

Ipsos MORI



The Ipsos MORI Story





This is a short history of Ipsos MORI, explaining how we've become the company we are and, in particular, drawing attention to the pioneers who have shaped the company and the research industry as a whole. Their values remain key to our success in the 21st century.

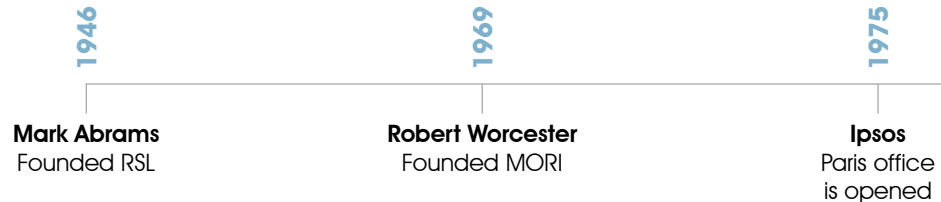
At Ipsos MORI we have an enviable pedigree. Our company is built on a rich heritage of entrepreneurialism, quality and service. This story reveals our founders' obsessions with quality, with innovation and with communicating what we do to a wide audience. These qualities remain very much at the heart of Ipsos MORI today.

This story focuses on key individuals but, of course, we've been so successful because of the thousands of people who contributed their time, skills and ideas while working for us.

I hope you enjoy our story so far. The next chapters will be just as exciting for those of you working in the company today.

Ben Page

Chief Executive, Ipsos MORI



The Ipsos MORI Story

Over the past 60 years, the UK market research industry has grown in stature and in global influence. The companies that formed Ipsos MORI were there from the very beginning. Here we trace the history of the firm, through its founders and luminaries, to celebrate how we have helped shape the research sector as well as the influences that have made Ipsos MORI what it is today.





Dr Mark Abrams
Founder, RSL

An Influential Past

Survey research has existed since Victorian times when sociologists and reformers collated data on poverty and living conditions in UK cities. Among the earliest protagonists were Charles Booth who, in the late 1880s, collected data for a 17-volume report on 'The life and labour of the people of London', and Seebohm Rowntree who, using interviewers, documented the living conditions of families in York in 1899.

Although social research was fairly well embedded in the UK before the Second World War, commercial market research was then considered a rather American and esoteric activity. In the 1930s, this fledgling discipline was practised by just three firms in the UK, each operating as a function of an advertising agency. At the London Press Exchange (LPE), the function was headed up by Dr Mark Abrams.

This is where the Ipsos MORI story begins.

Our Earliest Beginnings: Research Services Ltd.

Abrams, a pioneer in social and market research in Britain, was a student of the London School of Economics in the late 1920s. After gaining his doctorate and spending time at universities in the US where he became familiar with the opinion polling methodologies of Dr George Gallup, he returned to the UK.

At the LPE, Abrams conducted surveys for consumer businesses like Cadbury. Although he was an early catalyst in making the UK one of the most influential countries in market research worldwide, it was in social trends and social policy that his true passion lay.

In 1934, Abrams made a name for himself in mass media research. The story goes that his boss asked him to conduct a National Readership Survey. Asked how big the sample should be, Abrams decided on 30,000 as a benchmark. To this day, that survey sample size is unchanged. An important advance linked to the readership survey was the development of social grading systems which are still in use today (although they are regularly updated to reflect current conditions).

Five years later, in 1939, the LPE planned to convert its research unit into a company with Abrams as Managing Director. But the war intervened and Abrams' skills were redeployed into social research activities. He conducted a study of rationing and nutrition on behalf of the Ministry of Food and evaluated the effects of German bombing on the morale of the British civilian population.

Demobbed in 1946, Abrams returned to the LPE. That same year he founded Research Services Ltd. (RSL). This was Abrams' opportunity to capitalise on his advertising agency and wartime ministry experiences. RSL combined public sector and political work with, latterly, the more commercial activities of media, advertising and product usage and attitude research. This independent British company, renowned for its media research, was ultimately to merge with Ipsos in 1991.

In 1946, Abrams became a founding father of social and market research in Britain. He and 22 other research professionals met at the LPE to start a luncheon club which, later, became the Market Research Society. The members had the express purpose of sharing ideas and opinions. In 1948, Abrams became its president (Rowland Lloyd, managing director of Operations at Ipsos MORI, followed in Abrams' tradition becoming chair of the Society in 2008).

It was Abrams' social conscience that saw him become involved in private polling work for the Labour Party. He was hired by party leader Hugh Gaitskill and then by his successor Harold Wilson. This was a mantle that would be later taken up by MORI's Bob Worcester.



Dawn Mitchell
Managing Director, RSL
1976-2001

Dawn Mitchell, who joined RSL as a junior researcher in 1965, and took over the reins as managing director from 1976 to 2001, said of Abrams: “He was demanding, sometimes terrifying and always infinitely kind. Our absolute dedication to the task was taken for granted. He did us the courtesy of believing that we could become almost as erudite and creative as he himself was.”

Abrams’ focus on quality was drummed into all staff. On becoming MD, Mitchell recalls: “I felt as though I had been given a sacred trust. If I ever allowed quality standards to slip I would be betraying Mark and the whole reputation of the company. Every statistic had to be defensible and based on good research.”

On his retirement, Mark Abrams remained active in social research – working tirelessly for Age Concern and the Social Science Research Council.

In the 1970s, Mitchell, a fluent German and French speaker, set up the international division of RSL. Her most significant contribution to the market research industry was in the field of print media research. Mitchell is credited with starting the Worldwide Readership Research Symposia in 1979. This biennial event continues to bring together research professionals in print media from around the world.

She was intimately involved in developing syndicated surveys such as The European Businessman Readership Survey (EBRS), The Asian Businessman Readership Survey (ABRS) and The British Businessman Survey (BBS), which have all stood the test of time.

The EBRS, first published in 1973, researches top professionals in industrial and commercial companies across Europe. Mitchell says: “Back then there was no comparable data on the structure of business and industry in European countries. We actually built samples and described how industry worked comparatively, by size of company, type of enterprise and management structure. To me that was a real contribution to understanding how post-war Europe had evolved.” The EBRS was just one of a number of international surveys that RSL ran during the 1970s and 80s. And, at a time when market research was largely organised on a country-by-country basis, and before the establishment of today’s global research groups, RSL led the way in coordinating telephone and face-to-face surveys across Europe and the world.

The business of the company was transformed in 1990 when RSL won a major customer satisfaction study from BT. Interviewers were equipped with laptop computers as the size of the sample, complexity of the questionnaire and speed of reporting meant that paper and pencil data collection, the norm at the time, was simply not up to the task. Although computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) was to become an industry standard within a few years, it was RSL that was first to deploy this technology on a large scale. A year later, RSL launched Britain’s first CAPI omnibus – CAPIBUS.

Then, in 1992, the company won the prestigious RAJAR contract to provide a unified measurement service for the BBC and commercial radio – a contract that has been successfully retained in subsequent re-tenders. Processing 60,000, one-week radio listening diaries each year called for another creative solution. This time it was the introduction of document scanning on an industrial scale.

Although RSL was best known for its media research work, it also provided market research services to a wide client base in both the commercial and public sectors. It was the international dimension of RSL, and its track record in innovation, that appealed to the young Ipsos, a very successful French research company headed up by Didier Truchot and Jean-Marc Lech. RSL was the second acquisition for Ipsos.

From the earliest days, the UK was key to the Ipsos group. This is illustrated by the decision to set up the International CATI Centre in London in 1997. Another first, this allowed for Europe-wide telephone studies to be conducted and managed from a single location. The CATI Centre became a successful business unit in its own right and continues to provide services to companies within the group as well as our external clients.



Sir Robert Worcester
Founder of MORI

The Rise Of MORI

Following closely in Abrams' footsteps was a new name on the market research scene. Bob Worcester came to the UK in 1969 to set up MORI (Market & Opinion Research International). Previously, he had worked at McKinsey & Co and Opinion Research Corporation in the US.

MORI was a 50-50 joint venture between Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) and NOP (owned at that time by Associated Newspapers). "MORI was a short-enough acronym to fit into headlines or at the bottom of a TV screen," Worcester quipped, foreseeing the future strength and visibility of the brand.

The agreed brief was that MORI would enter the UK market on behalf of its joint-venture partners to focus on strategic decision research:

- reputation
- employee attitudes
- financial relations
- business-to-business
- and to coordinate international research.

Corporate image research was quickly established as MORI's flagship activity. Media coverage about Worcester in *The Financial Times*, followed by a feature in *The Observer*, brought MORI to the attention of major corporations. While many had undertaken product market research, they were now commissioning research on their 'corporate' brands for the first time. Employee attitude research was also in its infancy in the UK, but well developed in the US where Worcester had worked with commercial giants such the Prudential Insurance Company.

Worcester's arrival in the UK coincided with the back-end of the Wilsonian 'white heat of technology' era. Being American helped to smooth his entry into influential UK society and enabled him to build up credibility with newspaper contacts. As Ben Page, head of public sector research for Ipsos globally, puts it: "Bob hob-nobbed with the rich, famous and the press. But he was also incredibly hard-working. He got to work

earlier and stayed later than his competitors. And there was an element of going out to breakfast, lunch and dinner with opinion formers – a practice that Ipsos MORI continues to this day.”

Worcester owed a great deal to his joint venture partners who helped make introductions to big name businesses in the UK. MORI’s first-ever client was the British Government and, within a year of settling in London, Worcester counted ICI, Shell and BP, as well as Barclays, Midland (now HSBC) and NatWest, among his clients.

He approached *Financial Times* columnist Antony Thorncroft about his intention to launch a study into corporate reputations. Within 24 hours of an article about Worcester, Westinghouse, Lloyds Bank and International Nickel had become his clients. Between 1969 and 2005 (when Worcester stood down as chairman of MORI) the company conducted more than 2,000 corporate reputation studies in over 100 countries.

When Mark Abrams left RSL, Worcester was chosen to undertake the Labour party’s private polling in his stead. He was thrown in at the deep end when Prime Minister Wilson called an early election in the spring of 1970. During that campaign, Worcester undertook three polls. It was the year that Ted Heath surprised Harold Wilson by winning the General Election. “Harold should not have been surprised,” says Worcester who had told him just two days earlier that the Tories had a one-point lead. “Wilson dismissed it, saying that I had been in the country for less than a year and probably didn’t really understand British politics. That was Tuesday. By Thursday, Wilson was out of a job.”

The company, although very small (it then employed Worcester, his secretary and one researcher), was achieving success and profile. In 1973, at the end of his four-year contract, Worcester bought out his American joint-venture partner ORC and became the majority owner.

The 1970s was a period of strengthening the MORI brand and reputation. The firm researched the EEC referendum on behalf of the Government and undertook its first media polls for *The Sunday Times*, *London Evening Standard* and *The Economist* as well as for the BBC. Worcester also published the *Consumer Market Research Handbook* and conducted multi-client surveys of senior civil servants, MPs, journalists and university leavers.

The late 1970s saw MORI build its stronghold in social research. Brian Gosschalk, today chairman of Ipsos Global Public Affairs and CEO of Western Europe, recalls one of his first days at MORI back in 1979. The company employed 15 people by then and Gosschalk was taken out by Worcester to canvass public opinions of the local council in Southwark. “The questions developed for that social survey are, today, among some of the official government measures for every local authority in England,” says Gosschalk.

During the 1980s and 90s, MORI continued to grow its reputation and capabilities in central and local government research studies. Several factors contributed to this development. Firstly, there was a trend towards privatisation and outsourcing public sector services which prompted demand for metrics around perceptions of how well services were delivered. Secondly, as performance management principles

spread from the private to public sector, there was a need to know what citizens felt about the services they funded from their taxes. And lastly, there was a movement towards evidence-based policy making – governments wanted to know whether projects would work before stumping up the investment.

If the 1980s was the decade of growth and development, the 90s was the era of wholesale change. In 1994, when Worcester decided to split the role of MD and chairman, Brian Gosschalk took over as managing director. Responsible for the day-to-day running of the business, Gosschalk oversaw the opening of offices in Scotland (1997) and Ireland (2000), and delivered a major cultural change and reorganisation programme. Among his change initiatives was the formalisation of two specialisms – Social Research (now Social Research Institute) and Corporate & Consumer Research – as well as significant investment in IT and support services such as HR and training.

In 2000, Gosschalk formed a team and led the first staff buy-out. A second management buy-out followed in 2004 when the venture capital equity changed hands from 3i to Isis Private Equity.

In 2005, Robert Worcester was made “a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of his outstanding services to political, social and economic research and for his contribution to government policy and programmes”.



Jean-Marc Lech and Didier Truchot
Co-Presidents, Ipsos

International Brand Ipsos

Coming slightly later onto the research scene was Paris-based Ipsos. It was founded in 1975 to serve a select client base that sought high quality research. One of the founders was Didier Truchot who, today, is Co-President of the Ipsos group with Jean-Marc Lech.

The Company experienced rapid growth and quickly became a recognised brand in public opinion and media research. In the early 1980s, it launched several advertising effectiveness barometers (one per medium), an elite business readership survey and an omnibus survey. The Company also developed syndicated approaches to research that would become standard in the marketplace.

By 1989, it was the fifth largest organisation of its kind in France. The founders decided that the time was right to launch onto the international scene to enable their global clients to compare data across countries.

Didier Truchot says: “At the end of the 80s, particularly thanks to the development of our expertise in advertising research, Ipsos was working with international clients such as P&G and Danone. Their comment was: “We are happy with Ipsos but in 10 years’ time we won’t be able to keep working with you if you cannot conduct the same studies in more countries”. In response to this, we designed a European development plan before extending our ambition to a global scale. Today we are proud to serve our clients in more than 100 countries with the same high quality of service everywhere.”

A priority focus for the European rollout plan was to establish a presence in the UK market. Attracted by the media leadership of RSL, it acquired the UK firm on Christmas Eve 1991. Later Ipsos also acquired Research In Focus, a firm specialising in high value marketing research in the UK.

By 1997, Ipsos companies were among the most successful in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK. There were also Ipsos companies in Belgium, Portugal, Hungary and Poland plus companies and investments in the US, Latin America and the Middle East.

As the Group spread globally, its capacity and experience in international research projects grew. 1997 drew to a close with companies in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico incorporated into the Ipsos fold and the acquisition of ASI, a leading US advertising agency, now Ipsos ASI.

In 1999 the Company started to do business in the Asia-Pacific region. It was also the year that Ipsos listed on the Paris Stock Exchange – a launch so successful that the share issue was oversubscribed more than 12 times. The listing provided investment capital for further expansion without compromising Ipsos' independence.

Since 2000, Ipsos has intensified its expansion strategy with acquisitions in all regions including developed and emerging countries. Indeed, between 2000 and 2008, the Group acquired 44 companies and opened 16 new offices.

This rapid global expansion has provided employees the opportunity to transfer between countries and to specialise in new and growing research disciplines. Today, Ipsos is unique among major research groups because its capital remains controlled by its research professionals.

Part of the global strategy is to incorporate the Ipsos name into every company it acquires to extend the reputation of the brand. Quality is at the heart of every Ipsos group company. The quality ethos is about delivering on promises; providing a service that will attract and retain clients; treating suppliers in a fair and scrupulous manner; meeting the highest standards determined by the industry bodies to which it belongs; and a commitment to continuous innovation and R&D to deliver added value, cost savings and robust data to clients.



Brian Gosschalk
CEO, MORI, 2001-2005
CEO, Ipsos MORI, 2005-2007



Richard Silman
CEO, Ipsos UK, 2001-2005
Chairman, Ipsos MORI, 2005-2007



Mike Everett
CEO, Ipsos MORI, 2008-2009

A Great Collaboration: The Merger

2005 was the year in which Ipsos and MORI joined forces.

Ipsos was looking to strengthen its presence in the UK. It made its first formal approach to MORI in 2003 but was turned down when MORI opted for a second management buy-out rather than a trade sale. Two years later, a deal was agreed.

It took the industry by surprise. Industry magazine *Research* wrote: “Ipsos’ purchase of MORI had been rumoured for a while but, to be frank, we’d consigned that to the drawer marked ‘We’ll Believe It When We See It’... The marriage would appear to be made in heaven. Ipsos has always been a strong player in the marketing, advertising and media research field, but has failed to make strides in public sector and loyalty research. By harnessing MORI’s strengths in these areas, Ipsos has effectively bought instant expertise, experience and clients.”

And, indeed, this was the rationale for the merger. As Truchot puts it: “Where you are strong, you grow stronger”. The merger brought together the complementary strengths of Ipsos and MORI.

As well as a clear strategic fit, there was a cultural fit. David Elms, an experienced corporate finance partner at KPMG who advised MORI shareholders on the merger, says: “You can’t integrate a deal unless there is a good cultural fit. And even before the deal was struck it was evident that there was a very good cultural fit between these two organisations. But what I also saw was the time and effort that both sides spent on ensuring a smooth integration process.”

Brian Gosschalk and Richard Silman (formerly CEO of Ipsos UK) agree. There was absolute commitment from both sides to make the merger work. “Strategically it felt right,” says Gosschalk. “MORI was under no financial pressure to do the deal but was finding it increasingly difficult to compete on an international stage without an international network. Culturally there was compatibility about our values, ethos and commitment to quality.” Silman, adds: “As Ipsos was strong where MORI was weak and vice versa, we complemented each other perfectly.”

Brian, Richard and Mike moved on to senior roles within Ipsos. Brian became chairman of Ipsos Global Public Affairs and CEO of Western Europe, Richard, Global Head of Ipsos MediaCT and Mike became Global HR Director.

The combined board was evenly balanced between Ipsos and MORI management. As the purpose of the deal was to grow the business rather than to cut costs, redundancies among staff were very few and clients from both sides remained faithful to the new organisation.

The merger meant that resources and capabilities were pooled for clients' best advantage. Operationally the combined business had a much larger field force for face-to-face interviewing as well as additional telephone research resources and expertise.

The quality and reputation of the brands that became Ipsos MORI live on. It is one of the best connected survey research bodies in the UK. "It is the organisation to which clients turn because our people make sense of the issues they research. We are not just technicians who know how to do surveys," explains Mike Everett.

At the same time as undertaking the largest merger in UK research history, Ipsos MORI stole a march on its competitors in 2006 by becoming the first organisation to be awarded the global quality standard, ISO 20252.

Building on this, to assure commercial and government clients of its commitment to data protection, Ipsos MORI was also the first in the market research industry to achieve the new information security standard ISO 27001 in August 2008.

Ipsos MORI Today

From small beginnings, Ipsos MORI has grown into a considerable brand of substantial weight. With more than 950 staff and over 2,000 interviewers, it is one of the largest and best-known research companies in the UK and a key part of a leading global group with an unrivalled portfolio of research experience.

Since the Ipsos MORI deal, the company has thrived, consistently outperforming its peer group. Ipsos group has continued to grow and develop and now has a direct presence in almost 60 countries.

Our current success is built on the firm foundations of the past. From Mark Abrams, Sir Robert Worcester, Dawn Mitchell and beyond, a shared passion for entrepreneurialism, innovation and quality has created the blueprint for what the company has become today.

Ipsos MORI remains committed to shaping the future of the research industry; to innovation; and to communicating what it does effectively to the widest possible audience.

www.ipsos-mori.com