

market research: bringing the 'who' and 'why' into the user experience.

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VanUE

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David Gray & Sixth Line Solutions

- specializing in customer experience & retail since 1995
- strategy from the eyes of the stakeholders
- one – stop strategic information & tools
- added focus group facility in 2000

consumer

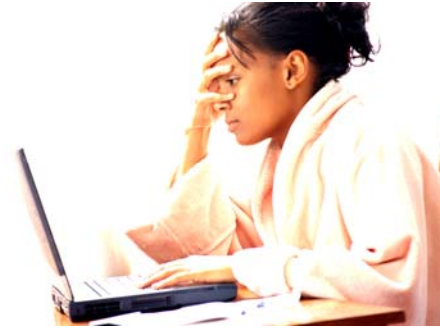
- economic conditions
- demographic changes
- social changes
- shopper attitudes and behaviour

retail

- sales
- supply -trends
- competition
- multichannel

usability research

focuses on “what” and “how”
(behaviourally based)



market research focuses on “who” and “why”

bridging the divide

tech profession

technology focus

applications

literal use measurement /
best practice

more 'hard' science

focus on metrics



market research profession

focus on attitudes/ opinions

client experience in other
sectors – more holistically
aligned with consumers

expertise in soliciting feedback

more 'soft' science (because
people hard to predict)



who is the user really?

why important? – consider how each of these scenarios may affect web content, strategy, design and layout for an e-comm site:

- 78% visitors to site are suburban females who read dose
- most site abandonners are not your target
- fall into to distinct needs-based segments
- 75% have a strong aversion to pop-ups
- 28% don't appreciate your humour
- 33% have old browser technology
- 82% are interested, but can't find your membership benefits
- 25% are concerned about privacy

will web metrics
identify barriers?

who else?

- current visitors
- lapsed visitors
- potential visitors
- influencers?
- non-visitors
- new targets?

definition of marketing research

marketing research as a noun is simply information that fuels the process of bridging organizational and customer needs.

as a verb it's the processes for soliciting this information

it's a tool for:

- informing decisions
- developing knowledge of market and competition
- reducing risk
- identifying opportunities
- understanding barriers
- aiding creative thought
- evaluating future options and past performance
- testing assumptions



when to explore and when to measure

explore when you're:

- soliciting ideas to boost creative process
- embarking on new ventures/changes/direction
- uncovering potential barriers/opportunities
- deciding what's important enough to measure

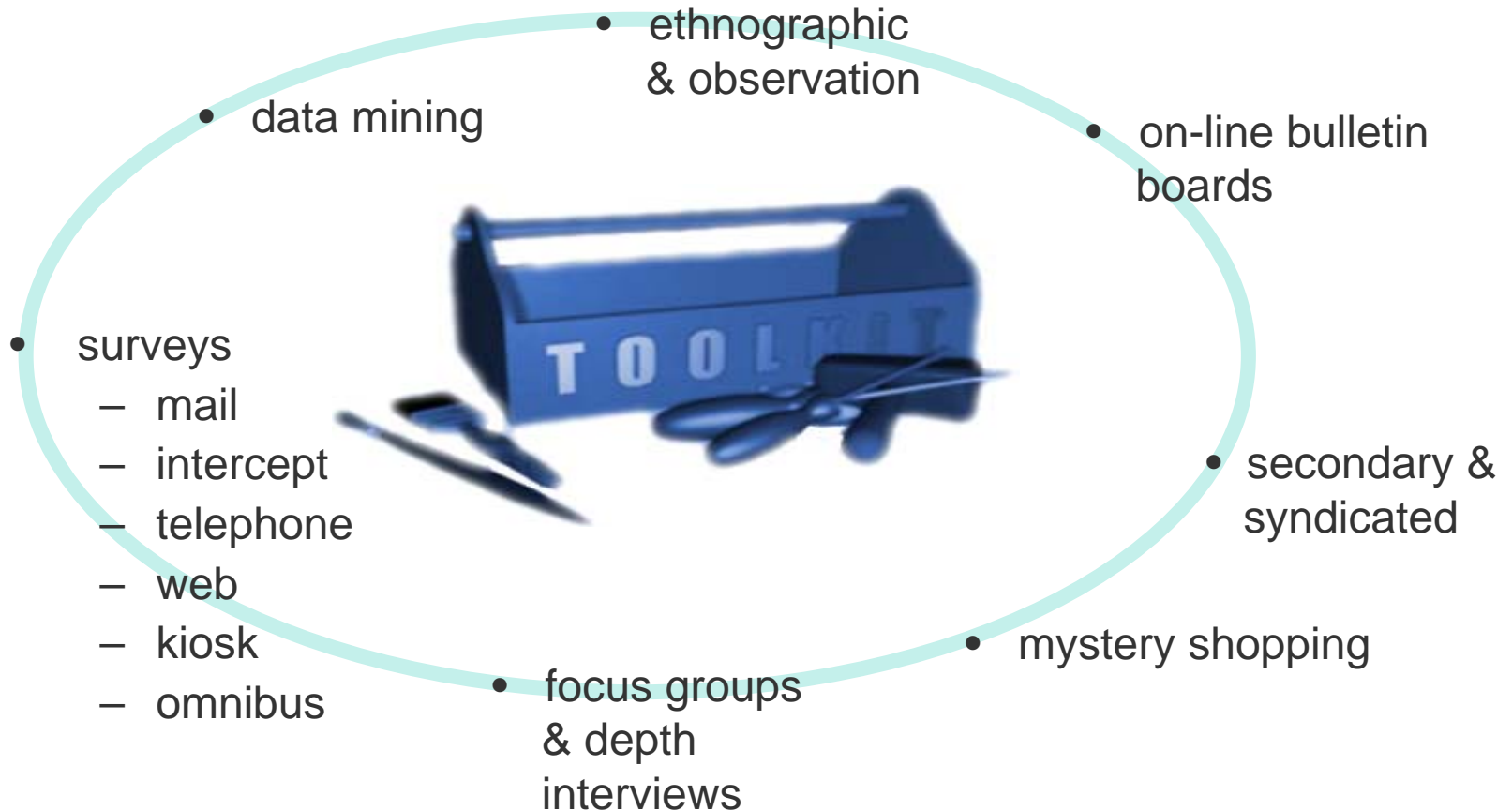


measure when you're:

- gauging the extent of a issue
- confident you've identified most possible causes
- wanting to test assumptions market wide
- identifying meaningful trends and differences in data



techniques & when to use them



preparation checklist

- what is the business need and context?
- how is information to be used?
- who needs this information
 - creatives? or analysts?
 - are there any other possible beneficiaries?

- how timely or “fresh”?
- how precise?
- at what cost?
- ...what is the driver?
- who do we want to learn about?
 - and how to find them?
- how much detail in results?

technique not yet
mentioned

two sample approaches

1. focus groups (qualitative)
2. survey (quantitative)

focus groups – practical overview

- not useful for usability
- concept development, opportunities, general usage barriers
- or issues, messaging, and image/brand
- specialized facilities have advantages
- mindmapping, laddering, personification, etc.
- professional moderator has advantages



duration: usually 3 weeks minimum

focus groups – practical overview

- in-house or outsource
- location and times
- recruiting targets
- develop screening questionnaire
- recruit
- prepare a discussion/moderator guide
- conduct groups/manage incentives/proof of id
- transcripts+ notes+thinking = report/presentation



duration: usually 3 weeks minimum

recruiting respondents

- how many
- who to include
- who to exclude
- “gen pop” vs. “mix” vs. “quotas “
- screener
- the “sell”
- target lists/own or borrowed
- pipeda
- incentive amounts
- when to schedule
- “homework”
- lead time & reminders
- profile sheets and controls
- sign out

surveys – practical overview

- in-house or outsource
- develop research plan (as focus groups but more detail);
 - methodology – phone, online, mail, street,
 - interviewer or self completion?
 - target samples
- create questionnaire – many edits
- fieldwork (execution) schedule
- data handling and tables
- statistical analysis or models
- analyse results and create report/present findings



duration: usually 3 weeks minimum

when to integrate into web decisions

strategic planning

- identifying opportunities or challenges
- profiling existing customers or identifying potential targets
- evaluating options & assumptions

concept development

- prototype or next version development
- revamping look & feel or changing navigation/layout

evaluation

- satisfaction kpis, performance measurement with site
- assessing if site is becoming dated

Common Research Mistakes

1. Jumping to a technique
2. Little thought to how info will be used, no resources allocated to act
3. Lack of editing and too short time up front (questionnaires, screeners and mod guides)
4. Minimal leverage of results (finding other uses or problems to solve, lack of sharing)

Budgeting

speed vs accuracy vs CO\$T

- Size of opportunity or risk of loss
- Funds available (reality!)
- % of investment being evaluated

- Nice-to-know?
- Length of leverage (will info get stale fast?)

- Watch out for “freebies” - you get what you pay for!

Outsourcing if...

- Objectivity/politics, lack of internal resource available
- Time-saver
- No internal resource
- Complexity of issue or target
- Large risks if mistake

...watch out for “cousin who knows how to build a website” or
“neighbour knows how to do a survey”

sixth line case studies

pink planet – one-on-one interviews

- launch of revised site
- test navigation
- assess what content interested
- discover opportunities/barriers

sixth line case studies

mytelus.com – focus groups

- revised site development
- assess new content ideas & features
- identify messaging issues
- basic navigation & organization issues

shotcallers – moderated online discussion

- prototype development
- assess content ideas, visuals, explore new ideas
- brand and personality of site
- gauge opportunity
- basic navigation & organization issues

sixth line case studies

off the wall – groups + 2 surveys

- who is our customer now? how many more like them?
- how do they differ?
- key positioning issues in market
- brand and personality
- gauge opportunity

mountain equipment co-op – one-on-one interviews

- print catalogue “usability”
- assess content ideas
- uncover any issues or barriers
- brand and personality
- navigation & organization issues