

# MarketingNews

An illustration of a person in an orange shirt and black pants, bent over and looking through a telescope. The telescope is pointed towards a bright, sunlit landscape with green hills and a blue sky with white clouds. The person is standing in a field of tall grass and wildflowers. The background is a dark blue sky with stylized white clouds and a small black bird flying in the distance.

AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION [AMA.ORG](http://AMA.ORG) SPRING 2021

QUARTERLY

## BETTER MARKETING BETTER WORLD

The industry's  
opportunity  
to sow greener  
pastures



AMERICAN MARKETING  
ASSOCIATION



# Confidence Prepared

Become a Certified  
Digital Marketing Pro

***“The resume with a  
certification will always  
get a call before the  
one without.”***

**Jennifer Bloom**

Marketing, Creative Staffing  
Expert at Eliassen Group

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Digital  
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# The Quest to Do Better

**A**re you fully vaccinated yet? I am, fortunately as are nearly all of my friends and loved ones. Could you have imagined just one year ago that we would have reached this monumentally relieving point in time so soon? The promise of widespread inoculation (at least in the U.S.) has been intoxicating, a powerful manifestation of the miracles of science and human ingenuity, despite many bad actors' best efforts to thwart and confuse.

It may seem trivial at times to consider marketing's place in these proceedings amid the scope of global suffering, but its importance cannot be understated. "[It] has the power to improve lives, sustain livelihoods, strengthen societies and benefit the world at large," we write in the lead-in to our selections from the Journal of Marketing's Better Marketing for a Better World special issue (page 16). It also "has the power to hurt consumers, employees, communities, markets, institutions and the environment that surrounds us."

As the world delicately, cautiously creeps back to some semblance of "normalcy," let this issue serve as a reminder of the power of your work.

## JULIAN ZENG

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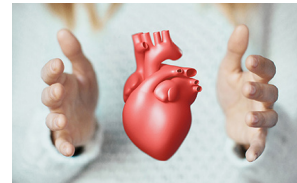
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## MarketingNews

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Even though we may not physically be in the office, our work doesn't stop. Whether it is through a new process or a completely new approach to business, AMA Virtual Training events provide the tools you need to keep your organization moving. We cover a wide variety of marketing topics through interactive instruction to help you make an impact with the work you're doing.

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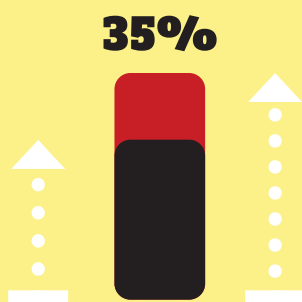


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## The Gradual Return to Normalcy

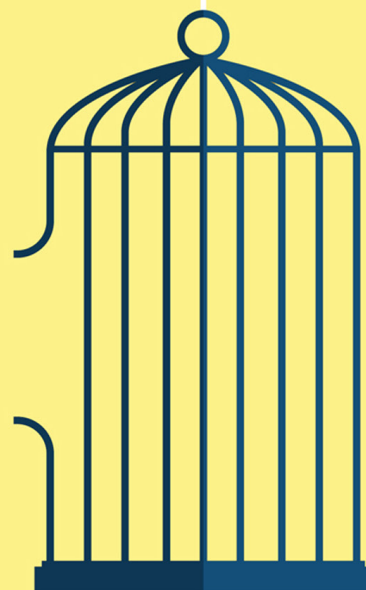
U.S. consumer sentiment insights show positive signs, as economic outlook remains cautiously optimistic and vaccination numbers grow



Overall increase in year-over-year online spend penetration.



About **40%** of U.S. consumers are "consistently optimistic" about the economy.



Just under **15%** remain pessimistic.

**51%**

of consumers plan to splurge or treat themselves.

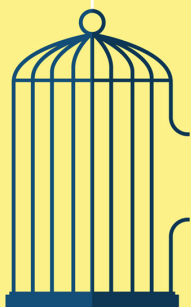


**60% growth** in restaurant/curbside pickup during COVID-19.

**About 50%** expect to continue this practice.

**Around 70-80%** of consumers who accelerated their digital health and wellness engagement say they will continue post-pandemic.

**More than 75%** of Americans have tried a new shopping behavior during the pandemic.



**33%** of fully vaccinated consumers are doing out-of-home activities.

**22%** of those planning on getting vaccinated are resuming activity.



**4 in 10** consumers now buy the majority of their goods on Amazon (increase of **83%** since the start of the pandemic).



**52%** of shoppers now believe Amazon has a positive impact on retail (compared to **45%** a year ago).



**36%** think the company is good for the environment (compared to **26%** in 2020).



**More than 95%** of consumers still believe they should support independent retailers in the wake of COVID-19, but most buy from Amazon instead.

These shoppers cite higher product prices, shipping costs and potential delivery delays as top reasons they prefer Amazon.

In the wake of holiday shipping delays in 2020, **29%** of consumers say they plan to shop more locally.

**15%** say they will shop in person to avoid shipping purchases.







# Lost in Translation

Solving the disconnect between marketing analysts and decision-makers with data translators

BY MARY ANDERSON | MSBA, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Imagine you are a marketing analyst who just spent days wrangling, analyzing and summarizing data to help your company answer critical questions. You present your statistical results and, instead of the “aha” moment you expected, your audience seems unimpressed. You feel frustrated that your insights are not having the impact you expected.

Conversely, imagine you are an executive who continually hears that you need to use data to make marketing decisions. Your marketing analyst is presenting the information you need to move forward with a big investment, but it is a blur of statistical jargon. You feel frustrated and resort to making decisions based on your intuition.

Data analysts and business executives often speak different languages. Their roles and expertise may differ widely, making it difficult to interpret what the other role is saying. But as companies continue to embrace big data

to drive marketing decisions, the different parties need to understand each other.

Data science evangelist Hugo Bowne-Anderson interviewed 35 data scientists to find out what they do and how their job is evolving as demand is rapidly increasing for their skills. He found that the ability to communicate—to answer business questions and explain complex results to a non-technical audience—is becoming more important than the ability to build and use deep-learning infrastructures. Enter the data translator, the person who understands both the technical jargon and the intricacies of marketing strategy and can bridge the gap.

This article explores the importance of data translators and their key skills, comparing the job posts for data analysts relative to the desired traits of a data translator. Although experts say data translators play a critical role in organizations embracing data, my analysis of job postings shows that companies hire for both data scientists and data translators in one role. I argue that given the disparate skill sets of translators compared to data scientists, companies have unrealistic expectations for the role that one person can reasonably be expected to successfully perform.

## What Is a Data Translator?

As more companies embrace a digital transformation, they hire more technically skilled employees such as software engineers, data scientists and analysts. These roles are often characterized as the “quants,” or people who are more number and data-focused. Data analysts play a pivotal role in providing the necessary data for marketing executives

to make informed decisions. However, even the highest quality data will be ignored if the decision-makers can't understand the data. Research has found that "leaders in senior management do not speak the same language as the analysts," according to a 2017 article published in the MIT Sloan Management Review. The disconnect between data analysts and decision-makers leads to frustrated data analysts who feel their data is ignored and that their talents and insights are underutilized. In addition, the disconnect can lead to confused decision-makers who want to make data-driven decisions, but the data they receive is not presented in a language they understand.

Data translators require a unique set of skills in order to understand both the technical aspects of data analyst roles and the nuances of the business and its strategies to correctly interpret and communicate data for decision-makers and data users. The article's authors Chris Brady, Mike Forde and Simon Chadwick created a checklist of seven skills that good data translators will have:

1. Sufficient knowledge of the business to pass the "street cred" test with executive decision-makers.
2. Sufficient analytics knowledge—or a willingness and ability to acquire it—to communicate effectively with the organization's data scientists.
3. The confidence to speak the truth to executives, peers and subordinates.
4. A willingness to search for deeper knowledge about everything.
5. The drive to create both questions and answers in a form others find accessible.
6. An extremely high sense of quality standards and attention to detail.
7. The ability to engage at team or organizational meetings without being asked for input.

Overall, data translators need domain expertise, sufficient technical skills, good communication skills and leadership experience. Seeking data analysts who possess all of these skills, in addition to highly technical skills, is like searching for a unicorn.

If a unicorn cannot be found, one solution is to build out a data science team based on skills needed for the overall team, and then to hire and train employees to fill these roles collectively. "Rather than assign people to roles, define the talents you need to be successful," writes Scott Berinato in Harvard Business Review. "A talent is not a person; it's a skill that one or more people possess. One person may have several talents; three people may be able to handle five talents." This approach allows individuals to highlight their existing skills and talents while relying on the skills of the team as a whole to meet the overall needs of the company. In other words, rather than expecting one individual to possess all the characteristics of a data translator, these

skills are instead dispersed across and throughout the data team collectively.

To create a shared understanding and appreciation for other talents and skills, Berinato suggests that team members take specific actions to understand other roles. For example, data scientists can learn basic design principles to improve data visualizations and designers could learn basic statistics to understand analytical results. This exposure to other skills builds empathy within a team, an important attribute for team effectiveness.

## Job Requirements Data

Given the emphasis experts place on the need for data translators for companies to be successful leveraging data, I was curious to explore how prevalently such a position might be listed on job postings. However, looking at Indeed.com, I found no job postings with the title of data translator and only two job descriptions including the phrases "technical translator" and "analytics translator."

Perhaps companies fill this role internally with someone who steps into the shoes of performing the role of data translator. For example, an existing employee is likely to have domain expertise and could create this role for themselves. Therefore, this role would not be found on job posting websites as it is created organically.

A second explanation for why job postings for data translators are not more prevalent is that perhaps the roles for translators are included in other data scientist positions. For example, a study in the Journal of Information Systems Education analyzed job descriptions for more than 9,000 job postings for entry-level data analytics jobs from 2014 through 2018. Over this five-year span, the authors found significant increases in job postings requiring general statistics, modeling, model development, data management, database systems, business intelligence, programming languages and enterprise systems, as well as for specific software skills or languages, SQL server, Tableau, statistical packages, SAS, R, and Python. The increased requirements are all highly technical, except for Tableau, which can be highly technical but also could indicate an increased demand for creating quality data visualizations. As previously noted, creating compelling data visualizations is a key role of data translators as powerful data visualizations make data digestible to the intended audience.

To discover if companies are hiring for roles similar to a data translator and if communication skills are becoming more important as experts suggest, I looked at job descriptions from Indeed.com for data analysts and various iterations which included domain expert roles such as sales operations analyst, marketing analyst and messaging analyst (for an online messaging company). For each title, I pulled 10 job descriptions. The job descriptions were all



**TABLE 1: The percentage of required and preferred skills for data analyst and operations analyst roles from Indeed.com job descriptions, compared to each of the seven skills of data translators.**

SPECIFIC DATA TRANSLATOR SKILL	DATA ANALYST	OPERATIONS ANALYST
Sufficient analytics knowledge to communicate effectively with the organization’s data scientists.	100%	100%
A willingness to search for deeper knowledge about everything.	86%	90%
Sufficient knowledge of the business to pass the “street cred” test with executive decision-makers — domain expertise.	80%	60%
The confidence to speak the truth to executives, peers and subordinates.	71%	80%
The ability to engage at team or organizational meetings without being asked for input.	86%	40%
An extremely high sense of quality standards and attention to detail.	57%	80%
The drive to create both questions and answers in a form others find accessible.	57%	50%

similar and, even with just 10 descriptions per title, I found strong themes and similarities across the descriptions.

I then compared the job descriptions to the characteristics of data translators. Table 1 summarizes the percentage of how many listings specifically identified data translator skills as either required or preferred for the roles. As expected, 100% of the posts required “sufficient analytical knowledge to communicate effectively” with the organization’s technical scientists.

Additional specific skills that related to the role of a data translator and are frequently mentioned in the job descriptions include collaboration, written and verbal communication skills, and leadership experience, which are mentioned in over 50% of job descriptions.

Overall, these job postings show that both the analyst job descriptions require and prefer the skills of a data translator with a strong emphasis on communication and leadership. Hence, these findings suggest that while the title of “data translator” and concept of “data translation” are not used in job postings, the specific skills of a data translator are key components of job postings for data analysts.

## Conclusion

Companies need someone in the organization to perform the role of a data translator, an individual who possesses specific skills to bridge the gap between the technical and marketing strategy worlds. However, such individuals can be difficult to find. Companies can take a holistic approach to cultivating these skills across the analytics team as a whole. Alternatively, they might create a new position, the data translator, who can perform that role.

Now imagine your company has built out its analytics team based on the overall skills needed to cover both complicated analysis and communication to executives. The analyst discovers critical insights to your marketing executives’ questions, the data translator understands the results and communicates them with effective visualizations and familiar lexicon. The executives now implement change based on these results, reinforcing the value of the data science team to the company. **MN**



## Foundation

The American Marketing Association Foundation (AMAF) champions individual marketers who are making an impact in our profession and community. We recognize marketing visionaries who have elevated the field, and we support the next generation of marketers who will transform the profession.

## 2020 AMA Collegiate Scholarships

The AMA is committed to transforming students into marketers who are good at what they do while doing good in the process — and to ensuring diversity in the profession.

Thanks to our donors' contributions, the AMAF was able to provide 11 scholarships in the categories of Diversity Leadership and Social Impact in 2020.



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## AMA Social Impact Scholarship

### WINNERS:



*First Place:*  
**Isabelle Ivankovich**  
Montana State University

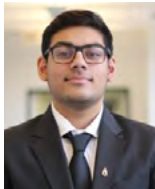


*Second Place:*  
**Meghan Chung**  
University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School



*Third Place:*  
**Natalie Farrell**  
Johns Hopkins University

### *Honorable Mentions:*



**Aahan Mehra**  
Indiana University



**Aidan Oetken**  
University of South Alabama



**Hannah Zanow**  
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

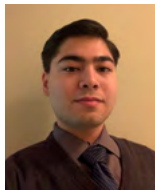
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## AMA Diversity Leadership Scholarship

### WINNERS:



*First Place:*  
**Zion Robinson**  
Texas State University



*Second Place:*  
**Giovonni Colantonio**  
Bowling Green State University



*Third Place:*  
**Molly Anderson**  
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

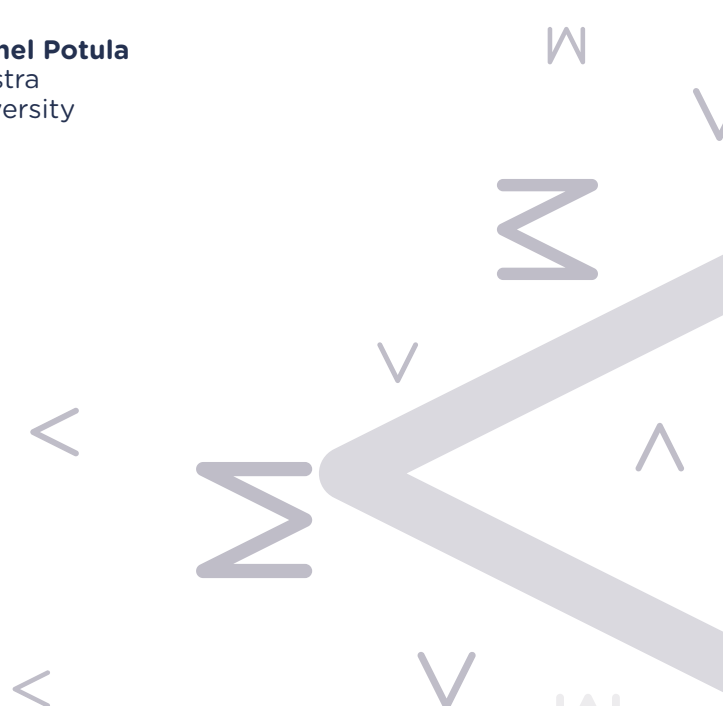
### *Honorable Mentions:*



**Madelyn Myer**  
University of Louisiana at Lafayette



**Rachel Potula**  
Hofstra University



# 2020-2021 Collegiate Chapter Awards

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## Hugh G. Wales Faculty Advisor of the Year

### RECIPIENTS:



*First Place:*  
**Gary Beemer**  
University of  
Tampa



*Second Place:*  
**Chien-Wei  
(Wilson) Lin**  
SUNY Oneonta



*Third Place:*  
**Scot Squires**  
Ferris State  
University

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## Lifetime Achievement Award

### RECIPIENTS:

**Traci Brady**

Salve Regina University

**Ronald Drozdenko**

Western Connecticut State University

**Stephen Ramocki**

Rhode Island College

---

## AMA Collegiate Case Competition

### WINNERS:

*First Place:*

**British Columbia Institute of Technology**

*Second Place:*

**Temple University**

**University of Pennsylvania**

**Western Connecticut State University**

*Third Place:*

**California State Polytechnic University-  
Pomona**

**Indiana University**

**Montana State University**

**University of Nevada-Las Vegas**

**University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire**

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater**

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## Platinum Circle Chapters

### WINNERS:

**Florida International University**

**University of Pennsylvania**

**University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire**

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## International Chapters of the Year

### WINNERS:

**Pennsylvania State University**

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater**

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## Student Marketer of the Year

### WINNERS:

*First Place:*

**Alexandra Ragano**

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

*Second Place:*

**Jared Prevost**

Ferris State University

*Third Place:*

**Avni Gupta**

Indiana University

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## Small Chapter of the Year

### WINNER:

**Western Connecticut State University**

# 2021 Rick Sweeney Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award

This award recognizes and rewards an outstanding professional chapter volunteer whose ongoing contributions have added significantly to the American Marketing Association's goals.



## WINNER:

**Robin Tooms**

AMA Houston

Robin Tooms has spent her 20+-year professional career ascending from creative and design roles, to leading strategy for clients and serving as a virtual CMO, to an in-house CMO for a leading financial institution. As an innovative marketer, she has deep expertise in areas including both retail and B2B, corporate and product branding, digital marketing and marketing automation, and integrated brand and marketing strategies. Over the years, she has gained a reputation for driving initiatives that capture millions of dollars in brand value and new revenue opportunities.

Robin firmly believes that everyone has a responsibility to support the community that helped their personal and professional success. Her mission has been twofold: create awareness and value for our design and marketing communities, and to support the organizations and students that will shape the next generation of professionals. To do this, she regularly volunteers for board and leadership positions with organizations, including over 15 years of volunteering for the American Marketing Association in a variety of roles.

# 2019-2020 Chapter Excellence Awards

The Chapter Excellence Awards program was established in 1974 to recognize and reward outstanding achievements in leadership, finance, membership, programming and communications among AMA professional chapters. The Platinum Club of Continuing Excellence includes recipients of a Chapter Excellence Award for at least five consecutive years.

Congratulations to all Chapter Excellence Awards program entrants who now have a permanent record of their chapter year.

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## **GOLD:** OMAHA CHAPTER

## **BRONZE:** HOUSTON CHAPTER

## **SILVER:** WASHINGTON, DC CHAPTER

## **TURN-IT-UP:** SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER

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### **LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE**

Cincinnati Chapter  
Iowa Chapter  
Triangle Chapter

### **COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE**

Atlanta Chapter  
Iowa Chapter  
Tampa Bay Chapter

### **FINANCE EXCELLENCE**

Baltimore Chapter  
Chicago Chapter  
Nashville Chapter

### **LEADERSHIP SPECIAL MERIT**

Atlanta Chapter  
PDX Chapter  
Richmond Chapter

### **MEMBERSHIP EXCELLENCE**

Austin Chapter  
Charlotte Chapter  
Iowa Chapter

### **FINANCE SPECIAL MERIT**

Cincinnati Chapter  
Pittsburgh Chapter  
Richmond Chapter

### **PROGRAMMING EXCELLENCE**

Austin Chapter  
New York Capital Region Chapter  
PDX Chapter

### **MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL MERIT**

New York Chapter  
PDX Chapter  
Richmond Chapter

### **COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE**

Atlanta Chapter  
Charlotte Chapter  
Chicago Chapter

### **PROGRAMMING SPECIAL MERIT**

New York Chapter  
Triangle Chapter  
Wichita Chapter



## COMMUNICATIONS SPECIAL MERIT

Iowa Chapter  
New York Chapter  
PDX Chapter

## COMMUNITY SPECIAL MERIT

Oklahoma City Chapter  
PDX Chapter  
Richmond Chapter

## RESILIENCE (COVID-19 RESPONSE)

Houston Chapter  
Richmond Chapter  
Washington, DC Chapter

## PLATINUM CLUB OF CONTINUING EXCELLENCE

Atlanta Chapter  
Cincinnati Chapter  
Houston Chapter  
Iowa Chapter  
Oklahoma City Chapter  
Triangle Chapter

# Call for Nominations

Know any outstanding marketers? Honor them for their achievements with an AMA award. Nominations are currently open for:

- » Nonprofit Marketer of the Year - Regional and National  
[ama.marketing/npm21](http://ama.marketing/npm21)
- » Higher Education Marketer of the Year  
[ama.marketing/hemy21](http://ama.marketing/hemy21)
- » AMA Foundation 4 Under 40 Emerging Leaders  
[ama.marketing/4under4021](http://ama.marketing/4under4021)

The background is a stylized illustration. At the top, there are blue and grey clouds. Below them, a large, white, stylized letter 'M' is positioned. The 'M' acts as a frame, showing a landscape with green hills, a blue sky with white clouds, and a body of water. In the foreground, a person wearing an orange long-sleeved shirt and black pants is crouching in a field of tall, green grass with white seed heads. The person is looking through the 'M' frame. There are also some small black birds flying in the sky above the clouds.

# Better Marketing Better World

**M**arketing has the power to improve lives, sustain livelihoods, strengthen societies and benefit the world at large. At the same time, marketing can have a dark side—it has the power to hurt consumers, employees, communities, markets, institutions and the environment that surrounds us.

The *Journal of Marketing's* special issue on Better Marketing for a Better World brings together wide-ranging research to assess, illuminate and debate whether, when and how marketing contributes to a better world. The 14 papers in the special issue address four key topics—sustainability and climate concerns, economic and social empowerment, health and wellbeing, and prosocial giving. The following scholarly insights are just a taste of the issue; for a full list of the articles, go to [AMA.org](http://AMA.org).





# Sustainable Selling on Social

Using social media to drive adoption of sustainable products in emerging markets

BY WANGING ZHANG, PRADEEP CHINTAGUNTA AND  
MANOHAR U. KALWANI

**F**or decades, pesticides have been applied to protect crops and livestock from pest infestations, to increase crop yields and to improve food production. However, pesticides are a double-edged sword and have raised serious concerns about food safety, environmental protection and sprayers' health.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 68 pesticides have been classified as potential carcinogens and every year 200,000 people die because of toxic pesticides. Therefore, promoting the use of safe, sustainable new pesticide technologies is critically needed to preserve ecological security. However, getting a new product adopted, even when it has obvious advantages, is difficult.

A new *Journal of Marketing* study demonstrates that social media can be used to alleviate a major deterrent that hinders the adoption of a new technology: customer uncertainty.

Our research team implemented a field experiment in 34 villages and with more than 700 farmers in rural China to study how customers, especially those in emerging markets and in rural areas, face several types of uncertainty regarding a new eco-friendly pesticide. These include uncertainty regarding the authenticity of the new product and supplier given previous experiences with unscrupulous “fly-by-night” operators (for example, the fake seeds problem in China and India); the “objective” quality of the



product or the “match value” of the product to the potential user; and how to apply the technology to get the best outcomes. Traditional marketing literature has focused on how uncertainty is resolved vis-à-vis objective quality since authenticity is usually not a concern and driving outcomes is typically not an issue in most categories studied. A unique feature of our paper is that the technology and context we consider involves all three types of uncertainty.

We use a randomized control field experiment to measure the causal effects of marketing tools in changing behaviors. Our experiment was launched in three rural areas in two provinces in China, lasting from April 2017 to August 2018. First, we spent time “in the field” to understand users’ production processes with the new technology, the obstacles encountered, and how users make decisions given limited access to information and other constraints. With this knowledge, we designed a field experiment to quantify the effects of alternative information sources and marketing tools, including a social media platform, online influencers and traditional customer service in the adoption process.

Our findings provide insights for managers and policymakers who aim to leverage marketing to accomplish social goals. To do good, marketers need to convince consumers to adopt products that are good. An important barrier to such adoption is overcoming the uncertainties associated with the product and the difficulties learning about the features and benefits of the product.

**According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 68 pesticides have been classified as potential carcinogens and every year 200,000 people die because of toxic pesticides. Therefore, promoting the use of safe, sustainable new pesticide technologies is critically needed to preserve ecological security. However, getting a new product adopted, even when it has obvious advantages, is difficult.**



We address these issues by understanding the entire process of adoption. When a product is brand new, encouraging trial behavior among prospective users is key. During this stage, overcoming uncertainty about whether the new product is authentic or not is paramount. We document that an influencer, albeit one not familiar with the new technology, works well in an online social media environment to encourage followers to try the new product. In addition, traditional firm-initiated customized service and support has a significant effect in motivating trial behavior.

Both of these approaches also lead to improved outcomes in the adoption stage but via different routes. On the social media platform, the ability to exchange information between the product adopters and information broadcasted by the firm promotes learning about specific product benefits and the best ways to use it. The more traditional marketing approach also accomplishes these objectives, but via one-on-one communication between the firm and the potential customer. For marketing to do good, it needs to scale effectively. The social media platform with an influencer wins here because it is more cost-efficient than one-on-one marketing by the firm.

Our results also suggest that practitioners should think carefully about how to use social media most efficiently. Although research has documented its use for changing consumer behavior, it is not a panacea and requires careful management. Specifically, at the trial stage of the funnel we see the platform underperforming because it cannot, by itself, resolve uncertainty regarding supplier credibility and product authenticity. Thus, creating an online social media platform does not guarantee the peer effects as desired.

We offer a solution to this funnel-holdup problem: having an influencer who can vouch for the credibility of the product and who tries out the product and reports it on the platform. We find that the presence of an influencer creates an effective and product-relevant online interaction environment which can foster more active online social learning among participants in the platform. However, the use of social media alone is only beneficial to people who have a high intrinsic value for the new product. **MN**





# Do Marketers Matter for Entrepreneurs?

A Uganda-set study seeks to reveal the effects volunteer marketers have on entrepreneurs in emerging markets

BY STEPHEN J. ANDERSON, PRADEEP CHINTAGUNTA, FRANK GERMANN AND NAUFEL VILCASSIM

**C**an marketers help improve the world? While this question may seem vast and unknowable, a new *Journal of Marketing* study proposes otherwise. Exploring a critical, yet largely unaddressed research question, our team proposes that marketers can help entrepreneurs in emerging markets grow their businesses. And flourishing entrepreneurs in these markets can then improve lives, sustain livelihoods, enhance overall living standards and strengthen societies.

Entrepreneurs are ubiquitous in emerging markets. In 2010, more than 31% of the adult population in Uganda, the setting for our study, was either starting a business or running a business less than four years old. However, many emerging market entrepreneurs struggle to make ends meet and their firms' growth rates are low, stifling the positive impact they could have on society. As authors Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo assert in "Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty," the



low growth rates seem to result from most businesses being “utterly undifferentiated” and failing to attract customer interest.

Marketing helps firms differentiate by attempting to answer the question, “Why should the customer buy from the firm and not elsewhere?” Thus, we examine whether entrepreneurs in emerging markets can benefit from marketers’ help.

To test marketers’ effect on emerging market entrepreneurs, we conducted a randomized, controlled field experiment with 930 Ugandan businesses. The experiment allowed us to examine the impact of a business support intervention in which international professionals from varying functional backgrounds, such as marketing or consulting, volunteered time to help small-scale entrepreneurs.

Our results show that volunteer marketers are effective at helping entrepreneurs grow sales, profits, assets and employees. Specifically, compared to control firms, the entrepreneurs supported by volunteer marketers grew monthly sales by 51.7% on average, while their monthly profits improved by 35.8%, total assets increased by 31%, and paid employees rose by 23.8%. An analysis of interactions between volunteers and entrepreneurs indicates that the marketers spent more time on product-related topics than other volunteers during the intervention.

Furthermore, analyses indicate that the marketers helped the entrepreneurs focus on premium products to differentiate in the marketplace. In line with the study’s process evidence, firms with greater market knowledge

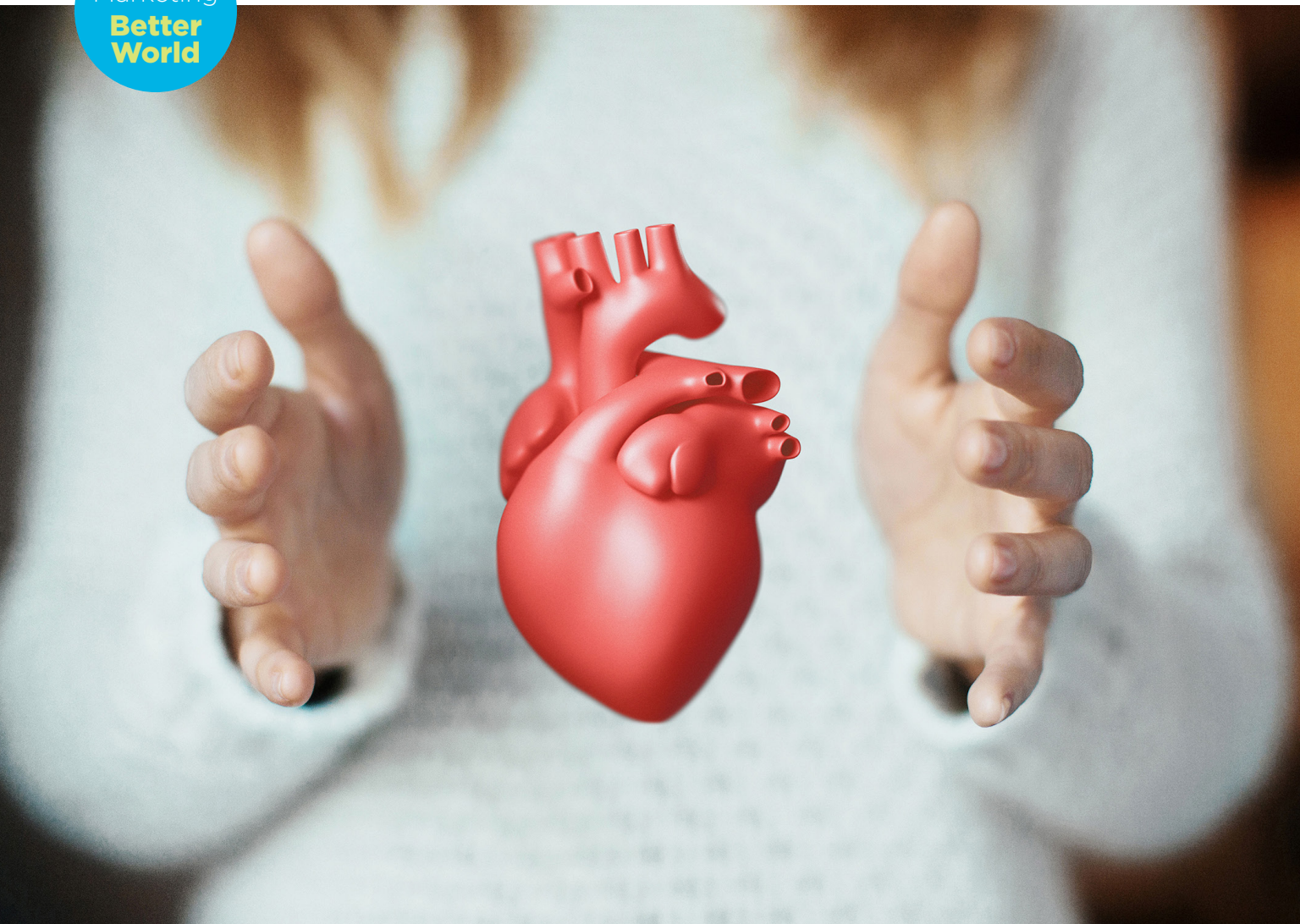
or resource availability benefitted significantly more than their peers when matched with volunteer marketers. Because small-scale businesses form the commercial backbone of most emerging markets, their performance and development are critically important. And marketers’ positive impact on the businesses highlights the need for the field’s increased presence in emerging markets.

Given the positive and direct impact marketers can have on growth outcomes, we hope our study will motivate marketing practitioners to work with entrepreneurs and early-stage ventures in emerging markets. Governmental and non-governmental organizations actively serving emerging markets should also benefit from our findings when designing and implementing future business support services. Entrepreneurs should also take note of our findings and solicit marketers’ help.

Finally, we hope business schools will incorporate versions of our “remote coaching” intervention into their emerging market programs with a focus on matching entrepreneurs with their marketing students. We also hope multinationals will participate in future remote marketing coaching interventions like ours. In short, we envision multinationals allowing and enabling their interested marketers to spend a few hours a week remotely coaching an emerging market entrepreneur. This endeavor, we believe, could be a win-win for the entrepreneurs and the multinationals: The entrepreneurs’ businesses would likely grow and the multinationals would likely have more satisfied employees, accrue corporate social responsibility-related benefits, and learn about opportunities (and threats) that exist in emerging markets. **MN**

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## Helping Anyone with a Pulse

A simple, no-cost way to increase organ donor registrations

BY NICOLE ROBITAILLE, NINA MAZAR, CLAIRE I. TSAI, AVERY M. HAVIV AND ELIZABETH HARDY

**C**urrent statistics on organ donation point to an ever-increasing demand, yet inadequate supply of available donors. For example, in the United States, there are more than 113,000 individuals currently on the

transplant waiting list and 22 people die each day waiting. And the gap between those needing transplants and those receiving them continues to widen.

With thousands currently waiting for organ transplants, the need for donors is urgent. One way to address the ever-growing demand is to increase the number of individuals registered to donate. While the vast majority of people support organ donation, many do not take the steps to register.

A new *Journal of Marketing* study tests a simple, no-cost intervention that can double registration rates, thus helping communities gradually increase the number of prospective donors.

Low registration rates are especially common in countries with explicit consent registration policies—that is, individuals must opt in to become organ donors—compared to countries with presumed consent policies—where individuals are organ donors by default but can opt out. Although some suggest changing the default may be a





promising intervention, the impact on actual donations has been mixed due to, among other things, uncertainties about a deceased person's donation preferences.

Furthermore, changing registration policies involves implementation challenges and ethical considerations surrounding informed consent. To date, most jurisdictions have maintained their existing policies, thus prompting the question: What can be done within explicit consent systems to improve organ donor registration rates? Prior research provides us with a good understanding of predictors of organ donation attitudes and intentions, yet little is known about how to increase actual registrations.

To address these limitations, our research team conducted a field experiment in the Province of Ontario, Canada to test behavioral marketing interventions targeting information and altruistic motives in an effort to increase new organ donor registrations in a prompted choice context. We supported our interventions with improvements to streamline the registration process (i.e., intercepting customers at the time of decision, handing out promotional materials upon arrival for customers to consider while waiting) and increase the salience of our interventions (i.e., created a simplified form printed on cardstock with colored accents).

Our paper contributes to the limited evidence for low-cost and scalable solutions to increase organ donor registrations within the current explicit consent systems.

Our field experiment demonstrates how intercepting customers with promotional materials at the right time (an information brochure and perspective-taking prompts), along with other process improvements, can increase new organ donor registrations. Specifically, we find that our best-performing intervention, prompting perspective-taking through reciprocal altruism ("If you needed a transplant would you have one? If so, please help save lives and register today.") significantly increased actual registration rates from 4.1% in the control condition to 7.4%, an 80% increase.

We were able to do so without imposing on the freedom of individuals, raising ethical concerns (i.e., changing defaults), or passing new legislation. To illustrate the potential impact of our findings, assuming that everything held constant over time and we introduced our best performing intervention (reciprocal altruism) together with our process and design improvements Ontario-wide, we could expect roughly 225,000 additional new registrations annually. Given that one donor can save up to eight lives, and enhance 75 others, such an increase could make a meaningful impact on the lives of many.

By leveraging behavioral science to design our interventions, we contribute to understanding how to reduce the intention-action gap in the context of organ donation, improve public policy and enhance social welfare. **MN**



# The Benefits of a Nurtured Giving Tree

How nonprofits can drive more giving from their current donor base

BY SUNGJIN KIM, SACHIN GUPTA AND CLARENCE LEE

Individual philanthropy is the primary funding source for many nonprofit organizations. A major challenge facing such organizations is the volatility of individual giving: Nearly half of newly acquired donors only give once. Because of this instability, nonprofits strive to increase repeat giving by individuals as well as to identify and retain donors who are more committed.

A new study in the *Journal of Marketing* explores the challenges and opportunities with nonprofit fundraising to provide organizations with strategies they can use to increase sustainable giving and profitability. To this end, our research team worked with a large, successful nonprofit organization that conducts research and outreach related to an animal species and engages with more than 100,000 individual givers each year. The organization structures individual giving in two different forms: donations and memberships.

One reason for members to give is the benefits they receive, depending on the membership tier, which range from a quarterly magazine to exclusive guided tours and online courses. By contrast, donors do not receive any benefits from the nonprofit in return for their donation and

give largely because of a “warm glow” (i.e., the good feeling that comes from giving) and tax deductions.

Using detailed data provided by the nonprofit, we studied the behaviors of first-time givers in the U.S. over five years and obtained several insights about fundraising. First, the two forms of giving attract different kinds of individuals. For instance, donors were more likely to be women, while members were more likely to be men. Second, during the five-year period, over half of the individuals transitioned to becoming multi-form givers. That is, those who started out as members added donation to their giving portfolio and those who started out as donors added membership as another form of giving.

These “member-donors” were especially important to the nonprofit: They gave more each year than those who gave in a single form and gave more frequently. Thus, multiple options for giving served as a pathway to engage more committed givers over time. Third, we found that appeals sent by the organization tended to primarily increase the likelihood of repeat donations or membership renewal, but not the amount given. Fourth, while lapsed donors were likely to donate again even when two years had passed since their last donation, lapsed members were positively disposed to renewing even three years after their last renewal. This insight can guide the nonprofits efforts to bring back lapsed givers.

In addition, we developed a predictive model that can help identify individuals who are more likely to become member-donors in the future, based on their characteristics and past giving patterns. Once identified, the nonprofit can focus on nurturing longer-term relationships with them.

Collectively, the data-driven insights we derived can help nonprofits develop strategies to structure their giving options better, retain givers for longer, and target their marketing resources on more committed individuals. The net impact of these strategies is to make fundraising more effective, implying that a larger share of every dollar raised goes to serve the organization's mission rather than to fundraising efforts. **MN**



# Deepening Brand Experience Opportunities in Our Strange New World

Times of change present opportunities for change. Don't miss your moment.

BY BEN JURA | ASSOCIATE CREATIVE DIRECTOR, SNAPDRAGON

**A**s the saying goes, “Life has never been this fast before, and it will never be this slow again.” In an era where entire market paradigms continue to be up-ended by a global pandemic, throwing into question the nature of basic interpersonal relationships—let alone consumer relationships with brands—this notion is as relevant as ever. When the future is uncertain, the best you can do is position yourself in a way that serves you best across the range of possible futures. Times of change present the best opportunity for change, and there is no better place to start than with how you think about brand experience.

## Human Experience First

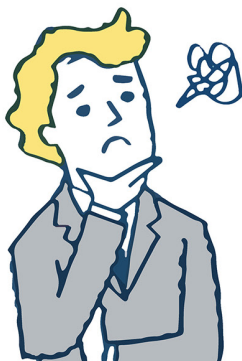
More than a year into a global pandemic, volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity remain extremely

high. Even the foundational assumptions brands could previously make about relationships, the structure of work and education, or the physical organization of our space on a societal level are thrown into question as we look to the next 3-5 years. Your approach to positioning your brand for the future might take many forms. But no matter how you think about the future, it is clear that putting humans and their long-term experiences at the center of your brand's model of the world is a smart and generally effective way of ensuring your place in an unknown, unknowable future.

In reality, as hard as it is to operationalize a human-centric approach to the way your organization is run and your brand manifests itself, investing in these as foundational values has been proven to have significant returns—especially when done in an economic downturn. Vision gained from investigation of consumer behaviors that transcend the day-to-day can be a counter to volatility. Collaboration beyond individuals' functional expertise can result in understanding that balances uncertainty. Clarity derived from consumer insights highlights which strategic initiatives to explore or evolve, and serves to counteract complexity. And a start-small approach with a focus on behavioral outcomes and rapid evolution can help to institutionalize agility as a counter to ambiguity.

## What Comes Next?

How do we move from here to there? The common existing paradigm is that brands are able to segment their approach into narrow specialized initiatives that would limit stress and investment by transferring the responsibility of designing interactions to agencies with deep knowledge in their area. In theory, the best group to understand a target's social media interaction is a team of social media experts who could infinitely subdivide your target, tactics or areas of focus. But this leads us to a trap created by the analogical reasoning that is so easy to fall into after continued success in a narrow area. It colors and influences the way that we approach a problem and limits the tools that we can bring



to bear in solving it. People approach problems from the standpoint of their own experiences. So digital marketers think about experience through the lens of digital—distinct from the way an advertising agency or management strategy consultant might think about experience.

However, when the foundational question of how a brand ought to be experienced is baked into the company writ large, it allows for experience strategy to radiate out to all initiatives across categories. This becomes a natural extension of brand value rather than something to try to infuse into tactics post hoc. Brand experience should not be different depending on one's point of contact with the brand and needs to be unified and consistent. The best way to ensure this is to make the consideration of brand experience a core part of the culture of your organization. This can be done without significant pain or expense.

## The Approach

Start by setting an aspirational target aligned with the brand promise. It doesn't take too much—a couple of executive workshops, for example—to align on the goal of being more human-centric and to set a target, benchmarks and timeline for achieving it. Often, making this decision to be deliberately focused is enough to kick-start people to think in this new way. Define a value-driven experience aspiration and link it to an expected behavior change. This link between desired behavior and financials changes the conversation because the focus shifts to which experiences will lead to the desired behavior—and create the desired value—even as needs evolve.

Next, create a sense of what success looks like. Build momentum by launching a lighthouse project where it would be possible to show results with minimal investment. These small successes can create excitement and support for subsequent projects. The learnings from these preliminary, low-investment projects can help to prove out processes and can be quickly scaled up across multiple experiences until one becomes the model throughout the enterprise.

Last, work to integrate consumer insights into your approach to begin building a database of information. Once this database grows a bit, it can be used to guide investment strategies, identify trends and psychographic profiles, and help to shape the choices about how and where the brand can evolve as the data shows changes in behavior over time. This data serves to identify opportunities and validate past initiatives by tracking how actions and attitudes evolve beyond just NPS (net promoter scores) and other cursory superficial measures.

Take Starbucks, a brand-experience-driven organization whose initiatives revolve around people and their behaviors. After a change in focus away from experiences, revenue dropped nearly 30% in two years. In 2008, Starbucks shifted back to an experience focus. This priority was enshrined in their new mission, “To inspire and nurture the human spirit—one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time.” Since then, Starbucks has used brand localization to assimilate the aesthetic and attitudes of its stores to different geographies. The company has responded to constantly changing behaviors around convenience by adapting its drive-thru experience and innovating on its digital rewards program, while creating upscale Reserve Roasteries for customers not prioritizing convenience. As a result of its loyal core, Starbucks can easily pilot new programs addressing different attitudes—think “My Starbucks Idea” and more recently gamifying its digital experience with Bonus Star Bingo promotions, allowing loyalty members to play games and earn points toward purchases.

Brands can learn from Starbucks and use every single audience channel and touchpoint as an opportunity to engage, excite and entangle to build affinity and advocacy. All it takes is an organizational priority to discover and prioritize the points where an audience's desires and a brand's goals intersect. If you want to be remembered, be memorable. If you want to become a valuable part of people's lives, be memorable in consistent, brand-appropriate ways across a range of touchpoints so that each element or aspect eventually triggers a reference to the entirety of the brand and its values beyond what currently exists. **MN**



# Inspiration Metrics

How to measure design without killing it

BY JENNIFER MURTELL | VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGY - ASIA PACIFIC, MARKS

**M**easuring the success of design can feel like two radically different, but not mutually exclusive, experiences. On one hand, it can feel a bit like sorcery: mysterious, risky and totally unpredictable. At the same time, it can feel like a widget assembly line: calculated, dull and safe, often with little reward. In many organizations, this cycle can hinder breakthrough thinking and innovation.

To make effective decisions, we need to balance the chaos with the predictable by finding ways to inspire great work and mitigate risk. So how do we harness and measure the power of design, without snuffing out the “magic” that makes breakthrough ideas take hold? How do we effectively lead innovation into the future, without taking a blind leap?

## Building in Confidence: Lead and Lag Thinking

The answer lies in the balance of leading and lagging indicators, and in knowing what each can do to unleash more powerful design solutions. Weaving the right balance of inspiration, intelligence and validation into the design process creates outcomes that are efficient and prolific.

Leading indicators help us understand the consumer, category and culture. This kind of insight work acts as a compass—it enables design teams to navigate the challenge and keeps them pointed true north. If we are missing meaningful, timely and actionable insights in any of these areas, we need to examine how our business strategy can be realized with an incomplete picture. Brands can't thrive in a vacuum of consumer, category or cultural context, and design starved of meaningful inspiration will, more often than not, fall flat.

Lagging indicators help us to validate the well-informed hypotheses we have asserted in our design work. If the leading indicators are robust, this validation is a pleasure to experience, because the work hits both strategic and executional bullseyes. Learning can then be focused on optimization of what we already know, instead of holding our breath to find out things we should have known before we began.



## Leading Indicators: Identify and Focus the Challenge

Consumers can't tell us what the future looks like, but they can tell us what their lives look like, and how we fit into it (or don't). Early ethnography or other qualitative insights work goes beyond demographic realities: Their unique worldview creates a powerful lens through which we can inspire and motivate. It helps us understand and tap into their ever-evolving needs and barriers more meaningfully. If you haven't refreshed your segmentation or consumer target intelligence in 18-24 months, you're overdue to hear from them. Consumer insight work doesn't have to be expensive or time-consuming—neither is it a zero-sum game. If budget is tight, scaling your insights approach can target gaps in your intelligence without derailing the job to be done or overspending.

## Leading Indicators: Accurately Inspire Effective Work

Category and cultural intelligence is equally important. Without understanding the trends that drive category evolution, the future is difficult to see. Without understanding the emergent visual language that fuels these

trends, we won't be speaking in a language that inspires or responds to consumer needs and desires.

Design semiotics is a powerful way to uncover this fertile ground, building relevance and longevity into your brand expression. Though the term "semiotics" sounds complex and expensive, it's actually quite simple. Think of it as a competitive audit of newness. What niche brands are tipping into popular culture? What design trends are they instigating? In regions driving the most innovation, what emergent design language is manifesting? What new meaning spaces can we tap into?

### Lagging Indicators: Validate Your Early Decisions

Quantitative or hybrid methodologies can be a great way to validate design decisions, if the work has been informed in a relevant way. When leading intelligence is strong, design strategies become inspired, prolific and inevitable. Testing them quantitatively can feel like a win, and even produce multiple "winners." The key to great quantitative outcomes is to focus learning objectives on the business strategy that drove the change. Ensure focus on the meaningful and actionable, avoiding subjective "Do you like it?" lines of inquiry or data collection.

Loyal consumers who observe the change with a little confusion or discomfort is inevitable—the meaningful inquiry lies in what the change means to them, despite their discomfort. If the design resonates with new growth targets and doesn't cue a tangible negative change with loyals, we have created a successful solution.

### Lagging Indicators Can Focus Optimization Quickly

Smart, effective design testing allows for easy optimization of design solutions, because the strategic guardrails on the visual landscape have already been established. With this confidence, feedback from quantitative research becomes highly actionable and clear.

For example, if we:

- Know how important immersive sensory language is to our new target (consumer);
- Understand what the emergent sensory language—the semiotics—looks like (category);
- Educate ourselves in the sociocultural trends that drive this category shift (culture); and
- Design the quantitative test to measure sensory immersion attributes (focus),

then we will know definitively what levers to push or pull to take a design from good to great. Whatever your business strategies are trying to achieve, ensure that

you're customizing your research for success against those specific, focused objectives. If design testing is directing you to go back to the drawing board, you simply haven't informed the work with enough leading indicators.

### Leading: Informing & Inspiring Your Design

- *Do* learn from consumers early, qualitatively, to create a more nuanced, robust and holistic understanding of how your product, service or brand fits into their lives.
- *Do* look at the emergent future of your category, especially through the lens of visual language (or semiotics), including areas like visual whitespace opportunities.
- *Don't* react to broad generational insights as a replacement for speaking with consumers.

### Lagging: Validating and Optimizing Your Design

- *Do* test with new consumers who don't currently use your product or brand, whether new to the category or loyal to the competition—these consumers will provide you the best read on receptivity, traction and growth into the future.
- *Do* meticulously focus your learning objectives on the business strategy, particularly in customizing quant frameworks. This allows you to jump over the speed bump of "difference" (see above) as a metric and focus on actionable optimization.
- *Don't* test exclusively with your loyal fans. There are myriad reasons for this, but primary among them is familiarity—change is uncomfortable. This information isn't relevant (change was the point), it's not actionable in-and-of-itself, and most importantly it sows the emotional seeds of fear and risk.

### Benefits of Balance

A robust intelligence phase that informs key consumer, category and cultural insight is crucial, and provides the guardrails for effective and inspirational design solutions. It also allows quantitative validation to perform optimally, doing the right job at the right phase in the process. If we allow our teams to solve design problems with all the intelligence they need, with a full and well-rounded toolbox, validation becomes more valuable and more meaningful. It creates a playbook for designers to execute with excellence, early and proactively, instead of reacting to unexpected research results late in the game.

Working this way builds confidence, consensus and rich intelligence along the way—but most importantly, it creates prolific design outcomes that win. **MM**

