

ESSENTIALS OF MOMENT-TO-MOMENT RESEARCH

Experts on the forefront of audience response methodologies share their tips, best practices and professional guidance for understanding and conducting Moment-to-Moment research.

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Every word. Every frame. Every moment. Do they count?

Every day, every moment, people are inundated with information to process. Television, radio, newspapers, billboards, the Internet and social media bring countless stories, offers and messaging. There are hundreds of channels to flip through, dozens of products to choose from, and thousands of words to process. Given this non-stop blitz—as many as 5,000 impressions a day¹—how do busy and distracted consumers make their choices?

That's an important question for those whose job it is to understand consumers and influence behavior. Given the enormous competition and easy access to technology, communicators typically have only a few minutes (and often less than 60 seconds) to capture audience attention and form an impression. If those first moments fail to convince people, the opportunity to make any meaningful impact is gone. That's why researchers want to better understand what messages drive people to make choices. They want to learn what makes each moment—and each experience—count.

Immediate, emotional responses inform larger issues

As researchers know, initial reactions—down to the smallest detail—can be the difference that shapes an entire outcome. To identify and better understand the details, researchers have embraced methodologies that measure how people respond to every second of a visual or audio stimulus.

For more than three decades, Moment-to-Moment (MtM) research has captured respondents' unfiltered, visceral reactions to all forms of media. Its rich, quantitative data informs and complements qualitative discussions, helping researchers and analysts identify which specific elements, messages, arguments or even mannerisms are impacting an audience. That's why MtM methodology is used extensively for audience and consumer research, message testing and public opinion polling.

“Everybody experiences far more than they understand. Yet it is experience, rather than understanding, that influences behavior.”

— MARSHALL MCLUHAN, COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA THEORIST

Development of Moment-to-Moment tools

Methods for measuring MtM response have been in development since the early 1980's. Dialsmith is one of the leaders in MtM technologies and the developer of the [Perception Analyzer system](#). The Perception Analyzer captures respondent feedback through a hand-held dial that is turned left or right to indicate a range of response (e.g., likes/dislikes, agreements/disagreements, etc.) The dials are designed to be simple and intuitive to use. The technology is also available in an online platform and includes a mouse-controlled, on-screen slider for measuring responses to recorded media in surveys.



How to use this guide

This guide is intended for research professionals using, or considering using, MtM as part of their research methodology. Our goal is to help you understand the benefits of MtM research and how experts are using the methodology and supporting technologies to enhance their research efforts and meet project objectives.

The guide provides practical, field-tested advice and tips from experienced researchers who have been using the methodology in their own consulting projects for years. It is meant as a helpful and easily reference-able resource to help you get the most of using the MtM methodology.

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What does Moment-to-Moment methodology do for me?

Recall-based research asks participants to neatly sum up their range of emotions and opinions into one retrospective conclusion. While it provides valuable insights, recall is only part of the equation. Lost in the method are those true, in-the-moment nuances that are vital to a more holistic view of a respondent's opinion.

MtM data provides researchers with a respondent's continuous, second-by-second, emotional response to visual or audio stimulus, whether it's a speech, TV ad or program, or litigator's opening arguments. Researchers can get as granular as needed with the data without making sacrifices to the overall quality of the research results.

Neil Griffiths of Blinc Partnership, well-known internationally for its media research work, described the benefits of using MtM research (related to using the Perception Analyzer dials) this way: "The dials allow people to have visceral responses to the different messages we present. Participants don't over-intellectualize the message before responding, so we get their gut feeling, and then can discuss why they like one more than another."

With MtM techniques, you can dig into which specific moments, messages or topics elicit reaction from respondents—both positively and negatively—and use the data to drive deeper qualitative discussions. As John Garrett of political research specialists [Greenberg Quinlin Rosner Research](#) puts it:

"[Moment-to-Moment] dial testing is a finer tool that allows us to gather data with more precision and more speed. But it does more than just answer questions about specific language and messages. It's amazing how much you can draw from the data it provides—about emotion and tone, about how to approach sensitive issues, about very big picture concepts."

"Moment-to-Moment research has such a wide range of applications to glean deeper insights into the whys of visceral reactions. Recall has its place, but is fraught with too many errors for the mind to 'fill in the blanks' in what really cannot be accurately recalled."

- DR. DAVE LUNDAHL, CEO, INSIGHTSNOW

CUSTOMER STORY

Where's the sweet spot for Moment-to-Moment research?

There are many research areas where MtM methodology is making an impact.

Ad Testing: MtM has been used to test Super Bowl ads for more than a decade

TV Pilot Testing: Nearly every major television network throughout the U.S. and globally uses MtM to test television pilots

Political Messaging: MtM has helped elect every U.S. President since Ronald Reagan

Product Messaging: Regularly used by packaged goods, utilities and healthcare companies in their consumer research

On-Air Talent Coaching: Recently, HSN used Online MtM to help program hosts improve sales skills

Trial Case Presentation and Testimony: MtM is widely used in mock trials and litigation consulting

Public Opinion Polling: CNN is one of several major news networks to prominently feature results from MtM focus groups in their on-air coverage of the presidential debates and the State of the Union addresses

Executive-Level Speech Coaching: Businesses use MtM to identify which messages resonate with employees, customers and stakeholders, and how to best deliver them

Uncovering Elements: Highest Political Impact

Full-service public opinion and marketing research firm, [Hill Research Consultants](#), uses MtM techniques as a way to uncover unexpected things that experience and judgment sometimes miss. As an example, the firm wanted to see if there was anything in their political candidate client's background that might favorably influence undecided voters. Through MtM research, Hill found that undecided voters in their client's region responded very favorably to the candidate's volunteer service in Vietnam. That finding helped develop key messaging for the campaign ads, which helped the candidate win the Senate race.

"In today's distracted world, it's crucial to have a message that makes people pay attention easily. [Moment-to-Moment] is the only way I know to judge that, as it helps you get to the piece that has the highest impact. It offers one more indicator if something is being effectively communicated in the way you intend it."

— DR. DAVID B. HILL, DIRECTOR, HILL RESEARCH CONSULTANT

**TWEET THIS**

In what areas of research is Moment-to-Moment making an impact?
#MomentToMoment Research Essentials

What does Moment-to-Moment deliver for my clients?

“Having the graphic overlay of response lines is easy for stakeholders to understand, much more intuitive than a bar graph,” said Elizabeth Merrick, Manager of Customer Insights at [HSN \(formerly Home Shopping Network\)](#).

Visual data create dynamic understanding

Some researchers find that end clients are averse to numbers, and instead, are more receptive to visual representations of data. MtM researchers have reported that this is especially true when working with creative clients in broadcasting and advertising. MtM research generates respondent feedback continuously over a period of time so it lends itself to a more visual representation of the data. For example, the Perception Analyzer system can output [graphical lines overlaid on top of the video](#) that visually represents the aggregated feedback of all respondents at each particular moment of the video.

By viewing the MtM response lines on a graphic overlay in real-time during a focus group, clients get live, visual feedback that is more easily interpreted and actionable. For many clients, it’s as dynamic an experience for them as it is for the respondents in the focus group.

IN THEIR WORDS

Seeing is believing

When working with a client for the first time, Dr. Lara Giese, president of Advanced Trial Sciences, describes for them the MtM technology she will be using to collect data and how it will help the case. She describes how her clients react to MtM when seeing it for the first time:

“Once clients see the research method in action and witness the visual overlays and response lines, MtM becomes very convincing, and a necessary tool for their case preparation. They immediately see and understand the value of the data—and the power of the methodology--to be able to decidedly recognize the strengths and weaknesses in the presentation of arguments in a case.”

– DR. LARA GIESE, PRESIDENT, ADVANCED TRIAL SCIENCES

Accurate, actionable data

As researcher Neil Griffiths of Blinc Partnership says, “Essentially, the dials tell the story. Response lines may show a program has a great beginning and ending, but a not-so-great second act. This tells the producer the second act, or elements of it, needs improvement, not that the whole program should be shelved.”

Griffiths says MtM is extremely useful to the media industry even if the program or ad is already “in the can.” In that case, dial tests help broadcasters identify specific scenes or moments to which the audience responds most positively, which can be used to create promotions. This can be an enormous factor in the success of a program or ad.

Rich Thau, president and founder of [Presentation Testing, Inc.](#), a New York-based research firm, says that clients who are convinced their message is solid are sometimes surprised by what they see in the response lines when the message goes through MtM testing.

HSN’s Merrick says of MtM that it all comes down to more accurate data. “It makes all the difference to be able to see our videos from the same perspective that the customer sees it, and to be able to isolate moments of truth. Those types of results are much more actionable for us.”

Degrees of efficiency

Thau relies on the MtM methodology because it allows for putting a large amount of information—often 3,000 to 5,000 words—under scrutiny in a limited amount of time. This is not possible to do with other methodologies.

Griffiths sees MtM as an efficient use of time with focus groups. “The dial responses provide an edge about what to explore more thoroughly and qualitatively because it shows what matters most to the participants,” she said.

“Every time I use MtM, it saves my client time and money. It gives attorneys the information they need to change direction in real-time, enabling continuous review and analysis.”

— DR. LARA GIESE, PRESIDENT, ADVANCED TRIAL SCIENCES

CUSTOMER STORY

Dialing into the Pulse of the Nation

Public opinion researchers have been on the forefront when it comes to MtM research. Dr. Dan Schill, Assistant Professor in Communication Studies and researcher at Southern Methodist University, helps conduct the dial focus groups for CNN's coverage of the presidential debates, State of the Union addresses and more. Dr. Schill explains how MtM benefits his research:

"The Perception Analyzer technology plays a meaningful role through its ability to capture real-time, second-by-second responses from swing voters throughout the span of a 90-minute debate. The data from the dials allow us to identify and rank which issues are making an impact on voters and pushing opinion in either a positive or negative direction. And the ability to capture this information in real-time is a unique benefit of using the dials."

In-Brief: MtM research methodology has been a mainstay in CNN's coverage of major political events. Researchers Rita Kirk and Dan Schill facilitate the dial focus groups for CNN.

Client: Drs. Rita Kirk and Dan Schill, Southern Methodist University, Public Affairs Research Department

Objective: Allow CNN to display real-time focus group feedback during the State of the Union speech

Solution: The Perception Analyzer (focus group equipped with dials)

Results: Researchers were able to show the real-time reactions from a focus group made up of a mix of Democrats, Republicans and Independent voters during CNN's 2008 and 2012 presidential debate coverage. CNN used the feedback for news reporting and political analysis after the event.

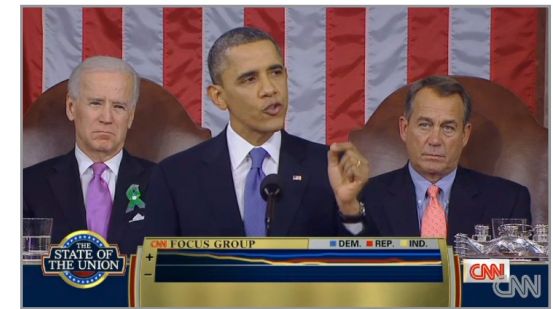


Image courtesy of CNN



Image courtesy of CNN

[Click here](#) for more on CNN's MtM research »



TWEET THIS

How does @CNNPolitics use Moment-to-Moment research in their coverage of major political events?
#MomentToMoment Research Essentials

IN THEIR WORDS

Offline vs. Online Moment-to-Moment research: What's the trade-off?

With the rapid rise of online communities and social interactions, it's no surprise that researchers are always looking for new and innovative online approaches. MtM is one such approach and through new tools, such as [Perception Analyzer Online](#), researchers can now add MtM evaluation of online media to traditional online surveys. But when does it make sense to do so?

With online MtM, similar to online surveys, you benefit by being able to reach a much larger and regionally diverse sample. You can get your survey out in the field and see results very quickly. Additionally, the MtM element can be combined with traditional survey questions to gather rich quantitative feedback that can stand on its own or be used to compliment offline qualitative research.

But like all online research methods, online MtM has its place. The main tradeoff in using only an online survey method like MtM is that you lose the ability to do the deeper qualitative follow up from your MtM results than what you could do in offline focus groups or in in-depth interviews. To address this, some MtM researches are developing methodologies that utilize both online and offline MtM components such as combining data collected offline and online, and incorporating online MtM elements into online focus groups.

Online MtM research has been used effectively in testing a variety of formats including television pilots, on-air talent (such as hosts or emcees), music formats, advertisements and political messaging. But as with all surveys, success depends on the design and methodology of the research.

HSN Learns through Observation

As manager of Customer Insights at HSN, Elizabeth Merrick leads a team of market researchers who use, in addition to database analytics and customer surveys, online MtM technology to gauge consumer responses.

"Studies show that Moment-to-Moment research improves data quality, and it is more accurate for our purposes than a traditional Likert scale," said Merrick. "Online research gives us more data points, and we can watch the progression of responses onscreen. Our take on it is, 'Why ask, when you can observe.'"

—ELIZABETH MERRICK, HSN



TWEET THIS

HSN's Elizabeth Merrick says MtM improves data quality, more accurate than Likert scale #MomentToMoment Research Essentials

How does offline MtM research differ from online?

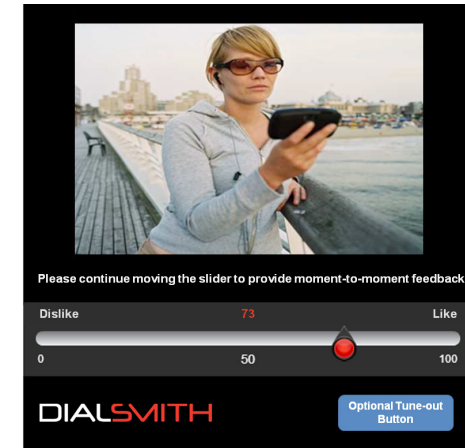
While both offline and online MtM research allow for gathering continuous feedback on visual stimulus, each differs in setting and tools.

Offline MtM refers to the use of hand-held response devices, where individuals taking part in a focus group use a dial or keypad to provide continuous, discrete attitudinal and emotional response to a visual or audio stimulus, such as an ad, movie, TV pilot, political speech or mock trial. Dials are most common for MtM research because the intuitive nature of the dial minimizes distractions or interruptions to viewing, allowing respondents to stay engaged and focused.

Focus group moderators can view results in real-time, and use the responses to guide deeper qualitative discussions. It also allows researchers to show their clients results in real-time so they can see how the audience reacts in a live setting. Offline MtM results can be viewed as video overlays and/or exported as raw data for deeper analysis.



Offline



Online

The Perception Analyzer tools from Dialsmith are the industry standard in offline and online Moment-to-Moment research technologies.

Online MtM allows for continuous feedback of media presented in online surveys. When does online MtM make sense?

- When you need a larger and/or more diverse sample
- When you need quick turnaround
- When you have limited budget
- When you want to add a larger quantitative component to your qualitative research

IN THEIR WORDS

Blinc develops blueprint for combining offline and online MtM research

London-based Blinc Partnership is an agency that knows its way around a focus group. Known for its intellectual rigor, Blinc is the U.K.'s premier broadcast media researcher with a client base that includes the BBC and Nielsen. Blinc uses MtM methodology extensively in their research and has recently integrated both the offline and online MtM technologies to effectively meet specific project objectives. Here's what Blinc's managing research director Neil Griffiths said about their experience using both methods:

"We started using both [offline and online] methods in our work with the BBC. As a national broadcaster, they are required to collect responses to their programming efforts from all over the U.K. Conducting in-person focus groups in every region is too expensive. Doing our MtM research online allowed us to collect a lot more data and draw on larger regional samples. From the online generated data, we can, if the client requests it, do follow-up interviews to drill deeper on the qualitative side.

We use the online MtM results for collecting data that underpins qualitative discussion. With online, we can build more data points and more questions, which can then be further explored in focus groups. The online work doesn't replace the offline groups. In situations like this for the BBC, we're able to use the two methods together to deliver much clearer and data-backed qualitative results for the client."

**TWEET THIS**

How does Blinc Partnership combine online/offline MtM research for the BBC?
#MomentToMoment Research Essentials

DIY or hire the experts: What factors should I consider?

As a company that develops and sells the Perception Analyzer, and provides technical consulting and support, Dialsmith regularly hears from research professionals who are weighing their options. Should they buy their own dial system and operate it themselves, or hire a technical and services consultant? While specific project needs and objectives vary, the factors researchers should consider in making this decision are typically the same.

Running your own MtM system is a science as well as an art. It requires dedicated staff that has the training and technical expertise to ensure that it's not only done, but done right.

As long-time Perception Analyzer system owner, Rich Thau, said, "This is not something that you can just figure out on your own. You wouldn't want someone performing surgery on you who just read a manual about how to do it. There's an investment here and your reputation is at stake, so you want to make sure you have someone who knows what they're doing and has a lot of practice under their belt."

Find out the key factors to consider
when deciding to DIY or hire an expert »



DIY **VS** EXPERT

Here are key factors to consider when deciding whether to do-it-yourself (DIY) or hire an expert:

1. As a good rule of thumb, if you're conducting MtM groups less than five times per year, you'd be better served by hiring a technical consultant. The upfront investment to purchase and get trained on a system will be recouped over time, but hiring an expert consultant makes much more sense at this level. It also allows you to focus your attention on other elements of the research and client deliverables.
2. If you or your client's requirement for the MtM research is a custom or "one-off" use of the technology, the experience and technical acumen a consultant provides will allow you to apply the technology in the most optimal and efficient way. With a consultant at the helm, you can focus on project objectives.
3. If you are thinking about integrating both offline and online MtM research, call on experts for help. Dialsmith offers the technical services to manage both offline and online MtM projects and consolidate the data into one reporting system.
4. When dial research becomes a standard part of your research methodology (either through changes you are making to your research or through client requests), then investing in the purchase of your own dial system and the training of your staff makes sense.
5. Before you purchase a dial system, be sure you have dedicated resources in-house that can be trained. This includes staff to program and run the system, as well as IT staff to support the on-going maintenance of the dedicated PC/laptop.

Five technical must-do's when prepping for a Moment-to-Moment dial focus group



1. Make sure you have dials for the maximum number of respondents you'll seat. Then be sure you have a few spare dials on hand just in case.
2. All digital media that will be used for testing should be in either .MP4 or .WMV format. Include one second of black (or silence) at the beginning and at the end of the media segment.
3. Understand exactly what data deliverables and formats your client needs, and communicate them clearly to your technical consultant, if applicable.
4. Whenever possible, use meeting facilities that offer cable pass-throughs between the respondent room and the viewing room.
5. Be sure your project requirements address any custom audio/visual requests from the client.

How do I keep respondents engaged?

With MtM research, you're capturing data every second, so keeping respondents engaged and actively dialing is instrumental to ensuring high-quality results. We polled Dialsmith experts as well as industry partners for methods they use to keep participants engaged and focused throughout an MtM session. All agreed on the top two factors for successful engagement:

1. Provide clear instruction and practice time

With MtM, don't expect participants to simply pick up their dials and know what to do. While the dials are intuitive in nature, it is important to provide clear instruction on what the respondents need to be doing with the dials and what specific questions they are responding to. Respondents should feel confident that they understand how to use the dials to reflect their opinion and are comfortable enough that they can remain focused on the content. Our experts recommend allowing participants practice time so they become familiar with the feel of the device in their hand and the touch of the dial.

Dialsmith's Vice President of Client Services, Eric Alzuhn, recommends waiting until right before your first MtM exercise to mention the dials to the respondent group.

"Being a focus group respondent is a new experience for most, especially for dial groups. Let them warm up to the experience and the technology with a few simple demographic questions," says Alzuhn. "Then, tell them they're going to try something a little different with the dials. Keep things simple up front and don't overwhelm the respondents with too much detail during your opening remarks. You'll have better results if you wait until just before that first MtM evaluation."

"Being a focus group respondent is a new experience for most, especially for dial groups. Let them warm up to the experience and the technology with a few simple demographic questions."

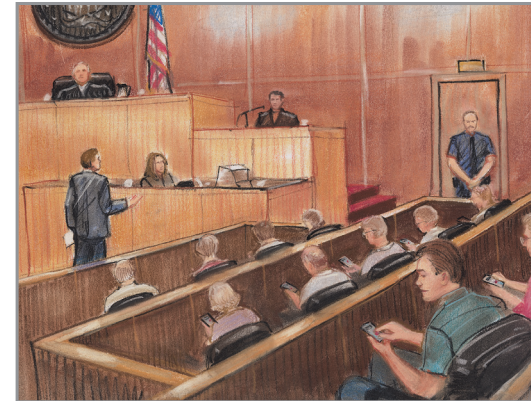
- ERIC ALZUHN, VICE PRESIDENT, CLIENT SERVICES, DIALSMITH

Litigation consultant Dr. Lara Giese presents her respondent group with a short, fun tutorial that includes a behind-the-scenes look at what the dial feedback looks like on-screen. Dr. Giese feels that this provides important context for her respondents and helps them better understand how to respond appropriately with the dials.

Research consultant Rich Thau also recommends building in time to do a dry run, so that respondents can “work out the kinks,” and get a feel for viewing, listening and dialing at the same time. A dry run also presents the moderator with an opportunity to see if all respondents are using the dial properly, or if further instruction is needed.

With Online MtM, you must take into account that your respondents’ experience with the media element of your survey may be impacted by numerous variables, including system hardware, software and/or Internet connection. Additionally, the technical fluency of each participant is unknown, so your instructions should be clear and straightforward, yet not be so simplistic that you alienate those participants who are more technically savvy.

With Offline MtM, it’s recommended that you build in a practice opportunity for your online respondents if at all possible. Allow familiarization with the ratings slider and time to troubleshoot any connectivity or technical issues.



2. Design the project to address engagement

For Offline MtM, it’s possible to keep respondents engaged even when dealing with stimulus longer in duration, such as a full television pilot or a speech. But in such cases, the responsibility is on the moderator to play the role of “engagement cop,” gauging the proper timing for reminding respondents to continue to dial regularly all the way through the testing session. For example, one MtM researcher won’t let sessions go longer than 10 minutes without entering the room and reminding participants to use their dials.

Online MtM is a bit more challenging. You need to be very conscious about keeping video segments shorter. Respondents will be taking the surveys in all types of environments, which are subject to distractions. Tools like Perception Analyzer Online provide on-screen prompts, such as a flashing slider and on-screen messaging, to help keep participants focused on the media and actively providing feedback all the way through the testing session.

Reminders to help keep respondents engaged

While instructing groups, our MtM experts use the following reminders to keep respondents engaged: *(To be as effective as possible, have a dial in hand to demonstrate these reminders while instructing your group.)*

1. Keep both hands on the dials throughout the viewing/listening session.
WHY: We want respondent reaction in real-time and to avoid any delay that may be caused by reaching for the dial.
2. The system collects information from your dial every second, so make sure you are continuously reacting to what you see and hear.
WHY: We want to make sure respondents know that they should be using the dials to indicate if they like or dislike something in that moment and not wait until the end to respond.
3. Keep your focus on the media; do not worry about the specific number you are entering.
WHY: We are more interested in the range that a respondent is dialing; not a specific number.
4. Try to use the entire range of the dial when responding. If you like something, turn your dial up. If you really like it, turn it up even more. The same can be said if you don't like something.
WHY: Larger movements reveal more than smaller ones, so we want respondents to think in ranges and not in specific numbers.
5. Before we begin, set your dial to the middle mark—typically 50. Any time you're not feeling particularly positive or negative about what you are observing, return your dial to 50.
WHY: Think of 50 as the starting point for each test segment; it also represents a neutral opinion.

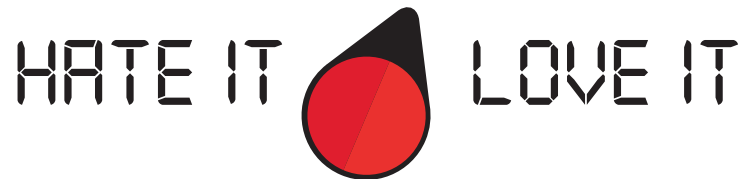
What does flatlining indicate?

According to Neil Griffiths of Blinc Partnership, flatlining can happen when:

- Participants are disengaged or distracted
- Audience is so wrapped up in the experience they forget to record their reactions
- Content is not noticeable or noteworthy
- Overall messaging is not working

What results can I expect from Moment-to-Moment research?

With MtM response systems (as presented by the Perception Analyzer), degrees of opinion can be quantified on a larger scale, customizable from zero to 100. This allows greater inflection points and degrees of opinion at every moment of the evaluation. The scale can even be set up to force respondents to pick a side ('hate it' or 'love it'), and not just record a slight change in preference.



In both offline and online MtM, respondent data are collected every second. Typically, the output is displayed as moving lines graphically overlaid on the test material. The lines represent aggregated data from the dial responses. Data subsets can be based on any demographic you decide, from basic to calculated, such as, "male, single, age 18 to 24," or "women, married, age 28 to 42, at least one child."

MtM is quantitative, but is often used to inform deeper, qualitative discussions. High and low points can be used to analyze trends. The appearance of flat lines can also be important and should be taken into account.

IN THEIR WORDS

The Healthcare division of [Market Strategies International](#) worked with a pharmaceutical company to obtain feedback from patients, physicians and nurse educators about an insulin pen delivery device. Attributes critical to the product's success included product features, price points, appearance and product name. Using the Perception Analyzer dials, researchers were able to collect the quantitative data they needed to help their client make accurate business decisions.

"The Perception Analyzer quickly provided us with foundational quantitative data, allowing us to focus on providing qualitative confirmatory insight [to our client] – all within one research project."

– DR. KATY PALMER, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT IN MARKET STRATEGIES' HEALTHCARE DIVISION

The importance of flexible reporting

Before working with MtM research technologies, be sure you're able to access the type of reporting you need to deliver the results your clients are looking for. Data are aggregated for the entire group, as percentages of the total group, or by cross-tabulation analysis, all of which can be collected from any point in the event. Data can be shown in frequencies, table format and/or means.

The Reporting Module within the Perception Analyzer tools, for example, compiles data to be viewed in several formats. You can also export to other applications after your session(s).

The Reporting module lets you:

- Export raw data to Excel, SPSS and other data analysis formats
- Export aggregated data for graphs in spreadsheet or presentation software
- Export graphs, tables and snapshots to PowerPoint
- Create video clips and snapshots of video with overlays
- Print and/or display results in table or graph formats

Perception Analyzer Online reporting is accessed through a self-service portal:

- Secure, SSL data repository
- Access field and data reports
- Analyze data in the portal and create quick and easy banners, tables and crosstabs with a few clicks
- Export data in dozens of formats and file types
- Pull data in real-time, anytime



Perception Analyzer Online reporting is available through a self-service portal.

CUSTOMER STORY

HSN: When your community lives online, you meet them there

For multi-channel retailer HSN, selecting their show hosts and understanding how these hosts influence consumer buying decisions are critical outcomes to the company's research efforts and the network's success. To get this feedback, HSN used Online MtM research. The project provided useful insight into the relationship between the host and viewer engagement.

- In-Brief:** Elizabeth Merrick, manager of Customer Insight at HSN, wanted to gauge the level of customer engagement of both new and veteran show hosts. A Tune In/Tune Out study was designed and hundreds of viewers were surveyed.
- Challenge:** To better understand the host variable. For this test, Merrick wanted to know when hosts have the most viewer engagement, and if there are patterns that can be observed about that engagement.
- Solution:** Use Perception Analyzer Online for MtM observation of viewer engagement levels during hosted programs.
- Results:** Through the MtM results, HSN was able to draw a direct correlation between pre-show surveys favorable to a particular host and an acceleration of favorable online response to that same host in the first five seconds of a program. This surge of response early in a program revealed a high level of engagement between customers and host.

What do I need to consider when presenting or digging into the data?

As with all research, results must be viewed in context. Because MtM results can be presented visually and in real-time, MtM experts suggest keeping three factors in mind when presenting or reviewing data:



1. **Account for your scale.** For instance, with a scale of zero to 100, you are much more likely to see larger inflections in the data. This allows you to focus on bigger swings of opinion, and not quibble over the difference between one or two points. Smaller scales—such as one to five—allow less inflection and may be more difficult to interpret differences of opinion.

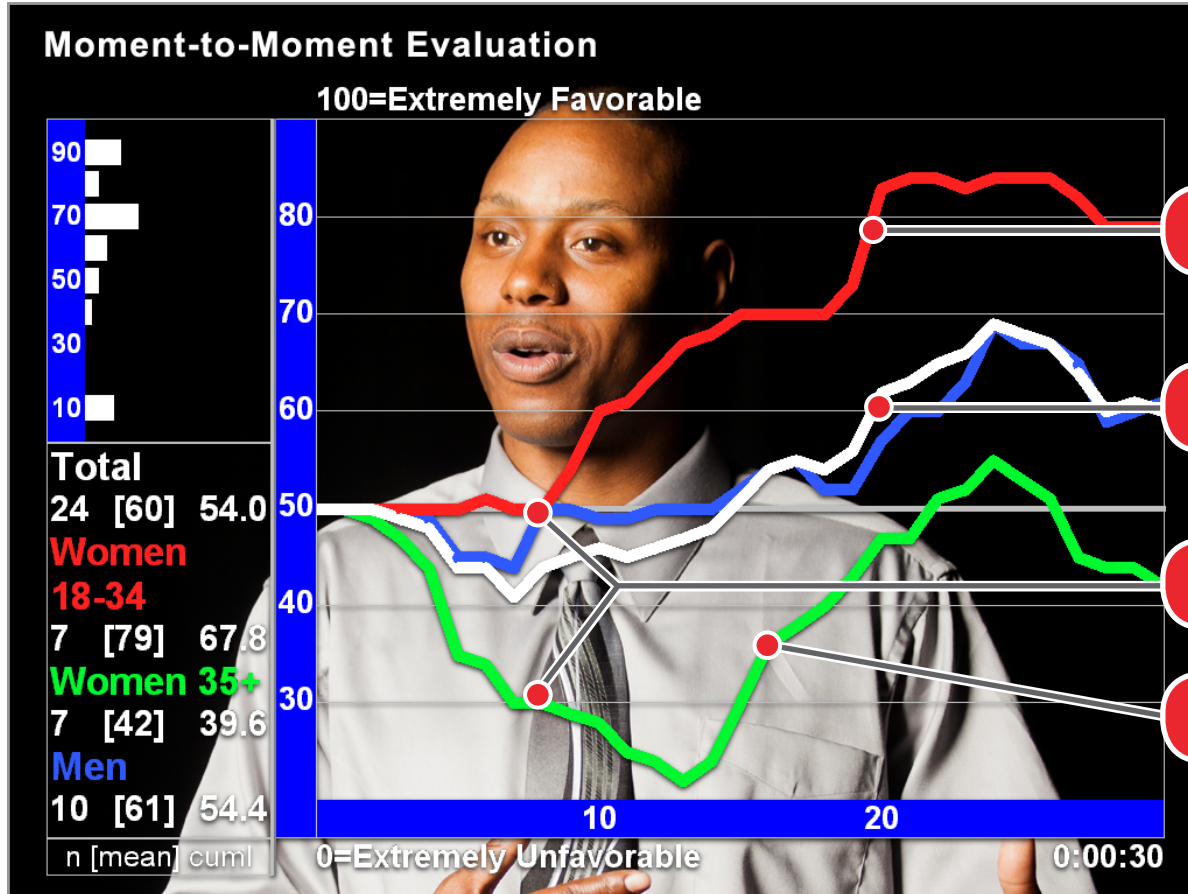


2. **Keep inflections in context with previous responses.** An outlier response may actually be a reaction to information presented previously. Rating is aggregated, so you won't get a perfect 100. In fact, a score of 60 might be very high depending on context. Inflections may indicate that a particular part of a program, advertisement or message needs reworking.



3. **Help temper client response.** Neil Griffiths of Blinc Partnership advises being sensitive when working with clients, particularly those in creative fields, such as broadcasting and advertising. They have deep emotional bonds to their ideas and work, and when they see a response line that “dies” or goes flat, it can be disappointing for them. Explain that the work isn't “bad,” it's just that there are certain sections that need improvement.

Understanding your data



Aggregate of subset for each moment

Aggregate of all respondents for each moment

Key point of divergence between subsets

Swing of opinion

CUSTOMER STORY

How TED Gets Smarter

TED has revolutionized the way in which presentations are perceived and received. These highly popular events take place around the world, and are viewed online by millions. Measuring audience response has been crucial to the success of TED.

In-Brief: At TED2011, conference attendees were equipped with Perception Analyzer dials to evaluate each TED Talk segment in real-time.

Client: TED is the nonprofit, information-sharing organization that asks thinkers and doers to give the “Talk of their lives” in 18 minutes or less.

Objective: The TED organization wanted to find out which topics and speakers were most appealing to their conference attendees and which moment of the Talks were most compelling.

Solution: Audience groups equipped with the Perception Analyzer hand-held dial devices (offline MtM).

Results: TED staff used the dial data to identify the segments that gave the highest marks and used that information to select which segments were posted online. Audience feedback was also used to help determine future format changes and topic areas.

“The ability to monitor audience feedback live offers huge promise. Perception Analyzer provided fascinating data both during and after the conference.”

– CHRIS ANDERSON, CURATOR FOR TED



Find out more about Moment-to-Moment research tools

Who is Dialsmith?

Dialsmith develops the [Perception Analyzer](#)® and [Slidermetrix](#)® audience response tools for the collection of MtM and discrete feedback for use in market, media and litigation research, public opinion polling, audience engagement, as well as live event scoring. Additionally, Dialsmith provides advisory and consulting services on these technologies, directed at helping clients deliver intelligence to their stakeholders and engaging experiences for their audiences.

A big thanks to our guide contributors

This best practices guide would not have been possible without the clients, researchers and industry experts who shared their insights and practical, hands-on expertise. Special thanks goes to the following contributors:

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