



# Cactus Call

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Southwest Chapter—Marketing Research Association

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CACTUS CALL is a bi-monthly publication issued by the Southwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association.

Comments, suggestions and submissions should be sent to: Kim Larson at 435/753-9014, or [klarson@drgutah.com](mailto:klarson@drgutah.com)

If you wish to place an ad, please call Robin McClure at 972/869-2366, for a fax order form. Cost for a one-time ad is \$30; to have the ad run in four consecutive issues costs \$25 each. Please call as soon as possible as the next deadline is August 23, 2000.

## Message from the president

It's hard to believe it's time to pass on the Presidency. This does not mean you won't be hearing from me. I'll be serving on the board for another year and, after that, will actively participate in all things that help make the chapter more successful. I'm looking forward to working with all of you. If you have not been active in the past, I hope you have been turned on by all the wonderful things this chapter has accomplished.

I'm proud to look back over the last year to what has been accomplished during this boards reign.

**Las Vegas:** This is the crown jewel each year for the chapter. This year I felt we did an exceptional job. The speakers were special, bringing new insights as to how to work in today's changing world. I always feel if you go home with one or two new ideas the conference is a success, and I did that! It was also a success in terms of the number of first timers to this conference. An amazing 40% of the 150 attendees were new. I choose to take this as a sign of the growing interest and future participation in the association. The best part to me was the warm, sharing spirit among all attendees. It was nice to see familiar faces and to get to know new faces.

**Scholarship:** Our scholarship program took a while to put together but the outcome was exciting. The board felt that furthering education in our field was our most important goal. So far we have received three applications. I hope companies are looking at it as a serious opportunity to improve your employees' skill sets.

**Chapter Celebration:** The Chapter Celebration will take place August 12<sup>th</sup> in Austin and is truly a noteworthy endeavor. We frequently see upper management attending regional and national conferences, but middle management doesn't often get this opportunity. This conference is designed for them. The seminars are geared to help them help you turn your business into a major profit center. The program should be rewarding and give major direction in how to supervise a facility and what clients are looking for when choosing their vendors. This has been a goal for several years now and we are proud to say we have achieved it.

**Cactus Call:** We have tried to add more spice and a new look to our newsletter. We think we have done a good job. Of course, we would know better if our membership would give us some feedback. It can be in the form of helpful criticism, exciting articles or just letting us know that they are being read!

**Overall:** The hardest thing to do in a chapter as widespread as ours is maintaining an active, involved membership. We need YOU to make that happen. We need volunteers, feedback and suggestions for activities you want us to provide. I would also like to hear feedback on my year as President. Please keep those letters rolling in (for those of you who remember Dean Martin).

Thank you for letting me be your President for the past year. I have confidence that things will keep improving with our new President Mike Exinger and his new board. I also want to give my heartfelt thanks to my board and all the volunteers without whom none of this would have happened. Here is a special toast to all my co-workers on the Southwest Chapter Board.

Peggy O'Connor

2000/2001

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**MRA Southwest Chapter**

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## The Internet Explosion Supports On-Line Consumer and Public Opinion Research

By Karl Geoffrey Feld  
Western Wats Opinion Research  
Center, LC

The Internet is here to stay as a research tool! Is this merely a bold statement or an inescapable conclusion? Today, as the research industry conducts ever more research via the Web, we find that believers are rapidly replacing the nay sayers. When the Internet was introduced in 1995, researchers initially used it for a few narrowly-targeted business-to-business and consumer market research projects. But that has changed. According to the 1999 Respondent Cooperation Survey conducted by The Council for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR), as many people now complete business-to-business surveys over the Web as complete them either by phone or face-to-face contact.

Some companies have also made initial inroads into the use of the Internet for consumer and public opinion research aimed at the general population. The successes of Harris Interactive, combined with the growing commercial activities of Intersurvey and others, demonstrate that this type of research has a glowing future.

The difficulty of accurately sampling the general population is currently the single largest challenge facing Internet researchers. Despite the explosive growth of the Internet, all members of the U.S. population ages 18 and over still do not have Internet access. There are no centralized, easily accessible sources listing all e-mail addresses and many people

have multiple e-mail addresses or access the Internet from work, further complicating attempts to sample representatively by geography.

However, this too is changing. In just five years, the percentage of U.S. households with Internet access has increased seven fold. In April, Harris Interactive reported that the percentage of U.S. adults with on-line access jumped from seven percent in 1995 to 49 percent today. They anticipate that this figure will reach 60 percent by the end of the year 2000. Mounting evidence confirms this forecast. According to various national telephone research studies of registered voters conducted throughout 1999 by Western Wats Opinion Research Center, LC (WWORC), approximately 60 percent (+/- three percent) of registered voters consistently indicated that they access the Internet or go on-line, not including e-mail, at either home or work.

Until recently Web-based research typically under-represented the three key demographic groups including women, individuals ages 65 and over and functional illiterates. However, those figures are improving. In March, The Strategis Group reported that women in particular have been the driving force behind Internet growth in the U.S. over the last 30 months. During this period, the number of U.S. adult women with Internet access tripled to 49 percent. Media Matrix reported in 1999 that baby boomers and seniors currently are the fastest growing Internet populations. While any written, self-administered research instrument like web surveys limits participation by functionally illiterate respondents, future advances in voice technology may eventually increase participation even among this group.

Internet researchers have developed different approaches to resolving the sampling problem, with varying degrees of success. Currently, the most widespread and cost-effective method used is the panel. Panels are usually comprised of Web users quota sampled to reflect the U.S. Internet population, (or the universe in question). Some companies augment the obvious shortcomings of panels with telephone contacts targeted at hard-to-reach populations.

Intersurvey has gone a step further. Using RDD sample, they recruit via telephone to build and maintain a nationwide panel of potential respondents. The company equips those who do not have Internet access with Web TV, much as Nielsen does with its people meters. In this way, Intersurvey includes the non-Internet user portion of the general population. Many sample houses already have large, listed e-mail address samples of respondents available and are building random e-mail sample by recruiting respondents through RDD calls using their own formidable, RDD samples.

Private sector initiatives, combined with government initiatives included in the 2001 federal budget designed to increase connectivity among low-income families and under-served communities, will continue to propel the current surge in U.S. households on-line. As the number of households with Internet access comes inevitably closer to reflecting the U.S. population at large, Web surveys will become increasingly prevalent.

Interestingly, the Web already gives researchers access to young, white males with higher education and incomes who are traditionally

difficult to reach by telephone. It also shows promise as a tool for improving future data validity through mixed mode research. In CMOR's 1999 study, respondents who refused to participate in the telephone survey expressed a preference for the Internet as a data collection method, second only to mail surveys. Don Dillman of Washington State University noted that allowing respondents to change modes of interviewing can do much to convert refusals in both phone and Web surveys. Using the Internet to supplement telephone data collection could lower the non-response rates from which many telephone studies now suffer without compromising turnaround time or increasing project costs. Companies like SPSS and CfMC are already redesigning their Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) packages to accommodate simultaneous programming of complimentary telephone interviewing and Web survey programs.

The future of accurate and reliable Internet research amongst the general population hinges on perfecting the sampling methodology. The long-standing and unresolved problems associated with any self-administered questionnaire also remain. Numerous companies and the United States government are investing in ways to meet the problems of sampling access and methodology. Speakers at the Gallup Research Center's April symposium, *Survey Research: Past, Present and Internet*, outlined research already underway which explores ways to combine voice technology with Web research so as to eliminate problems of illiteracy and visual limitations.

As yet, data validity and data loss problems inherent in any self-administered survey (Web or otherwise) continue to linger. The rapid adoption of the telephone by Americans, together with the desire for greater accuracy in research, paved the way for the growth of telephone data collection methodology. Will Internet research will follow this pattern? Perhaps the development of a cost-effective approach combining the benefits of a live interviewer with the cost savings of Web-based questionnaires could further improve the quality of web-based data collection. For now, Internet research has already established itself as an excellent medium for augmenting telephone research in hard-to-reach populations, as well as a reliable and cost-effective method to conduct business-to-business and organizational research within highly connected universes. 🌱

**Southwest Conference Celebration**  
**Saturday, August 12, 2000 -- Aus**

**M e m b e r s  
on the move**

**Galloway Research Service** is pleased to announce the promotion of **Carlos Jauregui** to our Research Group. Carlos has been with the company since 1989 and served as Director of the Telephone Department since 1995 where he has been a vital part of that department's growth and success. In addition to Carlos, **John Ucab** has been promoted to Telephone Department Director. John has been a contributing factor as Assistant Telephone Department Director since 1997. Both Carlos and John have been highly instrumental in moving Galloway Research Service into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as a reliable and highly respected research organization. 🌱

**What:** This "chapter celebration" is being held on Saturday, August 12th in Austin Texas. The seminar runs from 9am to 4pm -- this includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

**Who:** The sessions are geared toward supervisors, front-line managers, or "any other title associates" responsible for running a profit center.

**How Much:** The seminar cost is \$75 for the first company employee and \$60 for all other employees from the same company. We're making this substantial discount available because we want to encourage companies to send all employees that are involved with the operations of a facility. Information first hand is always best, and the more people participating in the interactive session -- the more diverse the information exchange.

**Where:** The sessions will be held at **Tammadge Market Research**, 210 Barton Springs Rd., Suite 515 in Austin (phone -- 512-474-1005; web: <http://www.tammadge.com>). In addition, we have reserved a block of rooms at the Hyatt Regency of Austin for \$89 a night (it's right next door to Tammadge at 208 Barton Springs Rd. Call them at 1-800-233-1234. Please fill out the registration form by July 10th, 2000 so we can be sure of our attendance and that there will be enough rooms for all. Check the Tammadge web site for a map of the facility and a link for the hotel.

**Who is speaking:**

- Tom O'Connor, CEO of On-Line Communication, Inc.
- Sharon Mutter, President of Sharon Mutter Field Sources.

**Tom O'Connor:**

Tom will speak on managing a call center, but in fact everything being discussed applies to any of the market research disciplines - - central location, focus groups, door to door, etc.

The management of a calling center is a very complicated task requiring attention to detail, constant analysis and action. The profit of a center can very quickly evaporate under the leadership of a person not accustomed to constant scrutiny as part of their job. A calling center manager wears many hats, some of which are; Psychologist, Statistician, Cheer Leader, Rabbi, (in reference to his wife), Policeman, Enforcer, Propagandist, Demagogue, and Teacher. To explain these roles, we need to take them one at a time and then examine their overall integration into the job of managing a call center.

We cannot ever create the right ambiance attitude and nature, of any facility, if we do not work diligently on the details that create them. I think this session will give you great insight as to what's expected of you and how to accomplish it. This will be an interactive session, so be thinking prior to the session about some of the questions you might have based on your experiences.

**Sharon Mutter:**

As I read ads or listen to sales people tout their facility they all say the same thing. We do high quality work, good customer service, monitoring, special training etc. What exactly do these buzzwords mean? We have asked Sharon to flesh out these comments, giving them depth and meaning. The end result is that you will learn to differentiate your company from your competitors.

Sharon has worn many hats over the years - - trainer, client liaison, national field director for a full service company and now independent national field director, which makes her an expert on the meaning behind these buzz words and what your client still wants in this ever changing field.

**Conference info or questions? Call Peggy O'Connor at 800-765-3200**

**Directions to Tammadge (and Hyatt Regency) -- check their web site: <http://www.tammadge.com> or contact Mike Exinger at [mexinger@clearwater-research.com](mailto:mexinger@clearwater-research.com)**

## Southwest Conference Celebration Saturday, August 12, 2000 Registration Form -- Please complete form by July 10th, 2000

<b>Registration:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 - First employee from company <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 - second, third, fourth, etc. employee from company	
<b>Costs include:</b> All Seminars - Breakfast & Lunch Conference concludes at 4:00 p.m.	
<b>COMPANY INFO:</b>	
COMPANY _____	
ADDRESS _____	
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____	
PHONE _____	
NAME #1 _____	AMOUNT -- \$75
NAME #2 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NAME #3 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NAME #4 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NAME #5 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NAME #6 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NAME #7 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NAME #8 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NAME #9 _____	AMOUNT -- \$60
NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: _____    TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____	
Make checks payable to:  <b>SOUTHWEST CHAPTER MRA</b>	Mail completed Registration Form & Check to: <b>Barb Rosner -- SW Chapter MRA</b> <b>2902 South Newberry Road</b> <b>Tempe, AZ 85282</b> <b>Phone: 602-966-0190</b>

**Questions? Call Peggy O'Connor at 800-765-3200**

# Chapter Benefits -- Are You Getting Yours?

By Mike Exinger

According to MRA guidelines, the following are the "Minimum Chapter Guidelines-Standards" for an MRA chapter -- like ours:

### III. Member Services

- A. Chapters will conduct a member needs assessment at least every 3 years.
- B. Chapters will conduct at least 2 educational programs each year.
- C. Chapters will publish at least 4 newsletters each year.
- D. Chapter will publish a Membership Roster annually.
- E. Chapters will offer a New member orientation at each chapter meeting
- F. Chapters will publish an Annual Report to members.

Remember that these are the **minimum** chapter guidelines and standards -- we can always do more. So, how are we doing? More importantly, how are **you** doing?

There's an old saying (about what I don't remember...at least, I don't remember the first time I heard it) - - anyway, it goes something like, "You get out of it what you put into it." The Southwest Chapter exists because, well...let me just pull out a page from the President's Manual...

### PURPOSE OF MRA CHAPTERS

The National organization provides the reason for existence, provides services that meet the broader needs and interests of a

membership that spans not only the United States, but other countries as well, and tries to serve the many segments of our membership by providing information and education that draws members together under one common umbrella.

Chapters are a vital link in the functioning of our association. Each one has an individual perspective particularly important to the members in that geographic area. Chapters are an association's way to be able to reach members on a personal level, one that can bring them closer to their fellow members and focus on local educational needs and services.

Primarily, chapters:

- Are MRA's tie with members at a local and area level;
- Provide a forum for members to gain leadership experience;
- Provide for an exchange of ideas among members, knowledge in the areas of marketing research, and the establishment of friends and business contacts through meetings;
- Keep members informed of activities and policies of the national organization.
- Allow members to become directly involved in programs that will benefit them and to plan local/programs to meet their needs.

OK, a little wordy, but you can see that chapters serve a variety of important functions, and the emphasis is on the word **serve**. Every year members are asked about the most important aspects of

belonging to MRA, and while every member is different, there are certain themes that run strong.

One is networking -- the exchange of ideas from member to member on procedures, methods, strategies...you name it. Since joining MRA I've learned a lot from fellow members (and been able to share my own brand of knowledge a time or two). Perhaps more important -- I certainly don't feel "alone" as if I'm the only one who's ever suffered from a nasty client or a dysfunctional CATI system.

The other theme is education -- or call it information, or instruction, or even edification -- it's the opportunity to gain insight from today's industry innovators, leaders, and thinkers. We do it "up big" in Las Vegas and this year we are also doing it on a more local/informal level in Austin (see elsewhere in the newsletter about the Chapter Celebration). We can do more...if that's what you'd like. Other chapters have citywide functions, more frequent smaller events, etc. We've shied away from some of this because of the "great distance" factor, but maybe we can circumvent that.

Some ideas -- what about a "videoconferenced" education seminar? What about a networking "focus group" via the Internet? What about a series of articles within this newsletter? What about members sharing information on a specific topic in the newsletter? What other ideas might you have?

Like I said before, "You get out of it what you put into it." I hope that you will take advantage of what MRA-SW has to offer (scholarship, Austin, Las Vegas, and more). I also hope that you're brimming with ideas, suggestions, speakers and topics and want to share with your fellow chapter members.

We can help -- send news-y items to Kim Larson for the newsletter. Send her (or me) ideas for speakers and topics for next year's conference (or suggest a site for a smaller local chapter event). Write a brief article on a research subject. Start a discussion dialogue. Put into it what you'd like to get out of it -- and you will. 🌵

## New MRA-SW Chapter Board for 2000-2001

By New MRA-SW President Mike Exinger

I am pleased to announce that the following MRA-SW chapter members will be serving with me on this year's chapter board. The members and their positions are:

- President Elect -- Kim Larson
- Vice President -- Bobbie Earle
- Secretary -- Kati Beauchaine-Brown
- Treasurer -- Barb Rosner
- Immediate Past President -- Peggy O'Connor
- Directors at Large -- Gene Filipi, Elisa Galloway, Bert Taylor, and Vic Walsh

In addition, we have created what I refer to as "the brain trust" -- Nancy Hayslett, Robin McClure, and Linda Brazel -- three members who have been extensively involved in both SW and National, with a great deal of experience, history, and insight. We'd be silly not to tap into their wisdom, and since I'm rarely silly, consider them a part of us.

NOTE: A complete list of board members with contact information (including yours truly) can be

found on page 2 of this and every edition of *Cactus Call*.

As you can see, the board is made up of some returning veterans (Bobbie, Kim, Barb, and Vic) and plenty of new blood (Gene, Elisa, Kati, and Bert). What's nice is that all members have had prior experience in the "volunteering" biz -- some within MRA, some within other research and marketing venues, and some in other organizations. All have shown that they possess the ingredients -- interest, enthusiasm, and spirit -- necessary to make an outstanding board member, and I look forward to working with each and every one of them.

How can you be a part of MRA-SW this year? Glad you asked, because the chapter doesn't begin and end with the board -- the chapter begins and ends with **you**.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is a list of the "member benefits" that each chapter is responsible for -- I encourage you to read it and find out if "you're getting yours." And then get involved. Here's how (a variety of ways):

- SW-MRA's big event is always the Las Vegas Conference -- we are always in need of volunteers for a variety of tasks and responsibilities. Do you know of a speaker? Do you have an idea for an event? Can you assist in registration, or hospitality, or recruiting sponsors or other volunteers? I'll post a complete list in future editions of *Cactus Call*, but for now think about how you'd like to be involved. A note -- many (if not all) board members got their start as volunteers for this event (I started as the guy who sent e-mail invitations...imagine that).
- One idea I have for this year is to create a "state coordinator"

position (one for each state in Southwest's region). It's a structure I used to use when I was in a broadcasting organization, and the rationale behind it is that individuals on the state level can best "serve" those within their own state because they are in a better position to **know** members in their own state. I think Southwest is the ideal chapter to try this approach simply because we have one of the largest **geographic areas** of any chapter. If you are interested in being a "state captain" and have ideas for what the position could entail (communication, events, etc.), please drop me a line.

- Our annual MRA-SW Board strategic planning session is scheduled for the end of July. The purpose of the strategic planning session is to map out plans for activities and communications for this next year...and beyond. Again, you can help by telling us what **MRA-SW should do for you**. Remember the "member benefits" I mentioned earlier? Do you have ideas as to how MRA-SW can better meet your needs and provide the benefits you're entitled to? If so, let us know! While not every member can be a part of the strategic sessions, every member can and should offer his or her opinion. So, feel free.

I am excited about this next year for MRA-SW. I encourage you to get excited as well, and think about how you can be involved. Questions? Comments? Drop me a line or give me a call. 🌵

# Southwest Chapter Offers Educational Scholarship

The Board of Directors of the Southwest Chapter has established a continuing education award for its members and/or employees of its members. Any member in good standing may apply for an award for his or her own use, or for one of their dedicated full-time or part-time employees. This will allow the recipient to pursue a course that will upgrade the skills used in their current position, or prepare them for additional responsibilities.

Here is your chance to take or have an employee take that course in statistics, management, computers, etc. that would bring you up to date on the latest advancements, while still maintaining current job responsibilities.

No award will exceed \$500 and the number of awards will depend upon the funds made available by the Southwest Chapter Board. The Southwest Chapter has created this award for Southwest Chapter members or their employees, and is designed to benefit:

- The recipient
- The member company
- The Marketing Research Industry in general.

### NOTE: THE DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED --

Applications must be submitted by Friday August 18, 2000 to be considered for the 2000-2001-study year. Scholarships will be awarded September 1, 2000 and will be presented when a certificate of successful completion or transcript has been presented to the Board.

### To Apply: Send us:

- Your name
- The scholarship recipient's name (if not for you)

- Company information (address, phone, fax, e-mail)

A brief description of:

- Who the scholarship is for
- What the scholarship will be used for
- Where the scholarship will be used
- Why you/the recipient should be awarded the scholarship

Send the application to:

**Nancy Hayslett,  
Scholarship Coordinator  
On-Line  
Communications, Inc.  
8596 East Davenport Dr.  
Scottsdale, AZ 85260  
(480) 905-1429  
nancyh@on-linecom.com**

For further information contact Nancy at the address/phone/e-mail above. ☙

## Why Volunteer? A First Hand Account

By Mary Garafalo  
Answers to Questions, Inc  
Long Island Groups in Focus

About 14 years ago, my former boss asked me to help with reservations for the NY/NE chapter meetings. I couldn't say no, after all she was my boss. I helped her with reservations for about two years. I was able to meet many of my clients as they checked in, and network with others during the meeting.

It wasn't too much later that I became an owner of a Mall facility and continued to help with reservations. By this time, many people knew my company and me. I eventually was nominated to run on our local board and was elected secretary. I then went on to become President of the chapter.

As president-elect, I went through leadership training with other chapter presidents of the MRA. This was my introduction to national.

My involvement at the local level really helped increase my business relationships with clients and other independent data collectors in the area. It also kept me up-to-date on issues that might affect the industry.

Leadership training with National was my stepping-stone to becoming active in National MRA. Councils were being formed. I was asked to become a member of the newly formed Chapter Council. As members, we had bi-monthly conference calls and were given regional Presidents to call to keep them abreast of the happenings in our organization, and assist them with any problems or concerns they may have had with their individual chapters. After serving as a member of the council for two years, I became Chapter Council Chair. I found my role as chapter council chair very rewarding. I liked to help nurture the incoming board members and assist in a problem-solving role, and expand my business relationships throughout the USA.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as chapter council chair of the Marketing Research Association and would urge each and every local member to become active in their chapters so they may achieve the rewarding experiences I achieved becoming a volunteer in the MRA. ☙

**A LA**

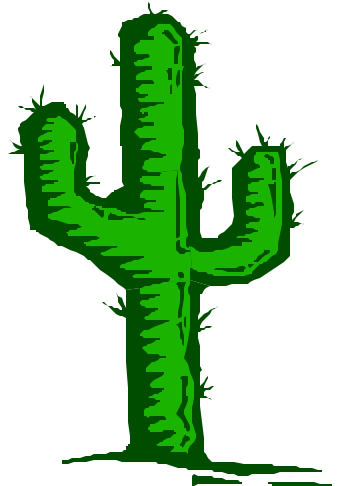
*Editors Note: This is a reprint of a letter sent to*

Thank you so much for your recent contribution to the Research Association Raffle. Your donation helps support the fight against domestic violence in Boulder County.

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