



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO REACH THE CONSUMER AND TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

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The GRIT Report serves as an excellent resource for us to discover new trends, technologies and innovations. Ultimately, however, when you look at all of these tools and innovations in tandem, they are all attempting to achieve one sweeping goal: to better understand the consumer.

For all of the billions of dollars spent on research and for all of the methodological approaches and rigorous standards for research best practices, we still seem to have barriers holding us back from understanding our consumers. Over time, research has made itself too expensive, too time consuming and too often siloed from key stakeholders and decision makers across the enterprise. At its origin, qualitative research was simple. A conversation, first conducted door-to-door, later with focus groups and IDIs, created an opportunity to discover insights about consumers' daily lives. As the industry evolved, those conversations became increasingly hard to justify with high expenses and tight time constraints. And yet, the need for qualitative insights has never been greater.

While GRIT highlights some of the inventions that are transforming the world of insights, it reveals the barriers to adoption, as well. What would happen if we broke down those barriers and made the consumer accessible again?

We could get back to understanding and building empathy for the consumer. We could get back to having consumer conversations that reveal insights. At all levels of the organization.

Budgets are tight. Brands need to make agile decisions. The fight for market share is more urgent every day. Data can expose behavior, but it cannot reveal insights into motivations and need states. This provides challenges and opportunities for research to innovate and reinvent itself.

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We embrace technologies to facilitate our professional and personal lives. By highlighting the topic of automation, this year's GRIT Report proves that research is no exception to that rule. We see the adoption of tools and platforms that simplify processes and automate cumbersome tasks as promising steps towards achieving faster and better consumer engagement. The report includes statistics about automation and intentions to experiment with new techniques, including webcam interviews (41.5% say they currently use, 22.6% say it's under consideration). With the increasing popularity of video platforms in consumers' own lives, webcam interviews are revolutionizing the ways in which researchers are reimagining scalable, affordable qualitative research.

At Discuss.io, we have taken cues from the consumer world and injected those trends with SaaS functionality in order to fulfill a business need. Specifically, we have taken the popularity of live video, combined with the desire to

understand consumers, and created a technology that allows the age-old activity of having conversations to be systematized, organized, archived and accessed rapidly and at scale. We look at the steps that make talking with consumers challenging and we automate the process where technology can serve a useful purpose. We streamline the steps so that more time can be left for what's important: asking questions, uncovering meaningful insights and interpreting what they mean to the brand. In simplifying the process, we remove barriers and are able to democratize access to the consumer across the organization.

That is the challenge to the entire industry. Fundamentally, we should all be harnessing technology that makes it easier for brands to gain better understanding of what makes consumers tick. Research is no exception to the rule: it is just as important for research strategies and teams to evolve, innovate and take advantage of automation.

