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Panelists

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Gregg Archibald: I let's just kind of jump in with **how have things changed for you over the past six months, and how are things going now**. Jay, let's just start with you on this question. What have you seen change, and how are things today?

Jay Shutter: It would be difficult for me to say that things haven't changed all that much, and I'm sure, like everybody else, we're going to articulate some of the same things that we've all experienced. It's a significant change, right? We work in the technology sector, primarily. All of our clients are very technology-oriented and dialed in. We've been doing video conferencing and remote conferencing for years now, just as a result of the tech industry almost requiring you to participate that way, especially the larger ones. So, we as an organization, a small organization - we have 35 employees here in Austin - we've been very technology-savvy. We've had all the platforms and all the tools to allow anybody to work anywhere they want to. We were accustomed to doing Webex on video, long before most people were willing to get on video.

So, in the grand scheme of things, you'd like to sit there and say, "Well, nothing has really changed," but it's not true. It has totally changed. It absolutely changed. To have an entire company of people working from home and very capable of utilizing these platforms to be able to communicate and do the meetings that we need to do is great, but it has changed. It has changed the dynamics between employees, it has changed the dynamics as a company, it has changed the dynamics in terms of our clients, and it has changed the dynamics in terms of how we do the work that we do. Even though we were kind of doing it the same way just from an office, but not from home, it really has changed. So, there's a lot there, probably, to unpack.

The big thing that we're kind of seeing - I just wrote some thoughts down on these - is this new nature of virtual seems to be sort of that excuse to make things easier, right? Hey, you don't have to spend time in the car commuting. You don't have any excuses. I'm sorry, I'm getting on a plane. I'm sorry, I'm in a car. Whatever it might be, right? You're pretty much available. So, as a result of that, I think people have more meetings, more scheduled meetings. People are busier than they seem to ever have been, at least that's what we're experiencing within our business and with our clients. So, that's a long way of saying like when you get married or when you



have kinds and people say, “Oh, things aren’t going to change.” Oh, yes, they will. Things have changed.

Gregg Archibald: That’s a pretty extreme metaphor there. What about the kinds of approaches and business issues? Have the business issues changed at all over the course of the past several months?

Jay Shutter: No. Honestly, that’s kind of one those things we look at and say - well, of course, I’m not flying on a plane around the world. So, American Airlines misses me desperately. We’re doing [Laughter] more virtual groups. It’s almost worse, in a sense, that now my entire days are sucked up all week long where it used to be Tuesdays and Thursday nights. You could get to next city and do groups. So, it has really changed that way in terms of, methodologically, how we’re approaching qualitative work, for example. It’s quite nice. We get to see people, and everyone is getting to learn how to use Zoom or whatever platform they’re using. So, from that perspective, it’s great.

I think what we did before was we fielded quantitative surveys, and we did qualitative work. So, the only piece missing from that equation is the in-person, which creates its challenges. For example, if you’re doing product demos, you need to showcase products to potential customers, respondents, and have them pick them up, turn them over, look at them, go through all of these things. You’re suddenly having to rethink how you approach that from a virtual perspective. From a business perspective, we are busier than we ever have been, but that’s the nature of the technology industry right now. The technology industry is really kind of at the floor of making all of this virtual possible. The businesses that thought they were technically-oriented before, they’re absolutely now realizing how important technology was and investments in the cloud platform and things like. So, I think, for us, business-wise, it’s just those subtle changes in terms of how we are approaching qualitative. It’s not so subtle, but we were already doing virtual groups quite a bit. It’s just the nature of the work that we do, but it’s a lot more, and it’s the only way to do it, effectively.

The only thing that concerns me is we do have a lot of business-to-business work, and I believe that it’s a lot harder to get people to participate, especially



quantitative. We're seeing lower response rates, especially in Europe right now. In the US, it's not horrible, but it's not great either. So, I still think there's a lot of distraction. I think people are much busier than they ever were, again, because it's too easy just to schedule 30 minutes or an hour, whatever, on people's calendars because that's the way you do it, and you just accept it. So, I think there's a lot to be worked out in terms of how we work remotely in this new paradigm where it's just easy to fill up a calendar because no one is commuting or no one is blocking time. It's just different, and I think we're all still trying to figure out how to navigate our schedules and our time.

Gregg Archibald: Okay. Michele, you're a little bit more focused on media. Tell us a little bit about **how things have been changing for you and where they are now.**

Michele Madansky: Yes. So, I guess I would say, first of all, as someone who has her own business and has worked from home, I agree that the tools and being able to work virtually have been super easy for me. The change, personally, is that my husband has taken over my office, and my two college-age students have come home from school and were doing virtual learning at all hours. So, that's just disruptive. I think any parent will say that it's challenging to work from home with children around, regardless of the age.

In terms of my clients, the advertising industry is struggling right now, and I think that research to support ad sales is taking a hit, and that's just one of the things that people are not going to invest in outside research necessarily during this time period. For technology companies, some are struggling, and others are super busy and trying to pivot. I have a client in the on-demand food delivery space, and at first they weren't sure how they would be hit by the pandemic, and then they focused on pick-up, as opposed to delivery, and now their business is booming. Another company that I've worked with in the past called Sittercity has pivoted to doing Zoom-based babysitting, which is a great idea. So, I think that there's this bifurcation of either companies and people being super busy, or the other side, which is the furloughs or just not investing in research, or I would say outside research, at this moment.



So, there are two things, and you can come back to me on this. I think one big challenge is business development. The way that I have always done business development is going out to conferences or meeting people for drinks or coffee or whatever, and that is more challenging to do. I would say, in the first month or six weeks of the pandemic, it was hard to even reach out to people who you didn't necessarily need to speak with. Then the second thing that I want to talk about on this call is, like a lot of researchers who had time on their hands, I fielded some research among how COVID has been impacting working moms. My big concern after this pandemic is that we're going to lose a lot of women from the industry because the challenges of working from home with children is so big, and it's the women who are picking up a lot of the slack at home. Even though there are a lot of dedicated dads helping with distance learning, etcetera, I'm afraid that this is going to set back the industry, and the market research industry has been fairly equitable in terms of gender.

Gregg Archibald: I actually had a conversation last week where one company has set for all parents to set aside two to three hours during the day where they are not working so that they can focus a little bit on the online education, those kinds of things. **Did you see any of that in that kind of business adaptation in the research that you did?**

Michele Madansky: I fielded the research in April. At that point, I don't think any businesses had figured it out. So, no, I think it was kind of in the throes of schools still in session. A lot of parents were just starting to work from home or trying to figure it out. That is among professional women. I think, among a lot of the non-professional women, half of them were working less or furloughed. So, a huge impact beyond just taking care of the children, there are also the monetary concerns. At that point, the businesses have not figured it out. The women said, the professional women more so, that they were working more hours than fewer hours.

Gregg Archibald: So, let's come back to this idea that you just brought up around business development. A lot of us have probably been in the same position within the marketing research world that dinners or lunches or conferences or whatever it may be have kind of been the bread and butter of building those relationships for business development. **How have you adapted to that?**



Michele Madansky: So, the good news is that I have been reaching out to people in my network who I haven't talked to for some are decade or more. So, what I have been doing is finding people through LinkedIn or through a lot of colleagues that I'm friends with on Facebook who I might not have talked to for a while. Anytime that they come up within my feed or something in my feed, I'll jot them down as somebody I need to talk to. So, it's been nice to just kind of reaching out and catching up with people from my past. I'm a strong believer in just maintaining relationships and things come around. I will say, in the past two weeks, literally, I feel like I've been getting more outreach than I have during this entire pandemic. So, that's been good.

Gregg Archibald: All right. Dmitry, what about you? **How have things changed, and where are you guys now?**

Dmitry Gaiduk: Okay. Things are really changing right now. I think we are in the middle those changes. So, it's not like it just started, and this COVID situation is just a massive catalyst and accelerator for all the trends that we actually discussed early. Right now, we could see it becomes real. So, there are a lot of shifts in methodologies and research techniques, and of course, more changes towards automation and innovations. I would say that this is really a remarkable business. We're more open right now to have this conversation. So, if previously you speak with you clients and they're really traditional and stick to their current approaches, right now, everything could be changed. For me, this is a good moment and a good lesson from this situation. Of course, it has all changed, not only from a business point of view, from methodologies and approaches, but of course business development all changed to digital channels, and we revealed all our approaches to clients. Right now, we are succeeding and actually approaching many, many more folks than we did during the exhibitions or different shows. Right now, we are doing this digitally and doing this successfully. Maybe it's because of the nature of our product. So, we do remote and automated non-conscious measurements for market research and for user experience studies, and UX is right now quite a hot thing. So, maybe we are like you because of the topic of the studies, but we could reach more and more clients.

So, we could see a lot of changes here, and these changes are also about internal procedures and employee management. Unfortunately, we can see many of our



colleagues who lost their jobs during this period. So, we could see both positive sides and many negative ones. What I would like to notice today and what I want to bring to the table to discuss is from my point of view. I believe, right now is a really good moment and a great opportunity to kind of like have a reset button and really shine our industry. So, I believe that was kind of like a long-term perception. Finn, I believe we discussed this many times, about the perception of market research. So, right now is a really good chance to prove our value, to prove our business because we are those guys. We are those professionals who actually help businesses not to fly blind and guide them through this whole situation. So, I believe this is like a really good opportunity that we've got business changes.

Gregg Archibald: Yes. I've got some opinions on that, but I want to get Finn's take on it in just a second. So, Finn, be prepared to comment in a minute on that. Before I go down that path, I do want to kind of get your perspective because you have quite a bit more of a European and international perspective. How are you seeing things now versus two or three months ago versus maybe six months ago, before the pandemic was really in place? What's your take on all of this?

Finn Raben: I'm sorry. Is that to me, Finn, Gregg, or is it to Dmitry?

Gregg Archibald: To Finn.

Finn Raben: I think I'm going to echo the comments that Jay made where the whole world has, to a degree, been turned on its head in as much as nobody was expecting, I think, the impact of the virus to be quite as global as it became. The extent to which it has impacted on business has largely been influenced by national reactions. So, each country, each government has taken an approach to dealing with the virus, which has had varying impacts on business, in general. At the start of the pandemic, it was quite interesting to see that in regions like Asia Pacific where wearing masks and being much more conscientious about hygiene and disinfection is a natural way of life that the impact in the region, generally, was to a large extent considerably less than what we were seeing at that time. For example, in the Northern Italy or in Spain where those two economies were devastated in the first couple of months by the sheer scale of the impact. As that then moved up through Europe, again, countries in Europe responded differently.



As I mentioned when we joined, the Dutch for a reason best known to themselves decided to call the lockdown an intelligent lockdown. Not an awful lot of things closed. Businesses were allowed to keep turning over if they so wished, and it was a very light level, a light regime of restrictions that were put in place, such as having to wear a mask in public transport, etcetera. That allowed a continued, albeit lesser, freedom of movement than before. Nonetheless, the economy kept taking over. The other extreme was Sweden, for example, where they basically said, “No, no, we’re just going to keep everything open.” You see now in the new peaks that are popping up, every country got it wrong to some degree. Who got it right in the end? Nobody will know.

How that has impacted on the research sector has been quite interesting because I think there has been a general acceptance, of the point that Dmitry made, that research can or insights perhaps, more appropriately, can help companies to navigate the labyrinth of issues that the whole pandemic poses. Equally, depending on whatever sector you’re in, your business could be booming, or it could be dying. In the last six months, if you’re involved in the hotel industry or in the aviation industry, you’re probably without a job at this stage. On the other hand, if you’re in ecommerce or delivery, you’re probably picking up monthly bonuses that’ll make Jeff Bezos jealous. So, the sectors have performed very, very differently, according to the situation.

The FMCG sector, I think, is one which is quite interesting because, clearly, people still need to buy packaged goods. The extent to which brands remain important to consumers varies quite considerably. We did some work with Europanel on a recent community circle that we had where they talked about the fact that shopping patterns were still quite solid, despite the initial loss of the global supply of toilet paper in the first four weeks of the pandemic. That was simply a short-term reaction, I think. The purchase of packaged goods continues to go. People still have to eat. People still have to survive. Interestingly enough, toiletries are apparently somewhat less popular now than they used to be, but let’s not get into that debate.

The relevance of brands is one that becomes a more interesting quandary for some of the big-brand owners. So, depending on the sector that you’re in - clearly,



technology is one that is, again, booming at the moment given, as Jay said, its need to underpin everything that we do. The advertising sector, as Michele said, is one that's in a difficult place. Not least because of some of the things that are happening with the social media giants and the embargos on advertising, for example, on Facebook. So, it really is a very interesting potpourri, a mix, of different performances in different sectors right across the world. The only thing that I can say is that Asia has tended to be our future, a little bit - as Joaquim, our president, would be keen to say - because whatever happens there tends to kind of come left across the globe. So, they're not a bad litmus test of what will be down the line for us. It's not always true, but not a bad place to start.

Gregg Archibald: So, I want to dig in with you on the comment that Dmitry made about the relevance of insights and this being a good moment in time to prove our value. **Are you seeing a level of demand and influence from insights organizations being the suppliers or internal research departments or insights departments shifting? If so, how are you seeing that shift happen?**

Finn Raben: I definitely think that there is a greater awareness, particularly amongst insight departments that they have information under their fingertips that will, as I said, help them to navigate these times. Clearly, for the businesses that are booming, they want to continue to monitor what their customer or their consumer believes, their attitudes and perceptions to the service that they're providing. For the sectors that are on more difficulty, it's perhaps there's still a need to understand how consumer behaviors and perceptions are changing, given the massive social change that Jay referenced about having to stay at home, having to work at home, having to build your disciplines at home, and how that impacts upon your consumption, your attitudes, and your perceptions of different services and brands. So, there's still a need to do that. For the sectors that are in perhaps less good times, I think they recognize that there's probably more value to be generated from the information they already have under their fingertips than perhaps going out to get more first-party data from consumers. Then there is shift to looking at the different databases they have, to reflecting upon the information, as I said, that they already have within their organizations to see how they can better leverage that information to improve their offer. The supply side is one where, I think, it has been curtailed. There's no doubt. I think every industry to



some degree, as I said, apart from possibly Amazon as a delivery service, has had to shrink to a certain degree. Those businesses that are struggling to pivot will clearly suffer more than those that can, and that ability to pivot is not just one which is based on platforms, but it's clearly based on skillsets, on knowledge, on expertise, and I think any of the organizations that have been able to adapt and/or react to those circumstances a little quicker will fare better than others.

The knowledge that can be generated from the data that people has is of course, however, always dependent on being able to assess the quality of the data that's being used, and that's probably the one area where outside companies or suppliers may still be able to provide support, because knowing what the right data is to make the analyses or knowing where to look for the right data is perhaps not always a skillset that is prevalent in internal insight divisions. It is of course growing all the time and will continue to, by the way, as more people get made redundant or get furloughed from the supply side and get moved into the consultancy roles or are themselves are consultants. So, that knowledge will spread over the coming weeks and months. There is a definite shift in looking towards what you have and how you can leverage that, again, in order to hopefully shine a light into the darkness ahead.

Gregg Archibald: Yes. We've heard that a number a number of times under kind of the big premise or big umbrella of doing more with less because budgets do still seem to be pretty constrained and prioritized. So, leveraging existing knowledge has become more prevalent than it was six months ago, and a lot of people have said that they are looking at their 2001 data and 2008 data, particularly here in the US, around 9/11 and the Great Recession, to try to provide some perspective on what those things may reflect on today. So, that seems to be pretty consistent. I want to shift gears just a little bit to how you personally have adapted, how your personal life has adapted, personal/professional life, and how you've adapted a little bit as a leader of an organization. **What are you doing differently today to keep sanity and fluidity happening?** Jay, I'm going to start with you.

Jay Shutter: It's great. I'm no longer in charge of the session. I'm participating, and that's what happens. I think everything that Michele, Finn, and Dmitry said is just fantastic, really terrific viewpoints on exactly what we've been experiencing. Michele



brought up something that I think is really, really something that we're all going to have a hard time dealing with. I have young senior researchers with young children, and I'm watching this situation completely destroy them both professionally and personally because they believe they're failing as a mother, and they believe they're failing as a professional. This whole notion of, as a CEO, business leader, you think to yourself, "Oh, we're going to be completely flexible." You know what, I can say you can carve out as much time during the day as you want to spend with your child. You can split it up, split it up, split it up, but imagine that you have a two-year-old, and I say to you, "You get four hours during the middle of the day so that you spend a couple of hours in the morning and a few hours in the afternoon working," but that child comes back around and still needs attention at dinnertime and at bedtime. If the expectation is that, at that point in time, that mother or that father is necessarily going to start working again until midnight, it's just not sustainable. It's just not sustainable. So, all of these great ideas that we have to be flexible to encourage our employees and to show them that we care about them, especially in our industry, because our industry is very unique - we are a very tight family of people who work very closely together, we're consultants - and of the nature of the way we do this, I still don't know. I still look at how we could get through this because, Finn, [Laughter] to you point, there are other countries that have done this well, and then there's America. I'm laughing just because it's sad, really. I just don't see a light at the end of the tunnel. I don't see schools opening in a meaningful way. I see parents afraid to put their children in daycare. So, how do you tell that 10- to 15-year professional to just hang in there for another six months, one year? Who knows how long we're going to have to wait until we actually can get back to truly normal, at least where we're all comfortable of putting our kids in school or in daycare or whatever it might be. So, I firmly believe that we still have a lot to figure out. There's a lot to sort out. So, I don't have an answer yet.

I'll tell you what, personally, I've been trying to do as somebody responsible for the leadership of my organization. We try to be subtle. We try to be background. We try to let people learn and things like that. I'm now trying to be more visible, for whatever that's worth. I'm writing a regular Friday note to the organization to share with them whatever is on my mind, and of course the few things that really came immediately were, "Everybody, we're in this together. We're all experiencing



the same thing. You clients are experiencing the same thing. Don't feel like you're the cause of this. Don't feel like you're not doing your job." There are all these things that you want to let them know that we understand and communicate that. So, you start there. Then we have the Black Lives Matter situation where, as an organization, we have to respond to this. We have to respond to the issues of diversity and to making sure that our organization recognizes that we as an organization are doing what we can, because there's only so much you can do when you're so busy taking care of your clients, right? So, all of these things are so critical to communicate on a regular basis, let alone in a time where people are isolated, working from home. I have a lot of young employees who don't have anybody that they live with. So, they're truly isolated. So, you've got to lean in and connect in every possible way that you can, and that's what I've been really focused on, and I've been frankly, deeply honest with everybody because this is impacting me. I've been working from home up in Missouri for a year. My wife and I moved to Missouri so that she could take a job up there, and I'm leading from afar. That's difficult enough as it is, and now we're all doing it, right? So, opening up and sharing your honest emotions is really, really important right now, and listening, and being compassionate to the extent that we can.

So, all of those things, I think, are critical and there's no right answer. I mean we're not on that situation where we're hiring. I mean, who would have thought? This is the other thing that I put in a lot of my emails. I feel so horrible for all the small businesses who are struggling. For the restaurant owners, for the bar owners, for the people who just had great businesses. What are they going to do? For the businesses who work in sectors that are in the airline, travel, I just don't know what you'll do, right? So, to me, it's a expressing those sentiments, making sure that we're all doing everything we can to support local businesses, ordering out if we can. Whatever it is you can do feel like you're doing something. So, all those things just really need to come through. And here we are hiring and saying, "Well, I guess for the first time, we're going to really explore hiring remotely." We had a firm principle that when we hired, we wanted people to work in our office so that they could adapt to our culture, so we could build – continue to build that culture. So, now we're in a situation where we're going to finally say we just have to hire and let people work no matter where they are. How do you either build culture, sustain culture or impart culture to these new people working remotely? It's an



extremely challenging time. So, all those things get wrapped up into that personal how am I feeling, how am I experiencing and what am I doing. It's an awful lot and we cannot ignore the weight of all of this, that each of our employees are feeling, no matter where they are in the organization.

Gregg Archibald: I want to dig in just one thing that you said there and that is imparting culture in this remote hire situation. What is your one most important tip on imparting culture in that kind of situation?

Jay Shutter: I wish I had the one tip. It was easy when it was in person, but I think staying true to who you are as an organization, staying true to the principles that you have in terms of how you work with clients with the work that you do, the way that you communicate and share feedback with your employees. What we do is we ask our juniors to write questionnaires or to do analysis on reports, and the way that we impart the positive and the constructive feedback is all about the culture. So, everything that we do in our interactions, whether it's the Monday morning meeting or where there's 30 of us on Zoom sharing your thoughts, being to the extent possible, positive, and showing energy and excitement. All of those things that are about what you want your culture to be, that passion, that compassion, all of those things have to come through in every interaction. I think that's the one thing is that the patience level, the understanding, the clarity in communication and remembering that every time you're communicating now is even more important than it ever was because you've got the pact. All of those things into that one little communication, virtually, that you used to be able to impart in person, because there is that in-person - you feel it when you're in-person. It's a lot harder to feel virtually. So, again, that's my tip is you just – you are – it's like doing a focus group as all of us that know, when you're moderating, you're on stage. Well, you know what? Right now, when we are communicating, working with our employees, we're on stage. We have to perform and we have to do everything we can to give as much as we can with every interaction. That's my tip.

Gregg Archibald: Okay. So, I'm going to come to you, Dmitry, in this. Tips, ideas, best practices, whatever it may be about maintaining kind of personal sanity and clarity for you and your organization. What are some tips and ideas that you have?



Dmitry Gaiduk: Okay. So, first of all, I would like to agree with Jay in every word. Maybe you stole my thoughts about this. So, I absolutely agree. First of all, it's all about being connected. It's about being connected with your team. Of course, like first of all, with your team and being connected to always with your clients and to other industry players, it's extremely important. By being connected with the team, this is kind of be honest, try to talk to every person as soon as you – as many times as you can, as often as you can and try to be patient to some personal circumstances. There's no secret weapon here. It's just like you need to feel people, you need to feel your team. And I believe - what I really would like to add, like for example, our team, after we recognized the whole situation for one of our products for the actuality. We did pivot, during two months we developed a platform. Instead of just mobile app, we developed the platform for remote usability testing, and that was a heroic deed for the whole team. I believe these situations, these times really add in something special to company culture, to company DNA and this is really invaluable.

Gregg Archibald: We have positivity, transparency, connected. You're right. Those are several things that Jay mentioned.

Jay Shutter: Absolutely.

Gregg Archibald: Michele, any other kind of perspective you can add?

Michele Madansky: Yes. So, I'm not managing a team but I am working with a lot of clients. One thing which I've seen in the Bay Area is young people, people with young kids, a lot of them are leaving the city, and I can't blame them. So, they're saying, "Why should I be paying rent in the most expensive city in the US when I could be working virtually from a ski town, or moving in with my parents who can take care of my kids in the Midwest?" So, it's interesting to see that dynamic, but I would say that the thing which is important for them and also for all of us is making sure there's time for self-care during the day. Being on Zoom all day is exhausting and being in back-to-back meetings is exhausting. One of the things now that my husband is working from home, if we have a little break during the day, I'll text him and we might play a game of darts in the backyard, which is only 20 minutes but a nice little break during the day. Making sure you get time to go out for walks. Living in



the Bay Area has made it really nice because I can social distance in my neighborhood and the weather has been pleasant the entire time. But I think this is where there's a lot of fatigue happening, and in addition to taking care of whatever you need to do, whether it's your children or whether it's your parents, making sure that you have that - really taking the time out for self-care is critical. The other thing I would say is to reach out and talk to colleagues even if they're - you don't have any business with them. Do virtual Zooms, happy hour. Do something to feel like you're kind of networking and connected but in a fun way, so you kind of get maintain this feeling of being part of a larger industry. To me, that's been important as someone who works by myself.

Gregg Archibald: I never thought that I would enjoy virtual happy hours, but I've been able to have happy hours with people all over the country. It's kind of cool. Finn, what about you? **Any different ideas, tips, tricks to maintain sanity and focus for either of you or the organization?**

Finn Raben: No. Well, I mean, I think all of the things that have been said so eloquently by everyone at this stage are all true and I think we just have to keep doing more of them. I'm often surprised that the fact that it's a bit of that physician heal thyself kind of problem. Here we are, we're supposed to be the human data experts so, therefore, we should be doing this stuff, right? We should be understanding what are the strengths, what are the weaknesses and how we should be dealing with people and it is something that we do also need to spend a bit of time to concentrate on, to make sure that we are doing them, whether it's a virtual team lunch, whether it's the weekly note out to your staff, whether it's actually making sure that if somebody's kid comes into the room during the conference call, then you take time to say hi to the kid. One of the things that I have to be honest that I have enjoyed most, if you like, in a slightly perverse way in these times, is the reset button about getting back to reality, about saying that there's a life out there beyond just work and it's about talking to people and their dog or the painting on the wall that's behind everyone on a Zoom call and why people have it, and it's about getting to know people again rather than everything being very strictly confined by the work parameter. And I do - perhaps I'm being a little naïve here but if I am, then I'm happy to go to my grave being a little bit naïve. It's lovely to get to know people again. We are social animals, and therefore, keeping that



connection and nurturing that connection, whether it's with a staff member, whether it's with a client, whether it's with a colleague, or whether it's just for a friend, it's incredibly important.

I'd like to pick up on a point that Michele made earlier on because it's very easy for us now to have Zoom calls or any form of video conference call with people that we know because we understand their foibles, their characteristics, their idiosyncrasies. So, it's very easy to project them onto a screen when you've seen them in a conference call. It's a much tougher thing to do when the person at the other end of the camera is somebody that you don't know and in a business development context, that's a really important thing. It's being able to know did they give a slightly imperceptible nod or a shake of their head in response to a thought or a comment or whatever? As human beings, in any form of relationship, we do rely on that. It's also one of the reasons I believe why we spend so much time working at the moment, because it's a shrug of a shoulder that communicates a thousand things when you see somebody in the office or at home, whereas if you've got to type that in an email, it takes another five minutes to type that out rather than simply shrug your shoulders. So, I do believe that keeping the humanity and in fact, prioritizing humanity at all times, ensuring that those young people who are in Amsterdam, live in tiny apartments with maybe four other people, where the hell do they find a quiet corner to hold a conference call in a small apartment like that and what is the stress that that brings to bear? To Michele's point about if they – if a father or a mom at home with the kids, with hungry kids and the call stretches into lunch time and their kids are going bananas in the background, how do you cope? That whole mental wellness, quite apart from the diversity issues and all of the other things that are cropping up. We've just got to keep raising humanity up as the number one issue in trying to make sure that that's front and center of everything we do.

The one thing I have to say that I learned and I thank God for my wife every day, but in particular for this one was when we knew we had to work from home, she said, "The one thing you have to do is you have to pick a space that's not in the living area of the house. So, you have a work area. You have a living area." I like to think she may correct me if I'm wrong, I like to think I'm reasonably disciplined about starting a work day at time A and finishing at time B and clearly, in these



times, that stretches quite considerably, but being disciplined about how and where you work at home was, for me anyway, something which made this period a whole lot easier to deal with.

Gregg Archibald: That's a great point. I do want to just comment on one thing you said about prioritizing humanity. I had a customer service call to Amazon and the person that answered who's obviously working from home, and while I'm in the middle of being – you know, this frustrated consumer, her three-year-old daughter came up to talk to her, and it went from being a conversation with a business about a problem to a conversation with a person that's going to help, and I cannot tell you how clearly that clicked in my mind during that interaction and it is just burned in my brain, and if there's kind of a lesson that I've taken out of all this or a silver lining that I've taken from all this, it's exactly what you said. There's a level of humanity that I would sometimes forget and it has just – that's probably been a valuable lesson for me to carry through the rest of my life, and it was that moment. She had no idea how important that particular moment was to me. I do want to...

Finn Raben: And long may it last, right? I don't know if you guys ever saw that great interview with a guy on BBC at one stage where he's trying to do an interview and the next thing, his three kids come flying in the room, and his poor wife or a nanny or somebody is crawling on her hands and knees trying to drag the kids out of the room while the interview is going on, and you're kind of going, "Actually, that's just brilliant. That is humanity in real life." So, long may that last.

Gregg Archibald: So, let's switch gears for a few minutes. I am cognizant of the time and this has been a phenomenal conversation. So, we are running a little bit longer than we normally do but I want to talk about the future and have all of you correctly and accurately and thoroughly tell us what the future holds. So, let's pick a number and I'm going to pick a number of 12 months from now when things are stable. **What has changed in the industry? What are we going to be doing then that's different than what we're doing today?** The pressure is on because this is going to influence my investment strategy. So, Michele, let's start with you.

Michele Madansky: Okay. So, 12 months from now, I do not think we're going to be doing a lot of focus groups. I am hopeful that we can do some in-home interviews but I still think that



online focus groups, online ethnographies are going to be the norm for qualitative research. I am hopeful that there's going to be more of a focus on listening to research and really taking it in. All too often, I think there's a lot of investment and then not a lot of focus on the results. So, I'm hopeful that with challenging times, organizations will take a step back and actually listen to the insights, have working sessions around the implications versus putting reports on a shelf. I unfortunately think that most of us are still going to be working from home.

Gregg Archibald: I'll just pick a number, 12 months. It could be 18 or 24 so we don't get too – whenever there's some kind of stability is what I should say. Dmitry, what about you? **What does the world look like when there's some kind of stability?**

Dmitry Gaiduk: Okay. So, before I'm telling anything else, I will tell you that I'm an optimist and I really see the optimistic things all the time but in this situation, I'm not sure it will calm down any way soon. I don't think it will come down in 12 months and from what I see, I'm not sure about this future, truly speaking. Of course, it will - like I have been told that the common sense and smart people will just stop this process of their decisions but unfortunately, I can't see there's light in the end of this tunnel, even being optimistic. So, from our industry perspective, again, I believe we will win from this situation. This is where I started in my first sentence that okay, like right now, we have a unique chance and this will be a really great transformation for the whole industry. I really love this quote that, "We are human data experts." I think it's a fit for that. I believe we will be better human data experts and everyone will win from this situation, but about practices, about some clear vision, I don't have it yet. And I believe this is not - right now, adaptation to this new reality, it's actually transformation, and we are just in the beginning of this.

Gregg Archibald: I like that explanation, that this is a transformation and we're just in the beginning. So, Jay, you've got your crystal ball. We're stable. **How's the insights industry different? What are you going to be working on? How are you going to be doing things?**



Jay Shutter:

I wish I had a crystal ball. No, you know what? I think everything everybody has said really adds up to what the future probably looks like, which is one, this COVID thing is not going to go away. It'll "be under control" at some point, go where you'd like to hope, but I think it's going to change – I think it's having a - and Finn, you said that, hit the reset button or maybe Dmitry, you said that, but I think we are as a humanity, I think this is an opportunity for us to hit the reset button. I think it's resolved people who are going to be spending more time working from home. I don't think people stay working from home permanently but I think they will spend more time working from home now that we've shown it can work, which has all kinds of implications in terms of how people are available and where they're available and what they can do. So, I see a continued trend. I don't know why a client would want to spend more time on an airplane when we can do virtual groups and do them very successfully. So, I think virtual methodologies are going to continue. I think we're going to see VR really come to play in terms of product. I think we're going to have the ability very soon. A lot of people are working on this already, and have been - to be able to hold the product in your virtual hands and turn it around, look at it and do all kinds of things. So, I think virtual is going to really continue to grow. I think quality, I think we saw we're going to have the same challenges no matter what in terms of quality of panel sample, ability to reach people on their mobile phones. All the things are just going to stay the same for the most part there. I think attitudes will shift. I think behaviors are going to change. I think if you're an investor, you're need to look at the impact that all of this is going to have in manufacturing and architecture, how we design buildings, how we design planes, how we design public transportation in general. I think all of these things are going to change to align with people's choices to stay home more, to stay social distance to more. It's just going to be fascinating and I think Dmitry is absolutely spot on. I agree with your agreement, Gregg, which is it is a transformation. It's just beginning, and I think it's kind of fascinating, and I think the insights industry is at the forefront of this because we are the ones that go talk to and understand what people, humans, need and want and how to translate that back into business strategy, product strategy, service strategy, and I think it's going to be an exciting time. I'm being optimistic, Dmitry, but I'm like you. [Laughter] I'm just still really - like I'm not sure how this all plays out. What about education? Still, we don't have any kind of clue how that's going to play out. How do we educate our kids in this new environment? So, I think there's lots of business



opportunities and growth opportunities in the context of addressing this pandemic, but it's going to be fascinating.

Gregg Archibald: Finn, the crystal ball. We've stabilized COVID in some way, shape or form. How does the insights industry changed?

Finn Raben: Yes. I mean I think this is the herd principle of predictions, right because I mean we've all kind of trying to say the same thing in different ways. I'm not sure I've got that much more to add. So, I think the bottom line is no matter what the situation, and I do agree by the way, I don't think there's any short term end in sight. I think that even if there is a – if there's hope of a vaccine, which is quite positive from certain quarters at the moment, it's going to take some time for it to be produced at scale. It gives the virus time to mutate or indeed hive off in a different direction. I think we are entering a new normal, but no matter what the circumstances, and as human beings and social animals, we are always going to adapt and react and change and evolve in our behaviors, our desires, in our consumption patterns, and in the ways in which we relate to people, to institutions and to brands. So, there's always going to be a need to understand how we, as those animals, change and react to the environment at the time. I think that many of the trends that we're seeing now, and I can't remember who said it earlier, but will accelerate. So, whether that's automation, whether it's a move towards a further adaptation of machine learning systems or whatever, all of these things will continue to grow a pace, and support, if you like the ability to be able to understand humans better in whatever environment we're in.

The only thing is that I do remember, it was a couple of years ago, I think somebody said, "Oh, this is the year of the mobile" for the 10th time, and we've been talking about the year of the mobile for so often and yet we were taking so long to shift over to it. I do think we have to, at a point in time, just take the challenge by, excuse the expression, the "short and curlies" and run with it. As insight professionals and as data experts, we have a truly unique perspective and ability to both assess, interpret and relate data to people that need it for whatever the pervading challenge or quandary is, and I think we need to stop being shy about that expertise. At a client summit which we ran a couple of months back which is essentially a series of presentations that are done solely by brand owners, it was



remarkable that each and every one of them was saying how they were using the data or collecting data in order to be able to guide their strategies and the roadmaps for moving out of this scenario into whatever the future might hold over the course of the next two to three to five years. In each of those cases whether it was internal expertise or external expertise, it was the data expertise that underpinned everything that they were doing. So, it's a long way of saying I'm agreeing with everything that everyone had said. We are the data experts. We are at the stage of transformation, but we do have a unique set of skills that we really must not sell short any longer because like Atlas, the world's future rests on our shoulders.

Gregg Archibald: Very well. That was quite big to end that dialogue. One of the things that I've noticed throughout these 16 weeks is kind of a shift in the nature of the conversations and initially, I would say that we were kind of - most of the conversations were about how different people were reacting to the nature of these changes, and how to deal with business volumes and methodologies and emotions, and this conversation, I think, has been the strongest one on the idea of moving from reacting to reinventing, and all of the things that we've talked about through this kind of - it's really about speeding up some of the transformations that we've seen in the industry over the past few years and it's been incredibly insightful from all four of you, and I really want to thank you all for bringing this perspective, this knowledge to a wider audience and for the benefit of the insights industry as a whole. So, just a very heartfelt thank you on behalf of me and on behalf of GreenBook and I wish that Lenny could have been here to participate as well. So, feel better, Lenny. But thank you all for your time. I know that this has run a bit long, but it's been a phenomenal session. So, thank you, Finn. Thank you, Jay, Michele, Dmitry, and you guys have a beautiful day and stay safe and stay well.