

President's Corner

*Lisa Morse, Questar Data Systems, Inc.
Chapter President*

Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter Annual Report

In June 2003, the Board set its sights on making headway on five strategic objectives. Following is a recap of our efforts.

Improve Volunteer Opportunities and Experience

What better ways to develop professional skills, contribute to our industry, and get acquainted with colleagues in our marketing research community than to contribute time and talent to Chapter tasks and events. New members were contacted and invited to join a committee of their interest or lend a helping hand where they felt they could. This resulted in bolstering the participation on several of our committees.

Improve Programming

This is not to imply that we weren't already proud of the programming that had taken place in previous years — in the spirit of continuous improvement, this is an ongoing effort. In August through November 2003, the Programming Committee put on four fine events. These covered a range of topics, including leading-edge techniques in qualitative research, future trends in the industry through the publishing eyes of *Quirk's Marketing Research Review*, linking customer satisfaction to other business performance measures, and what HIPAA means to healthcare research.

Over the winter months, the Programming Committee encountered a string of challenges locking in event speakers. But with April's event on perceptual mapping, and informative presentations now set for May and June, things are back on track. In the near future, members will have the opportunity to expand their understanding of the research behind light rail transit in the Twin Cities and how the Star Tribune puts research to use.

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2004 Upcoming Events

Research and Light Rail Transit

Thursday, May 20 – Annual Meeting
Frank Loetterle
MNDOT's Hiawatha Light Rail Transit
Doubletree Hotel in St. Louis Park

Research and the Media

Thursday, June 17
Rob Daves and Dave Gunderson
Minneapolis Star Tribune
Location to be announced

MN/UMW Chapter Fall Conference

Thursday, September 23
Metropolitan in Golden Valley

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While these planning efforts have been underway, the Programming Committee has also been busy planning for the Fall 2004 Chapter Conference, which occurs every other year in September. This year's Fall Conference promises an interesting line-up of speakers on current issues facing our industry. Stay tuned for more details about this.

Focus on Professional Diversity of the Membership

The Chapter's programming is geared around an annual master plan designed to appeal to a general audience within our research community in both the supplier and end-user arenas, as well as research professionals who are new to the field and/or specializing in niche areas of qualitative and quantitative work. The Programming Committee used this master plan as a framework for developing its educational opportunities throughout the year.

To better understand the needs of those members outside the Twin Cities metro area, the Board recently completed interviewing "Greater Group" members regarding their wants and needs as it pertains to our Chapter. We look forward to the results of this exploratory effort.

Emphasizing Marketing Research Advocacy

Do Not Call legislation has been an area of major concern to our industry. National MRA, in partnership with ARF and CMOR, has been working hard to ensure that the marketing research industry remains excluded from this legislation. Through Verbatim articles over the past year, we have updated our members on this, as well as how changes in FCC Rules impact unsolicited faxes for survey research purposes.

Improve the Image of the Chapter

We had two areas of focus here — cross-promoting our activities with other professional associations and establishing a Chapter website link from the National website. In collaboration with AMA and Trend Agenda, we were able to extend our members the opportunity to attend various events sponsored by these organizations at reduced rates. In turn, our Chapter received wider exposure for our event offerings.

As for establishing a MN/UMW Chapter website, we still have a ways to go before we achieve this goal. However, the plans have

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President's Corner

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been laid and much of the content has been prepared. This will remain a focus for the incoming Board.

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According to the latest count from National MRA, our local chapter membership currently stands at 111. This, unfortunately, reflects an 18% decline over the membership on record one year ago. Needless to say, growth in our membership will be on the agenda as we go into a new Board year.

Our financial balance is \$15,927. This reflects a \$2,604 increase that comes as a result of revenues generated by member dues and the income received from programming events. As a non-profit, our financial objective is to avoid losing money while trying to maintain a relatively flat balance. The income from this past year positions the Chapter well as it goes into full swing preparing for the expenses associated with the upcoming Fall Conference.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to this year's Board members, Committee Chairs and Committee members. This organization is entirely run by volunteers. We could not bring our membership the fine educational and networking opportunities that we do without the hard work and contributions of all these individuals. Thank you for a great year and the opportunity to serve you as your Chapter President.

Communicate with Yourself!

Stress Busters: "Got a minute?"

Don't feel you have to say, "yes" to everyone who asks you, "Got a minute?" If the interruption is unimportant and you're swamped and really don't have a minute, don't be afraid to say so. Try a response such as, "Actually, I'd like to talk, but right now is not a good time. Could you stop back (or call again) at 4:00 pm?" Even better, you can tell the person you'll stop by or call later, which puts you in more control of how long the interaction will take.

You're not only respecting your own limits, you're making it possible for others to respect them, too. If it's your boss, remember to discuss and clarify priorities if you really don't have time. Remind them of your workload—they sometimes forget. "Should I work on the XYZ project or this new work first?"

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The most important thing
in communication is to
hear what isn't being
said.

- Peter F. Drucker

International Research – It’s All in the Name! Hispanic Names

By Robin L. McDougal, Maritz Inc.

In international research, communications and understanding the right questions to ask are key issues in developing worthwhile results. For instance, unless you realize that the “format” of a respondent’s name might vary from what we expect, one would never anticipate asking the respondent to clarify his/her name.

If a study is going to be conducted among an Hispanic sample, an understanding of the format of Hispanic names is helpful. Even in the minute details such as data layout, such knowledge will encourage the allowance of an extra field for a second “last name” and/or a possible conjunction “de”.

Hispanic names can be confusing. This is because it can be difficult to determine exactly what the person’s last name is when we have our own format in mind. The several parts of the Hispanic name are as follows:

First Name

Middle Name

Father’s last name (surname or “last name”)

Mother’s last name (maiden name)

(if a married woman, in some Latin American countries) the conjunction “de”

(if a married woman) Married last name (last name of the husband/husband’s father)

For example, Jose Rodriguez Muñoz’s last name, as we know it, is Rodriguez. Many Hispanic countries use the conjunction ‘de’ in a married woman’s name to show that it is a married last name (e.g., Michelle María Montalvo Santiago de González). But more often the format in this case would simply be Michelle María Montalvo Santiago González.

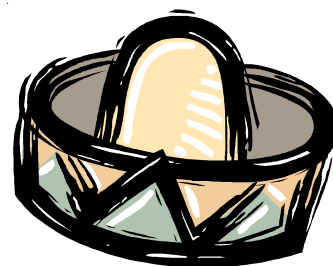
Many second and third generation Hispanics in this country will have adapted to the United States system of names. In this case, they will follow the traditional first-name/last-name pattern of names. But sometimes they will follow the traditional Hispanic pattern. In business records, the mother’s maiden name is often dropped by the business database because no allowance is made for a “second last name.” So, if sample con-

sists of a database of business names, if the respondent’s name is verified at the end of the interview, the names may not match. The respondent very well may provide his/her traditional Hispanic name with the mother’s maiden name as a second last name. Without allowing for this in the record layout, the data entry step enters this “second last name” as the last name and everything else is shifted into the wrong fields.

If some kind of data cleaning step will be conducted to match the completed interview records with an initial sample list (by name), it is important to realize that records cannot be eliminated if the last name of the sample record does not match the last name of the interview record. Before any decision to remove a record from the sample as invalid, a cross-check comparing the “name” in the middle name slot may reveal that the middle name is really what we considered in our sample record to be the “last name” or “surname.”

Efforts to outline fields in the sample layout identifying first name, middle name, last name/surname, and second last name (what we know as the mother’s maiden name) will help minimize confusion. However, extra care should be taken if and when matching data by name to verify that the correct matches are being made. Depending on the process, cleaning the data may involve shifting names from one field to the other if a sort or a match by last name will be required.

In summary, be sure to communicate the awareness that needs to be taken when conducting Hispanic research. The name alone and how it is handled could make or break the effectiveness of your results.



MRA's Strategic Planning Sessions

By Bob McGarry, Information Specialists Group, Inc.

It is a scary, yet exciting time in the market research industry. There are many issues that are happening in the industry, and the Marketing Research Association is trying to position itself to be able to prepare its members for these changes. To that end, as a Chapter leader, I was invited to participate in a strategic planning session that took place in the beginning of March. The purpose of the session was to consider the course the Association should be on for the next five years.

The participants in the strategy session were a combination of National board members, Chapter leaders and the Association administrators. There was a good cross-section of geographical areas as well as types of researchers. Our Chapter was well-represented by Jane Cook of Frank N. Magid Associates, Inc., Tammie Frost-Norton of Research International, Lori Kruse of Land O'Lakes and myself. The other three are all National Board members and Jane will soon be the President-Elect. The session was led by the new Executive Director, Larry Hadcock, who has considerable experience in association management and brings a great deal of energy and enthusiasm to the position.

The twenty-five or so participants were split up into four smaller work groups, and each group was given the task of looking at ways the Association could reconfigure to more appropriately address the issues that will face the industry in the next five years (legislation, off-shore outsourcing, Internet data collection, etc.) as well as looking at what the make-up of the membership could and should be during that period of time. We were asked to "look outside the box" and not get caught up with how things had been done in the past. The discussions brought about a lot of thought-provoking ideas and everybody who participated left energized by the process. Larry and the leaders of the Association have been disseminating the information from these sessions and are planning to present their results to the National MRA Board when they meet again in June.

The thing that I was most enthused to hear in these discussions was how important everyone felt the role of Chapters would be going forward. I know our Chapter has often felt disjointed from the National office, and I've heard the same feelings from other Chapter leaders. However, I came away from the session confident that things were moving in the right direction. I'm looking forward to hearing about the realignment plans and seeing how the Association will take on the challenges that lie ahead for this industry. It's potentially a rough sea out there but we have good people at the helm.

Internal Communication: Walk the Talk—Get Results

"We judge ourselves mostly by our intentions. Others judge us mostly by our actions."

One of the fastest ways to earn employee respect is through 'walking the talk' or leading by example. This may seem tough to do at times, especially during challenging times, but its rewards are immeasurable.

Expecting employees to embrace values that you do not is not only unfair, it's unrealistic. They look to you for guidance and leadership no matter how high level their position. It's proven time and time again that values-driven processes lead to results. You must embrace those values to establish credibility. Gandhi had it right. He said, "We must be the change we wish to see in the world."

Here's a simple daily mantra for "Walking the Talk" and getting results:

1. Start with me
2. Show others how
3. Hold them accountable
4. Do right by those who do right

“The Origin of Spam”

By Linda Daniel, Harris Interactive

Bet you thought the term for unsolicited emails came from a certain well-known meat product. Since I hate the meat variety of Spam, that always made sense to me (yea, I know, it’s probably illegal to say that in Minnesota). Well, guess what! The term apparently has nothing to do with you-know-what. It has to do with being supremely annoying.

Actually, the use of the term was probably inspired by a comedy routine on *Monty Python’s Flying Circus*. A man goes into a diner and wants to know what’s on the menu. The waitress tells him:

“ Well, there’s egg and bacon; egg, sausage and bacon; egg and spam; egg, bacon and spam; egg, bacon, sausage and spam; spam, bacon, sausage and spam; spam, egg, spam, spam, bacon and spam; spam, sausage, spam, spam, spam, bacon, spam, tomato and spam; spam, spam, spam, egg and spam; (*Vikings start singing in the background*) spam, spam, spam, spam, spam, spam, baked beans, spam, spam, spam and spam.”

Being the Monty Python crew, of course, the routine went on for quite a while...sort of like the junk email that fills your inbox, eats up memory, and tries to sell you stuff to fix problems you wouldn’t even tell your doctor about.

I’ve tried deleting the spam junk without opening it, opening it and asking to be removed from the list—even opening it and sending a reply of how-dare-you! Nothing seems to work. What I’d really like to do is send some of these originators a bar of soap. Or find their mothers and have them grounded.

As Dave Barry would say, “I’m not making this next part up!” I finished writing the paragraph above and an email notice popped up. The message text read as follows:

Continued on top of next column

How are you doing?

Better than all other Spam filters –

Only Delivers The Email You Want!

This is the ultimate solution that is guaranteed to stop all spam without losing any of your important email! This system protects you 100%.

We didn’t believe it either until we actually tried it. So you be the judge and see for yourself.

You owe it to yourself to try this program, and forward this email to all of your friends who hate Spam or as many people as possible.

Get rid of unwanted emails now.

Sigh.....

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June Event - Research and the Media

Rob Daves and Dave Gunderson of the Minneapolis Star Tribune will be the featured speakers at a MN/UMW Chapter Event on Thursday, June 17, from 7:30 to 9:30 am.

Rob, who is Director of New Research and the Minnesota Poll, and Dave, who conducts marketing and readership research, will team to present an overview of the full research effort at the Star Tribune.

Please note the date of this event on your calendar. More details will be arriving in your mailbox later in May.

Do Not Call: A Local Perspective

By Bob McGarry, Information Specialists Group, Inc.

Much has been made of the instituting of the National Do Not Call Registry and the effects that it would have on the market research industry. Although the law was intended only for telemarketing calls it was generally thought it would have a negative impact on telephone research. It was assumed that the general public would not make the distinction and would stop taking telephone surveys. Now that it has been in place for over six months it's time to reflect on how much effect it really has.

In my own unofficial poll done with some of the phone centers and recruiting outfits in the Twin Cities, it appears the Registry has had little effect on cooperation rates. Certainly, there have been people who refused participation because they are on the Do Not Call list. In fact, one of the local call centers just received a letter from the State's Attorney General's office due to a complaint from a Registry member. However, most of the local research businesses I talked with claimed it not reached the nuisance factor that Caller ID has become. Recruiters have seen little to no drop off from their panels so it has not caused many issues for the area focus group facilities.

The greatest short-term effect has been with our clients, especially when doing customer research. I've had clients run their lists against the Registry in order to make sure they don't upset anyone. The other phone centers have mentioned similar type hoops that they have had to jump through in order to make their clients comfortable.



The consensus is that it's too early to tell what the full effect will be. Some are optimistic that it will help improve response rates because people will be more likely to participate when they are not being deluged by telemarketing calls. Others are holding their breath that there is not a groundswell to tighten up the Do Not Call laws to include all unsolicited calls. For now, telephone research seems to be unharmed but we need to be prepared for what's lurking in the shadows.

Good Grief!

Time for another puzzle

Every answer is a two-syllable word or name in which each syllable starts with the letter G.

Example: use Listerine, for example (gargle)

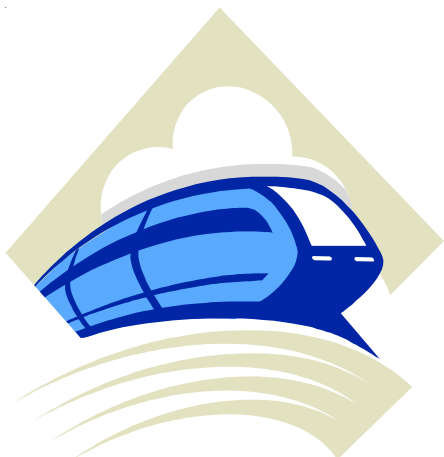
1. Flock of geese
2. Kind of dancer
3. French artist in Tahiti
4. Welders eyewear
5. 10 to the 100th power
6. Snaky-haired monster of myth
7. Sound of a water fountain
8. Bauble
9. Kind of counter
10. One of the Khans
11. Actor famous for playing Hamlet
12. Kind of eyes for the amorous
13. More than enthusiastic
14. Russian writer, The Father of Russian Realism
15. Awkwardly tall
16. Girlish laugh
17. Decoration on an old building
18. Not fully awake

May Annual Meeting Event - Making Tracks: Research and Light Rail Transit

All Aboard for the Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter's May 2004 Event! Dr. Frank Loetterle, a veteran transportation engineer and researcher for the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Hiawatha Light Rail Transit Line will speak at the Chapter's Annual Meeting on May 20th at the Doubletree Hotel in St. Louis Park.

Did you know that sleek light rail vehicles will begin rolling in revenue service very soon through downtown Minneapolis and out to Fort Snelling along the Hiawatha Line? By December, 2004, the line will be extended to reach Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America in Bloomington. Ridership in 2005 is expected to reach 19,300 per day along the 12-mile line. There will be 17 stops along the way, and LRT vehicles will reach 55 miles per hour in spots. Trains will run 7 ½ minutes apart during rush hour, and every 10 to 30 minutes at other times. Each of the articulated 94-foot long cars can carry 187 passengers. They are equipped with luggage racks and bicycle storage hangers and are fully American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.

Watch your mailbox for registration information and plan on joining us to learn how research has influenced LRT in our area. In addition, attendees will have the pleasure of witnessing the installation of the Chapter's 2004-05 Board of Directors.



Do-Not-Call Decision



The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals released its decision, which upheld the constitutionality of the National Do Not Call Registry.

“Four key aspects of the do-not-call registry convince us that it is consistent with First Amendment requirements. First, the list restricts only core commercial speech i.e., commercial sales calls. Second, the do-not-call registry targets speech that invades the privacy of the home, a personal sanctuary that enjoys a unique status in our constitutional jurisprudence. Third, the do-not-call registry is an opt-in program that puts the choice of whether or not to restrict commercial calls entirely in the hands of consumers. Fourth, the do-not-call registry materially furthers the government's interests in combating the danger of abusive telemarketing and preventing the invasion of consumer privacy, blocking a significant number of the calls that cause these problems. Under these circumstances, we conclude that the requirements of the First Amendment are satisfied.”

This is indeed great news for the industry, yet the battle is still not over! CMOR is currently in the process of examining the case and highlighting important points for the industry. Please check the CMOR website for updated developments and a summary of the case.

If you want to build a ship, then
don't drum up men to gather wood,
give orders, and divide the work.
Rather, teach them to yearn for the
far and endless sea.
- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Framing Questions in Relevant Contexts - Asian Research

Sandra M.J. Wong, *Excerpted from Quirk's Marketing Research Review, Dec. 1993*

A way in which “context” affects Asian marketing research is in the framing of questions a researcher uses to gather meaningful and useful information. Asian respondents often need to understand the context of a question being asked before they can fully respond. The context provides a filter from which their “reality” is structured. If the researcher does not provide a recognizable context, the respondents will either redirect the question, answer in ways that give no real information, or create the context in order to respond. The obvious danger is that a researcher may be getting information that reflects issues other than what the researcher had intended.

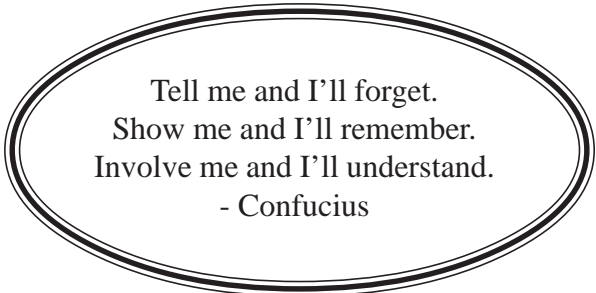
Short and abrupt answers in themselves do not necessarily indicate the respondents’ unwillingness to engage in a discussion. The respondents may, in fact, be signaling you that they cannot relate to the framework as presented. The researcher needs to be perceptive enough to realize when his/her cultural construct or template has either no meaning or a significantly different meaning for the respondents. Furthermore, the same cultural template may have different meanings among the subsegments of the same ethnic group.

Let’s say that you are preparing to do research on behavioral patterns of parent’s leisure time with children. One American assumption is that people value spending time with their families on their days off from work. The interpretation of “spending time with family” means to spend time with one’s spouse and children. Another assumption is that good parents are involved in their children’s extracurricular activities. One common scenario depicts the parents taking their kids to a Little League game and then barbecuing at home with a few friends and their children.

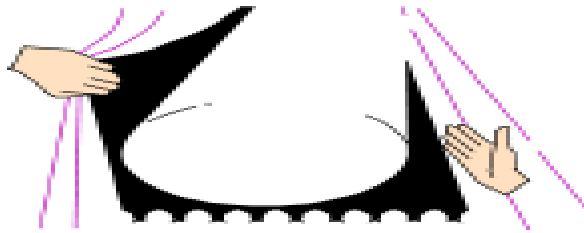
This American cultural construct has different degrees of relevance to various subgroups of the Asian segment. While the more acculturated Asian American families can relate comfortably to this concept, it is quite unfamiliar to many Asian immigrant families. If

the less acculturated Asian is your target audience, and your research design is based upon the above American assumptions and values, you would be presenting a cultural construct that is not relevant to your intended audience. Using the example of “spending time with the family,” we find a very different meaning for many Chinese immigrants. They would more likely interpret this concept to mean getting together socially with members of their extended families (i.e. parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.) than to doing things with just their spouse and children. Moreover, the concept of “good parenting” for many Chinese parents does not include their involvement in the children’s sport activities. Many of them regard children’s play and adult leisure as distinct activities, to be done separately or in parallel, rather than together.

A good research design has to allow for the emergence of different cultural constructs and meanings during the process of gathering data. The skillful researcher is constantly listening for shifts in orientation, perception and meaning. When these occur, the researcher must be prepared to allow themselves the freedom to adjust the research. Sometimes, this means piloting a survey instrument to check on word/concept interpretations and contextual clues before its full scale implementation. Other times, it means allowing the researcher to redirect the discussion and pursue the respondents’ own categories of meaning and interpretation. Researchers should always strive to make explicit the respondents’ own cultural constructs from which they make sense of the world. In this way, the client gains deeper insights about behavioral patterns and motivational qualities of the Asian consumer.



Tell me and I’ll forget.
Show me and I’ll remember.
Involve me and I’ll understand.
- Confucius



Spotlight

Are you at a point where you can't afford a wrong turn? Where the right decision has become mission critical? Examine the steps in strategic planning process success, and you'll find one common component. **Information!**

Information is the currency of the Now, but the challenge is how to spend it. You know marketing research is the gathering of information, but that still leaves numerous unanswered questions. What information should you gather? How should you use it once you have it? How do you separate the critical information from the data?

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The Verbatim will "SPOTLIGHT" a different Board or Committee Member's company in each issue.

SPOTLIGHT on the TCI Group



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Good Grief! Puzzle Answers

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Gaggle | 10. Genghis |
| 2. Go-go | 11. Gielgud (John) |
| 3. Gauguin (Paul) | 12. Goo-goo |
| 4. Goggles | 13. Gaga |
| 5. Googol | 14. Gogol (Nikolai) |
| 6. Gorgon | 15. Gangly or gangling |
| 7. Gurgle | 16. Giggle |
| 8. Gewgaw or geegaw | 17. Gargoyle |
| 9. Geiger | 18. Groggy |

Score:

12. Get going!
15. Goody goody!
17. Genuinely great!

(From 'The Puzzlemaster Presents: 200 Mind-Bending Challenges' by Will Shortz. Random House, 1996.)

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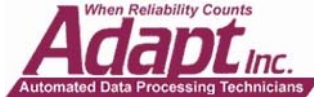
Business card size \$25 (members) / \$50 (non-members)

Double business card size \$50 (members) / \$75 (non-members)

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