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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**GLOBAL:** You’ll never complain again about challenges in qualitative research after reading this fascinating article about the birth of qualitative research in Iraq.

**SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT:** What can comedians like Louis C.K. teach us about being insightful? A lot, as it turns out. See how comedians uncover deep insights and how that can inspire techniques that qualitative researchers can use.

**BUSINESS MATTERS:** Internet Marketing can help you to expand your business reach to new prospects and customers—with very little effort. Learn how to lay out a plan to tell customers about your business and come up in search engine results.

**TRENDS:** Our keynote speaker at the 2016 QRCA Worldwide Conference in Vienna was so outstanding that her message bears repeating in this issue of *QRCA VIEWS* magazine. Tamira Snell, Senior Advisor and Futurist at the Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies, addresses ways to “navigate the future” in the persistent realities of “uncertainty.”

---

### I Want Comedian Louis C.K. on My Research Team!

**SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT:**

Comedians like Louis C.K. can teach us about being insightful. They uncover deep insights and inspire techniques that qualitative researchers can use.

---

### How to Get the Benefits of Internet Marketing Without the Abuse

**BUSINESS MATTERS:**

Internet Marketing can expand your business reach to new prospects and customers with little effort. Learn how to lay out a plan to tell customers about your business and come up in search engine results.

---

### Mega Trends and Their Implications on the Future

**TRENDS:**

Our keynote speaker at the 2016 QRCA Worldwide Conference in Vienna was so outstanding that her message bears repeating in this issue of *QRCA VIEWS* magazine. She addresses ways to “navigate the future” in the persistent realities of “uncertainty.”

---

### Focus Groups Amid Suicide Bombers: Qualitative Research in a War Zone

**GLOBAL:**

You’ll never complain again about challenges in qualitative research after reading this fascinating article about the birth of qualitative research in Iraq.

---

### 18

**Focus Groups Amid Suicide Bombers: Qualitative Research in a War Zone**

---

### 14

**I Want Comedian Louis C.K. on My Research Team!**

**SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT:**

What can comedians like Louis C.K. teach us about being insightful? A lot, as it turns out. See how comedians uncover deep insights and how that can inspire techniques that qualitative researchers can use.

---

### 28

**How to Get the Benefits of Internet Marketing Without the Abuse**

**BUSINESS MATTERS:**

Internet Marketing can help you to expand your business reach to new prospects and customers—with very little effort. Learn how to lay out a plan to tell customers about your business and come up in search engine results.

---

### 46

**Mega Trends and Their Implications on the Future**

**TRENDS:**

Our keynote speaker at the 2016 QRCA Worldwide Conference in Vienna was so outstanding that her message bears repeating in this issue of *QRCA VIEWS* magazine. She addresses ways to “navigate the future” in the persistent realities of “uncertainty.”
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

54 CHECK OUT OUR NEWEST PODCAST
Michael Carlon interviews Jennifer Golbeck from the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland about social media and its role in the future of Qualitative Research.

55 FOUR NEW BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK REVIEW: Yes, And: How Improvisation Reverses “No, But” Thinking and Improves Creativity and Collaboration—Lessons from The Second City will show you why introducing improvisation and an ensemble way of thinking will lead to better ideas and a happier, more productive work environment.

BOOK REVIEW: The Next America provides a data-rich portrait of where we are headed as a nation as we move toward a future marked by the most striking social, racial, and economic shifts the country has seen in over a century.

BOOK REVIEW: Cool: How the Brain’s Hidden Quest for Cool Drives Our Economy and Shapes Our World explores the sociological, biological, and psychological underpinnings behind how the concept of “cool” emerged as a rebel instinct in the mid 20th century and how it has evolved into a force for social progress.

BOOK REVIEW: Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World provides an engaging blueprint on how to spark and successfully implement “original” and creative thinking in both your personal and professional life.

8 FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

10 FROM THE PRESIDENT

13 INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

QRCA VIEWS
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

24 STRAIGHT OUTTA LA: ALL THE PLACES YOU MUST SEE IN THE CITY OF ANGELS
TRAVEL WISE: Los Angeles is the destination city for the 2017 QRCA Annual Conference, January 18-20. To help us prepare, a Los Angeles resident shares her insights on why the city is an amazing destination and recommends activities and restaurants to try during your visit.

32 USING QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS TO MANAGE CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP RESEARCH
TOOLBOX: The most valuable insights and feedback often come from a variety of sources like video, audio, surveys, transcripts, or social media. Collecting, normalizing, and analyzing this data is labor intensive and time consuming. Researchers today can leverage powerful Qualitative Data Analysis technology to manage mixed methods data analysis.

38 9 TIPS FOR REMOTE USABILITY STUDIES
TOOLBOX: A how-to guide for moderating remote usability testing, with step-by-step instructions for running a successful project.

42 INTEGRATING FACIAL CODING INTO YOUR NEXT QUALITATIVE PROJECT
TOOLBOX: Neuroscience is rapidly gaining traction in the industry, as researchers continue to seek deeper insights into consumer emotions and behaviors. Pioneers Bob Granito and Peter Hartzbech discuss integrating facial coding into your next qualitative project.

50 GOING BEYOND THE SLIDE: ACCESSING THE POWER OF POWERPOINT
TECH TALK: PowerPoint is being used more and more for report writing, desktop publishing, website development, graphic design, and more. This review of some powerful features in PowerPoint will help you to enhance your qualitative research reports and presentations.
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Both Sides Of The Coin

We have a wonderful issue of QRCA VIEWS this quarter! This issue of QRCA VIEWS is like a coin in that it has two basic sides, two different themes that seem to tie our articles together. On one hand we have the theme of “High Ideas”, several articles that delve into deep themes and trends and ideas that can shape your thinking, from how to conduct focus groups in a war-torn country to learning how to be a better qualitative researcher from stand-up comedians. On the other hand we have the theme of “Practical Ideas”, several articles that deliver hands-on, roll-up-your-sleeves, practical tips and steps and walk-throughs for using advanced qualitative research tools and running your business. All good stuff.

Our Global column, as featured on the cover, is a somber yet fascinating journey through the dangers and cultural challenges of inventing qualitative research from the ground up in a country torn apart by war, as recounted by Steven Moore. This is an article you absolutely will not want to put down, and I bet you will run some of these revelations around in your head for quite a while after.

In Trends, Tamira Snell discusses how mega trends provide a solid framework for identifying and mapping out the driving forces that will shape our world and everyday lives. And our Schools of Thought column is where Claire Booth explains that she wants comedian Louis C.K. on her research team because to be a comedian is to be insightful, and Louis does it better than anyone with his secret weapon, vulnerability.

And now for the other side of the coin, the nuts-and-bolts, pragmatic articles that you can begin using tomorrow to be more valuable to your clients and employers. In Business Matters, Gabriella Donivan shows business owners how to reach new prospects and customers through Internet Marketing while avoiding some of the pitfalls you could encounter along the way. In Tech Talk, you can learn how to use PowerPoint not only to enhance your client presentations but for generating reports and easily involve clients with video, audio, and web presentations, as explained by Ricardo Lopéz.

Our Toolbox section is always chock-full of hands-on helpful advice, and this issue’s trio of articles is no exception. Hilary Bienstock provides nine specific tips for successful remote usability studies, including when respondents use mobile phone and tablet devices. Our Tech Talk Feature Editor, Kay Corry Aubrey, walks us through ways to use qualitative data analysis tools to build a customer journey map and integrate insights from mountains of unstructured digital data. And, explore how facial coding tools are adding new layers of insights in qualitative research. Bob Granito and Peter Hartzbech show you how these tools can be used even if you don’t understand the “science” behind facial coding.

In Travel Wise, Jinghuan Liu Tervalon takes us on a spirited preview of the neighborhoods, restaurants, and experiences to be found in Los Angeles, location of the 2017 QRCA Annual Conference, coming up January 18-20.

Our quartet of Book Reviews will expand your mind even further. Christina Nathanson reviews Yes, And by Kelly Leonard and Tom Yorton, which shows how principals of improvisational comedy can improve idea generation and collaboration within corporate cultures. Susan Fader gives an overview of Originals by Adam Grant, which provides a blueprint for being a successful “original” thinker. And, we round out Book Reviews with two contributions from a mother-daughter team, with Carolyn Marconi reviewing The Next America by Paul Taylor, which uses data to show how demographic trends are poised to completely change the face of the America of the past, and Elizabeth Marconi delving into Cool by Steven Quartz and Anette Asp, an exploration of just what “cool” is, how it has evolved over the years, and what the next trends in “cool” will be.

Lastly give your eyes a rest and put your ears to work with our newest Podcast featuring Jennifer Golbeck, author of our last issue’s Schools Of Thought column, in an interview about how she feels social media data will enhance rather than replace the standard arsenal of qualitative research tools and methods. Give it a listen!
QRCA Is Leading the Conversation in Qualitative Research

Market research has changed dramatically and quickly in the past decade, and so has the role of the Qualitative Consultant. It is no secret that companies often seek guidance from branding agencies, platform providers, strategic consultants, field agencies, quantitative research houses, trend bloggers, academic professionals, and the list goes on. QRCA members, with their commitment to continual education and new product and services development, are the perfect consultative partners. QRCA members provide the reliability, commitment, and fresh thinking you and your company need. The consulting services our members provide are more valuable and sought after than ever before.

QRCA is a collective of international leaders in the field. We talk, publish, craft policies, share ideas, and create an annual educational conference so our members can move all industries forward. Come and meet our members at the 31st Annual QRCA Conference, January 18-20 in Los Angeles, California. This conference is open to everyone on the provider side who specializes in the design, conduct, analysis, and/or instruction of primary qualitative research. We welcome brand consulting firms, independent consultants, academics, product development professionals, etc. As long as your primary role and interest is in qualitative research, you are in! So come join in the conversation with us this January. Visit www.qrca.org to learn more.

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I Want Comedian Louis C.K. on My Research Team!
I had an aha moment walking out of a Jerry Seinfeld show in Las Vegas. As I headed down the stairs from the balcony, wiping my eyes still laughing, I realized I hadn’t just been entertained by Jerry, I’d learned something as well. About myself and about others around me. Our laughter was a shared recognition of ourselves in his jokes, and I suddenly understood that the reason Jerry is so good is that he is insightful.

As marketers, we researchers deal in insights. What does Jerry Seinfeld know that we don’t? He hasn’t done any surveys or focus groups to learn about our habits or buying patterns, yet he was able to get the audience laughing about behaviors we all had in common. How did he do it? My curiosity led to about a year of exploration on comedians. I watched comedy specials, attended comedy festivals, listened to lots of comedy podcasts, and even interviewed comedians. I quickly learned that at the heart of a good joke is a good insight. Comedians, like researchers, want to get to the truth. In fact, many of my interviewees told me they got into comedy because they felt a need to express truth. I’ve learned that provoking truth through jokes is what gives the craft of comedy real meaning.

Louis C.K.—Viewed as the Most Insightful Comedian

No one is doing this better right now than comedian Louis C.K. Louis is the writer, director, and star of the Emmy-winning FX show, Louie. He sold out Madison Square Garden for an unprecedented four nights in a row and gave the world Horace and Pete, a genre-defying television program that he wrote, directed, and even distributed.

One of the questions I asked my interviewees was, “Which comedian do you think is the most insightful?” Most of the comedians I interviewed nominated C.K. as the chief comedic truth-teller. As one described C.K.’s style, “He has the conversations we have in our head—out loud.” As a comedian, C.K. has a platform to show us what we are thinking (consciously or often subconsciously). As we recognize our own thoughts in his material, we are surprised, delighted, and often relieved to hear someone else, someone highly respected, to show us a mirror. Our surprise, delight, and relief trigger our laughter. “It’s not just me who thinks that!” we say to ourselves.

So how does C.K. get into our heads that way? And what can we as researchers learn from him? I think one of the key things that sets C.K. apart is that he is willing to make himself vulnerable. He is willing to share his own subconscious thoughts because he knows that, by virtue of being human, we share many of those same thoughts. We just don’t know we are thinking them until he points it out. The surprise of recognition and subsequent connection we feel are what powers our laughter.

Through my research, I was surprised to learn that comedians use words like “insecure” and “needy” to describe themselves. I had always thought comedians seemed so confident, so self-assured—they can withstand the dead rooms and the heckling. They must be incredibly sure of themselves! Turns out most aren’t. In fact, many well-known comedians, and many of my interviewees, come from difficult childhoods and grew to recognize that humor gave them a voice and the laughter gave them a hug. They were able to find
One of the key things that sets C.K. apart is that he is willing to make himself vulnerable. He is willing to share his own subconscious thoughts because he knows that, by virtue of being human, we share many of those same thoughts.

their voice and make a noticeable impact on others, and this was intoxicating. But it was all powered through their insecurity. In fact, without that insecurity, they never would have had their comedic success. They know how to mine insecurity and vulnerability for insights to create their jokes.

One of C.K.’s best bits is his daughter asking him, “Why?” “Why can’t we go outside?” she asks. “Because it’s raining,” Louis says. “Why?” she asks. “Well, because water’s coming out of the sky,” Louis says. “Why?” she asks and continues to ask until Louie quickly finds himself in very murky territory—he can’t answer his daughter’s questions because, he realizes, “I don’t know any more things.” Watch the clip here, skipping to the 7-minute mark: qrca.org/VIEWS-017. In trying to answer why after why after why, the absurdity of life itself becomes obvious, “Why?” she asks. “Because you can’t have nothing isn’t and everything is!” he yells. It is a very funny and powerful joke because when you peel back enough layers, the fear and confusion that we all have within is laid bare.

Many of C.K.’s funniest bits come when he is making fun of technology. He is well aware that we are addicted to our phones because we use them as shields when we don’t want to engage with anyone, as escapes when we’re bored, or simply when we’re lonely and need to feel wanted. But he goes deeper than that. He knows we are using our phones to sometimes fill that emptiness that we all, by virtue of being a human being, share. He admonishes us, through his jokes, to put our phones away sometimes and have a real human interaction. As he says in this joke, “You need to build an ability to just be yourself and not be doing some-

A great exercise to encourage participants to make themselves vulnerable is the “Five Whys.” As most of our thought process happens in the subconscious, moderators know we usually can’t take participants’ first answer. Rather, we encourage them to go a little deeper through laddering. In the “Five Whys”—participants record their first answer, ask themselves why again, record their second answer, and so on. The group resumes discussing the “Fifth Why,” which can be quite an emotional endeavor for some.

Another great exercise to allow people to be a little more vulnerable is the tried and true “think, feel, say” exercise. In this exercise, participants are given a figure of a person with three thought bubbles. One bubble points to the person’s head, and the participants are asked to jot down what they think the person might be thinking. Another bubble points to their heart, and participants note what the person might be feeling. A third bubble points to the person’s mouth, and participants write down how the person would express him/herself. Just completing this exercise in and of itself shows participants that what we feel, what we think, and what we say can be quite different. It is “proof” that what is felt vs. what is said is important to talk about.

Embracing our vulnerability and having those private conversations out loud is a powerful way to make an authentic connection with our participants. Encouraging our participants to make themselves vulnerable will help us get to the insights and truth. In the meantime, I’m going to keep watching Louis C.K. as he unpacks the human condition and gives us lots of insights and laughs in the process.
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When Saddam Hussein’s statue fell in Firdos Square in May of 2003, thousands of American civilians poured into Baghdad to oversee the country’s reconstruction and help guide Iraq to a political system where the Iraqi people had a voice in their government.

The civilian organization was named the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and set up operations in central Baghdad in one of Saddam’s presidential palaces. This area became known as the Green Zone. It was the locus of most international activities and where the “occupiers” lived and worked, well secured behind multiple layers of heavily guarded blast walls.

In July 2003, I opened the Baghdad office for an international NGO (non-governmental organization) that works with political activists in emerging democracies to educate them on the technical aspects of how elections and governance work. My office, which doubled as my home, was in the Red Zone, where most Baghdadis lived.

Our district, Karrada, was across the Tigris River from the Green Zone. I went shopping in the open-air market. I ate shwarma at sidewalk cafes. I took taxis to meetings. Most importantly, I was one of the few members of the international community regularly talking to Iraqis.

With so little contact, the Iraqis didn’t know what the Americans were doing in Iraq, and the Americans had no idea what the Iraqis were thinking about them being there. The disconnect between what was
One night I was in the Green Zone sitting on the roof of Saddam's palace drinking beer with one of my colleagues, who also lived outside the Green Zone. There was little entertainment inside the Green Zone, and the roof provided a good view of much of Baghdad. We began eavesdropping on another group of roof-sitters. They were pointing at Karrada saying things like, “Look, you can see signs of economic activity,” in much the same way a marine biologist might point into an aquarium and describe the feeding behaviors of sea anemones. Of course, the very theoretical “economic activity” to which they were pointing was the market where I had picked up a really tasty batch of figs the day before. We asked them what they did in Iraq. “Military intelligence,” was the answer.

Having seen many James Bond movies, I thought military intelligence was gleaning information about the structure of terrorist organizations and tracking jihadi using sophisticated electronics. And maybe they were. But military intelligence, and the CPA more broadly, were lacking basic information about what was happening in the everyday life of common Iraqis—information that did not require 007 but only a focus group. This is the context of the world into which the qualitative research industry in Iraq was born.

I spent weeks in the Green Zone pitching a qualitative research program to anyone who would listen. While many mid-level functionaries in the CPA didn’t want to let facts on the ground interfere with their spinning of ideological fantasies, a few at the top recognized that lack of information was impeding their ability to be effective.

Ambassador Paul Bremer was the civilian in charge of the CPA. One of his top aides had been lured out of retirement from the State Department. During his career, this aide had used public opinion research extensively to forward the objectives of U.S. diplomacy. Now, in the biggest gig of his career, he was getting his decision-making information from Wolf Blitzer, Tom Brokaw, and occasional chats with the Iraqi custodians sweeping the floor.

With Bremer’s influence, my organization was authorized and funded to con-
duct focus groups throughout Iraq. Clearing the considerable American bureaucracy was only the first hurdle. As it turns out, we faced numerous methodological hurdles.

Public opinion research was not something anyone had ever done in Iraq. For decades, only one opinion mattered—Saddam’s. How would common Iraqis react, after decades of oppression, to someone asking their opinion on political matters? Iraqis were raised not knowing who might be an informant or what they might say that would get them tortured and imprisoned. Would Iraqis be comfortable giving their opinion in a group of strangers?

The UN had used the Canal Hotel as their compound since the 1990s. UN officials prided themselves that Iraqis could come and go from the building with ease, as opposed to the multi-layered security at the Green Zone. I stopped by one day to pick up some maps. The day after my visit I turned on CNN to see that a suicide bomber had parked a truck filled with explosives next to the building, near the map room, and detonated it. The nice ladies who helped me find my maps were likely dead. This attack ruled out opening an office with a fixed focus group facility. How would we adhere to methodological rigor in selecting participants and at the same time keep our participants and staff safe?

We decided to use snowball sampling to select our focus group participants. In addition to it being the most suitable methodology, I liked the poetry of using snowballs in the desert. Focus groups were so foreign to Iraq that we even had to come up with an Arabic phrase for “focus groups.”

The Bedouins of the Middle East have a saying: “Me against my brother; me and my brother against my cousin; me, my brothers and my cousin against the world.” This simple phrase gives a lot of insight into the Middle East in a number of ways, but in this instance, it shows how difficult recruiting for focus groups can be.

If you hire one recruiter and tell him to bring 15 people for a focus group and you will pay them each $20, every participant he brings will be from his family. If you hire two recruiters, you get two families. There is no way around this.

For our first focus groups, we used six recruiters to bring in eight people each, half women and half men. We then held hour-long mock focus groups to assess which of the participants had an opinion and weren’t afraid to express it cogently. Those who participated well in the mock focus groups were then asked to stay for the actual focus group. This method had the dual purpose of selecting safe, quality participants and giving our inexperienced moderators additional training.

In a patriarchal society like Iraq’s, it is not surprising we got the best results by dividing the groups by gender. What was unexpected is how gender impacted our choice of moderator. Certainly I could not moderate the focus groups myself. Aside from my inability to communicate in Arabic, an American in the room would completely bias the participants. The moderator needed to be Iraqi, but who?

Our first moderator was a university professor who had studied public opinion research his entire career but had obviously never conducted a survey or focus

“Each time we got a dozen Iraqi strangers in a room to be recorded talking about their daily experiences and political opinions, it was a victory.”
our professor did not have the needed skill set, I tried a 27-year-old Iraqi woman in a hijab, the Islamic headscarf.

In an attempt to anticipate negative reactions, our young female moderator might encounter from the group participants, we devised a rather complex set of ground rules. We explained that within the context of the focus groups, the way in which people interacted would be different from outside the focus groups. In Iraqi society, it would be impolite to cut someone off when they were speaking, but in the focus groups, our moderator would sometimes have to do that in order to make sure everyone's opinion was represented in the time we had available. We gave the participants an opportunity to leave if they did not feel comfortable with the arrangement. It worked well, and we began using younger moderators for all our groups.

While this framework was the best one we came up with, it was not without its problems. Our moderators were sometimes threatened by participants for asking questions about American figures. Sometimes there would be tension when Sunni participants assumed the moderator to be Shi'a, or vice versa.

In fact, we were running into methodological and logistical challenges as quickly as we could solve them. Getting women to attend a mysterious meeting with a group of strangers away from their home was difficult under the best of circumstances. Sometimes we would find out that an office building or restaurant we were using for a set of groups was associated with a particular militia or political party, thus skewing recruitment or biasing responses. On occasion the electricity would fail during a session. A car bomb nearby might delay respondents' arrival. A militia might shut down the neighborhood.

As with focus groups anywhere, the groups would sometimes get taken over by a strong personality. In Iraq, it was usually on the basis of religion. During a focus group in Najaf, a center of the Shi'a religion, we were asking about the upcoming Iraqi elections and what might sway the participants' opinions on how to vote. The room

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**The first of our young focus group moderators.**

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**The welcome sign for NGO workers arriving at Baghdad International Airport circa July 2003.**

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**After Saddam fell, Iraqis felt more comfortable expressing their opinions. This protest outside the Green Zone was staged by the Union of the Unemployed. I always wondered, what happens if their demands are not met—do they go on strike?**

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**Here I am joining in the celebration of Saddam's capture. I like to say I am one of the few public opinion researchers who can take apart an AK-47 and put it back together again.**
had ten men, nine of whom were in Western attire and one who was dressed more traditionally. When we asked if religious leaders would influence their vote, the men in Western attire said “no,” and the man in traditional attire said “yes.” Coincidentally, our moderator, still inexperienced, had to leave the room to ask a methodological question. In the five minutes she was gone, the man in traditional dress had pressured the rest into saying that religious leaders would influence their vote. Being able to watch a religious Iraqi influence the group was excellent insight into how influential religious leaders might be in an election.

In political qualitative research, the facts of the environment can change rapidly. But until a focus group in Basra in December 2003, I had never had the facts change during a focus group. We were asking a group of women about how the capture of Saddam Hussein might change their attitude toward security. Iraqis weren’t completely sure Saddam was really gone. Security was at the top of everyone’s minds at that time; automatic weapons were just part of the daily soundtrack of life in Iraq. But during the focus group we began to notice that the usual background chatter of gunfire had begun to increase in frequency, although it didn’t sound like a firefight. Shortly, we learned that Saddam had indeed been captured and the gunfire was celebratory. We halted the focus group and joined the celebration.

Getting opinions from women was a constant struggle. A focus group in Diyala provided a breakthrough in this regard. Our moderator asked, “Please tell me your opinion about the current situation in Iraq, what you like and what you dislike?” One of the participants was a custodian at the Diyala city hall. When it was her turn to answer, she said, “Same as what others said.” The moderator asked her why she said that, and she replied, “Because they are more educated than me and they know better than I do, therefore I agree with their opinion.” The moderator followed up by asking her what she did for a living, whether she was married, did she have kids, was she responsible for raising her kids and financially supporting her family. To each question, she answered passionately and enthusiastically, “Yes, of course!”

The moderator went on to say, “Your opinion is valuable. You are here to represent women your age, with your experience and your level of education, who have gone through the same challenges in life, who are dutiful wives and courageous mothers. You are their voice.” The moderator then asked her again what she liked and disliked about the current situation in Iraq. This time she answered eloquently, in a sophisticated manner with tears in her eyes.

None of these groups would be written up in an academic journal for methodological excellence. But each time we got a dozen Iraqi strangers in a room to be recorded talking about their daily experiences and political opinions, it was a victory.

I had conducted hundreds of focus groups and scores of surveys in Russia after the fall of the Berlin wall, Bali in the aftermath of the 2002 terrorist attacks, newly independent East Timor, and Romania after the dictator Ceausescu had been executed after a kangaroo court hearing. While all the focus groups I’ve conducted have been about political forces shaping our lives, very few could be credited with actually saving lives. By better understanding the motivations of Iraqis, the Coalition Forces were able to change their policies to lessen friction between Coalition soldiers and the Iraqi people, saving lives among both. This says a lot about our profession.
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- Maryanne Livia, President, RRU Research

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— Cory, Ministry of Culture

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STRAIGHT OUTTA LA:
ALL THE PLACES YOU MUST SEE IN THE CITY OF ANGELS
(Site of the 2017 QRCA Annual Conference January 18-20)
People in LA never run out of topics to talk about: the traffic, the drought, the hot new restaurants, the Lakers, the celebrities they saw last night, the homeless people on the street… Los Angeles is known for its diverse residents, innovative business environment, dynamic culture, and unashamed consumerism. If you live here long enough, you learn to refer to the freeways in a certain way, the 10, the 405, the 2. If you’re adventurous enough, it’s likely you have a good mix of friends with various ethnic backgrounds and have enjoyed the authentic and even esoteric cuisines LA has to offer.

I couldn’t have been happier to learn that the QRCA Annual Conference is coming to LA in January 2017! January is one of the best times to visit the city—warm enough to walk comfortably around in just one layer of clothes and after the holiday craze has dissipated.

**Why Los Angeles Is Awesome**

The Los Angeles metro area is home to 13 million people. Because of its Spanish roots and location, LA has diversity in its genes: the people, the landscape, the culture, and the food. If your instincts tell you LA is more than Hollywood, Beverly Hills, and Rodeo Drive, you are definitely right. Pockets of neighborhoods and subcultures collide to create the breeding grounds for new ideas and movements.

Downtown LA (now with a cool acronym, DTLA) is the epicenter of an emerging hipster culture and art scene, home to both Skid Row and posh condo developments side by side. Chinatown and Japan Town are all part of DTLA, and Korea Town is nearby, where you can shop for the best and freshest produce at any Korean supermarket at an amazing price and enjoy a boba tea to your liking.

The West Side is crowded with beach-going people, part of which is now adequately named “the Silicon Beach.” Did you know Snapchat’s headquarters is in Venice Beach, where you might have only pictured hoverboards on beach strands? If you go up north, Santa Monica is home to more established tech giants like Google and Yahoo. Pure Barre Studios are everywhere in this part of a very health- and appearance-conscious town. It’s also a place where you can get an $8 juice to cleanse yourself of all the impurities in your body.

Driving up north on the Pacific Coast Highway, you’ll find yourself in Malibu. Known for its natural beauty and tranquility, many movie stars choose to live there. The family-friendly beaches are usually packed 10 months a year. But if you choose to avoid the crowd, hiking up the trails might be what you want to do: the Zuma Canyon Trail, Malibu Bluffs, and Solstice Canyon are all good options.

Venturing out east, you’ll encounter Pasadena, a gem of a city nestled only 20 minutes from downtown. It’s often described as the most sophisticated mid-sized American city for its arts and crafts movement, a well-educated population (think Cal Tech, JPL, and the Art Center), stunning architecture, numerous theaters, art galleries, private schools and, of course, the spectacular annual Rose Parade. If you go down south, you’ll be in the heart of the San Gabriel Valley, where you can savor all types of Chinese cuisine, from provinces you’ve probably never heard of.

If you want to try out some of the best restaurants in LA, West Hollywood is a great place to visit. Nobu, Lucques, Osteria Mozza, Ink, and Night+Market are all there. But don’t take the city simply as a hedonist capital. It prides itself as a creative metropolis and hosts a year-round WeHo Reads series that includes a banned book week and a literary panel event in October. You cannot see all of Los Angeles in one weekend. Or a week. So where should you start?

**What to Do in Los Angeles**

Get out of your hotel and embark on a walking architectural tour of DTLA

Our Conference venue, the JW Marriott Hotel, can be the perfect starting point for a walking architectural tour of downtown. See a mix of modern, art deco, Spanish, and Renaissance styles: the Los Angeles Public Library, the Bradbury, City Hall, the Parker Center, the Biltmore Hotel, the US Bank Tour, the Union Station, the Walt Disney Concert Hall, and the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. The Los Angeles Conservancy leads several different themed walking tours on Saturdays. If you prefer something informal, walk with your QRCA buddies and colleagues in the morning before you start your learning and networking for the day. You’ll be amazed at what you see!

**Take a selfie with the Hollywood sign at the Griffith Observatory**

So you want to show your friends you just visited LA? What’s a better way than taking a selfie against the Hollywood sign? The best place to do so is at the Griffith Observatory. Driving up winding Vermont Avenue and Vermont Canyon Road, your view will gradually open up—you’ll see beyond the Kaiser hospital nearby, and more of the city landscape. On top of the hill, just outside the observatory, the Hollywood sign will be in sight.

While you are there, head into the observatory. If you’re into astronomy or cosmology or have a curious young child who wants to know about the theory of everything, watch a live show at Samuel Oschin Planetarium. The digital projection system with the dome will make
“Los Angeles is a beautiful, delicious artichoke with many surprising layers.”

you feel like you’re watching a 3D movie and moving through space, all while educating yourself about the universe and life’s origins (it will likely make you a bit dizzy, too!). It’s also worth mentioning that Nicholas Ray shot several famous scenes for Rebel Without A Cause right here at the observatory.

For the brave and energetic, park your car at the bottom of the hill on Los Feliz Boulevard and hike up to the observatory.

Visit the Broad Museum in DTLA or the Huntington in Pasadena

The Broad Museum, an art collection from billionaire philanthropist Eli Broad, opened its doors to the public last September. This contemporary art museum is a must-see if you are into Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons, and Barbara Kruger. Just be sure to reserve your free tickets early, before you come to LA. If time permits, you might also want to check out the LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art) next door.

The Huntington Museum and Gardens in Pasadena is a library, art museum, and botanical garden. If you have children with you, or if you prefer to spend a day strolling in a beautiful rose garden with a chance to sip tea, this is a great choice. See the intricately designed Chinese and Japanese gardens, explore the exotic tropical and desert plants, and view the works from American Impressionism all in one day. Tickets are required.

Shop and Dine in Santa Monica

The Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica is one of the most popular shopping destinations in LA, and you can find most of the big retailers here, from Athleta and Anthropologie to Zara. In addition, the QRCA conference might coincide with the Dine LA Restaurant Week (usually mid to late January), where you can get a prix-fixe lunch and dinner at some of the city’s best restaurants. You can find a list of restaurants participating on the City of Santa Monica website. Walk or drive to the Santa Monica Pier to see the ocean and ride on the Ferris wheel afterward… You’ll fall in love with the city.

Buy a Book at the Last Book Store

As its name properly suggests, the Last Book Store is one of the few independent bookstores left in the city. Located on Spring and 5th Street in DTLA, it sells both new and used books along with records. It also hosts readings and open mics regularly. Going there is an event in itself. You’re sure to enjoy walking around in what used to be a bank, with vaulted ceilings. For book lovers and collectors, it’s heaven on earth.

Run a Race

If you are staying in LA throughout the weekend, consider running a half marathon in Pasadena on January 22, 2017. A reincarnation of the Pasadena Rock n Roll, the race starts and ends at the Rose Bowl—a perfect opportunity to see the best parts of Pasadena. You’ll climb up Orange Grove from California to Colorado, which will be challenging, but the last mile is an easy downhill run.

Epicurists’ Heaven—What to Eat in Los Angeles

Nickel Diner: a well-run, down-home American diner in the heart of DTLA. If you like comfort food, breakfast food or have a sweet tooth, you can’t go wrong with this place. Maple bacon donut, anyone?

Grand Central Market is a hip open market on Broadway. It has a long history, but the most recent renovation has made it a foodie’s destination in LA. You can buy fresh fruit, sample some artisanal cheese, and order a kombucha. If you’re hungry, the choices are almost limitless. Try Wexler’s Deli for some greasy-good deli meat, Horse Thief BBQ for the brisket sandwich, and top off your meal with a latte from G & B Coffee. Everybody complains the line is very long at Eggslut, but if you’re willing to wait, it’s definitely worth it.

Tatsu serves “ramen with a soul.” A modern space on Sawtelle in Japan town, it offers not only classic ramen but also ramen burgers and pork buns. The Tonkotsu broth is something a home chef can’t easily make. Perfect if you’ve had your fair share of cocktails and wine and suddenly find yourself hungry again.

If you are venturing out to Pasadena and the San Gabrielle Valley, you won’t want to miss these three places: Europane, a classic pastry and breakfast restaurant with two locations on Colorado in Pasadena; Din Tai Fung, a Taiwanese chain that serves the best soup dumplings and dim sum in Arcadia; and Bulgarini Gelato in Altadena, the best gelato in LA and possibly in the country. There is the standard vanilla and salted chocolate gelato, but you might want to try the gorgonzola gelato or yogurt gelato served with olive oil. And if you’re really lucky, you might spot pistachio gelato, which, rumor has it, is so expensive to make the shop only wants to serve it to friends.

If you’re staying only for the duration of the conference, you might not need to rent a car (thanks to Lyft at LAX). DTLA alone can definitely occupy a lot of your free time. If you don’t mind the notorious traffic, definitely see more of the city because you’ll never run out of things to see or do. To me, LA is a beautiful, delicious artichoke with many surprising layers.

The author would like to give special thanks to Tom Rich for contributing to this article.
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How to Get the Benefits of Internet Marketing Without the Abuse

Internet Marketing costs pennies on the dollar when compared to TV, radio, or newspaper advertising. Unlike these traditional forms of advertising, there is no such thing as one single airing. Once you establish your website, for instance, it is viewed over and over for the one cost you initially paid. In other words, you’re not paying a separate fee every single time you expose your sales message.

It’s for this reason that Internet Marketing offers the best marketing platform for a business owner in today’s times. Unfortunately, many business owners spend much more because they don’t know which questions they should ask or what is involved with certain online services versus others.

In the spirit of helping you capture your fair share of the Internet market, I will share a few of the no/low cost online opportunities that could help expand your business reach to new prospects and customers—with very little effort. I also want to address the pitfalls of Internet Marketing, particularly in terms of finding reputable service providers to facilitate the expansion of your online presence.

What follows are four ways to easily and affordably expand your reach into Internet Marketing.

**Verify Your Google Business Listing**

Google provides the opportunity for every single business to have a free Google Business Listing. In each listing, you are able to put a very nice banner with a Call to Action, which includes a thorough description of your business, your business hours, your contact information, website address, as well as a category that is...
Get the Benefits of Internet Marketing Without the Abuse

Listing. “What that means is that you have a business listing Google created for you, but you have not done a simple Google verification process to prove you are the actual owner. For an easy $200 to $300, these companies offer to do that for you.

In truth, you don’t need a company to verify your business. You can easily do it yourself for free—there is a simple verification code. If you Google your own business listing and you are not verified, you’ll find a link on the page asking you to “verify now.” If you would like some support on the design side of the Google Business Listing (i.e. an attractive banner, description, photos, and SEO), this is something you can outsource for under $100.

Establish Presence on Multiple Social Media Sites

Social media is another channel to explore for Internet Marketing exposure. Now, before you freak out and shriek, “You told me this could be easy and not overwhelming!” listen up—you don’t actually need to post on each of the social media sites you have established for your business. The simple act of having a business profile on multiple social media sites gives you SEO ranking credit and credibility with Google. It’s this credit and credibility that bumps you up in search results. If you choose to regularly post on social media sites, you get the added benefit of establishing a relationship and impression with your followers.

It’s my suggestion that you start with a business Facebook page and a Google Plus Listing. Google+ is Google’s attempt to compete with Facebook. Google likes it when you use its products. LinkedIn is also great, as it’s a free social media site targeted toward professionals—with a full resume for all your prospects to peruse.

You can put all of your social media links on your website. The more Internet presence you have, the more it shows you care about people understanding what you do and what you have to offer them. Google likes this kind of effort, as do customers. A solid Internet presence has the power to substantiate you as a business. It also offers your customer a comprehensive impression of who you are and what you have to offer (assuming you do regularly post on one or more of those social media sites).

Give Your Website a Modern, Attractive Makeover

I have loved watching the evolution of WordPress website templates. WordPress initially started out as a blogging template a decade ago that was not very attractive. Today, WordPress offers stunning templates, some free, some low cost, that give any website a modern, attractive look.

If you don’t currently have a website and are a one-person shop, consider a one page WordPress website template. What’s great about a one page website is that you can get all of your pertinent information on a single page—maintaining a corporate, professional image—without getting overwhelmed or bogged down with content. It’s also easy for your customers to get to know you at a glance, and it costs much less to create only one page.

If you currently have a website, take a critical look at it. Is it presenting you as a modern, fresh, professional company or could it use a makeover? Again, consider WordPress as a go-to template source if you feel your website could use a facelift. I’ve been impressed with how WordPress’ multi-page templates can make even the smallest company look big. And again, the costs of implementation are much more affordable than having a website custom designed for you.

Search Engine Optimized (SEO’d) so people looking for your type of business—locally or nationally—can find you when they search online for a business like yours.

This free Google Business Listing was created so that your prospects can find you with ease. Google lists three businesses (in each city per category) on Google Page 1, for free! That’s a great advertising opportunity for any business and a win-win for you and your prospects.

Now to the downside…call centers (pretending to be Google) have popped up all over the nation with one purpose—to call business owners like you and offer, for a price, to “Verify Your Listing.” What that means is that you have a business listing Google created for you, but you have not done a simple Google verification process to prove you are the actual owner. For an easy $200 to $300, these companies offer to do that for you.

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The other bonus of WordPress is that all its templates are “mobile user
Look for SEO professionals who are transparent about expectations and how they achieve results.

friendly” (Google’s term for: your website fits perfectly on all mobile devices).

If you're web savvy, you can implement these templates on your own. Or, you can find a trustworthy web developer with reasonable fees to do it for you.

Should you choose to hire a web developer to support you in creating a website, take note of the following: you should own your own domain name. Your domain name is actually a business asset. The biggest mistake small business owners make is hiring a web company to build a website for them—and the web company actually owns the business owner’s domain name. When the web company owns your domain name and they are providing the hosting, then guess what—they own all the rights to your website, too. You are literally held hostage to pay their monthly hosting fee or you completely lose your website and all your current marketing efforts toward it.

Hosting fees are a point of frequent abuse in the Internet Marketing industry. Hosting companies charge anything from $25 to $400 a month for hosting services. And in the majority of cases, that is all the web company is doing for you, hosting your website on their server. Hosting should not cost over $250—annually, not monthly! So, shop around if you’re getting quotes above that.

If you need to make minor changes to your website, your web developer should be able to do this for a nominal fee. Every time your website is updated, be sure to ask your web developer for a copy of your website files to save for backup. You need to own your online assets so that you are in control.

Invest in SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

There are two ways to advertise your website to prospects. You can personally direct people to it—by handing out your business cards or just giving out your URL (domain name), or you can SEO your website so you can be found on the Internet when people are searching for your type of services.

You can invest in SEO for local, national, or international searches. The end goal when you choose to SEO your site is to get your URL on Google Page 1 for keyword searches or keyword phrases your prospects might be typing into search engines when looking for services you can provide.

SEO is a misunderstood service in the industry. It is a process, not a one-time action, that gets your business website on Google Page 1. I like to think of SEO as part jigsaw puzzle and part chess game. The jigsaw puzzle metaphor refers to your Internet assets (i.e. your website, social media sites, Google Business Listing). The chess game is about out-maneuvering Google, as well as your competition, so you can show up on Google Page 1.

Google Page 1 is primo advertising for people searching for services like yours. Every business owner wants to be there! Who shows up on Google Page 1 is more about strategy and vigilance than the amount of money you throw at it.

Some business people confuse SEO with AdWords. You can pay Google to post your ad on Google Page 1 in response to searches using the keywords you choose. Those phrases or keywords are called AdWords. The SEO I’m referring to relates to the organic search positions on Google you cannot purchase.

When seeking out providers to support you in your SEO efforts, be sure to find providers that meet the following two criteria: (1) They are SEO experts first and foremost, and (2) They have a proven track record in getting people on Google Page 1.

There are many stories where business owners say, “I paid $5k for my website with SEO and I am not showing up anywhere!” Typically, they hired a web developer to SEO their new site. That web developer added a few basic keywords/phrases to the code of the website but is not playing the monthly chess game with Google and your competitors to get the business website on Google Page 1 and ensure it stays there.

It is my experience that web developers are not SEO experts; they are web developers. It takes an SEO professional that understands how to execute the work to get you on Google Page 1.

Look for SEO professionals who are transparent about expectations and how they achieve results. An untrustworthy one will take your money and run, meaning you pay $200+ a month and have zero visibility into how that $200+ is being used to your benefit. Hence, should you venture into SEO, ask lots of questions. Figure out what steps your provider will take in the monthly chess game. How long will it take to get results? What should you expect? You have every right to understand what that process looks like and the specific steps that are going to be taken on your behalf each month to get your company on Google Page 1.

How to Get Started with Internet Marketing or Take Yours to the Next Level

I’ve given you a range of options for how to either get started in Internet Marketing (if you don’t have a presence online today) or how to up-level your existing online marketing efforts. I encourage you to pick at least one of the options shared and explore how you might get more online exposure for your company as a result.

Internet Marketing does not have to be confusing, overwhelming, or too expensive. As you seek outside service providers to support you in your Internet Marketing journey, don’t be afraid to ask for examples of their work. Do a little research. And most of all, make sure their work ethic matches yours.
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Leading the Conversation on Qualitative
As qualitative researchers, we often need to mine for insights through mountains of unstructured digital data such as transcripts, videos, photographs, web analytics, and social media posts. Though many of us might enjoy the analysis portion of a project, this phase can be very time consuming. In this article I am going to introduce you to game-changing tools that can greatly improve your efficiency with data analysis and synthesis, once you get the hang of it. The technology is called qualitative data analysis software (QDA), and I am going to demonstrate how it works by showing how you might leverage it in a real project—building a customer journey map.
A customer journey map is a visualization that shows how a particular type of customer interacts with an organization over their life span. The map lays out the customer’s evolving relationship with the organization and traces the “touchpoints” the person uses to interact with the organization along their journey.

In Figure 1, is a simplified example of a customer journey map for a hypothetical digital camera manufacturer. It illustrates the prosumer photographer’s journey from the day they receive their first camera to the point where they become an expert. The map traces the person’s growth from rank beginner through master of the basics to passionate hobbyist to prosumer photographer where the individual could actually be making money off their skill. At each stage the customer listens to company-sponsored podcasts, watches video tutorials, reads magazines, and attends user events targeted toward people at their level. As the customer’s knowledge of photography increases, they upgrade their equipment, experience particular pain-points and feelings, and present new opportunities for increased sales.

While each journey map is unique, they all have one thing in common: in order to make them accurate, rich and useful, we need to collect, analyze and combine research data from many different sources—market research, customer support, diary studies, social media, sales results, usability, and industry research.

For the purpose of this demonstration, I’m going to use NVivo 11 Pro for Windows as the example software, though most qualitative data analysis tools offer similar features.

We start the process by creating a project within NVivo and importing the files we want to include in our analysis. For the customer journey map research, we’ll use focus group and interview transcripts, videos, shopalong photographs, field notes, survey results, demographic data from participant recruiting spreadsheets, and social media posts.

Once we’ve imported all the material, we code it by highlighting bits of information. "Coding is the heart and soul of the process because this is where we identify themes and relationships across the entire body of research."
“Luckily, coding is quick and intuitive because it parallels how we might mark up printouts of our research results with a highlighter and sticky notes.”

“Luckily, coding is quick and intuitive because it parallels how we might mark up printouts of our research results with a highlighter and sticky notes in the physical world. Coding is the heart and soul of the process because this is where we identify themes and relationships across the entire body of research.

To analyze the data for our customer journey map project, we’ve created a multi-level structure with Touchpoints, Stages, and Experiences nodes at the top.

Once we’ve tagged and coded the files in our project, we can run queries against it by theme/node. So, for example, we can query across all media types to find out where customers are frustrated by product use or to see how customers initially learn about digital photography. Results from our queries look across all sources within the project lending greater depth, validity, and interest to our findings (Figure 3).

Here are some other ways we can use QDA software to gain deeper insights into the prosumer’s development. We could explore the words photographers use at each stage by doing a text analysis or word cloud from interview transcripts.

Another option is to highlight selected results from usability studies (Figure 7), or we could find patterns in customers’ social media posts across geographies (Figure 8).

It’s quite likely that, as we learn more about the prosumer photographer space, our hypothesis will evolve, but this is no problem because we can go back into the project and recode and reorganize the nodes.

QDA software has been around for decades, so well-established products have deep and rich feature sets that can take a long time to master. I hope in this article I’ve shown you the value you can get from this type of technology even from knowing just a few basic things.

Popular Qualitative Data Analysis Tools

- Atlas.ti
- Dedoose
- MaxQDA
- NVIVO
- Quirkos
QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

- Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo by Pat Bazeley & Kristi Jackson, Sage Publications, 2013

JOURNEY MAPPING

- Service Design: from Insight to Implementation by Andy Polaine, Ben Reason, and Lavrans Løvlie, Rosenfeld Media, 2013

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9 Tips for Remote Usability Studies

By Hilary Bienstock
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- Hilary User Experience
- Manhattan Beach, CA
- hilary@hilaryue.com
So You Want to Run a Remote Usability Test?

When I teach user experience (UX) research, I make sure to mention that almost all UX research techniques are derived from market research techniques. That means that even if you haven't run a usability test before, as a QRC you have the tools you need to run one—just think of it as a variation on an IDI that's focused on a digital product (a website, mobile app, etc.). At the same time, the findings you're looking for are quite different: rather than uncovering participants' fundamental motivations or emotional responses, with usability testing we're interested in their observed behaviors as they navigate the product.

Although usability techniques come directly from IDIs, there's a key difference: rather than focusing on attitudes, usability research is intended to get a close read on participants' behaviors and the perceptions and motivations behind those behaviors. The “secret sauce” of a usability test is paying extremely close attention to the actions users take, as well as the actions they don't take.

Usability tests are often conducted face-to-face, with participant and researcher sitting side by side at a computer screen in a usability lab or focus group facility. However, there is a trend toward online or remote usability testing—a viable and effective option.

When you moderate a remote usability test, you'll be in front of a computer watching your participant's screen and their webcam; you'll also probably be sharing your own webcam. You'll have the ability to send links and other text to the participant, and there probably will be a private area, invisible to participants, for you to chat with tech support and with your observers. In the main window, you'll be able to see everything the participant sees on their computer monitor during the test.
New technology makes it possible to remotely test not only websites shown on computers but also sites and apps viewed on mobile devices (phones and tablets). The vendor will help participants set up a screen-mirroring program so that the mobile device screen is duplicated on the computer screen, which is what you’ll see.

Feeling confident? Great! Here are nine tips to optimize success:

1. Hire a Vendor
   
   Don’t try to do this on your own, kids, and don’t hire a local recruiter with no knowledge of the technology allowing you to see participants’ screens and webcams. Instead, I highly recommend using a vendor who routinely provides this service. They’ll run tech checks with participants in advance of their sessions and most vendors provide live tech support during sessions. They also will be able to create recordings that, post-session, can be streamed and/or downloaded.

2. Check Device Specs
   
   Participants will be using their own computers, phones, and tablets. Especially for usability tests of mobile products, it’s important to verify that participants can access the site or app using their device. Make sure they have the right OS, the desired screen size(s) (smartphone, tablet, and/or computer), that they can download the app in advance (if you’re testing an app), etc. Many mobile apps will appear differently on iOS and Android, or an app in development may only be available on one platform. Ensure all of these requirements are in the screener and verified during the vendor’s tech check. The good news is participants are unlikely to be confused about how to use their own phone, tablet, or computer. The bad news is you won’t have as much control over how the product looks or functions on their device or computer—but that’s the real world.

3. Expect Technical Problems
   
   Vendors are getting better and better at this, but it’s still a lot of work to get participants up and running with screen sharing. Some participants may be behind a firewall that doesn’t allow for web conferencing, or they may have Internet issues on the day of testing. This caution is especially true for mobile devices, where there is the additional hurdle of getting screen-mirroring to work from mobile device to computer. Even with an experienced vendor who does tech checks in advance, you will probably have at least one session that doesn’t go as planned. Which leads directly to my next point...

4. Schedule Floaters
   
   In addition to sessions aborted due to technical difficulties, participants can sometimes forget about a session.

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**Remote Usability Testing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel costs or time on the road</td>
<td>Less ability to build rapport with participants when moderating remotely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to include participants nationwide or even worldwide</td>
<td>Less immediacy for observers; less impetus for them to sit in the same room and observe sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants are located in their natural environment (home or office), leading to greater comfort</td>
<td>Greater chance of technical problems and aborted sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderator often can’t see participants’ fingers as they interact with mobile devices; may miss key behaviors</td>
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“The ‘secret sauce’ of a usability test is paying extremely close attention to the actions users take, as well as the actions they don’t take.”
because it's something they are doing from home rather than a scheduled appointment at a specific location. I recommend scheduling half-day floaters so that every session has coverage or schedule extra sessions beyond the needed number. It's your back-up plan.

5. Share Webcams in Addition to Screens
For usability testing, it's critical to see a user's screen so you know what they are seeing as they use the product. For an in-person test, of course, you'll also see their face because you're in the same room. For a remote usability test, you may need to specify with your vendor that you'd like to see your participants' faces via webcam. Of course it's still a distant second to being located in the same room, but it will give you a better chance at building rapport and will allow you to see your participant's reactions and respond accordingly.

6. Talkative Participants Are Crucial!
Participants need to be expressive and good talkers, even more so than for an in-person test. You won't be in the same room, so even though you (ideally) have a view of their webcam in addition to their device, you simply can't get the same kind of signals through body language and facial expressions. In addition, for mobile device usability tests, you probably will see their mobile screen via screen-mirroring, which means you won't see what their fingers are doing. So you may not know which link they used to navigate from one screen to another, and you won't see if they are trying to use a feature that's not implemented (for example, if they are trying to pinch to zoom in to see an image that doesn't have that functionality). It's critical that your participant can narrate what they are doing, why they are doing it, and anything that isn't working the way they expected.

7. Use Workarounds for Proprietary Sites
For proprietary sites (e.g. prototypes that aren't publicly available), consider sharing your screen and then letting the participant control the mouse. Most screen-sharing platforms have this capability. Letting the participant control your computer monitor makes the interactions slower, and fancy interactions or video may not work as well, but it's a way to show things that are not shareable via link or on users' home networks (unfortunately, this workaround can't be used for mobile).

8. Use Two Computer Monitors or One Large Screen
Additional screen real estate will give you the chance to see all the different parts of the remote session (screen sharing, chat, webcams, etc.), while still using another portion of your screen/another monitor to view your own data (screeners, test plans, detailed participant lists, and any other data you need). Personally, I print out my moderator guide, login instructions for participants, and anything else I don't want to scramble for.

9. Run a Tech Check of Your Own Equipment
Make sure your own technology won’t be a problem: use a computer that’s connected to reliable, wired internet (wireless connections can sometimes be flakier), and a landline phone with a headset so that you can moderate the session hands-free without worrying about poor cell signals. Have your cell phone nearby as a backup. Ask your vendor to run a tech check with you a day ahead of time, in addition to participant tech checks; you may learn that you need to install a plug-in or take other steps in advance in order to join screen sharing and conference calls. You wouldn’t want your technology to be the reason a session can’t proceed as planned!

Easy as pie? No, but it's well worth the effort to get up and running with remote usability testing. ☑️

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“New technology makes it possible to remotely test not only websites shown on computers but also sites and apps viewed on mobile devices (phones and tablets).”
Qualitative researchers rely on asking consumers to consciously think about and share their feedback on products and brands. Yet, consumers are often unable or unwilling to fully express their emotional responses to stimuli.

Facial coding, a neuromarketing technology, enables researchers to get inside the minds of consumers and record responses as they process and respond to brand messages. It provides reliable data for researchers to optimize their clients’ ability to create and deliver brand messages that powerfully connect with the minds of their target.

**What Is Facial Coding?**

In the simplest terms, facial coding scientifically and unobtrusively measures non-verbal emotional engagement of a participant, revealed through facial expressions. Facial coding allows for researchers to passively bridge the gap between stated responses and actual responses to stimuli.

Worldwide, there are seven scientifically validated emotional states: anger, fear, disgust, contempt, joy, sadness, and surprise. Each emotional state has specific characteristics associated with recognizing the emotion, regardless of demographics.

In 1978, Swedish anatomist Carl-Herman Hjortsjö, psychologist Paul Ekman, and author Wallace V. Friesen developed one of the most influential methods to objectively code facial behavior, which was further fine-tuned in 2002. Their approach, named the Facial Action Coding System (FACS), represents a fully-standardized classification system of facial expressions for expert human coders based on anatomic features. Experts carefully examine face videos and describe any occurrence of facial expressions as combinations of elementary components called Action Units (AUs). Using these AUs as a map to emotion, facial coding software reads a participant’s facial muscle activity to reveal true emotions.

**The Process of Facial Coding**

The face reveals both conscious and non-conscious reactions. Facial coding relies on sophisticated software to gain deeper insights into human emotional reactions via facial expressions.

There are three phases of facial coding.

1. **Data Collection**

During the data collection phase, participants are exposed to stimuli such as a video ad, trailer, or TV program. Key action units (AU) are captured in real-time, via webcam. Most tools are very flexible, accommodating all types of respondent features including facial hair, glasses, and less facially expressive respondents.
2. Facial Expression Analysis

Once the AUs are identified, each pixel in that region is evaluated by the software for shape, movement, and texture by the software's algorithms. This algorithm then returns the likelihood that the facial frame under analysis is representative of the emotional state. This is completed for each participant at high speed, then aggregated across participants and married to demographic information to support more complex analysis.

3. Metrics

Metrics are visualized on screen, simultaneously displaying a recording of the respondent’s face, the stimulus, and the emotion channel responses. The data visualizations can be easily cross-referenced with data from other respondents and dropped into client presentations, providing engaging scientific evidence of your findings.

How Does In-Person Qual Facial Coding Differ from Online Quant Facial Coding?

While the data collected in both scenarios is the same, the true value of qualitative facial coding software is demonstrated in the delivery of moment-by-moment data, from which emotional insights can be quickly and easily revealed. The online scenario simply collects the data, aggregates the data for analysis, and provides a dashboard for later review of the results. The in-person mode collects the data in the same manner, but it also allows for real-time observation using a live viewer. This data is clearly and visually represented frame-by-frame, allowing for more granular insights. During an interview, a moderator can track facial-coding responses through an interactive dashboard and then probe the respondent for further understanding of the emotional measures, allowing for a more dynamic interview.

Facial Coding Applications

Facial coding can be used to test the emotional impact of any content, product, or service. This can cover physical objects such as food probes on packages, videos and images, sounds, odors, tactile stimuli, etc. Facial coding is most frequently used for research involving:

- Media Testing & Advertisement
  In media research, respondents can be exposed to TV advertisements, trailers, and full-length pilots while monitoring their facial expressions. Identifying scenes where emotional responses (particularly smiles) were expected but the audience just didn't "get it" is as crucial as finding the key frames that result in the most extreme facial expressions. In this context, clients might want to isolate and improve scenes that trigger unwanted negative expressions that indicate elevated levels of disgust, frustration or confusion, or they might want to utilize the audiences' response toward a screening in order to increase the overall level of positive expressions in the final release.

- Software UI & Website Design
  Facial coding can be used to study response to usability and content of websites and applications. Monitoring
facial expressions while testers browse websites or software dialogs can provide researchers with insights into the emotional satisfaction of the desired target group. Whenever users encounter roadblocks or get lost in complex sub-menus, one might certainly see increased “negative” facial expressions such as brow furrowing or frowning.

The Science of Translating Facial Activity into Metrics
For those readers interested in the science behind the facial coding, the primary facial coding engines available within the industry include Affectiva AFFDEX, Emotient FACET, and Noldus FaceReader. Each engine differs by the metrics they automatically code, but they are governed by the same principles outlined through the Facial Action Coding System (FACS).

The translation from facial features into metrics is accomplished statistically, comparing the actual appearance of the face and the configuration of its features numerically with the normative databases provided by the facial expression engines. Rather than returning a “yes” or “no” for each emotional classifier, the engines give a probabilistic result, reflecting the likelihood or chance that the expression is an authentic one. Each of these classifiers is interpreted independently from the others. Automatic facial expression analysis returns numeric scores for each of the facial expressions or Action Units and emotions, along with the degree of confidence. As the facial expression or emotion occurs and/or intensifies, the confidence score rises from 0 (no expression) to 100 (expression fully present).

DIY or Lab Specialist?
Fortunately, it’s not necessary to understand the science of facial coding to benefit from the research metrics it can provide. For researchers ready to invest in facial coding as a future research method, who are prepared to allocate budget, and are comfortable in exploring and deploying new technologies, a license and elementary training for the software is available for purchase from providers. Alternatively, an expert research lab provider can deliver a package of full support prior to and during your in-person interviews, with an on-site technician managing the equipment, respondent preparation, and deliverables. This involves a cost only on a per-project basis and frees up the researcher to focus on what he or she does best.

What Does All this Mean for Qualitative Researchers?
The real-time metrics provided through facial coding bring a scientific assessment of instinctive emotional response to research and give researchers an opportunity to enhance the quality of their in-depth interviews. Using data captured in the facial coding session as a framework, researchers are able to dig deeper during the self-report part of the session. Data can be shared with clients in real-time or post-session. In addition, visual data can be captured to enhance your client presentation.

The facial-coding options now available to researchers allow for the integration of facial coding into qualitative studies with ease and confidence.

Figure 2. Picture of Probabilistic Analysis courtesy of iMotions® and powered by AFFDEX Engine from Affectiva.

Figure 3. Picture of Action Units courtesy of iMotions® and powered by AFFDEX Engine from Affectiva.
Uncertainty as Key Ingredient to Navigate the Future

October 2015, Marty McFly and “Doc” Brown land in our time—in an ’80s stylized version with hovering skateboards, self-binding Nike sneakers, flying cars with alternative fuel, 3D commercials, and video phones. Although the Back to the Future films were a sci-fi comedy trilogy about a crazy professor’s experiments with technology, they became so popular that then-President Ronald Reagan referred to them in his 1986 State of the Union Address.

Today, the Back to the Future trilogy has become part of our cultural fabric, but even more, the films can serve as a great illustration of the essence of working with Future Studies because some of these predictions did become a part of our present realities—but others did not—at least not yet. And this is the very heart of the future: uncertainty. It is not there yet. Here, Future Studies provides a set of tools and a methodology for working structurally, constantly navigating the uncertain waters of tomorrow.

Imagining the Future

Trying to grasp the future is not new. We are mammals with a unique human capacity: the ability to dream, to be able to imagine a different world, fantasize about something that doesn’t exist yet. Experiment. This is also what has made innovation, progress, and growth possible. But we don’t always get it right. The world is getting more and more complex, we as people and consumers demand more and more, and when it comes to imagining the future and something that is not already a part of our everyday lives, we cannot simply ask people what they want—it is too abstract.

In Future Studies, we thus apply approaches and methods like scenario planning and mega trends models in order to explore and flesh out future opportunities and challenges that can help us in decision-making processes and strategic action planning. However, in this translation of mega trends and scenarios into future strategic themes, we must never forget that change is about people—and understanding people—the drivers and barriers that trigger them, and the large societal currents that shape...
our lives, values, thoughts, and needs. In other words, we can use Future Studies to transform the future into new solutions through the eyes of the people—and their lives in the future.

What Are Megatrends and How Do We Use Them?

A trend refers to a direction, development, tendency, or a current of change over a longer or shorter period of time. Trend research is thus knowledge about how trends emerge and develop and how to find and follow them. Trends can be identified and used in various ways and are often interconnected and expressing different levels of maturity or implications. As such, trends can be researched all the way from fads, consumer, behavioral, and lifestyle trends, over to micro trends and linked to macro and mega trends, and even giga trends.

The Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies is primarily researching and analyzing mega trends. These can be identified as fundamental external driving forces that impact every level of society with a high degree of certainty. Mega trends are aggregations of trends and tendencies and help us frame our understanding of future scenarios; they help us structure our assumptions regarding the future.

We define mega trends through a time horizon of 10 to 15 years, but their development is not necessarily linear nor do the implications of a mega trend happen at the same time—they affect society broadly at different times and at different stages of their maturity and always depend on context and location.

Mega trends have large implications on the way we live, work, and consume. Therefore, it often becomes crucial to triangulate the methodological macro-view framework with micro-view insights of everyday socio-cultural practices. This can lead to clear definitions of unmet needs, new opportunity spaces for innovation, or value propositions in business modeling. This, in my opinion, is the unique and true potential of future studies.

The Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies is currently working with 14 different mega trends and categories of mega trends, which include a lot of “-ations,” such as globalization, polarization, commercialization, democratization, immaterialization, individualization, and acceleration. These trends and categories also reflect complexity, sustainability, economic growth, demographic development, technological development, and focus on health, the knowledge society, and the network society. All of these are internally connected. For example, economic growth may depend (positively or negatively) on technological growth. Demographic development may induce individualization and polarization and/or networking and knowledge.

Zooming in on Demographic Development

Demographic development is one of the categories for mega trends that can help illustrate this people-centric approach. Highlighting some of the major societal currents we can expect over the next 10 to 15 years fleshes out quite clearly how our lives and world will change.

Urbanization is one example: By 2030, 4.9 billion people, or 59% of the world’s population, are predicted to live in cities. By 2050, this will be 70%, and the migration from rural to urban areas has already begun. It can be of no surprise that this will have implications on our everyday lives. First of all, with more and more people living in more congested areas, space will become a commodity, even more than it is today, and the experience and functions of space will change. How we will use and inhabit public versus private space—and what unmet needs we will need for space to fulfill—will be future strategic themes, where people and their behavior are at the very center.

Aging is another example: In developed regions, life expectancies are increasing, which means that every generation can expect to live about five years longer than the previous generation. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), by 2050, the majority of the population in OECD countries will be above 55 years of age. This calls for a completely new understanding of the various stages of senior life along with new smart solutions for living and working as well as healthcare offerings and welfare models.

A final example is Single Living: It is expected that by 2025 to 2030, single-person households will make up around 40% or more of all households in many developed countries (OECD).

Increased aging is part of this development, as where we already see a large number of widows and widowers leading single lives. However, increases in divorce rates, rises in career-focus for both genders, and other single-living arrangements—like couples that choose to live apart although being in a “traditional” relationship—means that we will see the formation of new needs for socializing, communicating, and consuming.

As these three mega trends of demographic development show, we can use more tangible, even measurable, societal currents to somehow begin imagining how our lives, wants, and needs will change.

Mega Trends in Technological Developments

If we dive into another category for mega trends and explore technological development, it becomes evident again how a need for a deep understanding of people is so closely linked and interconnected to the field of future studies, if we truly want to navigate the world of tomorrow and grasp the implications of mega trends.

To begin with one major development, one example is Automation: Due to technological advances, automation is becoming a reality—we see automation of production, automation of decision-making processes, etc. Automation is having a profound implication on businesses—and on our work and private lives, too. Many types of jobs we see
today will be automated over the next 20 years. Another way of putting this, according to a recent study from U.S. Department of Labor, 65% of today’s grade-school kids will end up at jobs that haven’t been invented yet!

Supercomputers will help us gather, analyze, suggest, and even make decisions for us. Big data and smart solutions will be a part of our everyday lives.

Second, there has been a Mobile Revolution that will continue over the coming decades. The number of mobile-only internet users is expected to rise, connecting 60% of the world’s population to mobile broadband in 2030. One of the clear outcomes of this development has been the breakdown of boundaries between the physical and virtual space where technology has become (and continues to become) a more integrated, seamless part of how we engage ourselves and interact with the world around us. We hardly think any more about when we are online or when we are offline; we just want access. Part of this trend links to what is popularly referred to as the “sharing economy,” where we swap, exchange, etc. Furthermore, it reflects a need for constant access instead of ownership over a product. A part of this behavioral change is driven forward by technological possibilities and the massive leaps in our interconnectivity, communication, and the ICT sector. On the other hand, these technological possibilities are becoming a reality because our needs are changing, too.

A final aspect of the future of technological development is Life Sciences Leap: Innovation is believed to occur in cycles. The last cycle was driven primarily by ICT (Information and Communications Technology), which will also continue to develop over the next 20 years; however, the theme of the next cycle for the coming decade is expected to be within life sciences. Life sciences comprise different fields of science, of which the most important ones are medical technology, biotechnology, and medicine and pharmaceuticals. From a people-centric perspective, the rise of medical devices that use smartphones, tablets, and wearables to engage and aid the user have already paved the road and created the popular term “DIY health”—do-it-yourself health, where we as individuals are taking our lives more and more into our own hands by constantly monitoring our behavior and lifestyle practices. Generation Alpha, the next generation, is expected to be born with technology on their bodies. Wonder what implications that will have in terms of life sciences technology!

So in all these technological advances and predictions, we must not forget to look at the implications they will entail on the people using them, contextualizing and triangulating them with other interconnected mega trends and categories of mega trends.

The Future Is About People
Michel Codet, a very wise man and professor of the Laboratory of Innovation, Strategic Foresight and Organization (LIPSOR) in France, puts this perfectly: “The future is not written, rather it remains open. The future is multiple, undetermined and open to a large variety of possibilities. That which will happen tomorrow depends less on prevailing trends or any sort of fatalistic determinism, and more on the actions of groups and individuals in the face of these trends.” I could not say this in a better way myself. The future is about people. If you want to prepare yourself for Tomorrowland, then mega trends and scenario planning are a solid methodological framework for identifying and mapping out some of the driving forces that will shape our world and everyday lives. In the end, it all comes down to understanding people—the people of today and of tomorrow, and how we imagine, seek, and sometimes resist change, how we together shape the future.

In other words: good news for qualitative researchers whose business is people! 📽️

To understand futures, it is essential to grasp the theoretical frameworks underpinning the three branches of the field.

**FIRST,** explorative futures studies is the study of possible futures. It is much less technical and offers insight and understanding by examining differing, sometimes competing, narratives of the future.

**SECOND,** predictive futures studies is the study of probable futures. It is largely based on empirical social sciences and assumes the notion that the future is predictable and coincides with the linearity of the past. In this regard, knowledge is privileged since the future is considered to be knowable—much like expert oracles in classical antiquity. In some ways this is true, as in the case of celestial mechanics, but applying a solely deterministic perspective to complicated sociopolitical issues and culture can be damaging.

**THIRD,** normative futures studies is the study of preferable futures. It is focused on achieving an ideal standard of the future in a given context. However, this necessarily relies on the involvement of multiple stakeholders to help shape the desired future since it is largely contingent upon external factors. Thus, critical futures studies is important in investigating preferable futures. It is based on poststructuralism and questions the nature of competing discourses by focusing on who benefits from the realization of any particular future.
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I read somewhere that PowerPoint is used 350 times every second. Really? That has to be a low figure. I am sure I know 350 colleagues using PowerPoint right now! But that was not always the case. Only a few years ago I was still writing reports primarily in Word—and PowerPoint was mainly used to make presentations. In fact, the program was originally named Presenter, and after it became part of the Microsoft Office suite, it quickly replaced all other presentation tools (remember the photo slide and overhead projectors?). But today, PowerPoint is used for much more than presentations. For most of us, it has replaced Word as our primary tool for report writing. It is also used for desktop publishing, website development, graphic design, and even rudimentary photo and video editing. In this article I will explore PowerPoint and hopefully teach you a few things that will make it even more valuable.

Going Beyond the Slide:
ACCESSING THE POWER OF POWERPOINT

By Ricardo A. López
Hispanic Research Inc.
Melbourne, FL
ricardo@hispanicresearch.com
“PowerPoint can automatically create a video of the presentation including any recorded narration. This is an extremely easy way of creating a powerful video report with no editing skills needed.”

The features available in PowerPoint depend largely on the version you are using. I am a firm believer in using the latest version—if you are using PowerPoint 2007 or earlier, you really need to upgrade your software. This article is based on the features found on PowerPoint 2016. I personally subscribe to Office 365, a licensing agreement where you pay a monthly fee to use the software. The big advantage of Office 365 is always having the latest release of PowerPoint.

One of the first things you need to address in working with PowerPoint is the slide size. Before PowerPoint 2013, the default slide size was 4:3 (and it’s still called “standard” in PP)—with the advent of widescreen TVs and computer monitors, Microsoft changed the default to 16:9 (widescreen). Widescreen is a better format for displaying presentations because you have more screen real estate to work with and are able to beautifully fill all modern video displays. That being said, if you are preparing a presentation to be delivered at a conference or other venue, you need to check in advance. I made the mistake of preparing one of my QRCA conference presentations a couple years ago in the widescreen format only to find out that the hotel had all its screens projecting at a 4:3 standard ratio. Changing from widescreen to standard is a laborious task!

In my work I usually provide a written report and a presentation of the findings. With PowerPoint I can prepare a report that can serve both purposes or be easily tweaked for presentation. But even when I am not presenting, many of my clients prefer the report in PowerPoint because they use it to make internal presentations. Reports written in PowerPoint are also popular because they are, in theory, shorter and more actionable—which is something that clients really want. I say “in theory” because it is possible to write a report in PowerPoint as you would in Word, using a small font and a lot of text.

Those of you who know me know that I love using video. Nowadays I find myself using video clips instead of text verbatim to support almost every research finding. My clients love it, and PowerPoint makes it easy. I recommend that you review and select the clips that you need outside of PowerPoint by using a video editing program. My favorite editor by far is Adobe Premiere Pro, and I highly recommend the Adobe CC suite if you are serious about using video on a regular basis. But there are other inexpensive programs that will do the job. Many of them are free or included with your OS. To pull video quotes quickly I sometimes use a small, inexpensive program called Boilsoft Video Splitter. Boilsoft is not an editor, but it enables you to cut down and organize your video material. You can go through the interview and cut segments sequentially, saving them into different buckets. The beginning and end of each clip does not have to be perfect as you can always do the trimming once you bring them into PowerPoint.

Inserting video into PowerPoint is extremely easy and intuitive. Once the video is inserted, you make adjustments to it within the Format tab, go to the Playback tab to trim it, and tell PowerPoint when and how to play it.

Now, video is tricky! You may have something that plays perfectly on your computer but refuses to work for your client. The solution is to stick with standard video formats (like MPG-1) that work across platforms. Make sure all your videos are in the same format before you bring them in. This is even more crucial when using mobile video clips submitted by participants because they may be in many different formats and compression standards. That is why it is essential when working with video to also invest in a video conversion program. There are many on the market (I use Brorsoft). Note: PowerPoint will suggest that you compress all media once you are done to make the file smaller using the compress media button under the file tab. Be very careful because PowerPoint actually compresses your OS. To pull video quotes quickly I sometimes use a small, inexpensive program called Boilsoft Video Splitter.

Boilsoft is not an editor, but it enables you to cut down and organize your video material. You can go through the interview and cut segments sequentially, saving them into different buckets. The beginning and end of each clip does not have to be perfect as you can always do the trimming once you bring them into PowerPoint.

GoToMeeting do not work with video because the screen does not refresh fast enough. To deal with this, I place all videos to be used during the presentation on a video streaming platform like YouTube or Vimeo. You need to ensure they are private and only accessible through their unique URL. I have a Vimeo Pro account that allows me to place all the videos in a portfolio accessible through one password-protected link. I provide the link in advance to all the viewers or share it during the presentation. You can use screen sharing for the presentation itself but have the...
viewers use the link to stream the videos directly from Vimeo. Not the best solution, but it works. By placing the videos online you can link to the unique URL from within PowerPoint via a still image. This has the benefit of keeping the PPT file small as it does not have the large video files embedded. Anyone who receives the presentation can click on the image and the corresponding video will open in their browser (as long as they have an Internet connection). You can even share a PDF of the presentation for total compatibility across all platforms, and the links to the videos will still work from within the PDF.

PowerPoint offers other solutions to present remotely with video. My favorite is the “Present Online” feature, though it requires a free Microsoft account. From within PowerPoint, go to the file tab and select “share.” Then click on “Present Online.” If you decide you want to give the viewers the ability to download the presentation, Microsoft will “prepare” the presentation in the cloud and produce a URL. The preparation will take a while if there are many video clips. You can then have a regular teleconference where everyone clicks on the URL to join. They will have access to the presentation through the URL, but you will be the one controlling the slides. And best of all, the videos play just fine because they are streamed directly from the cloud.

One big benefit of PowerPoint, of course, is the way it excels as a presentation tool. Some, however, may think that PowerPoint is outdated because it is often seen delivering boring visuals—but we cannot blame PowerPoint! To deal with inexperienced designers, Microsoft has added PowerPoint Designer to its 2016 product. As of this writing, this feature is only available if you have an Office 365 subscription. PowerPoint Designer lets you take your content and automatically generates a variety of ideas to make your slides look better. Now you can easily generate the same type of effect you find in Prezi with the Dazzle feature or the Morph transition.

Don’t overlook PowerPoint’s audio capabilities. When delivering a presentation, you can record the audio as a narration linked to each slide. The user can listen to your presentation by clicking a play icon in the lower right corner of each slide. You can also use “Present Online” to create a video of the presentation that includes any recorded narration. This is an extremely easy way of creating a powerful video report with no editing skills needed.

PowerPoint is very powerful, and I encourage you to go beyond the basic creation of slides. I am out of digital ink here, but if you want to know more, please go to: www.video-example.com. I have created a companion video to this article that explores other areas in more detail.
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Leading the Conversation on Qualitative
QRCA continues to conduct and record interviews with thought leaders in the qualitative research industry. These podcasts shed light on subjects of great interest to those whose work involves qualitative research. Podcasts of these interviews are available at the QRCA website (www.qrca.org) under the Publications link as streaming audio and can also be downloaded to your laptop or portable listening device as an MP3 file.

Listen in as QRCA VIEWS Podcast Editor Mike Carlon interviews Jennifer Golbeck from the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland. If you are in the majority, you share a lot of your own life on social media; services such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram account for a significant amount of Internet traffic, and people are sharing massive amounts of data about themselves, their attitudes, and their brand preferences through these services. In the marketing community there are what seem to be never-ending arguments about how this active and passive sharing of data by consumers will impact the research industry, and Jen Golbeck certainly has a point of view on it, and it may not be what you think.

In this podcast you will hear Jennifer’s point of view that data collected from social media will enhance, rather than replace, most of the techniques qualitative researchers use to understand behaviors and perceptions. To understand why she feels so strongly about this, you will have to listen in!
The Yes, And authors, Kelly Leonard and Tom Yorton, are executives with The Second City, a Chicago-based comedy theater and school of improvisation. They’ve also built a business called Second City Works to create improv-based learning and have worked with major corporations like Clorox, Farmers Insurance, and Schick.

I have always been an improv and co-creation fan. It made me who I am today—a rule breaker, a curator of rule breaking!

To be honest, doesn’t the fusion of improv and business leadership intrigue you? It made me pick up this book and dive right in.

You won’t learn how to be a comedian by reading Yes, And, but you will have the basis of the “seven elements of improvisation,” which Leonard and Yorton believe will enable one to communicate more effectively, create a more open dialogue with your colleagues and customers, and break down those ridiculous silos that really put a damper in meetings that tend to go nowhere. Most of all, you could call yourself a “rule breaker.”

- The words “Yes, And” are the two foundational words of improvisation. Improvisers always agree with their partner’s statement and build on that with something new. This is where the best ideas (and comedy) come from. When you say, “Yes, And,” you have endless possibilities. It can be scary at first because some may think they have nothing to contribute, but I found this technique extremely useful in brainstorming and ideation sessions.

- Let’s not use the word team...let’s call it an ensemble. The authors believe “team” implies competition, while “ensemble” does not. They feel that “an ensemble lifts you in direct relation to the diverse skill sets of those you are working with.” In fact, developing ensembles in an organization gives you a distinct advantage.

- Co-create with your ensemble. I love watching Whose Line Is It Anyway? and am always amused when ensemble members curate and co-create sketches “on-the-fly” with audience engagement, using “Yes, And” instead of “No, But.” In facilitated co-creation sessions with end consumers and business partners, no time is given to vet suggestions or monitor feedback. In this “free for all” environment, no one is set up to fail. No questions are asked, and no one yells at anyone. In fact, co-creation is great at building new relationships and connections, which ultimately lead to successful new products.

- Be authentic to harness a competitive advantage. Show respect for your organization by doing what you probably fear the most. Acknowledge what is not working. Question the status quo. Challenge assumptions and standard operating procedures. Make it your own “Festivus” (thank you, Seinfeld!).

Air your grievances! Call out the elephant in the room! Use comedy to communicate honestly and openly during difficult situations. Even Winston Churchill said, “Never let a good crisis go to waste.”

- Learn from your mistakes! It turns out your parents were right. Failure leads to success if you acknowledge it and then incorporate into the mix.

- Follow the follower. Gives permission to allow anyone, anytime to assume a leadership role for as long as his or her expertise is needed. Empowerment leads to more creativity and strengthens your role when you are known as the (fill in the blank) guru.”

- We have a listening problem. Bad listening leads to building things no one asked for or wanted. Think New Coke. Great listening is the most critical element of improvisation. “Active Listening” leads to “Yes.” But while we learn 85% of what we know through listening and, every day, 45% of our day is spent listening, humans listen at only a 25% comprehension rate AND only 2% have any formal listening skills training.

Five years ago I put an index card up on my home office wall with the phrase “Celebrate failure—it makes success sweeter.” I still live by it. I was moved by this book and highly recommend it for anyone who wants to be successful.
In The Next America: Boomers, Millennials, and the Looming Generational Showdown, Paul Taylor of The Pew Research Center posits that the America of the future will look radically different from the America of the recent past. While most of Taylor's conclusions will not be news to those of us involved in research and who may spend our lives interviewing people from all walks of life, Taylor's book spells out in detailed graphs, charts, and statistics why the demographic composition of today's focus groups and IDIs is likely quite different from studies you may have conducted only a few short years ago.

Each chapter in The Next America deconstructs one of the major demographic or societal shifts inextricably changing what it means to be an American in the 21st century. Taylor focuses much of his analysis on examining both real and perceived differences between Boomers and Millennials, the two largest and most influential age cohorts alive today (the older Silent Generation, which is dying out, and the "in-between," much smaller Generation X, are mentioned only in passing).

Importantly, Pew's in-depth research and analysis makes the case that Millennials are unlikely to become "more like their parents" as they get older, which typically has been the case in prior generations. Instead, as Millennials move through adulthood over the next 30, 40, and 50 years, the impact of the unique characteristics, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that have defined them in their 20s will continue to change the landscape of this country. In other words, "We are not in Kansas anymore, Toto."

A sampling of the seismic changes Taylor explores:

**Generation Gaps** – Young and Old in America are more different from each other now than at any time in living memory—demographically, politically, economically, socially, and technologically.

- They differ racially and ethnically: Nearly half of all children in America today are non-white, compared to only 25% of Boomers. We will reach a non-white majority by 2045.
- Their families look different: In 1960, just 5% of children were born to an unmarried woman; today 41% are.

**Money Troubles** – Millennials are being hammered on all sides by economic misfortune that is delaying the formation of new households at a record level.

- Runaway college costs leading to huge student debt levels: Trapped under a mountain of student debt, many Millennials are delaying marriage, living back home, and taking longer to become fully independent.

**The New Immigrants** – The U.S. is home to four times more immigrants than any other nation on earth. While our long history of relatively peaceful assimilation continues—in contrast to Europe's continued unease with its immigrant populations—people coming to the U.S. today are markedly different from those who came ashore during the last big immigration wave at the turn of the 20th century.

- They are more diverse: While most of those who immigrated during the last big wave came from Europe, which made assimilation somewhat easier, the vast majority of today's immigrants are Hispanic or Asian.
- They are arriving at a time of reduced socioeconomic mobility: Globalization and the digital revolution have eliminated many of the entry-level jobs that provided a ladder to opportunity for prior generations of newcomers.

**Whither Marriage?** – Sixty years ago, nearly 75% of all adults in the U.S. were married; today less than half are married.

- The stigma of single parenthood has largely dissipated: Over 40% of all births in the U.S. today are to unmarried mothers (many of whom are living with a partner), versus just 5% in 1960. While many assume unwed mothers are teens, most in fact are women in their 20s and 30s who have chosen to have a child outside of marriage.
- Same-sex marriage is filling some of the gap: While same-sex marriage rates are not yet at the level of the rest of the population, and may never reach that number, over time it will help to offset declines in the overall marriage rate.

While The Next America may have benefited from a few more stories and examples, rather than such a heavy focus on data and statistics, anyone who wants to stay abreast of demographic and sociological changes that directly impacts business will benefit from adding this book to his reference library.
If you have wondered why the heck “cool” is so elusive and malleable but so deeply entrenched in consumer marketing, *Cool: How the Brain’s Hidden Quest for Cool Drives Our Economy and Shapes Our World* offers a perspective.

Referencing Mark Zuckerberg’s claim that “I’m like the least cool person there is,” the authors, Steven Quartz and Anette Asp, unpack the layers of cultural connotations underlying this seemingly simple self-deprecation from the Facebook mogul. After all, isn’t he the ultimate embodiment of “cool” for the legions of hoodie-wearing entrepreneurs seeking six-figure salaries before they can legally rent cars? But, then again, how cool can a computer nerd who runs in elite social and political circles really be?

Despite its seemingly philistine subject, *Cool* is a deeply-researched text dense with scientific theories spanning the social sciences. *Cool* will surely begin appearing on graduate-level cognitive behavior course syllabi in short order.

The authors also do an admirable job of peppering the research with myriad “real-life” cultural examples that enliven the hard science. *Cool* is ideal for someone who prides herself on her book smarts as much as her street smarts or who relished banging out 10-pagers for that college psychology class and wishes to brush up on the latest research.

The book opens with a treatment of cutting-edge neuro-economic research out of Caltech, where Quartz is a principal investigator and Asp was a project manager. They proceed to dispense with the Western concept of a unified self within every individual that coherently directs one’s thoughts and behavior. In its place, they discuss how three internal mechanisms compete to derive pleasure: one seeking survival, one desiring habits, and one pursuing goals. Each plays a different role in consumption decisions. This framework provides a guideline for understanding consumer behavior. For example, your “Habit mechanism” compels you to purchase the same snack brand you choose every week, your “Goal mechanism” wants you to go for the fat-free rice crisps, but your “Survival mechanism” is eying the chocolate-dipped potato chips.

Next, Quartz and Asp explore why consumption is so deeply embedded into our social lives. Humans create social cohesion by establishing social norms and collective beliefs that define boundaries between groups. “Signals” such as body language and social etiquette indicate our conformity to or rebellion from social norms. Consumption goods such as brands of clothing and cars are highly effective signals because they can be assessed quickly and shown to many people at once.

Quartz and Asp explain how signaling is consumption is so deeply embedded into our social lives. Humans create social cohesion by establishing social norms and collective beliefs that define boundaries between groups. “Signals” such as body language and social etiquette indicate our conformity to or rebellion from social norms. Consumption goods such as brands of clothing and cars are highly effective signals because they can be assessed quickly and shown to many people at once.

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The authors theorize that “cool” emerged as a dissent against social hierarchy. They root the origins of “cool” in the 1950s, where Western social status was primarily measured by a single variable: wealth. People sought status by emulating the dominant, wealthy class. “Cool” arose as a rejection of status emulation utilizing what the authors call the “rebel instinct,” a protest against social subordination (think: the Beat writers and punk subculture who created their own versions of “cool” in the form of “rebel cool”).

The growing political, educational, and economic empowerment of women, racial minorities, and homosexuals in the 1960s and ’70s set the stage for a transition from the wealth-based American social hierarchy to a pluralistic social structure. Different groups could hold different forms of power and value traits other than money. Consumers in a pluralistic society accrue respect by signaling to their desired in-group. When people adhere to a group’s lifestyle and values, they show commitment to the group’s success, and both the group and the individual thrive.

After reading *Cool*, you may not be able to predict the next YouTube sensation to clients or colleagues, but you will impress them with your scientifically-grounded understanding of what lies beneath cool brands.
Adam Grant’s *Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World* is full of concrete, easy-to-implement suggestions on how you can successfully inject “original” thinking into both your personal/everyday and your professional/business lives.

Grant, whose previous best-selling book *Give and Take*, on why helping others drives our success, has been, for the past four years, Wharton Business School’s top-rated professor (his specialty is psychology). Many recent best-selling books by other well-known authors—such as Daniel Pink, Malcolm Gladwell, Nicholas Kristoff, and Arianna Huffington—have highlighted Grant’s original research and observations in their books. Of course, Grant has the “must-have” TED Talk credential. He has given numerous TED Talks, and his 2016 TED Talk on what it takes to be an “original” was voted an audience favorite. And, did I mention Grant was Wharton’s youngest tenured professor ever?

Even with all these top-notch, well-earned credentials, it still takes a lot of chutzpah to call your book *Originals*, on why helping others drive our success, has been, for the past four years, Wharton Business School’s top-rated professor (his specialty is psychology). Many recent best-selling books by other well-known authors—such as Daniel Pink, Malcolm Gladwell, Nicholas Kristoff, and Arianna Huffington—have highlighted Grant’s original research and observations in their books. Of course, Grant has the “must-have” TED Talk credential. He has given numerous TED Talks, and his 2016 TED Talk on what it takes to be an “original” was voted an audience favorite. And, did I mention Grant was Wharton’s youngest tenured professor ever?

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Grant recognizes that “nothing is completely original, in the sense that all of our ideas are influenced by what we learn from the world around us. We are constantly borrowing thoughts, whether intentionally or inadvertently. We’re vulnerable to kleptomnesia—accidently remembering the ideas of others as our own. By (Grant’s) definition, originality involves introducing and advancing an idea that’s relatively unusual within a particular domain, and that has the potential to improve it.”

*Originals* provides a blueprint, across eight chapters, of how to be a successful “original” thinker. For example, the chapters on:

- “Creative Destruction” provides a guide on how to get out of the “default rut” in order to explore whether better options exist. Grant uses Warby Parker, the inexpensive online eyeglass retailer, and, self-deprecatingly, him-
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