

POWER **FROM** THE PEOPLE



*EMBRACING THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH COMMUNITY*

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# Market Conditions Are Creating Opportunities for BlogNog™

Social media is everywhere. Millions of people now look to social media sites like the ones shown below as their primary source of news, opinion, and entertainment.



“Blogging” as a behavior is becoming increasingly widespread – 3 in 4 U.S. online adults now use social tools to connect with each other (Forrester, 2009).



- ✓ What is important to the market research profession is that we create ways to leverage this new mode of communication by adapting or blending traditional methods of collecting opinion data with blogging behavior and the technology that supports it.
- ✓ Enhanced technology often produces improvements in quality of data collection, reduces costs, and shortens the time required to produce deliverables.

# What Is BlogNog™?

BlogNog™ is an online qualitative platform that has a very familiar look and feel for anyone who has ever used social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter.

BlogNog™ leverages today's blogging culture to have online conversations with respondents, either in a one-on-one conversation stream or in one-to-many discussion forums.

Designed by research professionals (not IT specialists), the format simulates traditional, F2F qualitative methods while engaging respondents at a deeper level than bulleting boards or chat-room research. BlogNog™ also provides enhanced geographic reach, fast feedback and results, and no travel costs and scheduling challenges.

The screenshot displays the BlogNog™ interface for a project titled "Home Redecorating Ethnography". At the top, navigation links include "Home", "Manage Account", "Support", and "Log Out". The main heading is "Home Redecorating Ethnography". Below this, an "Assignment:" section contains a welcome message and a search bar. The interface is divided into two main columns. The left column contains a sidebar with "My Assignments" and "My Posts" tabs, and a "View All" link. The right column features a "Post Your Response:" section with a large text input area, a "Browse..." button for uploading photos or files, and a "Post Your Comment" button. Below the response section, a conversation stream is visible, showing a post by "Joe Jones" with a photo of a cluttered room and a comment by "Moderator" asking for feedback. Callout boxes highlight key features: "Writing space for blog entries" points to the response text area; "Upload photos, videos, and other files" points to the "Browse..." button; "On-going conversation stream, with most recent posts appearing at the top" points to the stream of posts; and "Similar to Facebook, click on comment to add a comment or question within the conversation stream" points to the "Post Your Comment" button.

Home Manage Account Support Log Out

## Home Redecorating Ethnography

**Assignment:**

Welcome! Thank you for agreeing to take part in this important market research project. As part of this project, you will need to log in each day this week and complete the assignments posted from the moderator. Assignments will appear in the conversation stream below. We need you to be completely honest. There are no wrong answers in this research, just your personal opinion. Even if you feel negatively about something, please share it, because it's your opinion and it's important. As you respond, please be as detailed as possible.

Created 06/05/2009  
Last Edited 06/18/2009

My Assignments  
My Posts

Displaying 16 of 16 Comments  
[View All](#)

**Post Your Response:**

Upload a photo or file:

**Joe Jones** I like the colors they use and the simple designs they incorporate into their rooms. I really feel like my bedroom has been taken over by mounds of clutter, including books, clothes, and photos. I'm attaching a picture of my room for you to see. It seemed that throughout the video all their ideas focused on how to keep rooms organized, simple, and clutter free. I like that. All the ideas were simple and straightforward and made so much sense.

- Posted 7 minutes ago | [Add Comment](#) | [Delete](#)

**Moderator** How would having organized rooms make you feel?  
posted by Moderator 5 minutes ago

**Moderator** Please view this video on home redecorating. What ideas in this video would you use for your own home? Describe the ideas you liked and did not like.

# Distinctive Benefits of BlogNog™ for Qualitative Research

## **Immersive and Longitudinal**

One of the benefits of online qualitative research is in enabling us to enter the “space” where respondents exhibit the behavior under study, upload photos/videos that represent the subject matter, and blog their associated feelings and beliefs. We can also follow them over time and capture attitudes and experiences as close as possible to the time that they occur. In reality, the things we are most interested in happen when we are not there, during the course of everyday life.

## **Highly Contextualized**

BlogNog™ respondents blog about their thoughts and feelings in their own environments as things happen – data collection is highly contextualized. Respondents submit photos, videos, and other forms of data that are used as artifacts which symbolize the behavior under study. Combining these two main sources of data yields a powerful and compelling set of findings that goes much deeper than other forms of qualitative research.

## **Strong Likelihood Of Obtaining Honest Feedback**

There is something quite magical about the Internet in terms of soliciting people’s thoughts, opinions, attitudes, and deeply felt emotions. The individual’s anonymity in cyberspace lends itself well to the purposes of qualitative research such that even the most sensitive topics may be explored. While online, people seem not to be influenced by social desirability, political correctness, and other biasing factors.

## **No Geographic Limitations**

BlogNog™ has the ability to speak with respondents from a local area, nationally, or anywhere on the planet Earth without the need for clients to use their time and budgets to travel. And, BlogNog™ is fast – a study can be up and running as quickly as it takes to recruit participants and create a discussion guide.

# Choosing The Appropriate BlogNog™ Design

## BlogNog Community™ -- What is it?

It is an online discussion forum recruited for clients to gather qualitative data from interacting members of a target population.



How does it work? The “conversation” is a series of postings from the moderator and participants. The moderator posts questions and issues. Respondents post replies to the moderator and to each other.

Multiple discussions, each with its own conversation stream, can be easily set-up. The moderator states the discussion topic and presents any associated stimuli. Over the course of hours, days, weeks, or months, bloggers participate in the online discussion and have their own ability to upload photos and video. BlogNog™ allows the moderator (and client) to probe responses and participate in the discussion.

This provides an adaptive learning environment that leverages group dynamics to form overall opinions.

## BlogNography™ -- What is it?

It is a one-on-one ethnographic study between the researcher and blogger. This research design provides a bird’s eye view into someone’s world for awhile, be it a couple of hours or for a few days, or whatever is necessary to meet study objectives. Conditions are provided to foster in-depth and intimate exchanges with people in the natural context of their daily lives, in their home, places of business, or wherever we need to be when (and where) consumers experience, think, feel, and form opinions about a particular topic.



How does it work? The moderator and blogger communicate directly with each other asynchronously (not necessarily in real-time). Other participants are not allowed to view what others blog. Any form of stimuli can be provided to and from participants, including text, photo, video, and audio recordings. Rich, symbolic data are collected as would occur in any traditional ethnography.

# Specific Functions and Tools of BlogNog™

## BlogNog™ Version 1.0

From its original design in 2008, BlogNog™ was built to facilitate qualitative marketing research studies. Since then, users now consider BlogNog™ to be:

- ✓ Far more engaging than bulletin board formats
- ✓ State-of-the-art in its design and functions
- ✓ Intuitive for participants and observers
- ✓ Similar to Facebook in its use
- ✓ Powerful with virtually unlimited capacity
- ✓ A flexible solution to atypical project needs
- ✓ Amenable to highly sensitive topics
- ✓ Parallel to traditional, F2F methods
- ✓ Exempt from the need for technical support
- ✓ Convenient
- ✓ Fast loading
- ✓ Able to provide complete transcripts automatically
- ✓ Lower cost
- ✓ Transparently priced
- ✓ Green
- ✓ Fun for consumers and B2B populations

## BlogNog™ Version 2.0

With the release of BlogNog™ V 2.0, a leap-frog in technology has made BlogNog™ far more advanced than any other online platform in the market. Its newest features include:

- ✓ Shopper Insights™ for Mystery Shopping and Shop-Alongs
- ✓ (Q3)™ to link qualitative and quantitative phases of integrated research plans
- ✓ Multilingual capability for use among different cultures and consumer segments, globally
- ✓ Multi-dimensional grouping function for drill-down analysis
- ✓ Participant Wall analysis for end-to-end view of an individual's inputted data
- ✓ Custom Branding for placement of client organization name, logo, color(s)
- ✓ Dial-testing, drag-n-drop sorting, image/text tracking, virtual magazines, custom flash programming

# Who Uses BlogNog™?

***BlogNog™ is built to be a powerful and flexible qualitative research tool that can be used anywhere in the world. It is user-friendly for research veterans and non-veterans alike***

- Qualitative Research Consultants
- Research Companies
- Advertising, Public Relations, and Branding Agencies
- Marketing Consultants
- Corporate-side Researchers
- Employers



***BlogNog™ is offered at three service tiers***

1. **Self-service**, for those who wish to license the software on a per-project basis or longer-term licensing arrangement and manage all facets of the research themselves.
2. **Select-service**, for those who wish to conduct some phases of the research themselves, such as moderating, but otherwise receive support from Accelerant Research on other study-related aspects such as screening and recruitment.
3. **Full-service**, for those who wish to be involved from a design and guidance perspective, but otherwise leave all executional tasks and analysis to Accelerant Research.



# When To Use BlogNog™?

BlogNog™ may be appropriate to achieve study objectives when used as an augmentable component to a qualitative study or as an alternative solution to in-person methods. It all depends on the nature of the study, the target population, and the creative thinking that goes into study planning.

For starters, BlogNog™ is fast. A BlogNog™ study can be up and running as quickly as it takes to recruit participants, usually within a matter of days. Once a study is live, BlogNog™ provides access to participant feedback and the opportunity to interact and probe participants as hypotheses evolve.

BlogNog™ is flexible and intuitive enough to be used as a multi-purpose tool. The online interface combined with the facility to present or receive photos, videos, and other content enables BlogNog™ to serve a number of potential qualitative objectives, such as:

- New product ideation
- Early stage concept and ad development
- Purchase cycle research to understand how prospects shop a category
- Interactive exploratory discussions on customer experiences to determine potential satisfaction and loyalty drivers
- In-Home usability testing
- Online usability testing, website and software design
- Diagnostic evaluations of ads, promotions, events
- Competitive intelligence gathering
- Mystery Shopping



# Customer Experience: Winning the Hearts and Minds of Customers

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# Customer Experience Management is a Study of *Journeys*

- To drive revenue through customer acquisition, retention, and cross-selling is a fundamental business objective for any organization.
- Nowadays, organizations are learning that creating value for their customers during their interactions with providers gives them a competitive advantage and drives increased customer loyalty and associated business performance outcomes.
- To customers, the organization's perceived performance is created (or updated) during their interactions with providers. The set of interactions forms the basis of their relationship with providers and determines to what extent and how long they stay loyal to that provider.
- Each time a customer interacts with a provider, they are on a ***journey*** with a distinct destination – to get what they seek. What they seek can be anything within the entire set of customer touchpoints in the relationship: purchasing, answers to questions, problem resolution, products, services, prices, etc.
- Sometimes these journeys are short and straightforward; other times they are complex and require the customer's time and effort, particularly when their journey cuts across multiple channels (e.g., in-store, online, phone, in-person).
- These journeys that customers make are all subsumed by **Customer Experience Management** and the challenge to organizations comes in the form of optimizing the benefits of doing business with the provider and necessitates an empathic understanding of customer experiences and their likely outcomes.
- It behooves organizations to study customer journeys and the experiences entailed, identify customers' perceptions of organizational performance during each experience, and isolate root causes for customers' behavior and emotions that foster deeper loyalty or attrition.

# Customer Experience Management: BlogNog Shopper Insights™ for Shop-Alongs and Mystery Shopping Research



- With BlogNog™, we can transform the general consumer into a Mystery Shopper, and thus change the landscape of this highly important, often-used form of research for competitor intelligence.
- For either Shop-Alongs or Mystery Shopping research, we can recruit general consumers to replace “professional mystery shoppers” who many retailers and other “brick and mortar” establishments are able to identify on sight and potentially alter the way in which products and services are provided to that person, biasing the data collected.
- Our general consumers, instead, can use their smart phone, snap series of photos per our study requirements that document their shopping experiences, attach their blogged input about their attitudes and opinions, and send all these data to BlogNog™ in email format.

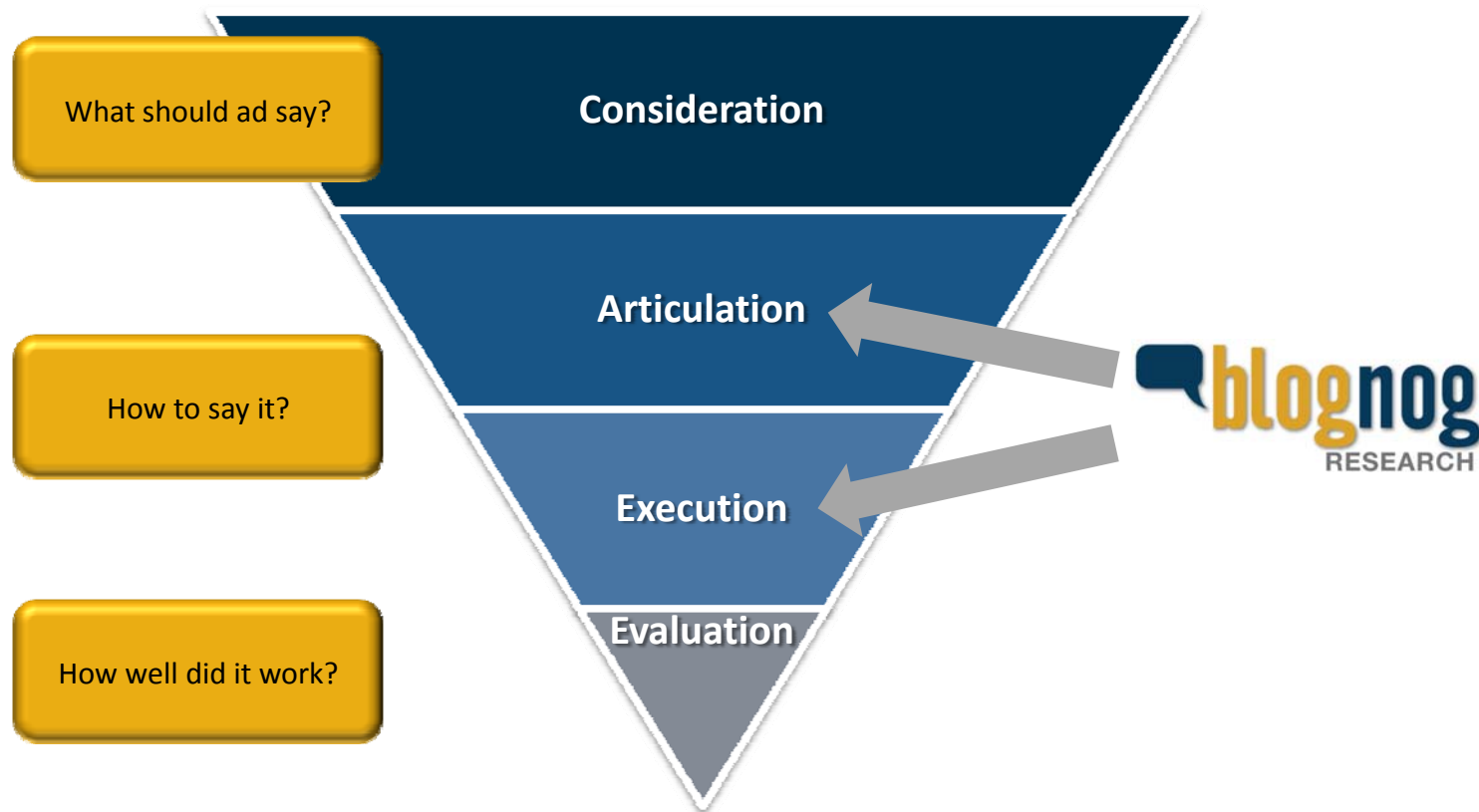
# Advertising and Positioning: Building and Testing the Effects of Communications

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# Advertising and Positioning Development Framework

- Accelerant Research sees communications development — including ads, packaging, signage — as a process of three basic questions:
  - What to say?
  - How to say it?
  - How well did it work?
- Research supports and aligns with this process through the areas of focus depicted — consideration, articulation, execution, and evaluation.



# Articulation & Execution Testing: BlogNog™ Applications

- BlogNog™ can be used in several different ways for organizations that develop advertising and communications strategies and executions, particularly for the Articulation and Execution testing phases.
- In Articulation Testing, a hybrid approach, utilizing BlogNog Community™ and BlogNography™ is recommended in order to:
  - leverage group dynamics among bloggers (study participants) to facilitate brainstorming activities. In this case, we want to enable fellow bloggers to see each other's responses and purposely use those data to heighten their own creative input.
  - isolate individual opinions and ratings of stimuli representing client's "early versions" of advertising and messaging.
- In Execution Testing, a BlogNography™ is recommended, again, to avoid a "follow the herd" phenomenon that may develop among a group of people interacting with each other.
- Depending on the size of the group recruited for study, we can integrate a wide variety of state-of-the-art online research technologies into an otherwise qualitative BlogNog™
- We believe BlogNog is an ideal fit for this articulation research. It provides a flexible and fast platform to explore a number of different learning objectives, it provides an easy distribution channel for participants to view marketing stimuli, and it leverages today's social media culture to conduct online research in a way that consumers are already interacting with the web...through blogs!

# Integrating Online Technologies with BlogNog™



A sampling of our ability to integrate online technology capabilities with BlogNog™. . .

## Custom Flash Programming



## Dial Technology

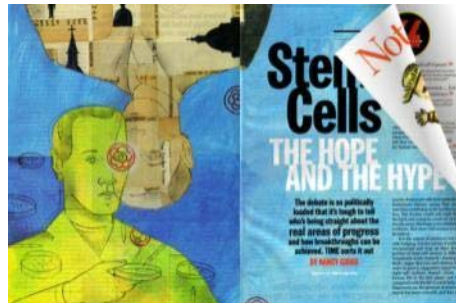


## Image Tracking

Please select your favorite spot on the image, then click "Continue".



## Virtual Magazines



## Text Tracking

Using your mouse, highlight the phrases that most appeal to you, then click "Continue".

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

## Drag and Drop Ranking



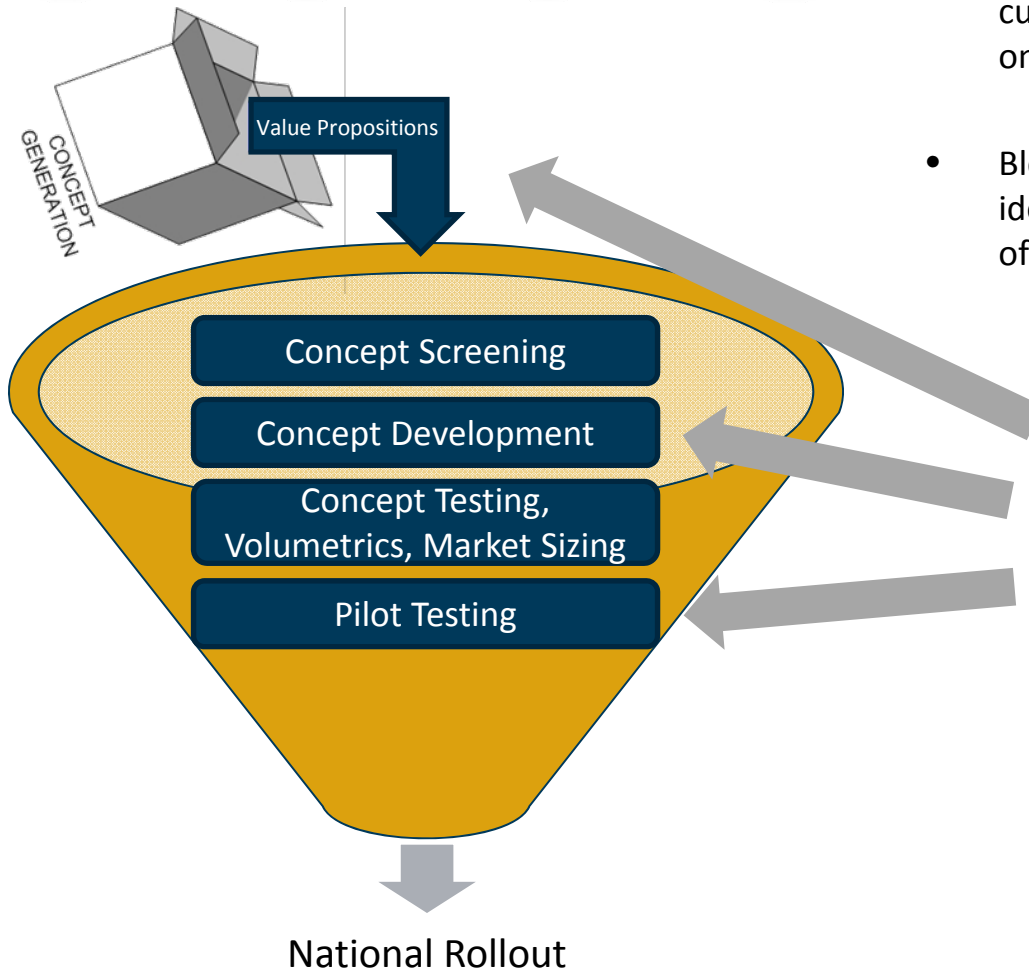


# Product Innovation: From Ideation to Concept Development to Pilot Testing

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# Product Innovation Framework



- Product Innovation requires breaking down a product into its component parts and conducting customized research to inform decision making on the development of each part.
- BlogNog™ can be used to gather data at the ideation, development, and pilot-testing phases of the innovation process.



# Ideation, Concept Development, and Pilot-testing: BlogNog™ Applications

- BlogNog™ is uniquely designed to facilitate ideation, concept development, and pilot-testing research in a high-quality and cost effective manner, providing results in real time in support of a clients' speed-to-market objectives.
- Ideation sessions are best approached with a BlogNography™ which prevents fellow bloggers from seeing each other's responses, even though creativity is a necessary ingredient.
  - In this case, we focus our study on how individuals interact with similar products in the category. We want to learn how they use the product to obtain their desired outcomes.
  - Based on this in-depth study, the data are used as the grist for a subsequent ideation mill.
- In Concept Development phase, where the objective is to build out features and benefits of the product, a BlogNog Community™ is recommended.
  - Enabling fellow bloggers to use the responses of others in the group, we deploy a set of qualitative techniques such as laddering, role playing and teamwork exercises to generate the data needed for this type of study.
  - A variety of projective techniques may be used as well, e.g., use of archetypal symbols, story-telling, sentence completion, and many others that are used in traditional forms of qualitative research.
- In Pilot-testing, we are essentially doing in-home usage testing of new products that have only been launched in pilot-testing sites, as a final step in research before a wider rollout. In this case, we recommend BlogNography™ in order to provide in-depth learnings of various aspects of the new product that could be modified for maximum market effect.
- We believe BlogNog is an ideal fit for this kind of research. It provides a flexible and fast platform to explore a number of different learning objectives, it provides an easy distribution channel for participants to view marketing stimuli, and it leverages today's social media culture to conduct online research in a way that consumers are already interacting with the web...through blogs!

# The Principals of Accelerant Research

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# Paul Rubenstein, Ph. D. – President



- Dr. Rubenstein is responsible for the firm's development and management of client relationships, business strategies, and creation of new research services and products. Skilled in both qualitative and quantitative research, his career spans over 20 years in marketing research, primarily within the financial services sector.
- Prior to starting Accelerant Research, Paul served as MAI's Leader in its Financial Services Practice since 2004. His previous position was at Bank of America where he was Manager of Marketing Research supporting the Consumer Deposits and Asset Management Group (private bank, brokerage, and institutional asset management) lines of business. In these roles, Paul was the lead designer of several of the bank's current set of best practices in marketing research on customer satisfaction and loyalty, product development and testing, and advertising development.
- Before his tenure at Bank of America, Paul was employed by JPMorgan as a marketing researcher in its Private Bank and then as a Director of the Market Strategy Team in institutional sales of pension and 401(k) products and services. In this role, he led a team of CFAs in performing quantitative analysis of fund performance against competitor products, asset class indexes, and other appropriate benchmarks using Modern Portfolio Theory. In addition, he directed all custom research of institutional asset management priorities and objectives including plan sponsor and plan participant research.
- Paul's previous positions include Director of Custom Research for PSI Global (member of the family of NFO companies) and as Research Director at KRC Research and Consulting, a division of Bozell Advertising. Paul's areas of specialization include customer satisfaction and loyalty, consumer segmentation, product development, advertising and communications research. Paul has a Ph. D. in Psychometrics from Fordham University and an MA in Industrial Psychology from New York University.

# Bill McDowell – Senior Partner



- Bill comes to Accelerant Research from Bank of America, where he spent two years as a research manager on the Innovation Research Team within Global Consumer and Small Business Marketing Research. In this role, Bill managed quantitative and qualitative research initiatives for all lines of business that spanned the Bank's new product development research pipeline.
- Prior to joining Bank of America, Bill was a Senior Research Analyst at Lowe's Companies, Inc., where he managed the company's competitive brand tracking and multi-cultural tracking studies. He also managed ad hoc research studies to meet specific Marketing and Merchandising business needs.
- The first six years of Bill's career were spent on the supplier side at MAi, where he worked as Project Director on Bank of America satisfaction and acquisition tracking studies, as well as ad hoc studies across the Bank's lines of business. In addition to Bank of America research, Bill managed studies from a wide range of industries including retail, consumer packaged goods, manufacturing, advertising, telecommunications, media, pharmaceuticals, and politics.
- Bill's areas of industry expertise include financial services, retail, and innovation research. He holds both MBA and BSBA degrees in Marketing from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

We welcome you to connect with us  
for a live  demonstration.



*...strengthening customer ties, faster...*

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