Case Study:

How 3 Leading Brands Generated Strategic Insights Using Medallia Market Research

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For a brand to be successful in a sluggish economy, having the right data is an especially critical need.

Many experts have been vocal that, for the first time in decades, we face the risk of "stagflation" - inflation and a recession at the same time.

In this economic climate, having the right insights is critical because when the market is not expanding, consumer purchasing becomes more of a zero-sum game between a brand and its competitors. Therefore, the margin for error on strategies is even lower, and with profitability less certain, it is even more crucial to have the right information to launch and keep initiatives that work and discontinue ones that don't.

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Internal data sources aren't enough

Many brands consider their decision making to be data-driven when they regularly reference overall sales and customer-level metrics just using internal sources. However, there are shortcomings to relying on internal data alone. Without external market context, it is impossible to know if a downturn itself, or the degree it is occurring, is unique to that brand or consistent with the market as a whole.
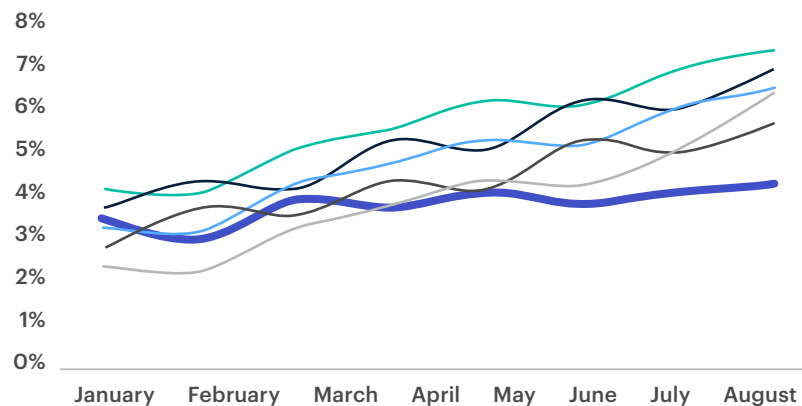
Even though this brand has seen an uptrend, they're underperforming the competitive set

Only with this context can stakeholders understand how the brand's performance lines up, with details on specific competitors, regions, dayparts, and types of customers that define their market.

This can mean the difference between a dramatic pivot to avoid bleeding more market share, or staying the course with existing strategies that are outperforming competitors in a tough environment, even if sales are still trending down. Making the wrong choice of those differing approaches can be too costly. And if forming new strategies, brands need the external data of who their customers are and where else they are shopping to get in the best position to win them back.

Consider how consumer behavior has already changed over the past two years:

- The pandemic drove massive **migration to digital** purchase channels
- **Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL)** platforms created new avenues for finding and buying products (although experts worry about the risk of default as the economy tightens)
- The Black Lives Matter protests of 2020 occasioned more intentional ties between **brands and social causes**
- **The Great Resignation** created massive staffing shortages and fueled higher employee pay across many sectors
- Global **supply chain disruptions** created delays and out-of-stock issues for many brands

These are some of the many factors that are causing some companies to thrive and others to struggle.

Without adequate benchmarks of sales performance trends, customer profiles, visit experience feedback, and other measures, **how can a brand know which players in the market should serve as inspiration and which as cautionary tales?**

It's critical to pick the right provider for insights using external market research

The right data for modern market research and consumer insights should go beyond outdated, legacy approaches that rely solely on slowly collected, labor intensive methods that fail to tell the whole story.

Solely using syndicated reports lacks customized, tailored inquiries to the questions that matter to your brand specifically.

Solely using ad-hoc surveys limits historical context, can lack accurate and granular details, collect too slowly to be useful, and can also be too expensive when managed by an agency.

Solely using large-scale behavioral datasets can be complex to process, and makes it difficult to find the "why" behind the "what".

And even in normal circumstances, it's overwhelming for insights teams to piece together data from various vendors. In an environment where bandwidth is stretched, budgets are tighter, and the demand for strategic insights is even higher, it's critical to partner with a vendor that is capable of rapidly providing the information that matters.
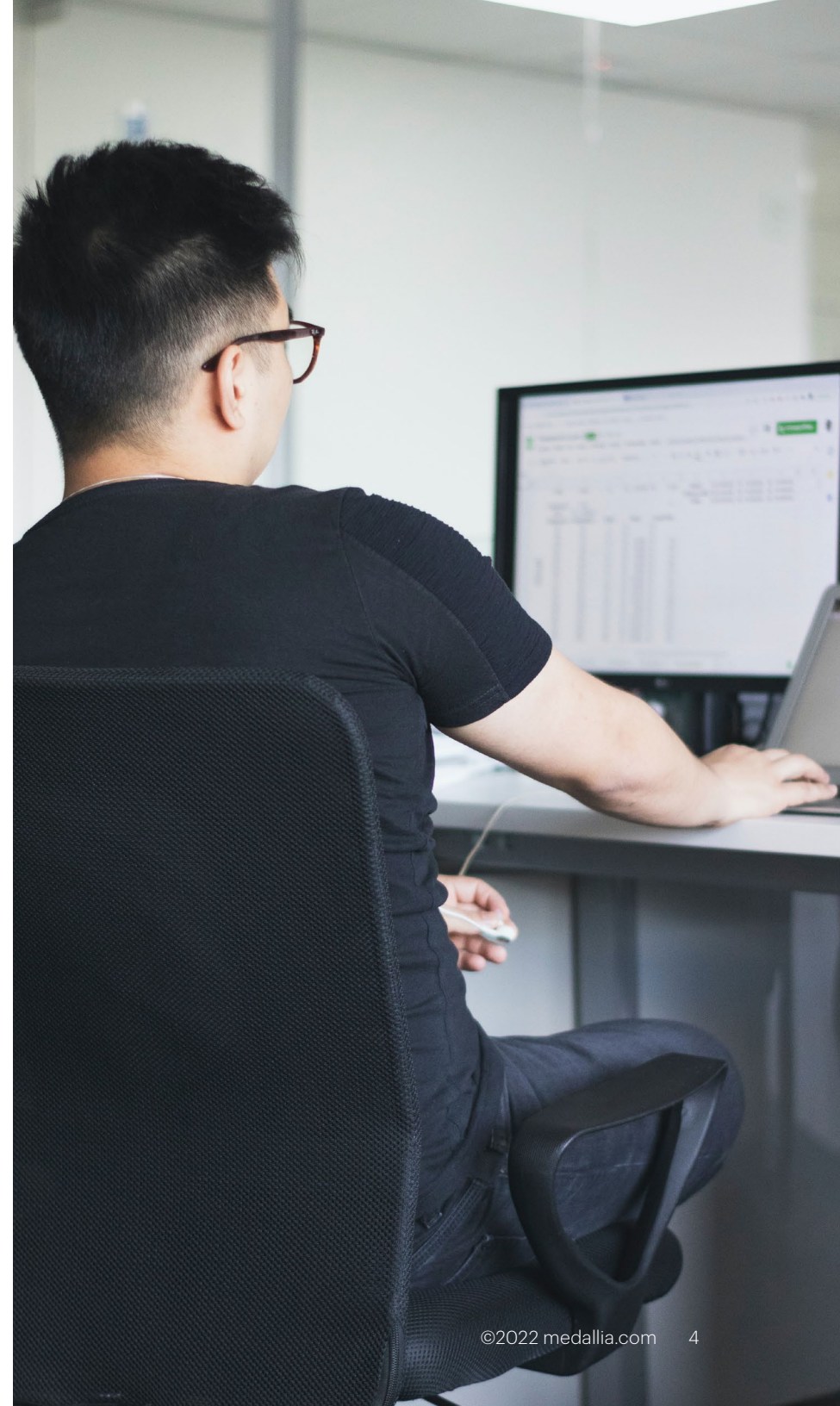
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Medallia Market Research offers a unique combination of datasets and services to solve this problem.

- Gain access to **observed spending and foot traffic behaviors** of millions of panelists via smartphone movement tracking and debit/credit transaction tracking. These datasets provide accurate, unblinded views into brand and competitor performance in nearly real-time and with always-on historical context.

- Panelists can also be targeted for both **quantitative and qualitative video** surveys based on their real-world behaviors like physical location visits or website visits.

- **Get answers quickly** with self-service dashboards and reports of behavioral and syndicated survey data, plus design of custom questionnaires.

- For complex research projects, get **support from our team of insights experts** to do the heavy lifting of research execution and analysis.

- Using quantitative data alone can be limiting. Qualitative data taps into the **human emotions behind decision-making**, and can reveal deeper insights that are obscured with quantitative data.

- Today's insights teams do not have the luxury of time. In-sourcing a research project from scratch, or outsourcing and waiting for a vendor to complete it, can be too slow to meet the needs of the business. **Self-serve analysis tools** get you quick answers when you need them.

Across industries, our clients have leveraged Medallia Market Research to see major returns as they optimize strategies and deliver better experiences to their customers. Here are a few examples:

We analyzed visit patterns to help a Convenience Store brand act on the changing competitive landscape of COVID-19.

One of our clients, a large regional convenience store chain, had been facing a challenge in understanding consumer traffic and potential since the pandemic began. They suspected that their customers were spreading food and other occasions across multiple stops in one circuit.

With Medallia Market Research, they leveraged our smartphone foot traffic data to see where else their customers were visiting before/after they visited the C-store.

This analysis revealed that over 12% of customers who went to the C-Store **also** went to a restaurant or coffee shop in a short window before or after, exposing the opportunity for the brand to win more need-state occasions within the Convenience market.

It also provided valuable clarity into how they considered their current food offering to win against their restaurant and grocery competition, and daytime prioritization that helped them assess which restaurants were their biggest competitors.

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How a government department rolled out new health protocols with lightning speed at the beginning of the pandemic

A Canadian local government used Medallia Market Research to launch a mobile pre-shift survey initiative. The screener survey was designed to track compliance with pandemic safety protocols and reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection among government employees.

The department was able to rapidly build, launch and field the survey to employees. They used real-time reporting capabilities to track potential health and safety risks, and instant notifications allowed them to act quickly.

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These flexible survey tools allowed us to institute new health protocols at lightning speed. In less than two weeks after the pandemic began, we used the Medallia Market Research survey platform to launch a mobile pre-shift screening initiative.
With tens of thousands of screens done on mobile devices in just the first few weeks, the department was able to reduce contact with high touch surfaces like kiosk keyboards. Real time notifications of failed screenings and dashboards for each business unit were invaluable in ensuring the health and safety of both staff and constituents.

Continuity of Operations Manager for a Canadian City Government

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How an Education-Tech software company used video research to retain more clients

A leading EdTech company, with ambitious goals for client retention, found itself lacking meaningful and actionable insights through its earlier attempts of getting customer feedback.

Using Medallia Market Research video survey tools, which enable companies to capture rich human emotions and opinions found in video, they were able to collect in-the-moment feedback and source the most innovative ideas from customers. They used our platform to analyze hundreds of video responses from senior clients and automate text and sentiment analysis, leading to the development of quarterly "showreels" of feedback.

Not only were the videos a much more digestible and emotion-invoking form of research than other methods, they were instrumental in generating buy-in from the company's own top decision-makers to invest in new customer retention initiatives. The results speak for themselves with an all-time high Net Promoter Score and better customer relationships.

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Don't wait to enhance your organization's decision making with next-gen research

The brands that thrive in this era will be the ones that make the best use of information available to them. And this era of market research will be defined by the frequent combination of massive panel behavioral datasets and innovative tools for collecting both quant and qual sentiments, all backed by advanced analysis tools capable of distilling the complexities to land on meaningful insights without a heavy burden on the end user. Medallia Market Research can help not only the Insights division of an organization make use of this data, but also democratize it across organizations more rapidly, so that all relevant teams can identify changing market dynamics and seize opportunities when they arise.

Want to discuss your research strategy?

Talk to an insights expert →

About Medallia

Medallia is the pioneer and market leader in Experience Management. Medallia's award-winning SaaS platform, the Medallia Experience Cloud, leads the market in the understanding and management of experience for customers, employees and citizens. Medallia captures experience signals created on daily journeys in person, digital and IoT interactions and applies proprietary AI technology to reveal personalized and predictive insights that can drive action with tremendous business results. Using Medallia Experience Cloud, customers can reduce churn, turn detractors into promoters and buyers and create in-the-moment cross-sell and up-sell opportunities, providing clear and potent returns on investment. www.medallia.com

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