

10

minutes with...

Ged Parton

CEO of global practices and capabilities for Synovate



BY PIET LEVY//STAFF WRITER

✉ plevy@ama.org

A single company can be conducting a single study for a single product, but if it's expanding that study to multiple countries, it cannot afford to take a singular approach.

If you want to know about Americans' relationship to a food product, you may find what you're looking for in a focus group. Seek answers in Vietnam and you may have to conduct an ethnographic analysis, says Ged Parton, CEO of global practices and capabilities for London-based market research company Synovate, No. 6 on *Marketing News'* Honomichl Global Top 25 last year.

Parton spoke with *Marketing News* from his home in London about his advice for conducting multinational research studies, his suggestions for getting clients to understand cultural nuances across nations and his concern about the state of the multinational marketing industry today.

Q: Let's start with the takeaway first. If you can offer one brief bit of advice for market researchers conducting research in multiple countries, what would it be?

A: One of the big things for us is making sure that we have local representation on the project and delivery teams. So what I mean by that is if you are conducting a multinational marketing project from the United States and conducting field work in multiple different countries, it's incredibly important that you have a strong local-to-local connection so the guys coordinating the project for the client can talk to local teams and understand local nuances.

One of the things you very regularly see in survey-based data is ... a very similar response in completely different countries. ... In Germany, you might find a whole group of people who are increasingly reluctant to use an automatic dishwasher because they're concerned about the environment and trying to live in as green a way as possible. In Japan, it's by design to not upset their neighbors with noisy dishwashers. In Japanese culture, people strive to make sure they're not imposing their own will and lifestyle on other people. So it looks like [people in] Germany and Japan are behaving in the same way, but the reasons why are very different.

For us as an organization, that's why we're a hugely locally oriented business and why we try to build collaborative teams across our business. [This is] so we [can] make sure that for the multinational marketing surveys we're completing, we can advise clients [on] what's behind the numbers.

Q: How do you try to help clients better understand those different cultural nuances across countries even if they're conducting multinational research about a singular topic or product?

A: We spend a long time with the client trying to work out what questions they are trying to answer. That drives the behav-

ioral design or approach we take for a particular study. For instance, one of the cool techniques that we use very regularly for multinational marketing projects ... identifies common motivational strategies and common approaches or outlooks that people have when trying to deal with a particular issue. ... What I mean by that is you often find traditional research study questions for a household cleaning product [for example] may be asking specifically about the [product's] efficacy or luxurious qualities. ... [But] it may well be that the best way to approach the multinational market study is by looking for commonalities across countries. Rather than [centering research around] characteristics of the product, [make it around] a much broader place to start.

So, for instance, if you were tackling dishwashing and your client was concerned about the lack of an emotional connection [with a product], rather than [center questioning on] the construct or a design, [first try to get] an understanding of what the home means and what homemaking means. If you start with a broader perspective, it allows you to identify common ways of thinking about different markets, about the way people feel about the home and approach homemaking, and you can then identify what common themes are among common groups of people. You can create a different understanding with the client than if you had started with the product.

Q: Some forms of research work better in certain countries than others. Give some examples.

A: In focus groups, we often have an exercise where you liberate emotional and intellectual [restrictions] to stimulate folks [so answers] are as direct and creative as possible. In Europe, for instance, it's OK to have a process that involves [participants] removing their shoes, closing their eyes and standing next to other participants and putting their arms on [each other], not as a collective group hug, but as a physical interaction. There are other countries where that kind of physical interaction would not work. In the United States, [people] may be uncomfortable with the physical contact. In some cultures taking shoes off may be

a major problem. It's a slightly frivolous example, but what I'm trying to point out is unless clients are working with organizations that do multinational work all the time, it's incredibly easy to construct a design that simply won't work in one market versus another.

In some markets, some cultures have a propensity to respond incredibly positively to any sort of material put in front of them, partly out of politeness, partly out of natural cultural predisposition. So if we are assessing an ad campaign for a new product, we might automatically expect to see Latino cultures rating the project or advertising incredibly highly versus Western European markets where the national propensity is to downgrade.

(continues on page 28)

Helping companies communicate and conduct business in any language and in any locale!

-  Translation and Copy Writing
-  Multilingual Desktop Publishing
-  Multilingual Web Design/Development
-  Software Localization
-  Website Localization
-  Interpretation
-  Global Search Engine Optimization

For more information please contact:

info@globalizationpartners.com

or visit us at

www.globalizationpartners.com

Ph: 1-866-272-5874

1600 Tysons Blvd, 8th Floor, McLean, VA 22102

Gaining access to customers across the globe



takes more than offering your corporate website in a few languages. It requires a local mindset. You must enter each new market as if it were your home market while maintaining brand integrity and message consistency.



Going Global? Call upon the experts

GALA's member companies include the most experienced localization, translation and globalization experts in the world. They share a commitment to quality, service, and innovation in helping clients reach global markets.

www.gala-global.org



DRIVE AROUND IN CIRCLES FOREVER



FEED GRANDPA TO CROCODILES



PASS KIDNEY STONES HERE



TOUCH STINKY CHEESE AT YOUR OWN RISK



MOTORCYCLES MAY JUMP OVER YOUR CAR



CAUTION: BRASSIERE AHEAD



UNIVERSE COLLAPSES HERE



SMITING ZONE



HUH?

GET THE MESSAGE?

There is no universal language. Or universal communications plan. But there are insightful strategies and meaningful translations to make your brand relevant, anywhere on earth. They are the expertise of TripleInk, a multilingual communications agency located in Minneapolis that calls the whole world home. To see how we can help market your brand across borders, cultures and languages, call or visit us on the web. And sign up for a free GET THE MESSAGE poster at www.tripleink.com

TripleInk

MULTILINGUAL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

tripleink.com

800.632.1388

612.342.9800

Globalization/Localization and Multicultural Marketing Coming September 15 in Marketing News

As companies work to expand their services to countries around the globe, it's crucial that research and marketing efforts respect and support culturally correct messaging. Don't miss this special issue to learn more about marketing around the world.

For advertising information contact:
Richard Ballschmiede, Advertising
Sales Director, at 312-542-9076.
Email: rballschmiede@ama.org

Q: So if a company is engaging in different forms of research for the same study, how do they ensure that answers to their multinational research studies can accurately be compared?

A: The single biggest thing for me is that you really need to make sure that your agency partner is very used to executing multinational marketing work and has some kind of vertical understanding ... of particular categories [such as] financial services, packaged goods, healthcare and so on. ... Do not trust your favorite local partner for multinational work. Always

consult with multinational market experts. If you don't, you will make mistakes in study design. ...

Because we are an organization of scale, we are spending a huge [amount of] money investing in research. Synovate has a laboratory in Cape Town, South Africa, that's connected to other groups around the world including Chicago, New York and Amsterdam, [the Netherlands,] where they are fielding studies on our own behalf to assess these kinds of issues. The reason why we do that is because we want to be able to say to our clients that we validate particular ways of asking particular questions. **m**

Find Out More @ MarketingPower.com

Links to all the additional resources cited here are available by visiting MarketingPower.com/marketingnews and clicking on "current issue" or April 30, 2010.

Articles:

Live Like Locals

A *Marketing News* article provides tips for finding effective local marketing and market research help in foreign countries.

10 Minutes With...Nigel Hollis, Executive Vice President and Chief Global Analyst, Millward Brown Group

In this Q&A, Hollis elaborates on some localization lessons and other takeaways found in his 2009 book *The Global Brand*.

Webcasts:

Small Budgets, Big World—Improving International Marketing ROI in Hard Times



Communicate locally
Succeed globally

23 Main Street
Andover, MA 01810
USA
Tel . +1 206 329 2596

www.gala-global.org

GALA is an international non-profit association that promotes translation services, language technology and language management solutions.

The member companies worldwide include translation companies, localization service providers, globalization consultants, internationalization specialists and technology developers. GALA companies share a commitment to quality, service, and innovation in helping clients reach global markets.



Welocalize

241 E. 4th St. Suite 207
Frederick, MD 21701
Phone: 301.668.0330
Fax: 301.668.0335
Email: info@welocalize.com
Web: www.welocalize.com
Contact: Shannon Smith,
Marketing Manager

Managing the translation of sales and marketing material in a multinational, multilingual company can be very challenging. With ad agencies and subsidiaries all over the world, budget management, workflow and communication can all become difficult to track very quickly. In an effort to make the entire process a whole lot easier, Welocalize has developed a translation marketplace called MarketSight which is specifically designed to manage the translation of sales and marketing material. MarketSight is an enterprise, web based application which can be deployed in simple, software as a service (SaaS) model. Please visit our website or email us for more information.



MultiLingual Computing, Inc.

319 North First Avenue, Suite 2
Sandpoint, ID 83864-1495
Phone: (208) 263-8178
Fax: (208) 263-6310
E-mail: info@multilingual.com
Web: www.multilingual.com

MultiLingual Computing, Inc., publishes MultiLingual, the magazine for people and companies with business needs that span cultures and languages.

Published eight times a year in print and digital formats, the magazine has readers in more than 60 countries who learn about global websites, localizing products, translation, managing content and more. News and event notices are provided at www.multilingual.com and in our free biweekly electronic newsletter.

Free downloads at www.multilingual.com/gsg include guides to doing business in foreign countries as well as internationalization, localization and translation.

We also co-produce Localization World, a conference and networking event dedicated to global business know-how. Information can be found at www.localizationworld.com



TripleInk is a multilingual marketing communications agency that works across languages, cultures and borders to provide insightful strategies and meaningful translations to make brands relevant, anywhere on earth.

Services:

- **Language Services** range from translation to in-language technical writing and in-language copywriting
- **Multilingual Production** Services comprise all media, from audio-visual to interactive and print
- **Multicultural Consulting** and Creative Services encompass product naming and branding, art direction and design

Markets Served:

TripleInk serves B2B, consumer and industrial products companies and their agencies in a variety of industries.

Contact:
Christa Tiefenbacher-Hudson
612.342.9800 ■ 800.623.1388
cthudson@tripleink.com



60 South 6th Street, Suite 2800, Minneapolis, MN 55402