L&E research

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Jennifer Cattel: Hello. Hello. Welcome, everyone. We'll get started in just a minute. Just waiting for everyone to come into the room. So glad you're here. Don't forget to say hello in the chat. Let us know where you're from. It's finally sunny and a beautiful day in Connecticut. Welcome. Welcome, everyone. You want to make sure that you change over your 'to' in the chat to panelists and attendees so everyone can see. It looks like the majority of people are in the room, I'm going to go ahead and get started since it's already two after. So, welcome to today's webinar. My name is Jen, I work for the Insights Association. And I'm so glad you're here for today's The Latest in Qualitative Research Technology. If you have any questions throughout the presentation, you can put them in that Q&A pod. Brett will get to the questions at the end of the presentation. Please stay included in the chat, say hello, but you definitely want to put those questions into that pod. To start us off, I'd like to introduce our moderator and host for today, Brett Watkins. He is the president and CEO of L&E Research. So I'll turn it over to him.

Brett Watkins: Thanks, Jen. Appreciate it. Welcome, everybody. I see people continuing to log in, so excited to have you. It's a conversation we're looking forward to having today. I want to introduce everyone. Our discussion today will be around artificial intelligence and the usage of it in the market research industry, as well as getting to know a little bit more about two companies who are leading some of the forefront there. So I am joined today by Gary Ellis, who's the co-founder of Remesh. Gautam Kanumuru, who is the co-founder of Yogi. And joined by our very own Kelli Hammock, who is our senior client solutions manager. And welcome, everybody. Gary, maybe we'll start off with you. Tell us a little bit about yourself and your background in the industry.

Gary Ellis: Excellent. Thanks, Brett. Thanks, Jennifer. Great to be in front of everyone today. I'm going to use slides as hopefully not too much of a crutch, but a way to at least guide the initial conversation and then I'll dive into the platform itself so you guys can get a preview of actually what we do here at Remesh. So real quick in the way of context. The idea for Remesh, the origin of Remesh really

comes back from both me and my co-founder's somewhat obsession. My previous career was as a political operator, and back in the 2012 cycle, one of the things that very much stuck with me was, while politicians are able to stand on a bully pulpit and get their message out, it's really quite easy for them if they've got the right audience on traditional or social media to project out, doing the inverse is challenging. And obviously, everyone here is part of the insights space, so you know that there is a plethora of resources to actually understand people. But to actually create an environment where you're providing a virtual table that everyone can gather at in a live dialogue, a qualitative conversation can transpire between one individual and a large group. An audience of people that you need to understand wasn't really technology that was available. So starting in 2012, I met my co-founder. It's always nice to have a co-founder who's getting their PhD in computational and theoretical physics if you're going to build a tech company, because that is not what I do. And between 2012 and 2015, we started building the underpinnings of what is Remesh. We moved to New York together to go through an accelerator program in 2015 and have built the company on the back of that. Today, we're venture-backed to the tune of about $50 million. We've got 150 employees. And what we've built is what we consider to be a new paradigm for qualitative research. And it does exactly what we set out to have it do, which is a large dynamic conversation between that one individual and the audience of your choosing that surfaces relevant insights in a really seamless fashion, but it's powerful and engaging at the same time. So it's really this crossroads between qualitative and quantitative.

Brett Watkins: Hey, Gary, before we dive into the product demos and stuff, can we at least get everybody else introduced?

Gary Ellis: Oh, yeah, sorry. I didn't mean to bogart here.

Brett Watkins: No worries. I'm excited to see, obviously, more of that as well. Gautam, how about you? Tell us a little about yourself.

Gautam Kanumuru: For sure. Hi, everyone. My name is Gautam. I'm co-founder and CEO of Yogi. Very high level about Yogi to begin with. We are a software platform to help companies decipher reviews and ratings, get more visibility into what's going on with brands and companies' reviews. So, really excited to be here. Definitely, the topic is one that hits home for me in terms of the latest in qualitative research and AI. Prior to founding Yogi, I used to work at Microsoft on AI technologies across Windows 10, Xbox, Cortana. So I always like to say, if anybody is having an issue with a Microsoft product, I can probably find you the

person to complain to. So, feel free to shoot those bugs my way. But thanks, Brett. And excited to be here.

Brett Watkins: Appreciate that introduction, Gautam. Good to know about Microsoft, definitely had my few challenges in life. I'll take advantage of that. Last but not least, Kelli Hammock here is our L&E Research - she's our senior client solutions manager. Kelli is doing a lot with not only working with our technology partners like Remesh and Yogi but also, she's going to talk a little bit about our virtual facility. Kelli, you want to give us a little hello and audience a shout?

Kelli Hammock: Yep. Hello, I am Kelli Hammock. I've been working in market research for about 15 years now. And primarily, I've worked on the operational side in a variety of service areas. More recently, I've been doing proposal writing, screener development, research design, and project consultations. And so when those consultations are needed, I help our clients navigate the various methodologies and technologies that will best suit their research goals. So, that's how I help out at L&E Research. And I really help our team with resource management as well, so that if they aren't quite sure how to help our clients, I help them to do that as well.

Brett Watkins: Awesome. I look forward to you talking a little bit about Virtual Facility today as well, Kelli. So I know that's something that's been very much uppermost in mind, which is a good segue to, as we know Virtual Facility for us was really created by a lot of COVID and the outcome of the pandemic. And it seems like you can't start or have a conversation with everyone without actually acknowledging the elephant in the room over the last 15 months and the changes on it, so I'm curious to see what everyone is thinking as far as what's changed. So, what's been the same and what's different? How has the pandemic influenced you and what's going on in your world? So Gautam, what's that been like for you?

Gautam Kanumuru: COVID has been interesting for us, as I'm sure it's been interesting for everyone in the world. So since reviews and ratings are our primary data source that we focus on, there's been a huge explosion in those since the pandemic. With e-commerce becoming bigger, it's completely shifted the way that consumers shop. And so what we've really been seeing on our side, what's changed is the brands and companies that we work with are starting to become more aware of the importance of this data source. Not only because reviews play a huge role in the way that consumers make purchasing decisions, but also what those reviews represent. They essentially represent this pool of

unbiased feedback from tens of thousands of actual purchasers. And so because of that, it becomes really useful across the organization. So whereas we maybe used to work heavily with eComm teams and stuff like that, we're now seeing that marketing teams, brand managers, folks on insights and innovation are all able to extract really useful information from these reviews and ratings. So that, plus just generally speed. People need answers faster, the world is moving faster and so the faster that we're able to get information out, the better it is for our clients. So that's what we've been seeing on our side, Brett.

Brett Watkins: Gary, how about you? I know on our end, we've seen there seemed to be like a couple of months of trying to figure it all out. But now companies seem to have really dived in and found their track, if you would, and really rolling forward. What have you seen?

Gary Ellis: Absolutely. And I think Gautam's last point, building off of that, is it's been a year of change. And it's been more forced change than I think the industry has experienced, at least in the time that I've been part of it. And a lot of what research is and has been is how close you can get to the participants, the sample. And at least in the qualitative world, that's about in-home iHUTs, it's IDIs, its focus groups, and all of those things just basically at the end of March last year had to get shut off. And you juxtapose that with the fact that now things are changing in terms of purchase behavior, messaging needs and that desire, that need to get closer to customers and understand how to push through these transition periods came together in a really interesting way. For us, specifically, we obviously are a digital solution, so we were well positioned to take advantage of the need for our customers. And I very much view us as a technology platform, so our customers range from full-service shops all the way through to the end client themselves. We were a bridge for them in some ways to reach those audiences in a way that they needed to in a time where they had to reach them in a different place. And I think that transition period is ongoing. The beginnings of COVID when it was chaotic to now where there's almost a re-established norm and a return to work is something that is really important for everyone, all organizations, but specifically the insights departments to really stay close to the employees and the customers and to understand what the changing needs really look like. So it's been a hard time to run a business, quite frankly, over the last year, but it's also been a really interesting opportunity to push the industry forward from a technology perspective.

Brett Watkins: Interesting is a good choice of words, Gary, without question. You apparently win the award. I saw someone comment that you hadn't heard the word bogart used in a while, so you're doing a fantastic job of identifying.

You mentioned it, both of you, technology. And one of the reasons why I was so excited to have you both here today is the fact that artificial intelligence is such a central piece of your technology. Talk a little bit about that, Gary. Actually, Gautam, start off if you would because I want to come back with Gary on another question here first. Which is, talk to me a little bit about your artificial intelligence usage, and how is that applying and being used for you in the industry?

Gautam Kanumuru: Our philosophy on AI in general and how it comes into Yogi is, we see AI as the next step in automation and removal of more menial tasks for folks. So we play, and Gary with Remesh play in the world of large amounts of data. And you really have to organize that data in a way that then leads to the insights, so where we apply AI is really in the analysis of the data coming in. Specifically, when you talk about review data, it is all text-based. So being able to understand at a simple level, what are the keywords being used, but also what is the sentiment and emotion behind this? As well as what's really big for us is what topics of conversation are being talked about here? Is somebody speaking positively about the smell of a product, but negatively about the packaging that it came in, for example? And so where we use AI is really to organize these hundreds of thousands and millions of data points in such a way that an analyst can just look at a simple software platform and very quickly understand what's going on and deduce the insights that really make a difference. And this is as opposed to before you were able to apply AI technology like ours for this kind of problem space where you would essentially have to have a team of humans go in and sift through this information and organize it. So that's where AI really does play a fundamental backbone role in the Yogi platform.

Brett Watkins: Gary, how about you? I know that obviously, you're utilizing the artificial intelligence in your platform, so tell us a little bit about how Remesh is utilizing that. And feel free if you want to walk right into demo, if you want.

Gary Ellis: And what Gautam alluded to, or I guess just said straight up is 100% spot on. Our core premise is we are not looking to replace the insights professional, we're looking to make the insights professional more efficient. And traditionally, if you're going to use large data sets and you've got to hand tag it, you've got to collate it, you've got to structure that data yourself, you're spending more than half of the project resources or at least man-hours on that ranking and structuring of data. Rather than – and it's upwards of 80% depending on who you speak to. That's not a good use of your time, you and your fellow insights

professionals are smart folks. And being able to take the rank and structure data and turn that into narrative and arc into recommendations, that's where we want to empower you to be able to spend your time. And therefore, what we've really optimized for is how does one person speak to a group? And I guess I can jump into a screen share here and bring it to life a little bit more. I'm going to share, then I'm going to go into our platform really quickly. Let me make this big as well. So let me orient you really quickly here, this is a conversation that has already taken place. In Remesh, conversations are live. The idea is that you're bringing that one person, that moderator, into a conversation interfacing with a large group of participants. And we're pretty much agnostic as to where that sample comes from, whether or not it's through the sample providers that I think we're all used to, or if you have other means in which you want to bring your audience into our platform. We've got a set of onboarding polls, pretty simple quantitative polls so that you can build segmentations and you can make sure you have the audience that you want to speak to in the conversation itself. And then we have what is essentially a discussion guide. And that allows you to pre-build your conversation, the path in terms of what you want to say. So that while it's a live dynamic conversation back and forth, you don't want to have to think of all of your core questions on the fly. We certainly allow for that, that ability to ad hoc pivot, probe, all of the things that you want to do in a live conversation, the idea being that we want to treat a one-to-many and many-to-one conversation in a similar fashion how you treat a one-to-one. We believe that conversation is the best way to know a group and therefore, we've tried to create functionality so that we can replicate all of the things that you would need to have a one-on-one conversation. But to get to the AI and automation question, what we have to do then is synthesize all of the data coming from the group side into something that that moderator and perhaps some observers who've got the ability to go behind the focus room glass, can really quickly make sense of what the group is saying and continue the conversation or move the conversation, as necessary. So on the right here is everything from the moderator, you can see they can inject text in the conversation, images, instructions. And then on the left is everything that the group is coming back with. And simplistically, there's two main question types. There's quantitative questions because those are really important, even in qualitative research, to be able to weave those in. Both from a segmenting your group, but also having that sort of quantitative understanding of your population. So this example conversation is around alcoholic beverages, and the first quantitative question we asked was, what is most important to you when choosing an alcoholic beverage, single or multi-punch? Not all that unique for sure. And then you get into your open-ended questions, which are really our secret sauce. So the moderator posits a question, they push a question out to the group, and everyone on the participant side is able to respond in their own

words to that question. They type out what they think the right response is to that moderator's prompt. And then we run them through a series of voting exercises. You can think of it as a dynamic conjoint with a little bit of intelligence sprinkled into it. And what we're really trying to do is create a utility matrix, an understanding of all of the respondents and everything that they typed, and how much agreement there is across those populations. And that allows us to understand the group collectively, but also drill down into its specific segments. And what we do then is, we surface a few different ways for you to look at the data and decide if you want to continue the conversation. So it goes back and forth, where you have a question, you see the responses, you get some interpretation of the responses and a continuation of the dialogue. So if I was to dive into a specific question, let's see, we got, why did you select the option above? So real quickly, what would be the base alcohol for your perfect drink? All of these closed-ended options. So obviously, with quantitative research you have the questions and the answers pre-baked. One of the beautiful things about qual is you don't limit that, so you ask why. The views in which we provide is a highlights view, so this is a compressed view of the ten most popular responses. So if I was to look at the group and say, what best represents the entire group, what is the spectrum? But I don't want to have to look through every single response the group came up with, this is a compressed list. So it's a way to quickly see what the major themes that are coming through are. We also provide a common topic view. This is where our NLP starts to come in. So not only are we building a utility matrix which leverages mostly machine learning to do that ranking and structuring, we've added some natural language processing on top. So you can start saying, let's get to the people who talked about vodka, what were they actually saying? How do we understand the context behind it? And I think it's important that we are not trying to create new verbatims, so everything that you're seeing here are verbatims and then agreement scores coming out of those voting exercises. What we're trying to do is leave that response intact and give you some direction in terms of what the group is saying and make it really easy to surface those responses. And the last piece here is we, of course, want to be able to pull in segments. So we have all the segments that we created from our quantitative questions, and you can create those in advance or on the fly. And then you can look at the agreement score for a specific segment, what they most agreed upon, what they least agreed upon, and look at who is actually typing those responses. The last thing that I'll mention in terms of where I think AI is uniquely powerful is in bias in qualitative research. So I hope I don't step into a sticky situation here, I'm not trying to accuse anyone of injecting bias into conversations. But if you show up to a focus group, who you are, how you present yourself, how you interact with the audiences, it impacts the research. And I wouldn't claim that Remesh or really any methodology is free of bias. But

the fact that it's an avatar asking a question, and you can customize it or you can make it real, but you're asking the same question to everyone, everyone has the same opportunity to respond regardless of who you are. If you're an introvert or an extrovert, if you're talking about populations that are maybe internal, it doesn't matter if you're a manager or an individual contributor, it's a democratized process. So at the end of the day, what we're really trying to do is empower that individual to speak with whatever audience that they want to truly understand them in a way that scales up to north of 1,000 people at the same time, very quickly compress all of the data that's coming back, allow you to see the key themes and how much agreement, where the most important topics to this group, and allow the conversation to continue in the least biased way possible.

Brett Watkins: Gary, it's funny, and I've seen a couple of questions over here which I think was relevant to what I was thinking as well. And that, to me, is what I infer as your biggest – when you're comparing to like typical bulletin board solutions, your ability and what Remesh provides is the ability to have conversations with a lot of people all at once, and then condense that into analysis to where you can quickly pivot. And the artificial intelligence is leading the conversation, correct, as opposed to a moderator having to manage all of the who, what, when, where, why questions. Is that accurate?

Gary Ellis: Yeah. A moderator still has to be rather deft to use Remesh for sure. So our job is not to replace or to tell the moderator what to ask next, so a moderator in the team is typically writing that discussion guide in advance of a conversation and they're seeing the data that comes back in the fly and they're deciding whether or not they want to continue down the discussion guide, or pivot or probe. Really what our AI is doing is helping consolidate those responses in a really impactful way. And the biggest difference between Remesh and a bulletin board as you mentioned, is really the live nature and how deep you can get with that scaled group. Because at the end of the day, what we really want to understand is, get you to that actionable next step. As you think about the innovation cycle as you're going through your research process, it's not one and done. You're not going to launch a new product or a new ad campaign and only use Remesh one time or only use Remesh and no other methodology. We want to make that as efficient as possible so that as you're going through those individual gates, you get to the answers that you need. One of the things that we see often is you can field the survey, you can go through an exercise. And once you've gone through the analysis portion, which can take a considerable amount of effort, you're left with open questions at that stage. What we want to get you to is, at least in an hour-long conversation, the core questions that you need

answers to, we want to make sure you have them and you can move on to the next stage of your research. So that really at the end of the day, the research team can do more with less. That's the promise of technology. The old adage, your good, cheap, fast, pick any two, we aim to solve that and allow you to do all three. And that way, you can be more efficient with your time.

Brett Watkins: And as for others, I saw a few raised hands as well as a few other questions, we'll definitely address those here at the end. So I just thought that would, however, for those who asked that question about bulletin boards, it was obviously a natural time to ask. Gautam, how about you? Talk a little bit about usage of artificial intelligence in Yogi and how you're applying it to help researchers in the insights industry.

Gautam Kanumuru: For sure. Probably the best way to talk through Yogi and get an understanding of where the AI fits in is honestly just to jump into it, so I'll go ahead and share my screen. So, really, when we think about Yogi at the highest level, our intention is to help companies that have high volumes of customer reviews, add structure and meaning to this flood of really fragmented and messy data, and presenting it in such a way that it leads to better products and experiences. And the way that we approach this, and really AI tends to play a role in all three of the phases of the Yogi platform, is by going at this in a three-prong approach. So the first piece is what we call Aggregate. So when it comes to getting this information, it's really important with, honestly, any data source that you analyze, that you have a very clean and accurate data repository, if you will. And so one of the pieces that Yogi takes care of is going through and building this aggregated feedback source of review data across different retailers, being able to tag things as, hey, did this come from a promotional review? Is this a verified review? What product is it affiliated with? Those are all pieces that the Yogi system automatically takes care of. Once we aggregate and have this central repository or database of review data, the second piece is what we call Organize. And so this is where probably the most - the easiest example of how AI fits into Yogi tends to show up. Which is, Yogi will go in and use its AI and natural language processing technology to slice and dice the data in a multitude of ways. And I know one attendee commented that sentiment analysis is the first piece, it's really when you go beyond that, that things become much more useful. And so that is really one of the core pieces of our organized layers. We obviously present sentiment analysis, but we also try to take it beyond by doing things like automated theme recognition. So what we mean by automated theme recognition is, the team does not have to come to us and say, hey, when you're analyzing reviews for a skincare product, texture is going to show up, smell is going to show up, packaging is going to show up. Yogi's AI is automatically able

to detect these themes and layer that analysis on accordingly. Which ends up being hugely beneficial from an analysis perspective and from a speed perspective. And then that naturally leads to the third phase, which is what we call Analyze. At the end of the day, it's good that we have this central database of data. It's great that we were able to run AI technology on top of it to expose this information in really granular ways. But we need to make sure that it's easily accessible so that one analyst or one team member has the ability to quickly understand what's going on across tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of reviews in, honestly, a matter of minutes. And so that's really how Yogi works at a high level. But I think what we can do is actually jump into the actual platform as well, just to help bring the point home. So we're looking at a sample Yogi dashboard right now of reviews from smart TVs. And there's a couple of pieces that are worth calling out within the Yogi platform. So the first piece is essentially our filter panel. And you'll see that Yogi offers a bunch of different ways to break down this review information. So you have high-level breakdown like brand, what products are being analyzed, as well as sentiment, and the themes or topics of conversation that I was talking about. So you can see that Yogi, again, without any human intervention, was able to go through all of these reviews about TV and break it down accordingly. So you can see all the reviews that mentioned talks about the bezel or design, the picture quality. People using it for gaming versus for watching things, even down to the actual people talking about their experience on the software system that the smart TV runs. These are all topics that Yogi was automatically able to generate because of, again, this AI technology. And when you balance this with pieces like sentiment analysis as well as all the other information that Yogi is storing about the products that these reviews are affiliated with, how big is the screen size? What smart platform are they using? This ability to filter and combine these filters becomes super powerful for you to get down to those granular breakdowns. So that's on the filtering side. At the same time, we have to search in case you want to look for certain keywords or look at how people are talking about certain things. Then you have the date filter on the right hand side to look at things over periods of time. But, where things start to get super, super interesting is, sort of in kind of the three views that– the three views that we tend to see our clients kind of live the most in. The first view is what we call the feed. And so, this is literally just a list of all the reviews coming in, and you can see all the information that we store about it. Obviously, somebody is extremely opinionated about TVs. But you can see that we store information about the date, the brand, what product is it affiliated with, what themes did Yogi see was talked about in this review. But, once you want to start kind of breaking down the data, it's where– this is where the next two views really start to become useful. And so, the next view that I clicked into is something that we call the dashboard view. And so, this is meant

to give sort of that quantitative breakdown of what's happening with this information. So, let's say we wanted to understand, hey, from a theme perspective, what's being talked about the most? And I think this is actually a good sort of balance to some of the questions that Gary was showing at the Remesh platform, which is, you can start to see that balance between, OK, when we ask the question of what people found important, these are the themes or the topics that they talked about. But then once we go out in the wild, we can see that hey, picture quality and price and value are the two things that are most talked about when it comes to TVs. Then– because again, this is review data, you're able to– it's public information, so you're able to even compare yourself to competitors, for example. So, we can see here that we're looking at a chart that tends to be a fan favorite of a lot of our clients, which is rating on the y axis, sentiment on the x axis. And so, kind of the closer to the top right you are, the better that you're performing. And we can see that if anybody is in the market for a new TV, the Samsung Q60A is sort of the best performing amongst the products that Yogi analyzed. Whereas the TCL 5-Series is kind of being talked about the most and is in third place. And then you're able to kind of slice and dice the information in a bunch of different ways, and really start to get out finding trends, and getting an understanding of kind of what to dive deeper into. And so, probably what makes the most sense is to kind of walk through an example. And then from that example, we can jump into the next view that Yogi offers. So, let's say we had some questions about the remote, for example. So, what we can do very quickly is, we'll go ahead and filter for only reviews that are talking about the remote. And let's say we wanted to get an understanding of, hey, what products are– what products remotes are doing better than other remotes? We can very quickly see that the Hisense U6G and the Hisense U8G are the two best performing– have the two best performing remotes in the market. Whereas, if we go to the bottom left, we see Vizio, Vizio, and Vizio, essentially. So, Vizio's remote is kind of poor in the– when it comes to the overall market. But now, from this, maybe we want to get an understanding of like why is Vizio's– let's say we work for Vizio. Why is Vizio's remote sort of underperforming? That's where we can jump into this next view, which is what we call the network view. So, at first it looks like a bunch of dots on the screen. But it gives really interesting– this actually gives really interesting visibility into the way that our AI technology works. So, what Yogi is doing here is essentially reading each individual review, and then building connections between similar reviews, and then plotting it on a 2D plot. So this is how behind the scenes our AI technology is able to generate these sorts of themes automatically, without any human intervention. So, again, we were sort of looking at the remote. Let's say that we wanted to break down, why is Vizio's remote kind of performing poorly? So what we can do is, we went to the network diagram, filtered for

remote, filtered for Vizio. And then we recolor this based on sentiment. So now what we're looking at is, the red dots represent negative comments about review– about the remote. And we can very quickly hover over and see there's no voice button on it like I had expected before. The remote is simple, it lacked basic media controls. You can turn the TV on with Siri, but nothing else via Siri. So, we can see that some of the comments are really revolving around kind of those– the voice capabilities of the remote. And so, this is when now you can balance this really well with, let's say we wanted to go into talking to certain participants or running a focus group around something like this where, we now have a general understanding of, hey, the remote is performing poorly. The comments seem to be revolving around sort of the voice capabilities of the remote. Let's really dive deep to see what our consumers are expecting from this. And that is now where you can sort of balance the– the what's happening out in the wild, what's happening in the real world. And knowing what to kind of double click into when you have the opportunity with your consumers. So, that's sort of a– kind of a high level breakdown of the Yogi platform. And the other thing that we generally see and that we kind of alluded to in the beginning of what's changed for us has been that this review data is really becoming applicable across the organization. So, when it comes to just measuring consumer satisfaction, doing trend mapping, how to optimize sort of your marketing claims, your e-commerce pages, product innovation. This review data becomes extremely– just extremely relevant across the organization, because, again, at the end of the day, it's just this flood of unbiased feedback that's coming from tens of thousands of actual purchasers. So it's when you're able to really break it down at the granularity that Yogi is able to offer, that it just does become helpful. And again, that is because of that– sort of the natural [INAUDIBLE] processing and AI technology that's working behind the scenes.

Brett Watkins: Awesome. I appreciate you sharing that Gautam. One question I see that's pretty frequently coming out, before I get Kelli sharing real briefly what we're doing with virtual facility. Are you applying this technology to other things beyond customer reviews? So whether it's you know, support, website comments, things of that nature. Are people utilizing the tool in the same way or can they?

Gautam Kanumuru: Yeah. Yep. Yep. They definitely can. So, we have the ability to– for users to kind of upload data in a bunch of different streams. And so, we've done a multitude of different data sources with it. And obviously the ability to kind of breakdown at this level becomes relevant definitely beyond reviews.

Brett Watkins: Awesome. Well I see the questions are kind of piling in. So, everybody I'll try to get to those. And just as a quick update for everybody, if we're not able to answer your question today in the webinar, feel free to reach out. I certainly have them. We will try to get answers back to you as best as we possibly can. And certainly we'll try to answer everybody's question if we're not able to answer today's webinar. I also want to share with everybody a quick thanks that I omitted at the front. Focus Forward, who is our transcription partner, as always kindly volunteered to provide those to all the participants today. So, we will be sending out summaries as well as full transcripts of today's interviews. So, for you or any of your colleagues that happen to miss out, or just want to have that for a later purpose, we'll be providing that to you. And again, thank you Focus Forward for doing that. Kelli, share a little bit about virtual facility before we get to some more of the questions here, and get a little q and a.

Kelli Hammock: Absolutely. So, prior to the pandemic, the industry as a whole was already exploring ways to include more virtual and remote research solutions. But, in early 2020 I think, as one of our presenters mentioned earlier, we were pushed forward into making those modifications much earlier than planned. L&E Research had been lightly conducting virtual facility research sessions for about a year prior to the pandemic. Fortunately, this gave us the opportunity to dabble into creating a process. So, Zoom accounts were created. Internal calendars for scheduling sessions were set up. New designations for virtual facility were created in our proprietary management software, and IT personnel trained themselves to be able to both host and troubleshoot live sessions with clients and panel members. When March 2020 rolled around, and we began seeing these requests increase, we were ready to rise to the challenge. We began adding new platforms in addition to Zoom. Clients requested access to MS Teams, Adobe Connect, and Cisco WebEx. Different clients have different needs. So for everything we thought we knew, we had to learn about 10 times more, and implement processes to streamline the newly learned information. While we did have a foundation in place, only through trial and error did a consistent and reliable process emerge. Adaptability as we navigated this changing environment has allowed us to be on the forefront of this exciting endeavor that we call L&E's virtual facility. So if I had to assign a keyword to 2020, that word would be communication. The theme of communication is posted throughout every branch of our organization, and rightfully so. Internal communications within leadership, management, and all levels of staff. External communications with our clients and our vendors and suppliers. And arguably, most importantly, communications with our panel members recruited into research projects. In fact, I would say we were over communicating detail, as

there were so many new and unknown variables everyone was experiencing. You simply don't know what you don't know. And you definitely don't know what someone else doesn't know. The reason I'm stressing communication is because it really has been the linchpin to creating that process. So I'm going to go over some of the steps that I feel have secured us as the virtual facility leaders. Upon project commencement, a call is scheduled between the project manager, moderator or client, and the virtual facility client service manager, to assure that all parties are clear on the objectives and details of the upcoming projects, such as if any stimuli will be used, and how it will be presented. How many observers will be attending the session, and they will– how will they prefer to be identified on screen? And if the client or moderator has any additional needs or requests for the sessions. If not already established, clients can discuss and determine which specific video conferencing platform will be the best fit for the project. Our operations team added a few steps to the recruiting process to assure a smoother approach. We created a template of screening questions that are applied to gage technical proficiency. Well we found that most panelists learned quickly how to navigate online video conferencing platforms in the early quarantine days of 2020. We found through screening that some needed additional help and instructions. Some didn't have the technology required. And some simply were not the best fit to participate in these types of interviews. Recruiters were able to quickly determine what level of additional assistance would be needed, and panelists were scheduled for a follow up call with a trained technician when necessary. Finally, our confirmation email letters were modified to include more details about participating in virtual facility research, and what this experience would entail as well as what steps may be taken– may need to be taken in advance, such as downloading software and testing their AV. L&E's virtual facility client service rep makes the process seamless on the day of research, and all participant details are handled so that clients simply need to log into the meeting. Your L&E host will coordinate with all participants leading up to the session start time, they confirm functioning audio and video or screen sharing if required. Participants who haven't arrived 15 minutes in advance are contacted to assure an on time session start. And all participants are placed into a waiting room for added security. Your L&E virtual facility host will be available for the duration of the session. Should the need for any technical assistance arise, L&E virtual facility projects have an average 93 percent show rate. And that's– I'm going to attribute that to all these steps we've taken. And I think it's pretty impressive myself. The increased utilization of the virtual facility has been the largest shift L&E has seen over the past year. However, this is not the only modification we've seen to conducting research remotely, in addition to Yogi and Remesh we work with a variety of technology platforms that have expertise in conducting synchronous and asynchronous research. If you are unsure which

partner will offer the best solution to supplement or support your next project, L&E Research can help with that. Our partner platforms can be found on our website at LE Research dot com. And our team can help you make the selection that is most suitable for your research. So, Brett, I'm going to pass it back over to you.

Brett Watkins: I appreciate that, Kelli. It's funny you bring up the recruiting process, because I know that's applicable, certainly for Gary as well, that we had questions like, hey, how do you get the participants in. And Gary, correct me if I'm wrong. But I mean, the recruitment process itself has still not changed. It's still the traditional process of you have to engage and interview people via– either via phone or combination of phone and electronic. That's certainly what L&E Research does every day. And as a partner of Remesh. But I assume that there's no other different process to that, correct?

Gary Ellis: No, you're absolutely right. Right? So, you've got your universe of potential panelists with whatever sample provider that you're working with. They are pre-screening as targeted as possible. Because obviously recruits are not cheap. And then they're pre-screening, qualifying, holding back, running a series of invitations so that Remesh being a live, synchronous event. Right, so, it's– typically it's about an hour. And you want to make sure at the top of the hour your whole group, who you want to talk to, no one extra shows up on time, and is there to participate. So there is a rather laborious process that has to go into making sure the sample that you need shows up and it's ready to be there. Now, we obviously want to work with our partners to obfuscate the laborious aspects of that from you, so that all you have to do is request who you want, and then lean back and wait for the conversation to happen. But I think the other thing worth noting here, and I don't necessarily want to dive us too deep down this path, is that the quality of participants is hugely important in qualitative research. When we first went to market back in 2016, I was unpleasantly introduced to the world of sample in terms of what quantitative panels can really offer at times. And we've had to be really careful with how we go through screening processes, because in a quantitative world, unless someone is just straight lining responses, it's very hard to differentiate between high quality and low quality. In qualitative research that's entirely different. Who people are and how they represent themselves is one thing, and that's important for panelists or panel companies to be able to screen for, but also how articulate you are. At the end of the day, qualitative research is about the depth, the quality, the way in which people are able to articulate detailed responses. And that has been something that we've had to put a lot of focus on. And I think L&E has probably had to do the same along the way.

Brett Watkins: Interesting that you bring that up since recruitment is our business without question, Gary. In fact, for those on the panel– or in the audience that are interested, we have a white paper at our website as well, and it's very subject. David Harris is a noted researcher, author of writing better questionnaires. We contracted with him to actually determine, if was there a quality difference between panel sample and qualitative sample, which we utilized our panel, which is specifically over 1.1 million consumers as targeted towards qualitative specifically. And the findings were dramatic. It was not just in quality of response, but also cost in terms of time. The ability to execute projects more rapidly, as opposed to the amount of time it took to find and or replace those who were not obviously [INAUDIBLE]. So, we've got just a couple of minutes. And I know there's a lot of questions here.

Gary Ellis: Can I build off that for half a second?

Brett Watkins: Yeah, go ahead.

Gary Ellis: I think one of the really interesting things, and I presume, but I won't be too presumptuous, though some would agree with me, that at the end of the day, qualitative research is more valuable than quantitative research, because there's a whole other layer of information that's provided. But without technology, qualitative research is hard to do. It's really, really laborious. And I think part of what we, as technology companies promise to deliver, is that higher quality, better ROI at the end of the day, and it's kind of inverse to the almost race to the bottom that we've seen on the quantitative side, which is about checking the box and getting through the study.

Brett Watkins: Yeah. I think that's an interesting point, which also too, I think in both of your situations and what we witness or are seen as well from brands is that qual and quant are being merged together, and being able to utilize tools like yours, enables companies to get the qualitative while also applying some quantitative. Obviously, I won't go down the rabbit hole of bias and structures and other things, which I'm sure our audience– any of them are quant experts would dive into. But we are definitely seeing more of the hey, how can we leverage more with less? And certainly this is a great manner to which to do that. Final question before– because we wrap up on time here and keep it in the hour that we promised everybody. You know, we– one of the interesting and I think differences is, and I'm interested to hear from you, both Gary and Gautam is, you know, Gary, you're working more with the asking environment, and Gautam you're asking– you're working more with the

observational environments. And Kelli, obviously at L&E we're obviously always more involved with the ask environment as well. Are you seeing your clients at all wanting to balance these two? I mean, where do you sense from your clients that you're working with, like how are these two things working together? And are you sensing and getting feedback that suggests you know, where's the balance and the pros and cons to that? Gautam?

Gautam Kanumuru: Mm-hmm. Yeah. No, we're definitely seeing sort of the balance between them. I think one of the reasons that this is starting to become more of a conversation is because the technology and platforms have now reached a point where observational is– or observed behavior is more doable, essentially. And generally what we've been seeing and talking about is, is really trying to find the right balance between the two. Because really what it is is, you can get to a really good understanding of, again, what's happening in the wild. Like, from across 10 thousand reviews, what topics are people talking about the most? And using that information to really inform how you approach kind of meeting with the– meeting with your participants, because, like Gary, Kelli, and Brett have alluded to, it's really important to get those good panelists. It takes effort. You want to put in that upfront effort. And so making sure that you're able to take best advantage of that time when you're in front of them is extremely important. And that's where– when you can find that right balance of understanding what's going on, generally speaking, you can use that information to inform the way that you approach the questions that you ask, the way that you phrase them, and what details you decide to kind of double click or dive into.

Brett Watkins: Yeah, makes total sense. I mean, it's a great predicator to better ask in the environment. Gary?

Gary Ellis: Yeah. I agree wholeheartedly. And I think one of the major shifts that I've seen in the last decade in the research industry is this push from what I would consider like waterfall research, where at the beginning or end of a project, you're doing something that is incredibly costly comprehensive in some ways, and that is your anchor point for your decision making. To this more agile approach, now, I'm using technical kind of terms that we use in our development side as well, which is, more frequent research that is lighter in nature. And depending on where you are in the stage of your research, you should be doing different things. Should you be using secondary desk research? Should you be doing custom primary research that's quantitative or qualitative? It's all about throughout that entire innovation cycle, bringing the right tools into your process, so that at the end of the day, you've got a constellation of data.

You've got a collection of different types of data that inform your decisions. And I really do think that's the future for where research is going to live, is, it's how all of those disparate right now data structures get leveraged by teams. And right now there's a lot of manual pulling together of data sets. Brett and I were talking about this not that long ago, that there isn't a really good standard for data structures. And I do think that's probably one of the future places that we need to go as an industry, so that you can take the different stages of your research and actually have the data be integrated across, and really start to tie your disparate data sets together. So, I don't think qual is a catch all solution for every stage of your research. I don't think quant is either. I don't think actively collected or passively collected data is. I think you are– the whole point of being a researcher and kind of pushing this field forward is knowing what the best tools are for various stages and being able to pull those out and leverage them in the combination that works best for you.

Brett Watkins: Awesome. Hey, everybody, appreciate this again. I want to jump really quickly in the q and a, as we've gotten a lot of questions over here that I'm kind of flowing through to try to address. And as I said with everybody before, thanks again to Focus Forward who has agreed to transcribe this for us as part of our partnership. And we will be sharing that information as well as a summary that Kelli will be writing up. We do that for obviously all of our webinars. So, in case you want– somebody needs a more short term consumable that you want to share with your team, we'll be providing that for you. Also, again, thanks to Insights Association for partnering with us to put this webinar together. Great organization that we've been members of for many years now. Melanie Courtright's leadership is really– it's been extremely impressed and thrilled with the direction of it. So, thanks to them and the organization there. And Art Flynn again for his involvement as well. So quick questions as we try and address these, and I'll try to do it as rapid fire as I possibly can here, in that kind of 30 second [INAUDIBLE] so to speak. First one came off to Gautam as we look at your reviews and rating systems, how are– the question is, how are you able to separate out real reviews from botched and paid reviews, and how do you look at those and be able to monitor and filter them?

Gautam Kanumuru: Yeah, yeah. So, it's obviously a really important factor on our end. So, there's a multitude of different pieces of information we're able to take into account to essentially label a review as pretty much legitimate or not. So, there's things we can que off of as knowing if it's a verified review or not. Is this part of a paid promotional program. And then being an NLP company, patterns in the language and when do these show up. So, if we see a sudden

explosion of reviews in the third week of June of people saying, it sucks, just like very quick reviews, we can usually deduce that hey, look, these are reviews that aren't– they're nefarious in nature, essentially. And so, we definitely have technology in place to help cover those.

Brett Watkins: Awesome. Well, I see Gary is also being proactive and so we're going to try to address or answer some of these questions here live in terms of the actual chat piece. So, some of them were also answered, like for example– already in terms of discussion, so [INAUDIBLE] those through. While Gary is typing on that answer, Kelli, I've got a question from one of the responses that talked about recruitment quality and the recruitment process, but also health care experience. Certainly, I know we have some experience there, do you want to share a little bit about that while Gary is filling in, I believe Monto's– however you pronounce that name.

Kelli Hammock: Sure. So, I would love to talk about our health care experience. I would say a significant portion of our recruiting is health care. And in fact, I would love to brag on a couple of our team members, because we do have a few team members who consult on all health care projects up front. These are people who actually worked in the clinical side of health care prior to their careers with L&E Research, so they do have that experience. And they can help our clients to determine if what they're looking for is the best fit for the research. So, for example, I've seen scenarios where a client thinks they want one thing, and our health care consultants can turn around and say, actually, this person doesn't exist. What we think you want is this. They're going to be the ones actually administering this drug or experience, whatever the case may be. And so, it's been extremely valuable. So, all those healthcare projects are consulted on the front end for both feasibility and we can determine how many people we can get across all of our markets and specific markets. We can make recommendations on where it's going to be most successful. And I would love to just brag on the team that works there, because we have a phenomenal top notch health care recruiting team.

Brett Watkins: Awesome. I appreciate that. Yep, they've been with us a long time, Kelli. And by our growth there, it certainly tells us how good they are. So, they keep getting more and more people that are requesting their services. Gary, it looks like you were wrapped up with typing up that one question. One of the [INAUDIBLE] here was asking– is coding qualitative responses on the fly. So can you talk a little bit about– I saw some other questions related to this as well, as it relates to you know, can people see what's going on, or are we seeing a kind of response– I think people are just kind of curious as to like,

how is the technology managed in the process, and what are people seeing on the participant's side.

Gary Ellis: Yeah, absolutely. And I'm going to drop in our website, which is obviously somewhat broad, but it will allow you to connect to the team, because there's like 18 plus questions, and certainly not enough time to address all of them. In terms of are we coding qualitative verbatims on the fly? The answer is kind of. So, principle technology of machine learning that allows us to get a popularity score, so, how much agreement is there with any given verbatim for an entire population or a subsegment of that population, we do layer natural language processing on top. It allows us to pull out major themes. And we use some– we use technology that allows us to stop words, and different non-valuable kinds of words. So we're not surfacing a bunch of the's or a's. And we're pulling those out and allowing you to look at them individually. We do aspire to have full thematic coding. But right now we don't want to under-represent the data, that's what we optimize for as efficiently as we can create data structure for our observers and our moderators, the people who have access to the full data sets, we're running the conversations and ultimately responsible for reporting outcomes. But as the technology gets– kind of evolves and gets better, and I've got a pretty significant R&D team, we'll kind of keep pushing down that threat of basically automated coding. But that's a very challenging problem to solve.

Brett Watkins: Understand. We're literally trying to aggregate what's been doing for– going on for decades, and to try to condense that into a process that applies to the masses quickly as opposed to applying to the individual or a small group. And so, makes total sense. We are really at one o'clock now. And for everybody out there, again, I will certainly ask Gautam and Gary if they're willing and or like put to their teams, and we'll ask Jennifer's help as well. All of those who have asked for questions, we'll certainly look to answer those, as well as provide you contact information, should you wish to have any follow up. Certainly, as I said, and Kelli shared before, both Remesh and Yogi are partners of L&E Research and the technology solutions that we provide. You can find those at our website at www dot LE Research dot com. We also would be happy to be the coordinators for any questions that you may have to facilitate that process, including to a line up Gary and Gautam's team, if certainly the product is something you have more interest in. Sort of same with virtual facility as well. So, at that one o'clock hour, I want to take this opportunity now to say thank you again to Insights Association for hosting and partnering with us on this webinar. Gary Ellis with Remesh and Gautam Kanumuru with Yogi, Kelli Hammock, our client solutions– senior client

solutions manager here at L&E Research. Thank you again everybody for logging in. I have all your information and look forward to seeing you again.

Gary Ellis: Thanks everyone.

Gautam Kanumuru: Have a great day everyone.

Brett Watkins: Take care.