



Press release

GfK's MRI and SymphonyAI's Simmons Research Combine in Joint Venture

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Two leading providers of syndicated media research and consumer intelligence in the United States join forces to better serve clients

New York, NY, February 12, 2019: MRI and Simmons Research will immediately combine in a joint venture to be called MRI-Simmons. The JV will be co-owned by GfK and SymphonyAI Group, with GfK as the majority partner.

With this new entity, these two leading research firms will combine their expertise in consumer insights, media profiling, and trends, bringing more investment in digital research and innovation to their clients.

The newly formed joint venture will offer agency, media, and advertiser clients the best in research and technology with the highest quality data, the strongest strategic partnerships, the most innovative digital platforms, and intuitive, easy-to-use visual reporting. This aligns with GfK's clear vision of leveraging strong and unique data assets and enhancing them with highly relevant data science and analytics – not only descriptive analytics, but prescriptive as well. With the landscape becoming increasingly complex for clients' research teams and the pressure for those teams to produce results with fewer resources, the new JV will offer the ease and efficiency of having one, high-quality partner to meet all their media research and insights needs.

For 40 years MRI has played an integral role in media and marketing plans for businesses throughout the US. Notably, for the past 20 years MRI's national study and reporting services have been accredited by the Media Rating Council (MRC), which assures that audience measurement services are valid, reliable, and effective. MRI is the only service of its kind to maintain this exceptionally high level of quality and will continue to do so within this new joint venture. In addition, Simmons has provided the National Consumer Survey to help leading brands, agencies, and media companies effectively engage with consumers for more than 60 years.

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“Clients have told us that they need new products and services, including applications and APIs, to be developed with velocity. This joint venture provides a strong talent base with an ability to focus more resources on different product areas, from enhancing and expanding current products to building new ones even faster,” said Gregg Lindner, President of GfK North America and Chairman of the new joint venture.

“MRI and Simmons together provide a scale not possible when operating as separate businesses. As a result, all our clients will have access to better technology and a more comprehensive range of solutions for faster and smarter decision-making with even more robust data and services,” said John Ouren, Simmons Chairman and board member of the new JV.

Anna Welch, current managing director of MRI, will lead the joint venture and Mike Drankwalter will lead all sales for the new entity.

About MRI

MRI's focus on excellence has made it the leading provider of media and consumer research in the United States. Its Survey of the American Consumer® is used in the majority of US media and marketing plans and has long been the industry standard for magazine audience ratings. Through over 24,000 in-person interviews each year, MRI captures in-depth information on consumer media choices, attitudes, and consumption of products and services in nearly 600 categories.

For the past 20 years, MRI's national study and reporting services have been accredited by the MRC, which assures that audience measurement services are valid, reliable, and effective. As part of its annual accreditation process, the MRC conducts rigorous audits of MRI's methodology, fieldwork, analytics, and data handling systems. MRI is the only service of its kind to maintain this exceptionally high level of quality.

MRI is a division of GfK; to learn more, please visit www.mri.gfk.com and follow MRI on Twitter at @MRI_research.

About Simmons Research

Simmons Research is the leading source of cross-channel consumer intelligence. Simmons measures American consumer psychographics, preferences, attitudes, and media behaviors by closely overlaying survey and passively measured data using advanced measurement sciences. For more than 60 years, Simmons has helped leading brands, agencies, and media companies effectively engage with consumers, providing measurement of over 200,000 consumer elements,



including all major media, 600 attitudes and opinions, 500 product categories, and 8,000 brands. For more information, please visit www.simmonsresearch.com and follow @simmonsresearch on Twitter.

About GfK

GfK connects data and science. Innovative research solutions provide answers for key business questions around consumers, markets, brands and media – now and in the future. As a research and analytics partner, GfK promises its clients all over the world “Growth from Knowledge”.

For more information, please visit www.gfk.com and follow @GfK on Twitter.

About SymphonyAI Group

SymphonyAI Group (SAI) is a group of leading companies that transform the business enterprise with AI solutions. SAI companies provide the leading AI-centric solutions for driving revenue growth and operational excellence, for the retail, CPG, healthcare, industrial and media verticals, and for finance, IT and other key enterprise horizontal functions. Founded and led by Dr. Romesh Wadhvani, a successful technology entrepreneur and business leader, SymphonyAI is one of the fastest growing companies in business-to-business AI solutions with expected revenue this year of over \$300 million and 1,500 employees. For more information, please visit www.symphonyai.com.