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## Multilingual Market Research in Asia Pacific

Language Connect recently conducted a survey on languages in the Market Research sector. With global participation from clients, end users and individual researchers, the report, due to be published this quarter, confirms the importance of the region to global market research agencies.

With external factors, such as the [Internet of Things, Big Data and mobile](#) collectively changing the foundations of modern research and insight, the study finds that multilingual research compounds these challenges. The need for speed, coupled with the challenges of delivering consistent and efficient global and regional insight, places demands on global researchers to consider cultural adaptation, translation, and localisation of projects.

The industry is responding by increasingly adopting automation of research processes and a gamut of new technology offerings is coming to market. We foresee the need for instant access to expert language services will grow in importance for production processes to keep up with the acceleration in timescales.

This trend is especially strong in Asia, where consumers are mostly mobile natives. They have, in effect, skipped the whole PC-era. Mobile offers researchers a unique and real-time source of data, meaning that they can, more rapidly, engage, collect and analyse sources of information and then quickly deliver results to their clients.

In the survey findings, six times more researchers see multinational work increasing than those that see it declining. The participants provide many reasons for sustained increases in demand for multinational work. The common themes are:

- Globalisation/centralisation of their clients' businesses and budgets
- Growth in APAC and emerging markets with client as well as agencies entering new territories
- Adaptation of online technologies and data mining techniques

Respondents cite China as the most challenging market but also the one growing the fastest. With 67% expressing that working with non-standard characters as a key language challenge, there is no doubt that translation and localisation will be a crucial element of research workflow in the region.

One participant commented: *"In general, most Asian languages are short on words so the biggest struggle going from English to a local language is trying to find a local word that is "close enough" to the English equivalent. This applies to Indonesia/Malaysia (Bahasa), Tagalog and the many Filipino dialects, Thai and Vietnamese."* highlighting the need for expert translation and localisation. You have to localise all surveys and then appropriately translate responses to ensure data is correct. If you don't, somewhere along the line, errors and misunderstandings are going to emerge. In a similar way, with behavioural economics, where 90 percent of

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psychology research comes from evidence in the West, how can you be sure that similar theories will apply in Asian cultures? Cross-cultural research into decision making is limited so the next best alternative is to look at measurable differences between cultures.

The idea of supply and demand is shifting, with the latter growing in importance. In short, consumer power is increasing and has more sway. If you look at trends in Asia, brands that want to successfully launch breakthrough innovations quicker and with more reliable returns, need to be better informed. Asian consumers, for example, don't want to buy more products . they want better products. Market researchers task is to find this insight out markedly faster than ever before. To achieve this, they are adopting iterative and agile processes . as opposed to consecutive ones . which allow them to speed up the research process and enable small incremental improvements before reaching a breakthrough concept. By making language services an essential part of this process, brands and research agencies can increase their speed to market as well as produce reliable, commercially beneficial insight.

Language Connect is the preferred language services partner of APRC. For more insights on the report, please contact Baxter Tan ([btan@languageconnect.net](mailto:btan@languageconnect.net)) in our Singapore office.

## AMSRO / AMSRS Investigate a merger

AMSRS and AMSRO member associations are entering into exploratory discussions and investigations about joining forces to become one association serving the Australian research profession and industry.

Over the past 60 years the two sister associations have supported our respective constituencies well and together we cover a diverse range of member services including professional development, training and conferences; networking; industry publications and member resources; advocacy, ethical and privacy compliance and advisory services; industrial relations; industry statistics and awards; and promotion.

Our peak industry bodies work well together and we have delivered a number of joint initiatives benefiting our members . including the Research Effectiveness Awards, government advocacy efforts with Market Research differentiated from Telemarketing in the revised (Telemarketing and Research Calls) Industry Standard (2011), the introduction of the Do Not Call register and currently with our IPND efforts; higher education collaborations; annual industry survey; industry specific ISO standards and strategic partnerships in Asia with our involvement in the Asia Pacific Research Committee (APRC) and globally through the Global Research Business Network (GRBN).

AMSRO and AMSRS are exploring the feasibility of a merger between our two organisations for the following reasons:

- The potential benefits of being able to speak with a single, stronger voice before the public, media and government; and

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- It may be possible to provide services to our members in a more efficient and effective way through a merged entity.

There have been successful mergers in other jurisdictions . including New Zealand, the UK, Canada and more recently in the USA with the announcement of the CASRO and MRA merger. These mergers will provide us with useful case studies in the investigation process.

To assist us with this exploration, AMSRS and AMSRO will be engaging the services of an independent consultant, jointly funded, to undertake a review of the 2 organisations and provide advice regarding the most appropriate structure for a merged entity and provide us with recommendations regarding timing and process.

We envisage that this investigation process will be finalised by the AMSRS National Conference in Melbourne on 8 & 9 September 2016.



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