

Video Ethnographies

The use of video to enhance ethnographic work has a long tradition in Anthropology going back to the Tores Straits expedition in 1898. Over the past century, the exact methodologies of how to integrate video components into ethnographies has been refined extensively. Today, at Insignia, we draw on this century of methodological refinement to bring our clients the best in video ethnographic techniques.

Video as a component of an Ethnography

Conducting ethnographic research into small group behaviour in particular settings such as specific types of events may be enhanced by the use of a video recording component. In order to do this properly, great care must be taken to ensure that the video enhances, rather than interferes with, the process of data collection.

When used in conjunction with classic ethnographic research, video recording is an adjunct to the research - it is not the prime focus. The video is primarily used

- for a visual record;
- to track traffic flow patterns, and

- to show exemplary types of interactions. On Site Video Ethnographies

This style of video ethnography is best deployed in high traffic, public spaces such as stores, shopping malls, and other public spaces. 1 Basic methodology

After consultation with the client to determine specific requirements, members of the Insignia team conduct a quick on-site analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to figure out the correct placement of video cameras and to get a preliminary "feel" for the location. After this initial on-site survey is completed, specific tracking forms are created on a case by case basis to address client concerns and the main focal points to be examined are mapped out.

Observers are debriefed and record field note impressions after each session. At the end of the video recording section of the project, all field notes are integrated with the onsite survey and any final additions and/or adjustments to the tracking forms are made. The revised tracking form is then used to analyze the video data.2 Primary components

Video: Several cameras are used to capture the full range of observable behaviour.

Mapping: Mapping is used to track specific flow patterns, choke points and specific places where interactions occur.

Behaviour tracking forms: Specific forms are tailored for each project and focus in on specific questions of interest to the client.

Non-video environment scan: A lot of sensory information that affects consumers sub-consciously cannot be captured on video (i.e. scent, the "feel" of the crowd, etc.). In order to account for this non-video component, we place one or two highly trained observers acting as a "secret shoppers" at selected times during the video taping process to account for this "feel";.