



Market Research Society of India

## 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting

22<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER 2020

Dear Members,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Body Meeting of The Market Research Society of India on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2020.

This particular AGM is special, in the sense that this is the first ever AGM that is being held virtually, and the one that has the maximum participation since we came together as MRSI. We currently have 48 members participating in this live event of your society.



Financial Year 2019-20 was a year of big-bang activities, under the stewardship of the new Managing Committee. This current round of Managing Committee can boast to be the youngest committee thus far, and that has been apparent in the pace, degree of enthusiasm and participation in driving multiple initiatives of your society.

The new MC, upon being elected in June 2019, had set forth an agenda of 14 points, with a balanced mix of earlier initiatives, and some fresh ones to usher the new vision.

While most of the initiatives have progressed ahead as per plans, some beating our own expectations too, there was an unforeseen and unprecedented event that started to take shape in the early part of 2020. COVID 19, threw off some of our larger plans such as the ESOMAR APAC event planned for 30<sup>th</sup> of March. However, your Society, instead of getting bogged down by this crisis, showed extreme agility, resilience and compassion to play a much larger role in the industry never seen before.

Before I begin with the update on various initiatives of your Society, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the Managing Committee members for putting in their valuable time, dedication and energy during the entire course of the year, especially given the extra pressures that their day job brought in.

Special appreciation is due to the office bearers – our Vice Presidents, Sunder Muthuraman and Manish Makhijani, Hon Secretary Sanjay Pal and our extremely diligent treasurer, Vinay Kumar.

We also had a senior industry leader join the MRSI team to drive execution of our strategic initiatives. I would like to welcome Ms. Mitali Chowhan, and acknowledge the manner in which she became an inherent part of the core team so quickly, along with our Director General, Sandeep Saxena. The activities of the society are presented in more detail in the document.

**Thank you,**

**Sandeep Arora**  
**President**

**AGILITY | RESILIENCE | COMPASSION**

*In the times of COVID-19*

## THE MRSI TEAM

**The MRSI Managing Committee 2019-21**  
Office Bearers





**MRSI – Vice President**  
Manish Makhijani  
Unilever



**MRSI – Vice President**  
Sunder Muthuraman  
Kantar





**MRSI – Treasurer**  
K. Vinay Kumar  
Datawise




**Secretary, MRSI**  
Sanjay Pal Nielsen

**The MRSI Managing Committee 2019-21**







**Paru Minocha**  
Kantar




**Priya Lobo**  
Ormax




**Dr. Derrick Gray**  
BARC




**Praveen Nijhara**  
Hansa Research




**Ashwani Kukreja**  
Tata Sky



**Shaveta Bhardwaj**  
Kantar





**Shelley Sengupta**  
Diageo




**Vivek Gupta**  
Ipsos

**The MRSI Managing Committee 2019-21**







**Ashutosh Singh**  
Internet Research Bureau




**Saurin Shah**  
Godrej Consumer Products




**Rashesh Raval**  
Azure Knowledge Corp.



**Tomson Thundathil**  
Malayala Manorama




**Sathya Namakkal**  
DDB Mudra




**Pravin Shekar**  
Krea eKnowledge


**MRSI Secretariat**




**Welcoming...**



**Sandeep Saxena**  
Director General



**Nandakumar Nair**  
Manager



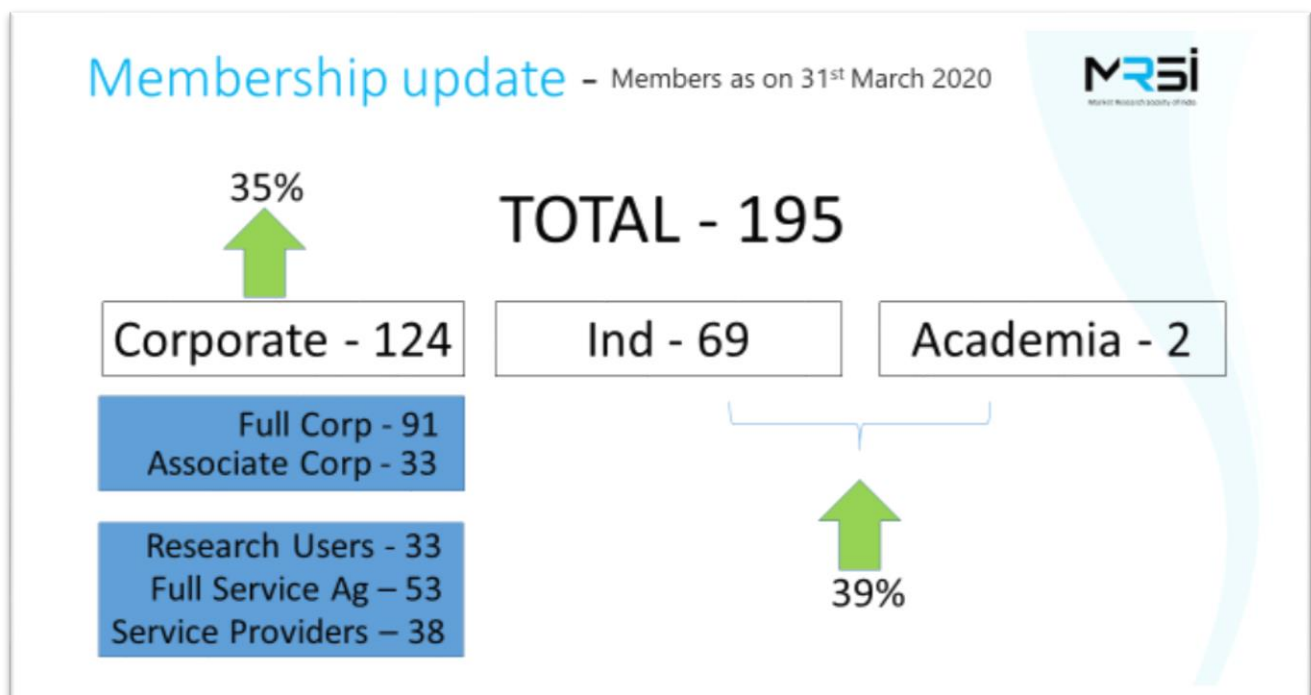
**Mitali Chowhan**  
Deputy Director General

Market Research Society of India



**2019-20** saw a huge jump in our membership base with increased activities. We achieved a whopping growth of **35% in our corporate membership**, and **~40% at the overall membership**. This was a result of outreach to individuals and corporates through our awareness campaigns for our webinars as well MRSI Golden Key Awards. Subsidized delegate rates for the ESOMAR APAC conference also played a significant role.

We closed the year with an **addition of 37 new Corporate Members and 22 new Individual members**. Our membership base at the end of the financial year stood at 196, just a tad short of 200. This breaks up in to 124 Corporate members, 2 educational institutes and 69 individual members

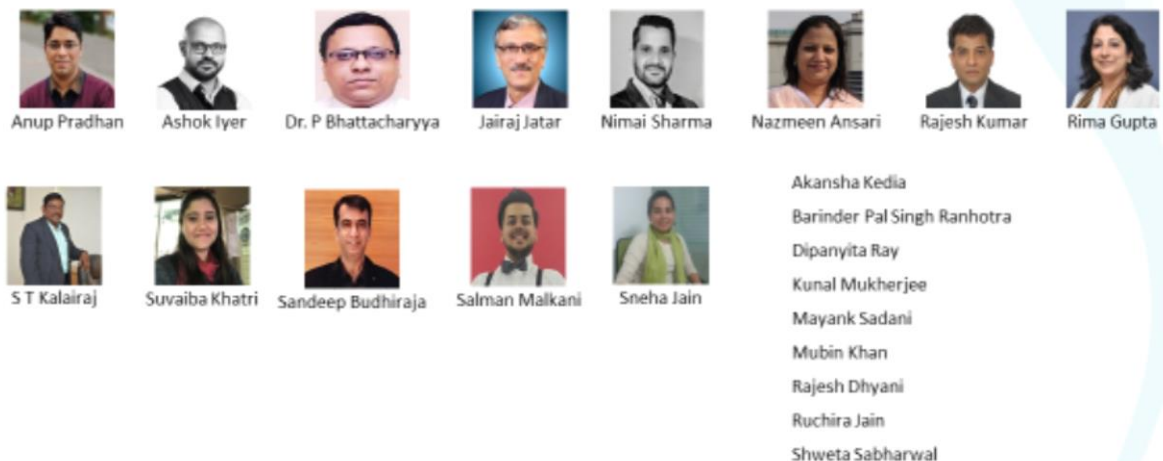


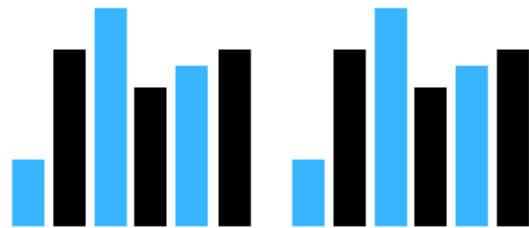
Please join me in welcoming the following members who have joined MRSI in 2019-20:

## Corporate members



## Individual members





Overall the surplus of income over expenses stood at INR 2.96 lakhs at the end of FY 2019-20 as against INR 25.95 lakhs in the previous year. This decline was due to the fact that ESOMAR APAC was cancelled due to COVID 19 and we did not get any contribution to our income from the conference.

However over INR 17 lakhs of income from Golden Key Awards and a significant jump in our membership base helped in meeting our overall expenses and leave a small surplus.

Overall, the expenses were higher than previous years on account of MRSI staff's travel expense to attend the ESOMAR APAC conference in 2019 as well addition of the new team member.



## KEY INITIATIVE

### DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



One of the key initiatives taken in 2019 was towards digitalizing the work streams of your Society. This was done through development of new Webportal.

The MRSI went live with a state-of-the-art CMS-based integrated webportal, hosted in AWS, in March 2020. This digital transformation project migrated several offline processes into the Content Management System.

The new functions include end-to-end new and automated Membership processes, registration and operational processes around events such as Seminar and Awards, Email engine and many more. Social marketing and front-end website updates are now possible at the click of a button.



## OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES



The entire set of initiatives have been broadly divided into four large categories:

### 1. BIGGEST BLOCKS

- a. ESOMAR MRSI APAC Conference 2020
- b. MRSI Golden Key Awards
- c. MRSI Freelance Interviewer Relief Fund

### 2. INFORMATION SHARING & TRAINING

- a. MRSI Wednesday Webinars
- b. MRSI Academia Connect (Strengthening ties with Educational Institutions)
- c. MRSI FIT 2.0 (Field Interviewer Training & Testing)

### 3. EXPANDING HORIZONS

- a. MRSI Connect (Building Start-up Ecosystem)
- b. MRSI Government Connect (Strengthening Govt ties)
- c. The Community Program (Giving Back to Society)
- d. Market Research Adda (Geo-level Member Connect)

### 4. REINFORCING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- a. MRSI Professional Standards Committee







## ESOMAR MRSI APAC Conference 2020 –

This was supposed to be the mega-highlight of the year, with us targeting a total of 750+ international and local attendees, by far the biggest regional event of ESOMAR.

And, as we all know, due to COVID 19 lockdown, all international and domestic travel came to a halt. Therefore, as a result, we had to postpone this mega-event to later in 2020. But given that the impact of COVID19 continues till date, the planned on-premise Conference was shifted to a virtual platform.

This virtual event, re-christened as the ESOMAR Asia Pacific 2020 – Insights Festival, was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with very interesting and relevant topics and papers.

We are hoping that we would be able to conduct this on-ground event, in partnership with ESOMAR, with similar grandeur in 2021, once life goes back to normal after COVID - 19 effects.

# REJOICE | CELEBRATE | HONOUR

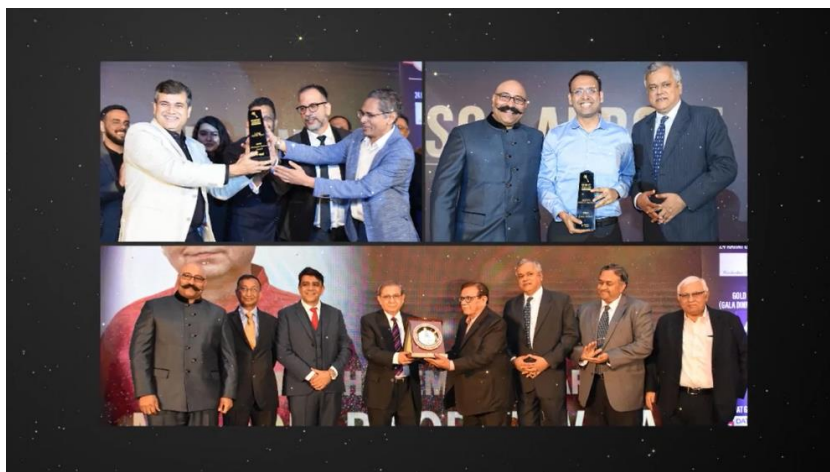


## The MRSI GOLDEN KEY AWARDS

In 2019, your Society pioneered the MRSI Golden Key Awards – an Award ceremony to celebrate and acknowledge the Insights industry and its professionals. This grand event was held at Mumbai Cricket Association, Mumbai on December 19, 2019.

There were 13 Award Categories that were hotly contested for by over 160 entries. An eminent jury panel of senior Marketing and Market Research professionals presided over the selection of winners.

With an active drive from a core team of volunteers from various industry members, led by MRSI VP Manish Makhijani, the crafting of the Award Categories, process of selection of winners and event creation for the Golden Key Awards 2019 has laid grounds for a sparkling annual event going forward.



As part of the Golden Key Awards ceremony, an iconic award was also launched – the **MRSI Lifetime Achievement Award**, which was conferred upon industry veteran **Mr. Dorab Sopariwala** for 2019 by the past presidents of MRSI.

The launch of the Golden Key Awards 2020 was announced recently, and the last date of nominations for Early Bird was 3<sup>rd</sup> November. While overall number of categories have been brought down this year, but special category around COVID-19 has been introduced. The award ceremony would be virtually conducted on 21<sup>st</sup> Jan 2021. Hope your organization is geared to take home Golden Keys this year!

## MRSI Freelance Interviewer Relief Fund

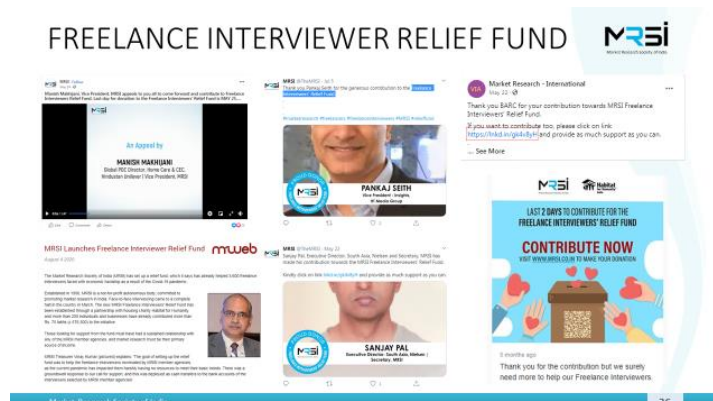
- COVID 19 brought a global disruption in March 2020, and Indian market research was also severely affected. This meant that the freelance investigators who carry out face-to-face interviews were without work for several months. In an industry first, your Society took up the challenge to rally the Indian MR industry to support the MRSI Freelance Interviewers' Relief Fund. We got together with leading agencies to work out a framework of who should be eligible and the contribution mechanisms. This program was created and launched within a month into lockdown.

Contributions were made by the Indian MR industry practitioners from past and present, in India and across the Globe, to help our community. Over 200 individuals and corporates contributed to the fund, and a total of more than Rs. 75 lakhs was raised.

Our MRSI Treasurer, Vinay Kumar, liaised with our charity partner Habitat for Humanity to oversee the deployment of transparent cash transfers to the bank accounts of the interviewers nominated by MRSI member agencies.



- We had a number of supporters – leaders from India and abroad, issuing video pleas on social media. A number of other social media campaigns were run to bring visibility to this initiative. This program benefited over 3600 interviewers identified as per agreed criteria by agencies.



ACTIVITY UPDATE

## Information Sharing & Training

MRSI Wednesday Webinars

MRSI Academia Connect

MRSI FIT 2.0

## MRSI Wednesday Webinars

MRSI Wednesday Webinars have been an important part of MRSI member benefits for over 5 years now. This is one of the unique media through which MRSI can effectively reach out to various members directly regarding information and updates.



In this new managing committee, Ashwani Kukreja and Sunder Muthuraman took over the curating and hosting of Wednesday Webinars and elevated it a very different level, especially during the onset of COVID-19 lockdown phase!

We had 12 monthly webinars around exciting topics such as Sampling in Digital World, Role of Artificial Intelligence in Market Research, Storytelling, Commodity Pricing, CX (New wave of Consumer voice), and Consumer buying behavior. Highest registrations



here was around 208, with the average registrations of 120. A number of audio-video social media posts promoted this webinars to enhance the reach.

We also held 4 COVID Special webinars which beat all records of registrations. Max registrations crossing a whopping 920, resulting in 544 attendees. These also included Playbook webinar series that were acknowledged and applauded globally.

These Webinars were hosted regularly every month with interesting topics and very popular Indian and international speakers. We also had a commercial partner for the webinar which allowed us to recover our webinar license costs.

Plan on MRSI Wednesday Webinars in this current year is Rebound and Rebuild, and the format is going to be Interviews, debates, Key notes, etc....constantly moving the needle is the name of the game here.

If you or your organization is keen to contribute to this immensely popular webinar series, please do reach out to Sandeep Saxena or Mitali Chowhan at MRSI.



## Education and Academic Institutions

With a focus to increase our industry connect with leading educational institutions and students, this particular Academia Connect program was launched in 2019.

Last year, your society, as a first, engaged in a partnership with Birla Institute of Management Technology (BIMTECH) for a certificate course in Market Research with an objective to provide additional skills to their existing MBA students with industry relevant syllabus. MRSI reviewed the course outline and had a say in the faculty engaged by the institute. In last year, 38 students took this additional credit course and 36 qualified for the joint MRSI and BIMTECH certificate.

Praveen Nijhara took charge of this initiative. Given the successful outcome of the first batch, BIMTECH has again partnered with MRSI for this year. St Joseph's Institute of Management in Bengaluru has also come on board this year. We are looking to formalise this activity and have a panel of industry experts who would be willing to take guest lectures and case studies in the institutes we partner with.


Also, we would encourage our members to consider and visit these institutes for their talent requirements for both full time as well as internships.

Please contact MRSI office if you would like to be empanelled as well as if you need details of students who have taken the course or need a connect with the placement cell.

### MRSI Academia Connect

Improve Connect between industry, academia and young students

- Initiative to create certificate course in Marketing Research in collaboration with Management Institutes;
- Birla Institute of Management Technology (BIMTECH), St. Joseph Institute of management
- Programme meant to provide additional skills to their existing MBA students with industry relevant syllabus; MRSI assisted co-creating syllabus and in identifying right trainers
- In the process of creating a panel of experts for lecture and providing case studies to help institutions
- Students can be considered for talent requirements; both full time or internship



MRSI  
Market Research Society of India

## **MRSI FIT 2.0**

The Field Interviewer Test (FIT), a Certification and Reference check system for freelance data suppliers is four years old now and we have over 20,000 interviewers registered in the system. 14,000 interviewers have passed the test and around 4,500 active interviewers are covered under the accident insurance scheme.

Led by Praveen Nijhara and supported by Manish Makhijani and Murali S (Kantar), defining of FIT 2.0 is underway. Right from the inception stage, key senior stakeholders will be involved to make this a future-ready new version of the Field Investigator Test, to deliver quality to Market Research endeavours and address concerns on data quality.

MRSI FIT 2.0 is at the design stage as we speak with strategic considerations on possible scenarios of fieldwork in the near future. A Concept based exploratory phase has been kicked off. We look forward to a “FIT”-for-purpose FIT 2.0!

ACTIVITY UPDATE  
**Expanding  
Horizons**



## MRSI Connect

Continuing our partnership with NASSCOM and the objective to increase the tech influence through start-ups in our industry, the 2019 MRSI Connect was organized at MCA in Mumbai in August 2019.

Led by Sandeep Saxena and Manish Makhijani, this edition of Connect focused on “Technology for Qualitative Research” and we had 11 organizations invited as sellers for the event. The brief for the start-ups was developed after speaking to senior qualitative leaders in the industry and the shortlisted start-ups were provided an industry briefing as well to have them utilize the available time more efficiently.

15 of our corporate members took part as buyers and heard the 2 minute pitch from all the sellers and had short 10 minute meetings with the sellers whose product caught their interest.

In total, over 100 meetings were conducted in during this session.



## MRSI Government Connect Program

The objective of this program is to create a dedicated workstream to focus on the MR industry’s engagement and perception with the government entities.

Sanjay Pal and Sundar Muthuraman steered the workgroup from leading members IPSOS and Nielsen to help identify strategy and action plan toward this engagement. Given the client perspective, Ashwani Kukreja, facilitated by contacts from BARC, engaged with a key ministry of the Central Government. This ministry has understood more about the MRSI and what we do, and will shortly be giving an opportunity for agencies for share relevant webinar(s) under the MRSI umbrella.

We expect this very critical initiative to have a multiplier effect in the near future.



The second edition of The Community Program saw MRSI partner with “Light of Life Trust”, a number of entries were received and the committee finally selected Indu Upadhaya from Ipsos to progress the project.

Indu conducted fieldwork in Murbad and Kashale in Raigarh district of Maharashtra and was mentored by Anuradha Roy Choudury from Parikrama.



Indu’s project won the “Making a Difference – Gender Equality” contest by ESOMAR and LOLT team and Indu presented their project at the virtual ESOMAR Congress getting global recognition for her as well as MRSI.

Ipsos very kindly provided all resources to collect data and analyse the same for the project and we are very grateful for their support.

## RESEARCH ADDA



Instituted by past president, Pravin Shekar, these local events provide opportunities for networking at local levels.

Continuing with the spirit this year, through the efforts of our Managing Committee member Tomson Thundathil, a Research Adda was conducted at Kochi in November 2019 at Rajagiri Business School for their students and MRSI members and marketers based in Kochi.

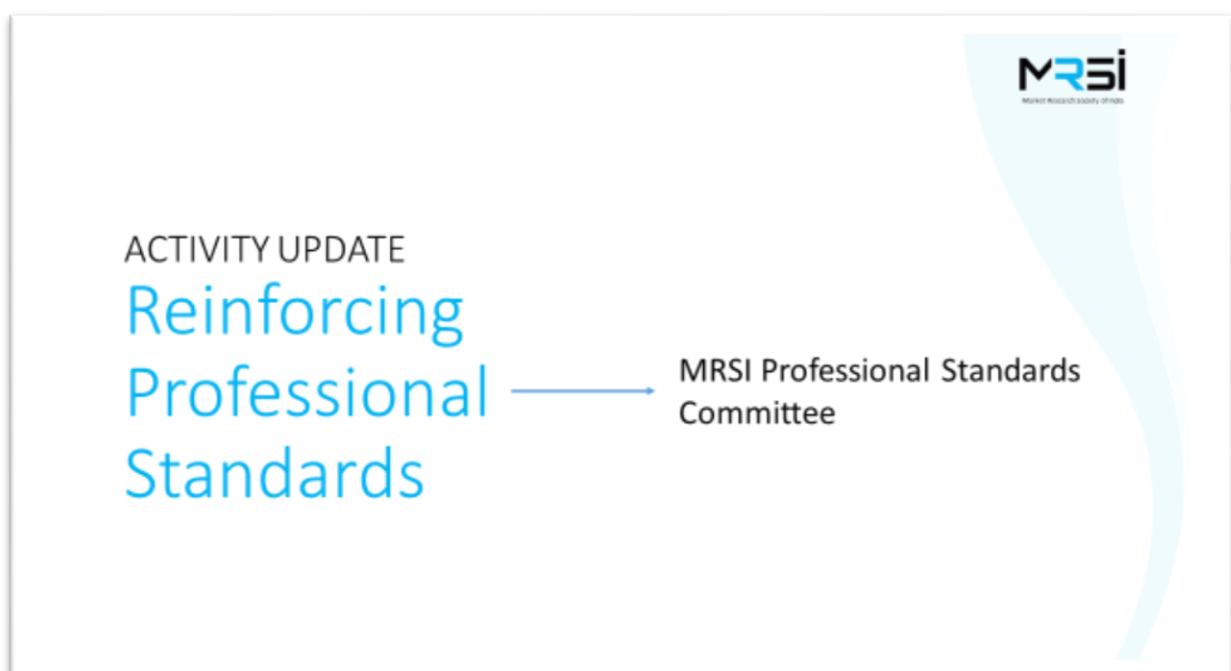
Our Director General, Sandeep Saxena, gave an introduction to MRSI while MRSI VP, Sunder Muthuraman, delivered a talk on “Getting insights in age of data explosion”

The event was attended by over 100 people.

In addition, we had a small gathering of Delhi based members in August 2019 hosted graciously by Lucid India which was attended by over 20 people and Sanjay Pal, Sandeep Saxena and myself represented MRSI. We would encourage you to volunteer to host these small gathering in your cities with logistics support from MRSI office.

More such gatherings to be organised once the current pandemic is over.





## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The first ever Professional Standards Committee (PSC) was promulgated with the guidance of Dr. Derrick Gray and Sanjay Pal in March 2020 by the MRSI.

Professional Standards in the field of Market Research are core to the charter of the MRSI, which was formed to promote, protect, improve & propagate market research in all its branches. The Professional Standards Committee forms the basis for even greater trust between MRSI members, their clients, partners, and the general public.

The PSC is a well-balanced committee, currently chaired by Sanjay Pal, ED, Nielsen, with committee members Dr. Bikramjit Chaudhuri, SVP, Datamatics Global Services Ltd., Ravikumar Narayanan, Business Development Director, Dynata, Anand Roy Chowdhury, DGM, Bharti Airtel Ltd. and Deepen Shah, VP, BARC India.

The PSC will strengthen professional self-regulation and has powers to impose disciplinary action on MRSI members found in violation of the MRSI and ICC/Esomar code.

In addition to taking up complaints, the PSC Committee has been building expertise in the MRSI Code of Ethics, and examining the various articles therein.

## Concluding Remarks

These were some of the key activities taken up by your society in the year 2019-20

Feel free to give some feedback, positive or otherwise, to ensure that we stay aligned to the expectations of our members (at [info@mrsi.co.in](mailto:info@mrsi.co.in))



The current year had brought a number of challenges, as well as opportunities. Whether we like this year or hate it, one thing is certain that we surely cannot ignore it.

In one of the recent reports of ESOMAR called “Insights in times of COVID 19”, it predicts a one-year decline of the global MR industry of upto -25.3%, shedding in the process, almost \$20Bn in turnover. If it weren’t for this crisis, this \$90Bn industry would have seen a 3.9% growth.

So, this is certainly a time for a pause...to sit back and reset some of our business models, our offerings and our resource pool.

This is a time when a number of things are changing rapidly around us:

- The engagement model (does CPI still remain valid?),
- Our competition (from Consulting Firms to Analytics companies to Tech giants to start-ups). One such example of shift can be seen in the US Top 50 (formerly Honomichl Top 50), which typically would have the full service research firms listed. If you were to see the latest report of 2020 – out of top 20, only 6 are full service research firms. Others include Digital Data Analytics companies like salesforce.com, adobe systems, Epsilon, etc - 5 of them!! Others are DIY platform companies, Sample Panel providers, Consulting Firms (like Booz Allen Hamilton, McKinsey & Company) and Syndicated Reports providers.
- Our operational model (from Primary Data Collection to Any Data Ingestion),

- Our resource pool (from MBA grads to Python programmers to data scientists to Solution Architects)
- Our sampling to reporting frameworks

Everything is changing...and it's not only changing at the supplier's end, there's a big change happening at the buyer's end too.

Given these fundamental shifts in our paradigm, your society, THE MRSI, would continue to partner you in these dynamic environments. We, as always, are open to your suggestions and feedback to ensure that we are aligned in meeting your expectations.

I would end this report by one of my favourite quotes from Paulo Coelho:



**Thank you very much! Take care of yourself, and stay safe!!**

Sd/-

SANDEEP ARORA  
President, MRSI