

# Is social research the next frontier?

Social media in its myriad of forms has permeated all levels of society across the world. The numbers of people that are connected and engaged to some form of social media continues to grow unabated and it has become a part of most of the planets daily lives. This is one of the presentations from the 33rd SAMRA Conference, Rosebank Crowne Plaza, Johannesburg. The conference took place from 16-17 August.



At its core it is a basic link to information, whether providing or consuming and because at its root research is all about collecting information in the forms of people's perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, thoughts etc. social media as a platform would seem to be a goldfield for organisations to efficiently monitor these perceptions and engage with consumers as well. More and more often, social media is being monitored and measured in order to track perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of brands, using people's posts or tweets as the data source. In the Booz & Company / Buddy Media Campaigns to Capabilities Social Media & Marketing 2011 Survey results, emerging uses of companies top social media platforms include market research (56%) and product development (40%). Of the respondents from this survey, 81% believe that it offers a great benefit for consumer insights.

In an interview with Sean Bruich of Facebook's Measurement Research group (conducted by Esomar and published on RW Connect), it is clear that research on a quantitative level within the social media space is taking greater hold and with 800 million customers and counting, Facebook has the biggest online database. Does traditional (quantitative and qualitative) research still have its place? Can "traditionally generated" results be supported, or replaced by social media? Can we determine how social media will fit into research?

This paper looks to examine these aspects with the aim of trying to provide some insights into what role social media plays (and will play) and whether traditional research methods are still applicable.

## For more:

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