

Can the Future of Healthcare Market Research be Virtual?

Market research has evolved dramatically over the decades, from quantitative data collection methods like Paper and Pencil Interviewing (PAPI) to Smartphone Assisted Personal Interviewing (SAPI) and Tablet Assisted Personal Interviewing (TAPI) techniques. To be noted here is the absence of research techniques dedicated to fulfil the unique and specific requirements of healthcare MR.

Recent developments have made VR and AR applications practical, cheaper as well as significantly more accessible. While current applications are mostly limited for entertainment purposes, they contribute towards making VR / AR mainstream.

The immersive experience provided by VR is already being implemented in a variety of healthcare scenarios that range from pain and stress management therapy to medical training and surgical preparations. VR services in the medical / healthcare segment are forecasted to generate US\$285 million by 2022.

Treatment for schizophrenia or paranoia is another area where VR treatment shows promise. Deep implementation of VR in medical education can also be used to train students on a myriad of medical conditions and situations even before they graduate.

Can VR and AR-based research hold the candle to existing healthcare MR methods?

Implementation of VR and AR technology in the healthcare MR field could push research forward by leaps and bounds. Think real-time access to patient and doctor interactions to researchers or a first-person view of a new medical tool through novel usage of VR and AR.

This can be further complemented with the use of health monitoring wearables, which can enhance data collection methods when utilized along with supplementary assets such as physician notes, web searches, online healthcare purchases, social media, etc.

Engaging in alternative technologies to enhance healthcare MR

Machine learning (ML) based predictive analytics is another technology healthcare MR can benefit from – an area of MR that Borderless Access has already set foot in. We have already implemented predictive analytics and ML-based heat map data to derive richer insights for our customers and maximize their ROI.

In the area of healthcare research, we have extended the use of ML through HealthSight™, an advanced analytics-driven, DIY programmatic project management suite that uses ML to reduce research cost and time. Designed from scratch as an advanced, future-ready Windows application, HealthSight enables researchers to commission multiple research projects simultaneously as well as manage every minute aspect of these projects from a single touch-based platform.

Also in the offing are VR surveys to conduct product testing and concept testing among physicians and patients. The aim of these surveys would be to develop the next generation of MR techniques, aimed at the healthcare segment, which can obtain deeper insights, reduce errors, increase ROI and enable quick and clear decision making for our clients.

Conclusion

The next phase of change in MR is almost upon us. It is time to reorganize operations to take advantage – rather than be a victim – of the new dynamics that are driving healthcare. The winners will be organizations that are willing to evolve and adapt to the new environment and are ready embrace alternative techniques.