

President’s Corner

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

Thank you!

To everyone who gave their time and energy to put together a successful Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association’s Fall Conference, **“Seeing the Forest AND the Trees: Building Business...Growing Skills”**, thank you.

The event was a rousing success. More than 120 MRA members and guests participated in the conference comprising of attendees, volunteers, sponsors and speakers. Not everything went according to plan – one session had to be cancelled because of an illness, another speaker unexpectedly had to fly solo, and the bathrooms at the facility were overmatched – but the end result was positive. We had a great networking experience the night before, solid educational sessions and tremendous opportunities to interact with other marketing research professionals.

Special thanks to past presidents Lisa Morse and Bob McGarry, to the chapter’s board of directors, the programming and site committee, the publicity committee and the hospitality committee. All of these volunteers went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure the 2005 Fall Conference was a first-class educational and networking experience for the attendees.

Volunteers wanted

Preparation is already underway for our 2006 events, including next year’s Fall Conference. Now is a great time to get involved with the Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter as a volunteer. Opportunities are available on such committees as programming and site, publicity, membership and greater

2005 Upcoming Events

November 17th, 2005

How “Simon Delivers”

New Product Insights

Simon Delivers in New Hope, MN

(see page 8 for more information)

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group. Serving on a chapter committee is an excellent way to learn about our industry, make valuable contacts and perform an important service for a good cause. We would welcome you as a volunteer. If you are interested, contact me or any Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter board member.

Registrar change

A familiar face appears in a new place. Jeff Cook, who has served as chapter treasurer for the past few years, has taken on a new role: registrar. Jeff, who moved from Cook Research to Questar during the summer, added the registrar duties around the same time. Along with being treasurer, Jeff is responsible for collecting registration for upcoming events. He has taken over for Clark Kristensen, who had handled the duties the last couple of years.

Happy Holidays

Thanks to Sarah Mundy for taking over publication of *The Verbatim* after assisting long time editor Tammie Frost-Norton with the past summer's edition.

This will be the last issue of *The Verbatim* for 2005. See you at the November 17 Simon Delivers Presentation. And let me be among the first to wish you all Happy Holidays!

Editor's Note

By Sarah Mundy, The Operations Centre

Fall is the perfect time for new beginnings and future trends. Whether it affects our daily routine such as client reports, or if it's on a broader scale such as the US and global economy, it's important to not only look at where we're going, but where we've been. This issue we've touched base on all aspects from report innovation, to recaps of significant Fall Conference events, to changes in a familiar organization. For fun, test your knowledge and take the MRA History quiz! And like the refreshing and revitalizing season of fall, enjoy this quarter's issue of *The Verbatim*.

Have ideas for next issue? Complaints about this one? Contact me via email or phone!

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Professional Research Certification - Overview

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.

Be awarded your Professional Researcher Certification by 12/31/05 and be featured in a Special Section of March 2006 Alert!, dedicated to the first class of Professionally Certified Researchers. For more information contact Linda Schoenborn at linda.schoenborn@MRA-NET.org or visit the national MRA website at www.mra-net.org.

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for the newsletter to Sarah.

Report Innovations?

By Linda Daniel, Harris Interactive

How many times have you heard clients say that they want something “different” in their reports? That the charts and graphs they used to insist you use are now considered dull, boring, and out of date? That they’re not sure what they want, but they’re sure they aren’t getting it?

Innovation in report presentations can be a good thing. No one wants to be locked into a template that can’t be altered, and there are a lot of good programs out there that can help us brighten up reports and presentations. Replacing the usual bars on a chart with oil rigs when showing increases in oil production, is a good and clever use of the imagination. But innovation just for the sake of innovation can lead to trouble. Here are some examples of innovations gone awry.

- Client Fred. Fred read somewhere that reports should be crystal clear, with lots of transparency. He’s not sure what that means, but asks you to spend thousands of dollars designing and producing presentations in glass folders, with the name of the report and the client’s logo etched in the glass. Shipping the reports is quite expensive, but not as expensive as the hospital visits when Fred and two co-workers drop their reports and need stitches.
- Client Susan. She’s been told by her boss that the reports on the satisfaction study you do for her company need “something.” People are not reading the reports because the reports are too detailed and, perhaps, boring. Susan, who works for a supermarket chain, takes these words to heart and asks that charts and graphs be replaced by drawings of various foods, where the data would be presented in callout dialogue boxes, making it appear that the food is talking. The boss is puzzled and the reports are redone.
- Clients Tom and Diane. Their theory is that you have to keep your readers’ interest or they simply won’t read the report. They bought a book on innovative ways to present data and ask you to adopt the “new” techniques. They further suggest that the best way to hold a reader is to have a

different type of graph or chart on each page, even if some pages are showing identical types of information. Readers of the new report complained of massive headaches and total confusion.

So here’s my plea. Let’s try to find better and better ways to display data and prepare reports. Let’s explore new techniques. Let’s not allow ourselves to be boring. But let’s also use a bit of common sense. If the “new” doesn’t translate into easier to understand, then it’s not really an innovation. . . .it’s a descent into silliness.

MRA History Quiz

Today, MRA has a fully operational headquarters with a fulltime staff of 16. The Association’s activities are governed by a 16-person volunteer Board of Directors, and is a self-managed, not-for-profit organization providing programs and services to over 2,600 members worldwide.

So, how did this all happen? Take the quiz below and see how well you know the history of your MRA:

1. Where is the Association based?
2. What year was the Association formed?
3. The Association was an outgrowth of what other Association? (Extra credit: name the subgroup.)
4. The Association was incorporated a few years after formation. What year?
5. Who was the first president? (Extra credit: name #2 & #3)
6. What year was the first conference held? (Extra credit: where?)
7. What was the original name of the Association? (Extra credit: what year was the name officially changed to Marketing Research Association?)
8. The newsletter has had three names, including the current name Alert! Name either of them. (Extra credit if you can name both.)
9. How many chapters are there?
10. What year was the first chapter founded?

Fall Conference Keynote – A Review

By Stefan Hartmann, Ipsos-Insight

Toby Madden, regional economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, addressed the fall conference with a keynote that surprised some attendees, but also put the calls to alarm, found in many recent news reports, in perspective. Instead of giving a presentation with lots of detailed gross domestic product and growth data by country and region, he gave a bird's-eye view of forces that shape the economy in the US and globally.



Despite recent blows from natural disasters and rising energy prices, his outlook was a positive one overall. Madden said the US economy - and by extension, the economy in the Midwestern states - was expected to grow by three percent annually in the next one to two years. This is not on par with the eight to ten percent seen in parts of Asia, but well ahead of Western Europe, where growth is expected to remain mired in the one to two percent range for the near future. While concerns about increased competitiveness of some Asian nations, especially China, are certainly valid, Madden pointed out that the United States economy is still much more robust than many European markets and therefore able to absorb blows such as hurricane Katrina to a greater degree.

He mentioned two factors that set the US apart from other nations, contribute to the resilience of the US economy, and will help in the future: flexibility and knowledge. While the impact of a flexible economy is obvious and oft-reported – higher risks in a downswing, but also much better opportunities, once things look up again – comment about knowledge holds more interest for market researchers.

Madden pointed out that knowledge is one factor companies in the industrialized nations can use to differentiate themselves from lower-priced competitors. Many different levels of knowledge are needed to develop and market successful products and services, but one of them certainly is the knowledge of customers, their perceptions, needs, and wants. Helping our clients face global competition should present plenty of opportunities for us as market researchers, maybe even more so than in the past as competition heats up.

While not covering marketing research or the Midwestern economy extensively, Madden's broad overview was very helpful in giving the necessary background, so we can all judge for ourselves how global economic developments affect the local market research community. And his engaging style of delivery made sure all attendees were sufficiently roused for the day of seminars that lay ahead.

Fall Conference Networking Event

By Lori Kruse, Land O' Lakes

Approximately 60 people enjoyed the pre-conference gathering at the Dakota Jazz Club on September 21, 2005. It was a great networking event and included guests from outside of the Upper Midwest Chapter of MRA. Attendees enjoyed wonderful appetizers and wine or beer while listening to jazz from the balcony. There was plenty of lively conversation, and many attendees got so involved in networking, they didn't realize there was a storm moving across the Twin Cities!



Fall Conference Evaluation, Non-Metro Attendees

By Randi Luoto, Luoto Associates

A key goal for the Chapter's Board is to grow membership and interest among marketing research practitioners who live outside the metro area. Both this year and last, the Fall Conference has contributed to this goal by drawing attendees from outside the metro and out of state. There were attendees from Duluth and Rochester, and as far as Chicago and Dallas. Thirteen out-of-towners attended this year and some of those completed evaluation forms with feedback and thoughts on the conference.

After combing their forms and getting additional feedback through email, it appears overall, these attendees thought the conference went well. Despite having traveled the furthest to attend and facing heavier expense in doing so, most consider themselves likely to attend again.

Dennis Uhlir from e-Rewards Market Research in Dallas said, "(The event) was very informative, certainly well attended, and well worth the trip. I made several very good contacts, and have already generated new business." Dennis' suggestion for the next conference would be some way to introduce guests to more members.

Kay Libby from SMDC Health Systems in Duluth said, "I thought the conference was very worthwhile. The variety of topics was excellent and applicable to a wide audience. The speakers were top-notch."

The general feedback from the attendees was that the conference was worth the time and expense. Several out-of-towners had also attended the pre-conference networking event held this year at the Dakota Jazz Club in Minneapolis. It was suggested to promote this even more for future conferences to build attendance among metro members. Imagine that. They hope to meet and greet more of us! Next year, we'll have to plan on doing just that.



CMOR Allies with MRA & IMRO

WorldOpinion News, www.worldopinion.com

The Council for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR) and the Marketing Research Association (MRA) announced a formal research alliance intended to enhance their synergies and better secure the protection of the research profession in the U.S. As part of this alliance, the two organizations will combine support services and share structures while maintaining their individual leaderships.

Both organizations see their alliance as another step toward unifying the marketing research profession, as evidenced in last year's merger of MRA and the Interactive Marketing Research Organization for online researchers (IMRO). With MRA's position as the largest research association in the U.S., representing all facets of the profession, and CMOR's focus on government affairs and respondent cooperation, the alliance is in a unique position to lead the research profession in addressing the industry's current and future challenges.

"This alliance is a win-win for CMOR and the research industry," said Terri Hansee, chair of CMOR. "By gaining the support of a larger organization we strengthen our resources while maintaining our independence, which is important to the work we do."

The Council for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR) is a non-profit organization that promotes, advocates and protects the integrity of the marketing research and opinion research processes. CMOR also works to improve respondent cooperation in research, as well as promoting positive legislation impacting the survey research industry. CMOR is comprised of more than 150 organizations and members, including industry trade associations, research providers, end users or client companies, academic institutions and individuals.

For other market research news, visit www.worldopinion.com. Over 13,000 unique visitors every month turn to WorldOpinion for information about the research industry.

MN/UMW Tabs Kristensen for Rising Star Award

The Minnesota-Upper Midwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association is proud to nominate Clark Kristensen for the organization's Rising Star Award. A member of the MRA for four years, Clark has managed the member databases, served as the registrar for chapter events and has emailed chapter materials to members for the past three years. Clark is also an active member of the MN-UMW Chapter's membership committee.

The purpose of this award is to recognize individuals who have provided outstanding volunteer efforts at the National and/or Chapter level for LESS than 5 years.

Hispanic Partnership Delivers New Panel

MrWeb, www.mrweb.com/drno/

US Hispanic research group ¡Hola! ResearchPAYS, co-founded by MR firm Alternative Technology Corporation (ATC), is planning to build the largest Hispanic panel in the US through an alliance with non-profit group the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).

The US Hispanic population, now at 40.4 million, is growing five times faster than the country's population as a whole, and it is estimated that, by 2050, one in four Americans will be of Hispanic descent. LULAC President Hector Flores believes Hispanics are 'increasingly the major driving force behind revenue growth in many markets'.

This article was taken from MrWeb, a portal site with news, jobs and directories for market research professionals worldwide, established in 1998 and with more than 12,000 regular users. For daily market research news, visit www.drno.org

Tips to Enhance Your Decision Making Batting Average

The Small Business Knowledge Base, www.bizmove.com

Just as people are different, so are their styles of decision making. Each person is a result of all of the decisions made in their life to date. Recognizing this, here are some tips to enhance your decision making batting average.

- Do not make decisions that are not yours to make.
- When making a decision you are simply choosing from among alternatives. You are not making a choice between right and wrong.
- Make decisions as you go along. Do not let them accumulate. A backlog of many little decisions could be harder to deal with than one big and complex decision.
- Remember that not making a decision is a decision not to take action.
- Before implementing what appears to be the best choice, assess the risk by asking "What can I think of that might go wrong with this alternative?"
- Many decisions you make are unimportant-about 80% of them.
- Once the decision has been made, don't look back. Be aware of how it is currently affecting you and focus on your next move. Never regret a decision. It was the right thing to do at the time. Now focus on what is right at this time.
- Mentally rehearse implementation of your choice and reflect in your imagination what outcomes will result.
- Once you have made the decision and have started what you are going to do, put the "what if's" aside and do it with commitment.

Article by Meir Liraz, president of [BizMove.com](http://www.bizmove.com) (<http://www.bizmove.com>), a free informational web site for entrepreneurs and small business owners that provides free guides and tips for starting, growing and managing a small business.

How “Simon Delivers” New Product Insights November 2005 Event

Based on a recent product test for a new household cleaner, Steve Lauder, Vice President of Customer Relations for Simon Delivers, and Tim Bates, President and CEO of Cirista, LLC, will discuss how they use product tests and other marketing research to learn about their customers.

During this presentation attendees will learn:

- What Simon Delivers learns about its customers through grocery delivery.
- The importance of product tests in Simon Delivers’ marketing research tool kit.
- The approach to testing new products amongst its customers.
- The types of information and insight Simon Delivers derives from its product testing.

Please join Steve Lauder and Tim Bates on Thursday, November 17th at Simon Delivers in New Hope for this insightful presentation. A light breakfast of coffee and bagels will be served. Seating is limited so don’t wait to register. November 10th is the deadline! To reserve your spot, contact Jeffrey Cook at treasurer@mmra.org.

MRA’s Researcher-to-Researcher Relief Assistance Blog

In response to the harmful effects of recent hurricanes, MRA has developed the **Researcher-to-Researcher Relief Assistance Blog**. This Blog will be used as an exchange system where all research professionals can list what they are in need of and/or what they can provide one another.

For example, some items that researchers in the affected areas may be in need of are:

- *Additional office space for temporary use*
- *Computers*
- *Phone line usage*
- *Support on active studies or retrieving data from the Internet*

To enter a posting on this blog, go to www.mra-net.org.

If you would like to support rescue and relief efforts, please contact the Red Cross at www.redcross.org to donate.

Dennis Denning Nominated for Non-Industry Professional Award

By Randi Luoto, Luoto Associates

Dennis Denning is the sole owner and founder of D. R. Denning & Associates, founded in 1990. The company provides wide-ranging business management services to small businesses and associations. Services include accounting, tax preparation, bill-payment, newsletters and conference management. The company works on either a retainer or pay-as-you go basis. The firm’s flexibility and unwavering dedication to client service is what prompts the MN/Upper Midwest Chapter to nominate it for this award.

Dennis has assisted the Chapter newsletter since 1998. Four times a year, over the past seven years, he has taken the raw articles and photos sent to him and given back the attractive,



well-laid out newsletter our members enjoy today. His influence has improved the newsletter. He led the chapter to switch to glossy paper and make other changes for a more professional appearance, especially important as associations grow. He challenged it to run more leading, business-oriented articles and fewer of the typical association fare (e.g., lists of new members). The result has been a newsletter that Chapter members read and are proud of. Because he has grown fond of the marketing research industry and MRA, he finds himself being informed by the content of each issue and reading every word. Without his help, the newsletter would be far less than what it is. And, in a further act of kindness, he has not raised prices since 1998!!!

D. R. Denning & Associates counts seven other associations as clients besides our Chapter. A favorite (besides MRA) is the Association of Health Care

Professional Award (continued)

Continued from page 8

Educators, which has grown while his client. While he dotes on all his clients, this association and MRA are special favorites and he sees his role as “helping out” in all the ways they need and as he can. He delights in seeing clients prosper.

Dennis’ personal interests extend to financial support for members of the local theatre community, travel and family. With grateful clients, two grand-daughters, (5 and 2) and an upcoming trip to Italy, he is a busy and happy man!

From time to time, MRA recognizes an individual to receive the Non-Industry Professional Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize one Non-Industry Professional that has had a positive or meaningful impact on the Marketing Research Association and/or the opinion and marketing research profession.

MRA History Quiz Answers (1-point per correct answer)

1. Rocky Hill, CT
2. 1954
3. American Marketing Association – take an extra point if you knew that, more exactly, it was an outgrowth of the AMA’s Trade Problem Discussion Group.
4. 1957
5. Lee Andrews, Andrews Research – take an extra point if you know that John Dunn, General Foods was the second President and add another for knowing that Bill Callahan from Wolf/Altshul/Callahan was number three.
6. 1959. Take an extra point if you remembered it was in Forest Hills, NY. Add another point if you attended.
7. Marketing Research Trade Association (MRTA). The name was changed to MRA in 1970.
8. The original name was MRTA Messenger and then Viewpoints.
9. 12
10. 1978.

Continued on next column

MRA History Quiz Scoring

Scoring:

- 10+ points: You are a true blue MRA loyalist.
- 7-9 points: History buff or old fogey?
- 4-6 points: Sign up for Tournament of Researchers ‘06!
- 1-3 points: Give yourself a pat on the back!
- 0 points: Well, at least now you know the answers.



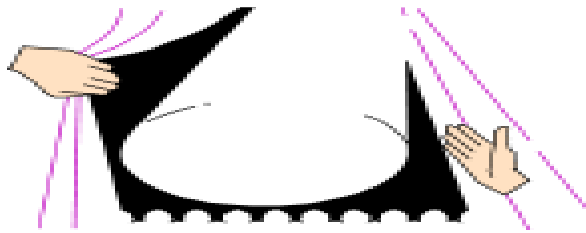
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Check out the next issue of *The Verbatim* when we “SPOTLIGHT” a Board or Committee Member’s company.

SPOTLIGHT on Tammie Frost-Norton

Spotlight

The Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association is honored to nominate Tammie Frost-Norton of Gantz Wiley Research for the Shining Star Award. Tammie has made great contributions to the success of the Marketing Research Association on both the national and chapter level. Currently, Tammie is a member of the national organization’s Board of Directors, and chair of the Business Services Committee. Other national involvement includes:

- IRC Council Liaison (2003-04)
- By-Law Review Committee Chair (2004)
- Membership and Chapter Council (2003)
- Awards Task Force (2002-present)
- Awards Nominating Committee (2002)
- Membership Council (2000)
- The Connector* Roster Code Task Force (2000)
- New Member Ambassador (1999)
- Nonmember Callers Task Force (1999)
- Chapter Council Presidents’ Manual Task Force (1999)



Before becoming active on the national level, Tammie was one of the founding members of the MN/UMW Chapter. She was a Director at Large on the organization’s first Board of Directors in 1997-98. She was the Chapter’s President Elect in 1998-99 and in 1999-2000 became the organization’s third President. Tammie served briefly as acting President and then as Past-President the following year (2000-01).

At the end of her tenure, Tammie took over as editor of Chapter’s quarterly newsletter, *The Verbatim*, for four years. Tammie has also been very active on the committee level. She has served on the Education Committee (2001-2002), the Nominating Committee ((2001-2002), as the Site Selection Committee Chair (1998-1999), and as the Membership Committee Chair (1996-1998 & 2000-2001). She received the prestigious Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter Award in 2002, and continues to be a great advocate for the Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter, the Marketing Research Association and the industry as a whole.

Tammie earned a B.A. in Business/ Economics and English from Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, IA. Now with over 16 years of managerial experience, Tammie leads the Gantz Wiley Research project management group with responsibility for overseeing staff development and workload assignment, client project management and delivery, and quality assurance. Before joining GWR, she worked as Vice President and prior to that as Director of Field Logistics Services for Research International (originally Winona Research). Further back includes Western Division Manager for Spar/Burgoyne Marketing Services.

Tammie’s “community service” is time spent at the local elementary school volunteering in her children’s classrooms for special events, classroom parties, and the PTA Teacher Appreciation dinner. She is also past President of the Antler’s Toastmaster chapter in Minneapolis, and a past Rotarian for Bloomington Rotary.

The Shining Star Award is a national award presented to an MRA member who has made outstanding contributions on either the chapter or national level.



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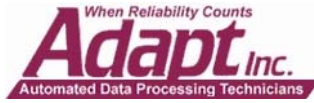
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