



## PROGRAMME ESOMAR CONNECT 2023

# ESOMAR CONNECT 2023

## MARKET RESEARCH IN ROMANIA: THE 9<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

### MACRO-CONSUMER TRENDS IN ROMANIA

BUCHAREST / NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

**SORMA** (The Romanian Society of Marketing and Public Opinion Research) and **ESOMAR** are pleased to invite you to our market research event in Bucharest, Romania, called “ESOMAR Connect”. ESOMAR Connect Romania will be hosted by Alina Serbanica, ESOMAR Council Member for Romania.

The 2023 theme for the event is “**Macro-Consumer Trends in Romania**”.

The ESOMAR Connect 2023 Programme will include speakers representing both MR agencies/companies (international and local/boutique) and end-clients. This year's theme is all about understanding what interests the Romanian consumers have. These trends shape how people use products and services, which, in turn, influences how companies should plan their marketing and sales strategies. Since things are always changing, this also means that research companies need to adapt their methods to prepare for what's coming next.

The program hosts a dynamic agenda of most important research agencies, as well as an important keynote speaker representing our international market research community:

**Grant Fuller, Founder Every Rung**

ESOMAR and SORMA members, market research specialists and marketers representing players across industries as well as professors and future market research specialists (today's students) will be part of the event this year again! The event is an excellent opportunity for you to network with client and MR industry experts and to hear from our special guests, important names within the global market research industry.

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**VENUE:** **Hotel Sheraton**  
**PLATINUM ROOM**  
Bucharest, 5-7 Calea Dorobanti

**DATE:** **Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (from 9:00 to 17:00)**  
Welcoming guests starting at 08:30



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Please note that the lectures will be presented in Romanian, with translation services available for English speakers.

The ESOMAR Connect 2023 event is hybrid one, allowing registration for the participation onsite (subject of an entrance fee) and online (livestreaming available, free of charge). The event is open for registration via the ESOMAR website (<https://esomar.org/events>).

### REGISTRATION

ESOMAR Connect 2023 registration is open to clients/research buyers, market research agencies and academic environment for subscriptions fees tailored for each audience.

This year, the event organizer provides two (2) 100% discount tickets for market research clients/research buyers (regular entry fee for MR buyers is 100 EUR / equivalent of 500 RON) for onsite participation. MR clients/research buyers can send additional participants beyond the free places offered by organiser, paying the 100 EUR fee (equivalent of 500 RON).

Sponsors have free spots included in the sponsorship package (without speakers/sessions chairs, if the case): Gold Sponsors (MR Agencies) have six (6) spots, Bronze Sponsors (MR Agencies) have one (1) spot and Media Partners have two (2) spots included.

SORMA Members have two (2) free spots offered.

All market research companies can send participants for a symbolic fee (100 EUR / equivalent of 500 RON per participant), as well as sponsors, beyond the free places offered by the organiser.

The academic environment (students, professors) is welcome to the event. There are twenty (20) spots offered for free. Universities can send participants for a symbolic fee (50 EUR/ equivalent of 250 RON per professor participant and 25 EUR/ equivalent of 125 RON per student participant) beyond the free places offered by the organiser.

The entrance fee applied to market research companies and universities (beyond the free places offered) will be collected in Romania via locally established invoicing process, by ESOMAR Connect Romanian Organiser (additional information will be provided to market research agencies and other participants).

Please note there is **limited space**, so be sure to [register](#) to confirm your place. For queries, please contact ESOMAR Member Relations at [member.relations@esomar.org](mailto:member.relations@esomar.org) and/or SORMA at [contact@asociatiasorma.ro](mailto:contact@asociatiasorma.ro).

### PROGRAMME

08:30 – 09:00	PARTICIPANTS REGISTRATION & WELCOME COFFEE
09:00 – 09:30	OPENING AND SETTING UP THE SCENE Alina Serbanica, ESOMAR Council Member, Romania



## PROGRAMME ESOMAR CONNECT 2023

PROGRAMME	
09:30 – 09:35	<p><b>SESSION A: Consumer Trends</b>  <b>Session Chair:</b>            Rodica Pop, Senior Brand Manager, Alka Group Romania</p>
09:35 – 09:55	<p><b>Mastering FMCG Trends: Strategies for Success in the Age of the Evolved Consumer</b>            Vlad Barbu, Senior Retailers Consultant, Nielsen IQ</p>
09:55 – 10:15	<p><b>The tectonics of consumer values in times of recent crisis: Make sustainability sustainable again</b>            Adina Iancu (Bogdan), Head of Qualitative Research, ISRA Center            Ioana Davitoiu, Head of Quantitative Research, ISRA Center</p>
10:15 – 10:35	<p><b>Back to the people behind the data: building the bridge between the inside-out expertise and the outside-in customers' understanding in banking</b>            Diana Simion, Marketing Insights Research Consultant, Exact Business Solutions            Julien Zidaru, Managing Partner, Exact Business Solutions            Roxana Pantea, Head of Customer Experience, OTP Bank Romania</p>
10:35 – 10:55	<p><b>The Store of the Future from the Consumers' Perspective</b>            Cori Cimpoaca, Founder &amp; CEO, MKOR Consulting</p>
10:55 – 11:30	<p><b>COFFEE BREAK</b></p>
11:30 – 11:35	<p><b>SESSION B: HUMAN vs AI</b>  <b>Session Chair:</b>            Alina Dinca, Managing Director, ISRA Center</p>
11:35 – 11:55	<p><b>Deciphering the Midlife Crisis Consumer Behaviour. Human vs. AI</b>            Iulian Sirbu, Consumer &amp; Market insights Manager, DataDiggers</p>
11:55 – 12:15	<p><b>Artificial Intelligence: Prince Charming or Ugly Witch?</b>            Daniel Enescu, Partner, Daedalus New Media Research</p>
12:15 – 12:20	<p><b>SESSION C: How Does Technology Shape Our Lives? – PART 1</b>  <b>Session Chair:</b>            Laura Rosca, Qualitative Research Director, iSense Solutions</p>
12:20 – 12:40	<p><b>Tech-Enabled Life. Uncovering consumer-led emerging trends on the impact of technology in daily life</b>            Andra Constantinescu, Senior Account Director &amp; Creative Domain Lead, Kantar            Catalina Ifrim, Senior Consultant – Insights Division, Kantar</p>



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PROGRAMME	
12:40 – 13:00	<p>Exploring The Mobile Megatrend – from store hopping to mobile shopping            Andrei Elvadeanu, Quantitative Research Director, iSense Solutions</p>
13:00 – 14:15	LUNCH BREAK
14:15– 14:20	<p>SESSION C: How Does Technology Shape Our Lives? – PART 2            Session Chair:            Laura Rosca, Qualitative Research Director, iSense Solutions</p>
14:20 – 14:40	<p>Less pain, less fear and a healthier future for our children            Oana Popa Rengle, Founder, Anamnesis            Simona Moiescu, Marketing Researcher, Synevo</p>
14:40 – 15:00	<p>DISCUSSION PANEL: Research Quality in Romania  <i>Moderator:</i> Ioan Simu, General Manager, Mercury Research  <i>Panel's Participants:</i>            Ana Dumitrescu, Senior Business Analyst   Customer Insights, Telekom Romania            Andrei Dudu, Business Intelligence Manager, Servier Pharma            Bogdan Vasilescu, Head of Statistical Data Unit   Strategy and Statistics, ANCOM            Mihai Ciuta, CX &amp; Research Lead, Raiffeisen Bank Romania</p>
15:00 – 15:05	<p>Introducing SORMA Members 180”            Alina Serbanica, ESOMAR Council Member   SORMA President, Romania</p>
15:00 – 15:30	<p>ESOMAR 180” – Fresh Ideas, New Research Products            SORMA Members 180” – Short Introduction</p>
15:30 – 16:00	COFFEE BREAK
16:00 – 16:05	<p>Introducing Keynote Speaker            Alina Serbanica, ESOMAR Council Member, Romania</p>
16:05 – 16:35	<p><b>Keynote Speaker:</b>            How journalism makes insights matter more, elevates influence and inspires better decisions            Grant Feller, Founder, Every Rung</p>
16:35 – 16:45	<p>OFFICIAL CLOSING            Alina Serbanica, ESOMAR Council Member, Romania</p>



## PROGRAMME ESOMAR CONNECT 2023

### SPEAKER PROFILES



[Alina Serbanica PhD, ESOMAR Council Member, Romania](#)

Alina Serbanica is Senior Vice President at Ipsos, leading the worldwide Total Operations Data Privacy inside the company.

She has over 30 years of experience in market research and her broader expertise on both online and offline, on delivering market research services and on handling global online operations represent her great asset for dealing with

the new data privacy environment, under a very dynamic pace technology, big data, social media, passive data collection and artificial intelligence have nowadays. Alina is member of the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP) and she is part of the ESOMAR Liaisons taskforce in the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), working in the Technical Committee dealing with the ISO 20252 for Market Research.

Since April 2023, Alina is Member of the ESOMAR Council (Board of Directors) for the 2023 – 2024 elected mandate. Previously, between 2010 and 2023, she served as the ESOMAR Representative in Romania, and she is co-founder member of The Romanian Society of Marketing and Public Opinion Research (SORMA), currently the President of SORMA.



[Vlad Barbu, Senior Retailers Consultant, Nielsen IQ](#)

Vlad Barbu is a Senior Consultant within the Retailer Services team at NielsenIQ. In this role, he collaborates closely with a portfolio of international and local retailers, identifying current market trends in FMCG, business optimization opportunities, and providing support to assess sales performance. His previous professional background is sculpted by over eight years of activity in Sales and

Marketing, enhanced by involvement in several entrepreneurship projects co-funded through the European Union budget.



[Adina Iancu \(Bogdan\), Head of Qualitative Research, ISRA Center](#)

With a background in Sociology, Communication & Public Relations, she started her journey in market research 15 years ago and what a joy ride has been! Juggling with FMCG, healthcare and services has gained know-how in a wide range of qualitative methodologies, with a soft spot for ethnography and creative workshops. Her purpose is to bring together the consumer, the brand, and the

client in order to breathe life into insights in a meaningful manner, reason why she prefers strategical studies.

A dog and a human person alike, dedicates her spare time to traveling, exploring, and rescuing animals. Her motto is „What makes a human great can make a brand greatly human”.

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[Ioana Davitoiu, Head of Quantitative Research, ISRA Center](#)

Ioana's background in Marketing, Market Research and Public Relations has provided her with varied skills when it comes to research technical knowhow, consumer behaviour and marketing strategies. Her project management certification and her passion for logistics enabled her to coordinate complex research projects in an effective and proactive manner.

The 5 years at ISRA turned Ioana into a keen believer in the power of well-balanced teams of researchers, as she strongly trusts that a MR project's success is dependent on fruitful collaboration between all involved parts. She is dedicated to always bringing warmth into ISRA's partnerships. Leonardo da Vinci was a painter, draughtsman, engineer, scientist, theorist, sculptor, and architect. So is any high-performing researcher.



[Diana Simion PhD, Marketing Insights Research Consultant, Exact Business Solutions](#)

Diana is a playful insights' explorer, Design Thinking facilitator, and consultant with a PhD in Communication Studies and a strong background in academic & marketing research. She has expertise in brand strategy and is particularly interested in addressing the consumer and employee experience within the

broader dynamics of the digital society and socio-cultural trends.



[Julien Zidaru, Managing Partner, Exact Business Solutions](#)

Julien is a market research consultant and design thinking facilitator. He has strong experience in teams' development and business growth and is very passionate about consumer understanding, CX, trends and innovation.



[Roxana Pantea, Head of Customer Experience, OTP Bank Romania](#)

Roxana is a calm and collected person, who looks for meaning in everything she does. Her professional background in process improvement and CX design, combined with well-developed empathy skills, are crucial in her role as Head of CX in OTP Bank. She stands for honesty, compassion, and collaboration within and among teams, and advocates for self-awareness as one of the most effective and

empowering ways to achieve professional and personal success.



[Cori Cimpoca, Founder & CEO, MKOR Consulting](#)

Cori Cimpoca is a professional with over 16 years of experience in marketing and market research. Cori holds an MBA from Cotrugli Business School, a Master's degree in Public Relations from UBB Cluj-Napoca and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from UBB Cluj-Napoca.

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In 2013, Cori founded MKOR, the Market Opportunity Research agency, offering comprehensive marketing services from data. Since 2020, MKOR combines market research with automated marketing, offering an innovative approach to market research.

In 2021, MKOR launched Consumer Trends.Live, a platform for real-time market monitoring from a consumer perspective. The industries included in the study are Fashion, Beauty & Care, Jewellery, IT&C, Electronics & Appliances, Furniture & Home Decor, DIY.



[Iulian Sirbu, Consumer & Market Insights Manager, DataDiggers](#)

Qualitative research consultant with 15 years of experience in the field. Holding a MA in Sociology of Consumption, Iulian specializes in ideation and insight-generating workshops, leveraging his education and experience into behavioural economics. He has worked mainly on the local Romanian market, but not only, with major research companies, boutique agencies, representing international agencies for studies in Romania and final clients alike. Tried to prove himself useful on a variety of industries such as retail, FMCG, banking, telecom, political parties, tobacco, pharma, betting, and gambling, both in B2C and B2B studies. On a personal level, he states 'it was a matter of getting to know myself through understanding the people around me'. As a professional, he believes it's a mandatory need to thoroughly understand your target in order to create tailor-made products, strategies, services and campaigns. Favourite motto is 'People hear and see statistics, but they feel stories'.



[Daniel Enescu, Partner, Daedalus New Media Research](#)

Daniel Enescu founded the Daedalus Group, which in 2014 has been sold to global research giant, Kantar Millward Brown. With qualifications in Aerospace Engineering, International Business, and Marketing, he's passionate about melding diverse knowledge to bring forth fresh ideas.

Since 2018, he's steered Daedalus New Media Research (Daedalus Online), making it a leading access panel provider in Central and Eastern Europe. In 2022, Daniel introduced Frappe Digital, a platform designed to enhance company agility.



[Andra Constantinescu, Senior Account Director & Creative Domain Lead, Kantar](#)

I've been in marketing research for 18 years now, a journey started shyly and with apprehension, but also determination to learn, understand and grow. A challenge at first, over the years research has grown into something that I love. I'm happy to have witnessed its transformation from an activity that was very labour-intensive to one that focuses more on knowledge, sharing and doing things smartly with the help of technology. I am also happy to be working mostly in a field that is very close to me – advertising research – and whenever I get to share exciting things that I come across.

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Catalina Ifrim, Senior Consultant – Insights Division, Kantar

I'm probably one of the luckiest persons on earth for the simple fact that after 22 years of research, I'm still here and still enjoying what I do. Many say that if you do what you love, you will never work a day in your life, but I believe differently - namely that if you love what you do, you will work hard every day of your life with joy and motivation, feeling that you have a special spark to share. Curiosity didn't kill me but rather made me spent many years delving into the motivations behind people's thoughts and behaviours. I am currently servicing our clients through the consultancy and workshop area that I oversee in Kantar.



Andrei Elvadeanu PhD, Quantitative Research Director, iSense Solutions

He began his career in market research in 2007 and has spent the last three and a half years in the iSense Solutions team. From the position of Quantitative Research Director, Andrei undoubtedly embodies the spirit of the company. He has a PhD in sociology, with a solid academic background, and he likes to combine methodological rigour with the creative spirit of marketing. He loves brand and communication research and is an ardent follower of the school of thought promoted by Byron Sharp. Over the past two years, he has designed and coordinated the weekly Consumer Stress Score study, developed in iSense Solutions as a free tool to help customers and companies navigate the challenges caused by the coronavirus pandemic. In his free time, he likes to unravel the mysteries of civil law as a student at the Faculty of Law of the University of Bucharest.



Oana Popa Rengle, Founder, Anamnesis

Oana Popa Rengle has a lifelong passion for qualitative research, with 24 years of experience. In June 2004 she set up Anamnesis as the first qual-research boutique in Romania. Since 2017 she is consulting independently on qualitative research and strategic insight integration into business. She is also a feature editor for the Global Section of Views, the magazine of QRCA, the Qualitative Research Consultants Association. In 2022 she received the ESOMAR Silver Research Effectiveness Award, alongside client lab test company Synevo, for the outstanding contribution of qualitative research in the development of VR Kids technology, a VR assisted approach for drawing blood from children. In addition to being a research practitioner, Oana is a certified Idea Generation and Creative Problem-Solving processes facilitator, and a psychotherapist practicing Systemic Family Therapy.



Simona Moiescu, Marketing Researcher, Synevo

Simona Moiescu started working in marketing research in 2005 as an unpaid intern, never thinking that a summer job would end up being a career. 17 years as a quantitative researcher at Kantar Romania helped her gain extensive experience with most types of research projects and methodologies, from product testing and brand tracking to Conjoint analysis and consumer experience. Since the

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beginning of 2023, she is the proud marketing researcher of Synevo team, helping her colleagues take data driven decisions and explore clients' needs and behaviour.



**Ioan Simu PhD, General Manager, Mercury Research**

Ioan has started his career in market research over 25 years ago, worked his way through almost all research jobs, and is currently general manager for Mercury Research. His research expertise is complemented by advertising experience and academic work. Ioan holds a PhD in sociology from the University of Bucharest, and specializations in political studies and business management from the University of Texas, ASEBUS and the University of Washington. He also teaches courses on advanced analysis methods, market research and marketing.



**Grant Feller, Founder, Every Rung**

Grant Feller is a storytelling consultant for FTSE-250 CEOs, global brands and leadership teams, helping them to use journalistic techniques to 'translate' insights and data into high-impact stories. After almost three decades leading print and digital teams in the UK national media, his consultancy is winning awards for its unique approach to creating compelling content.

## PRESENTATIONS' ABSTRACTS

### **Mastering FMCG Trends: Strategies for Success in the Age of the Evolved Consumer**

Vlad Barbu, Senior Retailers Consultant, Nielsen IQ

After years of facing disruptive circumstances, FMCG brands and retailers face the challenge of catering to an "Evolved" consumer, identified as Pressured, Calculated and Resilient. Translating these attributes into trends, NIQ follows their journey by combining what people SAY and what they DO into a Full View. By delving into practical approaches and actionable steps, the speaker will provide insights on how brands can grow beyond price and differentiate themselves.

This presentation theme explores global and local insights into the current shopper mindset. It brings into attention the decline of consumer loyalty, the adoption of cost-reducing strategies and the perception of promotions. Additionally, using NIQ unique retail audit information, it examines the trends of retail sales, with a focus on the relevance of Private Label products, the rise of Discounters and Proximity formats, and the performance of different product categories.

The aim of the presentation is to offer a clear understanding of the impact of current consumers' preferences and spotlight the trends brands need to consider for 2024 planning.

KEY STUDIES included:

- ✓ Global "NIQ Consumer Outlook", 23 countries
- ✓ Romanian "Shopper Trends", 2023 consumer study
- ✓ FMCG retail audit data analysis, 60 countries.



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### [The tectonics of consumer values in times of recent crisis: Make sustainability sustainable again](#)

Adina Iancu (Bogdan), Head of Qualitative Research, ISRA Center

Ioana Davitoiu, Head of Quantitative Research, ISRA Center

The global difficulties and uncertainty brought by the pandemic and, subsequently, inflation have led to a change in consumer values towards greater social responsibility and a desire to help, as a compensation for the world's injustices. In this context, sustainability has become a topic of interest for previously indifferent consumers. However, in the unfavourable economic context a new tension emerges: how to be sustainable within a limited budget?

Using a qualitative-quantitative hybrid approach, combining the ethnographic approach centred on a human approach with statistics recorded among consumers in the urban environment and supplementing with the monitoring of trends from recent years, we propose to answer the following questions: how can brands be sustainable in a relevant way, but especially affordable for consumers? What are those "tips & tricks" that can bring sustainability closer to everyday life? What should brands pay attention to when communicating about this topic? How strong is this trend and what will be its future, once the crisis is over?

### [Back to the people behind the data: building the bridge between the inside-out expertise and the outside-in customers' understanding in banking](#)

Diana Simion, Marketing Insights Research Consultant, Exact Business Solutions

Julien Zidaru, Managing Partner, Exact Business Solutions

Roxana Pantea, Head of Customer Experience, OTP Bank Romania

Caught up in an inside-out loop of product-market fit solutions, companies tend to underestimate the value of the forgoing problem-solution fit, ending up struggling to see the forest for the trees. Here is where we found the sweet spot to plugged-in a multi-layered Design Thinking approach that can provide better problem-solution fit, as well as higher cross-department alignment in identifying who and how companies could serve better.

Taking a challenging journey within the banking landscape, our aim was to overcome the gap between building a nice gallery of Personas (to have them) and actually using them (to act upon them). So how can we keep Personas alive, always on the radar when business decision is made?

Milestone 1. Build Personas on consistent data, not assumptions or improvised bulk of data. The winning card to play: in-depth qualitative data and complementary data to place them within the broader business context

Milestone 2. Engage key-stakeholders in building the Personas and leverage their expertise. The winning card to play: structured co-creation process and outside-in building of Personas

Milestone 3. Validate Personas on a larger scale for an insightful industry vs own portfolio mapping. The winning card to play: design an identification algorithm to assess each Persona's size within a national study base (1060 people sample), as well as within the Bank client's base (800 OTP bank customers)

Milestone 4: Reiterate and finetune the initial Personas. The winning card to play: triangulation of both data sources and methods.

Besides the valuable insights from the B2C Banking Personas' mapping, this human-centric approach of customer understanding provided the client with solid grounds for business decision making and a driving force for an organic cross departmental collaboration.



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### [The Store of the Future from the Consumers' Perspective](#)

Cori Cimpoca, Founder & CEO, MKOR Consulting

The presentation explores profound transformations in retail influenced by digitization and the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on consumer expectations regarding the "Store of the Future." With a CAWI methodology and 1,100 respondents, the research reveals significant directions and expectations.

Key trends reveal that high-tech experience, omnichannel approach, and premium quality are consumer priorities. The integration of VR and AR technologies, digitalization of shopping, and online-offline synergy are highlighted as future directions. Sustainability, interaction with vendors, and shopping safety are essential points, while transforming the store into a unique hub and adapting to the needs of a digital and ecological society pose challenges.

The presentation underscores the importance of aligning retail strategies with new consumer expectations and the evolving environment.

### [Deciphering the Midlife Crisis Consumer Behaviour. Human vs. AI](#)

Iulian Sirbu, Consumer & Market Insights Manager, DataDiggers

Anything that is influencing humans can be of interest to marketers and, by extension, to marketing researchers. The so-called 'Midlife Crisis' looks like it's having a significant impact on people's attitudes and lifestyle (including shopping behaviour). Consumption habits are also altered.

The project involves parallel studies conducted by two teams: one comprised of an entirely human market research team and a secondary one, featuring an AI entity (ChatGPT), directed by a human operator.

The research aims to foster a deeper understanding of the midlife crisis, offering a fresh perspective that could redefine market research methodologies: a richer perspective on the subject – we hope the information from both sources will complement each other nicely. One party might catch what the other party might miss. It will even bring the potential of emotional understanding by a machine, which we believe has been unusual, until now, the new exciting technological normal we are experiencing.

The main purpose of the project is to provide the brands with an overall view on how people's priorities vary depending on the crisis intensity and how to adjust their communication accordingly. In addition, we wanted to learn about the advantages and limitations of AI and share the findings with the Romanian research community.

### [Artificial Intelligence: Prince Charming or Ugly Witch?](#)

Daniel Enescu, Partner, Daedalus New Media Research

In just 7 months after its launch, ChatGPT has reached 60% aided awareness and 24% usage in urban Romania. We are probably witnessing one of the fastest global product expansions. The natural question arises whether we are just facing a "hyped up" phenomenon or if we are truly witnessing a singularity. The answer will only be known if we follow this phenomenon over a longer period, which we intend to do.

In turn, artificial intelligence (AI) is bringing major changes to the business environment, visibly month by month. Currently, the perception of artificial intelligence oscillates between fear and enthusiasm. However, there's one aspect people seem to agree upon: the impact of AI can no longer be ignored.



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Based on a market study conducted in July and October, we will present how perceptions related to AI have evolved, as well as the penetration and evolution of the usage of the most known product of generative artificial intelligence – ChatGPT.

### [Tech-Enabled Life. Uncovering consumer-led emerging trends on the impact of technology in daily life](#)

Andra Constantinescu, Senior Account Director & Creative Domain Lead, Kantar

Catalina Ifrim, Senior Consultant – Insights Division, Kantar

Steve Jobs once said that “True innovation lies in revealing what people desire before they even know it.” As a research company, we’ve often struggled with the question of how to anticipate needs that people aren’t even able to articulate.

But as it happens when we want to surprise somebody, the intuition of what they might like comes actually from a deep familiarity with that person. And, in our case, we’re talking about millions of persons whose behaviour we’d like to anticipate, in order to inspire brands to innovate or communicate in a relevant way.

Thanks to technology, we are now able to look at patterns across billions of data points and uncover emerging trends, based on searches and on what we know about the macro-trends shaping consumer behaviour. Our latest Digital Analytics project covered over 35 billion of data points spanning 5 years of searches, over 190 topics and more than 8000 trends. Its purpose? To uncover what is hot and what is here to stay in terms of technology’s intersections with life as: an entertainer, a protector and an enabler.

We look forward to sharing insights about consumer-led tech trends, with exemplifications from Romania. We also look forward to sharing predictions about what is next and case studies – global and local – on the inspired use of technology from brands spanning a variety of fields.

### [Exploring The Mobile Megatrend – from store hopping to mobile shopping](#)

Andrei Elvadeanu, Quantitative Research Director, iSense Solutions

The presentation will explore the profound impact of smartphones on our daily lives, with a particular focus on their transformative effects on e-commerce and consumer preferences, as well as the ways in which these devices have redefined the landscape of online shopping and advertising engagement.

On one hand, the study shows how smartphones have completely transformed our shopping experience, from the use of dedicated shopping apps to the emerging trend of social media shopping. On the other hand, mobile shopping extends its influence beyond just the purchasing process, playing a significant role in shaping consumer preferences.

In addition to their impact on e-commerce, this research also examines the escalating engagement of mobile users with advertising. The study demonstrates how mobile advertising has thrived, leading to increased interaction and engagement with ads. This shift in advertising dynamics underscores the role of smartphones as catalysts for change in the marketing industry.

Methodological note: most of the data presented was collected from iOPI, a cutting-edge online panel comprising approximately 1000 individuals who willingly installed a mobile app on their smartphones to track their digital behaviours, forms the foundation of this presentation.



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### Less pain, less fear and a healthier future for our children

Oana Popa Rengle, Founder, Anamnesis

Simona Moisescu, Marketing Researcher, Synevo

This presentation tells the story of ESOMAR Research Effectiveness Award 2022 Silver winner, VR KIDS case study.

Kids Virtual Reality (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bx2PtrN-9wU>) is a VR experience (based on the VR Analgesia - an emerging form of pain therapy in the medical world) designed to help reduce fear and pain during blood drawing procedures with children. It was developed by Synevo Romania, the biggest provider of diagnostic laboratory services in Romania and launched in 2021. A quantitative study tracking its impact since launch, indicated that perceptions of fear and pain were decreased by almost 40%, while 90% of the children preferred this to any other type of experience, including using other gadgets.

The award-winning qualitative research was an essential part of creating Kids Virtual Reality. The whole project started not from the available technology, but from in-depth understanding of children's, parents' and nurses' experiences, emotions and desires in the blood drawing process. This produced an empathy framework to guide all the players further involved in developing, testing, and deploying the technology. Using this framework, the VR experience was then custom-developed, iteratively tested, and adjusted, while qual (still) accompanied all the way.

Humanised technology is a trend we will be seeing increasingly in the future. And research will play a key role in ensuring technology is custom – made to serve human needs, instead of retro-fitting humanity to available tech.

### DISCUSSION PANEL: Research Quality in Romania

*Moderator:* Ioan Simu, General Manager, Mercury Research

*Panel's Participants:*

Ana Dumitrescu, Senior Business Analyst | Customer Insights, Telekom Romania

Andrei Dudu, Business Intelligence Manager, Servier Pharma

Bogdan Vasilescu, Head of Statistical Data Unit | Strategy and Statistics, ANCOM

Mihai Ciuta, CX & Research Lead, Raiffeisen Bank Romania

What are the quality challenges when researching Romania (Online, Telephone, F2F), and what is their impact in insights reporting?

How to ensure a quality level necessary for relevant and unbiased insights? What are the quality criteria and how to enforce them?

Institutions with responsibilities in quality assurance and their role: ISO (9001 and 20252), ESOMAR, SORMA, Providers, Clients.

Expectations on SORMA role in quality assurance from clients of market research and opinion polling.

### Keynote speaker: How journalism makes insights matter more, elevates influence and inspires better decisions

Grant Feller, Founder, Every Rung

Market research and journalism are two sides of the same coin – piecing together detailed pieces of information to maximise the impact with audiences. Both industries have much to learn from each other but if market researchers and insights teams want to ensure that their work is truly transformative, they need to be skilled journalistic storytellers.



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Stories are the most powerful tool we have to capture attention, transfer data and inspire emotional engagement – and journalists do this at speed, every day. The newsroom is a creative crucible and this presentation will show you how journalistic storytelling can help the research industry make the most of its insights.

### PANEL'S PARTICIPANTS PROFILES



[Ana Dumitrescu, Senior Business Analyst | Customer Insights, Telekom Romania](#)

Coordinating Customer Insights projects for Telekom Romania since 2019, Ana started her market research journey in 2015, agency side – so she is quite familiar with the challenges on both teams (research agency and research buyer). Passionate about people, numbers, patterns, logic, and all the unexplained bits of magic and poetry in-between.



[Andrei Duda, Business Intelligence Manager, Servier Pharma](#)

Andrei started working as a market researcher and analyst since 2008 in the marketing department of the company. During his activity, Andrei has gathered a lot of experience in market research, qualitative and quantitative data insights helping his colleagues in positioning products and building brands from the company's products. Since last year, Andrei joined a new department "Business Excellence" especially born to become the data engine of the company and help internal stakeholders to base their decisions.



[Bogdan Vasilescu, Head of Statistical Data Unit | Strategy and Statistics, ANCOM](#)

As a freshly graduated statistician, Bogdan's career started within the National Statistics Institute, followed by a short bypass at MEMRB – Retail Audit. 18 years ago, Bogdan was recruited by ANCOM and became member of COMSTAT since 2009. His main role is to constantly improve data collection & validation, both from telecom & postal players and from market surveys, as ANCOM is the official producer of statistics in the field. Passionate about the accuracy of indicators, he is probably bothering everybody for this goal.



[Mihai Ciuta, CX & Research Lead, Raiffeisen Bank Romania](#)

Mihai Ciuta is a market research professional with a strong background in customer experience and insights. With years of experience in the field, he has worked for reputable companies such as Raiffeisen Bank Romania, Coca-Cola HBC, and Nielsen. He is passionate about analyzing consumer behavior and has a proven track record of identifying gaps in customer experience across various touchpoints. Mihai Ciuta is highly skilled in managing various types of research projects and has excellent communication and leadership skills.



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### SESSION CHAIRS PROFILES



Rodica Pop, Senior Brand Manager, Alka Group Romania

Rodica is a marketer with a strong strategic and consumer-oriented mindset, with high appetite for understanding the brand challenges and turning them into relevant consumer and shopper actions. With a creative approach and an ability to challenge the status quo, she has an impressive experience with both international brands (confectionery) and local brands (sweet, salty snacks, coffee) very knowledgeable on brand & communication strategy, consumer activation, digital, in store trade marketing, new product development and launch. For a significant period of her career Rodica has cultivated a passion for understanding consumers by conducting juicy qualitative research.



Alina Dinca, Managing Director, ISRA Center

Alina has started her journey in the market research industry 20 years ago and has been the Managing Director of ISRA Center since 2017. Currently, most of her work is dedicated to overseeing operations and liaising with the company's clients as a senior consultant. While facilitating the commercial process, her focus is also on promoting key sustainability values and principles: professionalism, high standards of competence, quality, and integrity. Starting with 2017 she has been an active member of SORMA, The Romanian Society of Marketing and Public Opinion Research, with a passion for projects that can bring the market research community closer together and unite us as professionals, but first and foremost as humans.



Laura Rosca, Qualitative Research Director, iSense Solutions

Laura is a passionate researcher with more than 17 years of experience in understanding and deconstructing the perceptions of consumer behaviour. During her long-term partnership with clients from various industries, Laura has been offering valuable integrated research and business consultancy. Throughout her career Laura has moderated thousands of FGDs and IDIs and has trained several professionals on a wide range of classical and innovative methodologies. Laura is a notorious speaker for many conferences, reTAG, Progressive Hub, Employer Branding where she enjoys being challenged by sharp and daring questions.