Market Research always had the obsession of reflecting truth and build accurate quality data, quality analytics, and quality insights for improved decision making. But what is quality data for decision? What is quality analysis making truth emerge? What is truth while over the years, the notion and context of data and analysis quality have so much evolved? Besides, what is the role of Market Research as gatekeeper of truth, at times of increased fake truth and of generative AI dangers?

So many innovations experienced in Market Research over time with a responsible consciousness of reflecting truth...

Once upon a time, when I started in the Market Research (MR) industry, CATI replaced telephone interviews and questionnaires had to be programmed, phone calls could be auto-dialed...Schizophrenia raised about data quality when combining data from CATI and non-CATI countries.

Once upon a time, MR innovated in transitioning to online research, accepting to cope with invisible respondents and challenging what online data meant, how accurate it was, in its representativity of the observed phenomenon. Was online data the new truth? Truth, conveniency and cost were conflicting.

Once upon a time, qualitative MR considered ethnography, pictures, voice and text analytics as new approaches to capture implicit behavior and attitude at scale. The frontiers of insights became blurred between quantitative and qualitative. Truth was inbetween.

Once upon a time, detailled powerpoint reports were replaced by portals with real time dashboards, alerts and on-demand filtering. Another vision of the MR raison d'être in displaying and analysing data, shifting from opaque factory processes to transparent and instant delivery for brands. Instant truth.

Once upon a time, neuroscience data - derived from emotion detection or recognition - came into the game and challenged the way MR did capture emo-

tions for years, through questionnaires or qualitative. Advertising efficiency was in a crisis: who owned the truth? those who advocated integration of neuro and explicit data as closer to reality, more valid and predictive of behavior/ sales? or those who believed that neuro is experimental and just a new qual technique adding "why" insights to the quant. sacred "truth" metric?

Once upon a time, classic correlations and regression analysis moved to causal analysis and bayesian networks. Advocates of causal analysis defended a more comprehensive approach to truth and helped decision making evolve, based on a complete modeling of all variables together. But traditional groups of experts were more reassured by the stability of regressions, by the very simple outcomes of what triggers a behavior, closing eyes on multi-collinearity; truth was alterred by the obsession of simplicity; neural networks did better embrace complexity in a modeled and simple (visual) way, better reflected truth.

Once upon a time, brand research was challenged by social media. Where again was the truth? Was it derived from the hybrid data approach between what people say (in questionnaires) and what people sense and share (in social media), as a more comprehensive approach to what brand means? Or was social media considered as a nice to have add on, biased by the very positive or very negative consumers, and therefore not adding to the truth of brands?

Once upon a time, descriptive analysis moved to predictive analysis, which impacted retail and consumer panels data insights. The vision of truth evolved differently whether or not market modeling included contextual data, open data, whether or macro-economics. Algorithms world prevailed.

Once upon a time, outdoor audience measurement shifted from questionnaire-based modeling to GPS and IoT based data capture with AI-driven estimation. No interviews. New truth? New raison d'être? Algorithm data proved different but more accurate. Not without debates!

New paradigm of Value Creation in Market Research

I have always been impressed by the energy of innovations going on in the industry, so well leveraged at ESOMAR that I served for many years, or with local research associations awards, always looking for better accuracy and insights in specific projects, playing around with a diversity of techniques and perspectives of truth.

But since the era of data hybridation, data science and AI, I have been wondering why traditional MR was only investing in specific innovative projects for innovative clients, and why it was rarely investing in scaling data and AI-driven models from an infrastructure, product, value proposition and cultural standpoint. Why the dominant business model remained interview-based. Why most firms where not embracing the new AI paradigms of truth and getting structured as tech- and AI-ready companies. Why they do claim to be innovative with AI but don't take it seriously enough to create value with it.

And now that AI is not only an exploration, integration, optimization and prediction learning approach, but moves to generative AI capabilities with algorithms prompted by users and learning itself how to predict, it's time to get up to speed structurally and take an ethical and educational posture.

This moved me to advise CEOs and boards in their 360 digital & data strategy and business model shifts, after having success-fully orchestrated data transformation as CEO & global head within GfK and Ipsos. Modern data vision of MR is a potential game changer for digital strategies and ROI across sectors!

Human-centric digital leadership maturity audits, identification of strategic paths and data big bets are basic foundations to success in reshaping the firm's data-AI driven raison d'être. Use the 5Ps! They are critical for this: P-people, P-product, P-platform, P-project management, P-persona.

Yes, MR would create much more value (topline and mostly EBITDA) at the industry level if the traditional MR firms would structurally and culturally work at their AI-driven business model shift. But beyond this, I strongly believe the MR industry should act as a catalyst of truth, a gatekeeper of AI purpose...

MR should stand up as a catalyst of truth in the economic and societal debate around responsible AI

MR's DNA is anchored in the sense of truth, in internal and external validity, in the knowledge of evolving algorithm approaches and of the classical statistics fundamentals. This is priceless to raise consciousness of a good AI and AI for good!

First: MR knows that all models have an error to be identified and minimized, raising what is certain or uncertain via the basic p-significance test. While generative AI includes statistic layers, users's ignorance of the errors principle

is dangerous.

Second: MR comes from a culture of decision making, of knowledge, of understanding models (with theoretical hypothesis) then predicting, as against the genAI algorithms predicting without understanding and modelling. This implies a natural critical thinking that is a must when using unsupervised models: question the purpose of AI, question if AI will help us make better decisions, question how smarter we will get when using AI to leverage AI for good and fight against AI for evil.

Third: MR comes from a neutral and unbiased background, rooted in the representativity obsession, fighting against skewed data and stereotypes. Quite an intrinsically safe environment to consciously fight against biased and dangerously self learning algorithms with genAI.

Fourth: MR has always been grounded in privacy by essence.

When GDPR came over, it was no big change for the industry. Now the consciousness of privacy data when using self learning genAI is an absolute must for all. MR to spread the word!

MR embeds the notions of truth, accuracy, representativity, significance, privacy: all of what is dangerously missing in the ignorant users-driven world of genAI. MR embraces consciousness of good AI, understanding of why AI, and free will to decide what to do , how and when with AI.

Wake up MR! Collaborate with CTOs and educate around! AI and specifically generative AI are actually not dangerous. It is the ignorance, misuse, and bad purpose use that makes it dangerous. Responsibility is your priority. Societal and human impact at stake.

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