



Horst Stipp
Senior Vice President of Strategic Insights and Innovation
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Part 4/4

Greetings and welcome to “The Research Insider” – a special podcast series of interviews with market research and consumer insights experts, each of whom will be featured at IIR USA’s annual TMRE conference – otherwise known as The Market Research Event – taking place November 8th thru the 10th in San Diego, CA.

Today we bring you part four: the final segment of our four-part interview with Horst Stipp, Senior Vice President of Strategic Insights & Innovation at NBC Universal.

Horst, our last three segments focused heavily on changes taking place in the media environment, and more specifically, the questions those changes raise in terms of media consumption and advertising effectiveness, and how you and your team at NBC Universal are addressing these issues.

But interestingly enough, by the end of our third interview, we sort of circled back to that fundamental Wanamaker question. While the technology has changed, we’re still by and large asking many of the same types questions. What’s your response to that?

Horst: The one thing that I forgot to mention in all of that – which actually is sort of the most obvious one because I’ll be talking about it at The Market Research Event – is our collaboration with Google. What happened here was that there was a new player that we work with selling some ad inventory for us and it was

fascinating for us to get some more insights into what they were doing. But, in the process of working with them, we discovered another new metric that nobody had thought of before, which was Google searches. We will present data at The Market Research Event that came out of this collaboration with Google and is basically new – on the one hand – and that’s why we are actually presenting it in two parts at TMRE. One is more methodologically focused on showing the ad effects, showing how their metric can be used as a measure of ad effect. In the other section, we try to shed a little different light on it and show it with a different context. The context here is really changing media behavior. What happens when people watch television and use their smartphone and their computer at the same time? What does that mean for advertising? The interesting thing that we are going to reveal is that against a lot of assumptions, there is actually a very positive effect that can come from using two media at the same time, which is your ability to respond to an advertisement immediately by going to your phone or computer or to your laptop and searching out information about the product that you just saw advertised. So, we will be presenting data on that, I think, on Monday and on Wednesday. It is just another example of this innovation and just this ongoing development of using new, interesting methods for research.

The focus seems to often be about how what we are measuring relates across the respective different media, and the ways that they engage with it. While those are changing, the thing that I find a little bit amusing, personally, is that some of the questions remain the same. Early in our interview series – in part two – you noted that someone might have the television going while they are doing the laundry. Well, what level of engagement is there when multi-tasking? That’s not really a lot different than determining the effect of using multiple media on engagement or whatever metrics you want to use to assess effectiveness, right?

Horst: Right.

So, the more things change, the more they stay the same in some ways.

Horst: There you go.

I had one last question and I think this is the one question that people really want to know about from you. How can your current or prospective research suppliers – your partners – adjust, improve and innovate to better meet some of the needs you’ve outlined here? There will be a very large exhibition hall at this event. A lot of new people, as you mentioned, emerging constantly. I think that’s why the exhibition halls at research conferences are, perhaps, more interesting than what you’ll find at other events. Now, what can they do to make you happy?

Horst: Well, we could spend a whole hour on that. It is a complicated issue.

A couple of bullets would be good.

Horst: My bullets would be: number one is transparency. And number two would be honesty. Tell me exactly what you do, what you can do, what the measurement does. And I think there is -- because of the competitiveness and the price pressures there are a lot of companies that are trying to promise you the world and you have to be kind of careful with that. That’s a good idea. If I was on the other side, I don’t know if I would have a solution. You’ve got to get people’s attention and so on.

The other issue is the issue of research quality. There are some people in the research field, and some of them come from the digital area, where – this is going to sound terrible – but, they don’t have much classic research training. Sometimes when you hear or work with people like that, you realize that you are talking to a sales guy. There isn’t really as much information about the methodology and problems and so on as you would want. That is something that is a problem for me, personally. So, that would be my thinking. But, I am sympathetic to these guys. They are under tremendous pressure. And there are a lot of people who give jobs according to who gives the lowest price. That, of course, puts tremendous pressure on the quality, as well as the kind of caliber of people that you hire to do your research.

Is this just with prospective suppliers or do you find that you are facing these issues with some of your current suppliers?

Horst: Oh, no. This is true of the whole business. Yeah. Yeah. From everybody we deal with.

Just wanted to clarify that.

Horst: Absolutely, Marc. Oh, no. No. I didn't want to pick on any individual. It's the whole industry.

These could be people you're working with, as well?

Horst: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

Any last piece of advice? You mentioned transparency and depth, if you will. An ability to really be able to tell you -- to answer the questions someone like you would have. Is there anything else that strikes you that people should think about when they are dealing with someone like yourself? To really help you?

Horst: Well, I don't know. I think that sort of covers it. And I'm not suggesting that most suppliers do a bad job or anything.

No, certainly not.

Horst: I don't want to pile on the criticism and the advice in all of that. I just want to single out a couple of issues.

Well, I think you did it quite succinctly and nicely. You've been extremely generous with your time and we've covered an enormous amount of ground here.

For our listeners who may be interested in hearing more from Horst, he will be presenting twice at The Market Research Event with Google TV's Dan Zigmund, first on Monday, November 8th and again on a separate, but related topic on Wednesday the 10th. These are going to be some really groundbreaking presentations.

For more information about The Market Research Event, please visit us online at www.iirusa.com/research/event-home.xml

Horst, thank you so much for joining us and for some really fantastic insights. I can't wait to hear what you've uncovered about today's media consumer with Google.

Until next time, this is Marc Dresner for IIR USA reminding that there is still time to register for The Market Research Event, November the 8th through the 10th in San Diego. We're expecting record attendance this year, and you don't want to miss out. Hope to see you there!