Mission Statement:
The Qualitative Research Consultants Association is dedicated to advancing the discipline of qualitative research worldwide.
President’s Report

by Susan Thornhill

I am honored to serve as the 2011/2012 QRCA President since accepting the leadership baton handed off by Past President Nancy Hardwick in September. Our QRCA Strategic Plan continues to provide a very meaningful roadmap, allowing each successive President the opportunity to move forward on a focused path in achieving organizational accomplishments.

In preparation for our 2011 Annual Conference in Las Vegas, we conducted a review of the accomplishments over the past 5 years. A very impressive list was shared at our Annual Meeting. It seems the efforts of our staff and hard working volunteers have proven very fruitful! Especially with the complement of enhanced QRCA member benefits, the Board and our Membership Committee decided it is time to better “tell our story” and a comprehensive membership recruitment initiative, Membership 1,000, will launch in 2012.

QRCA’s accomplishments in 2011 included updating and approving the 2011 – 2013 Strategic Plan for the Association in January. This dynamic document that provided guidance and focus to the Board, volunteers and staff as we worked throughout the year to accomplish the tasks outlined. Following are specific milestones accomplished in each of the three major goal areas of the QRCA Strategic Plan.

**Enhancing Member Value**
- New educational discounts were set up for our members to offset the cost of membership and make being a member even more valuable. These include discounts for Burke Institute, CPSI, LearningConnect, Online Moderator Training, RIVA Training Institute and Sharpen the Focus Institute.
- A Candidate Membership category was finalized and communicated addressing the bylaws provision that those who are “in training” to become a qualitative researcher may join QRCA. In this way QRCA can play a role in helping new qualitative researchers quickly learn and expand their tool boxes and encourages a high standard of ethics and industry conduct.
- The Georgia/Alabama Chapter expanded to become the Southeast Chapter allowing for greater value and participation for members in outlying states including Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. See map to the right.
- We are continuing to enhance the QRCA website to better communicate with members, including a member resource area and member portal.

**Increasing Stature of QRCs Among External Audiences**
- A second successful Symposium on Excellence in Qualitative Research was held in Chicago. Featuring dynamic and intriguing case studies, qualitative researchers and their
clients joined together to share how both innovative and traditional approaches addressed client challenges and provided a strong research return on investment. See page 11 for more information and pictures from the Symposium.

- The first annual QRCA Award of Excellent in Qualitative Research was presented at the Symposium. Known as the Qually, this award represents the best of the best in qualitative research. We were proud to present the 2011 Qually Award to QRCA member Daniel Berkal and his client Britt Peterson.
- QRCA co-branded the New Qualitative Methods and Tools Directory with GreenBook. This directory provided QRCA with a great industry branding opportunity and members were provided discounted advertising rates as a member benefit.
- The Industry Relations Committee formed partnerships with six allied associations to cross-promote and link QRCA within the industry. Allied associations include: AMA, AQR, ARF, ESOMAR, MRIA and MRA.
- We highlighted our industry expertise and best practices via QRCA’s public LinkedIn discussion group which ended the year with more than 3,000 members!
- QRCA formed media partnerships with the GreenBook Research Industry Trends (GRIT) report and with Merlien Institute on their Qual Online 360 Conference in Milan to further the QRCA branding efforts and provide discounts to our members.

**Utilizing Association Best Practices**

- QRCA conducted a successful audit of the 2010 financials and updated the accounting manual based on recommendations from the auditors.
- VIEWS Android and iPhone mobile apps were developed so members can take our award-winning magazine on the road with them.
- The “Inside Scoop,” which communicates key association information to volunteer leaders, was enhanced and leaders are encouraged to share this presentation with members at Chapter meetings.
- An affiliate relationship with Amazon.com was established where QRCA will benefit financially when members shop Amazon via the QRCA website link.

QRCA continues to grow, evolve and enhance the value for our members while extending our role and visibility within the qualitative research community.
Vice President’s Report
by Susan Saurage-Altenloh

One of the more rewarding jobs performed by the Vice President is overseeing and coordinating the QRCA volunteer leaders who serve on committees, advisory groups, chapters and SIGs. The following leaders deserve recognition for their outstanding dedication to QRCA and its members during 2011. Only through the efforts of these proven leaders is QRCA able to accomplish so much. Thank you!

Committee Leaders:
Isabelle Albanese Qualitative Excellence Award
Kay Corry Aubrey Qualitative Excellence Award
Rebecca Bryant 2011 Symposium
Jennifer Dale Technology
Sarah Davies AQR/QRCA Joint Conference
Judy Langer Field
Manuela Fletcher International
J. Robert Harris Professionalism
Kelly Healy Connections
Rachael Krupcek QCcast
Ilka Kuhagen International
Abby Leafe Annual Conference
Dorrie Paynter Technology
Amy Shields Industry Relations
Mark Sumpter 2011 Sponsorship Chair
Laurie Tema-Lyn QRCA Views
Susan Thornhill Nominating
Kate Wagenlander Membership
Jeff Walkowski AQR/QRCA Joint Conference, Connections
Jay Zaltzman Annual Conference
Monica Zinchiak QRCA Views
Michele Zwilling Industry Relations

Task Force and Advisory Committee Leaders:
Steve Appel Public Relations Advisory Group
Diane Harris Historian

Mark Herring Investment Advisory Group
Chris Kann Public Relations Advisory Group
Ilka Kuhagen Event Content Task Force
Ricardo Lopez Member Communications Task Force

Chapter Leaders:
Roben Allong NY/Metropolitan NYC
Guylaine Ally-Bakerdjian Eastern Canada
Daniel Berkal Canada
Shaili Bhatt IL/Chicago
Linda Callahan New England
Angela Clark MI/Detroit Metro
Rosemary Driscoll New England
Michelle Ellis Florida
Jeff Etherton Pacific Northwest
Bill Fanning CA/San Francisco
Julie Francis CA/San Francisco
Mara Friedman Southern California
Barbara Gassaway Washington D.C.
Anni Gibbon OH/IN/KY
Elaine Gingold Minnesota
Corette Haf Virtual
Kathy Jacobs-Houk Virtual
Marty Johnson OH/IN/KY
Mike Karchner Philadelphia/Delaware Valley
Krista Knuffman Missouri
Jane Pepe CA/San Francisco
Joel Reish Southeast

Albert Sanchez Florida
Manny Schrager NY/Metropolitan NYC
Jen Simson New England
Randi Stillman Southeast
Mark Sumpter IL/Chicago
Regina Szyszkiwicz Pacific Northwest
Laurie Tema-Lyn Philadelphia/Delaware Valley
Lawrence Tobias NY/Metropolitan NYC
Rick Weitzer Missouri
Megann Willson Canada
Jay Zaltzman Southern California

SIG Leaders:
Bill Abrams Ethnography
Isabel Aneyba Latino
Missy Carvin Creativity + Innovation
Barry Davis Pharma/Healthcare
John Holcombe Ethnography
Kendall Nash Young Professionals
Susan Saurage-Altenloh Creativity + Innovation
Amy Savin Online
Kristin Schmitz Online
Ben Smithee Young Professionals
Marta Villanueva Creativity + Innovation, Latino

It is because of the efforts of these leaders that QRCA is able to accomplish so much!
Some of the great initiatives that emerged from QRCA committees and SIGs during 2011 are highlighted below:

• The **International Committee** selected two individuals for the Global Outreach Scholarship. Victoria Gamble (Australia) and Hana Procházková (Czech Republic) were the 2011 recipients and attended the Annual Conference in Las Vegas, NV.

• An overhauled Member Benefits listing was launched by the **Membership Committee** including discounts on training, services and education opportunities.

• Nine QCasts were held on a variety of topics throughout 2011 and are available in the archive on the website.

• The **Technology Committee** researched website options and proposed an upgrade to the Affiniscape Members360 platform. The group has also undertaken initiatives to optimize website SEO and increase forum usage.

• The **Field Committee** published a report entitled “On The Qualitative Frontline: Fieldwork Recruiters’ Views On Respondent Cooperation” which provides important insights into trends in respondent cooperation and continues to work on developing a Qualitative Respondent Registry.

• Liaisons were established with ESOMAR, MRA, MRIA, AMA, ARF, and AQR to enhance collaboration and sharing between organizations through the work of the **Industry Relations Committee**.

• The **Online SIG** continued its popular Third Thursday Digital Demonstrations which members found very valuable.

• The **Public Relations Advisory Group** worked with Hart Associates to build QRCA’s visibility and increase awareness, establish QRCA as the authority in qualitative research, promote QRCA to a national audience and increase business for all its members. Some of the 2011 highlights included:
  
  • 31 media placements
  • Enhanced content partnerships with American Marketing Association, GreenBook and Market Research Bulletin
  • Strengthened relationship with Quirk’s Marketing Research Review; secured and wrote a cover story for the November issue
  • Provided PR support to QRCA Qcast committee and for first QRCA Qually Award
  • Supported Symposium via PR counsel, ad trade with Market Research Bulletin and reporter attendance at the event

Finally, QRCA’s chapters and SIGs held numerous in-person and virtual meetings bringing members together in the sharing of best practices, new techniques, resources and camaraderie. Connecting and learning from fellow QRCA members have made qualitative researchers much more valuable to their clients. In many ways our chapters serve as the face for QRCA, and we are grateful for the leadership taking place across the globe in bringing QRCA members together.
Treasurer’s Report
by Foster Winter

QRCA continues to be a financially strong organization with cash reserves of nearly $580,000, which is well within the industry standard of 6-12 months of operating expenses. This amount is up slightly due to the positive net income in both 2010 and 2011. QRCA began actively investing at the end of 2010 based on the Investment Advisory Group’s recommendations. In 2011, this resulted in a positive gain of 3% on investments.

In 2011 new contracts were signed with Leading Edge, QRCA’s publisher of VIEWS and the Facilities and Services Directory, after a national search to confirm they were the right publisher for our needs. This has resulted in many enhancements and improvements in service, but also reduced the commission QRCA receives. Despite this change and the fact the Symposium revenues were under budget, by controlling expenses we achieved a slightly better than expected net income of $822.

Key financial activities in 2011:
- Engaged tax accounting firm who performed 2010 audit
- Revised accounting manuals to incorporate suggestions from auditors
- Continued to allocate funds toward PR and brand expansion
- Supported committee initiatives, including Symposium, QCasts and the Qually Award
- Significantly increased sponsorship at the Annual Conference

Key financial initiatives for 2012:
- Maintain adequate reserves
- Seek new revenue streams, increase existing ones
- Invest reserves to safely maximize returns

Looking forward, QRCA plans to focus on promoting our value to potential members and clients, implementing some revenue enhancing initiatives and continuing to control expenses. The budget for 2012 is conservative and we will work to continue strengthening our financial position.

Annual Comparison
Revenue | Expense | Net Income

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<th>2011</th>
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<td>Revenues</td>
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Revenue 2011

- Annual Conference: 37%
- Leading Edge Rebate: 55%
- Membership: 1%
- Other Income: 1%
- Spring Symposium: 6%
Balance Sheet

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<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<td>Net Income</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</strong></td>
<td>$623,534</td>
<td>$598,694</td>
<td>$480,806</td>
<td>$547,317</td>
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Statement of Cash Flows

Operating Activities Jan-Dec 2011

| Net Income | $822 |

Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided by operations:

| Accounts Receivable | $24,224 |
| Prepaid Expenses    | $3,562  |
| Prepaid Board       | $13,225 |
| Prepaid QRCA/AQR Conference | $-10,000 |
| Accounts Payable    | $7,243  |
| Deferred Revenue – Dues | $6,408 |

| Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities | $45,484 |

Financing Activities

| Unrealized gain/loss on Invest | $10,367 |
| Net cash provided by Financing Activities | $10,367 |

| Net cash increase for period | $58,851 |
| Cash at beginning of period  | $529,104 |
| Cash at end of period       | $584,955 |

Expenses 2011

- Management Fees: 11%
- Board of Directors: 5%
- Annual Conference: 30%
- Administrative Expenses: 41%
- Committee/Chapter Operations: 7%
- Spring Symposium: 6%
QRCA ANNUAL REPORT

QRCA Membership

**Member Retention**
2001 - 2011

**New Members**
2003 - 2011

**Year-End Membership**
2001 - 2011

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**Global Outreach Scholarship Recipients**

**Congratulations to: HANA PROCHÁZKOVÁ**
“I truly appreciated this opportunity to be introduced to the masterminds in qualitative research and I found new friends, as well as opportunities for future cooperation. And even if you are a first time attendee as I was — you will not be lost because everyone around me was very helpful and obliging.”

**Congratulations to: VICTORIA GAMBLE**
“I felt that coming to the QRCA conference would be a great way to tap into the shared experiences of a wide network of researchers, hear what people at the forefront of the industry have to say and find out what they are doing.”
In 2011, I oversaw the election for the 2011 – 2013 QRCA Board of Directors. There were four slots open as Nancy Hardwick and Matt Towers completed their terms and Susan Saurage-Altenloh and Susan Abbott were up for re-election. The following members were elected by their colleagues to serve on the Board: Susan Abbott, Kendall Nash, Susan Saurage-Altenloh and Monica Zinchiak.

The Board Members elected to serve as Officers (2011/2012) include: Susan Thornhill, President; Susan Saurage-Altenloh, Vice-President; Foster Winter, Treasurer; and Liz Van Patten, Secretary.

QRCA wants to gratefully recognize Nancy Hardwick and Matt Towers for their years of dedicated and exemplary service on the Board, which included a term as President for Nancy and Treasurer for Matt. Both members completed their terms in September of 2011.

Additional accomplishments in 2011 included updating the Board and Annual Conference Policies. All changes were summarized in the December Connections Executive Director’s article. All policy documents are available on the QRCA website under About Us, Bylaws and Policy Manuals.
2011 Las Vegas Annual Conference a Success
by Abby Leafe and Jay Zaltzman

The 2011 QRCA Annual Conference was held at The Venetian in Las Vegas, NV, October 13-15, 2011. The theme for this 26th Annual Conference was Learn, Connect, Have Fun. This year, Conference enhancements highlighted a Master Class Keynote Event, which included the observation and discussion of “live” focus groups, and the inclusion of eight educational sessions instead of seven.

Attendees gave the conference glowing reviews:

“The best way to stay relevant in today’s competitive marketing research world is to keep your skills up-to-date. How do you do that? Attend QRCA conferences! You learn, connect with colleagues and sponsors, and find ways to sharpen your skills, all in one location. What a great way to grow!” - Chelle Precht, Complete Research Connection

“The national QRCA Conferences are hands-down the best resource for anyone with any motivation to hone their edge in qualitative research. The networking opportunities are limitless! Fresh ideas are abundant!” - Jeff Henn, Baltimore Research

The conference was not all work and no play, however. Attendees had two opportunities to sample many of the world class restaurants that Las Vegas has to offer during Wednesday and Friday evening dine-arounds. The Thursday evening party at LAVO, provided a wonderful opportunity for all to experience the “Las Vegas nightclub scene.”

Important QRCA awards were given out during the conference, including: the President’s Award, which went to Dorrie Paynter for being a longstanding “strong and consistent contributor” to QRCA; the Maryanne Pflug Spirit Award, which went to “ray of sunshine” Kate Wagenlander for her enthusiastic contributions to the association; and the Rising Star Award, which went to sponsorship superstar Mark Sumpter, who “blew the doors off” this year’s Marketplace.

Speaking of sponsorship, kudos to Mark and his team for making this year’s marketplace fun, engaging and our most profitable to date. A big thank you to all the wonderful sponsors and exhibitors who helped make this conference such a successful event. Truly, it is only with the generous support of our sponsors and exhibitors that events like the Annual Conference can enrich our QRCA experience. Additionally, this conference would not have been possible without the incredible energy, excitement and effort of all of the conference team volunteers who contributed so much to its success.

We look forward to seeing everyone in Montreal, October 3 - 5 for the 2012 Annual Conference where you can “Immerse Yourself” in the best of QRCA.
On May 12, 2011, the University Club of Chicago teamed with professionals wanting to hear how QRCA members and their clients used qualitative research to produce winning results.

Patricia Martin, author of Renaissance Generation, The Rise of the Cultural Consumer and What it Means to Your Business, kicked off the day with a keynote focused on the critical role that qualitative research has played and will continue to play in the future success of companies. She stressed that as social media continue to speed up global communications, those companies with the spot-on consumer insights will be the companies best positioned to anticipate the market. In a world of rapidly changing commerce and instant communications, great qualitative researchers are essential.

Our members and their respective clients showcased how they used any number of approaches – ranging from traditional focus groups to the latest in online ethnography – to conduct innovative, insightful and results-oriented research. Canadian Tire learned more about the men in their stores. AARP went way upstream to tap into the attitudes of those they hope to have as customers decades from now. The Qually Award Winners showed how an advertising agency benefited from investing in qualitative research designed to sharpen their “pitch.” Repeatedly, clients boasted wins and credited QRCs with leading the way to success.

The Symposium generated 20+ articles in industry-related press, including the November 2011 Quirk’s cover story. Other highlights included:

• First-ever interactive QCast from a Symposium where presenters could field questions from both on-site attendees and from the virtual audience.
• First-ever presentation of the Qually Award.
• First time that professors from the University of Wisconsin brought students.
• The 2011 Symposium generated great buzz for QRCA.

After the presentations, attendees from Canada, Western Europe, from all across the U.S. and from as far away as Russia joined presenters in the library for cocktails and conversation – a fitting end to an exciting jam-packed day of learning.