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Laura Adams

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Laura has built up more than 10 years market research experience since graduating from Manchester University with a First in Psychology. For the past 5 years, Laura has worked as a freelance qualitative consultant with a varied client base exploring buyer behaviour, creative testing (advertising, packaging, POS, web), brand/service evaluation, idea generation, range review and NPD assessment.

Prior to setting up Halo Marketing & Research, Laura gained valuable client-side experience at Littlewoods (retail), British Waterways (leisure/tourism) and PriceWaterhouseCoopers (professional services). This client-side background gives Laura a holistic understanding of the research process – particularly how insight is best implemented to bring about change.

'I love what I do and this shows in my work. I relish the opportunity to talk to people from diverse backgrounds and understand what makes them tick. I particularly enjoy free-flowing research methodologies which allow respondents to explore opinions and behaviour without boundary.'

Halo Consultancy

Set up in 2006, Halo is a research consultancy delivering creativity, flexibility and passion. Typically working in partnership with leading research, marketing and advertising agencies, Halo manages qualitative and desk research projects from start to finish – as well as providing adhoc support to assist in-house agency teams during busy periods.

Halo is experienced across a range of sectors (FMCG, health, education, technology, finance) with a specialism in retail. Ongoing involvement in shopper research for grocery, clothing and DIY retailers/brands has consolidated into a confident skill-set for progressing research insight into meaningful retailer recommendations. Recent projects have examined POS, category flow, fixture layout, range evaluation and promotional cut through/impact.

Halo Experience

Consumer

- Greeting Card Manufacturer – A multi methodology approach focused on developing a customer segmentation model to guide future marketing and product development. The project utilised *accompanied shops, in-store vox pops and groups* to identify segments plus an *online survey* to confirm and quantify.
- Paint Manufacturer – *Accompanied shops* using eye tracking technology to break down the stages of the shopping process, the impact of in-store communications and enable extensive probing around actual vs. recalled behaviour.
- High Street Bank – *Depth interviews* employing a qualitative laddering technique to access subconscious emotional drivers linked to the future, money and owning a home. The revealing insights then provided a starting point for NPD.
- Food Intolerance Testing Specialist – *NPD groups* to address food intolerance awareness, product appeal and gauge the impact of proposed creative.
- Drinks Manufacturer – *Ad testing groups* to investigate memorability, cut through and likely impact of a campaign while highlighting necessary modifications to motivate the target market.
- Mobile Phone Manufacturer – *International programme of webchats* to test new ringtones and welcome graphics.
- Credit card provider – *Web usability depth interviews* to evaluate functionality. Various tasks were set for completion on the customer loyalty benefit website. Observing the adopted task approach, while probing to understand the user experience, identified areas for improvement.

Halo Experience Continued

B2B

- Utility Company – *Interactive workshops* to gauge the relevance of ethical business practices (what does the business gain and sacrifice, plus believability/influence of ethical marketing).
- Health & Safety Risk Management Consultancy – *Depth interviews* to examine satisfaction with the current service, comparative competitor performance, gaps in the market and likely response if the consultancy moved into new areas.

Public Sector

- NHS Primary Care Trust – *Depth interviews and groups* with service users and service providers to provide a holistic picture of the smoking cessation service. The key conclusions were developed into recommendations for service modification and a communications strategy.
- NHS Primary Care Trust – *In-home ethnography, depth interviews and groups* with service users (children and their parents) to identify the motivators, barriers and experiences of taking part in the obesity management programme. The recommendations helped minimise barriers, enhance service experience and maximise uptake moving forward.
- NHS Community Programme – *Depth interviews* with target non users of the back to work support services to identify levels of awareness – plus motivators and barriers to service use. The findings guided service development and provided the starting point for a marketing strategy.
- Media Regulating Body – *Deliberative consultation workshops* with local radio listeners to address the impact of changing radio regulations. The workshops involved presentations, interactive tasks, group discussions and a questionnaire to record opening and closing thoughts.
- Regional Development Agency – *Teenager/young adult groups* to evaluate experiences since leaving school, aspirations for the future and perceptions of opportunities/services vs. other regions.
- Adult Learning Provider – *Web usability groups* to identify engagement levels among the target audience and usability issues in need of improvement.

Client Recommendations

'Laura has worked with us on high profile projects for leading high street retailers. These projects have included everything from testing new clothing ranges through to assessing the impact of press campaigns. We work with Laura due to her excellent moderating skills and ability to produce insightful, concise feedback. Laura has been a huge help to us and we value her flexibility and willingness to go that extra mile.' Research Manager. ABA Research. www.abaresearch.co.uk

'Laura has worked on a range of projects encompassing focus groups, intercepts and accompanied shopping trips. Her moderating skills are excellent and she provides us with a great mix of detailed analysis, pertinent quotes and key themes. Laura has always proved to be meticulous in her organisation around projects and gets the best out of respondents even in challenging retail environments. She feels like one of the team which is why we continue to involve her.'
Director. Shoppercentric. www.shoppercentric.com

'We have worked with Laura on many occasions and she has quickly become a valuable member of our team. She is an enthusiastic team player and a highly skilled moderator. Laura's analysis and reporting always strike a perfect balance offering a high level of strategic insight whilst at the same time having a wealth of detail at her finger-tips. We love working with Laura and will continue to do so long into the future.' Director. Red Onion Research. www.redonion-research.co.uk

'We chose to work with Laura because she has specific experience in techniques that require a deeper motivational understanding of people. She has excellent qualitative laddering skills, probing at the right times to unpeel layers of understanding that are often hidden deep within people. She is able to open respondents up, getting them to speak about things that are important at a more subconscious level.'
Director. Breathe. www.breathe.uk.net

Previous Positions

- Apr 2004 – Mar 2006 Consumer Insight Executive
Littlewoods Shop Direct Group, Manchester
Key Responsibilities:
- Managing qualitative and quantitative home shopping retail research projects.
 - Delivering consumer insight to brand teams across the business.
 - Conducting competitor analysis to monitor promotions, pricing and customer contact.
 - Evaluating campaign success according to previous campaign data, current market conditions and key performance indicators.
 - Challenging existing practices with innovative ideas to improve commercial performance and customer satisfaction.
- Aug 2002 – Apr 2004 Market Research Executive
British Waterways, Watford
Key Responsibilities:
- Assisted management of leisure/tourism research program and budget.
 - Implemented and reported on customer satisfaction research.
 - Segmented key leisure markets to guide marketing.
 - Planned and executed new business scoping research.
- Sept 2001 – Mar 2002 Market Research Assistant
PricewaterhouseCoopers, Manchester
Key Responsibilities:
- Conducted client database qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys.
 - Presented back to management team to assist in formulation of client cases.

Professional Accreditations & Academic Education

- Market Research Society (MRS) Associate
- Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Professional Diploma
- University of Manchester
BSc (Hons) Psychology – 1st Class