

President's Corner

*Doug Skipper, The Market Solutions Group, Inc.
Chapter President*

Happy New Year!

While it may seem like we are in the middle part of the calendar, the Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association is kicking off 2005-2006, and there is a lot to look forward to in the new year.

Our calendar began in May with the installation of the organization's new board of directors, and a presentation by Minnesota Twins President Dave St. Peter and Marketing Director Patrick Klinger. After that, about 40 members attended the Twins' win over Toronto in the Metrodome.

Although the numbers were smaller, those who participated in the chapter's second annual golf tournament at Bunker Hills in June had a great time. I led a personal assault on the trees at the course, and can confirm that I left them quaking.

And our July event was a presentation on the Effects of Frequent Participation on Online Survey Results by Shauna Fuglestad of General Mills and Jackie Lorch of Survey Sampling.

Fall Conference

We follow up on our strong start to the new year with our 2005 Fall Conference: **"Seeing the Forest AND the Trees: Building Business...Growing Skills"**, Thursday, September 22 at the Blaisdell Manor in Minneapolis.

The festivities will actually start the previous evening, Wednesday, September 21, with a reception staged by our chapter's membership committee. The reception is included in the price of registration for the Fall Conference. The Fall Conference itself gets underway Thursday morning with a 7:30 registration, followed by breakfast and the keynote speech. After that will be eight

Continued on page 2

2005 Upcoming Events

MN/Upper Midwest Chapter Fall Conference September 22, at the Blaisdell Manor in Minneapolis.

"Seeing the Forest AND the Trees: Building Business...Growing Skills"

(See pages 6-7 for details)

What's Inside...

President's Corner	1-2
Board Members	2
Committee Members	3
Effects of Frequent Participation	3
Professional Researcher Certification Overview	4
Tale of Two Volunteers	4
Choose to Change	5
Annual Golf Event Review	5
"Seeing the Forest AND the Trees"	6
Fall Conference Registration form	7
Chapter Service Award	8
Minnesota Twins & Marketing Research- A Review	9
Spotlight	10
Advertising	11-12

President's Corner (continued)

Continued from page 1

educational sessions, a luncheon featuring the chapter's first ever Tournament of Researchers, and a session on Professional Researcher Certification. More information, including registration costs, sponsorship opportunities and a schedule can be found in this issue of the Verbatim.

New Board

We popped the cork on the new year when the chapter's new board of directors was installed on May 19 at the Metrodome. The board for the 2005-2006 year is Doug Skipper, president, Linda Daniel, president-elect, Bob McGarry, past president, Jeffrey Cook, treasurer, Denice Duncan, secretary, Randi Luoto, director at large and liaison to the publicity committee, Stefan Hartmann, director at large and liaison to the programming committee, and Bonnie Sargent, director at large and liaison to the membership committee. Congratulations to Bob for a very successful term as president, and many, many thanks to Lisa Morse, who was the outgoing past president. Lisa remains active with the programming committee, and has been instrumental in organizing and planning the fall conference.

Past Presidents

Lisa and Bob have joined a distinguished group of past presidents, who each played a key role in the development of our chapter since it was formed in 1997:

1997 - 1998	Darlo Martin
1998 - 1999	Judy Opstad
1999 - 2000	Tammie Frost-Norton
2000 - 2001	Lori Laflin
2001 - 2002	Bev Koser
2002 - 2003	Dave Koch
2003 - 2004	Lisa Morse
2004 - 2005	Robert McGarry

Many thanks to the past presidents who have given so much time, and to all of our chapter's volunteers on the various committees. Your efforts are appreciated.

Thank You, Tammie

Finally, a special thank you to Tammie Frost-Norton, who has served as the editor for the Verbatim for several years, as president of our chapter, and is currently a member of the national Marketing Research Association Board of Directors. Though very busy, Tammie took time to help us produce this issue and smooth the transition to our new editor, Sarah Mundy. Thanks again to Tammie, and best wishes to Sarah.

Auld lang syne **And for all of you, Happy New Year, 2005-2006!**

2005/2006 MRA MN/Upper Midwest Chapter Board Members

President

Doug Skipper
The Market Solutions Group
612-333-5400
dskipper@marketsolutionsgroup.com

President-Elect

Linda Daniel
Harris Interactive
763-541-7167
ldaniel@harrisinteractive.com

Past-President

Bob McGarry
Information Specialists Group
952-277-0156
rmcgarry@isgmn.com

Treasurer

Jeff Cook
Questar
651-688-0126
jcook@questarweb.com

Secretary

Denice Duncan
Fieldwork Minneapolis
952-837-8300
deniced@minneapolis.fieldwork.com

Director-At-Large

Bonnie Sargent
Field Research Services
651-644-3150
bonnie@fielddresearchservices.com

Director-At-Large

Randi Luoto
Luoto Associates
952-942-4955
rluoto@mn.rr.com

Director-At-Large

Stefan Hartmann
Ipsos-Insight
612-573-8529
Stefan-Hartmann@ipsos-na.com

Effects of Frequent Participation on On-Line Panelists' Response

By Doug Skipper, *The Marketing Solutions Group, Inc.*

Panelists who complete online surveys more frequently are not much different than panelists who complete them less frequently, a set of studies conducted by Survey Sampling International concluded.

Jackie Lorch of Survey Sampling International and Shauna Fuglestad of General Mills made a joint presentation of the results of the studies at the July 22, 2005 meeting of the Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association. About 30 attendees observed the presentation at a breakfast meeting at the Doubletree Hotel in Golden Valley.

The studies, conducted by SSI with the cooperation of General Mills and a national research partner, concluded that experienced panelist – those who had responded more frequently to Survey Spot (SSI's online panel) questionnaires – displayed slightly higher aided awareness scores, slightly higher advertising brand awareness, and lower buying intent (which more closely mirrors the marketplace).

In addition, the studies suggested that frequent responders did not speed through the surveys and responded heavily to “check all that apply” questions. In addition, the demographics of frequent responders who express buying intent were similar to the general population.

Lorch concluded that fraudulent panelists present bigger challenges to Panel Companies like SSI than frequent panelists do.

Editor's Note

By Sarah Murdy, *The Operations Centre*

I'm thrilled with this opportunity to volunteer as editor! I've already met some great people through various MRA events and meetings, and look forward to working with more of you.

For those of you who have not met me, I work for The Operations Centre in the Research International office. (This new company has combined the operational resources of Research International, Millward Brown and DR Added Value, and looks like a great change for all companies.)

So as transition surrounds me, I'm open to article ideas; and any of you who are interested in writing; just contact me via email or phone!

MRA MN/Upper Midwest Chapter Committee Chairs

Membership Co-Chair

Julie Heise
Harris Interactive
763-541-7175
jheise@harrisinteractive.com

Membership Co-Chair

Jennifer Lourea
Harris Interactive
763-541-7172
jlourea@harrisinteractive.com

Programming Chair

Jessica Westley
Strategic Resource Partners
952-471-0772
jwestley@srpllc.com

Publicity

Lori Kruse
Land O' Lakes
651-481-2862
ljkruise@landolakes.com

Verbatim Newsletter Editor

Sarah Mundy

The Operations Centre

952-853-9463

Sarah.Mundy@us.theoperationscentre.org

Please submit articles/suggestions/ideas
for the newsletter to Sarah.

Professional Researcher Certification Overview

Apply for Grandfathering Now!

The Professional Researcher Certification was developed as a powerful professional tool for researchers of all levels of work experience and education. It is the goal of MRA to encourage high standards within the profession in order to raise competency, establish an objective measure of an individual's knowledge and proficiency and to encourage continued professional development. Additionally, it is the hope of MRA that these certification standards will increase consumer understanding of research and foster premiere professional standards in the industry.

To achieve Certification, applicants must satisfy all education and experience requirements designated by the Certification Workgroup and must demonstrate an acceptable understanding and knowledge related to their area of Certification. In addition, those who have been granted this MRA credential must demonstrate ongoing professional commitment to the field by accruing education Contact Hours in their specific discipline. Certifications are renewed every two years.

This Program is available to researchers who successfully meet rigorous criteria developed by the Certification Workgroup. This Workgroup has developed basic standards for the three main research segments: Data Collection, End-Users and Research Companies. There are levels of positions within these segments reflecting entry-level or new professional positions all the way to owner positions. For each of these levels, there are expectations that reflect work experience, education and related coursework required for the applicant. Reviews and updates to these standards will be addressed as needed to maintain currency within the profession.

The Professional Researcher Certification is for individuals, not companies. In the future, an accreditation program certifying the credibility of a company's research proficiency may be developed.

A Tale of Two Volunteers

By Linda Daniel

Volunteering is good. Volunteering is noble. Volunteering can help you lose weight. OK...two out of three isn't bad. Volunteering usually attracts people who are dedicated, self-sacrificing, capable, and (in my experience) slightly crazy.

Let's start with Jeff Cook. He is great at volunteering. He's our chapter Treasurer. He's our chapter Registrar. Jeff is the reason you can now pay for events with a credit card. He's also the driving force behind our chapter website. For most people, that would be more than enough. Not for Jeff. He has created a new role at board meetings and volunteered to fill it. The position? Resident trouble-maker. We have very nice agendas at our monthly board meetings. We usually cover all items, despite Jeff's spirited attempts to derail the process. Don't get me wrong. Jeff is not being difficult, he just has a talent for asking questions that sometimes make us want to bow down and thank him for keeping us from making a great mistake—and at other times wanting to throttle him for bringing up something that we could have lived without considering.

I'd guess that, at some point when we're talking about how to attract new members, Jeff will bring up the issue of some unlikely category to target...say, maybe, raccoons. Why? Well, Jeff will undoubtedly argue that raccoons do a lot of market research, checking out brands of discarded hamburgers and fries, figuring out which brands of trashcans are easiest to open, and determining the best times of day to make their "dinner runs." Why shouldn't they be included in our chapter?

Another volunteer I'd like to mention is Julie Heise. She does so much for our chapter as the Membership Co-Chair that she was awarded the Chapter Service Award for 2004-2005. Let me tell you, she was thrilled...honored...humbled...happy. She'll actually receive her award at the Fall Conference. Now she's suddenly not so thrilled, honored, humbled, and happy. She's worried that her co-workers are going to embarrass her when she goes up in front of the entire audience to collect the award. I don't know where she gets such ideas. Just because someone mentioned that there will

Choose to Change

It's important to take time to understand why some people resist change and what steps you can take to effectively introduce change. Whether you're changing jobs, learning new work procedures or dealing with a new office mate, it is human nature to resist change. Any change, even if it is positive, can cause fear in many people. Resistance to change stems from four main causes:

1. The reason for the change is undefined
2. Those affected by the change are not included in the planning process
3. Communication about the change or its process is inadequate
4. Additional work and responsibility are feared

As a leader, you can help employees prepare and accept change by carefully planning and executing three specific steps:

1. **Define**—create understanding
 - Change will happen
 - Change is constant
 - Change means making adjustments
2. **Prepare**—explain the change
 - Communicate reasons, adjustments and how it will affect employees
 - Listen and acknowledge feedback
 - Gain support by getting the right people onboard
 - Provide training when necessary
 - Address Fears
3. **Implement**—help others through the change
 - Control emotions and rumors by continuing to communicate and acknowledge feedback
 - Empower the leaders on your team
 - Monitor change
 - Celebrate the change by rewarding acceptance
 - Make sure the change lasts

Tale of Two Volunteers (continued)

Continued from page 4

probably be thousands of people there, not counting the millions watching the televised event? Or because someone talked about the Harris Interactive contingent wearing hats, waving banners, cheering, and whistling as she collects the award? Really, Julie—just stay calm and keep reminding yourself that volunteering is good. Volunteering is noble. Volunteering makes your co-workers proud.

2nd Annual Golf Event- A Review

By Elizabeth Wohlrabe, ISG

The game of golf has always been a favorite among business people looking for a way to exercise and have some fun while networking with clients and other professionals in their industry. This held true on June 23, when MRA members and guests arrived at Bunker Hills Golf Course in Coon Rapids to kick off the 2nd Annual MRA Golf Event.

Participants enjoyed a box lunch at The Seasons Restaurant at Bunker Hills before heading out in the sweltering 95 degree heat to play 18 holes. The event was a scramble—each person hits their ball, the team decides which ball is the furthest/best hit, and the entire team plays from that spot. All levels of golfers participated in the event, from those who have golfed only once before to those who are scratch players.

Following the scramble, all of the golfers met back at the club house for happy hour and awards. Gift certificates to the Bunker Hills Pro Shop were given to Jeff Cook, Questar, for “Closest to the Pin,” Elizabeth Wohlrabe, Information Specialists Group, for “Longest Putt,” and the team with the lowest score. Members of the winning team included Cook, Joe Stanton, Clark Kristensen and Chris Larson, all of Questar.



Seeing the Forest AND the Trees Building Business...Growing Skills

Schedule Overview

7:45 - 8:30 Registration and Breakfast
8:30 - 9:30 Welcome and Keynote
9:30 - 10:15 Session I
10:15 - 10:30 Break
10:30 - 11:15 Session II
11:15 - 11:30 Break
11:30 - 1:00 Lunch / Tournament of Researchers
1:00 - 1:45 Session III
1:45 - 2:00 Break
2:00 - 2:45 Session IV
2:45 - 3:00 Break
3:00 - 3:45 Session V Professional Researchers Certification Ses

Seeing the Forest AND the Trees Building Business...Growing Skills

It was perhaps inevitable that a chapter in the middle of Paul Bunyan country would choose this title for our Fall Conference. But don't worry, you don't have to wear a flannel shirt to the conference, giant axes are definitely prohibited, there will be no log rolling contests, and, if Babe the Blue Ox shows up, you won't be assigned clean-up duty.

There's an old saying about "not seeing the forest for the trees." We certainly see a lot of trees in our hectic work lives, where it is far too easy to get bogged down in project details, writing surveys or moderator guides, filling quotas, meeting report deadlines—bouncing from one tree to another and going through countless boxes of bandages patching up the resulting scrapes and contusions. Unfortunately, we sometimes don't realize just how much we've been ignoring the forest until our clients ask us plaintively during a report presentation, "But what does it all **mean**?"

What we all need is a balance between the forest and the trees. How do we do that? The MN/Upper Midwest Chapter of MRA has put together an exciting line up of speakers who will help provide us with some answers.

We'll have some Forest People. No, they won't be Ewoks and they won't be from Endor. They will, however, be more on the Big Picture end of the research scale. Brian Dautsch will talk about legislation related to cell phones and Spyware, Allan Bergston will discuss anthropomorphic research and brand, Beth Fischer will moderate a panel about becoming a partner with our clients, and Tom Smith will discuss ISO standards for our industry.

We'll also have some Tree People. They're more towards the Detail end of the research scale. Greg Blevins will tell us how to determine the appropriate methodologies for our studies, Mike Thompson will help us better utilize the voice of the customer, Trenton Haake will give pointers on creating better qualitative discussion guides, and Carl Dickson will provide insight on writing power executive summaries.

So, come...learn... Of course, if you decide not to attend the conference, you run the risk of losing sight of either the forest or the trees on a project, then walking into that presentation and needing to come up with a brilliant save. That's when you really hope that another old saying comes to your rescue—the one about how "even a blind sow can find an acorn once in a while." Don't take chances. Register for the conference today.

Marketing Research Association Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter 2005 Fall Conference Registration Form

Register now! Email us at info@mnmra.org, or fill out the below information and fax it to 651-688-0546 or send to:

MRA MN/Upper Midwest Chapter
Jeffrey Cook, Registrar
Questar
2905 West Service Road
Eagan, MN 55121

You must be registered by September 2nd to be included on the Attendee List.

Full Conference includes Wednesday Evening Networking Reception, Thursday Breakfast and Lunch, Keynote and Educational sessions, Professional Researchers Certification Information session, and Tournament of Researchers.

	MRA Member Rate	Guest Rate
Early Bird Registration (On or Before 8/22)	\$120	\$150
Additional Attendees From Same Company (On or Before 8/22)*	\$110	\$140
Registration After 8/22	\$160	\$190
Additional Attendees From Same Company After 8/22)*	\$160	\$190
Wednesday Evening Networking Reception Only	\$35	\$45

**Please include name and email of additional attendees on a separate piece of paper.*

Name: _____ Title: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Country: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email (required for confirmation): _____

Total Due \$ _____ (Payment must accompany your registration form. Only U.S. checks accepted.)

Payment submitted:

Enclosed check # _____

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Minnesota Upper-Midwest Chapter Service Award

And the winner is:.....JULIE HEISE of HARRIS INTERACTIVE!

Each year, the Marketing Research Association recognizes one member from each of the 12 Chapters for outstanding volunteer service. The purpose of this award is to recognize a Chapter Volunteer who has given outstanding support to the Chapter in the past year.

The Minnesota Upper-Midwest Chapter nominated Julie Heise for our Chapter Service Award. Julie won this award, and was honored at the National MRA Conference in Chicago on June 3, 2005. She will receive the award locally at our Fall Conference

Julie's nomination was based on her position as Membership Committee Co-Chair 2002-2005, as well as her all-around commitment and service dedication to our chapter.

Julie organizes and runs monthly meetings with the 10 membership volunteers. One of her primary tasks at these meetings is to make certain there are people at each event to serve as greeters and to handle attendee questions or issues.

She attends about 95% of all chapter events. She is responsible for: registration and sign-in at each event, creating and distributing name badges, maintaining registration lists, and providing information for guests who wish to become MRA chapter members. Julie also sends "welcome to our chapter" packets to all new members.

Julie takes each of the responsibilities described above and goes a step beyond. She combines exceptional organizational abilities with a healthy sense of humor that encourages her committee to cheerfully perform any task she assigns. Her energy is endless and her patience seeming without limit. The MN/Upper Midwest Chapter is incredibly lucky to have Julie as a member.

Helping Julie to win this National award is her service-oriented background in life. For many years, Julie has volunteer for the Shriners, donating one weekend each spring to work at the Shriners' Circus in Fargo, ND. Julie's other major volunteer effort is For Evan's Sake. This organization makes and sells jewelry, with the proceeds going to help defray the medical/ educational expenses for Evan, a child with autism—Julie's nephew.



Julie's personality is such that you all probably already know her! But for a re-fresher, here is Julie's background/bio:

- Born in Cleveland, OH, she went to Moorhead (MN) Senior High School and graduated from Minnesota State University-Moorhead with a BS in Marketing and a minor in Psychology.
- In Portland, OR, she worked as an interviewer for CTIS, a division of Audits & Surveys.
- In Minneapolis, she worked for Northstar Interviewing (a local telephone interviewing firm) for 7 years. She started at Northstar as Evening/Weekend Supervisor and worked her way up to Data Processing Manager.
- Julie has been working at Harris Interactive since September 2000. She was hired as a Senior Research Assistant and has advanced to Research Associate.
- At Harris Interactive, Julie's experience includes brand awareness studies as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty studies in a variety of industries: telecommunications, computer software and hardware, petrochemicals, and finance. She manages all phases of Internet and telephone survey projects.

Congratulations to Julie on winning our Chapter Service Award, and her National MRA recognition for her efforts and dedication!

Minnesota Twins and Marketing Research- A Review

By Elizabeth Wohlrabe, ISG

On May 19, as the Minnesota Twins were warming up for the final game of a tied series with the Toronto Blue Jays, MRA members, guests and students gathered in a conference room in the basement of the Metrodome to hear Twins' President Dave St. Peter and Patrick Klinger, Vice President of Marketing, speak about how the Twins use market research.



Dave St. Peter

Courtesy of Metro North Chamber of Commerce

After a brief chapter awards ceremony, and initiation of the 2005/2006 Board Members of the MN/Upper Midwest Chapter of the MRA, St. Peter began by speaking about his humble beginning with the Twins. He started working with them in 1990 as an intern in the community affairs department. In 2002, at age 35, he became the second youngest president in Major League Baseball. St. Peter also shared a few laughs about his days at the University of North Dakota, during which time he had worked as an intern for Doug Skipper, president-elect for the MN/Upper Midwest Chapter of the MRA.

St. Peter and Klinger spoke about the pre-post market research studies they execute each year to position their marketing campaign, schedule promotions and, most importantly, to ensure the most optimal experience for every fan who visits the Dome. This year, the Twins have also done research to determine the community's perception on the proposal of a new outdoor stadium.

According to Klinger, one of his favorite methods of research is to conduct the interviewing himself - literally.

He enjoys finding an open seat at any given game, sitting down and talking with the fans. Never revealing his position with the Twins, he is able to get candid opinions from the fans on anything from Dome Dogs to the new "Twins Territory" advertising campaign.

Following the presentation, everyone headed upstairs to cheer on the Twins as they faced the Blue Jays. The game started off slow, with no runs in the first five innings, but the Twins pulled ahead in the sixth inning with a two-run double by Michael Cuddyer. The home team managed to keep the lead, and pitcher Joe Mays' 4-0 shutout performance was just what the Twins' needed to win the series with Toronto.

Overall, it was an exciting Chapter Event for all!



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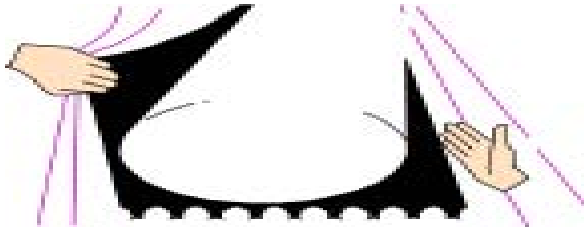
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www.hormel.com

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Spotlight

By Doug Skipper, The Market Solutions Group

SPOTLIGHT on Harold Cook

The Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association recently nominated Harold Cook for Honorary Lifetime Membership in the MRA.



Harold Cook, who is the president of Cook Research & Consulting, Inc., joined the Marketing Research Association in 1982, and was a charter member of the Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter when it was formed in the early 1990’s. He has played an active role at the chapter and national levels, has served as an energetic spokesperson for the organization and the marketing research industry, and has been a featured speaker at numerous chapter meetings and at a national MRA convention.

Harold, recognized as one of the country’s top focus group moderators, has also served on the American Marketing Association’s Board of Directors, and is an active member of the Qualitative Research Consultant’s Association. “I’ve loved being in marketing research,” Harold said. “It is the most interesting field to be in. I’ve loved being in the MRA and learning about the industry and the people in the profession. I’ve loved being part of it, and I’ve loved helping support the industry.”

A native of Marshall, Mich., Harold attended Alma (Mich.) College, where he met his wife Judy in a political science class. He earned a master’s degree at Bowling Green (Ohio) University and did graduate work at Michigan State before embarking on a teaching career at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. Though he found teaching and interaction with students interesting, he returned to Bowling Green to do graduate work in business and learn about computers, and taught at Heidelberg (Ohio) University.

He went to work for a company that performed market research for radio and television and soon landed in Los Angeles for focus groups charged with finding the first hosts for ABC’s Good Morning America. He liked his market research experience, and decided to continue his career and raise his family with Judy in the Twin Cities. He went to work with Frevert & Hall Research, and after four years there, moved to Custom Research Inc. While at CRI, he joined the Marketing Research Association.

Two years later, Harold and two partners purchased Innovative Marketing, Inc., a focus facility and food service testing facility, and expanded the company to include quantitative research.

In February 1987, Harold bought out his partners and founded Cook Research.

He retained longtime quality research manager Bobbi Schribman, and hired Judy. His son Jeff joined the company later, and Cook Research became a family affair. “Working with my family has been wonderful.” Cook said. It has also been successful. Cook Research and Consulting is one of the nation’s top focus group facilities, earning top ratings from the Impulse Focus Facility Survey year after year.

The national Marketing Research Association annually reviews nominations from each chapter for Honorary Lifetime Membership. A small number of professionals from the organization have received the honor.



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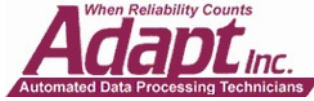
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