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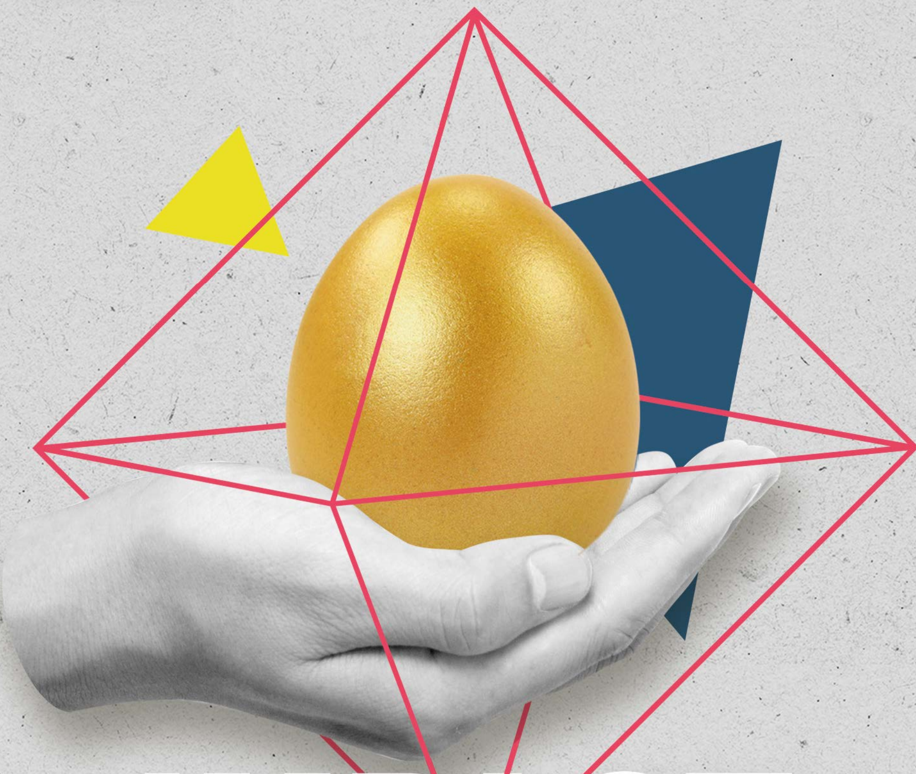

IMPACT IS THE (NEW) NAME OF THE GAME

Turning Insights into Action

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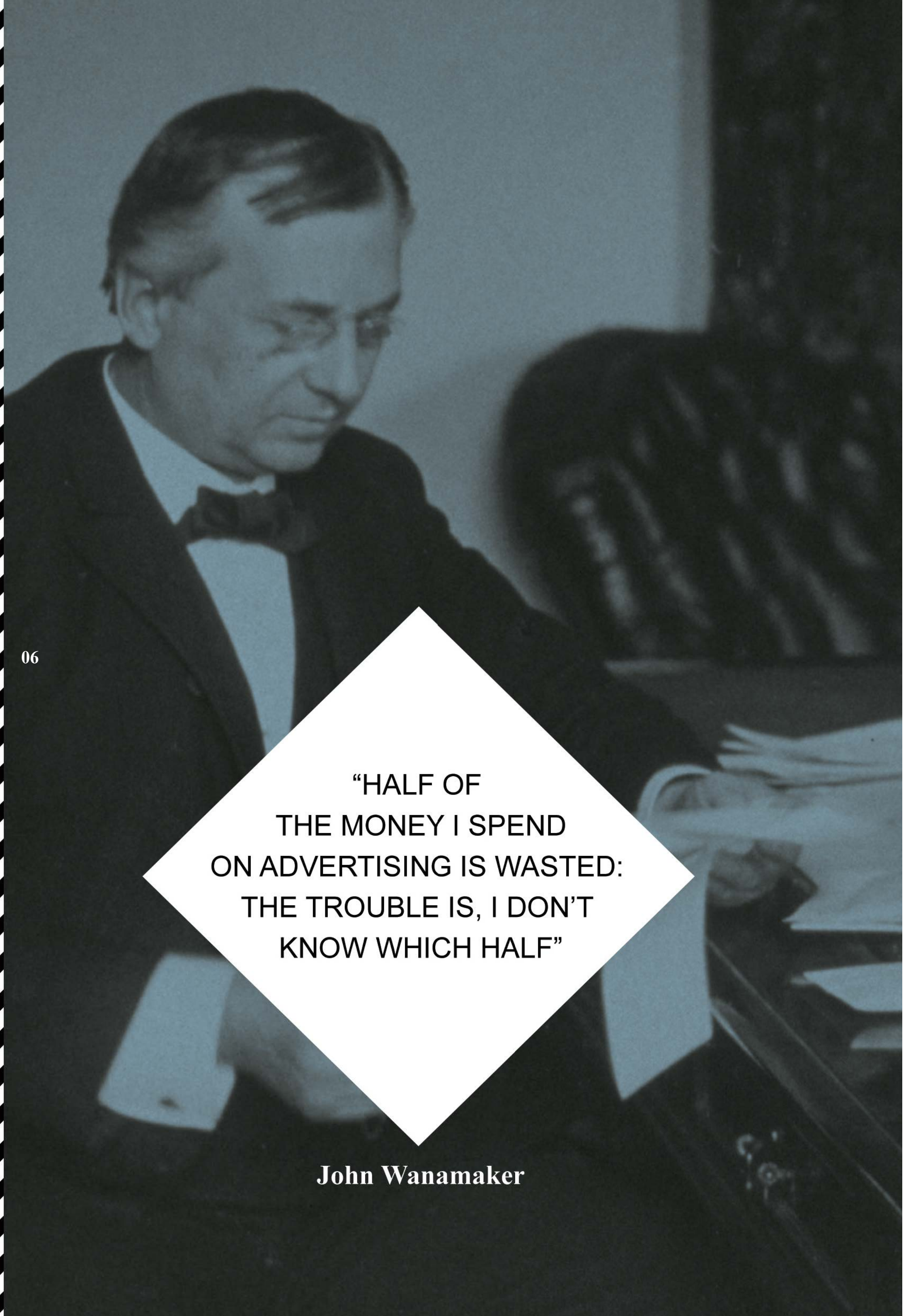
In the pre-internet era - which is not that long ago considering that the official birthday of the World Wide Web is March 1989 - information was scarce and data limited. Back then, marketing research functioned as the core (if not sole) data stream to support businesses in their decision-making. Yet the increased digitalization and the rise of the internet have led to the democratization of information where anyone can contribute to as well as access the collective intelligence. People's digital footprint, capturing their every single online move, results in yet another data stream feeding consumer data to marketers and businesses. As a result, one would expect market research to have become idle and having lost its value, yet the opposite is true. In this data abundance, the need for marketing research remains omnipresent, with the global research spending having grown to an ultimate high of 71.5 billion dollars in 2016 (*ESOMAR Annual Report, 2016*). While the world is data-rich, it is however insights-poor. The VUCA (i.e. volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) world we are living in calls for ongoing consumer and market understanding as elaborated in our *Have we lost our EDGE?* bookzine (*www.insites-consulting.com/edge*). Brands and businesses are on a continuous quest for deep consumer insights that guide them in what to do next and generate business impact.

Yet research by InSites Consulting amongst 185 buyers and users of marketing research has revealed that only 45% feels their research spending actually leads to impact (*Schillewaert N, Pallini K, 2015*). Furthermore, a study by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) amongst 800 executives[1] has shown that, although the majority of executives states that marketing research is essential for their financial performance and growth, only 32% considers their consumer-insights capabilities as best in class (*Boston Consulting Group, 2009*).

So why is it that market(ing) research is struggling to drive business impact?

A common justification (or excuse) is the pressure on budgets. Only 28% of research users believes they spend enough on market(ing) research or have sufficient budget to do their job satisfactorily (*Schillewaert N, Pallini K, 2015*). In other words, the common feeling exists that if people had more research budget, they could come to better insights and those insights would have a greater impact on the business. Yet the BCG research furthermore shows that there is no correlation between the amount of money spent on research and the quality of the insights gathered. Hence looking at research impact, it seems it is not a matter of research spending. So why then are we in this casino situation, where we know upfront that half of the money put on the table for research won't lead to anything?

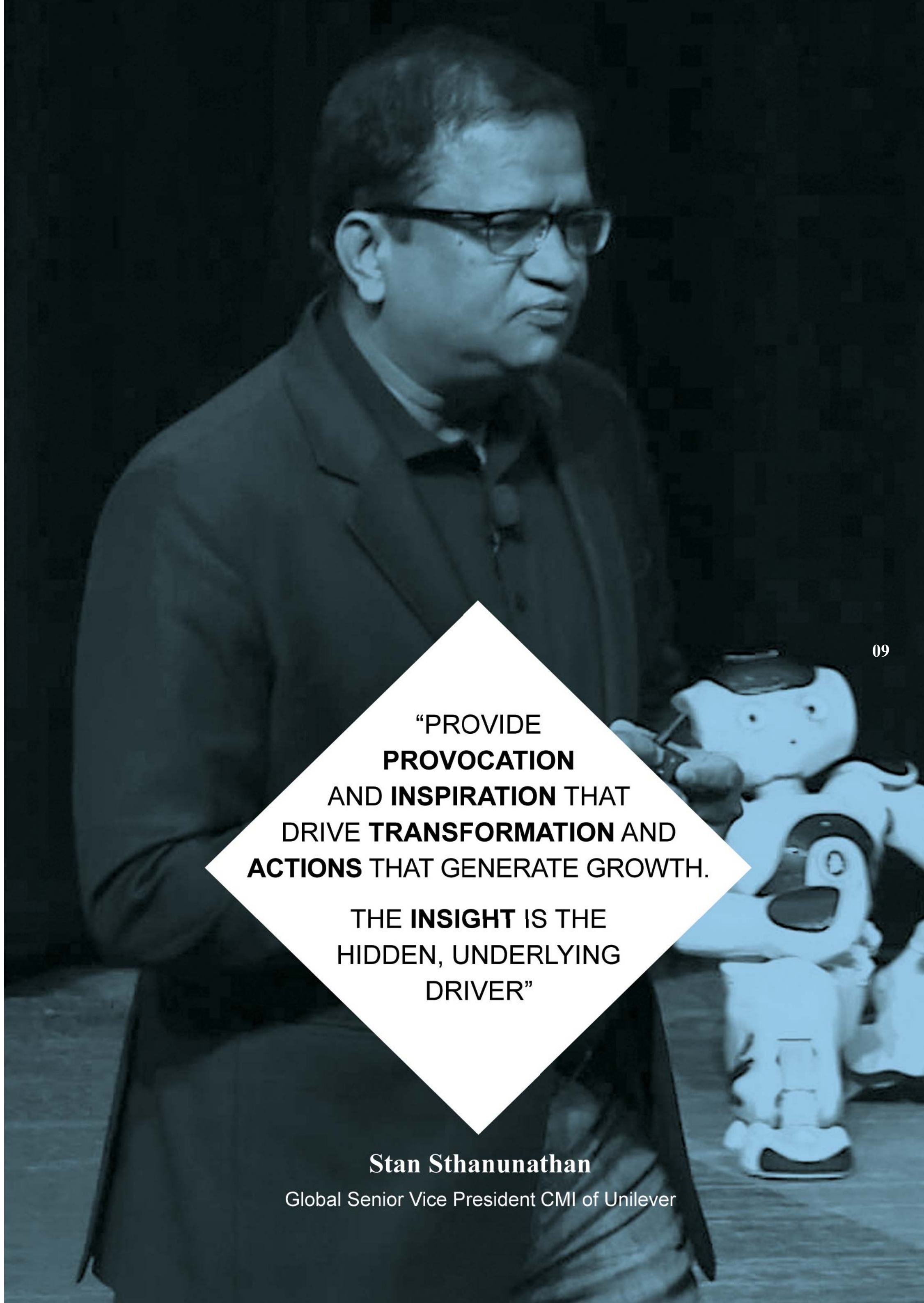
[1]https://www.bcg.com/documents/file35167.pdf



We asked Consumer Market Insights (CMI) managers from around the world this question; they highlighted two reasons. Firstly, it is about spending money more wisely. According to ESOMAR (i.e. the Global Market Research Association) figures of 2016, the global annual research spend lies just above 70 billion dollars. Nevertheless, a lot of this is invested in suboptimal techniques and approaches. Just think of the massive budgets that go to static tracker research or are invested in research techniques that are no longer up-to-date nor have the capability to gain real and fresh insights. Insight managers therefore need to critically re-evaluate their research spending and identify which projects and techniques lead to a better return on insights. These ‘audits’ should highlight which projects lack impact and result in an overview of which tools, techniques and approaches to keep, ditch or add in order to gain increased research effectiveness.

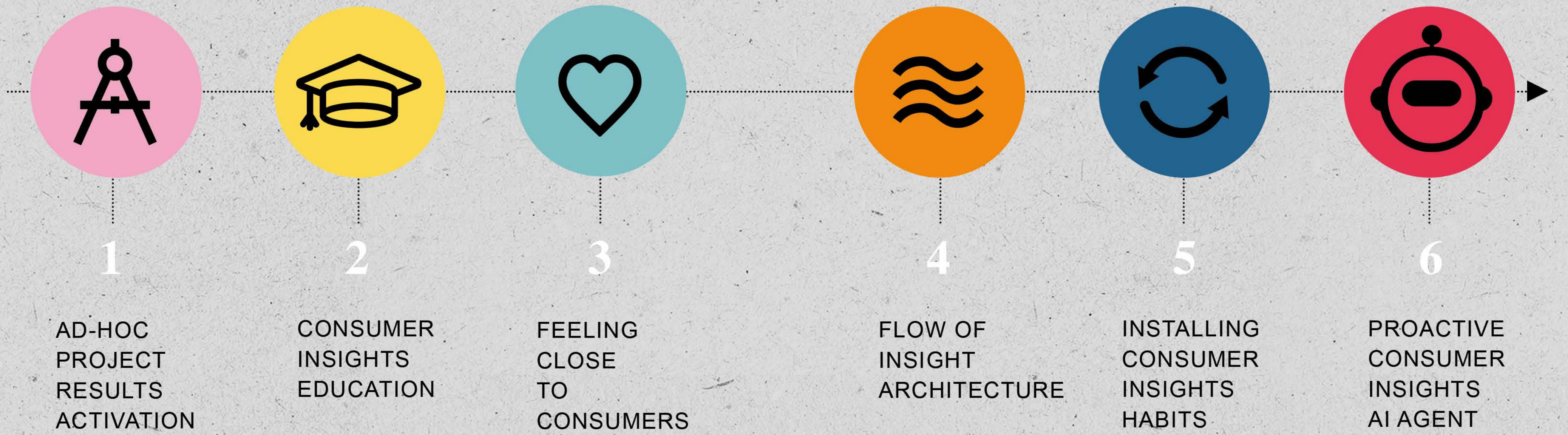
Secondly, it is about managing time differently. We learned from our interviews that 70% of the CMI managers’ time goes to the actual research project where the focus lies on turning data into insights. Only 30% is spent on activating the insights coming from the research or on talking to people from the business to understand which insights are needed. Yet to make research more impactful, re-shifting this time distribution is essential, where the necessary time is also invested before and after the actual research takes place. CMI managers thus need to dedicate the appropriate time on understanding which insights are required by the business and how those insights can be used and diffused throughout the organization. That is why holding a research *audit* is helpful; if the research itself is done more efficiently and effectively, CMI managers will naturally also have more time for the other phases of the research process.

Research impact therefore is not about how much money is spent. It's rather about how we manage our money as well as our time. So essentially, it is about the changing role of research and insight managers within the organization. Stan Sthanunathan, Global Senior Vice President CMI of Unilever, captures this (new) CMI role very nicely, stating at the ESOMAR congress 2015: *"You need to offer the business inspiration, you need to offer provocation. You need to help transform the business and show growth opportunities. The insights that you have, are just a means to an end"*. So, we need to stop thinking that a researcher's core task is to turn data and observations into insights. A CMI manager's true role is to uncover which insights are needed by the business, define the most efficient and effective research approach to uncover these insights and create a framework on how to drive action and impact amongst stakeholders.



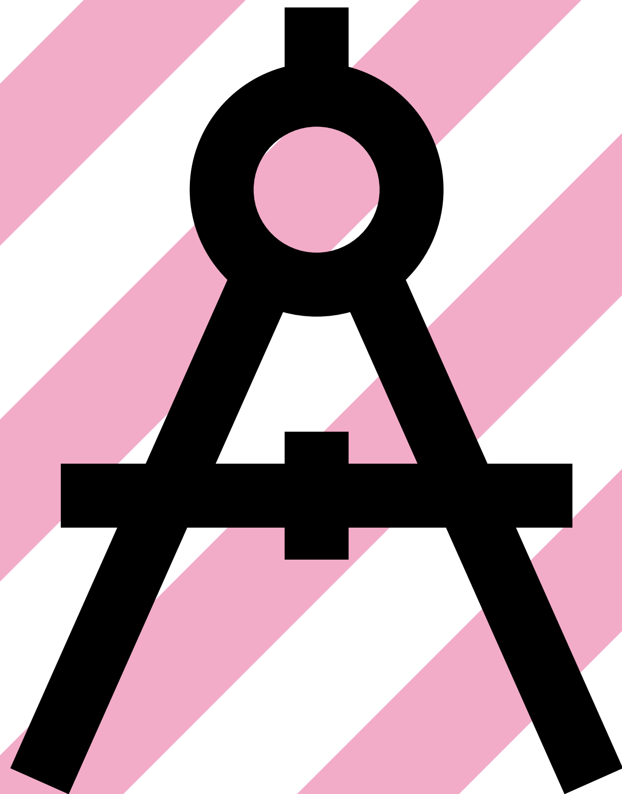
So how does one get there? How do we step away from the executional focus and turn CMI into a valuable business partner? We bundled this in a 6-step framework, comprising six insight activation maturity levels with action points for today, tomorrow and the future.

Insight activation *maturity levels*



INSIGHT ACTIVATION STARTS TODAY, BUT DOES NOT END TOMORROW

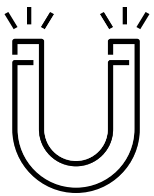
The road to true insight activation isn't one that can be travelled overnight; it requires a deliberate change in an organization's mindset, infrastructure and culture. Yet, one can start today by installing small tweaks in existing processes, projects and approaches. This brings us to the model's first step, where it all starts with sharing results of current ad-hoc projects in a more impactful way.



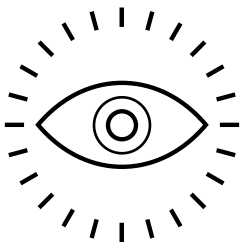
STEP 1

AD-HOC PROJECT RESULTS ACTIVATION

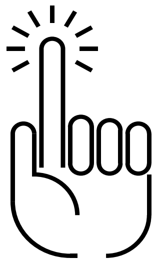
Generating more impact when sharing the results of your projects can be done through three easy steps, namely *engage*, *inspire* and *activate*. ‘Engage’ is what you do before your presentation, workshop or debrief moment. ‘Inspire’ is how you create a more inspirational debrief or present your research results in a more impactful way. And lastly, ‘Activate’ is how you keep the research insights alive and top of mind even after the results have been presented.



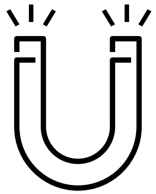
Engage



Inspire



Activate



Engage

Many of us have a lot on our plate, and on top of that we often spend our days walking in and out of meetings. This meeting culture, the majority of which doesn’t even add up to any executable action, has led to people being distracted in meetings, coming unprepared and tuning out before they even get started. The same goes for research debriefs and presentations, where people tend to join in rather passively, without any expectations or without even remembering the initial research objectives. Yet the road to more research impact starts before the research results are presented to the organization. This is where *Engage* comes in. Engaging is about making people curious about the research learnings and outcome, making them excited and eager to tune in for the research debrief and join a meeting with full attention.

This can be obtained by creating a teaser campaign to warm up the audience, for example by hanging up posters with a few striking quotes or results from the research in company meeting rooms, corridors or even restrooms. Visualizing an inspirational consumer quote or surprising research fact allows to trigger people’s enthusiasm to find out more.

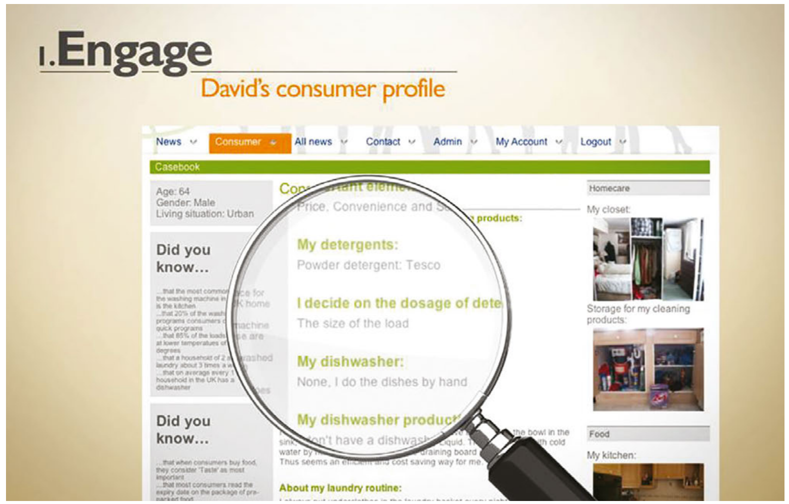
Another way to engage people is by sending stakeholders a sneak peek video providing a brief summary of the research report in 30 to 60 seconds. Both examples link closely to what the film industry is using (i.e. movie posters and trailers) to enthuse the audience when a new movie is about to be released.

Another way to trigger people's curiosity for a presentation or debrief is by inviting them to participate in a small quiz with questions from the research, where people are invited to answer each question with the consumer in mind. After each question, the right answer can be shown by means of a consumer quote or short video. This has proven to be a very powerful way to engage stakeholders as it is not only a first encounter with the key results but also an inspiring confrontation with the consumer (as the latter is the one highlighting whether an answer is right or wrong). Setting up these types of quizzes in a way that the average score lies around 4 to 6 out of 10 results in people feeling that they are not doing too badly, while at the same time their (lack of) knowledge makes them feel a bit uncomfortable. And that is exactly what you aim to achieve; you need people walking into that meeting room hungry for more, curious, yet at the same time also feeling slightly uncomfortable. They need to feel that the presentation will contribute to them becoming a better marketing person, a better innovation manager…

CASE

How Unilever R&D quizzed their way from consumer newbie to superstar

***Unilever** R&D wanted to change the hearts, minds and actions of the R&D executives by bringing consumers to the table where R&D decisions are made. To realize these objectives, 90 UK consumers were invited to keep an online diary on product categories relevant for Unilever (food & cooking, personal care and home care). Instead of just presenting the results of this diary research in a traditional slide deck, a new format was introduced where executives could engage and 'live' the results themselves. Each of the R&D employees was linked to one of the consumers, which they had to answer specific questions for. Through a gamified scoring system, executives could earn a badge (going from consumer newbie over explorer to superstar) and unlock additional consumer insights. This approach did not only result in an increased engagement among executives, it also brought the research to life interactively.*



Inspire

The second phase takes place during the actual research presentation, workshop or debrief. Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler, Professor of Media and Communication management at the University of St. Gallen, researched what drives presentation impact, defining what one could call *the success formula of a good presentation*. His research shows that there are three things that presenters need to consider if they wish to be effective.

First in line is presenting less, i.e. taking less time and using fewer slides to bring a message across. This may be a challenge, as people generally have the tendency to explain the ins and outs of their work. Yet focusing on the essence and leaving out all the less interesting, nice-to-know stuff will make your message stick better with the crowd.

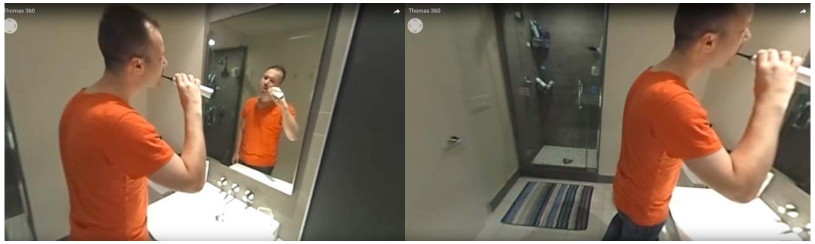
Secondly, it is about curating. It’s a presenter’s role to highlight what people need to remember, where you function as a curator indicating which insights and results you believe are valuable for your audience. The latter links back to the importance of spending the necessary time at the beginning of the research project in understanding the real business and insights needs. Only then will you be able to present the right results and insights to the right people.

Lastly, empowering the audience is key. Presentations are often one-way, yet Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler explains that it is important to give your audience an active role by letting them play around with the data or by stimulating them to discuss results and implications with other stakeholders. Letting stakeholders explore the data, where you ask them to go through a few consumer quotes or observations or to dive into a data dashboard, will result in them reconstructing the findings themselves. This is a very effective way to make a story stick, as research has shown that if people find the answers themselves, these will not only be more memorable, they will also be perceived as more credible.

CASE

Inspiring through Virtual Reality

Traditional ways of bringing the users to life failed to be memorable and to create true empathy. After finishing a project for ***Philips Sonicare****, we set up an experiment with entry-level 360-degree cameras to explore the potential of basic Virtual Reality. Research end users could simply explore their consumers’ world by using their own mobile device with the latest version of YouTube. Through their smartphone they could navigate in the consumer’s bathroom and literally observe the consumer insights around dental care from every angle. Instead of merely listening to a presentation, the technology allowed stakeholders to experience the insights differently, thus increasing consumer empathy.*



www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QDxpEc8qy0

A second way to empower your crowd is by facilitating an open discussion. Stimulating people to have an open discussion increases the awareness of how others are interpreting the results and where action is required. Discussing implications results in a sort of commitment; by talking about next steps and what you could or would do next, you are in a way making a commitment to yourself and your colleagues. This instant commitment is essential, as research in psychology shows that if we don't take action within 48 hours after learning something new, chances that something will be done decrease drastically.

Inspire means curating your content by focusing only on the essence, while leaving room for stakeholders to play with the data as well as to organize a discussion moment. Rather than having a one-hour presentation, your meeting should ideally be subdivided in 20 minutes of presentation, 20 minutes of data/ insight exploration and 20 minutes of discussion. Yet it does not end there; in order to increase the presentation's actionability and impact, it is advisable to also leave something behind for your audience, a sort of presentation souvenir, something beyond the PowerPoint or presentation, that will remind them interactively of the research results.

CASE

Bringing the Club of the Future to life

Through the global design project 'Open Design Explorations: The Club', ***Heineken*** *invited talented emerging designers from around the world to co-create the club of the future. This design project invited emerging designers from New York City, São Paulo, Tokyo and Milan to become part of a creative journey to collaborate on, conceive and produce a pioneering nightclub. To inspire these 19 up-and-coming designers, Heineken and InSites Consulting set up an online research community with over 100 clubbers from around the globe. An interactive infographic was built capturing the conclusion of the clubbers' needs, perceptions and experiences. This information tool (or presentation souvenir) served as an inspiration after the insights were presented, so as to challenge designers to explore solutions in line with clubbers' true needs and motivations.*

Activate

A last step in increasing the impact when sharing research results of ad-hoc projects is *Activate*. This last phase is about installing measures that encourage stakeholders to go back to the findings and remind them of what they have learned. This can range from occasionally sending them action points based on the research to creating task lists that allow them to immerse in the consumer reality and take these learnings forward.

CASE

How Viacom executives were inspired to visit Millennials hotspots on business trips

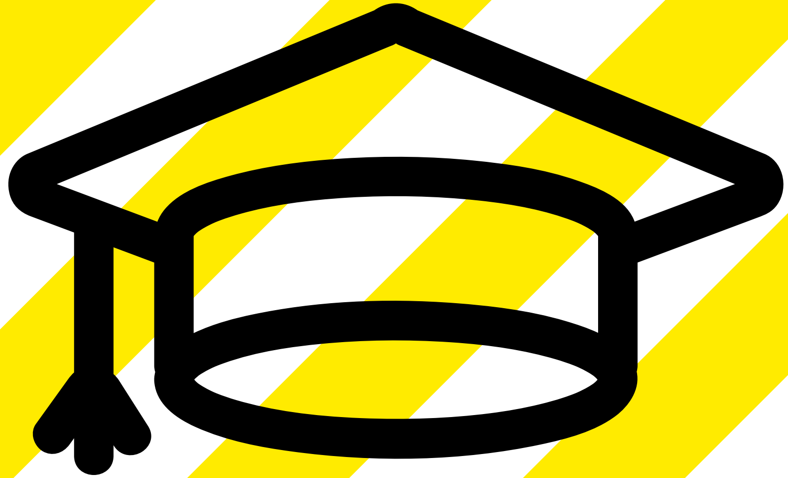
*An example is what we did for **Viacom** after running a study on Millennial lifestyle in ten capital cities around the world. The goal of the research was to connect senior executives with the Millennial world, so that they would better grasp what it means to be young today and use these insights in their advertising and television formats. For these senior executives to really immerse in the Millennial world and take action, we created small city guides capturing the tips & tricks gathered from the research. When on a business trip, the executives were motivated to use these guides to explore the Millennial hotspots at the various destinations, experiencing the places their target group recommended for eating, shopping, going out and sleeping. This way they really immersed*

in the environment of their target group, almost stepping into their shoes and truly experiencing the insights from the research. This initiative showed to be really valuable, as the Viacom executives fed back that experiencing some of the insights with their own eyes truly triggered them to take action.

Basically, generating insight impact is something that can start today, by following three easy steps when presenting research results, namely: Engage, Inspire, Activate. In this framework, it is all about using multiple touchpoints, where you share and highlight your message before, during and even after the presentation. It is about curating insights and understanding which insights should be transmitted to the business and to whom, by delivering snackable content interactively, which is not only more digestible but also leads to higher recall and increases the likelihood that the research insights will be taken forward.

Yet the road to true insight activations goes beyond quick fixes in the short term; it requires a change in mentality and in the internal stakeholders' way of working, a shift in organizational infrastructure and an adapted company culture.

Changing the organization's mentality is a first strategical pillar, which can be chunked into two steps, education and empathy. Education is about making sure that all stakeholders speak the same language, that there is a common understanding of what an insight is and how it can be used throughout the business. Empathy relates to the stakeholders' consumer understanding, being sensible to and having a passion for consumers by embracing consumer-centric thinking.



STEP 2

CONSUMER INSIGHTS EDUCATION

When looking at how organizations are structured, CMI departments often function as separate silos, being both literally and figuratively detached from the rest of the business. As a consequence, researchers and non-researchers speak a different language in most organizations, often resulting in frictions and miscommunication on both sides. What some consider to be a data point might be seen as an insight by others or could even be an idea for someone else.

Therefore, there is a need for a common language. *Consumer insights* is one of the most misused terms in marketing and market research. Yet it simply is a short, single-minded statement written in consumer language that reflects a consumer need, a wish or a desire and can be defined as: *"An understanding of the inner nature of things, leading to a discovery of something that is not yet obvious but at same time recognizable and real, and providing the basis for relevant and actionable marketing decisions, ultimately leading to a competitive advantage."*

It is essential that all stakeholders understand the buildup of an insight and its core ingredients. Our definition highlights some crucial elements that a consumer insight should possess in order to drive business impact:

- **It's me**
  A good insight is relevant for a consumer. Relevance can be driven by personal identification or by peer identification (this is when an insight is called contagious).

- **Aha!**
  An insight should be fresh and present a new way of looking at things. This includes both discovering something completely new and uncovering an existing reality in a new or fresh way. An insight should not immediately be apparent. It is rather something that is present latently; you only realize that it is true the moment you hear it. It brings to the surface what was there subconsciously.

- **Emotion**
  An insight should have an emotional valence. This could be a friction or a problem that consumers want to solve, but it could also be a desire for something. Consumers should be excited about having a potential solution.

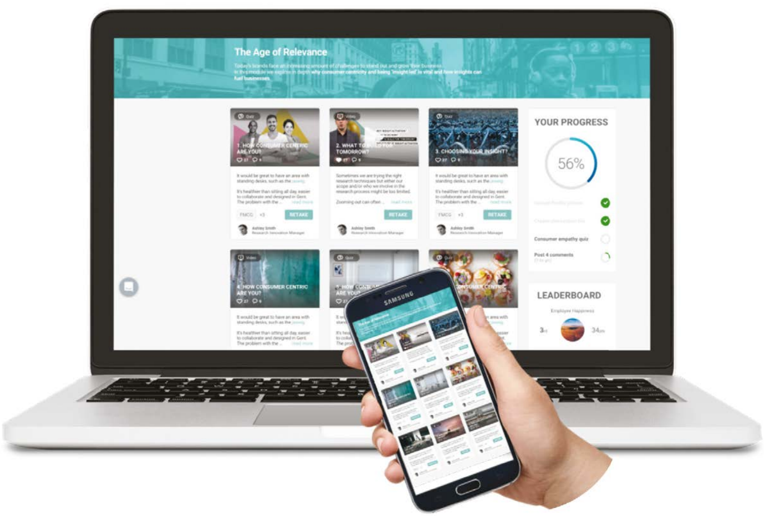
The better the insight, the higher the business potential. A good insight has the power to unlock marketing innovation on different levels: brand innovation, product innovation, service innovation, communication and consumer activation. In order to drive insight impact, all stakeholders must be trained on what an insight is, how it is written and how it can be used to transform a product, a brand and even an organization's business model. Doing so will not only resolve some common frictions between researchers and other stakeholders from the business, it will also help align the business towards a common goal. Consumer insights education can be done by organizing training sessions (online and/or offline) where the notion of an insight and its use are explained and explored interactively.

CASE

Talking insights at Suntory Orangina Schweppes

Suntory Orangina Schweppes *wanted to diffuse the notion of insights across the organization. To do so, an 'insights training program' was set up to educate a few hundred marketers and innovation managers from the different Suntory offices on insight writing and activation. This training showed to be very effective, as the common language resulted not only in everyone understanding the notion and use of insights, it also made the CMI team's job more impactful as there now is a common goal and drive.*

To answer the rising need of insight education, we, at InSites Consulting, developed the Insight Academy, a modular *phygital* (online and offline) course where people from in- and outside a CMI department can learn about the power of an insight and its use in an engaging and interactive modular way.



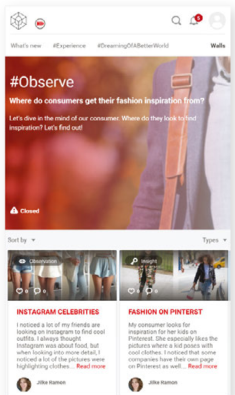
STEP 3

FEELING CLOSE TO CONSUMERS

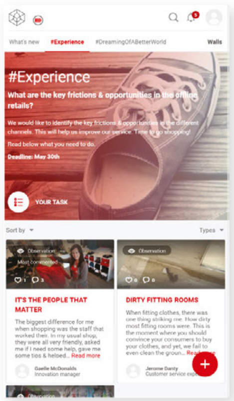
A second phase in changing the stakeholders' mindset is installing consumer empathy, namely making sure employees think, feel and make decisions with the consumer at heart.

Many companies have so-called *consumer connect* or *consumer closeness* programs in place, which invite employees to leave the company walls and meet, interact with and observe the actual *consumer*. Their goal is to increase consumer empathy and centricity by means of different tasks:

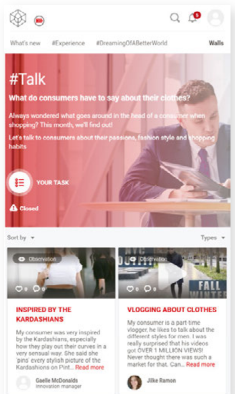
Observation challenges



Stepping into their shoes challenges



Interaction challenges



Observation challenges

This is where employees are invited to observe the consumer in order to immerse themselves in the consumer world. This can be done either offline (e.g. see how they shop, go through a journey) or in a digital environment (e.g. understand how consumers interact with brands on a website, Facebook page or online community platform). Challenges could be: how does the journey look, which brand activations work best, what are the Millennials' favorite apps, how do consumers use our product…

Stepping into their shoes challenges

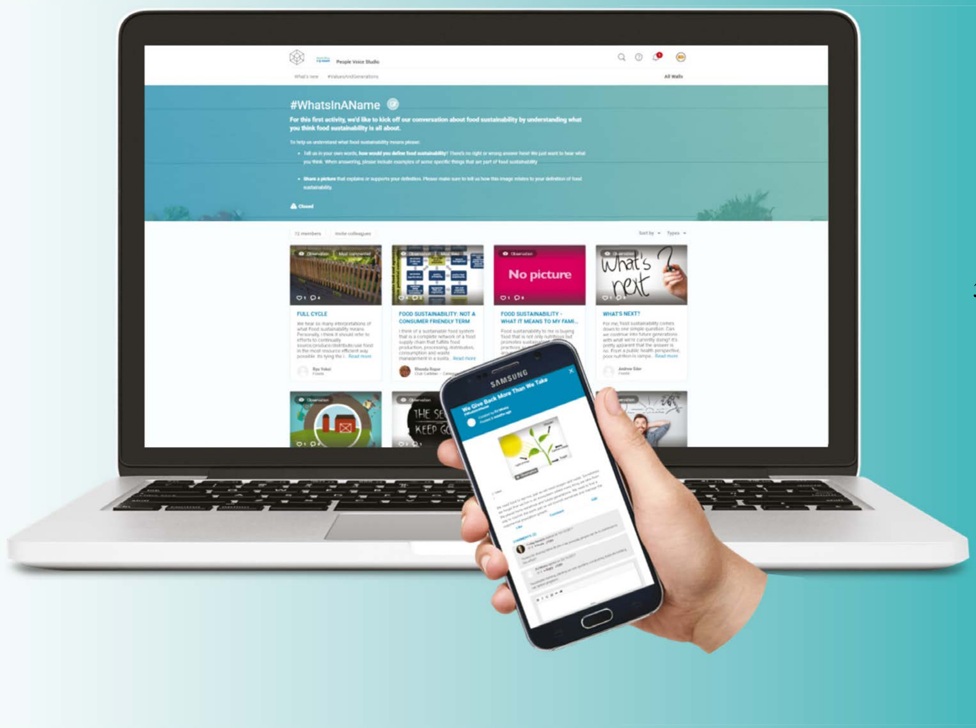
Employees are invited to step into the customer's shoes and pretend to be the customer for a while. During these types of challenges, they take on a more active role where they experience things themselves as if they were the consumer. During these tasks, they have to think, feel and act like a consumer. An example: one of our clients active in public transportation asked their executives to join Millennials on the bus, to understand the customer journey, including all the needs and frictions these young passengers have. Other examples of applications are using a competitor's product, buying the weekly groceries online instead of in a regular store…

Interaction challenges

This involves actual interactions and conversations with the consumer. These include talking to consumers about their lives, habits, the brands they like or how they use your product. This can be done over a coffee or by means of a consumer speed-date where there is short one-on-one consumer interaction but also through virtual Skype-like conversations where the employee connects with actual consumers.

These programs have proven to increase the consumer feeling amongst employees, giving them more passion and empathy. And although it’s a promising and inspirational concept, which closely links to the Japanese business philosophy of going *gemba*, which literally means ‘going to the real place’, with executives leaving their nice desks and visiting the factory floor, where the business happens (in marketing this is where the consumer is), it often hardly leads to any impact. These initiatives usually only take place once or twice a year as an individual exercise. And although many are inspired by these interactions with the consumers, the observations often end up in a pretty notebook, never to be shared with the rest of the organization. Which is leaving the organization with the feeling that these initiatives lead to nothing.

Yet digitalizing this part of the process allows to make these initiatives more scalable, where more people can connect with consumers more frequently. Furthermore it enables *shareability* across the organization, where stakeholders can share their observations with other teams by uploading them onto a commonly accessible space. This can be done using an *Activation Studio* platform, where these challenges are accessible on any device including a smartphone. The platform allows employees to easily upload what they have learned, colleagues to comment on that and teams to spot opportunities and areas of potential growth. This way consumer insights don’t go lost and can fuel sparks of inspiration, leading to increased insight activations across the whole organization.



STEP 4

FLOW OF INSIGHT ARCHITECTURE

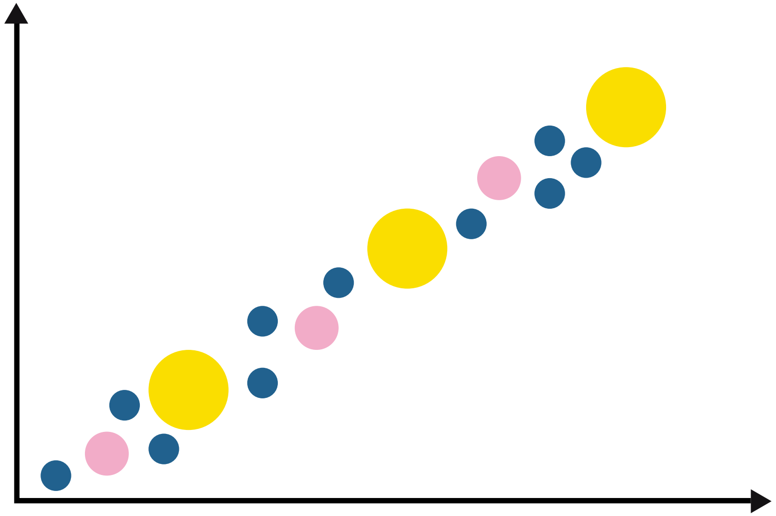
Once you have increased the stakeholders' mindset through education and empathy, the next step is to facilitate the flow of insights in an organization. This requires a shift in the organizational infrastructure, where insights are available, easily accessible and always top of mind.
When aiming to create a flow of insights within an organization, we need to consider two aspects: first, we need to think about the mental flow or the mental availability of insights and second, we need to think about physical availability.

Mental availability

Mental availability of an insight refers to fueling insights at the right moment in time, in the right format, to the right individual, so that they become mentally available. To achieve this, CMI managers should think like a marketer rather than a researcher, where just like creating a content marketing plan, a research program is defined indicating the relevant moments for insight generation and diffusion. CMI managers should only distribute the insights that are relevant at a given time, to avoid stakeholders not being mentally available to use or digest them.

Yet in reality, researchers don't think like marketers. They don't have a research content plan in place highlighting when and which types of insights should be gathered for or distributed to the business. Yet, researchers can benefit from creating such a content plan, where insight activities are mapped out in line with the pace of the business. These insight content plans are characterized by a mix of content blocks, each with different levels of attention and intensity.

Mix the level of attention & intensity with 3 content streams



Updates
Sparks of consumer inpiration (e.g. consumer stories)

Projects
Ad-hoc study on specific consumer questions (e.g. strategic projects & strategy execution)

Campaigns
Communication of insights around a certain theme, across projects (e.g. long-term strategic goals)

A first type of content distribution, represented by the pink dots in the graph, are insights originating from ad-hoc projects. These content streams consist of insights from tactical projects, which zoom in on specific consumer questions. These include hands-on insights that can be used right there, right then. Insights that aren't valuable at those moments should be kept for the mid or longer term, when there is a certain mental availability for them.

A second stream of content (the yellow dots) captures the more strategical projects, where the focus lies on bigger overarching needs from the business. This is where data, insights and observations from different projects from the mid and longer term (those left behind in the previous stream) are grouped to gain an augmented understanding of these bigger strategical questions. This process requires a joint effort from different stakeholders in the business and is often done by means of workshops where cross-functional teams craft insights based on all the information available. Insight education is essential here, as you wish to make sure all workshop members speak the same insights language and can contribute in turning data into insights and taking these forward in the business.

A last stream of content are consumer stories, represented by the blue dots in the framework. These are sparks of consumer inspiration that are fueled to the right person at the right moment. These can be recycled from ad-hoc research, more continuous projects or even interactions stakeholders had with consumers during a consumer connect initiative. The goal of these consumer sparks is to always keep the consumer top of mind within the organization, to make sure that everyone is always thinking customer first.

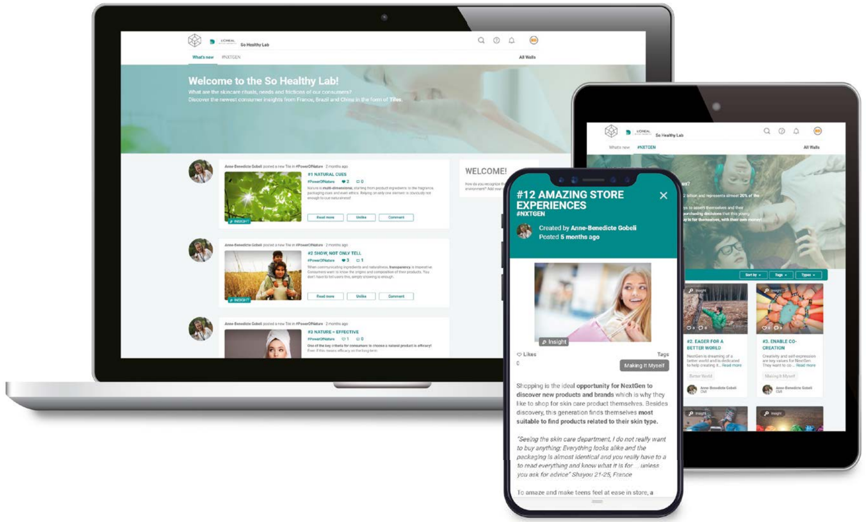
Research should thus follow a content plan, where you distribute the right type of insights at the right time, making insights mentally available within the organization, by creating a nice mix in your insights flow, including insights and content from ad-hoc projects and bigger strategic issues as well as consumer stories to make sure that the consumer is always top of mind.

Physical availability

A second dimension in creating an insights infrastructure is the physical availability of insights. When considering the life of an insight within an organization, one could see that it often involves a disproportional time investment compared to the actual impact.

A lot of time, money and effort are spent on turning data, observations into insights, yet once insights are unleashed within the organization, it often ends there. In most cases, once insights are shared, they end up somewhere on the company server, locked up in PowerPoint reports, never to be consulted again.

To counter this and increase the lifetime value of an insight, technology can come in handy. Rather than storing learnings, consumer inspiration and insights in reports on company servers or in personal notebooks, you can open them up to the whole organization by uploading them onto a shared digital space. The Insight Activation Studio serves this purpose, where insights can be uploaded by anyone and shared with the organization.



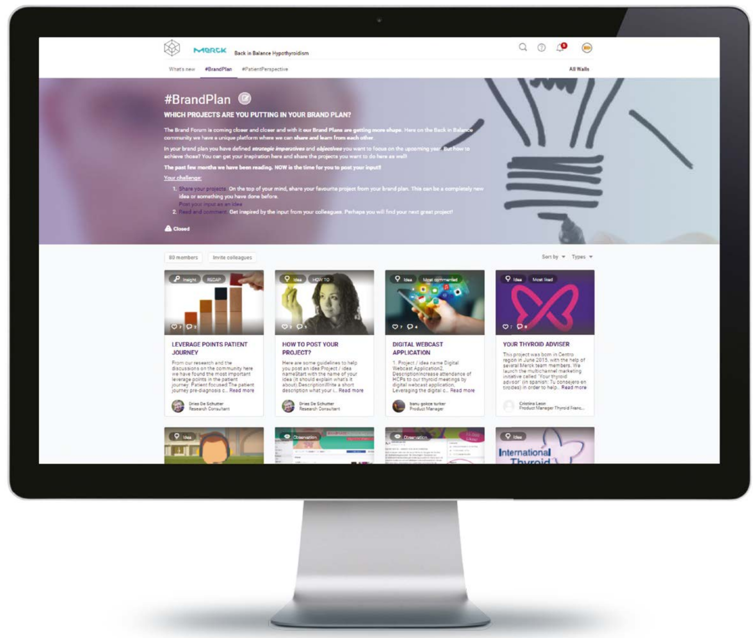
CASE

Harvesting insights to understand their glocal relevance

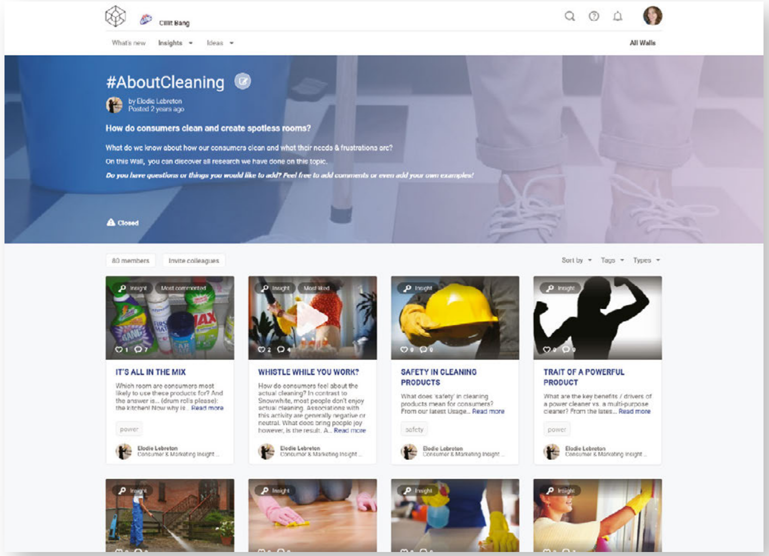
Following a market research project which identified and mapped out the patient journey in four countries, ***Merck*** *wanted to understand to what extent these insights were relevant and present on a global level. To do so, the insights from the research where harvested and shared on a Studio platform where all employees working in marketing, sales, communication and medical across all offices could explore, read and discover them. They could live the patient journey through the eyes of the patient by the visualization of two patient stories on the platform and 'complete' the patient journey by highlighting the country-specific differences (e.g. how are these insights translated in China vs. in South Africa) and add key insights where missing. By harvesting these insights, local teams could look for parallels with their own reality and use the insights to collaborate and ideate on programs for the annual strategic brand plan and global brand meeting.*

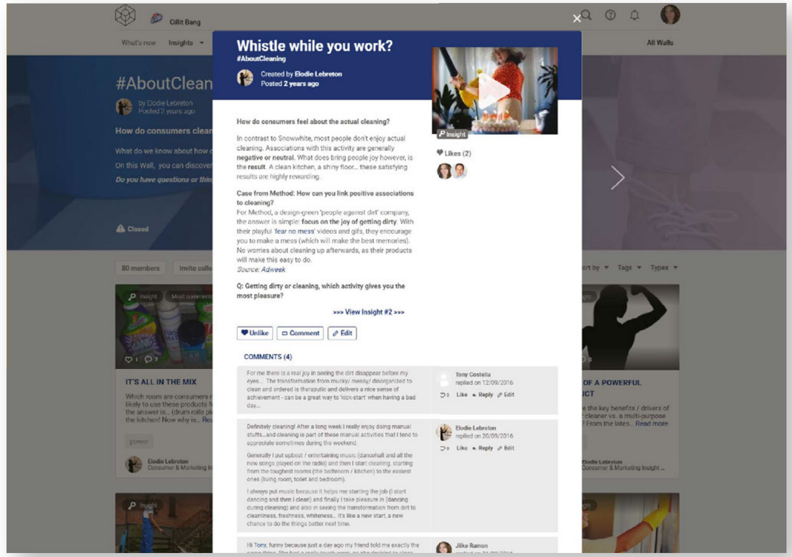
“THE PLATFORM IS FULL OF USEFUL INFORMATION AND INSPIRED ME WITH LOTS OF NICE IDEAS WHICH WILL HELP WITH MY 2018 BRAND PLAN AND WITH BEING MORE **PATIENT-CENTRIC.**”

Negar Azarikey
Product Manager Merck Group



The Activation Studio is a mobile-first platform that allows to create access, engagement and impact around consumer insights. The Studio is built with *Walls* and *Tiles*. Each *Wall* focuses on a specific theme, trend or business challenge. These *Walls* are filled with *Tiles*, snappy content items related to the theme or the challenges. Employees can interact on these *Walls*, by liking and commenting or even adding their own *Tiles*.





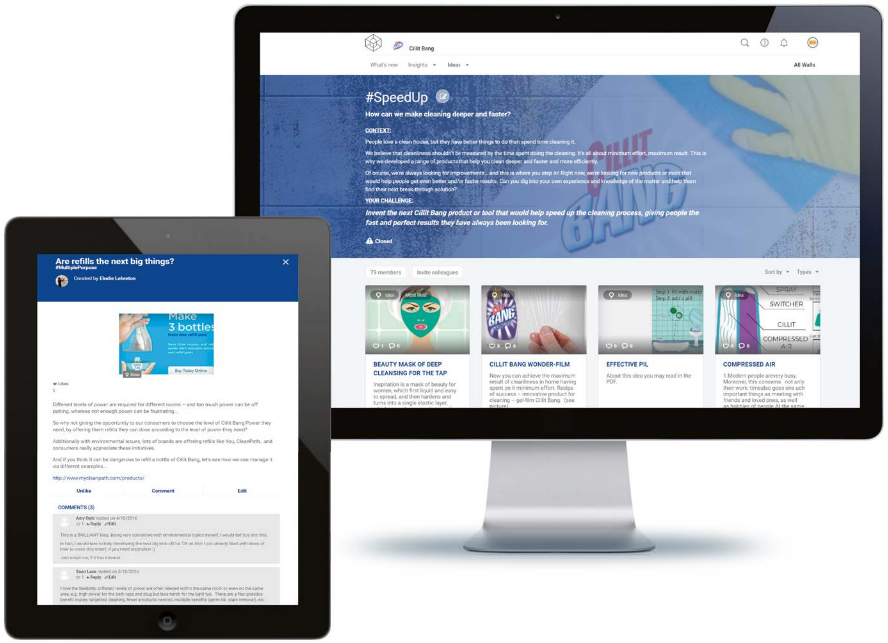
This digital tool helps to easily find and use the right insights. The technology furthermore allows to push insights to the right people and follow up whether an insight is being taken further. But it goes beyond uploading insights; the social dimension of the platform allows users to comment and add their own observations and ideas.

Digitalizing this stream of insight sharing does not only guarantee your insights to have a longer lifetime, the push & pull effect of the platform together with the social layer allows stakeholders to access the right insights at the right time and take them further in their idea and concept creation. As a result, it literally helps turning insights into concrete ideas and actions, making it a valuable platform to support all stages of an innovation funnel and to fuel business impact.

CASE

Crafting the new-generation cleaning products through internal and external ideation

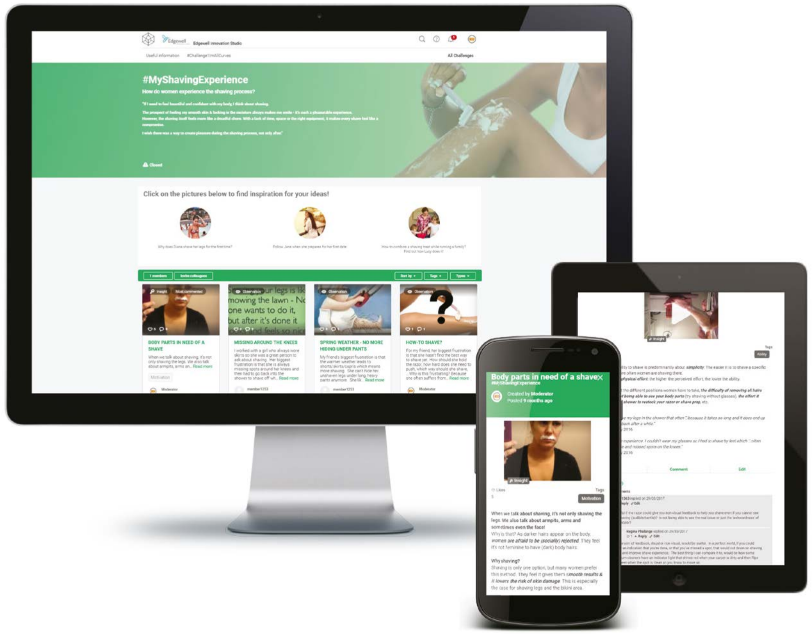
Coming up with new, disruptive and out-of-the-box ideas is not easy. This was also a challenge ***Reckitt Benckiser*** *was facing when crafting the new generation of Cillit Bang cleaning products, where traditional ideation did not lead to any surprising ideas. A more innovative approach was required. In the first round, Cillit Bang employees were invited to share their ideas in the Studio platform using different ideation techniques that stimulate creative thinking (e.g. brand alphabet, thinking hats…). The purpose of this first ideation round was to scrape the surface and come up with quick opportunities and new ideas for the brand. In the second round, we partnered with eYeka, a community of creative consumers that have little experience in the cleaning industry, but are experts in the creative sector. Users could upload their ideas directly into* *the Studio platform, in the form of Tiles. This made it very easy for them to share their ideas and to read/ build on the ideas of others. Goal of this second round was to have a fresh eye on the challenge and gain as many out-of-the-box ideas as possible. By combining technology, expertise and creativity, we generated 126 ideas to speed up the cleaning process. This mix of internal and external ideation through the Studio platform led to three brand-new concepts, warmly embraced by both consumers and employees.*

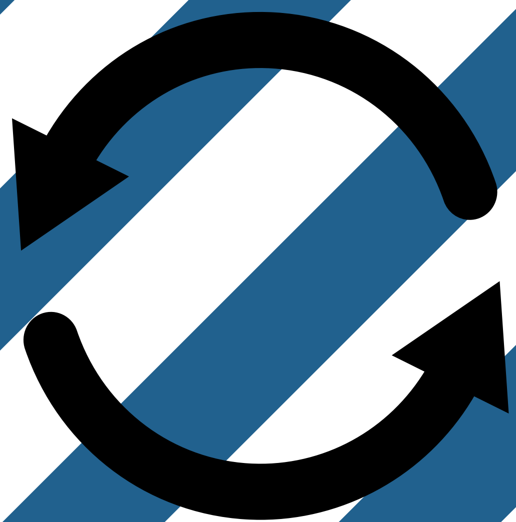


CASE

How Edgewell involved the company to ideate and shape the next razor for women

Edgewell Personal Care*, the American personal care company behind brands like Wilkinson, Banana Boat… found that a key friction when it comes to women's razors was the mismatch with the shape of the female body. Traditional razors are not adapted to the female curves, which lead to bad results. To solve this friction, Edgewell called on their employees, everyone from the company was invited to share ideas that could inspire product optimization or development. The Studio platform served as an idea Wall, where people could post ideas and engage (like, comment) with those of others. After 3 weeks, 113 ideas were collected that were further improved by 240 comments. In the end, three winning ideas were selected to be pitched to the Shave Product Steering Committee.*

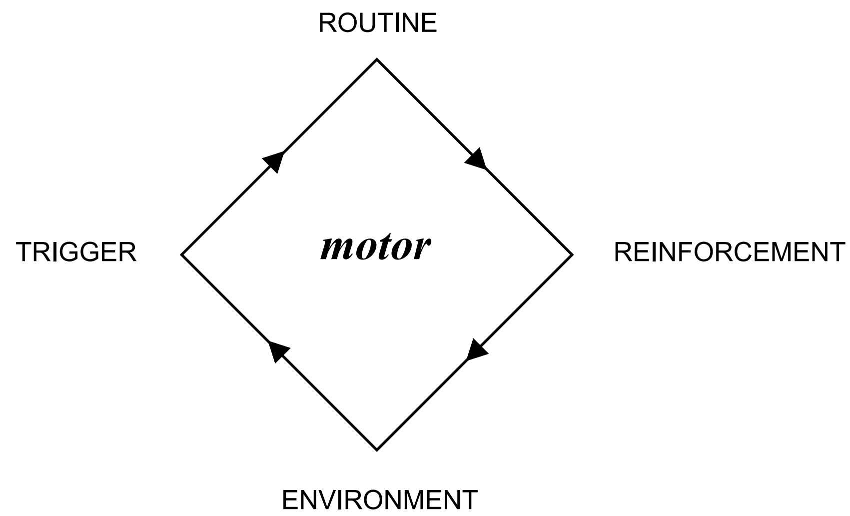




STEP 5

INSTALLING CONSUMER INSIGHTS HABITS

Even when all the previous steps are in place - stakeholders are educated on the language and use of insights, have embraced consumer empathy, have access to the insights library and a content plan is in place - there is no guarantee for success. Even then, people still need to continuously make the reflection *“What would a consumer do, what is the insight behind this and is there an insight that can guide us in this decision?”*. It is therefore important to install habits around *using insights*.



Installing a new habit is not easy. We are all familiar with the situation where at the start of the year we put forward a few good intentions (e.g. lose weight, eat healthier, work out more). Yet research shows that most people fail in keeping up their good intentions. By the end of January one in two will already have given up, at the end of February this number goes up to 80%. In general, only 1 in 5 succeeds in installing a new habit. Their success, according to research, is defined by two elements. Firstly, the ones installing successful habits don't just talk about it, they have a plan in place on how to reach their goal and on how they will approach it. It takes about 66 days for a habit to be formed depending on the behavior, the person and the circumstances, and this does not come without any plan or effort. Secondly, they never give up. The latter is important as research shows that you need to redo things seven times for a habit to be shaped. The same goes for installing habits on using and activating insights. It is about defining action points, creating the right framework and repeating this with persistence. Changing habits - and most certainly bad ones - is not done in one single speech or with one single manifest.

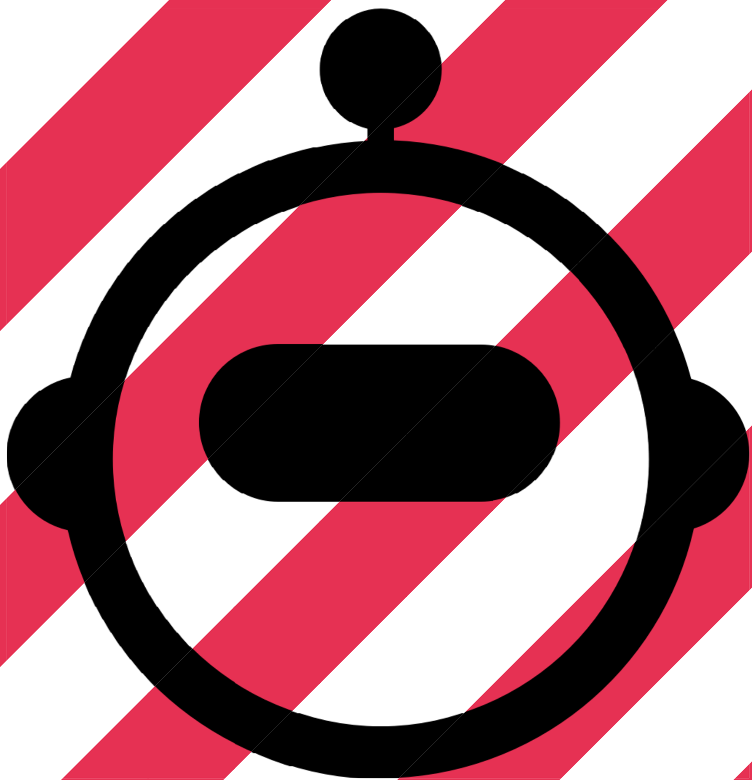
Instead of focusing on one big habit, one can generate behavioral change by installing tiny habits. According to Brian J. Fogg, a behavioral psychologist and author, the key is to simplify and make things systematic. If you make something small enough, it becomes easy to do. And if something is easy to do, we can stick with it. This ultimately becomes a habit. Here are some examples of tiny habits you can install, bringing the organization one step closer to consumer-centric thinking and insight activation.

One example is the habit of *asking why* when receiving a briefing from someone in the business. Each time a stakeholder approaches you with a research need, you ask them *why* three times, namely *"why do you need this, why is this important to you and why are you sure you are going to use this insight"*. This habit was also installed by one of our clients. And although at first many thought it was strange, stakeholders approach the CMI department today with a one-pager where they proactively prepare these three questions. This small habit of asking these questions at the start of the research process forces people to think twice before ordering a new research study. Next to that, it gives the CMI team a better understanding of what the business needs, resulting in research budgets being spent more wisely.

Another habit example that can help increase an insight's impact is one at the end of the research process, where you ask stakeholders that joined the presentation or debrief what they would do differently based on the learnings. Installing this habit results in people actively thinking about the *now what* during a presentation. Rather than having a wait-and-see mentality, this simple habit makes stakeholders walk away with concrete action lists that they can take forward.

A last example, which is probably the holy grail, is installing the habit of constant consumer reflection, where you keep asking yourself what the consumer would do. This can be done by for example keeping a free seat in your meeting representing the consumers, where you end every meeting by looking at that chair asking that question. Another trick is to start or end every meeting with a consumer story.

These small habits can help you move towards an organization where every single employee thinks about the consumer, puts the customer first and uses insights to do their job differently and better.



STEP 6

PROACTIVE CONSUMER INSIGHTS AI AGENT

The previous five steps were about changing current practices and installing new capabilities for tomorrow. Yet true insight activation involves moving from a reactive to a proactive mode, where the right insights reach the right people without them even asking for or thinking about them. This next level of research impact will be reached through a unique collaboration between AI and human researchers.

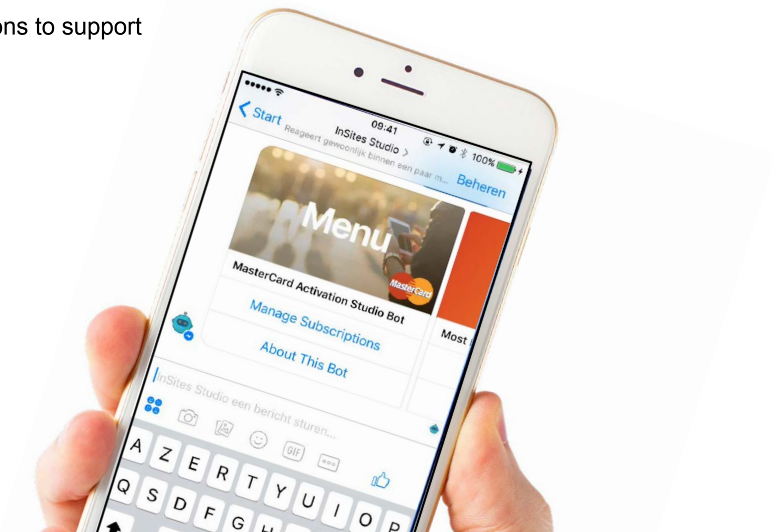
AI will (and already is) transform(ing) the research industry, elaborated in our *From Hype to Reality* bookzine (www.insites-consulting.com/fromhypetoreality). These smart systems will play a key role in all phases of a research process, including the activation of insights where AI can function as a smart assistant, helping researchers spread meaningful insights throughout the organization.

Just imagine being a marketer; you are in a meeting with your creative agency discussing new product packaging designs. There are two different designs on the table and you are not sure which design to move forward with. AI could guide you in this decision, as you could ask this virtual assistant information and insights on the product, which distinctive

assets to focus on and whether any country-specific design trends should be considered. Digging in the database of insights and consumer observations from previous research studies, your AI assistant could hand you all the insights to fuel this decision-making.

Or think of a scenario where, as an organization, you created a big consumer segmentation around which your business is organized. A persona is set up for each segment, yet stakeholders struggle to bring these personas and segments to life. In such a case, the AI assistant could help you by impersonating a specific persona or consumer segment based on all the consumer insights available for that segment. By having a conversation with you and feeding the conversation with all the data and insights available, the smart AI assistant could almost bring the consumer to life.

This is where Galvin comes in, an Artificial Intelligence chatbot that assists researchers by answering questions like *”Do we have insights on topic X?”*, *“Have we done a study before in country Y?”*, *“What were the findings there?”*… It functions as a handy assistant for all ad-hoc requests coming from the organization. Being an Artificial Intelligence bot, Galvin needs to be connected to data. The smart self-learning algorithm behind the bot will use this data to answer all queries. This can be done, for example, by plugging Galvin into an Insight Activation Studio, which is storing all research results and insights. When asking Galvin a question, which can be done through Messenger, Slack or Skype for Business, it will explore the database of insights and meaningful observations to support your query.



And this goes beyond answering ad-hoc research questions in meetings or impersonating consumers when in need for inspiration. Galvin can serve as your personal CMI assistant, keeping you up-to-date on the consumer reality at all times. Being connected to a database of insights and meaningful observations like the Studio, Galvin can see which insights have largest traction with your colleagues and feed this back proactively. Galvin could for example give you a daily update in the morning on the insights that are most relevant for you, highlighting what you may have missed or overlooked. Being a personal assistant, it could even be linked directly to your Outlook schedule where we enter scenarios where your AI assistant says: *”Based on the meeting that you scheduled today, you will probably need these insights, good luck!”*.

So, Galvin is literally your robot colleague that will assist you in all kinds of requests, allowing CMI managers to reorganize their focus on more strategical tasks. This future will necessitate a strong human- digital collaboration, where AI and machine learning algorithms assist researchers in complex, repetitive or time-intensive tasks and drive efficiency and automation. CMI managers will need to reallocate their time and resources and their value will come from different things like adding empathy and adding an emotional layer to observations, data and insights. This leads back to the human power of consumer understanding and creating deep consumer insights. By truly connecting human empathy with AI, one can reach augmented learning and understanding.

1

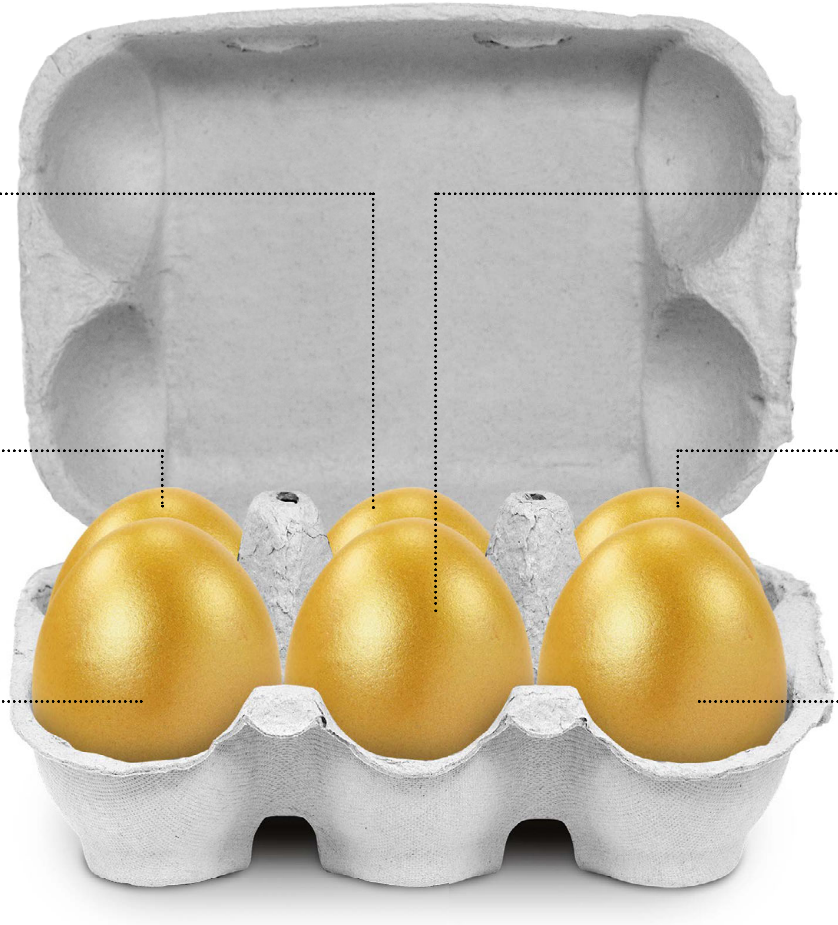
THE 3-STEP APPROACH
TO ACTÍVATE AD-HOC RESULTS

2

HOW TO EDUCATE YOUR
ORGANIZATION AROUND THE
POWER OF INSIGHTS

3

A SCALABLE WAY TO
BRING MANAGERS CLOSER
TO CONSUMERS



4

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF AN
ACTIVATION STRATEGY & PLAN

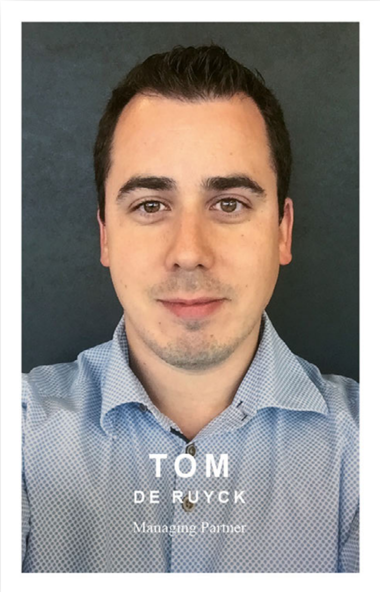
5

USING THE HABIT LOOP TO
MAKE THE USE OF INSIGHTS A
COMPANY-WIDE HABIT

6

HOW AI AND BOTS WILL
BRING US THE INSIGHTS WE
NEED WITHOUT US ASKING

It is clear that, in today's reality, where information has never been this accessible and data this abundant, the need for deep consumer and market understanding is ever present. Yet the true challenge (and game changer) lies in activating insights. Only by activating insights can we navigate the ship through these VUCA surroundings. Impact is the new name of the game, where a CMI manager's task goes beyond (solely) turning data into insights, but also involves investing the right resources in identifying the needs of the business and, having gathered the right insights, diffusing these within the organization. Insight professionals thus need to reinvest their time and rethink how they gather, distribute and activate insights in order to become a strategic partner of the business. Whilst today a CMI has a more supportive role in the background, this focus on impact may well turn them into the superstars of any organization.



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Let's talk!

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Although information has never been this accessible and data this abundant, brands and insight professionals are on a continuous quest for deep consumer insights. Yet the true challenge lies in activating these insights as CMI managers feel that only 45% of their research spending actually leads to business impact. Why is it that marketing research is struggling to drive impact? Are research professionals stuck in an executional role? How do we change the role of insight professionals within the organization and turn the CMI team into a valuable business partner?

The road to true insight activation isn't one that can be travelled overnight; it requires a deliberate change in an organization's mindset, infrastructure and culture. This paper highlights a 6-step framework towards insight activation, comprising six maturity levels with action points for today, tomorrow and the future.

By **Tom De Ruyck** (Managing Partner) & **Katia Pallini** (Content Impact Manager).

ABOUT INSITES CONSULTING

From the start of InSites Consulting in 1997 until today, there has been only one constant: we are continuously pushing the boundaries of marketing research. With a team of academic visionaries, passionate marketers and research innovators, we empower people to create the future of brands. As one of the top 3 most innovative market research agencies in the world (GRIT), we help our clients connect with consumers all over the world.

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