

Beat the bland

Big hopes?
Blunt budgets?
Be sharp!



KOKORO

Help!

Big hopes?

Blunt budgets?

The IPA just announced a -8.8% blow* to businesses' research budgets.

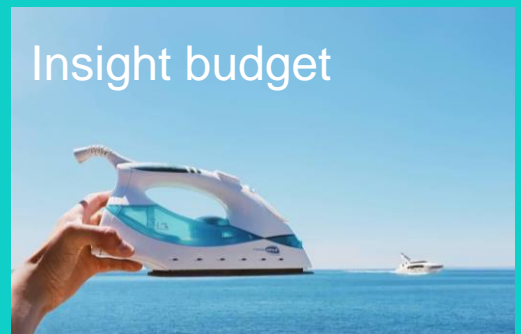
But with squeezed consumers facing colossal curveballs every week businesses have to be more plugged in to win.

In an ever more analytics-driven and budget conscious environment we give our take on how insight needs to evolve to find better opportunities, guide better investments and **beat the bland!**

Insight hopes



Insight budget



Expected ROI



1 Squeeze more out of what you have

2 Be brave about what you need

3 Maximise new research investment

*www.marketingweek.com/marketing-budgets-grow-despite-recession/

1

Squeeze more out of what you have

Make your brand tracker work harder:

- Dual-purpose your brand tracker to test comms, creative or even props
- Add (even just a little) qual to really understand data and pinpoint actions
- Challenge frequency of fieldwork/reporting

Evolve or die

Maximise spend and diagnostics by using the same brand tracker survey for speedy, cost-effective comms, creative or proposition testing – two birds, one stone. Long-standing surveys have a habit of ‘gaining weight’ over time so be brave and put them on a diet! Strip out dead wood to create space for flexible ‘hot topic’ sections while avoiding the additional cost of a longer interview. With a scrutinising eye, you can typically reduce a survey by 20% without compromising business-critical metrics.

Qual bolt-ons are another way to boost tracker insight – delivering the detail and nuance that standardised metrics can’t. Digital sessions with target market consumers can be a powerful way to unpick brand understanding and create a ‘test and learn’ environment.

Less is more

Reducing the number of fieldwork and/or reporting waves is a sure-fire win to maximise your investment. Our most successful brand trackers are structured on quarterly or biannual reads rather than monthly. This creates a focus on trends and genuine shifts in the data, not just ‘blips’ that turn businesses into busy fools.

1

Squeeze more out of what you have

Unleash the power of existing data

- 'Upcycle' your existing data
- Leverage data science to identify extra nuggets

Insight gold

A cost-effective way to generate powerful insight is to transform pre-existing data into something even greater. 'Upcycling' data can unleash big gains.

It may be as simple as taking a more holistic view of analysis. For instance, consolidating several waves of data or projects into a larger repository for deeper diagnostics and more meaningful data cuts. Making the data work harder and re-purposing it can suddenly reveal bigger-picture narratives that may be missed when looking at short-term performance.

Find extra nuggets with advanced analytics

Data science is speedy, affordable and can yield disproportionate returns.

Using analytics to derive what's really driving metrics can help businesses find focus on the elements that really matter. Or you can segment data to reveal previously undiscovered customer growth opportunities. The key is that by joining the data dots, the outputs can become greater than the sum of the parts.

Synthesising various data streams into a predictive model to demonstrate ROI is a particularly compelling exercise. Stakeholders can foresee how key levers will influence performance – insight gold dust! Such models pay for themselves by streamlining decision-making and focusing action.

2

Be brave about what you need

Answer more questions without research

- Prioritise real-world trials where possible
- Inject burning questions into existing projects
- Use existing knowledge and data until you're 60%+ sure

Say 'no' to the wrong research

With budgets under pressure, we believe spend should be preserved for game-changing insight. There are many ways that research questions can still be answered without having to spend:

- A/B test and look at real-world results. Ask colleagues to collect customer feedback if the 'why' remains important. This isn't always viable or desirable but protects your budget when the risk and cost of trial is low.
- Re-purpose another bit of research. Put a few more questions on a tracker or at the end of an ad hoc piece. Ask a couple of critical questions, to get to an answer everyone is comfortable with.
- Leverage internal expertise, internal data or previous research. Ask your agencies for their 5-minute view (your best ones will always be happy to share this). Get to a point where you're more than 60% confident.

The savings to be had by doing this quickly mount up. And then, when the questions you know will have an impact get asked, your budget is ready for them.

2

Be brave about what you need

Prioritise strategic research

- Push ahead with research to inform strategic priorities
- Proactively get this on the business's agenda if not there already

The time is now!

'Optimal timing paralysis' has stopped many an opportunity in its tracks. Businesses are getting increasingly hung up on 'waiting to see' before they dive in. But the CoL crisis is going nowhere soon. Pre Covid trends that haven't returned aren't suddenly coming back!

2023 is the opportune time to be asking the big questions of 'where does growth come from next?' (typically via customer and occasion segmentation) and 'how do we better serve consumers' needs?' (category U&A, key driver research, etc.).

The value is immense

These types of projects have a huge amount of value for two main reasons. First, they set the strategic direction for the business (or business unit) – they identify where to play and how to win. They provide confidence that existing plans are either fit for purpose or need re-writing. Second, they create diverse, vast datasets that can be used by multiple departments for many years. Historically, we've been asked to reutilise segmentation data years after the initial fieldwork because it remained relevant to specific questions. Over that time, you're building and maintaining a relationship with the agency who can give you another perspective on other challenges – more eyes and brains are definitely worth having at the moment.

3

Maximise research investment

More iterative, more creative

- Less big deck reveal, more iteration
- Put the money into the thinking, not over-sampling

Get out of the slow lane

Insight can take many messy turns, but it should never get to 60 slides long! Research has long been criticised for being too slow. Adopting agile 'sprint' working can significantly speed up the flow of insight and the innovation process. Plus, in our experience, an iterative way of working usually results in a superior solution... and faster.

To enable this, leverage interactive tools, like Miro. Allow teams to share and evolve ideas as they emerge. Create live documents that put more focus on debate and evolution rather than waiting for answers in a long deck.

Resist the urge to over-sample

You really don't need a vast 3-4k sample on everything! Determine an appropriate sample size by weighing up the 'size of the prize' or importance of the research question itself. Is it going to be central to the whole strategy of the business, or a small proposition? Our advice would be to really challenge the business and cut your sample needs accordingly to stretch your budget.

There can also be a desire to approach qual sampling as quant – trying to cover every part of a target group and all customer types in depth. But when budgets are tight, we advise focusing on the 70-80% of your current or potential user base (that accounts for almost all your existing revenue and future opportunity). Avoid getting distracted by the marginal ends of the bell curve that just add cost.

3

Maximise research investment

Get the customer into the boardroom

- Use high impact, rapid-turnaround video reels
- Create memorable moments that stir emotion and action

Consumer reels

Nothing brings insight to life more than seeing and hearing consumers put it into perspective. This is warts and all, real-life stories that will make you laugh and cry, not just talking heads.

Decent video creation should not require huge investment or time. You can cost-effectively collect high-quality reels in a matter of hours and collate them into something that will make heads-turn and create action.



KOKORO

Beat the bland

1

**Squeeze
more out
of what
you have**

Dual-purpose your brand tracker
Challenge frequency of fieldwork + reporting
'Upcycle' your existing data

2

**Be brave
about
what you
need**

Use real-world trials
Use existing knowledge until you're 60%+ sure
Push ahead with research to inform strategic priorities

3

**Maximise
new
research
investment**

Less big deck reveal, more iteration
Put the money into the thinking, not over-sampling
Use high impact, rapid-turnaround video reels

KOKORO

Need help?

Tell us your challenge:
London@Kokoro-Global.com



Segmentation
+ strategy



Proposition
development



Brand +
comms



plug in

KOKORO