How video can help operationalize user research

Medallia LivingLens

The reality of research

Way back in 2012, author Geoffrey Moore tweeted **"Without data, companies are blind and deaf, wandering out onto the web like deer on a freeway."** In 2020, this sentiment still holds true – data is the most valuable asset any business can own - especially for those looking to put their foot on the gas when it comes to growth.

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>
> 🐦 @geoffreyamoore

Data holds monumental power - more than oil, as we are often told. Business giants of the 21st Century, such as Facebook and Google, have built their empire on data. So it makes sense that many growing businesses either are, or are looking to, collect and utilize data at scale. With this, however, comes the task of managing and operationalizing this data.

With Research Operations roles becoming more prevalent, research teams are now not only ensuring the efficiency of user research projects andmaking sure they are delivered on time and on budget - they are also, as cited by Emma Boulton in a Medium article, The Eight Pillars of User Research, **"Amplifying the power of research by enabling it to scale and grow within an organization".**

[The Eight Pillars of User Research](#) helpfully sets out a framework for operationalizing user research, and there's certainly lots to think about. Everything from the right business environment and people, to contextual factors such as resources; agreed processes and best practice as well as governance. Finally, the tools you have access to have a significant bearing on the effectiveness of your user research. When you consider that user research may involve other roles in the organization such as designers and product managers, as well as challenges around resource, the volume of data, and whether projects have executive buy in, it's no wonder that organizations looking to collect and analyze research data at scale often face challenges in effective operationalization.

One of the issues we see coming out of the Eight Pillars of Research is the issue of data and knowledge management.

This tends to fall into two core areas:

Knowledge management

The ability to make research findable, relevant, contextualized, and understandable and is closely tied to internal communications.

Asset management

Which relates to where you store raw or processed data. It's not just about making the data useful, but findable and secured. It's heavily tied in with data security.

Most businesses understand the power of video in terms of the engagement it can generate from consumers, but using video for insight generation is an emerging concept.

Video research is an invaluable tool for getting closer to your users - instinctively, people are drawn to qualitative methodologies of gathering insights. Video, in particular, is very data-rich in that you can analyze everything from spoken word, actions, objects and sentiment, producing qualitative and quantitative data.

Both knowledge and asset management are highly complex and specialized, particularly when it comes to video data, which can be harder to manage than traditional quantitative data like text and numbers. But as noted in the final pillar, the right tools should empower your research team to manage high volumes of video data effectively.

So let's look at the impact of video and how it can help operationalize user research.

Why video?

Actionable, effective, exciting user research

In this article, published on User Interviews, <u>'Building a User Research Practice for the Long Haul'</u>, Microsoft's Joe Munko and User Interviews' Erin May outline what it might mean to 'do research right'.

According to them, a good research practice:

▶ **Yields clear insights, helping you know what to do next**

▶ **Is repeatable, minimizing precious research time spent thinking about process and mechanics**

▶ **Is habitual, meaning that people in your organization talk to customers/users regularly**

▶ **Builds long-term customer knowledge**

▶ **Is fun, not too hard, and efficient**

▶ **Is special, meaning that it involves new and interesting ways of making research work**

It's for these reasons that organizations find video research attractive. The insights from your research needs to be actionable, effective, and exciting, and video has the potential to unlock at least 6 times more information than an equivalent open-ended text response. Thanks to the wealth of qualitative and quantitative data video provides, it's arguably an unparalleled resource in identifying improvement opportunities and making data-driven decisions that return results.

It's key to understand that utilizing video in your user research is perhaps not as complex as it might seem.

What does a good video research process look like?

Integrate

Look at your tech stack and establish where there's potential to integrate video

Capture

A video intelligence tool will help you capture video research content from anywhere and store it in a centralized library for easy reference

Analyze

Machine learning and business intelligence tools will help you analyze sentiment, emotion, themes, objects and activity in your videos to clarify meaning and provide more context

Share

Pull your research together into reports and showreels to humanize feedback and bring the user voice to life
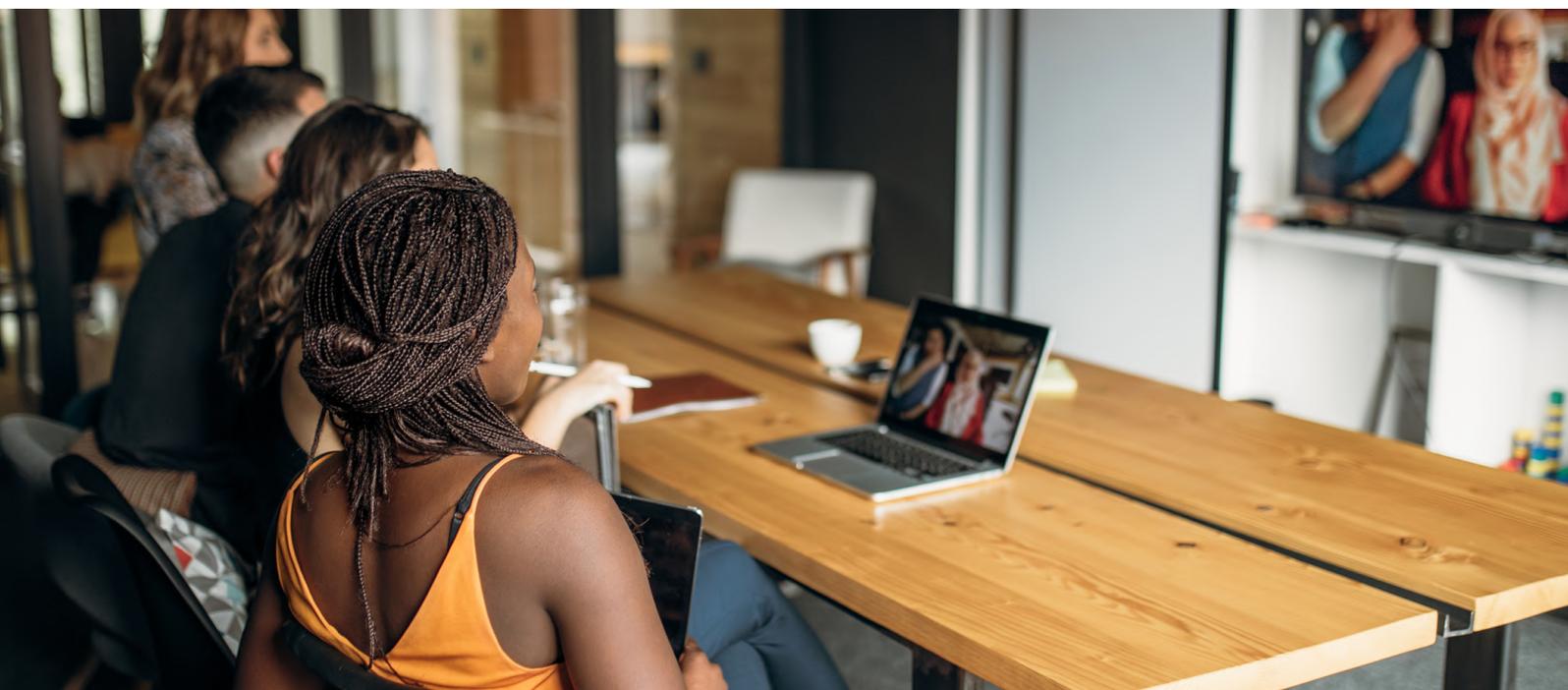
Top tips for getting started

Make your video, audio, imagery and associated data connected and searchable with a video intelligence tool

Control who sees what with content permissions

Embed video, audio and image capture into your existing insight projects, systems

Consider using virtual research spaces and capturing content via tools such as Zoom

Ensure your video intelligence tool can analyze sentiment, emotion, themes, objects and activity so you can quickly get a full picture of the research outcomes

Think about how you will share your video, and consider creating showreels to tell the authentic stories that video showcases like no other research method

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We believe video is the world's next big data source so we're simplifying the complexities. Our platform aims to free your organization's resources so you can focus on what matters to you – understanding your users better and making meaningful changes in your organization to drive results.