

Decision Insight

1) Can you give the readers some background on Decision Insight, and tell us about what your company does?

In a nutshell, we answer what consumers do in our client's marketplace using on-line, virtual environments. The key is focusing on what consumers DO, rather than what they say. We don't ask consumers their opinion about a product—we present a situation, put it in the context of a buying experience, and have them react (i.e. shop). The resulting behavioral metrics more closely correlate to actual behavior. In fact, across multiple categories, our output consistently correlates to actual brand share data at .90 or better.

2) What types of projects does Decision Insight specialize in?

Our SimuShop® virtual shopping model is a platform that is ideal for a wide variety of research applications, including testing new product introductions, pricing strategies, packaging strategies, merchandising strategies (e.g. aisle configurations), etc. The platform is ideal because it presents these strategies in the context of a real buying decision, including a comprehensive representation of competitive choices. This allows us to understand the impact of a strategy not only on a given product, but also on the client's entire portfolio, and even the category as a whole.

3) How has iModerate helped you and your clients?

Our approach focuses on behavior. We predict how a strategy will impact purchasing behavior. The use of iModerate allows us to complement our insights with diagnostics on why that behavior is likely to take place. Essentially, our approach provides the foundation for determining a winning strategy. iModerate provides building blocks to further refine winning solutions... or to re-energize poor performing ideas.

4) What do you see as being the main benefit that iModerate provides?

By conducting the qualitative interview in “real-time” (our respondents are typically intercepted upon completing the virtual shopping experience), consumers are able to clearly articulate their decision making process. The discussions are extremely rich, providing valuable insight into why a consumer makes a given decision.

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5) What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing online research in 2007 and beyond?

The good news is that online panels are now legitimately representative of the general population... and, of course, more time and cost efficient than other methodologies. As these panels have grown and the methodology has become more mainstream (and competitive in terms of providers trying to build/maintain their panels), quality certainly becomes an issue. It is important to continue to build on the progress that has already been made in terms of more stringent controls for panel recruitment.

6) What do you see as the next “big thing” in research?

The next big thing revolves around the idea of “cumulative effect.” Unfortunately, most strategies today are tested in silos. So, for example, a client tests an individual strategy for one key brand... but, in reality, when the strategy is implemented, so are other strategies across that client’s portfolio of brands. There may be interaction between the strategies, so we must account for that in research. Along those same lines, we need to begin to understand the cumulative effect of multiple campaign touch points. This means, for example, TV spots should be tested in conjunction with in-store communications. We are just scratching the surface of this, but there are broad implications for all researchers.