Minnesota Upper Midwest Chapter MRA

The Verbatim

Newsletter of the Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter of the MRA

Spring 2009 **Volume 12 Issue 1**

President's Corner

Tammie Frost-Norton, PRC

2008-2009 was a rather fabulous year for our Chapter, even if I am somewhat biased in that assessment! By now I'm sure all of you have visited our biggest initiative, the re-design of our website, www.mnmra.org. You will find it has considerably more information than in the old days, and we are continuing to keep it up to date with the latest news, updates from national, and People on the Move, as well as upcoming events. Keep it in your *favorites*!

It has been a busy year as well, with our Programming Committee offering 5 big events. We held our first ever Spotlight Half-Day event; a timely event on polling during our watermark presidential election year; a free educational event on social networking media, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter (you'll see that event review in this edition); and a review of the Minnesota Health Assessment survey (also reviewed in this edition). To top it off, we held our every-18-month Conference! Our Spring Conference in May 2009 was a big success even in these economic times, with over 75 participants, fascinating speakers and presentations, and the installation of our new 2009-2010 Board. Watch for the 2010 Fall Conference!

Our member survey is being conducted even as this is being written – hopefully you all participated, as it is a great way to get your opinion heard as to how the chapter can better support you. We started some new traditions this year, like a welcoming letter going to each new guest at our events. Publicity has redesigned our new member packet as well. We welcomed 25 new members this year, including 3 from Sioux Falls SD, 3 from Iowa (Des Moines and Cedar Rapids), 2 from Wisconsin (Neenah and Green Bay), one from Winnipeg, Canada, one from Mankato, MN, and the rest from the Twin Cities Metro area.

Continued on page 2

2009 Upcoming Events

Watch for Research Methods events coming in the Fall.

Keep checking the calendar and home page on www.mnmra.org!!

What's Inside...

Verbatim Newsletter Editor
Tammie Frost-Norton
(Please contact at
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President's Corner *cont'd*

Continued from page 1
We also initiated a special conference deal 2-for-1 for members outside of the immediate Metro area, recognizing the additional costs and time needed to attend. We tried an electronic invite this year, successfully, so I feel confident you will see more e-vites in the future, so dollars can be spent on subsidizing great speakers instead of mailing costs!

We have some new sponsorship packages that I think you will be very excited to see; they will roll-out with our new President, Gayle Belkengren, who has personally been working on this effort. We hope that with the right sponsorship, we can better subsidize event costs for members, especially during these economic times and the upcoming year.

It is with regret, then, that I step down from the President role, and with great affection and thanks that I say goodbye to the "old" Board: Bonnie Sargent, Tish Pasqual, Gayle Belkengren, Danelle Gorra, Julie Heise, Josh Holly, and John Schamber. They are a great bunch, and lucky for you, most are returning for the "new" Board, which you will read about in this issue! Special thanks to three hard-working Committee Chairs: Jeanine Hesse, Robin McDougal, and Patricia Scott. To all our Volunteers and Members, I wish you a great Chapter year of 2009-2010 with an upturned economy and increases in your businesses and positions!

Searching for News

Keep an eye on our website - www.mnmra.org - as we are constantly keeping it fresh and up to date. Recently we listed a free webinar that was being offered to all. We'd also like to keep up-to-date on news and info from our members and friends. Whether it is someone changing jobs, a new offering at a company, or a new service at a facility, let us know and we will post it in our news area on the Home Page. Please send it to info@mnmra.org, and include Attn: Website in your email.

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ANNOUNCING
OUR 2009-2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT	Gayle Belkengren
PRESIDENT-ELECT	Danelle Gorra, *Delve LLC*
PAST PRESIDENT	Tammie Frost-Norton, PRC
SECRETARY	R. Josh Holly, PRC, *Satisfaction Management Systems*
TREASURER	Jeanine Hesse, PRC, *Questar*
DIRECTOR AT LARGE	Rob Daves, *Daves & Associates Research*
DIRECTOR AT LARGE	Julie Heise, *Harris Interactive*
DIRECTOR AT LARGE	John Schamber, *MarketLine Research/In-Touch Survey Systems*

CONGRATULATIONS!! Many thanks to our departing Board members! Our new Board was installed on May 21, 2009 at the Spring Conference.

2008-2009 FISCAL YEAR-END REPORT TO MEMBERS

INCOME	
Event Income	13,030.00
Dues	2,450.00
Event Sponsorship	2,000.00
Interest	386.88
TOTAL INCOME	17,866.88
EXPENSES	
Bank/Paypal Fees	58.13
Volunteer Recognition	1,096.64
Board Expenses	1,563.10
Website Marketing	490.00
Newsletter	1,021.11
Event Expenses	11,202.29
Postage	1,290.58
Professional Services	2,046.86
TOTAL EXPENSES	18,768.71

You will see that we did lose $901.83 this year, from items that we didn't effectively budget for. Essentially, a few of our projects were more expensive than in the past years, including the website upgrade and subsequent promotion of the new website, as well as a minimal increase in speaker gift. Next year's budget will allow for the speaker gift budget needed, and we will not need another website upgrade. The Chapter is also gearing up for increased sponsorship for 2009-2010. Any questions regarding the fiscal year-end report should be directed to our 2008/2009 Treasurer, Danelle Gorra, or Past President Tammie Frost-Norton (see Board Member page for contact information).

Victory for MRA and the Profession!

MRA Member Announcement

Good news for the research profession! MRA, in conjunction with MRA volunteers, obtained explicit confirmation from the regulators in Massachusetts exempting market research incentives from their new public reporting requirements of Massachusetts Marketing Code of Conduct. The Department of Public Health ultimately agreed with our position that incentives to healthcare professionals should not have to be publicly reported.

The text provided in the Frequently Asked Questions posits:

"If a [Pharmaceutical or Medical Device Manufacturing Company] hires a market research company to conduct a double-blind study of health care practitioners, where the health care practitioners are paid an honorarium by the market research company, but the [Pharmaceutical or Medical Device Manufacturing Company] does not know which health care practitioners participated in the study and the health care practitioners who participated do [not] know what pharmaceutical or medical device manufacturing company was involved, is the information subject to disclosure?

Answer: *No. The regulations seek to create transparency around payments to health care practitioners by [Pharmaceutical or Medical Device Manufacturing Companies] that may influence prescriber behavior. Where the health care practitioner participates in a market research study, but is not paid by the [Pharmaceutical or Medical Device Manufacturing Company] and is not aware of the PMDMC involved, the payment need not be reported."*

This is an important victory for the whole profession. MRA has been advocating on this since the law's inception in early 2008. We expanded our efforts with a Call to Action for MRA members and non-members in Massachusetts earlier this year. Coordinated letters and phone calls from MRA member volunteers helped secure a meeting with the Department of Health – and ultimately resulted in an explicit exemption for market research studies with healthcare professionals in Massachusetts.

Savor this victory. There are other state laws and pending legislation impacting all facets of survey, opinion and marketing research that need the profession's attention and energy, but MRA members can play an important role in advocating for and protecting the research profession.

An individual can make a difference, but as we have seen in Massachusetts, together we can make an impact!

Call to Action!!!
Do You Conduct Medical Research??

By Bob Yoerg & Cindy Uttech

If you conduct research involving health care honorariums – you'll want to read this!

Grass-Roots Campaign Secures Change in Physician Gifting Regulation for Marketing Research

Numerous volunteers, working with the MRA's government affairs department, have succeeded in overturning clauses in new regulation by the State of Massachusetts that would have prevented market researchers providing incentives to physicians, thus threatening the future of medical marketing research in that state.

An organized group of local MRA members joined in a letter and phone campaign to the Massachusetts State Senate President and the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health. This campaign led to a formal meeting with the Legislative Director of the Department of Public Health. At the meeting, Larry Brownell, CEO of MRA, and Terri-Lyn Hawley, Vice President of Schlesinger Associates Boston, presented the case for transparency, and ultimately the language of the regulation has been changed to exempt marketing research (more specifics in related article on page 4 of this newsletter).

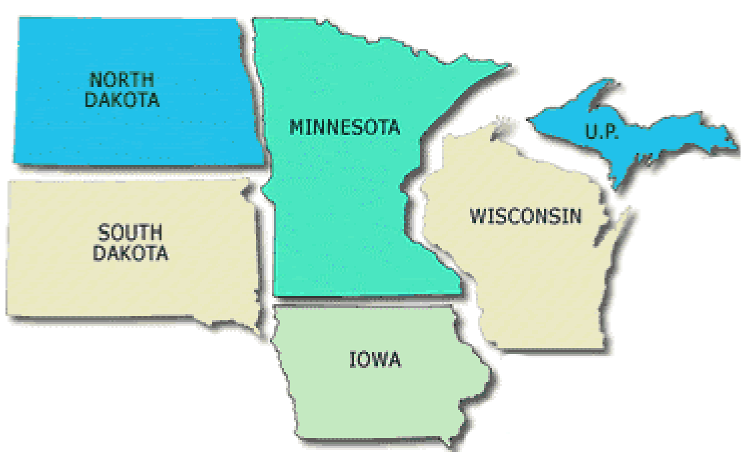
As an indication of the breadth of this campaign, here are some of the many companies that contributed their time: Schlesinger Associates, Cambridge Focus, Copley Focus Centers, Fieldwork Boston, Focus on Boston, Focus Pointe, JRA, National Field and Focus, Performance Plus, and Shugoll Research.

This widespread effort succeeded in Massachusetts, but the profession still faces the threat of legislation in numerous states and in the U.S. Congress that could require public reporting of incentives or ban them outright.

Defend our profession in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and the Dakotas!

Join Bob Yoerg and Cindy Uttech of Focus Market Research to begin a grass-roots effort in Minnesota!! Email us at Minneapolis@focusmarketresearch.com if you are interested.

If other members are interested in a grass-roots effort in any of our other chapter states, please contact Gayle Belkengren, Chapter President.



What's Your Status? Perspectives on Social Networking and New Media

Event Recap – April 30, 2009 – Focus Market Research, Meridian Crossings

This event was a milestone for our Chapter, as it was offered free to all and the invitation was sent out electronically via E-vite. The E-vite method worked quite well, allowing participants to see who else was attending prior to the event itself. This method may be used more often in the future, as it allows chapter dollars to be spent on speaker fees instead of mailing costs. With a room capacity at 34, the event filled quickly!

Our presenter was Susan Anderson, Senior Research Strategist for Fusion Hill (www.fusionhill.com), who is a self-described blogger, daily Facebook user, and Twitter advocate. She conducts Qualitative Research for medical device technology, financial products, and consumer packaged goods. She holds a degree in Studio Art from Macalester College and has previously worked as a design Project Manager for Go East, an Account Executive for Kroese Design Partners, and a Brand Design Associate for General Mills.

Susan started out with a general description of Social Media, New Media and Web 2.0. She gave us an online tour of Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter (and some sites took longer to explain than others)! There were quite a few opinions voiced regarding Twitter and the condensed (140 character) "tweets" allowed by users, ranging from the decline of English to an ADHD approach to life! But Susan graciously listened to all opinions (some pro!) and offered a few of her own via a multi-media display of anthropological-like slice descriptions and opinions (taped) from five different users of Social Networking and New Media. There was somewhat of a dividing line between the descriptive personal experiences, with the younger users describing the "gadget" aspect (special features they loved, etc.), and older users describing the relationships and those they were able to stay connected with thanks to the new media. The taped interviews were fascinating and informational.

Susan gave us a handout of the Social Technographic Ladder (from "Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies"). The bottom rung starts with Inactives, moves up to Spectators (those who read blogs, listen to podcasts, read customer reviews), continues with Joiners (visit and maintain profiles on social network sites), and then reaches the level of Collectors (use RSS feeds, add tags to webpages or photos, vote for websites online). Above that are Critics (post ratings, comment on others' blogs, contribute to online forums and contribute or edit articles in a wiki), and at the top of the ladder are Creators (publish a blog, publish own web pages, upload created video, write articles or stories and post them, upload self-created audio/music). You can now define yourself on the Social Technographic Ladder!

Susan handed out a Social Networking Bibliography, which will get loaded onto our Chapter website soon, and contains 12 books including the Li/Berhoff "*Groundswell*" mentioned above, as well as Jason Alba's *I'm on LinkedIn, Now What?"* and Joel Comm/Anthony Robbins/Ken Burges's "*Twitter Power: How to Dominate Your Market One Tweet at a Time."* Everyone left eager for more. We may hear from Susan Anderson again!

Minnesota Health Access Survey: Methods & Results

Event Recap – March 19, 2009 – Eagan Community Center

Brett Fried and Lacey Hartman, from the Minnesota Department of Health, joined a roomful of researchers to give us their perspective on fielding a massive survey, going through their goals, challenges, and methods they used to address the challenges. They also shared the results; the trends they found in health insurance coverage, the rates by various demographics and the potential access to coverage for the uninsured.

They conduct an RDD (Random Digit Dial) telephone survey (since 1990, now every two years), in collaboration with the U of M. In 2001 they started over-sampling non-metro regions and among populations of color. Their goals are to monitor the distribution of health insurance coverage in Minnesota, describe the characteristics of the uninsured, provide estimates by race, region, and certain age groups, and then inform at state level regarding policy and health coverage decisions. The survey is 45 pages with 177 questions, involving complex skip patterns, but keeping the phone length to 15 minutes average for a population of 9,728 (as high as 27,315 in the past).

Their biggest challenges were response rates, which they showed as falling over time (94% in 1990, 79% in 1999, 65% in 2001, 59% in 2004 and 44% in 2007). But they also face challenges in sample coverage, noting that those without telephones are excluded, and there are growing concerns about sample coverage due to wireless or cell phone only households. This has increased from 3.7% in 2004 to 16.1% in the first half of 2008. According to PEW Research, the percent of landlines currently equals that of 1963 penetration! Methods used to deal with the challenges involved weighting the data. They used weights to adjust for the known probability of selection and used weights to make the MNHA more "representative."

The results included uninsurance rate trends in Minnesota changing from 6.1% in 2001 to 7.7% in 2004 and 7.1% in 2007. Rates in the 2009 summer survey could be interesting, given the times. They also looked at those uninsurance rates by income, by age, and by race/ethnicity. The Health Status in the 2007 MNHA showed significant difference between the uninsured and the privately insured. Health at the excellent/very good level was 57% for uninsured and 78% insured; at good health level the uninsured were 27% and insured were 17%; at the health level of fair/poor the uninsured were at 16% and insured at 5%. Confidence in the ability to get care for the uninsured at the "a little confident" to "not at all confident" level was 36% for uninsured vs. 4% for privately insured. They also looked at employment characteristics of Minnesota's uninsured population, and potential access to coverage for the uninsured, comparing 2004 to 2007 in both cases.

In summary, they found that uninsurance rates and access to employer coverage stabilized from 2004 to 2007. There continue to be large differences in insurance status by income, age, and race/ethnicity. About one third of the uninsured population in Minnesota isn't eligible for employer based or public coverage. A lively discussion with Brett and Lacey followed as attendees dug into methodology and weighting questions, along with recent cell phone penetration research.

THANK YOU TO ***FOCUS MARKET RESEARCH*** FOR HOSTING THE BOARD'S MONTHLY LUNCH MEETINGS

Big Thanks to Bob Yoerg, Cindy Uttech, and Personal Chef Janet!

They Rock!! –The Board

Ad Testers Be Aware!

Follow the Crowd? Or Go It Alone?

By Steve Martin, CMCT (co-author of Yes! 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to Be Persuasive)
Reprinted with permission from Inside Influence Report www.insideinfluence.com

Imagine that one day you are reading an article in a magazine that describes an account that is rather worrying. In fact the article is written in such a compelling and engaging style that it arouses a strong response in your emotional feelings. On finishing the article you turn the page and see an advertisement for a product billed as "The #1 Market Leader". Could the emotions you are still experiencing from the story you have just read effect the persuasiveness of the ad you are now looking at?

In our increasingly complex and information overloaded world people will often rely on simple triggers as reliable shortcuts to make good decisions (Cialdini & Goldstein 2004). For example if we see a product billed as "The #1 Market Leader" we may be persuaded by the social proof heuristic "if many others are buying it then perhaps I should too". Similarly, products might be presented as 'Limited Editions' and as a result appeal to the scarcity heuristic "if it's rare or dwindling in availability then it must be good".

But messages that employ these decision triggers are rarely presented in isolation. So how are messages that employ these decision triggers affected by what someone experiences immediately before the message is presented? Imagine for example that having read a compelling and rather worrisome magazine article that you see two advertisements, one that uses the "#1 Market Leader" social proof message and another that employs the "limited edition" scarcity message. Which would message might be more appealing to you?

Vladas Griskevicius from the University of Minnesota and a team of social scientists that included INFLUENCE AT WORK's very own Robert Cialdini and Noah Goldstein tested this exact question. They proposed that the persuasiveness of a message could depend on not just the content of the particular decision trigger used in the message but also the specific emotion that an individual experiences immediately prior to receiving a message.

To test these ideas the researchers showed people a series of short film clips that were designed to induce either a fear based emotion or a romantic based emotion in the viewers. In case you're wondering the film 'The Shining' was shown to evoke fear based emotions and the film 'Before Sunrise' was shown to evoke romantic based emotions. In another test emotions were induced by asking the study participants to read a short story that again evoked feelings of either fear or romance.

Immediately afterwards people were shown a series of advertisements that employed either a social proof message or a scarcity message. For example one advertisement promoted a Museum where the social proof message read "Visited by over one million people every year" whereas the scarcity message read "Stand out from the crowd".

In another condition study participants were shown a restaurant review that suggested that "many people gathered there" and it was "a most popular restaurant" (social proof message). Another group were shown reviews that said the restaurant was a "one-of-a-kind place that is yet to be discovered by others" (scarcity message).

The results of the study clearly showed that those people who had feelings of fear evoked prior to seeing the ads were more persuaded by messages that employed the social proof appeal compared to a scarcity appeal or a control message. However the opposite was true for those who had their feeling of romance evoked before seeing the advertisements. The people in this group were more persuaded by messages that described features that were unique and scarce.

In summary, the study showed that fear can lead to messages using social proof as potentially being more persuasive than messages that use scarcity information. However feelings of romance would cause the opposite to be the case.

There are several implications of this study that could be of importance to marketers, salespeople and managers. Imagine for example that your organization is considering placing advertisements in a series of magazines or perhaps on the internet. As well as asking questions about where your ad will appear in the publication it might also be appropriate to ask what will precede your ad so you can be sure that the effectiveness of your ad won't backfire due to the emotional status of the reader being influenced by a story or article they have read immediately before seeing your advertisement. Similarly managers might consider taking steps to assess the emotional state of their teams before deciding whether to frame their communications or requests in terms of social proof or scarcity. For example if people are uncertain or perhaps fearful of the future they will be more persuaded and guided by messages that employ the social proof heuristic. For those working in sales this research suggests that spending a few moments describing a situation, case study or even another customers experience to evoke an emotional response in your target customer might be a worthwhile thing to do providing that a) it is done so ethically and b) the appropriate social proof or scarcity heuristic is then employed in any subsequent message.

Welcoming New Members

The MRA MN Upper Midwest Chapter is very pleased to welcome new members in 2009. Please welcome them at events and check out their businesses!

Name	Company	Position	Location
Hap Piell	Partner	Research House, Too	Evanston, IL
Charlynn Psihos	Project Director	MarketResponse International USA, Inc.	Minneapolis, MN
Tanis Goski	Manager, Research	Farm Credit Canada	Regina, SK Canada
Carol Russell	Principle/CEO	Russell Herder	Minneapolis, MN
David Smith	Sr. Vice President	Friedman Marketing	Harrison, NY
Jeanine Hesse, PRC	Sr. Project Manager	Questar	Eagan, MN
Robert P. Daves	Principal	Daves & Associates Research	Minneapolis, MN

Volunteer Recognition

PROGRAMMING 2008-2009	
Jeanine Hesse, ***Chair***	Questar
Tish Pasqual, ***Board Liaison***	GfK Custom Research
Michele Hanson	Readex Research
Carol Duling, ***Registrar***	Questar
Danelle Gorra	Delve
Darlo Martin	Maritz Research
Jason Johnston	Data Recognition Corp.
Dave Koch	Adapt, Inc.
Allen Floyd	Allen Floyd Market Research
Lori Laflin	State of MN Human Services
Stefan Hartmann	Ipsos MediaCT
Denice Duncan	Fieldwork Minneapolis
Doug Skipper	GfK Custom Research
Gayle Belkengren	

PAST PRESIDENT COMMITTEE 2008-2009	
Linda Daniel, ***Chair***	Harris Interactive
Bonnie Sargent, ***Board Liaison***	Field Research Services
Bob McGarry	Information Systems Group
Doug Skipper	GfK Custom Research
Dave Koch	Adapt, Inc.
Lisa Morse	Questar
Bev Koser	
Lori Laflin	State of MN Human Services
Tammie Frost-Norton	
Judy Opstad	Focus Market Research
Darlo Martin	Maritz Research

PUBLICITY 2008-2009	
Patricia Scott, ***Chair***	Field Research Services
Doug Skipper, ***Editor , The Verbatim***	GfK Custom Research
Linda Daniel, ***Bait Box***	Harris Interactive
John Schamber, ***Board Liaison***	MarketLine Research/ In Touch Surveys

MEMBERSHIP 2008-2009	
Robin McDougal, ***Chair***	Maritz Research
Josh Holly, ***Board Liaison***	Satisfaction Management Systems
Valerie Hanson	CJ Olson Research
Deb Connelly	The Research Shop

BIG THANKS TO FIELDWORK MINNEAPOLIS FOR HOSTING
THE MONTHLY PROGRAMMING BREAKFAST MEETINGS!
-Programming Committee

Spotlight on…

FOCUS MARKET RESEARCH
MINNEAPOLIS & PHOENIX

Focus Market Research has over 35 years of experience in recruiting consumers, medical professionals and B2B respondents for Qualitative Research, as well as Taste Tests, Product Placement and Ethnography studies.

Judy Opstad, the founder, started Focus to concentrate on recruiting and to be able to assure her clients the highest standards were in place for their projects. Judy worked as an interviewer and recruiter and also managed staff for Trendex, Frank Magid & Associates and Carmichael Lynch.

Presently Focus has 3 focus rooms at Meridian Crossings (35W and 494) and 1 room with a viewable test kitchen in Edina. The Phoenix location has 3 focus group rooms and test kitchen.

We make every effort to provide our clients with a hospitable, comfortable and professional environment in spacious viewing rooms - providing fresh respondents and no repeaters or cheaters.

As a family owned and managed agency we, along with our experienced staff always have our client's best interests in mind. The Minneapolis office is capably handled by Bob Yoerg and Cindy Uttech - 14 year veterans with Focus - and the Phoenix office is managed by Judy, Ray Opstad and Lincoln Anderson.

FOCUS Market Research INC.
MINNEAPOLIS • SCOTTSDALE

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Complete data processing services
We are experienced in conducting marketing research online. Our staff is passionate about online…all we do is Think Virtual Fieldwork!
For more information or for a custom quote, please email Ray Benack at ray@thinkvirtualfieldwork.com or call 203-354-4544 ext 190.

Minnesota Upper Midwest Chapter

MRA

The Verbatim

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