



Tara Miller,
Chapter President



CACTUS CALL

VOLUME 3

THIRD QUARTER 2011

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Presidents Message

For those of you who know me, you know that I am *never* at a loss for words. If anything, getting me to “shut up” can be a full time job (according to my husband). However, when faced with my first President’s Message I found myself staring at the blinking cursor and coming up with reasons to avoid writing. I even cleaned out a drawer in order to put this off. While contemplating what funny story or witty quote I should include I decided just to go with my heart. I have a few talents but one of the truly great things about me (I’m told by those who know me), is the fact that I am “genuine and real”. So I have decided to show you who I really am and tell you how I really feel.

I am but one person in a long line of people dedicated to serving our chapter with honesty, integrity, commitment and continuity. I didn’t lay the groundwork that built this chapter to be the success that it is. I just picked up the reins and pray I don’t drop them. There are so many people who worked so hard so we could succeed. I would like to thank a few of those people.

Alice Butler - our Immediate Past-President. Thank you for an outstanding job over the past year and making the 2011 Vegas Conferences one of the best ever. I have learned so much from you and I am truly grateful for your commitment to our chapter. I look forward to many years of serving together in various roles in the MRA.

A special thanks to Vaughn Mordecai, Melissa Pepper, Brad Larson, Steve Larson, Kim Larson and Stacey Weber. Thank you for your continued support and constant help. You are my mentors, my friends, and the people I turn to when I am in need of advice, clarification, understanding and just plain courage. You know the famous quote, “surround yourself with people smarter than you”... mission accomplished. I am blessed to know you.

As we do every year, our brand new Board spent two days in a Strategic Planning meeting in beautiful Park City, Utah. During this meeting we planned our events for the upcoming year. Here is a preview:

Webinars - Our goal is to provide free quarterly webinars exclusively for our chapter that will offer you PRC credits. The topics will include qualitative research, quantitative research, legal and business development. Watch your inbox for more information and dates.

26th Annual Las Vegas Conference - Every year we join with the Southern California and Northwest chapters to provide an educational conference in Las Vegas. Next year the conference will be held **April 11-13, 2012** at Planet Hollywood. As always, this conference promises to be fun and exciting as well as educational. We already have some wonderful speakers lined up and we hope to see all of you there.

Our first event of the new Board year was a huge success. Our Educational Forum in July immediately followed the Strategic Planning meeting in Park City, Utah. I could say a lot of wonderful things about this conference but Vaughn Mordecai (who is a much better writer than I am) has written a recap of this educational event that is wonderful, check it out on page 6. You will find yourself laughing out loud so be prepared.

Lastly, I wanted to sincerely thank all of you for the privilege of serving as your President for the next 11 months. I am very excited about this year and I am truly blessed to have the chance to serve this wonderful chapter. If you have any questions, complaints, compliments or suggestions please feel free to contact me anytime. My email is Tara@AccurateResearch.com and my phone number is (972) 647-4277 x 232. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,
Tara Miller
SWMRA President

CACTUS CALL is a quarterly publication issued by the Southwest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association.

Comments, suggestions and submissions should be sent to: Nancy Herson, nancy@g3translate.com (212) 889-5077



Upcoming 2011 Events

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Research Event</u>	<u>Date of Event</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Website</u>
AMA	Marketing Research Conference	Sept. 11-14	Orlando FL	www.marketingpower.com
ESOMAR	ESOMAR Congress	Sept. 18-21	Amsterdam	www.esomar.org
MRA	Corporate Researchers Conference	Sept. 21-23	Chicago IL	www.marketingresearch.org
QRCA	Annual Conference	Oct. 12-14	Las Vegas NV	www.QRCA.org
PMRG	Annual Conference	Oct. 16-18	Jersey City NJ	www.PMRG.org
IIR	The Research Event	Nov. 7-9	Orlando FL	Www.IIR.com

Announcements

Planning to attend the Austin City Limits Music Festival?

Kinesis Survey Technologies, will host a luncheon / networking event for market researchers on September 16 to kick off the ACL festivities. We invite you to this event being held at Austin's famous restaurant, The Belmont, located in downtown Austin. Space is limited, click here (<http://bit.ly/lmSwro>) to register and for more info.

The Southwest Chapter is happy to report former SW Chapter President, Stacey Weber gave birth to a happy and healthy baby girl, Miss Annelise Virginia Kirch on July 7th.
A lucky girl born on a very lucky day!

Special thanks to the Sponsors of the Southwest Chapter Educational Forum!

Accurate Research	Kinesis Survey Technologies
CfMC	Marketing Systems Group
Consumer Opinion Services	Research Now
DMS Insights / uSamp	Sample Source Auditors / Mktg, Inc.
G3 Translate	Voxco North America

The 26th Annual Las Vegas Joint Chapter Conference April 11-13, 2012



SAVE THE DATES &
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Presented by the Southwest, NorthWest and Southern California MRA Chapters



PERSPECTIVE: A LOOK BACK AND A LOOK FORWARD AT EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TOMORROW'S MARKETING RESEARCH LEADERS

By Jon Last, Past National MRA President; President, Sports and Leisure Research Group

Former SouthWest chapter and national MRA immediate past President Elisa Galloway always reminds me of how I used to quote the Mike Damone character in the film "Fast Times at Ridgemont High". In a classic scene, Damone was counseling his friend "Rat" that the right attitude towards marketing himself towards women was to project that wherever he took a girl, was the right place to be. I used this line as metaphor for how MRA could better position its education and professional development programs as the right mix of quality and value for researchers. It was our role at that time to run what was known as the PDC, which was responsible, in part, for developing content for national conferences. Now, a couple of years removed from national board service, I still look back at the educational programs that we put together as among some of the more innovative in recent MRA history.



Many years have passed since I first channeled my inner Damone. With that passage of time, we have all witnessed a constant transformation of the role of marketing research across enterprises. And with that comes a need to look at how continuing education is an even more critical factor for career success. It's also an appropriate time for MRA leaders at both a national and chapter level to re-examine their educational programs as the competition escalates.

It's easy to assume that this transformation is just another of a litany of suggestions to embrace new technology as part of the researchers' tool kit. I'm not disputing that, but to stop there is too simple. I'm tired of reading about the latest data collection gizmo or some purportedly new way to harness social media conversation as the ultimate window into the mind of the customer. To conclude that this is the first educational priority for research professionals strikes me as trite and acquiescing to the "flavor of the week".

Rather, I'd maintain that the most effective professional development agenda for research professionals, today, should focus upon how we can play an increasingly significant role in transforming strategic decision making within the enterprise in which we or our clients work. Whether we collect data on Ipads or note pads, we must evolve to be experts at how best to elicit, understand and translate the needs, wants, desires, perceptions, etc of target audiences into actionable implications and strategies. Unfortunately, too much of the education programs that I continue to see remain either too loftily perched in the clouds of theory or too mired in the depths of process to offer learning that will equip tomorrow's researchers to assume that proverbial "seat at the table".

One intriguing step towards such an ideal, is to build off of the same insight that spawned social media, webinars and countless other alternative delivery systems... That is, the need to create programming that is both interactive and integrative. By this, I think back to some of the better conferences and seminars that I have attended, where the collective experience of those gathered is melded with the perspective of the experts charged with running a session in an active forum of give and take.

Taking this concept further, I reflect fondly on a series of interactive sessions that I developed with another MRA "gray beard", Ed Sugar, called Anatomy of a Research Project. In these sessions, we broke the room into teams comprised of folks with a variety of research backgrounds. We gave them a case study within a dysfunctional client situation and asked them to put their heads together to solve it. To make things more realistic, we'd typically change situational parameters multiple times during the session and then we'd all get back together and share our respective journeys and ultimate outcomes.

The feedback that we received typically applauded how the exercise enabled participants to gain a greater understanding of how the different functional areas of client and research organizations interact, and how more effective collaboration can lead to more enlightened insights. Understanding that broader perspective and applying it to educational content, can keep tomorrow's researchers in tune with evolving client demands, and it can insure that unlike Mike Damone's assertion, you truly are in "the place where you want to be!"

Educational Forum Highlights



Members of the Southwest Chapter met last month in Park City, Utah for education, networking and quite a bit of fun



Muriphobia and the Southwest Marketing Research Educational Forum

By Vaughn Mordecai; President of Discovery Research Group

I learned a new word today. The word is *donnée* and refers to the core elements of a story, your assumptions on life that make you what you are, your basic facts, the premise of a story, the "what-if" that drives you. I'm hoping that if I use the word *donnée* often enough today, it will become part of my vernacular. I love words. That's most likely part of my *donnée*.

The other day, I realized that another part of my *donnée* is that I'm just a tad bit prissy...at least according to my wife...not that there's anything wrong with that. My biggest fear, the thing that startles the H - E - Double Hockey Sticks out of me, is not public speaking (Glossophobia), it's not Geniophobia (the fear of chins), it's not Albuminurophobia (the fear of kidney disease), or even Xanthophobia (the fear of the color yellow). I'm a muriphobiatic, or brutally afraid of mice. Yes...mice. I like to blame my parents for it. When I see a mouse, my very first reaction is to scream like a school-girl, jump on the nearest chair, and then attempt to stomp the thing into a bloody mess.



I love to be outdoors. I enjoy hiking, used to love mountain biking (too old & lazy now), and spend half my life on soccer fields. There's nothing more soothing than sitting outdoors in the mountains and kicking back. The outdoors, however, are not conducive for mouse avoidance. My wife and I recently saw the Sound of Music on an outdoor stage at the Sundance Resort (the mountain resort in Utah owned by Robert Redford). It was an awesome experience sitting outdoors watching the play and hanging with my wife...with the exception of the guy next to me that wouldn't stop singing at the top of his lungs...Cuckoo...Cuckoo... and an attack by a killer chipmunk, lizard-mouse the size of an oversized rat that attacked me (insert jump & scream & stomp in the middle of the play, followed by hysterical laughter by my wife who saw nothing). Yea...I'm a little prissy for a man who's six feet tall and comes from a blue collar background.



Park City, UT is one of my favorite places on earth. It's the perfect blend of being outdoors, not having to camp, great restaurants, outdoor activities, shopping, and mouse avoidance. The 2011 SWMRA Educational Forum was held in Park City, UT this year and the setting was awesome. The Canyons Resort, where the conference was held, is the perfect place for an intimate educational event, relaxation in the cool climate, and the perfect place to take in the outdoors with its views of the mountains and its skiing trails, the gondola in the background and all the granolas walking around...who actually bathed.

One measure of an industry networking event is the food and beverage. It's great to catch up with your marketing research friends and associates. It's even better to meet new people, and find new clients, but if the food and beverages stink, there's too little food or too little to drink, or the food is gross; the networking function becomes a miserable failure. Survey said...GOOD FOOD (I don't drink so I can't comment on the beverages.) Although...I'm not so sure what I thought of the caviar covered cucumbers. Well...yes I do know what I think...YOU'RE EATING FISH OVARIES! BLECH! STOP THE MADNESS! I realize that many people like caviar, but just to educate the public...caviar is fish roe. Let's connect the dots...fish roe is defined on Wikipedia: Roe or hard roe is the fully ripe internal ovaries or egg masses of fish. Do you really want to eat that? I'd say that you DO NOT. Some would argue this was the best item on the menu; I enjoyed the other food items very much.



Southwest Marketing Research Educational Forum, Con't.

Another measure of conference success is the quality of the educational content. For me, I'd give the content 3 out of 4 stars (sorry, just being honest).

- **Vaughn Mordecai, of Discovery Research Group**, spoke to us on the "Secret Sauce" behind social media research. He was charming, funny, good-looking, fed us treats, entertained us, provided us with all the information we would ever want to know about social media research, told us how to set up social media solutions for our organizations, wasn't too analytic but was analytic enough, and was the perfect key-note speaker. He did swimmingly. ACTUALLY, this is me so I shouldn't probably comment on how well I did and how effective I presented the material. I hoped the attendees learned something and that it helped their companies. I think it did. The presentation can be found on Slideshare at this link: <http://www.slideshare.net/DiscoRes/swmra-ef-2011>.
- **Bob Goodwin, the Marketing Research Director from Lifetime Products**, spoke on his wealth of experience conducting and analyzing, data generated for a company that may not have been "traditionally" thought of as a market research driven organization. Have you ever heard an interesting speaker who actually spent some time talking about Conjoint? No...I hadn't either until I attended this session. Though I'm associated with an organization that conducts mostly quantitative research, I found his qualitative research stories particularly interesting...especially those that "encouraged" (forced) his vendors to build facilities to fit and test Lifetime Product sheds inside their focus group facilities.



- I am PRC Certified through the Marketing Research Association. I've endured more "legal credits" than I'd ever hope for. Taking nothing away from these presenters, but how often is this information compelling, engaging, and in many cases...in the least bit interesting. Most times, the content presented is about as interesting as watching facial hair grow. Until...In walked **Helen Christakos, an Intellectual Property Attorney from Greenberg Traurig**. I can honestly say that her presentation was one of the most interesting I've witnessed in our industry. Yes, it was filled with the "sky is falling" analogies, and the "you will get sued if you do this" threats, along with the "government will fine you" warnings. But, I did walk away with useful information for my business, that could be applied to my organization and it was interesting in the process. Cha-Ching.

- Do you know Ted? **Ted Talks**. TED stands for Technology Entertainment and Design, and according to Wikipedia, hosts a "global set of conferences owned by the private non-profit Sapling Foundation, formed to disseminate 'ideas worth spreading.'" In 2005, TED began posting all of their talks online for free, and these guys (and girls) are brilliant. This session contained three Ted Talks and was good conceptually, but, for me fell flat on execution. I'd rather listen to someone at the front of a room who might not be quite as innovative (maybe even a little dumb) that I can ask questions of, than watch a video from a genius who wasn't in the room. Unfortunately, others seemed to feel somewhat similarly as the attendance at this session was a little bit lower than the other three (although it could have been because it was the last session of the day and folks were leaving to catch flights.) I did come away with some very good websites from these talks but the format left me wanting more.

All in all, the educational content was good. I walked away knowing about four new websites that I've enjoyed looking at (see Squareup.com; CrowdCompass.com; Gapminder.org; and the music website that may kill all other music websites - Spotify.com). I connected with some industry friends, met some new people, and didn't see any mice. All I could ask for from a couple of workdays.

Visit our website:

www.SWMRA.org

Tune in and
Stay Connected



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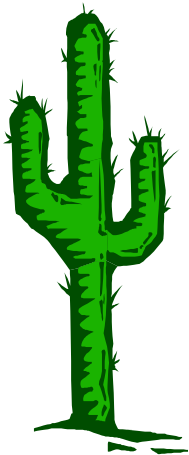
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