

## SOUND OFF

# Leveraging a **Pop-Up Community** as an Integrated Research Platform

November 2015



**SMX Sound Off:** Sound bits (of advice) and bites (of research) from Ipsos SMX – Ipsos' social media research division, dedicated to providing better ways to engage, interact and listen to consumers through collaborative, online communities and social intelligence, thus helping brands gain better insights to inspire and accelerate business growth.

## PEOPLE BEFORE TECHNOLOGY

Today's research landscape is saturated with various technology providers competing to win the hearts and minds of consumers and industry professionals alike. The market research online community (MROC) space is no exception. MROC providers offer everything from SaaS to full-service solutions, ranging from differentiated software and tools, to varied approaches that strive to enhance and/or accelerate traditional qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

While technology, when applied correctly, is more important and empowering to research than ever before, at Ipsos we still believe in a "people first" approach. Our communities are based on our strong belief that innovation and change come from people and not technology. People (consumers) need to be at the core of the products we develop, just as people (researchers) need not only to create the environment for consumers to share openly, but also provide the expertise to design and analyze effective research that generates truly impactful insights.

## OUR INTEGRATED APPROACH

To this end, we have worked across the organization and with our key client stakeholders to develop and execute several specific approaches leveraging our "pop-up" (aka "short-term") community platform for integrated research, to provide holistic, consumer-centric solutions.



### An Ipsos "pop-up" community:

- 1** PROVIDES AN ENGAGING, TURNKEY ENVIRONMENT TO GAIN DEPTH, UNDERSTANDING AND ITERATIVE LEARNING WITH YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE
- 2** LEVERAGES INDUSTRY AND RESEARCH EXPERTISE FROM ACROSS IPSOS TO INFORM STUDY DESIGN AND ANALYSIS
- 3** ACTS AS A "LINK" FOR VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF AN OVERARCHING RESEARCH PLAN, BOTH ONLINE AND OFFLINE

**“I REALLY APPRECIATE THAT IPSOS SMX WENT ABOVE & BEYOND TO INTEGRATE INSIGHTS ACROSS ALL THE IPSOS PLATFORMS...THIS INTEGRATED APPROACH IS WHAT WE VALUE AT OUR COMPANY AND WE LOVE WHEN THEY DELIVER ANALYSES AND INSIGHTS IN “ONE IPSOS VOICE.”** — Ipsos CPG Client

**“Our community has been an extremely valuable resource to complement our in-house qualitative research. Creating such regular research content for discussions and surveys has helped key stakeholders be invested in research and be proactive about getting customer feedback early on in the product development process.”**

— Ipsos Telecom Client

## HOW DOES A POP-UP COMMUNITY WORK?

Pop-up communities are by definition short-term, with a focused objective, initiative or target. They are designed to be quick, agile, and cost-efficient, and can be executed for as little as \$30K for a 3-week engagement.

Research is focused on iterative learning, to bring the consumer’s point of view to the table each week, and seasoned community managers guide discussion using the tenets and best practices of social media communication. Start by getting a foundational understanding of attitudes, and follow with focused innovation or co-creation activities, all the while optimizing and validating insights.



**RECRUIT & SET-UP**  
2-3 WEEKS

- Client List or Custom Recruit

### — PROFILE AND QUALIFY

- Qualifying participants are invited to share feedback in a community



**ASK & ENGAGE**  
2 WEEKS - 6 MONTHS

- Co-creation and collaboration via engaging qualitative and quantitative tools
- Research design and moderation using proven methods translated for digital
- Opportunities for integrated objectives and iterative learning

### — FINAL REPORT

- Synthesized findings from across the full project delivered in a compelling report with key insights and recommendations



**ANALYZE & DELIVER**

- Weekly summaries, topline research findings and final report

## CASE STUDY #1

## POP-UP COMMUNITY TO COMPLEMENT SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND OFFLINE QUALITATIVE

## BUSINESS OBJECTIVES:

Our QSR client wished to bring the consumer voice into the design and development of an optimal digital experience and mobile app for their brand. This included the development of “persona” profiles that brought the consumer journey to life in a rich, vibrant way.

- 1. Persona Profiles** - Develop rich persona profiles of customers that go beyond existing data to inform design of optimal digital experiences to drive purchase and loyalty.
- 2. Digital Strategy Development** - Provide framework for optimal experience + path to loyalty as supported by digital assets across advertising, social media, apps, etc.
- 3. Mobile App Design** - Inform design of new mobile app with relevant uses, features, and experience to drive purchase and loyalty.

## INTEGRATED RESEARCH APPROACH:

We designed a 4-week pop-up community to take a deep dive into consumer behavior and foundational understanding, including emotional and rational drivers behind the digital and mobile journey. To help inform the community discussions PRIOR to launch, we conducted a digital audit across the brand’s owned and earned media online, which helped us understand themes and performance against key competitors, and gaps in the overall digital experience. Finally, we executed offline intercepts and IDI’s (in-store and at home) as a last step, to capture additional context and in-the-moment observation.

## RESULTS:

Leveraging several key specializations within Ipsos, including social intelligence, community expertise, qualitative research and marketing strategy, we were able to deliver comprehensive findings that combined learning from online social and community conversations (both organic and guided) with robust in-person observation and strategic activation sessions. This allowed us to paint a rich, “real life” picture of the consumer that went beyond the data to convey the “real humans” behind the key touch points of their digital experience.



## CASE STUDY #2

# POP-UP COMMUNITY AS A “LINK” FOR EXTERNAL RESEARCH COMPONENTS

### BUSINESS OBJECTIVES:

Our financial client wished to explore and better understand customer and prospects' “perfect” banking experience in order to develop a holistic and consumer-centric strategy. While they were confident in their objectives and hypotheses, they were also seeking guidance and category expertise in a partner who could not only conduct the research but also consult on the overarching business questions and help them implement action against the findings.

- Foundationally understand consumers' attitudes toward their finances and financial institutions
- Understand consumers' perfect bank and banking experience
- Explore what factors make up the “Bank of the Future”

### INTEGRATED RESEARCH APPROACH:

Upon hearing about the breadth, depth and longitudinal aspect of our client's objectives, we recommended an integrated, multi-pronged approach made up of various Ipsos specializations. Leveraging market intelligence, an online community, a consumer workshop, in-person focus groups and quantitative deep-dives, we were able to ensure synergy and efficiency by working as one team throughout the process.

Our solution was designed to be iterative and collaborative throughout the process. Each stage of the research built upon learning from the previous stage, and we stayed flexible enough to shift or even eliminate components based on ongoing discovery.

We started off by conducting market intelligence on the financial services industry, which uncovered numerous insights regarding industry trends and key statistics on consumer behavior, which in turn helped shape and inform the questions we asked as we moved into primary research. An 8-week pop-up community then allowed us to 1) efficiently and effectively cover a subset of questions each week with various audience segments the client wanted to cover and 2) vet and optimize concepts and ideas generated in the offline component throughout the duration of the project.



### RESULTS:

The community, in this case, acted as a “link” between all of the research components. We were able to leverage it not only for foundational understanding and inspiration in the early weeks to inform the workshops, concepts and overall strategy, but again to vet and optimize concepts from the consumer workshop, focus groups and quantitative deep dives. This ultimately allowed us to provide our client with a clear, holistic and well-supported strategic direction that fit with their brand.

## 5 SOUND BITS OF ADVICE

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1

**Adopt a “people first” approach** in your community-based research initiatives. Communities are built upon engagement and in-depth understanding of your audience, which go beyond the technology.

2

**Leverage multiple stakeholders** from your internal organization and your research partner, to optimize the expertise needed for successful design and execution in each stage of the process.

3

**Be open to iterative learning**, which is a key advantage of community-based research. Build upon learning from previous stages of research to inform the next stage of discovery.

4

**Combine online and offline methodologies** where appropriate, and use your community as an overarching “link” to vet and optimize concepts and ideas from various sources.

5

**Conduct “pre-” and “post-” community studies**, whether in the form of secondary market intelligence, social data analysis or qualitative/quantitative deep dives to complement community learning with broader, contextual insights.

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