1

Hosting a Successful Metamodern Party: Mixed Methods Management Research on the Web 2.0+

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Introduction

Three decades ago McGrath 1981 stressed that "a single observation is not science" (p. 191) and amply demonstrated that all research methods are inherently incomplete and fraught with often fatal imperfections. He offered methodological pluralism—"bowling [dilemmas] over with multiple methods … embedded in multiple designs, using multiple strategies" (p. 209) "selected from different classes of methods with different vulnerabilities" (p. 207)—as the solution for transcending methodological vulnerabilities, maximising the theoretical and practical desiderata and capturing the nuances of rich data.

Mixed methods designs, in which qualitative and quantitative techniques complement and enhance each other, can help overcome the inherent limitations of quantitative and qualitative methods because they simultaneously provide data depth and breadth whilst safeguarding

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generalisability and transferability of results (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2008; Johnson et al. 2007). Moreover, multiple methods and sources of data minimise the danger of common method variance (the "variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the construct of interest") which is a concern in approximately 41% of attitude measures (Podsakoff et al. 2003, p. 879). Finally, they enhance triangulation as they allow for findings to be cross-checked (Bryman and Bell 2007).

Despite their having been found to work well for many disciplines (Hewson 2008), especially those that are naturally "multifaceted [and] crossing national, cultural, organizational, and personal boundaries" (Sedoglavich et al. 2015, p. 257), and their increasing popularity (Bryman and Bell 2007; Cui et al. 2015; Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2008; Hewson 2008), they account for only 4–9% of the total business literature (Harrison 2013). One of the main reasons for their limited use is cost (Kemper et al. 2003). In this chapter, we propose that a large part of the resource restrictions (such as limited time and funds or scarcity of equipment and competent data collectors) plaguing traditional mixed methods research designs can be reduced by using the internet for qualitative research sampling and quantitative data collection. We demonstrate that online research increases rather than sacrifices reliability, validity and generalisability on the altar of cost-efficiency.

Practicalities, however, are but a small and rather mundane part of the necessity for management scholars to explore novel methodological approaches. It is the emergent reality of the twenty-first-century world that forces us to re-examine both our tools, attitudes and identities. The understanding that complex interactions of multiple stakeholders over boundary spanning networks cause time-delayed effects that cannot be solved analytically by applying deterministic linear models is not new (Lutha and Virtanen 1996). From applications of chaos theory (Arnaboldi et al. 2015; Murphy 1996) to various management problems we also know that the qualitative properties of dynamic systems cannot be captured by the cross-sectional data collection techniques of modernity. Everyday universal experiences, such as consumption, for example, have been demonstrated to be "so diverse, variable,… esoteric, … and dependent on the

specific nexus of the person, the object and the context as to be rendered totally immaterial and thus, incommensurable to modelling … by the tools [used in] the modern and post-modern milieu" (Panigyrakis and Zarkada 2014a, p. 18).

Mixed methods designs—by virtue of their inherent dynamism, decentralisation, multiplicity and multifacetedness—not only control for the context of management practice of the twenty-first century identified in Panigyrakis and Zarkada (2014a, b), namely the remnants of the hyperreality, fragmentation and juxtaposition of opposites that characterised postmodernity, but also transcend the fluidity of personal and communal identities and the brutal sociocultural restructuring that comes with the transition to metamodernity. Quantitative methods alone cannot detect Baudrillard's (1988) "fantastic cages" of consumption or what Lacan described as the powerful images that reside between language and the unconscious, feed desire for the sake of desire (Sharpe 2005) and form the bases of Sternberg's (1995) "iconic capitalism". At the same time, qualitative methods alone can only capture valuable but largely ungeneralisable subjectivities thus limiting the resulting theories' practical applicability in a globalised economy consisting of billions of interconnected consumers, entrepreneurs and employees and millions of interacting organisations, institutions and markets.

Metamodern socioeconomic phenomena, however, take place in the yet largely uncharted territories of the Web 2.0+ as much, if not more, than they do in the physical world. Cyberspace, Augmented and Virtual Reality experiences are as real as the chairs they sit on to their partakers. Space and time are reconfigured and the loci and nature of communications between people and organisations are shifting. The one-way controlled transmissions of information over broadcast media of modernity have evolved into incontrollable multi-party conversations over Online Social Media Networks. Content, experiences and emotions are Posted, Shared, Liked and Commented upon alongside organisational communications. It is thus obvious that the internet is fast becoming the single largest and most readily accessible repository of "digital life stories, an invaluable database of socio-demographics, opinions, needs, desires, values, grievances and hates" (Zarkada and Polydorou 2013,

p. 108). New collective identities emerge, old ones are renegotiated, reputations and brands that had been carefully crafted over decades are deconstructed, virtual teams replace hierarchies and remote work is becoming the norm, e-commerce volumes increase and even governments invite online bids to public auctions. It follows that management researchers need to be where their subjects are: in the largest ever village square.

Indeed, the 3.7 billion most affluent, educated and influential people in the world (i.e. 89% of the North American, 74% of the European and 73% of the Australian and Oceanian population) meet daily online (Internet World Stats 2016) and interact freely over physical, national, linguistic and psychic barriers. What is more important, they spend on average 6.6 hours per day living the World Wide Web (web) experience (Kemp 2016). Even the Japanese and South Koreans, the laggards in internet usage, are online for about 3 hours every day (Kemp 2016). Internet-based research has for over a decade now been quite popular (Hewson 2008; Wang and Doong 2010), mainly because of its time and cost benefits and despite concerns over the quality of the data it yields and its generalisability (Fricker 2008; Hewson 2008). Since these concerns were voiced, however, the frame bias concern has been practically eliminated by the rapid adjustment of internet users' demographics to include the over 65-year-olds, the poor and the uneducated (Deutskens et al. 2004; Wang and Doong 2010) as well as people living in remote areas of the developing world (Dahir 2016). The opposite is actually fast becoming the case: it is the use of traditional media that excludes whole generations who shun print and increasingly switch off broadcast media (Luck and Mathews 2010), that is, most of GenY, the Millennials and all those whose birth pictures were posted on Facebook and are now old enough to own tablets. It is obvious that internet-based research is a sounder methodological approach to reaching large, dispersed or interest-based populations than pen-and-paper or telephone surveys (Hewson 2008). After all, the world average of internet users has tripled during the past decade (it reached 43.9% at the end of 2015) whilst the fixed telephone line subscription rate has declined to the level of 1998 (14.34%) (International Telecommunication Union 2016a)

and mail volume has been halved (United States Postal Service 2006). What is more important is that almost 60% of the world's population (Statista 2016) carry the web in their smart mobile devices with them wherever they go.

In this chapter, we propose that, to understand the "click and mortar" world that twenty-first-century people and organisations inhabit, and to be able to study, not only the unstructured and multifaceted emergent problems but also the traditional research themes which are being reconstituted by Web 2.0+ technologies and mentalities, management scholars need to be able to reach their subjects both in their physical and their avatar forms using new and exciting methods. We add to the voices (c.f. Hewson 2008) that call for internet-mediated mixed methods research as a solution to overcoming resource constraints. We also argue that these methods serve the purpose of addressing current and future social circumstance efficiently whilst safeguarding data quality by using freely available technologies such as web analytics and e-marketing techniques. We aim to assist the management research community in overcoming the well-documented (Harrison 2013; Harrison and Reilly 2011) limited familiarity with both mixed methods designs and IT functionalities.

As an example, we offer our study of consumer-based brand equity of celebrity footballers (Tzoumaka and Zarkada 2013, 2016; Zarkada and Tzoumaka 2014, 2015; Zarkada et al. 2014). The inability of traditional methodological approaches to serve consumer culture theory and the organisation-stakeholder meaning cocreation process has been well documented (Panigyrakis and Zarkada 2014a) so we needed to develop novel approaches for decomplexifying and organising an emergent research area. We applied an exploratory sequential mixed methods design. This type of research, despite its advantages, is actually quite rare (Abeza et al. 2015; Creswell and Plano Clark 2011; Harrison and Reilly 2011). Our study comprised (a) a short online survey to identify focus group participants, (b) five traditional focus groups meetings in two cities and (c) a complex, quasi-experimental, self-selected web-based questionnaire utilising a one-group post-test protocol (Gaines et al. 2007), the closest to pure experimentation (Fricker 2008). Whilst designing the

study, we found very little practical advice regarding applications of state-of-the-art technologies that are popular in business but still rarely used for academic purposes. The following sections present the procedures we developed to cover the gaps in the literature on efficient and effective online:

(i) Sampling
(ii) Participant recruitment
(iii) Data collection

We provide checklists with criteria for selecting appropriate techniques and practical tips on how to apply them. Our suggestions are derived as much from our experiences as from our mistakes. Finally, we reflect on how technological innovations affect not only the tools but also their users.

Managing Twenty-first-century Management Research: The Party Planners' Checklist

The internet is the vastest meeting place the world has ever experienced—a distinct but also deeply enmeshed in the collective global everyday experience social milieu where friends, foes and strangers alike engage in multi-party user-controlled meaningful but also silly conversations, traces of which are for ever hosted on millions of networked computers all over the world. Management researchers cannot stay out of these conversations that evolve uncontrollably *ad infinitum* thus generating valuable data. Being present, however, is not enough to make sense of the evolving phenomena. Neither is being a wallflower in this "endless party where people invite themselves" (Zarkada and Polydorou 2013, p. 93).

Management researchers need to become hosts of their own carefully orchestrated data collection parties. Imaginative use of technology can make these parties highly visible and so exciting that people will want to massively attend and bring the host a nice present: their experiences, feelings and opinions.

Online Sampling: Drawing Up the Party Guest List

The foremost concern of online sampling is that the research population is actually present and adequately active on the web. Commercial and official sources need to be carefully examined in tandem to avoid errors of coverage. For example, in our study of footballer brand equity the research population was defined as sports fans with an interest in professional soccer. From industry reports we established the percentage of the country's population that have an interest in soccer. To ensure that the internet population characteristics did not differ from the general and the research population we used a combination of data sources such as national statistics, databases compiled by international agencies (International Telecommunication Union 2016b; Internet World Stats 2016) and commercial reports (Internet Live Stats 2014; MediaScope Europe 2012).

Sampling integrity is maintained by considering the nature of the study in relation to triangulated documentation of habits of the target population. We were seeking the opinions of people on celebrity footballers so we met our subjects in the milieu in which they meet their idols. Greeks spend more time on the web than on any other medium such as television, radio, newspapers or magazines (MediaScope Europe 2012) and sports fans are the heaviest of all internet users (European Interactive Advertising Association 2008). Also, sports-related search terms consistently top the national popularity lists (Google 2016) and sports sites are always amongst the most visited ones (Alexa 2016). Finally, sports fans are found all over the country so the internet is the fastest and most reliable way of reaching people in remote areas as well as ensuring that they are all approached at the same time and in exactly the same way—something that could not have been guaranteed had we, for example, used pen-and-paper surveys administered by the research team at football stadia and club refectories at immense cost.

Participant Recruitment: Inviting the Guests

Twenty-first-century people are playful, easily distracted online community members who multi-task and media mesh at exponentially

increasing rates (Luck and Mathews 2010). Institution-generated messages are generally perceived as "pathetic… not funny… not interesting… not know[ing] who we are or car[ing]" (Hanna et al. 2011, p. 267). The good party hosts' main objectives are to shine through the media clutter, attract the attention of potential research participants and engage them long enough to collect their valuable data. Marketing practice and advertising theory provide valuable tools for promoting the research.

Promotional Media Selection: Choosing How to Send The Invitations

In theory, unrestricted self-selected web sampling gives researchers the opportunity to access individuals who are difficult or very costly to locate and reach (Fricker 2008). In practice, however, the degree to which the opportunity will be taken full advantage of depends on the dissemination medium. The key medium selection criteria and our insights on how to apply them are summarised in Table 1.1. They are (i) relevance (there is little to be gained by placing a call to participate in a focus group on sports in a cooking magazine), (ii) appeal (as indicated by circulation data), (iii) audience profile (to check for representativeness of the sample), (iv) partisanship (to control for sampling and response biases), data sharing (i.e. full access to medium usage patterns) and (vi) the cost of placing an advertisement or advertorial (or the effort required to set up a sponsorship agreement).

Whilst for print or broadcast media circulation and audience demographic data can be hard to find or unreliable (as they are provided by the department selling advertising space on the medium), for the online ones, statistics are readily accessible through free (or low-cost) website analytics tools such as Alexa.com, siteworthtraffic.com and Similarweb.com. Multiple sources are, again, required to triangulate the medium evaluation data. SiteWorthTraffic, for example, shows unique visitors and page views per day as well as trends whilst Alexa provides country-wide and global rankings as well as detailed visitor demographics. Further to reliable hard data, qualitative examination of each medium is also required. Open partisanship is a main concern as it automatically excludes

Table 1.1 Criteria for promotional media selection

Criteria	Tips
Relevance	Make sure the topics covered by the medium are closely aligned to the research theme
Appeal	Use multiple sources to cross-check metrics such as • Ranking of the medium in relation to its competitors in the region of interest • Average session duration (time spent on site at each visit) • Number of pages clicked • Bounce rate (percentage of visitors who enter the site but leave it without interacting with the site instead of continuing to other pages within the same medium) • Overall web traffic statistics (an aggregate metric comprising the number of visitors and the number of pages they visit) • Content curation (the content they pick from other sources and upload to the medium) • Content sharing (the content other media pick and reproduce from the medium that is being evaluated) • Quantity, quality and relevance of the user-generated content (such as comments and discussions) posted under relevant topics
Audience profile	• Make sure the demographics of the medium are representative of the population • Check medium access patterns in terms of time (e.g. early morning or late evening), place (e.g. home, school, train or office) and technology (e.g. pc, smartphone or tablet) and use them as survey design parameters
Partisanship	• Make sure that there is no conflict of interest between the medium and the topic of research • Check whether the medium is being perceived as biased in any way related to the study
Cost	Negotiate a media sponsorship or content sharing agreement and/or a price that includes multiple promotional opportunities
Data sharing	Request full access to web analytics for all content and promotional activities and failing that ensure that you get regular reports

users that belong to rival groups or hold different opinions. Public perceptions of the medium's lack of independence, whether based on fact or not, are an even bigger threat as they can introduce uncontrollable response bias. Finally, the data needed for medium evaluation are also needed for the *a posteriori* sample quality assessment. So, full access to site

traffic analytics needs to be granted to the research team by the site owners throughout the project.

Research Promotion Tools: Designing the Invitations

Recruitment for internet-based self-selected surveys has usually been carried out using banner advertisements on web pages (Fricker 2008). Advances in IT and digital marketing practices, however, have since provided additional alternatives, namely Content and Social Media Marketing, which have yet to be evaluated in the context of academic research. We here present a comparison of the costs and results of all three techniques which we applied sequentially on the most popular internet-based sports medium in the country. First, we run banner ads and then we applied Content and Social Media Marketing techniques in tandem. To evaluate the effect of each promotional technique we used data provided by Google Analytics.

Banner Ads

The exposure of internet users to banners is usually measured by counting impressions, that is, how many times the banner was displayed on users' screens provided by the website that displays the banner. There are several problems with the direct placement of banner ads. Impressions count even when the screen is automatically refreshed periodically by the site thus counting the additional impressions on the same user's screen as new impressions. It also cannot differentiate between above and below the fold placement (i.e. how much of the screen the user sees without scrolling as the algorithm cannot factor for screen size and resolution). Moreover, impressions, as a measure, cannot account for the visitors' using ad blocking software. "Active desktop ad blocker usage has quadrupled globally since 2013, with around 220 million users employing ad-blocking technology today. Consequently, 32% of all page views worldwide are now impacted by ad blocking" (Hancock 2016, p. 1). For example, in the USA 45 million active users do not see

website advertisements whilst in the UK the number of ad block users grew by 82% in 12 months (PageFair Team 2015, p. 1). At the time of data collection, Greece was "leading the way with an average of 24.5% of [the] online populations using adblocking software" (PageFair and Adobe 2014, p. 7). Finally, there is no way to account for "banner blindness" (Stec 2015), the fact that over 70% of internet users ignore banner advertising (eMarketer 2014) and certain age groups, such as the 18- to 34-year-olds, pay them even less attention than they do to TV, radio and print advertisements (Stec 2015).

The clickthrough rate (CTR), the ratio of clicks on the banner to the number of total impressions, is another measure of the conversion rate of a banner ad. On a global scale, the average CTR across all formats and placements is 0.06% (Stec 2015) and researchers can benchmark their placements against the performance of similar advertisements by industry, country, formats, placement and size using free internet tools such as the Benchmark tool on richmediagallery.com. For our project, we had a three-frame Flash animated medium rectangle (300*250) skyscraper banner placed to the left sidebar on both the home and the dedicated (football) page. The cost of the ad placement at the time the research was carried out was approximately €10,000 per week. During the one-week period that the banner ad was left in place, it yielded 1,648,000 impressions, 329 attempts to respond to the survey (a minuscule 0.02% interest rate, below the country average of 6% for same type and size advertising but comparable to the average 3‰ CTR achieved by web banner promotions of academic research) but only 41 fully completed questionnaires (i.e. a rather small 12% response rate). Thus, the ROI of our banner advertising was unacceptably low as the cost per participant, had we paid for the ad, would have been €243.90.

Content Marketing

Content marketing is based on a *quid pro quo* logic: instead of yelling to attract attention, like you do when advertising, you give something valuable (informative or entertaining content) to get something valuable (attention, clicks, conversions or, in our case, data) in return. Instead of

being the irritating commercial you become the exciting show (O'Brien 2012). The website that first hosted the advertisement, later, featured an interview with a research team member written by a sports journalist. The article discussed a topic that is important to football fans but also included information about the research, stressing its academic nature, the university affiliation (the premier Business School in the country) and the FIFA funding (the top football institution in the world) to increase its perception of credibility, seriousness and relevance. It also mentioned that all focus groups participants would enter a draw for a season ticket for their favourite team. We used the same egoistic and altruistic appeals of the banner advertisement as calls to action in the sidelines and also inserted multiple hyperlinks to our online questionnaire in the text.

In approximately 48 hours the article web page yielded 8,425 unique page views, 1,351 clicks to the questionnaire (a satisfactory 16% interest rate) and 1,274 completed questionnaires (an amazing 94% response rate). What is most impressive here is the commitment to the research and the level of trust the respondents to the screening survey demonstrated. They completed the questionnaire after having read the instructions and accepted the terms of the survey which were (a) to participate in the focus group meetings and (b) to provide full personal data (name, surname, email address and mobile telephone number).

We also used content marketing to promote the survey for the quantitative phase of the research. There were no incentives for filling in the quite long and complex questionnaire, but again, the response rate was a very satisfactory 33.4% (much higher than the 10–25% typically reported in Deutskens et al. 2004; Manzo and Burke 2012; Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2012; Sauermann and Roach 2013). Overall, 87.37% of the traffic on the survey website came from clicks on the links incorporated in the article. Interestingly, 14.45% of those clicks came from the mobile version of the site hosting the article. Finally, about 10% of the traffic came from sites that reproduced the content. Traffic from the article and its reproductions had a very low bounce rate (17.83%) thus further strengthening the argument for using content marketing to promote research. Having taken the egoistic motive away, we believe that this result

strengthens the relevance argument: when people care about the topic they happily give their time and opinions. Upon comparing the results with those of the banner ad we also believe that the article played the role of reducing participants' perceived risks.

Social Media Marketing

The online articles were also pushed through the media group's relevant social media platforms. The leverage for both surveys was poor as only about 2.1‰ of the clicks to the focus group screening survey and 2.11% of the clicks on the quantitative study page came from media sponsor's Facebook posts. Moreover, the bounce rate of the Social Media-generated traffic was a quite high 48.33%. In our study, Social Media Marketing was supportive of the content marketing effort and controlled by the sponsor's marketing personnel so our data is insufficient to fully evaluate its appropriateness for academic purposes.

In Table 1.2 we summarise our experiences and provide guidelines for putting IT and digital marketing practices to work for academic research based on what we learnt through creative trial and error.

Managing Incentives: Getting the Invitation Accepted

Offering monetary and quasi-monetary incentives for participation has long been common practice in qualitative research for which extra effort and commitment is required of the participants (Deutskens et al. 2004; Fricker 2008; Morgan 1997; Wang and Doong 2010). Moreover, during the past decade, internet-based data collection has increased, so response rates have decreased, thus increasing the need to offer incentives for participation (Teitcher et al. 2015). There is evidence that incentives increase online survey participation by about 27% but they also have the potential to encourage multiple submissions (Manzo and Burke 2012; Teitcher et al. 2015). There is conflicting evidence on the effect of incentives on response rates (Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2012; Sauermann and Roach 2013). We attribute the success of our screening survey to (a) the

Table 1.2 Promotional techniques

Alternatives	Tips
Banner advertising	• Check o CTR for similar type of ads in the region and in sites related to the industry of interest through multiple sources o Ad blocking software penetration in the region of interest through multiple sources • Carefully negotiate the placement • Consider using Google Display Network (instead of negotiating with sites for ad placement you specify the audience segmentation parameters and Google does the placement of the ad) • Have the ad professionally designed and produced • Do not use the outdated flash technology as this does not display properly on all screens. Use static images, GIFs and, if budget permits, videos
Content marketing	• Control for sampling and other biases introduced by the medium and/or the text • Include many different calls to action and hyperlinks in and around the main text • Carefully negotiate concurrent promotions, multiple articles and access to web analytics
Social media promotion through the medium's owned media	• Carefully consider o the reach, o style and o appeal of the medium's SM portfolio and those of its elements (Facebook, twitter, etc.) • Request access to detailed platform analytics (e.g. Facebook demographics and usage patterns during the week and day) • Study the comments and shares of the users to calculate the risks of message distortion • Check the content of the posts to ensure that response biases are not introduced by the wording of the text after it is condensed to comply with message length restrictions • Use the services of professional designers to produce visual content appropriate for SM • Negotiate bundle price for numerous carefully timed posts
Mixed mode	Check for systematic response variance across subsamples defined by the entry point to the survey which you track by creating custom links on each medium through Campaign URL Builder

relevance and value of the prize and (b) alleviating respondents' perceived risks of participation. The prize, a "lottery incentive with a high payoff and a low chance of winning" (Sauermann and Roach 2013, p. 273) was something they really wanted: a season ticket to their favourite football team. The prospective participants were presented with prudently crafted legal documents explaining both the prize draw process and the data protection safeguards.

To reduce participants' perceived risk and make sure they trusted that the prize would be awarded through a transparent and unimpeachable procedure, we employed the services of a notary public to write the Terms and Conditions document that preceded the online survey and to design and oversee the lottery process. Not only were the terms of the competition clearly explained, but also, details of the time and place of the draw as well as the ways by which the winners would claim their prizes were provided before they completed the survey.

Another problem with online surveys is that there really is no guarantee of respondent anonymity as the IP addresses of the visitors to the survey website can be recorded. In the case of our focus group recruiting and screening survey the problem was compounded by the need to collect the personal and contact details needed to arrange the focus group meetings. So, for both surveys—even for the quantitative one where no names and contact details were required—we employed the services of an academic specialising in online privacy issues who worked together with a lawyer to prepare a Privacy Policy Disclaimer. Both legal documents were presented as hyperlinks in the first and the last pages of the electronic surveys and respondents had to click a button to accept the terms and enter the survey and another one to submit their responses. Further to the conditions standard university ethics stipulate, we reassured potential respondents that (a) all safety measures were taken for the domains to be free of viruses and other threats to their computers, (b) no further communication would ever be attempted and (c) the contact details and IP files would be destroyed upon completion of the research.

Moreover, several filters were built into the focus group screening survey to ensure that the respondents' time was not wasted and that no personal data that was not absolutely necessary was collected. For

example, residents of cities other than the ones where we intended to run focus groups were thanked for their attempt to complete the survey and the session was terminated at the third question, after about 20 seconds. The efficacy of the filters is evident in that out of the 1680 people that attempted to respond to the survey, 976 were eliminated, thus also reducing data handling and screening time and effort. Finally, we offer our insights in confidence of their efficacy as only 3% of the email addresses we collected were not valid.

Data Collection: Party Time!

The proof of the good host is in the superb guest party experience. After being allowed into subjects' computer-mediated private spaces and managing to generate high-quality data, the research also needs to be perceived as interesting, fun and amazing enough to motivate its subjects to Like and Share the research with their Friends and Followers, thus creating snowball effects.

The criteria for selecting the technology for designing, hosting and administering an online survey are (a) user interface and experience (UI/UE), (b) researcher interface (c) credibility, (d) hosting and (e) instrument self-promotion.

For the survey that recruited participants for the focus groups we used Google Docs which is free and very easy to use but has limited room for aesthetic adjustments. It comes with free hosting but offers no web analytics data. As respondents were to supply their details, the analytics were superfluous and aesthetics and advanced programming functionalities were considered of limited value for a short and simple screening survey.

For the lengthy and sophisticated quantitative survey of the model building and testing phase of the research, we employed a web developer and programmer to customise LimeSurvey (https://www.limesurvey.org/), an open source survey application. The modifications we made were (1) to create and attach an algorithm to randomly assign the questionnaire versions required for the quasi-experimental design (photos and bios of local, global, active and retired celebrity footballers),

(2) to install IP address authentication for filtering out returning users, (3) to track the page from which the user had been redirected, (4) to modify standard Likert scales to include a "no opinion" option needed for scale cleaning at the measure construction phase of the analysis, (5) to add the logos of the university and funding agency to increase credibility and alleviate perceived risks, (6) to customise and aesthetically improve the default templates and (7) to add "buttons" with the logos of various popular platforms through which the participants could invite members of their online social networks to participate in the study.

The survey was uploaded to a university server to increase the credibility of the research by clearly signalling the purely academic nature of the research and to allow us to collect via Google Analytics the page visit and visitor profile data needed to test for sample quality and representativeness.

We performed numerous ex-post quality controls to address potential online survey pitfalls (Schmidt 1997) such as contamination and skewing of results by accidental, fraudulent or malicious multiple submissions by the same individual—an increasingly common and serious problem in online research (Teitcher et al. 2015). We performed manual and visual checks for outliers and irregular patterns in questionnaire completion time, variables and cases with too many repetitive, outlying or missing values. We also checked for duplicate or irregular IP addresses (such as too many Chinese IPs on a survey written in Greek) using the tools freely available on NirSoft.net. Moreover, we used Google Analytics data to control for self-selection bias effects by comparing our data set demographics with those of the website and the pages through which the questionnaire was promoted.

Both survey samples were representative both of the internet and the football fan population in Greece and in line with similar European (Bauer et al. 2005) and Greek studies (Athanasopoulou et al. 2011) so we offer our insights in confidence that the strategies and tactics we employed were efficient, effective and efficacious. In Table 1.3, we summarise the techniques we used and found them to produce the desired results. We also list some suggestions derived both from our mistakes and from our experiences with subsequent virtual data collection parties we hosted.

Conclusions and Reflections: The Hosts' After Party

With the full benefit of hindsight, and after a lot of soul searching, we feel that we hosted an overall successful party in which academia and practice got better acquainted. First, we evaluated not only over three decades of mixed methods and almost two decades of online research reports published in academic journals and handbooks but also the experiences of professional e-marketers showcased in commercial websites and blogs. Then, we identified, evaluated and used multiple sources of information not traditionally accessed for academic research. Based on the secondary data, we set up and run a media collaboration for participant recruitment. We also identified, reviewed and tested different data collection instrument building and hosting platforms. In essence, we recruited, selected and managed a dynamic virtual team of graphic artists, media and IT practitioners. Finally, we critically examined the results of our e-adoptions and innovations.

The process of designing and executing the project was not always smooth. Neither were our understandings automatically self-evident to our media partners and tech-services suppliers. Explaining what we wanted and understanding what was technically possible often proved to be a struggle but, we are happy to report, we managed to work through our experiences to turn them into shareable insights. We here present a practical online mixed methods research guide and a set of tried and tested methodological tools for the twenty-first century. With this chapter, we firmly reconfirm the applicability and argue for the necessity—if not the inescapability—of on- and offline mixed methods management research. We contribute to knowledge by enriching academic practice with insights gained by businesses and by providing managers with academically sound testing of their practices. Thus, we offer a guide for bringing academically solid management research practices on and in line with the realities of the web2.0+ lived experience.

Our team comprises a Gen Xer, a Baby Boomer and a Millennial, so we are an adequately representative sample of the business academic

Table 1.3 Technical aspects of designing and hosting online data collection instruments

Criteria	Tips
User interface and user experience (UI/UX)	• Invest in the services of experienced professional graphic artists and web developers • Have responsiveness checked thoroughly on all devices and Operating Systems used by the population • Use multiple filters in the survey design to *a priori* control sample characteristics instead of wasting respondents' time to collect data you will later discard
Researcher interface	• Pay close attention to the programming required for the delivery of a useable data file (e.g. make sure that responses to Likert scales are delivered ready-coded into numbers and not as the words that appear on the survey) • Specify questions as mandatory to collect only the responses of committed and interested participants, filter out internet lurkers and thus save on data cleaning time
Credibility	• Use the university and/or funding organisation logos on the cover page, at the bottom of survey pages and provide hyperlinks to the relevant pages of their websites • Provide valid contact details and hyperlinks to the profiles of the investigator(s) on the university website
Hosting	• Host the data collection instrument on a secure server to which you have access for maintenance and analytics. If you choose to use a survey creation and data collection application, do not host the survey on their server • Use web analytics tools for response rate calculations • Consider using IP Authentication to filter out malicious response attempts or fraud (especially when offering incentives for participation) but also check the data set visually and manually
Instrument self-promotion	• Add Social Media buttons at the entry and thank you pages for easy snowballing • Buy a carefully chosen domain name and invest in SEO (applying on- and off-page refinements so that the site will be indexed and ranked successfully by the search engines) to increase survey visibility and domain authority

community. We feel that the three aspects of twenty-first-century mixed methods research that are the most alien to contemporary researchers are (i) securing sampling integrity online, (ii) selecting appropriate media and cost-effective techniques for the promotion of the research and (iii) the technicalities of online data collection. In Tables 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 we provide our hard-gained insights and suggestions based on what we did and worked, what we tried and found out does not work and what we now know we should have done.

The media sponsorship that made the application of the promotional strategies presented here possible was the result of mobilising pre-existing personal networks. This is not always possible, however. What researchers need to do is understand the roles, benefits and challenges of owned, paid and earned media so that they make sure they strike the right balance of effort, time and funds expended to achieve adequate promotion of the research and to ensure sampling adequacy and integrity. Owned media (web and mobile sites, blogs, etc. dedicated to the project) are controllable, versatile and cost efficient and, over time, they provide visibility and build relationships with potential respondents and journalists so they generate both data and earned media. Earned media (the publicity that is generated by people that have shown an interest in the research and they choose to promote it through their own media) might be hard to measure, impossible to control and slow to grow but they have the benefits of being transparent, long-lived and as credible as their source—at least to the source's audience. Paid media (the researcher-paid leverage of the power of other channels through advertising, paid searches and content marketing) can feed the owned and support the earned media but it is becoming increasingly more difficult for them to cut through media clutter, adblocking software and audience boredom. So, if we were to do it all over again, we would start by building a blog, website and relevant Social Media pages dedicated to the research for recruiting participants and media collaborators. We would upload carefully crafted articles, in plain language and lay terms, to highlight the broader context of the research without giving away hypotheses or findings that would introduce bias we could not later control for. We would also run a carefully planned email marketing campaign.

Technology changes fast, so what is now is not tomorrow. Hence, management researchers need not only to familiarise themselves with but to constantly stay in touch with developments in both IT and marketing regardless of their field of work. IT and marketing developments change the tools of the academic trade. The deeper issue that emerges from the discussion above, however, is how the tools change their users. Long gone are the days of the Ivory Tower, from which the university researcher descended gracefully to meet subjects that were eager to share their opinions over a cup of coffee, at the street corner or over the telephone. Twenty-first-century researchers are—whether we like it or not—entrepreneurs, fund-raisers and project managers as well as the mass marketers of their work and themselves.

In the UK, the Arts and Humanities Research Council funds academics that are "listenable", that is, those that have the mental flexibility to engagingly parry journalists, the ability to "dumb down" complex ideas, the right looks and a pleasant voice (Tickle 2012). Even though it has been argued that, no matter how famous, scholars cannot be classed as celebrities (Leslie 2011), the fact remains that twenty-first-century ones find it hard to resist the lure (Kurzman et al. 2007) of publicly displayed authority for entertainment purposes that makes them spend more time in studios than in studies thus commanding speaking engagement that look like a fortune to their off-the-limelight colleagues. Thus, academic careers become similar to those of fashion models—all about building and exploiting "field-specific social and cultural capital" (Parmentier et al. 2012). It seems that the new realities make managing the necessary "modifications in [the academics'] role identity" (Jain et al. 2009, p. 922) a prerequisite for attracting research funds, media sponsorships for their projects and even students to their universities (Joseph et al. 2012)—all in the course of serving science.

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