

# THE RESEARCH NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Editors: Phyllis Vangelder and Tom Punt

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## NETWORK PURPOSES AND PLANS

The Research Network was launched in the second half of 2002 with the encouragement of the Market Research Benevolent Association. With very little publicity it has already accumulated 123 members and convened a very successful inaugural lunch in September 2002. *Please see Page 3 for details of the next lunch on 10 April 2003.*

It is designed mainly to provide contact, communication and, when needed, support for longstanding current and former market research practitioners. But anyone, regardless of age, who recognises and values the experience of those who built the success of the market research industry over the years, is welcome to join.

### Objectives

As the market research industry moves into its maturity, the leading industry associations must inevitably focus on the current, active membership. But at the same time there is an increasing number of longstanding members whose value and needs should not be overlooked. The Network aims to ensure this does not happen, and has been set up with the following objectives:

- To maintain contact with senior and longstanding members and former members of the MRS
- To do this by means of a Newsletter, occasional low-cost meetings in central London and, when welcomed as appropriate, individual contact

- To provide a channel for social, professional and financial support where needed in accordance with the objectives of the MRBA
- To ensure that the current activities and historic contribution of longstanding members should be communicated to the broader MRS membership and elsewhere.

### Activities

- There will be two meetings in central London each year, comprising a low-cost buffet lunch at a large research agency or other premises sponsored/hosted by one of the members.
- There is a voluntary subscription of £25.00 a year. This is not obligatory, and no one should feel they cannot belong because of cost constraints.
- A Newsletter will be produced twice a year.
- There is no age barrier for membership. It is a self-selecting group growing mainly through contact by existing members
- Without being intrusive, members of the Network will be alert to the needs of individuals needing contact or support, so that appropriate cases can be referred to the MRBA.

Please draw the Network to the attention of researchers or ex-researchers who may be interested, but may not yet have heard of it. The growth of the Network will rely very much on word-of-mouth contact and snowballing.

A Steering Committee has been set up consisting of Peter Bartram (Chairman), Johann Aucamp, George Brzezinski, Stephen Ellis, Jane Gwilliam, Linda Henshall, Pam Moy, Tom Punt and Phyllis Vangelder. The Secretary/Treasurer is Gill Wareing, 6 Walkfield Drive, Epsom Downs, Surrey, KT18 5UF. Tel: 01737 379261 <mailto:gwareing@lineone.net>

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## WHO ARE WE ANYWAY?

*Tom Punt does some analysis*

This is not an analysis of a collective identity crisis, though that might be an interesting avenue to explore, but rather a basic profile of the 116 of us that there were at 16 December 2002. These data have been compiled only from information that members have agreed should be available to other members. However, names have been cross-referenced with the Register of The Market Research Society, in the form available online to all of us who are members. No other information from the original questionnaire has been analysed.

**Gender** 55% of the total current MRS Membership is female but less than one-third of our Membership, 32%. It must just mean of course that comparatively fewer older market researchers are female, though I do remember a few formidable women around in 1952 when I first started in market research, some of whom are, sadly, no longer with us.

**Residence** The majority of us have an address in London or the Home Counties although we live in some interesting clusters outside these areas, notably in the West Country.

County of Given Address	Percentage of Members (116=100%)
Greater London (mainly London postcodes)	27.6
Surrey	17.2
Kent	9.5
Hertfordshire	5.2
Buckinghamshire	4.3
Berkshire	2.6
Hampshire	1.7
<b>Sub-total London &amp; Home Counties</b>	<b>68.1</b>
Sussex	3.5
Somerset/Devon/Dorset/Wiltshire	8.7
Other English Counties	12.1
Wales/Scotland	2.6
Outside United Kingdom	4.3

**Membership of the MRS** The majority of us, 81%, are members of The Market Research Society although, using my own knowledge of those who appear not to be members, most have been so in the past. Of the 94 members who are also MRS members the majority (64%) have been members for 30 years or more and a significant proportion, amongst these, for 40 years or more (29%). Our two most senior were founder members in 1946. The original invitation to join was sent to over-65s but our newest members are mostly younger and we are open to all with a long-standing involvement in the research industry.

Our members include one past President and 12 former Chairmen of the MRS, 5 Honorary Members and 26 Fellows. Over 20 are current CEOs or Chairmen of leading research companies and many more are directors of such companies. Another 21 are former or current heads of research in leading client organisations.

As well as Fellows and Honorary Members the 94 MRS members comprise 29 Full Members, 4 Associate Members, 14 Field Members and 16 Retired Members.

**Internet** The majority of us have Internet access or rather, perhaps more accurately, 73% have given an email address that they do not object to being published. A little plea here: if you have Internet access but do not wish to give an email address please let Gill know since it might in time be possible to publish this Newsletter by means of our own website. Please note that in the electronic edition of this Newsletter all website and email addresses appear as hyperlinks.



"The older we get, the better we were"  
Yale University alumni tee-shirt slogan

"If not now, when?"  
Hillel, the Elder

"Nothing is more responsible for the good old days than a bad memory"  
Franklin Adams

"Men are like wine. Some turn to vinegar, but the best improve with age"  
Pope John XXIII

"We are the coffin-dodgers' network. We live in Cardigan Country and are proud of it"  
Terry Wogan, on BBC Radio 2

"The first forty years give us the text; the next thirty years supply the commentary"  
Arthur Schopenhauer

"Enjoy yourself: it's later than you think"  
Chinese proverb

"My eyes have seen much,  
but they are not weary.  
My ears have heard much,  
But they thirst for more"  
Rabindranath Tagore

"Growing old - it's not nice, but it's interesting"  
August Strindberg

#### Letter from Michael Bird to The Times

"Sir,

Marketing men will be eager to know whether the computer which dubbed a male customer 'Mrs Sample' (Letter January 28) had also given him a first name.  
'Random' and 'Free' rather charmingly come to mind".

### **DON'T MISS THE SECOND NETWORK LUNCH 10 APRIL 2003 The Reform Club.**

Those of you who attended the first Research Network lunch at the offices of Research International last September will remember the pleasure of the 'nostalgia kicks' when meeting colleagues and friends whom you had not seen for many years. 44 people attended that inaugural meeting. It was not only a convivial social occasion but also it set the scene for the way the Network would be run and the way it could provide support facilities to anyone who needed them.

It is planned to hold Network lunches twice a year, in April and October.

**The next one will be on the 10 April at the Reform Club, Pall Mall.** In spite of the grand setting, it will be an informal occasion with a buffet lunch and ample opportunity to move around to meet people and 'network'. It will also cover any business items relating to the Network. It is very important to have members' input into its development and any suggestions are very welcome.

**This lunch will be hosted by Geoffrey Roughton and thanks to his very generous sponsorship, the cost of the lunch has been kept down to £15 a head.** This notice will be followed by a general mailing, but if you would like to book a place now please send a cheque for £15 to Gill Wareing, 6 Walkfield Drive, Epsom Downs, Surrey KT18 5UF.

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH NETWORK WILL BE ON THE MRBA STAND AT THE MRS CONFERENCE**

## MADELEINES AND METHODOLOGIES

In the first of a series on classic theories and practices in research, Dr Elizabeth Nelson writes about the theories of Martin Fishbein. Liz has had a very active 'life after market research' in public service as, amongst many other official posts, Chairman of an NHS Healthcare Trust and Vice Chairman of the Open University. She was awarded the OBE for services to Ecolabelling and received the Gold Medal of the MRS in 1993. Martin Fishbein is now Distinguished Professor in Communication at the Public Policy Center, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania. The photograph of Liz and Martin below is reproduced with Liz's kind permission.



### FISHBEIN AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO OUR INDUSTRY

During the '60s and '70s scepticism about the value of survey research grew rapidly. In Britain the status of market research probably reached its all time low in 1970, during the General Election. Heath won against all the predictions of the pollsters. In most of the published surveys there had been a preference for the Labour Party. Behaviour did not follow. In that most visible test of their efficiency, surveys had failed to perform.

About the same time a young professor in Social Psychology and a visiting professor at the London School of Economics, Martin Fishbein, began to lecture on his new theory about the relationship of attitudes and behaviour.

#### The Model

If we take a trip back in history but with an up-to-date issue, such as positive discrimination, we can more easily track Fishbein's contribution to our methodology. Ideally the social researcher wants to know whether a majority of the electorate would vote for a policy of positive discrimination.

Pre-Fishbein, social researchers had used Likert scales to measure 'attitudes' on such questions as: 'Positive discrimination in employing black people is a fair policy' followed by a 5-point Likert agree/disagree scale. This statement would be followed by many other belief statements such as: 'Black people have not had the same opportunity to advance in local government jobs'.

What Fishbein argued was that this approach was not predictive. The researchers were not measuring attitudes, but only beliefs about the object (positive discrimination). According to Fishbein the researcher must also ask:

- how strongly the belief is held. How certain are you that positive discrimination in employing more black people is a fair policy?
- how positive or negative the respondent feels about being fair to black people. Is fairness to black people a good or bad thing?

The attitude model is stated as follows:  $A_o = \sum B_i a_i$

$A_o$  overall attitude to an object

$B_i$  the belief-strength with which any one item is held

$a_i$  the evaluation of the object, goal or value with which it links the original attitude object

Fishbein also questioned *how many* individual beliefs are relevant (or salient) towards a particular object. He persuaded many of us to question what variables and how many variables should be included in our questionnaires about a policy, or brand, or political leader. To complete the model, Fishbein went on to investigate 'Intention' to act in a particular way and how this is related to attitudes. The complete formula is

$$B \leftarrow BI = A_{act} + N_b$$

$B$  behaviour

$BI$  the behavioural intention, which is considered immediately to precede the behaviour

$A_{act}$  the attitude to the behaviour 'Voting for positive discrimination is a good thing'

$N_b$  social normative belief about the act concerned.



To keep this as simple as possible, Fishbein argued that social factors could affect the intention to act in a particular way. Salient social factors could be measured by questions such as:

'My trade union leader expects me to vote in favour of positive discrimination'

'My parents expect me to vote in favour of positive discrimination'

**In retrospect** Mary Tuck, who was a post graduate student at LSE and studied with Fishbein in the '60s, did more than any one person in the UK to ensure Fishbein's reputation as a truly innovative thinker. Such was her influence that Fishbein is probably better known here in academic and commercial sectors than in the States. Her conclusions about his contribution can be summarised from her paper given at the ESOMAR Conference in 1971.

What we have learned from Fishbein:

- 1- the separation of attitude from beliefs
- 2- the importance of establishing the salient beliefs – the search for one or two determining beliefs or factors
- 3- the importance of attitude to the act; getting respondents to think about a particular action rather than the object in isolation
- 4- the emphasis on man as a social animal. Social norms matter; consumers are a part of the social world; they perceive expectations from others.

Others disagree with Mary Tuck and have argued that we still cannot generalise about how attitudes and behaviours interact. Perhaps, as Joyce\* said, attitudes and behaviour interact in a feedback loop.

Others including O'Shaughnessy\*\* say that Fishbein has been overtaken by 'values' as a basis for predicting behaviour as well as a basis for advertising appeal. How could I possibly argue against that criticism? Nevertheless let me add my own thoughts about how Fishbein continues to question survey research methodology:

- Are researchers robust enough in their questionnaire wording?
- Do they limit the beliefs statements to those which are salient to the respondent?
- Do we still confuse attitudes and beliefs?

Should we not revisit the relationship between intentions to behave in a certain way and the strength of beliefs and social norms, particularly in the field of development of social policy?

\* 'What Do We Know About How Advertising Works?' Noordwijk aan Zee 1967 pp. 90-127

\*\* 'Competitive Marketing' 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Routledge 1995

### Market Research Benevolent Association

The Research Network has been launched under the auspices of the MRBA from which it has received unstinted support, including seed money.

The MRBA was set up in 1977 to help people working in research, and their dependents, if at any time in their lives they needed support. During these 25 years, it has quietly and unobtrusively assisted hundreds of people in the industry, sometimes in only small ways. In some cases, however, the Association provides major support over a period of years. In all cases the help is sensitive, appropriate and, of course, confidential.

It is hoped that the Research Network will act as a conduit for people who need the support of MRBA. Contact Gill Wareing for further information. Tel: 01737 379261.

Following last year's successful launch, another online auction sponsored by NOP Research Group will be held during The Market Research Society Conference to raise money for MRBA. Bids can be made at any time before or during the Conference. Log onto: <http://www.nopworld.com/mrba/>. Offers of items or services suitable for auction (not necessarily hard goods – holiday home stays were very popular last year) should be made to Steve Ellis at his email address: <mailto:semrc@btopenworld.com>

## Not forgotten

**We mourn the recent passing of the following people who contributed so much to the research industry.**

**Louise Bahns** formerly Research Director at Pegram Walters International and latterly European Research Director at Yahoo!, where she actively contributed to the increasing learning about online research.

**Simon Broadbent** Leo Burnett. An outstanding original thinker and contributor to best practice in advertising and media research and campaign evaluation. He was instrumental in developing current thinking on how to measure advertising effects and build those results into media planning tools which optimise the marketing budget. He played a key role in the establishment of the IPA Advertising Effectiveness Awards.

**Ian Grieg** Lancaster University Management School

**Michael Maister** founder of Strategy in Focus and Research in Focus

**Malcolm Mather** well-known international researcher. Previously Director of Gallup.

**Rosemary Murray** Managing Director of MORI On-Line

**Neale Pharoah** He originally worked with Bill Schlackman. After Schlackman's wound up, Neale joined MEMRB in Cyprus, playing an active part in their international expansion, particularly in Eastern Europe.

**Janet Pottinger** doyenne of Fieldwork, after a very long and brave struggle with cancer.

**Prosper Riley-Smith** qualitative research guru, a former Chairman of AQR (Association of Qualitative Researchers).

**Peter Schmidt CBE** President of ESOMAR 1966-68 and an Honorary Member of ESOMAR. Formerly Managing Director of DIVO, MD of INRA Europe and Vice President of METRA Group. He later joined British Nylon Spinners, a company taken over by ICI where he was Chairman and CEO of the Group in Germany.

**Norman Squirrel** One of the most influential founding fathers of the UK market research industry who set up a trail-blazing market research department at Procter & Gamble in Newcastle, the alumni of which went on to high-level careers, both conducting and buying research surveys. He was a Honorary Member of The Market Research Society.

**Jan Stapel** One of the pioneers of commercial market research in The Netherlands, founding NIPO with Wim de Jonge in 1945. He was a co-founder of Gallup and a founding and Honorary Member of ESOMAR.

**The next issue of this Newsletter will be produced in late summer 2003  
Contributions and letters are invited especially on opinions, reminiscences and  
current perspectives on 'life after market research'.**

**Please send these to: Phyllis Vangelder 17 Kenelm Close, Harrow HA1 3TE or**

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