

# How the digital transfer succeeds



this range of impressions be explained? First of all, and supposedly simply, by distinguishing qualitative research according to the goals it pursues.

**Hunting and gathering.** The classic group discussion, the handful of qualitative interviews for a first impression or the current status of what target groups in a certain market say about selected brands, what they know, perceive, think, all this can be transferred to the web with limited effort. Ideally with a larger number of participants, but more compact events than offline. Gladly supplemented or prepared by convenient, technologically supported ethnography in the sense of diaries, tasks or the like. So far, so unexciting, and always with the caveat that this is not the way to clarify why people behave in a certain way or why they do not behave in a certain way. For descriptive what-questions, on the other hand, this type of qualitative method is well suited online. This also applies to classic focus groups.

**Quick and Dirty Testing.** "Quickly test a few concepts." This is already not a good task for qualitative researchers offline. If you want to make either-or decisions, you should rely on compact quantitative approaches. They are less nice to follow live, but more likely to live up to the name "test". Let's face it: there is no meaningful argument for weak qualitative „testing“. Researchers or internal marketing clients with a desire for live impressions of the target group are often happiest with smart

**I**n order to really transfer qualitative research into the online world, no Zoom or team meeting is enough. Florian Klaus from K&A BrandResearch knows where the online dog is buried and presents

interactive methods that also work online.

It was spring 2021, and Corona had kept the globe on tenterhooks for almost a full year. With dramatic incidences, mutants, lockdowns and, yes, quite importantly for the research world, closed test studios. The everyday life of qualitative researchers had long since changed massively, we had all paid our dues, were on a common online learning curve with our clients and target groups. At that moment, a discussion article by a seasoned FMCG research manager flickered across the screen, lamenting a deficit of functioning digital methods in insight research. In the same article - which made things even more interesting - another experienced company researcher was positively surprised by the potential of qualitative tools on the internet. How can

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combinations: for example, a focused, quantitative test with accompanying video interviews.

**Genuine insight research.** This is about the explorative clarification of real, open why-questions and thus the king discipline of qualitative research. In essence, this purpose is the *raison d'être* of qualitative methods, because only why questions really need a qualitative approach. At the same time, this is where the greatest leverage for psychologically successful marketing lies.

And that is exactly where the online dog is buried now. Corona and social distancing caught many qualitative researchers off guard. For a long time they had felt safe on their supposedly disruption-resistant island of face-to-face research. Now digital solutions had to be found quickly. It was exciting to see how even the most renowned institutes acted in the heat of the moment as if qualitative methods could be translated one-to-one from the analogue to the digital world. The distinction according to the goal and the associated requirements of a method got lost in the process.

In our insights-research, we rely on the basic insight of current scientific psychology, i.e. cognitive behavioural therapy and behavioural economics: people like to believe that they are profound, deep-psychological and also somewhat mysterious decision-makers.

In fact, however, we are primarily driven by habit, routine and shortcuts to efficient everyday coping (psychological: self efficacy).

What concrete behaviour is derived from these very pragmatic needs is primarily determined by signals and codes with which alternatives are marketed in the respective environments (contexts). Our psychological system 1 reacts to these - according to the psychologist and Nobel Prize winner for economics Daniel Kahneman - with automated decisions that have proven to be particularly self-efficient in the past. And they are correspondingly difficult to overwrite with new behaviour. This is where the academically outdated depth psychology comes to nothing. Because: the human psyche is not deep, but rather geared towards the energy-efficient management of our daily challenges, according to Nick Chater in his book

"The Mind is Flat. If we take the psychological state of the art seriously, then digital insights research is not about transferring any deepwells to Zoom. Instead, we have to use the challenging question, which online strategies lead

past people's distorted self-perception (system 2) So how can we directly address behavioural routines,



### Literature

Moreno, Jacob Levy: *Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama* (1959).

Kahneman, Daniel: *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (2011).

Chater, Nick: *The Mind is Flat* (2018).

instead of letting ourselves be distracted by rationalised quick fixes and esoteric philosophising.

For us, the magic words are dynamics and interaction. In K&A Psychodrama® we use interactive, projective tools to step out of the mode of questioning, discussing and reflecting and to bring people into intuitive action. By jointly experiencing behaviour, varying framework conditions (context variables) and testing alternative ways of behaving, we clarify drivers and barriers in real life and develop perspectives for the future instead of fishing in the shallows of the past.

We have developed the K&A Monodrama® especially for individual interviews according to the founder of psychodrama J.L. Moreno and use it for target groups that are particularly difficult to reach, such as medical specialists.

We have taken the pandemic as an opportunity to transfer the dynamics of intuitive behaviour to the digital. Observing such sessions is an effective remedy against zoom fatigue. Instead of boring online group discussions, life and liveliness return to the screen. We have developed three methodological approaches:

- Intensive one-to-one, two-to-one, three-to-one settings (dyads, triads) for high familiarity, partly with an existing basis for familiar interaction (family, friends, colleagues).
- Prepared small groups in the context of multi-level research designs and/or in combination with ethnographic pre-tasks.
- Group settings with a team of facilitators acting as a projection screen for target group behaviour on the representative stage (video transmission of the whole body).

In all three cases, creative technologies, often supported by physical game packages sent in advance by mail, with props, projection figures, competition and test products, serve for an authentic interactive framework. Instead of using standard tools such as Zoom or Skype, specifically for qualitative research

developed platforms are used. In some cases we use mixed recruited groups from different target groups for additional friction and quasi-confrontational interaction. A challenge for the facilitator, with particularly rewarding opportunities for learning. ■

