

How is Crowdsourcing changing your world?

Hear what the leaders in Crowdsourcing are doing?

The MRS Annual Conference

Tuesday 19th, March

Room1: 2:10pm – 3:00pm

Come and join a panel discussion with pioneers of crowdsourcing from outside the world of market research.

The panel comprises:

- **Benita Matofska:** Chief Sharer, The People Who Share
- **Phil Geraghty:** Managing Director, PeopleFund.it
- **Dr Tim Causer:** Transcribe Bentham
- **Heidi Schneiganz:** Conductor :: 42Engines,Idea Bounty

Chaired by Ray Poynter, director Vision Critical University.

The panel members will draw on their different experiences of using crowdsourcing to discuss topics such as:

- “Why do people take part in crowdsourcing?”
- “Why do organisations crowdsource?”
- “What are the challenges about running a crowdsourced solution, compared with a traditional top-down, agency organisation?”

The panel will offer their thoughts and advice on how to utilise crowdsourcing in different organisations and situations.

The classic top-down, agency/intermediary model is under threat from all directions, from Big Data, from DIY, and from new business models. Market research needs to assess the strengths, threats, and opportunities presented by new ways of doing business, and this session will fuel that discussion and process.

More information of these four speakers and organisations will be available at the conference. With crowdsourcing, if you're not part of the answer, you're part of the problem!

Let's sell the message



With its partner organisation, Compare and Share, **The People Who Share** challenge traditional models of doing business; aiming to create a sharing economy.



Crowd funding is hot at the moment.

PeopleWhoFund.it, with River Cottage's Fearnley-Whittingstall, helped fund the Leeds Bread Co-op.



Philosopher Jeremy Bentham left thousands of pages of notes. UCL is using the power of crowdsourcing to **Transcribe Bentham**.



In 2010 Unilever used **Idea Bounty** to crowdsource their ad for Peperami Nibblers, moving away from their longstanding advertising agency to do so.

A Briefing on Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing?

The current Oxford Dictionary definition of crowdsourcing is: “obtain (information or input into a particular task or project) by enlisting the services of a number of people, either paid or unpaid, typically via the Internet”. The collaborative encyclopaedia, Wikipedia, is a great example of a crowdsourced solution.

However, crowdsourcing is much older than the internet, when villagers came together to build a barn, that was crowdsourcing, when the 18th Century British government offered a prize for a way to determine longitude at sea, that was crowd sourcing, and Mass Observation recruited hundreds of people in 1937 Britain to report on the world around them, that was crowdsourcing.

Wikinomics and Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing became a mainstream topic with the publication of Don Tapscott’s bestselling book “Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changed Everything” in 2006. Tapscott introduced the work Wiki (from the Hawaiian word for fast or quick) to a wider audience. Tapscott highlighted how a wide range of corporations, from gold mines to fashion brands were leveraging the power of the crowd. Tapscott was one of the first to challenge the future of traditional business models, the so-called ‘command and control’ models, and to suggest that co-creation was going to be a major part of the future.

Examples of Crowdsourcing

Here are a few examples of crowdsourcing, in addition to the four organisation who will be taking part in the panel.

Threadless

Threadless.com produces and sells t-shirts, at a premium price, powered by crowdsourcing. Would be designers upload their designs to the website, would be buyers rate the designs, and the winning designs are manufactured and sold by Threadless. Designers who are successful receive a cash prize (up to \$2000), a share of the royalties, and the chance to be ‘discovered’.

Red Lake Mine

In 1999 the Red Lake Mine was in trouble, they could not find any gold! So, against all normal conventions in the industry, the mine published all the geological information about the mine on the web and offered a prize of \$575,000 for the best suggestion of where to find gold. The mine received ideas from the usual sources, but also a wide range of non-standard approaches. The result was successful, and Goldcorp expanded to its current position as the world’s second largest miner of metals.

Foldit

Foldit solves real problems in a complex area, protein folding to understand viruses and help produce new drugs. Foldit turns the problem into a game, with people downloading the folding tool and the problem. In 2012 Nature reported the first crowdsourced redesign of a protein.

Crowdsourcing and Market Research

At one level, market research already uses crowdsourcing. Ideation in focus groups is crowdsourcing, research and insight communities are crowdsourcing, and even the process of researching customers is a form of crowdsourcing. However, most of the current uses of crowdsourcing, are simply approaches that have been fitted into the traditional business structures of market research. The next step could be to challenge the business models. For example, perhaps brands will issue a call for answers, without prescribing a method, and pay the best solution?