



Richer data, better insights

Why digital tracking is essential to every consumer insights strategy in 2019

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As we close out the year and look

forward to 2019, we all know that the pace of decision-making will only get faster and the need for insights will become more and more critical. We predict that digital tracking and behavioral insight will become “must haves” for the insights industry to truly understand consumers. As consumers adopt more and more digital behaviors across different platforms and apps, digital tracking will allow us as insights professionals to enable marketers to mine richer data, develop better insight into consumers and calibrate their marketing campaigns for the best results.

Here are three reasons we believe digital tracking needs to be a core part of every consumer insights strategy in 2019.

1. Digital tracking provides insight into unanswerable questions

In our always-on digital world, consumers quickly lose the ability to accurately answer questions about their

online behavior. Think about your own Web and mobile usage. If you're like most people, you flit back and forth between your smartphone, tablet and desktop. Now add to that countless social media, shopping and entertainment apps you use every single day. This will only continue to increase in 2019. In fact, according to measurement company Zenith, reported by Recode, in 2019 consumers will – for the first time ever – spend more time online than watching TV. This is significant. But are most of us prepared?

With traditional research, insights professionals may ask consumers about their online behavior but it will simply get harder for consumers to accurately answer these types of behavioral questions. Though consumers can likely recall their last trip to the grocery store, they may not recall when they last visited Amazon.com and what for. The pace of consumerism has changed and can be difficult to capture. Digital tracking can provide a full, clear and distinct road map of a customer's online behavior and will increasingly be the key to uncovering insights into questions that otherwise aren't truly answerable.

2. Insights professionals can't anticipate all questions marketers may have

In the same way that it's impos-

sible for consumers to accurately answer market research questions related to their online behavior, researchers are finding it harder to accurately ask questions that provide marketers with the right type of insight. In 2019, marketers will face increased pressure to optimize marketing channels and maximize ROI on marketing spend. Market research will continue to play a part in data gathering but consumer insights professionals can't anticipate all of the questions that a marketer may have in today's complex digital world.

Insights have become much more agile, real-time and on-demand than ever with platform-based approaches for reaching consumers and influencer communities worldwide. However, surveys require the right questions be asked within a methodology that provides the right outcomes. Adding to this challenge is the fact that many questions simply can't be answered in traditional survey formats anymore. Open-ended questions are often a challenge to interpret and analyze. Digital tracking can help solve for this and provide a forward-looking approach to market research.

3. Research needs to be transformational

As laid out above, the gap between claimed and observed behavior continues to widen for countless reasons.



In order to bridge this gap moving forward, insights professionals must adopt more comprehensive and robust methodologies in order to provide the deep insights that marketers depend on the insights industry for.

While the integration of behavioral data may be a new approach to some marketers, digitally-native “disruptor brands” are often built on the idea. The most innovative brands are already positioning for the future with digital tracking. Growth hacking is based on the idea of put-

ting forth a minimum viable product or idea and learning how consumers react to it. Those companies know that such data is a better indicator of success than traditional market testing alone.

But digital tracking isn’t just available to digitally-native companies. It can be used by brands of all sizes across all industries to see how consumers are finding, perceiving and buying their brand online or in real-world conditions. This will become a reality as insights becomes

more democratized in the future. Combined with more survey data, digital tracking can show marketers a full picture and provide a true understanding of their customers in real-time. If seeing is believing, then digital tracking is knowing.

What is your plan to incorporate digital tracking into your strategy for 2019?

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