

Consumer-centric focus supports Condé Nast's global vision

Audience insights combined with behavioral data accelerates content and product innovation, and helps identify revenue opportunities.

A new, global strategy for Condé Nast called on the business to move forward with a consistent way of viewing their audience across brands and regions. Condé Nast is connecting teams to support this global vision based on a holistic strategy that brings data, analytics and insight together from around the world.

A key part of the strategy necessitates fast, agile access to Condé Nast's global audience. The company's recently launched — and still growing — insight communities are comprised of 70,000+ audience members who've opted in to give feedback on an ongoing basis. By layering the preference attitudinal data from these brand communities on top of its wealth of existing audience data, Condé Nast can uncover new insights to inform decisions across the business. Learning from the insight communities creates stronger relationships with brand partners, accelerates content and product innovation, and enables the exploration of new revenue streams.

The ability to combine our behavioral datasets with the agile feedback we get from our communities uncovers a new layer of insight that will help our teams deliver innovative, customer-centric products that offer long-term value for our audiences and allows us to explore new revenue streams for the business.



Paul Nesbitt
Head of Audience Research
Condé Nast

Facilitated close of multi-million dollar deals with major advertising partners

Generated \$1M+ in new annual revenue as a result of new product offerings

Placed consumer needs at the heart of stakeholder decisions

Centralized research and insight platform optimizes local market research spend

Challenge

As Condé Nast continues to reimagine how the world's most recognizable brands connect with consumers wherever they are, on whatever platforms they choose, it is imperative to deepen their understanding of audiences to create a more holistic global strategy. Condé Nast is looking to tap into its audience base for insights to help develop new, innovative and scalable product offerings that build loyalty, drive engagement and generate revenue beyond advertising dollars.

The original structure of Condé Nast's custom insight teams spanned 12 countries and 19 brands, each working independently with their own mandate. Each brand and market ran separate initiatives and research programs with limited centralized direction or support. This resulted in a fragmented and siloed understanding of their audience, rather than an integrated view of the global Condé Nast audience. Moreover, insight from regional teams was difficult to compare globally which made scaling initiatives challenging.

Solution

Consistency across Condé Nast enables more global decisions

Condé Nast's insight communities have scaled to include over 70,000 audience members across 12 countries and 17 properties who've opted in to give feedback on an ongoing basis. This allows insight teams to respond faster to business questions from a variety of other groups, including commercial, editorial, product, strategy, as well as senior leadership. Having fast, agile access to highly-engaged customers provides Condé Nast an efficient way to iterate on ideas, reduce decision-making risk, test and launch programs that are optimized in near real time, and support revenue-generating programs in development.

For example, UX teams have a willing group of consumers from whom they can gather iterative and ongoing feedback to refine and enhance their products and services, and editorial teams can explore content ideas before publishing to consumers. Condé Nast is also now able to offer advertisers the opportunity to pre-test advertising creative among target audiences before it goes live to optimize performance, and also loop back and test the impact on brand measures. This access to consumer insights also enables teams to better understand the importance of various trends for different brands in various parts of the world and to ensure content strategy is on point.

Consolidating data sources optimizes audience experience

Combined with existing behavioral data from site analytics, social and video, data from the insight communities enables better understanding of Condé Nast's audience preferences and motivations and results in an optimized user experience with Condé Nast's brands.

To bring insight community data closer to other data sources and platforms, the team can merge survey responses with behavioral data and profile data stored in different locations. The view for the future is tying all systems together for a singular audience view, and to use lookalike modeling to scale community insights more broadly across other datasets. This 360-degree view of the consumer will allow Condé Nast to create the best customer experiences, drive engagement and increase average customer value.



The Condé Nast insight communities are an invaluable resource for efficiently tapping into our audiences for rich and actionable insights that help inform content and business strategy, and to get feedback on experiences that our audiences not only value, but are willing to pay a premium for.



Elyse Bell
Director, Custom Insights
Condé Nast

Feedback is an important element of overall engagement strategy

Condé Nast considers consumer input and feedback part of their overall consumer-centric mission, and their member retention strategy reflects that as well.

To ensure the best community member experience, Condé Nast asks new members about their expectations for engagement, and provides an opportunity for members to share feedback after each activity. This ensures members feel valued and understand how their participation impacts decisions at Condé Nast.. To further optimize engagement, each market manages their member experience differently to create locally relevant feedback.

Ensuring a mix of activities and topics is important for engagement, too. Condé Nast tries to keep an element of freshness in their community-activity calendar with a mix of activities that support business decisions as well as activities that are fun to complete and generate shareable content. The insights team rewards continued participation with an array of incentives, which could be eligibility into cash sweepstakes, special members-only content, or brand-specific prizes such as tickets an event or branded premiums (i.e. a New Yorker tote bag). A varied cadence of promotional rewards are also sent throughout the year, not just when completing a survey, to include an element of surprise.

Impact

Agile insight informs the creation of innovative new digital experiences

In the past, it was challenging to quickly gather insights among a very specific audience to inform or evaluate new programs or offers without incurring costs and valuable time. Now, the CN communities provide an efficient way to connect with target audiences and incorporate their feedback along with other data and insights that benefit new digital initiatives. For example, Condé Nast worked with community members in the creation of a value-add, subscription-based offering to address a lack of industry information among design industry professionals who were reading magazines like Architectural Digest. The resulting product, AD Pro, s is a business-to-business digital offering that serves the professional community with relevant industry content for a nominal fee. The success of this new subscription model not only resulted in a revenue-generating product, it demonstrated the power of direct consumer feedback to internal teams. In this case, the insights delivered resulted in the successful launch of a new revenue stream for the business.

Proactive support across the business

The Condé Nast communities have been instrumental in supporting commercial relationships in a number of ways. Internal creative teams have been able to pre-test ideas and concepts within the communities among clients' target consumers and across multiple markets to support responses to briefs. The insight teams have also used community members qualitatively post-campaign to examine creative and provide a deeper level of diagnostic insight that helps to further explain performance metrics. Community members are also available for partnership opportunities through which Condé Nast gathers customer or potential customer insights to help key advertisers address pressing business questions.

Deepening conversations and engagement

The insights team constantly looks for new ways to engage their audience while still providing valuable takeaways for the business. One way they do this is by including opportunities for video feedback, where members can bring the team/Condé Nast into their homes to share feedback in a more fun and interactive way — rather than simply completing a survey. An example is when Vogue invited 50 beauty mavens from around the world to take part in a beauty-focused ethnography project, during which they shared videos of their daily beauty regimes and kept a diary of interactions with beauty content. This provided valuable insight into global luxury beauty trends, and created a huge opportunities when community members came together around a common passion. The members who participated now feel closer to the brand they love, since their input is welcome and acknowledged.

Exploring new initiatives for the business

The communities have been used to help measure appeal and relevance of content and features during the prototype phase for new product development. With audience insights, Conde Nast was able to quickly identify which elements drive interest; product developers were then able to incorporate feedback into the next build. The community audiences have also been used to support the refinement and iteration of bigger research programs by allowing teams to pilot studies before scaling them across multiple markets to ensure they are optimized. They also allow experimentation with the latest research technologies though the various integrations Vision Critical has with third party technology partners, helping the Condé Nast insight teams remain at the forefront of research methodology.

Takeaways

Efficient access to consumer insights helps identify innovative new revenue streams and prioritize various ideas for components of new initiatives.

This type of consumer involvement with the brand creates deeper audience engagement with existing products.

Creating a view of the customer via consistent attitudinal insight along with connections to other data sources accelerates learning from tactical, one-off interactions to long-term customer value creation.

Insight communities can add value across the organization — from technology teams looking to optimize existing products or explore new opportunities to sales teams who use insight to enhance commercial partnerships.

About Condé Nast

Condé Nast is a global media company producing the highest quality content with a footprint of more than 1 billion consumers in 32 territories through print, digital, video and social platforms. The company's portfolio includes many of the world's most respected and influential media properties including Vogue, Vanity Fair, Glamour, Self, GQ, The New Yorker, Condé Nast Traveler/ Traveller, Allure, AD, Bon Appétit and Wired, among others. Condé Nast Entertainment was launched in 2011 to develop film, television and premium digital video programming.

About Vision Critical

Vision Critical builds customer trust and creates new business value through the collection and application of consent data. With its unique, relationship-based approach, Vision Critical's Sparq platform lets brands directly interact with insight communities of opted-in customers. Unlike traditional voice of customer methods, Vision Critical unlocks the real-time feedback that companies need to build better products, deliver better services, and achieve better business outcomes hand in hand with their own highly engaged, well-profiled customers.

Hundreds of high-performing organizations across multiple industries benefit from Vision Critical's technology and guidance. To learn more about Vision Critical, follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#), or visit us at www.visioncritical.com.