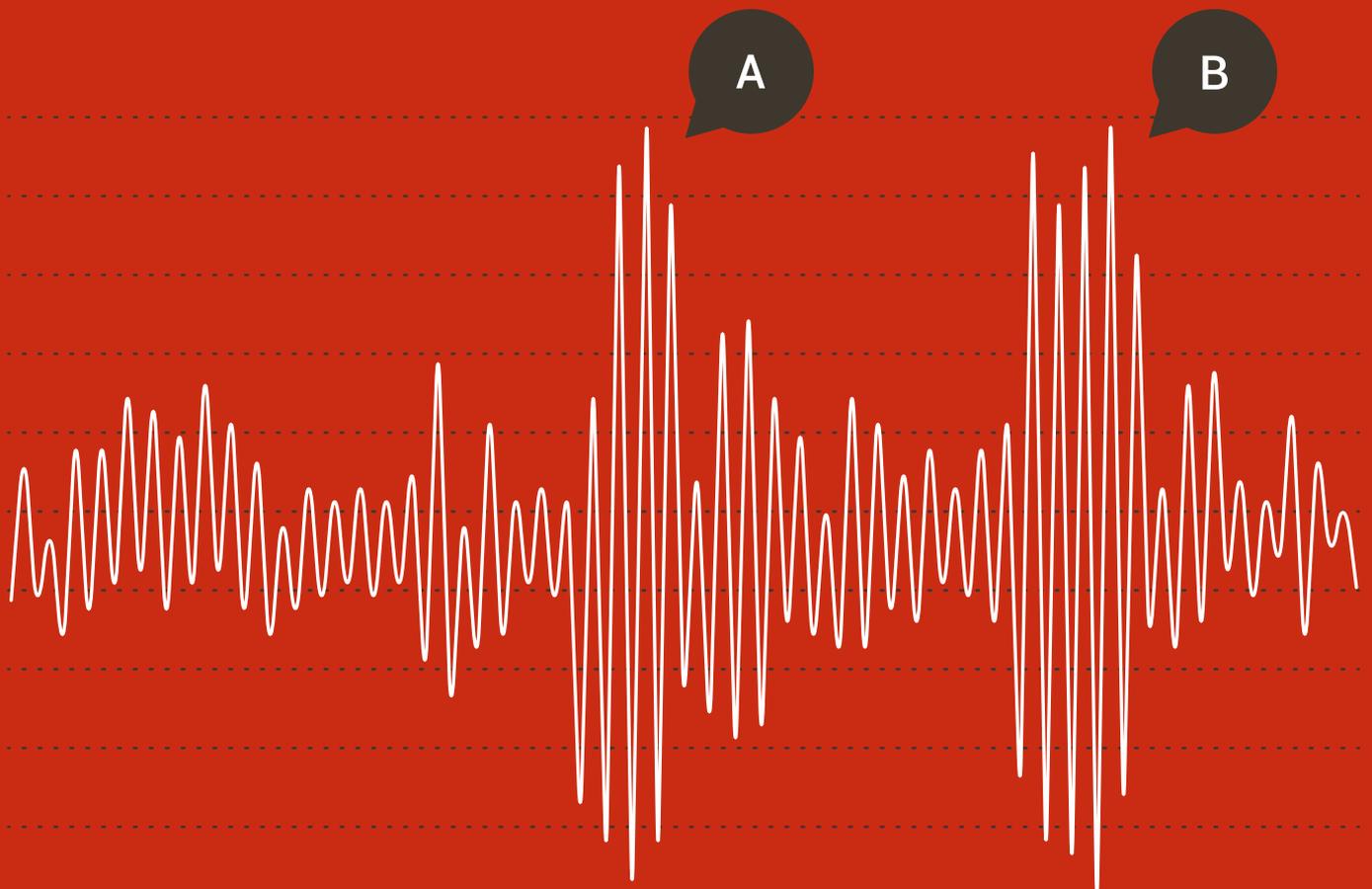




Case Study/ **Consumer Electronics Giant**

The Social Studies Group Uses Social Analytics to Assess Client's Product Design





About/ The Social Studies Group

The Social Studies Group Gets Results with New 'Netnography' Research

Company:	The Social Studies Group
Headquarters:	Washington, DC
Audience:	Consumer Brands
Industry:	Social Media Research
Website:	www.socialstudiesgroup.com/
Services:	Social Media Research, Marketing & Branding Strategy
Brandwatch Services:	Social Media Monitoring and Analytics

Key Results/

- Obtained online consumer views of products when offline data was unavailable
- Informed product design by capturing likes and dislikes of specific product features
- Isolated results around individual product models and features

'netnography'
an online study of
individuals, cultures
and communities

The Goal/

Gain Social Intelligence to Drive New Product Designs

Referring to themselves as “Nerds with Panache,” The Social Studies Group (SSG) is a social media research firm with a seasoned team that brings over five decades of marketing and branding strategy to each engagement. This enables the firm to gather the right intelligence and deliver meaningful results for companies seeking more knowledge in the area of consumer research.

Among SGG's clients is a global personal technology device company that wanted to use social media to delve into consumer opinions regarding the user experience (UX) features for several of its new models. Prior to engaging SSG for this project, the company had investigated consumer insights via focus groups and normal customer feedback loops. However, customer feedback around some features of newer models was minimal, and focus groups yielded inconclusive data.

The company looked to SSG to perform a netnography – a study of individuals, communities, and cultures online – focused on UX preferences of its consumer base and target market. Through the research, the manufacturer hoped to gain a deeper understanding of consumers' opinions in two critical areas:

1. Acceptance levels of the features found in each new model's UX
2. Specific likes and dislikes of the different new models' UXs

The company hoped that SSG would obtain enough social data to inform feature designs for the next product development cycle of these newer models.

The Challenge/

Yielding Significance from a Sea of Data

As SSG began to scope its netnography research for the consumer electronics company, project leaders knew they had to overcome several significant data challenges. First, a staggering number of related consumer electronic devices are sold online, which generates a massive volume of social discussion.

This would make isolating consumer reviews and discussions about the new models, and their UXs in particular, very difficult. “It would be harder than finding a needle in a haystack,” said Megan Evans of SSG. “It was more like finding several needles, of several specific types, within a stack of needles.”

A second challenge facing SSG was the inescapable fact that the social media search queries would need to be both flexible and complex. Only the use of complex search queries, with varying “includes” and “excludes,” could ensure that the research surfaced the most relevant consumer discussions and then isolated them around specific models and UX features.

A third challenge involved the need to accurately capture consumer sentiment about the newer models and their UXs. Online conversations would reveal those UX features being discussed the most, but SSG would need to understand how consumers felt about models and features at a statistically significant certainty.

Big Data with Detailed Refinement.

The Solution/

SSG had leveraged Brandwatch social media analytics in the past for some of the firm's most challenging research projects, and project leaders felt the netnography research required the depth, breadth, and flexibility of Brandwatch's search capabilities.

Setting the Scope

To create the data universe it would analyze, SSG defined broad searches in Brandwatch for the different device models. They set the time frame to begin at product launch, limiting it to three months. This would reduce the universe size and ensure all models were analyzed over the same time period. It was a critical step, because the consumer electronics company had launched different models at different times during the 12-month period prior to the study.

With so much online discussion about devices, SSG included in the Brandwatch search queries an extensive series of excludes. These would isolate reviews and social content specifically pertaining to the UX features. For example, they captured online comments related to the category of "User Friendly." These would include such terms as "easy use"~3, "simple use"~3, etc. "It was easy to create tags for the UX features in Brandwatch," said Evans. "We even created tags to ensure that misspellings and abbreviated terms were included in the rules." SSG employed tags across the multiple devices for consistency which enabled them to see what people were comparing across devices.

Fig. 1

Actual search query used by SSG in their product research

((device name) NEAR/7 (awkward)) NOT ("Not awkward" OR "find awkward"~5)

The Fun Part – Flexible Search Pinpoints Critical Consumer Views

With the broad search completed, SSG moved on to a further refined set of search queries to uncover statistically significant consumer sentiment within the data set.

With the broad search completed, SSG moved on to a further refined set of search queries to uncover statistically significant consumer sentiment within the data set. "That's the fun part and what gets people excited," said Wendy Scherer, Social Studies Group Managing Partner. "It's amazing all the ways you can slice and dice data in Brandwatch versus other systems." SSG created multiple complex searches in Brandwatch to understand consumer sentiment from a wide range of angles. Not only could they analyze consumer sentiment as a whole for the different models, but Brandwatch enabled them to isolate consumers by detailed groupings, such as the following:

- 1. Purchase Location/** Consumer opinions were categorized by the location where they purchased a model, such as online, at a specific retailer, etc.
- 2. Stage of Buying Cycle/** Considering a model, weighing options, thinking of buying, etc.
- 3. Focus of UX Qualities/** User friendly, intuitive, etc.
- 4. Emotions and Opinions/** Love it, hate it, fantastic, etc., opinion, and emotion terms. It was key to create these categories so that the results would show a positive (or negative) point of view and not both.

Brandwatch can provide researchers with an endless set of options for gaining in-depth views into consumer views. "We have a best-practice tip for all Brandwatch users," Scherer said with a smile. "Anticipate terms that will likely be significant, then leverage Brandwatch's flexibility to scan for alternative words, spellings, and colloquial terms that are related. That paid huge dividends on our netnography." **Figure 1** demonstrates an example of this.

The Results/ Surfacing the "So What"

Leveraging the detailed data break-downs provided by Brandwatch search queries, SSG created a dashboard that isolated each model, visualized its attributes, and revealed the ways in which consumers viewed them. To develop chart descriptions for each model, SSG had to ensure that the dashboard could specifically reference an individual model only.

To achieve this, they had the Brandwatch tool perform a "check" of the mentions discussing other models. SSG then created model-specific charts based on filtered dates and features.

Figure 2 shows a visualization of consumer views about the ease of use for one product model.

SSG also delivered numerous model comparisons to their client. These included comparisons of purchase drivers, qualities, emotions, and opinions across all models. They further broke down results and performed model-to-model comparisons, as demonstrated in **Figure 3**.

The charts presented a quick read about the qualities most discussed by consumers. Since users can actually drill into the data directly from the charts, they became a great discovery tool for diving deeper into the individual qualities and lessons.

Fig. 2

Consumer Opinion: Ease-of-Use for Model Z, 3-Month Period

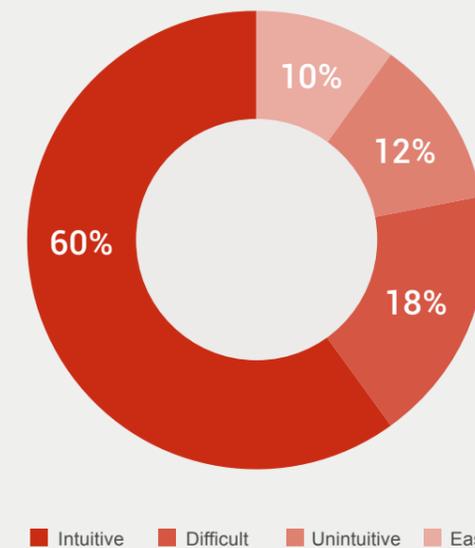
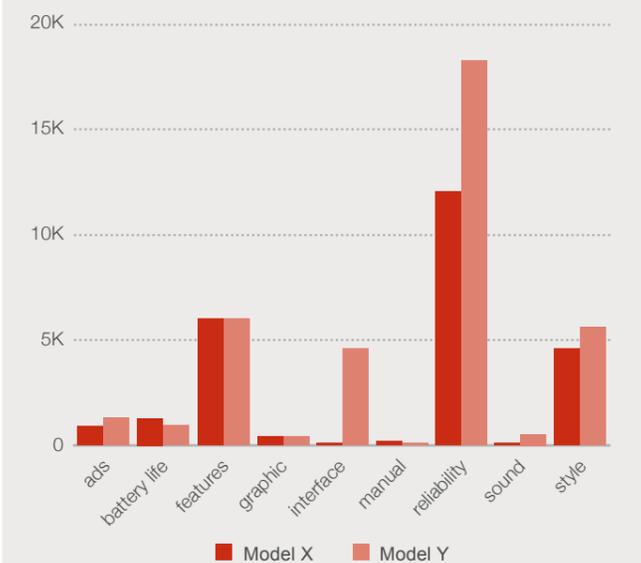


Fig. 3

Purchase Drivers: Model X vs. Model Y, 3-Month Period



About/

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Wendy Scherer,
Managing Partner,
The Social Studies Group

About The Social Studies Group

The Social Studies Group (www.socialstudiesgroup.com) is a market research firm that specializes in using social media conversations and visual content to help companies better understand their customers, competitors, markets and industries.

Custom service offerings include netnography (virtual ethnography), identifying and analyzing niche communities and influencers; comparative linguistic analyses of social media used for organizational and brand messaging; creating "universes" that can be monitored and analyzed over time; and in-depth social media monitoring for knowledge accumulation and analyses.

For more information, please visit www.socialstudiesgroup.com/

About Brandwatch

Brandwatch is a leading provider of social media monitoring and analytics solutions. More than 700 global brands and agencies use Brandwatch, relying on a broad range of social coverage and highly reliable, spam-free data to monitor online conversations.

As a result, organizations can glean insights around their brand interests, conduct market research, predict market trends, and more actively engage influencers, customers and prospects.

A global company, Brandwatch is headquartered in Brighton, UK and has offices in the United States and Germany.

For more information, please visit www.brandwatch.com