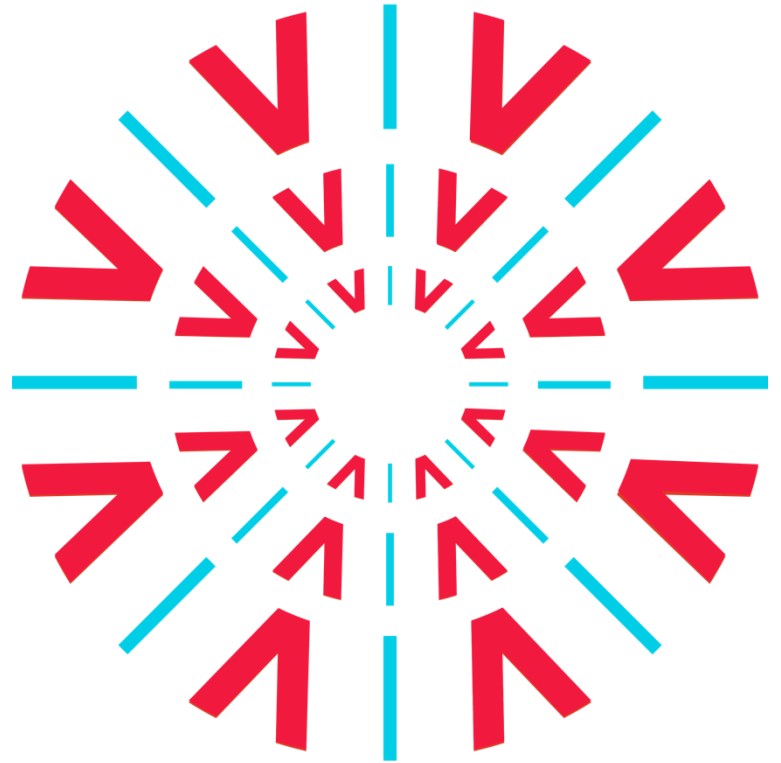




From Metrics to Meaning:

How Microsoft and Vital
Findings Re-engineered
Ad Testing with the Qual-
at-*MASSIVE*-Scale





Vital Findings: The Storytelling Experts

- **ESOMAR and Quirks award-winning agency**
- **Global reach** with experience conducting qual & quant research across **six continents**
- Renowned for **powerful storytelling and design** that drives action
- **Trusted by brands like Microsoft, Google, Apple, PepsiCo, Starbucks, Hoka, UGG**



2025 GOLD WINNER

Google



2025 BRONZE WINNER



2025 FINALIST

Dexcom



2023 WINNER

Microsoft

Introductions

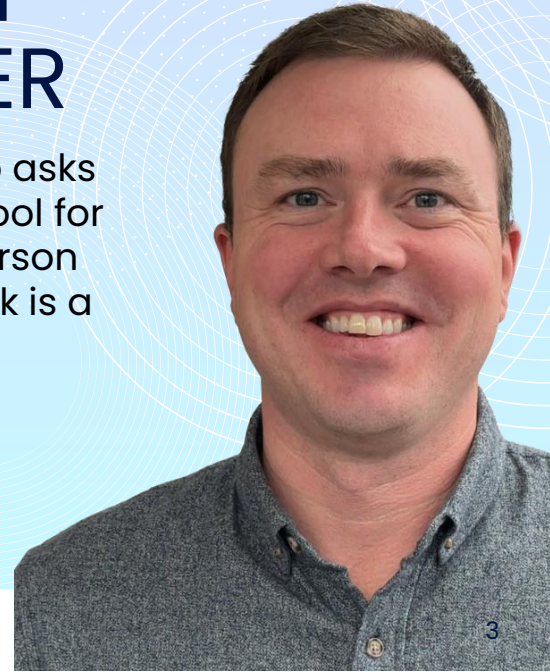


BRIAN THOMPSON

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” —
Marcel Proust

KEVIN STOCKER

“The person who asks a question is a fool for a minute, the person who does not ask is a fool for life.”
— **Confucius**



AD FOR AI: What Do You See?



CLICK TO WATCH:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TItBdHsoWjY>



Did you see AI as...

improving
efficiency

VS

"cheating"

human
assistant

VS

human
replacement

benefiting
humanity

VS

threatening
humanity

Microsoft is navigating the complexities of this category with their Copilot ad campaign



**stealing
human ingenuity**



**enhancing
human ingenuity**

Our environment didn't allow for the traditional

Creative Process

Creating & deploying ads quickly

Evaluating with in market metrics

Disconnected from deeper feedback



AI Category

Strong attitudes for and against AI

New & novel use cases coming online

Constantly evolving landscape



CHALLENGE

**How can Research
get a seat at the
artist's table?**

1 SPEED

2 ROBUST FEEDBACK

3 ON OUR TARGET AUDIENCES

4 IN A NON-THREATENING WAY



**UNDENIABLE VOICE
OF THE CUSTOMER**

Traditional Approaches Couldn't Meet All of Kevin's Needs

Quantitative research:



Representative reach



Shows us what people feel



Harder to pull out WHY
they felt that way

Qualitative research:



Rich and full of insights



Provided the why



Not scalable

We Looked To Qual-at-Scale/ AI Moderation Platforms

- ▶ Discussion guide with preset questions assisted by AI probing
- ▶ Respondents usually speak their answers and use video
- ▶ Instead of doing a dozen interviews, it's normal to do more like 20-100 interviews
- ▶ Automatic themes analysis using AI

A background image of a diverse group of people clapping and smiling, overlaid with a blue gradient. The text "Big Trend:" is in large white font, and "At least 9 of these platforms at TMRE" is in smaller white font below it.

Big Trend:
At least 9 of these
platforms at TMRE

Our POV:



WHERE THEY ARE GREAT:

- ▶ Ability for respondents to speak their answers
- ▶ Quantification of qual results (i.e., coding open ends)
- ▶ Providing a good map of the data with their AI back-end



WHERE WE NEEDED TO SUPPLEMENT:

- ▶ Sophisticated screening & Segmentation algorithm
- ▶ Robust data quality checks
- ▶ Complex quota management
- ▶ Human interpretation of results knowing what the ad is trying to do
- ▶ Ad expertise to provide cross-ad insights
- ▶ *100s or 1000s* of interviews for a study

We ended up pushing the boundaries of qual-at-scale to create something different



“Qual-at-*MASSIVE*-Scale”

QUANT BENEFITS:



Representative Reach



Provides the Why



At the speed Microsoft needs

QUAL BENEFITS:



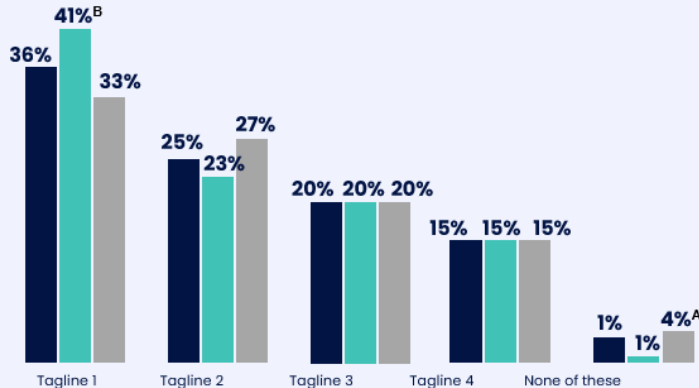
N=1200 quant with immediate explanation

✔○○○ Forced Choice Evaluation

Tagline 1 is the most preferred for blending the practical and the emotional

Which of these taglines do you prefer?
(Among Total Respondents)

● Total ● Customers (A) ● Non-Customers (B)



👍 Why Tagline 1 Was Preferred:

BLEND PRACTICAL & EMOTIONAL:

- “It's more motivating while telling you it's banking better. It motivates me to bank better (savings, credit building) so I can progress farther.- Customer
- “Other taglines were just too simple. I like “tagline 1”. It tells me a little bit more and makes me feel better about using this bank. - Non-Customer

MAKES THEM FEEL HAS THEIR BACK

- “Tagline 1 made me feel like brand had my back, in a way. It just felt like this was something I'd want to partner with them on because we'd be a team.” Customer
- “Other taglines felt distant. This one made me feel like I'd be in a true partnership with my bank, even if I know that's not always the case - Non-Customer

Hard to reach/specialty audiences

The sense of community in "Concept 1" stands out immediately



FIRST IMPRESSIONS "CONCEPT 1"

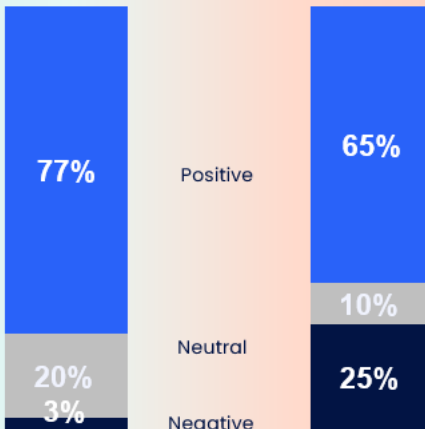
Total PATIENTS Overall Impressions



"I like this message because it makes me feel connected, like I'm not doing this by myself. It gives me a sense of belonging to something bigger."

"It feels uplifting, encouraging, and about moving forward together toward shared goals."

"It doesn't really land. It feels a bit self-centered, not something that brings people together. Health feels more collective to me."



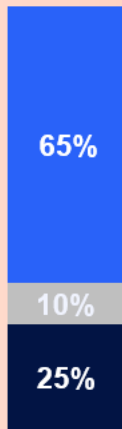
Total HCPs Overall Impressions



"I appreciate that the idea promotes community. Patients tend to stay more engaged when they feel part of a supportive group."

"I like that it highlights patients' involvement in their own care—it clearly places them at the center of the process."

"The people shown looked too young and too fit. It didn't feel realistic for many of my patients. Also, 'We goal' sounds awkward and unnatural."



Our Microsoft Copilot Example

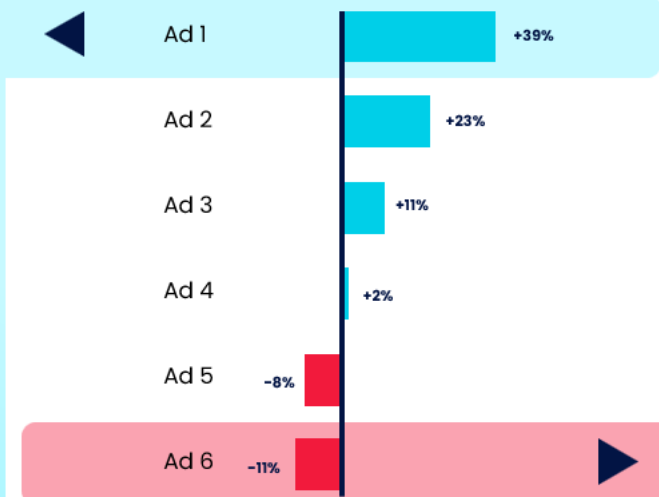
**Ad 1 was most likely to induce interest in AI;
Ad 5 and Ad 6 provide a net decrease**



Ad 1...

- “ Seeing a practical application of AI has made me more interested in using it and discovering other things that can be done with it.
- “ This showed me a real-world example of how it could be used to improve the quality of people’s lives.
- “ I would be interested in using AI to communicate with people in different languages. I can see it as being effective to resolve a language barrier.

**NET Interest in Using AI After Seeing Ad
(%More-% Less)**



Ad 6...

- “ Nothing new or useful was illustrated in the advertisement. How could my opinion change without something of value being proposed?
- “ This ad didn’t really make me think it can be useful to my life.
- “ It’s dull and the fictional problem isn’t something I’d ever use AI for.

Impact: What Changed for Us



1

Helped explain
the WHYS

3

Narratives backed by
quotes stick and influence
direction immediately

2

I'm getting asked....
"what do you think?"

4

Building an enormous
library of text we can
analyze in new, creative
ways

Where Else Can This Go?

What We've Used it For:

- **Ad testing**
- **Concept testing** with patients and physicians
- **Tagline testing** for financial services firm
- **Audience profiling** for persona generation
- **Brand Perceptions** for a global footwear brand

Thinking ahead

- Early-stage concept testing
- A&U studies
- Journeys
- Segmentation

vitalfindings
the storytelling experts



"No one ever made a decision
because of a number.
YOU NEED A STORY."

-DANIEL KAHNEMAN



**Ready to try Qual-
at-MASSIVE-Scale?**

**Email
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@vitalfindings.com**