the Provider Directory, offering near real-time intelligence about physician behavior to provider organizations, health plans, life sciences companies, and investors.

Ascribe Offers One Hour Verbatim Coding
Sep 23 2022
US-based verbatim analysis software firm Ascribe has announced a new release of its AI Coder, which it says enables responses to be coded and a summary delivered within an hour.

YouGov Debuts Free Versions of BrandIndex and Profiles *Sep 23 2022*
YouGov has launched free 'Lite' versions of its BrandIndex and Profiles tools, allowing users to analyse their target audiences and track brand performance for no charge.

Appsumer Debuts Free Platform for Smaller Advertisers *Sep 26 2022*
Mobile app ad insights and analytics platform Appsumer has launched a free cross-channel dashboard and reporting solution called Appsumer Starter, to help 'scaling' smaller app advertisers gain automated performance insights for the channels they most commonly use, including Meta, Google and TikTok.

Forsta Upgrades InterVu Online Groups Solution *Sep 26 2022*
Research and customer / employee experience technology provider Forsta has announced upgrades to its online focus group solution InterVu, integrating high quality video and audio for virtual experiences, enhancing sharing features, and adding quick polls and other features.

Seed Funds for HR Analytics Firm Employee Cycle *Sep 27 2022*
In the US, HR analytics dashboard Employee Cycle has closed a $2.5m seed round of financing, which it will use to support the development and launch of its Employee Data Platform (EDP), and to hire for its sales, marketing and engineering departments.

Cogwheel Launches Hotel Sector Intelligence Tool *Oct 3 2022*
In the US, hotel sector specialist Cogwheel Marketing has launched a reporting and business intelligence tool, which aggregates data from multiple sources to provide a 360-degree view of a hotel's online presence.

Google Surveys Shelved *Oct 4 2022*
Google has announced that its Surveys and Surveys 360 solutions will no longer be available after November 1st, as it believes in their current form they are no longer the best way to help businesses of all sizes run custom market research.

Canvs AI Launches 'Connector' for Forsta Platform *Oct 11 2022*
Text analytics specialist Canvs AI has launched a connector for the Forsta Survey platform, enabling users to import responses to open-ended questions, along with relevant cross-tab data, directly into Canvs for analysis.

Big Village Adds Forsta Visualizations to CARAVAN *Oct 13 2022*
Ad tech and data company Big Village (formerly known as Engine) is to add visualization technology from customer experience and research tech firm Forsta to its CARAVAN Omnibus Surveys, allowing clients to create results presentations for sharing with exec teams and stakeholders.

November 2022

New Investment for Qual Research Platform Notably *Oct 14 2022*
US-based Notably, which helps teams collect, analyze and share qualitative research, has raised $1.5m in an investment round. Funds will boost engineering, machine learning capabilities and overall company growth.

QuestionPro Buys CX and Journey Mapping Firm *Oct 14 2022*
In the US, online survey and research services provider QuestionPro has acquired customer experience, journey mapping and analytics platform provider SuiteCX for an undisclosed sum.

Max Diff, Video and Data Viz Upgrades for Suzy *Oct 20 2022*
New York-based end-to-end consumer insights platform Suzy has announced a number of product enhancements including the addition of video open-ends, Max Diff choice rankings, and an integrated data visualisation tool, Data Explorer.

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