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## Insights Leaders COVID-19 Roundtable

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### Panelists

**Camille Nicita**, President & CEO, Gongos, Inc.

**Gary Feldman**, VP Consumer Insights, Goldman Sachs

**Merrill Dubrow**, CEO, M/A/R/C Research

**Olivier Tilleuil**, CEO, EyeSee

**Rex Briggs**, Executive Chairman, Marketing Evolution

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Gregg Archibald: Let's just jump in, one of the things that we know is there's a lot of change happening in our industry, not only our companies, but the client needs. That's what I want to get started with. **What's changing in your business as a result of the Coronavirus? Is it research used, business levels, method sufficiency?** Camille, I'd really like to get started with you and hear what's going on with your business.

Camille Nicita: Great, thanks Gregg. When I think about our business, you could lead into this by saying, "What's not changing?" When we think about how we come to market and what we do, Gongos is a consultative agency and we help our clients, what we like to say, "Make customer centricity happen." That involves intersection of understanding customers as humans as well as then taking that understanding and helping our clients deliver on those needs better than anyone else. When you think about the environment that we're in right now, you could look at it from two different ways. You could look at it as maybe everything should stop right now until things stabilize and we see what those customer needs actually end up looking like to enable our clients to deliver on those needs, or you could look at this as COVID is the great equalizer.

When you think about business and humans, I don't think there's ever been a time in history of business, at least from where Gongos stand that clients, agencies including competitive perspective in consumers have all played literally at the same level. We are all humans when you think about it that way and we are all literally experiencing the exact same thing. When we think about our business and how we're operating right now, it is very much more as a collective and as a community of people coming together to try to navigate the future in totality together. I honestly have never seen – I believe the Insights industry is different than many in that we often come together even as competitors to share information. Merrill and Steve Schlesinger host a CEO Summit every single year where literally heads of companies come together to share and be vulnerable with one another on a regular basis, but this has brought about an even new level of vulnerability and sharing. I'm really, really inspired to see how people are coming together as humans to try to become, out of this situation, stronger on the other side. I truly believe that that potential exists now more than ever. Insights has the ability to really rise to the occasion and represent the customer as a human within



organizations and really engage that customer as a stakeholder of the organization to help them navigate the future forward.

Gregg Archibald: Thanks Camille. Merrill, I want to come to you particularly because Camille just mentioned the CEO Summit that you and Steve do every year which is a great thing. Camille just mentioned the vulnerability of sharing. Are you seeing that theme as well in how your business is running?

Merrill Dubrow: Yes, thanks for calling on me, Gregg. Absolutely. I was watching a show on Saturday called All American which is on Netflix and in the middle of the show, there was a big statement from one of the characters that said together. I actually paused it and repeated it because it struck a core to me. It's together, together we're stronger, together we're smarter, together we can get through this, together we're much more team oriented. The boundaries now no longer just include my company or Camille's company, it's everybody's company because we're all in this together. The CEO Summit that we do in January in South Beach when we had three of them scheduled for this year, the one in Toronto has been cancelled, but in reality, that does allow – and I love the word that Camille used which is vulnerability. Most CEOs hate to be vulnerable. They dislike it. They don't like to go there. They believe it's a sign of weakness and we believe it's actually a sign of strength. I really appreciate you saying that. I think the original question which is how is it affecting our company, I think that COVID-19 is forcing executives to be executives. I know that that's funny, but if leaders aren't leading today, the companies are in trouble. Clearly, from my standpoint, from everybody's standpoint, the obvious thing is qual was hit the hardest and it was hit really hard, really fast. Some of these companies were crushed. My questions would be what happened to focus groups facilities that have one or two locations? Can they survive? What happens to all these moderators? Travel goes away. Is it going to be harder to make relationships and keep those relationships? A lot of moderators are going to be looking for jobs. I don't know.

In my opinion, I think we have a real opportunity now today. Clients are available and they want to talk. My belief is clients were not used to working out of the house. Once in a while, they work out of the house because they have to take care of their child, they don't feel well, or they will take care of their wife or mother, but



the reality is, they want to talk and they have much more time in the hand and they go into much less meetings. Their meetings that they're going to are shorter. We have found a mark that they're much more accessible, they jump in on the call quicker and we've been doing a lot of lunch and learns. Some without the lunch. Some we do have lunch, show up. We're doing research on research and some sparked accelerated projects which are all do-it-yourself products that are allowing to get clients to get results in hours and they're really utilizing that. I don't have a lot of data reference, but I did notice on our last eight projects that we went last week and today, even this morning, had gone up and up considerably. Amazon today, I don't know if anybody has seen it, but Amazon just hit their all-time high in terms of stock market. Well, all the stocks are getting crushed. Amazon just crushed through their all-time high. Let's think about what that means to our business, right? That means they're introducing new customers to getting online. People are getting much more comfortable with ordering online. What is that doing in research? Is that an opportunity for research and is that going to hurt a lot of our clients that we have? I think that most clients have come to figure out, what's their new customer look like? What changes are going to happen in their business? How do they react to those changes?

Gregg Archibald: Let's pick on that for just a second. Gary, let's talk a little bit about some of the changes that you're seeing more on the client side. **What's happening in the types of research used or the types of businesses used, methods? What's happening in your business?**

Gary Feldman: From a research perspective, I would say there are two things. One, as someone has already mentioned, because we can't do in-person research, we do a lot of both usability and we recently launched our new app in January. We do a lot of research that typically is done in person. For my team, we're already doing some remote or not in-person methods, but because we are a bank, we have to adhere to a lot of regulations.

Unlike when I was at a startup for example where you could just find a new vendor and then, plot down your corporate card and tomorrow use that vendor. When you're working at a big bank, it's a little different. We've been trying to leverage both tools we already had to do digital research and also exploring new ways and



trying to even find ways that aren't necessarily super technologically advanced, but how can we continue to do the same types of particularly qual, we can't go to a facility. Whether that's using the tools we don't know about or we're trying to just even do things old school via the telephone. We're trying to use both cutting edge things and even using old ways of doing things.

Other than that, I would say the person who started in saying, "What's not changing?" Because otherwise, I would say and a lot of people will say, "How is this crazy? I've been held up in the Catskills for three weeks." If anything, I would say it's shocking how things have not changed. At least on our side, I feel like not just me, but I think our internal clients are having just as many meetings if not more meetings. In some ways, I feel people are more engaged even when we have a readout or share-out of some giant survey where sometimes you wonder when you do, people call in. You wonder if they're really paying attention because they're multitasking and looking at email. Because we're using Zoom now, we're trying to get everyone to use Zoom, not 100%, but I feel like people are more engaged in some of these discussions about the data. Maybe people, they're in the home office and they have fewer distractions. For the most part, except for what I mentioned earlier, from a day to day responsibility, it's kind of BAU in terms of what we're – we're just as productive if not more. From the consumer standpoint...

Gregg Archibald: More people are listening to you. Go ahead.

Gary Feldman: That's been my experience so far. I mean people are really – I guess also, they really want to know what's going on with our customers and the consumers in general. I feel like in some ways, there's a heightened sense of, not appetite, but they're even more curious than normal to find out what we can tell them.

Gregg Archibald: Beautiful, I love that. Olivier, can you talk a little bit about what's going on with EyeSee? **Are you seeing differences in business levels or research used or any of those types of things?**

Olivier Tilleuil: Basically, adding on Gary and Rex. At first, EyeSee was mainly focusing on employees and next on the clients and client issues are now how can you have the movement in-person research to a remote desk? That's basically the core of EyeSee



is how can we help clients to go from inside to shopper. We saw in the first couple of weeks, there's quite a lot while we are speaking with those clients for three or four years. We were still doing in-store research and now, they start panicking because the researcher - that's in plans, they cannot do anymore. That's one thing. Secondly, Rex mentioned as well Amazon and e-commerce is - we're seeing that United States is going from about I think 15% penetration to about 40% penetration in e-commerce and nice full critical flow of rents, managers in the last days. They expect us to follow after the crisis that's e-commerce and they'll be super important. We are looking now, how can we help clients to actually get better in e-commerce, what's important, et cetera, for those that's never done e-commerce testing before.

Gregg Archibald: Rex, what about you?

Rex Briggs: I had an interesting transition in Marketing Evolution back in September where I became Executive Chairman and part of that was supporting the CFO who took over the CEO's responsibility to be a leader by basically not being hands-on with customers or with our key team members. A lot of my focus had shifted towards, we're looking at thought leadership and trying to take a broader view of where the industry was going. I think that that's what put me in a position to be able to see what was happening with the Coronavirus back in January and to be able to have time to run the model and analyze it. The biggest effort I'd say now is that as you go beyond the point of how bad could this get? What does that look like for consumers? The next standpoint is how do businesses plan when they have got so much uncertainty given so much consumer change and given an unprecedented simultaneous lockdown of literally the entire world within a matter of 60 days. A big part of the effort has been trying to say, "Okay, blank sheet of paper. We've never really had a system in marketing research to share our data and share our forecast." Companies are collaborative which is great in this industry and I think the role of GreenBook, DARS, ESOMAR, and so forth is going to be really important to figure out a way that we can come together, share our forecast for where is thinking going? Where is automotive sales going? When are people going to travel again? There's 42 million people that went to Las Vegas last year, what would that number be this year? What will that be next year? That's going to be really important for all kinds of businesses to plan and for governments to plan on what



happens next. I'd say that for me, it really did change from a business-as-usual focus on things like attribution, optimization, and media planning and how do we get people to adopt this technologies faster and see the benefits of faster data and then more detailed analysis to, "Wow, we have a whole new problem and opportunity which is how do we get an industry to come together and collaborate on developing consensus forecast for forward view so that we can return that back to businesses and our industry as well as to governments to be able to come out of this stronger and better."

Gregg Archibald: One of the themes that we're hearing just from you and from Camille and Merrill is this idea of a lot of different companies coming together to try and solve these problems and in many, many ways. To Camille's point, the humanity of us all in trying to do something and trying to do it together. That's a wonderful theme to pick up out of this. When we start talking about some of the clients, I love Gary's comment about people are more engaged. They need information. Rex, to reiterate you, that's all-around planning and uncertainty. A few things that were mentioned with clients is there's more emphasis around e-commerce, Merrill, you mentioned that and a couple of others, and remote and the level of engagement. **Have you seen impacts on budget or research priorities?** I'm just going to open up the floor to anyone instead of calling on people and we'll go around and see if that works.

Rex Briggs: If I could, for just a moment, I'd actually frame it slightly different. I actually think that there is a step-wise change occurring that we're only beginning to appreciate which is that the trajectory we are on, COVID-19 has accelerated the trajectory towards the digitization of research, et cetera. I think that you're hearing from the very beginning comment, it's more about what hasn't changed and what has changed. That said, I think we're at the very beginning of a step-wise change where we will see new capabilities emerge out of industry that will have long lasting changes to behavior. The one that I was focusing on was how we, as an industry, may shift to collaborating and sharing data to create consensus forecast that everyone can tap into and that would be a change that would not have happened had we not had a crisis. That would be a change that would have long lasting benefits. The same way that in the great depression, the emergence of GDP came out of the frustration that there wasn't enough data and good data about what's happening in the economy and that changed the world completely having that



become a standard core part of data that would come out of government. I think we're about to see some step-wise changes that are more than just continuations of trends that were happening already.

Gregg Archibald: All right. Thanks for the clarification, sorry about that. **Coming back to the issue on the client side, the research priorities, budgets, are people or clients getting more aggressive, less aggressive, holding back? What are you guys seeing?**

Olivier Tilleuil: We are seeing at the moment mixed signals. Some companies pause their budgets for one or two months. Some companies stay the same. Other companies actually increase their budgets. Obviously, this is dependent on the industry – the airline companies do not spend too much on research now, but you can see with all the mix of various groups within CPG, within e-commerce, even within certain sectors that are booming really now like toilet paper or spaghetti, some companies invest more, some pause everything.

Camille Nicita: I would agree. I think it is –

Gregg Archibald: What about others?

Camille Nicita: Sorry about that, this is Camille. Do you want me to keep going or do you want to interject another question?

Gregg Archibald: Yes, please do.

Camille Nicita: I was just going to agree with Olivier in just that I do believe that it depends on the industry. Work in the travel industry is put on indefinite pause right now. I think the pattern that we saw is probably end of March into early April, things were extremely uncertain with clients no matter what the industry that they were in and they were just starting to just sort of pause, but I feel like as of last week, things started to stabilize a bit in terms of, maybe not seeing the same level of project size coming through, but definitely clients are starting to be less gun-shy about going in and actually talking to customers.





I think the big concern that we're trying to help our clients navigate through is just making sure that whatever it is that they are asking that they don't come across as tone deaf. That's the big concern that we're hearing with our clients. Is it okay to go out and talk to our customers? Our counsel is absolutely yes and in fact, as long as it doesn't bias the results, even let them know who you are, what brand do you represent? Because again, back to the comment I made at the beginning, now's the opportunity to say, "Customers can be a stakeholder to your business, to your way forward," so you can gain a halo effect by showing them that you're in this with them, that you want to understand them as humans and take their new attitudes, behaviors, and mindset shifts into consideration as you're navigating the future. I think that the biggest concern like I said that we're seeing is clients may be going in with smaller, less risky size projects from an investment standpoint and really being sensitive to coming across as caring and compassionate and not business as usual.

Merrill Dubrow: Hey Gregg, this is Merrill. Can I just build on something Camille said? If you don't mind.

Gregg Archibald: Absolutely.

Merrill Dubrow: We're noticing a lot of what Camille just said, we're noticing what I call toe-dipping. We're noticing that clients are testing a lot of concepts try to figure out what COVID-19 means to their business, to their consumer, what the new consumer is. In the last week, we've had insurance clients, healthcare, hospitality, even a travel company, a parking company come to us and want to test concepts. So, it's a toe-dipping from the aspect of they don't have to commit to a large budget. Less than \$4,000.00, we could test some concepts here, and we've noticed that that has really been getting some steam in the past week or so.

Gregg Archibald: Okay, fantastic. I want to move on because just in the interest of time. All of this has made many of us reflect personally and professionally on what's important, what do we need to do. **How are you, yourself, taking advantage of this forced reflection to move forward? What kind of tips or tricks or focus areas are you guys dealing with to personally put this all on perspective and be ready for whatever next steps there are?** Merrill, let me start with you.



Merrill Dubrow: Sure. Thanks, Gregg. The real answer is a lot. First of all, it starts with communication to the teams on Monday at 10:30, I have a business update to the entire company. It's mandatory. I also call people during the week just to touch base. I made some mistakes on that because calling some of our team members that I don't usually talk to regularly on a Friday afternoon, I scared the crap out of them, and that was my bad. I didn't think that through. So, just touching base with people. I'm also doing goofy contests to keep everybody connected and to try to forget about life at 35 seconds or a minute a day. So, what does that mean? We do - last week's contest was - I spelled M/A/R/C with Cap'n Crunch. How many pieces of Cap'n Crunch did it take to spell M/A/R/C, which the answer was 1,209. And the reality is - this week's contest is all about American Airlines and how many I've done in my lifetime - flown in American. The winner doesn't know it, but the winner is going to get actually a free plane ticket in the United States.

So, it starts with communication. I think it's all about - look, we're all CEOs, C-level. We all bleed red, we all shed tears, and we've got to be honest with each other, and I think that what helped me tremendously is having a really good support system. People like Camille from Gongos, or Steve Schlesinger from Schlesinger Associates, or Adam, or Kim Harrison, or Steve Hankey, Tim Armsten - the list is endless. Even Lenny Murphy. We've talked a number of times because - last Tuesday, listen, I hit a wall a little bit. In the afternoon, I really got down, was angry about what's going on. I just had to go for a ride for 30 minutes. I don't even know where I went. It was like just out of body experience. Then, I talked to some contacts and they really helped me. So, it's this sharing. I think that the more that we share, the more that we rely on each other, the more we get vulnerable, I think really, really helps us, and we'll get through. I don't know what the future will bring. I do know that life is going to change tremendously. Last Thursday I taught three online courses at Michigan State. I was in front of a computer for five hours. I absolutely hated it. Most of you have seen me present, seen how I move around. I pace. I get everybody engaged, but I hated it. But is that the norm? Are we headed for virtual conferences? All of us have to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. For CEOs, that's really hard.



So, my biggest take-away is I don't want any of my competitors to go out a business. That's a bad thing. I don't want anybody to go out of business to help everybody and anything. I think we got to use all of our contacts to help the industry. So, what you got? I'm on the board of Michigan State and actually chairing the board next year and worked with Melanie Cartwright, who's agreed to the Insights Association CEO to what all the MSMR students in the country be Insights Association members for free. She's allowed 30 other students from Michigan State to the next conference out of virtual reality - the virtual conference in June for free.

Gregg Archibald: That's fantastic.

Merrill Dubrow: That's what we need to do. I think we all have a lot of contacts, we just have to use them to move things forward.

Gregg Archibald: Thanks, Merrill. Rex, what about you? How are you personally adapting how you've spent your time and energy to adapt to all of these changes?

Rex Briggs: I think Merrill's comments are really profound, because it is difficult to go from the way that CEO or C-level executive typically has their schedule packed and laid out and organized to where we're at now, where we're dealing with tremendous amounts of uncertainty. I guess I would encourage executives to build in a buffer time to just be able to digest whether that's the drive that Merrill describe, or for me it was going up to the top of the mountain here in Tahoe and snow shoeing to the top of the mountain, because there are no chair lifts running anymore for this season. [Laughter] And just trying to think about, "Man, what do we do next?" How do we digest the changes that are occurring? Then, it's about getting back and engaged with people and focusing on what can we do that makes a positive contribution. For us as a family, let's take care of another family with a single mom and a kid at their school who doesn't have the same resources that we have. And then, it's trying to take that one human experience and think about it at scale and recognize that there's 17,000,000 people in America now out of work. So, what do we do to help rebuild that economy? I think that there's a positive feeling that we all have. The miraculous part about humanity is our ability to cooperate and behave and adapt together at a much faster rate than our biology would allow us



to adapt. I think that's incredibly empowering, just trying to focus on part of my time every day to make a positive contribution.

Gregg Archibald: I just have to say I've been getting halfway emotional during this conversation because the – I don't know. Just the connection that is a theme throughout all of this conversation from the very beginning to what you just shared Rex. There are some wonderful silver linings out of all this. So, thank you.

Lenny Murphy: Just being the third one, being on everyone, I have to say, "Wow." This maybe the most inspiring of these yet. Gregg, I've actually had tears on my eyes a couple of times. I'm a big old softy. Thank you all. Truly. I think it is amazing to hear the level of humanity in this. I just had to say it. Go on, Gregg.

Gregg Archibald: But just recognizing the time, one of the topics that we want to talk about is what does the research industry look like on the other side of this? The other side is there's very little definition to – Rex, you probably have as much perspective on that or more perspective than most people. **When someone says "the other side," what do you think of in terms of, what does that look like and what timing might be associated with that?** I do want to say that this all speculative, but Rex has a lot of data that he's been working with to try and have a perspective.

Rex Briggs: Yes. I think the other side – you are right, it is speculation. I was running models this weekend trying to think about. My built-in assumption is that there is a second wave, because it's very difficult to coordinate globally to really truly stop the virus from replicating. My expectation is that there is a second wave and that we do not lock down the economy in the same way we do in the second wave because it is too painful in the first wave. But we hopefully have increased our capacity for the medical system, and that we've increased the testing and tracing and containment capabilities. I think for the market research in this period, a good assumption is that you're going to be dealing with an isolation of people being able to interact, wearing masks in a very limited fashion. So, the digitalization trend absolutely continues and accelerates in probably after a year, a year and a half until there's a vaccine at scale. That's going to change people's behavior forever because that will become the new standard and the new normal. So, I think that speed of data and information is going to be increasingly important. A



shift from long-time series, things like mixed models which use three years' worth of data, to techniques like machine learning and others that maybe more focused on more immediate and larger scale data, it should be something that we expect and build in.

So, those are the ones that are obvious continuation of trends or already afoot in our industry. The harder ones are that their – it ends up being an alchemy of these different activities occurring that create completely new capabilities. The example I was talking about with the era of [unintelligible 0:35:39.5] and hopefully Lenny engaging as well. How do we come together and share data and create consensus estimates for where consumer spending is going to go by sector and category? That's a completely new thing that could emerge out of this that would have not existed but for this global crisis. There's probably several of those things that are very hard to imagine today but I would encourage you all to take a look for those and think about what do we really need that's new and different and try to work towards building that.

Gregg Archibald: Thanks, Rex. Gary, I'd love to get your perspective on that same question. If you got any unique – being with Goldman Sachs, if you have any unique perspective on what the other side is or when. But also, **what are the things that you expect to be more important over the course of the next 12 months to your business?**

Gary Feldman: Well, it is a fairly new brand. It was built to be – If you look at our website, it says we were built customer first. Everyone says that. That really is the DNA of our brand. That's why - when I joined, there is only one person doing consumer insights. I've been there about two years and we've added more people. The focus has been greater in consumer insights and research in general. So I think it just going to continue. It's already been part of our DNA from a business perspective. If you go to our website – I'm not going to sit here and say all the things we're doing, but we have different programs in place right now for COVID-19 for our customers. That's not really a research thing, that's what the business is doing. I think we – as I said, there's sort of more, I think, bigger appetite for understanding our consumers that was already there. I think people are just paying attention to it more, and I think that's going to keep going. I think we're going to keep trying to understand what's going on in the greater economy and how it's going to affect



the various lines of businesses we have, and what it means for our customers, and how we can – I think we’re taking even like surveys, we already do, in trying to mine them even more closely, like verbatims. Everyone always gets verbatims. Sometimes, it’s like the last thing you want to look at or just – because you work. But now, it’s like you can find – it’s not saying we never looked at them before, but you’re trying to really – let’s put it this way. We, on the research team, always want to look at them, but now, I think people are really like, “Okay, what are people really saying?” They can’t watch focus group tapes anymore. So, just trying to really milk every – not milk but like really trying to - getting in touch with our customers. Our call center has been – like that side of the business is really pushing the envelope to adapt to this new environment. They’ve been doing really great. So I think just us teaming with them and really trying to make sure the voice of a customer is even louder now.

Gregg Archibald: Okay, great. Thank you, Gary. Olivier, what about you? What do you think is going to be the focus areas on this “the other side”? Whatever that may mean. **Over the course of the next six months, 12 months, 18 months, something like that. What do you think the focus is going to be?**

Olivier Tilleuil: I strongly agree with Gregg. I believe in the next six months, what we will see is we will see speed up of the trends. Without the crisis, what would be two and five years will be probably to now in next six months or 12 months. So we are seeing e-commerce is moving fast to 40%. It might go a little bit down but this would be a huge challenge for lots of CPG companies. Lots of companies are questioning as far as current research methodologies, whether they have a choice or not, for instance, in person, focus groups, and so forth. They don’t have a choice. Now, they need to be open to new technologies in which learning will become a trusted sort of - adaptation of new technologies will be as well faster. Then, thirdly, I think we will see far significant shifts in geography. United States is obviously an important player. I believe in the next coming years, China and Asia will be becoming more and more important as well for conducting a research.

Gregg Archibald: Okay, great. Thank you. Merrill, what’s your perspective on what comes next?



Merrill Dubrow: Yes. First of all, I'm not scared today, I'm not scared next week, I'm not scared next month - we'll get past this. My hope is that we brace for round two because round two, I think, is going to be worse in the winter than where we are today. I'm really concerned about middle to end of fourth quarter and then going into 2021 because I'm not sure we're going to have a vaccine ready. And then, what did we learn? What did the government - what did the great United States learn from this to get us through the next round, because I think it's going to be bad. The big take-away from me is for years - having been in the research community for 35 years - for years, research budgets got cut and those dollars went away or went into marketing. I think the tables have turned and they're going to be turned, because I think the opposite's going to happen and marketing gets cut, and those dollars get put into research. I think the pandemic has changed shopping. I think that it changed consumer, and I think that companies like Walmart and Target, for instance, now have senior mornings, right? Every Tuesdays, unless you're 60 to 65 years old, you can't get into their store in the morning from, I think, 6:00 to 7:00 or 6:00 to 8:00. The reality is I think that all these companies are going to have to figure out who the new consumers to them, and I think they're going to put a lot of those dollars in marketing and they're going to go into research, is one big take-away from me. I think, with restaurants, they've had obviously take-out. What does that do to their business? Are they going to be testing all of that stuff? I do believe that the industry, years and years ago, was much larger conferences. Then, in went by into boutique-y conferences. I think we're going to get out - we transferred back into virtual conferences now. That would be interesting to see.

So, brace yourself because what's coming next, I think, we are going to see tremendous changing. I think that for suppliers, anybody who doesn't have a diversified portfolio with regard to different verticals, different methodologies - Everybody talks about being generalist or being some type of a guru on a particular methodology. I think that goes away, because if it doesn't go away, you could be in trouble down the road.

Gregg Archibald: Okay, all right. We're saving the best for last. Camille, **what's your perspective on the research industry on the other side of this, whatever that phrase might mean?**



Camille Nicita: Well, just to round this out here, I think two things come to mind for me. One is as long as I've been in the research industry or the insights industry, which is longer than I care to admit to right now, but it's been a long time. There has always been this sort of proverbial desire for insights to have a seat at the corporate table, right? To be seen as strategic, to show up to be asked their opinions, to have input into strategy, and I truly believe that now is that time, right? We have the opportunity as an industry to rise to that occasion, to show up smart, to show up strategically, and to prove to our organizations that consumer insight can truly help drive the future.

I was in a webinar last week where there was a client-side organization talking about how they're really being taxed with providing foresight to the organization, right? Enough information on COVID trackers and things like that unless you can actually provide information on how that is actually going to affect the future. That's what companies really want here. The insights department are being taxed with that right now. They're being asked, "What does this mean? What does this mean to our future? How is this going to show up or should it show up in our strategic plan?" That's an awesome opportunity, right? We've been waiting for that opportunity, not just to be information providers but to be true strategic partners to the business. Maybe I'm an eternal optimist but I truly believe that that is in the future if we play our cards right now and show up in a smart way. So, there's that piece. And then, I think just as leaders, no matter what organization you're in - we sort of have a saying at Gongos, "Keep one foot in here now and one foot in the future." Different parts of organization probably emphasize different size of that equation differently on a day-to-day basis. As the leader of the organization, I think my job is typically to be more thinking about the future and what do things mean to our future. But I can tell you, right now I have - yes, my thoughts on the future, but I am also very focused on the day-to-day and really feeling the day-to-day with my people, with my clients, with my family, with my community. As a planner, that's really hard for me. I'm always been thinking three months in advance. I live my life three months in advance. I'm trying not to do that right now because what we're going through right now is real and has huge implications, and if we're not paying attention day-to-day, you could lose sight of what that actually means, both the possibilities and the risk for the future.