



Research Solutions for

2015

Driving brand success

future
thinking

Stay ahead in 2015



Technology and innovation continue to play a pivotal role in the way we develop new approaches and research solutions to help better understand consumers and drive brand success. With growing economic convergence across the globe, a slowing world economy, rapid advancements in technology and transportation, brands need to innovate to maintain growth at a global level.

We spend time looking at new developments in technology and scientific thinking to find better ways of understanding consumers so that clients can make better business decisions.

We've identified 10 areas of research which we believe will be integral to brand success over 2015; from brand tracking to NPD, testing ideas to generating new ones and measuring satisfaction to understanding behaviours.

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Wearable technology & enhanced mobile ethnography



Mobile ethnography is designed to link consumer attitudes to their actual behaviour. There are a variety of technologies available utilising a range of mobile devices; from GoPro style cameras, field of vision glasses to Google Glass, all helping to capture a visual diary of consumer life.

The technologies allow consumers to carry on with their everyday activities living in the moment, enabling you to track where they go, what they do and what they are exposed to, without interference and importantly without the presence of an interviewer.

It's the role of smart wearable devices, which are increasingly unobtrusive in their nature that offer greatest potential to researchers.

Google Glass is definitely the most talked about and will surely see a range of apps being developed with a research angle. All solutions offer hands free research with glasses technology having the distinct advantage in that they will provide a 'real line of sight' recording. And going forwards Google Glass which also encompasses Bluetooth, WI-FI and GPS functionality has the potential to offer interactive research opportunities.



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Location derived audiences & behavioural segmentation



The rise of mobile technology has led to the creation and availability of a wealth of privacy compliant public and commercial data sources focussed on locations and people. This data has the ability to provide researchers and marketers with huge volumes of information, where it offers targeting and analytical uses, generated through mobile activity.

Processing this data can help establish the home location of the mobile device and can be layered with additional demographic and socio-economic classification data, applied at postcode level. In addition, this data has the additional potential to be overlaid with social media and transactional data, such as loyalty card data.

Location isn't just about where people are,
but also where they've been.

Audience segmentation can help you
understand behaviours and influence
decisions throughout the customer's lifecycle

By aggregating and processing tens of thousands of geo-located data sources a range of analytical techniques can then be used to create consumer segments and build profiles. These can be based on both home and non-home locations that the mobile device has visited.

Potential uses include:

- Understanding the types of customers spending time at a particular location, using broad demographics and behavioural segments to then tailor propositions and/or advertising to the audience.
- Identify behaviour by locations – understand customer loyalty to a particular retailer, identify the frequency with which a customer segment undertake a particular activity.
- Understand people by device – by identifying those exposed to comms, measure mobile campaign effectiveness to understand the impact on brand as well as call to action.

Tracking customer journeys:

With Beacon & Raspberry Pi technology



Location-based messaging has become increasingly prevalent as retailers target shopper journeys. Content sent directly to smartphones via apps and the use of Beacon technology enable retailers to personalise direct messages with promotions and/or discount codes, with the hope of maximising engagement and revenues.

Beacon technology also presents an opportunity to track customer journeys, enabling you to truly understand visitor experiences. Tracking customer journeys can lead to insights you simply can't find using other methods and these can also be combined with exit interviews to give you a quantitative read.

Beacon technology can be used to:

- Understand the customer journey
- Gather general purchasing behaviour, including key methods of information gathering
- Identify key drivers of the decision making process
- Ascertain perceptions of the retailer and key competitors

For brands interested in the customer relationship, with location-based advertising or call to action, Beacon research can also include shopping or usage behaviour, store or venue experience, brand and advertising awareness and brand usage.

Using Beacons in situ coupled with Raspberry Pi technology enables you to create customer journey heat maps. Heat maps are great for analysing behaviour. The insights they provide can greatly increase conversion rates. This method also allows you to understand traffic levels in specific areas that link directly to location-based advertising or call to action.



In addition, fly through videos of the 'typical customer journey' can be created using data collected from the beacons, which provide key stakeholders with a real life view of how customers navigate the store or venue.



Understanding brand influencers



How do you understand your brand's performance in terms of consumer awareness, association and equity? In recent years new technologies have radically changed the way we as consumers engage with brands, connecting via ever increasing numbers of touchpoints. Combined with a two way dialogue consumers now engage with brands more directly than ever before.

Brand tracking plays an essential role in measuring the strength and engagement with your brand and is fundamental to the creation of a strategy to influence consumers and track performance over time.

Understanding the core audience of influencers who are engaged with your brand is a vital part of this process. Identifying those consumers who are highly engaged and who connect through multiple touchpoints (those brand advocates) is vital to disseminating brand messaging.

BrandBox our bespoke brand tracking tool has labelled these consumers as Connectors. Understanding what they say and how they interact with your brand, helps you to map out how to engage with and influence them. It helps to highlight drivers of brand equity and how brands compare on a competitive level, providing you with clear strategic direction on where investment is needed to challenge rivals and drive business success.



Connectors: The key influencers for your brand. Identify those key advocates for the category.

Multiplatform marcomms evaluation



Measuring, evaluating and predicting advertising campaign effectiveness is increasingly complex as media usage fragments. In a multiplatform world, consumers are now bombarded with brand messages across all forms of media; from TV spots and sponsorship, to mobile, social media and online.

Brands need to be able to identify, measure and understand how different media are consumed, how they contribute towards brand values, and additionally how each media channel used in a multiplatform campaign has made on overall campaign awareness.

Interactive models can help evaluate a multiplatform campaign and the impact of each media channel on overall campaign awareness and key brand metrics. They provide a complete understanding of which elements a brand should adjust in a current multiplatform advertising campaign or where to re-allocate spend for future campaigns to maximise ROI.

Campaign Optimiser 2.0 enables you to (a) Input spend per platform to see which over or under index comparative to spend, or (b) Alter spend or % spend per platform to see how things would have turned out differently with a different media outlay.



Campaign Optimiser 2.0 measures how a campaign has performed and how each media platform used contributes. It can also help to predict best multimedia strategies moving forward

Creating the perfect product



Creating the perfect product by identifying unmet consumer needs or a gap in the market is what we all aspire to, but the reality is usually less utopian.

The need to innovate is generated from a range of needs, whether its utilising new technologies or existing capabilities. For marketers it presents a potentially time consuming and costly challenge of “reverse engineering” a proposition, by retrospectively developing a game changing product that will capture the hearts and minds of the target audience.

Getting consumers to try products with no written or verbal instructions gives them the freedom to decide usage occasion and can play an integral part in formulating the perfect product solution. Combining quantitative interviews to get a robust measure and utilising technology through mobile devices helps consumers to capture in the moment experiences using video, audio, photos and text.

By consuming or using products and evaluating them at the time/occasion that the consumer feels is right can help identify usage occasion and identify motivational language. By utilising the application of system 1 subconscious approaches it can also identify what consumers believe are the core product benefits. Combined with sales forecasting the research findings can help to fully understand the opportunity for the brand, category and the potential for retailer growth.



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Understanding the connected consumer

The march of all things digital is creating an increasingly dynamic path to purchase. What was once a linear journey, where a simple call to action was enough to encourage consumer buy-in and purchase; is now a complex web of advertising, communications and special offers, delivered directly to the connected consumer.

Today's shoppers are enticed by the opportunity to shop anywhere, any time and on any device and there is a need to minimise disconnect between online and in-store. They want flexibility to shop across all channels and switch channels at any point in their journey.

For marketers, with this increasing number of online and offline touchpoints to understand and influence, capturing the complexities of all types of customers, missions and retailer formats in the moment of purchase, is crucial to developing an Omnichannel strategy.

Key questions require consideration; are all channels of equal importance – which channel should be prioritised? Are there new or emerging channels that can be utilised to make gains in new markets? How can new channels be used to build brand awareness and loyalty?



Embracing an Omnichannel offering presents new challenges, as well as a multitude of opportunities, for retailers and brand owners alike

Implicit decision making



Timed Emotional Response helps to understand consumer decision making by identifying unconscious influences on our seemingly rational decisions. To get a quick and basic understanding of implicit response please [click here](#); it may just get you thinking.

Measuring implicit decision making is now widely used across the research industry across an increasingly broad remit. Known as Timed Emotional Response (TER) it provides a greater understanding of perceptions across a range of research needs: from brand packaging, measuring and understanding advertising effectiveness of sponsorship campaigns, as well as brand tracking.

Technology is key to its implementation. By measuring the length of time taken to respond to stimuli as well as the response itself, a more implicit measure of consumer perception can be gained. TER uses specially designed survey software which is simply incorporated into online surveys to measure response times to the millisecond and give an understanding of which answers are automatic and which are rationalised.



In addition the role of user response based facial recognition is now gaining momentum within research. Through the use of a web camera respondent's facial expressions are tracked to record key emotional states in real-time. It can be used to help understand consumer's reactions to an advert, video creative or animated visual. It delivers an implicit understanding of each second of the concept by capturing people's engagement and emotions through moment by moment analysis. It captures what people really feel and enable you to optimise any aspect of a creative.

Richness of qual throughout



As highlighted technology has enabled new and innovative qualitative approaches to come into their own in recent years. From mobile ethnographic techniques (think mobile devices) or online communities they have all helped add a richness to research findings and to get closer to understanding consumer behaviour.

The line between qual and quant is increasingly blurred as these techniques are increasingly adapted and scaled up to provide large scale data collection opportunities.

Whilst quantitative research will focus on measurement and testing, qual is all about strategic understanding and direction. Understanding people, from the lives they lead to their mind-sets and interpreting what they say and what they mean helps to identify key nuggets of information from which great findings and insight is made.



A range of more recent and tried and tested techniques continue to be used alongside quantitative techniques to great effect:

Ideation days - the perfect approach for stimulating innovative ideas and new thinking to address a specific problem for a brand or funnelling of innovation opportunities.

Online communities and bulletin boards - creating safe environments for participants to fully engage openly and honestly in a truly flexible setting - regardless of scale or length of study they enable clients to observe customer interaction.

Video analysis tools - takes in video and matches it to transcript, allowing a large database of searchable video material to be searched and the relevant video snippets to be retrieved/spliced automatically.

Playground Monitors – part of our new kids and family research offer, Monitors are our very own panel of kids' experts drawn from a range of disciplines, including: teachers, media consultants and psychologists who provide an external authority on projects.

Data The Movie:

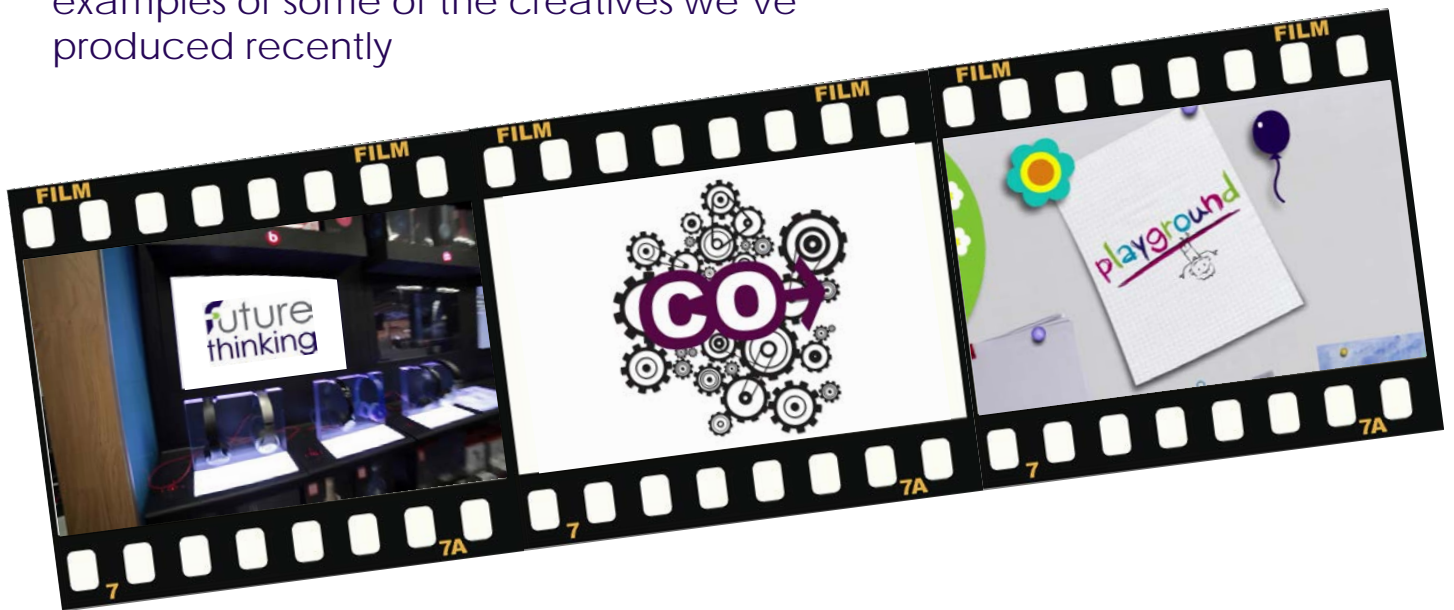
Maximising the role of video for data visualisation

As highlighted in 2014 there is no excuse for dull research findings. Research needs to inform stakeholders, delivering actionable recommendations, not just in the insight teams but across the wider business as well.

A key element of reporting is to provide visually stimulating and engaging content. As seen with a plethora of new research solutions, technology is now instrumental in delivering research findings that can be easily interpreted, saving time and energy, from the use of simple dashboards, and interactive portals to Prezi and infographics.

In addition, the use of video is now also being used more and more to bring research to life by delivering inspirational findings to time-pressured clients. As well as being visually engaging it provides an opportunity to increase understanding and retention of key messages, and drive stakeholder engagement for time poor clients.

Click on the images to view just a few examples of some of the creatives we've produced recently



About us



Julian Kenway

As Commercial Director, Julian heads up the Business Development, Client Relations and Marketing functions Commercial Director at Future Thinking. He has 16 years' experience in the research world, having specialised mainly in strategic global projects, particularly in emerging markets. Julian is now helping to drive the ambitious growth plans at Future Thinking and take the company to the next stage of its development.

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To help capture the current 'explosion' of new ideas in the market research world and to keep our creative juices flowing we developed our in-house think tank, Quantum Lab. It enables us to provide a range of customised approaches and new research solutions that deliver state of the art thinking tailored to our client's needs.

www.futurethinking.com/quantum-lab



Future Thinking is distinctive rather than different. Our toolkit may bear the hallmarks of other research agencies but we are dedicated to delivering a singularly characteristic blend of intellect and commercial awareness that ensures clients think, feel and do differently.

With combined industry experience of over 40 years and offices in the UK and Europe, Future Thinking provide genuine research expertise and understanding across a wide range of industry sectors. Dedicated teams across the business, with a mix of agency and client side experience, ensure we remain at the forefront of innovative thinking, advanced technology and analytical expertise.

For more information about the company please contact John Whittaker, Head of Marketing on +44 (0) 1865 336 400 or at john.whittaker@futurethinking.com

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