

ViewPoints

from





Lindsay Parry

Managing Director

Lindsay has over 25 years of experience working both agency and client side in understanding shopper behaviour and how this should impact organisational strategy to optimise sales and shopper opportunity.

She was one of the initial team at dunnhumby and stayed there for a number of years as Group Account Director, even being seconded to the Tesco in house CMI team. She was also Global Director of Shopper Insight and Marketing at TNS Research International, and then Lindsay moved to head up the Ipsos Mori, Retail and Shopper Team. She was appointed Chief Knowledge Officer/Head of Advisory Consulting at Planet Retail, before moving to Nepa to be Managing Director of Nepa UK.

We spoke with Lindsay about Nepa and what she sees are the opportunities for brands in 2021.



How did you get into the world of market research?

My career started off in-house with a major U.K. retailer. In my role, I was tasked with understanding the mindset shoppers were in when they were buying certain products. We did transactional segmentations for the company, including price sensitivity, promotional sensitivity, and differences by demographics. It was great, but to be honest, not very exciting.

Things changed though when the company asked our team to do some 'insight' work, using behavioural and attitudinal data. We were tasked with looking at 'you are what you buy' lifestyle choices. When we analysed the behavioural and attitudinal data and then spoke to customers about their motivations, we uncovered real patterns in the market, for example, around both men and women that were dating and purchasing fine wine and condoms, which led to an opportunity to introduce a quality food line. And, in the end, the company introduced a successful restaurant-style food label. The whole concept just grabbed me. Before I was a bit nonplussed about research, but after this I thought, 'Wow, I get this! If you get the right hypothesis, and test it with the right research, you get a real insight, which can be used to drive real commercial outcomes. Now, that's exciting – and that's market research.



Can you tell us a little bit about Nepa and your role at Nepa?

At Nepa, we aim optimize our clients' customer experience and marketing by defining what matters most to their customers and shoppers and delivering profitable recommendations.

In my role specifically, I focus on three things:

1. Understanding our clients' challenges and what is most important to them: understanding their brand health, supporting brand growth, looking at online and e-commerce opportunities, etc.
2. Making sure we have solutions that really deliver against those needs. So, working together with our delivery team, R&D team, and innovation team, we devise leading-edge solutions and refine existing ones to best support our clients.
3. Ensuring our people are constantly inspired and motivated, to not just deliver the 'wine and condoms' insights, but to go the extra mile to deliver the 'so what' questions. That's what makes the real difference to our clients. And, of course adds purpose and meaning to our own employees in terms of the work they are doing every day.

What type of clients would you say Nepa is working with and why do you think they choose Nepa?

At Nepa, we work with all sorts of different brands and industries, from finance companies to entertainment companies, online gambling, FMCG's and retailers. We work with both national and global businesses.

I think the key reason our clients choose Nepa is that we go the extra mile and, again, to go back to that original analogy, more than just the 'wine and condoms' insights. It's the: how are you going to implement that? How are you going to apply that? Why is that relevant? How can we make it relevant? How can we find an opportunity for you?

In the end, it's about what with you do with technology and research that really counts.



What is Nepa's methodology and is it different?

I think we tend to do things slightly different than our competitors. We believe in continuous, behavioural, and attitudinal research. We also believe in taking a holistic and modular view. I think that sometimes we think really about the methodology aspect because our widgets are very good, the technology and methodology aspects are very good. It's a combination of technology and methodology. For a relatively small global company, we spend a lot on our research, development, innovation and data science compared to our competitors. We are constantly trying to innovate and find the most robust way of doing things.



How is Nepa using passive metering to enhance its work for clients?

The explosion of digital activity has been massive in recent history, be it through online streaming, entertainment data, shopping, or using social media. It has exploded even more due to COVID-19, and yet we see so many clients still asking in surveys, "Tell us about what you did online, which websites did you click on, what apps did you use?" Personally, I have no idea what I did three seconds ago online or on my phone because it is so subconscious. So, using the right data, to answer the right question, is absolutely key. Passive metering answers the 'what' question about what you are doing online, on your mobile phone, etc so it's a critical part of the research mix.



It's been a challenging year with Covid 19, how has Nepa adapted and what are you most excited about for 2021?

I think there are massive opportunities for our clients in 2021. There has been an accelerated change this past year, far faster than anything else. Peoples' appetite to research online, shop online, be inspired and influenced by things online, across all industries, for all of their needs, is huge.

There are also major new brands grabbing customer attention so the landscape is more competitive and challenging. But for those clients who are innovators, ready for change and up for new challenges, we have already seen massive opportunities opening up to really take advantage of the new landscape.

2021 will be a year to seek new opportunities with new brands, new ways to market, understanding the 'new consumer' and users. There is a lot happening.

If you could compare what clients were asking you a year ago compared to now, is there any difference?

The world just got a whole lot more competitive. It has always been competitive, but even more so now. I think clients are realising that they need to really focus on the stuff that delivers results and really matters. We are getting more targeted business questions and tighter areas of focus, rather than broader questions we typically saw before.

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Lastly, if you could be anything, what would your dream job be?

I think like many people, you can sometimes get stuck in moments where you feel like a job is simply ‘work’, but actually, most of the time I am really excited about what I do! I am a trained psychologist/counsellor, but understanding why consumers and shoppers do what they do really motivates and intrigues me, so I am not sure that I would do anything different. I love doing what I do. It’s a pretty good job.



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