

Research

AUSTRALIAN MARKET & SOCIAL RESEARCH SOCIETY | VOLUME 36 | NUMBER 4 | NOV 2019 - JAN 2020

NEWS



SUMMER READING

PAGE 8
MIND THE GAP

PAGE 10
THE UNREALISTIC
OPTIMISM OF ASIA?

PAGE 14
THE CHATBOTS ARE COMING

PAGE 19
ARE BOTS THE KEY TO MORE
CONVERSATIONAL RESEARCH?

PAGE 22
DISPATCHES FROM GUNNEDAH

For the greater good

Horst Feldhaeuser reveals how a partnership between market research leaders and bright student minds benefitted the community.



As part of its curriculum, the University of Auckland Business School works closely with market research industry leaders to provide students with real-life projects. Each year, the students work on a research project for a deserving organisation, and in 2019, the New Zealand Housing Foundation was selected.

The Housing Foundation is a not-for-profit, charitable trust that assists people in

finding affordable secure, stable and healthy homes. Through its housing programmes, the Foundation provides options to get people into new homes and help them manage their finances so that, over time, they can become independent homeowners.

This project represents not only the partnership between the business world and academia, but also has the charitable element of working with a non-profit group.

It gives students hands-on experience, gives businesses a chance to work with the next generation of researchers and gives back to the community.

The students

Broken into small groups, around 60 students conducted an intensive 12-week project that brought the process of market research to life, including hands-on work in

"We know that students typically attain higher levels of achievement when they are engaged with course material and feel that they can apply their knowledge and skills in future employment. Social and community engagement is a big driver for our university."

stages like client briefing, research design, fieldwork (qual and quant), analysis and presentation of results. This gave students invaluable work experience they can now take with them into their careers.

In addition, the students worked side-by-side with seasoned industry mentors, who represented a cross-section of the business and market research community. Being a mentee has long been held up as a fantastic way to expand knowledge and skills, gain valuable advice from a more experienced person, and build professional networks. The programme takes this one step further by offering future career opportunities through 'speed-networking' interview sessions with the local business community.

We found that student loved this opportunity to give back to the local community. Some of their comments included:

- 'The fact that it was a real-world client with an important mission made the

research project more than just an assignment.'

- 'I loved that the organisation was a charity with a good cause.'
- 'I really loved that it was a real-life organisation with real data.'

The business partners

The involvement of the business community has been vital in bringing this project to fruition. Key industry partners for this year's program included Dynata, providing the data collection platform, and Infotools, who made their cloud-based analysis and visualisation platform, Harmoni, available to students for free.

As with being a mentee, mentoring itself provides a host of benefits to the mentors themselves. It helps them improve communication and management skills, as well as providing a sense of fulfillment and growth. Mentors can create a two-way feedback loop, learning from the students, just as the students learn from them. Many



This research project was honestly the coolest assignment I've had to do in the four years I've been at uni.

who mentor say there is a freshness to the perspectives the students bring, as well as a challenge to start thinking about things differently.

Students are judged by a panel of both client and industry experts, culminating in the 'Market Research Day' presentation for three finalist groups. Because they are doing the work for a real-world project that supports decision-making for non-profit organisation initiatives, the students can see the results of their labour at work in the community.

© OVER PAGE

The non-profit organisation

The groups' projects resulted in data the New Zealand Housing Foundation could actually use to understand the perceptions and awareness of their organisation in the community, and to understand the housing needs in the region.

The data collected covered a wide range of topic areas, including audience profiles for the organisation's services. Some of the insights concerned:

- Basic demographics such as ethnicity, gender, age and household income
- Perceptions of 'social capital'
- Feelings of safety in current neighbourhoods
- Likelihood of future home ownership
- Brand awareness among target audiences.

The New Zealand Housing Foundation will use these data-driven insights to help shape future programming and services. The research also included recommendations for ways to connect with audiences by addressing their challenges and 'pain-points' as identified through the research.

University of Auckland senior lecturer Dr Catherine Frethey-Bentham may sum up the benefits of this programme best when

I like that we got to work with mentors who work in the market research industry.

she says: 'We know that students typically attain higher levels of achievement when they are engaged with course material and feel that they can apply their knowledge and skills in future employment. Social and community engagement is a big driver for our university. We are proud of the impact this ongoing program has both for our students and the participating non-profit organisations, and the research agencies.'

In conclusion

This programme was presented at the most recent Research Association New Zealand conference in Auckland, and won the Best Paper Award, sponsored by ESOMAR. This honour helped bolster the belief that this partnership and programme is on the right track. Because the work that resulted from the partnership supported decision-making for a worthy non-profit, everyone involved will be able to see the results at work in the community. This model can be replicated across the globe at universities and with business partners, all for the greater good.

**HORST FELDHAUSER, GROUP SERVICES
DIRECTOR, INFOTOOLS**




Get a read on your audiences!

If you need multicultural participants for your focus groups, surveys or interviews, or bilingual moderators to conduct in-language research, call **Multicultural Marketing & Management (MMM)** to assist your team.

MMM has: 20+ years' experience, a nationwide research panel with multicultural participants, multilingual CATI and CAPI capacity, trained native-born bilingual moderators and interviewers from 70+ language groups, and nine industry awards.

Contact **MMM** at 1300 863 896
info@multiculture.com.au www.multiculture.com.au

