

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Chad: Hi this is Chad. Today I have the pleasure of talking with Brian Ottum. He is a market research specialist with thirty years on new product development. He started as a chemical engineer and joined Procter and Gamble, contributing to Charmin, Pampers and other products we would all know. He went on to earn a PhD in market research and today he helps companies like Kimberly-Clark, Jonson Controls, Thomson Reuters, and many others with product development and innovation. By the way he's also an amateur astronomer, stargazing since he was a young boy at twelve years of age. And he is a serious amateur astronomer. While he lives in Michigan, last year he built a remotely controlled telescope station in New Mexico to take advantage of the clear skies.

Brian, thanks so much for joining us today and talking to the listeners about product innovation.

Brian: Thank you so much for having me. This is an exciting opportunity.

Chad: So that's a pretty interesting list of experiences you've had, chemist, product developer, market researcher; astronomer in there. To me, it suggests a curious mind, this desire to be learning new things, to figure how things work. Have you always been that way? Or was there something that happened that really kind of stirred your curiosity?

Brian: Well, I've always asked why, and I think that's my key mantra, it goes back to a story my Mom told me when I was three years old. She was pushing me around in a grocery cart down the aisle and I would point to products on the shelves and start singing their TV commercials.

Chad: So as a young lad, you were already paying attention to marketing, the advertisements from others, and putting this together, packages.

Brian: Maybe, I watched too much TV, Chad. But I was always ... and even when I could learn to read, I would grab products and read everything on the label and I'd turn it around back and see who makes that. "Hey, that company makes this stuff over here too." So I was into that even as a young boy.

Chad: So as time went on something led you into chemical engineering. You went to college for chemical engineering. What were those events about?

Brian: Well, I loved Math and Science; still do today, and so engineering was an obvious thing to get into. I love Chemistry and figuring out how things are made. And so I got into the chemical engineering and then I started to get interviewed for a job and realize, hmmm, most of these jobs are in the manufacturing plant, chemical plant or a oil refinery and I took some job interviews down in Texas and realize, whooo, that's not for me. I didn't think I would survive too well in a production environment because I'm always obsessed with something new and different and in a production environment, you know, new and different is frowned upon.

Chad: Yeah, we want to make sure that refinery manufacturing facility continues to work properly.

Brian: Exactly, there is innovation there. It's problem solving. But, I kind of like the clean sheet of paper approach.

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Chad: So, that was a good blessing to figure this out before you actually got out of school and took that first job.

Brian: I actually had nightmares after these job interviews thinking, “Oh, my goodness. What if I was working there for ten years? What would I look like after twenty years working there doing that?” And what I could say was, “Hey, look at that three ring binder on the shelf, that’s what I did for five years. I divined a refinery in Saudi Arabia.” And I’m thinking, “Oh that’s not a good life for me.”

Chad: You needed something else. It’s interesting. I was in electrical engineering and was looking forward to getting out of school and developing products around electrical engineering, right? But actually, I was doing radar analysis first, then joined a company that turned into a software company and started developing software products along the way. Never had any intentions of how my career ended up. But it all worked together well, and I also enjoy developing those new products. What were those steps then? So you recognized that doing operations as a chemical engineer would not be a good fit for you. How did you end up in new product development?

Brian: Well, I talked to one of my friends who was also in chemical engineering and she had just gotten back from a summer engineering internship at Procter and Gamble and she had the most exciting things to say. She actually was involved in prototype testing, making prototypes, going out and testing prototypes with real live consumers and I’m just saying, “Whoa, that is way cool.” And so she told me all about it. And actually, she put in a good word for me when the recruiter came to town.

Chad: And so that got you. That was the steps that got you in the door of Procter and Gamble.

Brian: It really did. Yes, her help was instrumental and it was a wonderful job in Cincinnati for seven years.

Chad: Very good. So they or somewhere else, let’s dive into lessons actually learned from some real projects. And unfortunately we often learn the best lessons from those projects that failed, from things that don’t work out as we expect. Do you have an example that stands out where you learned some really good product innovation lessons?

Brian: Well, Procter and Gamble is a wonderful innovator and they are recognized as some of the best, doing the best innovations across many, many, many, many consumer categories. In most recently, in medicine, in medical type products. So, when I was there, I worked on Pampers, which is flagship brand and there was a lot of research done and among the number one thing a diaper does is it keeps all the bad things inside and doesn’t have any leaks, and so we worked on diapers that would leak less. And there was a large project to have ... Let’s have diapers that fit better, because everybody wants to have a diaper on a baby that kind of looks like regular underwear, right?

Chad: Okay.

Brian: And other things were developed to enhance the diaper. We had prototypes. We did market research and suddenly the project is very important. And management is getting very excited that the project is looking good because if you have a new product in a huge category it can be very big for the bottom line. Unfortunately, we would do research and perhaps some not so positive data from the

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

market came in. Well, at this time, the project is just like a freight train running down the track. And no one wants to slow down that train but you know that having data from the market is about the only thing you can use to slow down that market and it took a while and I kind of stepped in front of the train and got hit a bit. But it was an experience where ultimately the voice of the customer did come through and we were able to make changes but there was a lot of effort and money spent that didn't really go to a good place.

Chad: Okay. So let me step through this with you. So there was a desire to build a new version of a Pampers diaper that was more like regular underwear; something that was thinner and maybe more comfortable and looks like real underwear. What was that market research data that you got back that suggested this was not something that the market was going to be receptive to?

Brian: Well everybody wants a thinner diaper. Everybody wants a diaper that doesn't leak as much, but would you be willing to trade off one for the other.

Chad: I'd probably want a diaper that does not leak.

Brian: There you go. And so when you start getting data that is good on one attribute that is maybe not as important, you make some tough tradeoffs there and you find out that, "Hey in the end maybe this diaper in total is not a step forward."

Chad: Okay, so the issue here was the ability to make a thinner diaper that also had the attribute of not leaking.

Brian: Yeah.

Chad: And so ...

Brian: And that's tough.

Chad: And so production was making some sacrifices in designing this new diaper to be thinner that actually caused some times it leaked.

Brian: Yes, and we are talking about something years ago where the technologies don't exist like it does today. Today's diapers are thinner and they leak less. But back in the day, we were really on the leading edge of trying to do these two things at the same time.

Chad: So, a good example of a company being excited about a new product direction, adding this ... capture this new attribute of a thinner diaper and you said you got hit by that train a little bit. So there was momentum going after this product, and what was that like?

Brian: Well, what happens is that projects take a life of their own. Organizations get excited about a new innovation. Careers get connected to this new innovation. Nobody wants to hear any bad data so there's a lot of pressure against bad data, or data that might slow the train down. So that was the learning there and it happens at all companies but it's just something that I learned that, you know what? Every time after that, I was more willing to get in front of the train.

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Chad: Very good. So that's an attribute of product managers is this ability to be courageous. You got to be brave and stick up for the customers.

Brian: Exactly, and I had another project where similar thing happened earlier on and some of the people were trying to talk down or to minimize the bad data. We were called in to the boss' office and he goes, "Hey look the truth is friendly. We may not like it but we need the truth because the truth is not going to allow us to not spend billions of dollars in a stupid way." So, he made a wonderful example and right in that moment we said, "Yup, we going to kill this thing, we going to kill this project." And that was the right thing to do.

Chad: That's also an important attribute of any organization that wants to be more innovative; we have to seek truth, right? And have that capability to make the hard decisions and talk to the superiors in the organization about what the data is actually telling us.

Brian: Exactly.

Chad: We might not like the story but sure beats the alternative of spending money we don't need to.

Brian: That's right and good companies realize the opportunity costs. They realize. "Hey, their people can only really work on a small number of things at the same time. So don't waste their time with losers."

Chad: Yeah absolutely. So what stage in this product's development cycle were you? Because we go through typically, our big blocks are the concept development, actual development of the product, and then maybe field or beta testing, and then launch. Where were you figuring out that this was not a product that the market wanted?

Brian: More towards the middle. It should have been early. That's the mistake. You should catch your problems early on and then deal with them.

Chad: Did you have the market data earlier to be able to catch this?

Brian: Not strong enough.

Chad: Not strong enough to make the case to the company?

Brian: Yeah.

Chad: Okay. Certainly a lot of stories are like that. The products take a life of their own and we have this perception that we already spent so much money on this we need to keep going with it. Why would we throw more money down the drain when it's not going to become a successful product first?

Brian: Exactly but then you have people who've seen that, "Hey this person over here got promoted five years ago for that project and this is mine. This is mine right here."

Chad: That's their opportunity.

Brian: Yup

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Chad: We want to get promoted on opportunities that are winners.

Brian: Can I give another very similar story, very quickly for thirty seconds?

Chad: Please do.

Brian: This was a Baby Bell. Remember the Bell System got split up.

Chad: Yeah. AT&T got broken up.

Brian: But this was Southwestern Bell, a new product. I won't say the details but I was brought in to actually help evaluate this new product, this new telecommunications product. We went out to the market. We did lots of research. We did interviews and surveys, and prototype use testing. Data was bad. This dog don't hunt. This was a dumb product. It did not work. People did not need it. It was a failure all the way around. We did the presentation for the boss. At the end of the presentation, the boss says, "I hear what you're saying but you know what, I think we still need to get this into test market. We were flabbergasted. A week later, the person I worked with called me and said, "You know what I found out, that boss's compensation was based on the number of new products that were put in the test market."

Chad: Isn't that a great example of the metrics driving the process in a way that we don't intend?

Brian: Exactly. And the person I worked with quit because these metrics and the compensation and the rewards did not line up with fairness and equity and really what was important, really long term for the company.

Chad: Boy, good lessons in that. It's a good reminder too that innovation takes place within a system and we need to be thinking about our organizations as an entire system and all the different levers that we have that impact innovation and metrics that could be undermined and kind of gamed in that way can really harm innovation. One of my favorite metric examples that I've heard is, some time ago at Ford back in the days when there were more manual labor cutting sheet metal, the metric used for their throughput during the day and what their bonuses were based on was how much scrap sheet metal was left. So you saw this one coming, right? It doesn't take too much thought to figure out, well, if it's a slow line, then my bonus depends on how much scrap sheet metal I make. I can easily make some scrap sheet metal whether I need it to make the car or not.

Brian: That's good but bad.

Chad: Yeah. With metrics we got to be really choosy about the metrics we pick. That's great. Good examples. What about success example? Do you have an example of when things came together and why that came together?

Brian: Well, I've had a lot of successes that came about in certain parts to the project. Are you asking for about like in Procter and Gamble or since then?

Chad: Since then. What stands out as an example in your career of a product that you've worked with that you did still learn important product management, product innovation lessons that you applied to other projects? But this was a good story.

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Brian: Well a good story is over at a competitor of Procter and Gamble called Kimberly-Clark. After I left P&G, I got a PhD in innovation and market research and I started on my own as a consultant helping companies do market research during the innovation process, but really focusing on the early, early stages. I got involved in concept testing and I was working on methods to actually go out to consumers and so we had a room in Chicago of about fifty moms with toddlers, little kids. And we had twenty new product concepts we wanted to put past these moms to see if they like them. I had worked with Kimberly-Clark to help develop these twenty ideas and they were all over the map. There were things to help in the kitchen, for eating, for kids, to manage their food, to clean up their food, to keep bibs - keep stuff off their clothes - all over the map. And there was a wide range of ideas here. But there was one that scored high and I don't know if you've seen this before but I used keypads. Everybody in the audience had a keypad.

Chad: Yeah. They're also called clickers, where you get to ...

Brian: Yeah. The clickers. Nowadays, they're clickers. But you know. We're talking over a decade ago. We're talking nearly twenty years ago now.

Chad: So now, we use our smartphones, so we vote from our smartphones.

Brian: Exactly. When these moms saw this one concept, they clicked it all the highest score. And afterwards I told them, "You know what, that's about the highest score I've ever seen. The concept was for little swimmers. Little swimmers are the disposable thin diaper type products that you can use to let your little one go swimming without getting weighed down by twenty pounds of soggy diaper when they get out. So the concept was very simple, we had a template, we put all the ideas, let's say a hundred twenty five words or less and it just described, "Hey what would you think about having this thin diaper type product that does not get weighed down but still keeps the things inside and doesn't cause a mess in the pool and so your child can go swimming. And these moms went crazy. So that was an experience where they found the market need. The unmet need was, "Hey my kids love to swim but they're in diapers. I can't do anything about it." So they recognized the market need. They developed a bunch of concepts around it. Some were good. Some were bad. And we did testing. We found the one that worked the best and they were the first ever in the market with this type of product.

Chad: So this was an early concept testing exercise. You were...

Brian: This was the first ...

Chad: Three prototypes...

Brian: ... time we tested the concept.

Chad: Oh. So this was new to them too.

Brian: Yes. This was the first concept test. And like I said, the score was huge.

Chad: I'm laughing because that amazes me. Just that a large company like Kimberly-Clark who had a history developing successful products. And we all recognize along the way, those of us who are

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

involved in product innovation, there's been a lot of failures we don't know about. But they have a history and this was their first concept test they were doing with customers.

Brian: Well, this was the first with me.

Chad: Okay.

Brian: Prior to that, I'm sure they had worked on the concept, the rudimentary parts of it, let's say in focus groups.

Chad: Okay

Brian: This probably was the first time they got any numbers.

Chad: And put some quantitative information behind it.

Brian: Right.

Chad: And, I'm curious, so we had twenty ideas going into this concept test. Do you know where the twenty ideas came from? What kinds of activities were done to just create the ideas in the first place?

Brian: That's a great question. Any good organization will have, let's say ten of those will be rattling around for years. Their people got them. I mean, they've been playing with them and it's been rattling for a long a time. So they'll have those ten. And then, usually they will have done a really good customer need study, let's say let's go out and visit the daycare center. Let's watch them diaper babies for a couple of days. Let us go do some home visits with moms, do some ethnography. So usually that's a good first step. And I'm sure, that's what they did. And then they went using that information, they found out what the frustrations, pain points, unmet needs are with moms. And then they did some brainstorming based on those unmet needs.

Chad: Very good. So some user observations to really come up with some new ideas, and that concept test itself, sounds like that was a pretty quick activity to put together. These were short descriptions. You got a group of moms together in a room, and got them to vote on what they wanted.

Brian: Exactly. Because one of the things that research has shown is that companies do better if they test all their ideas even if they seem stupid. Because you can't be arrogant. You can't make the decision for the consumer, so I urged them "Test everything," and so we found a way to quickly test twenty ideas pretty cheaply with the clickers and we had a hundred and fifty moms total, so you get a sample size of a hundred and fifty. We did this over the course of twenty four hours. Oh, and by the way afterwards we had the moms do a discussion of what they liked and didn't like and why.

Chad: So you got some qualitative data out of that.

Brian: We got some qualitative data and we were able to improve the bad concepts by redoing the wording and then understand the best ones and how to make those even better.

Chad: Very good. So this was a really quick, probably not a very expensive activity to get valuable customer insights.

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Brian: Exactly. They could drive from their headquarters down to Chicago so they didn't have to get on a plane and yeah, it was a like a three week turnaround from the first, from the writing concepts to having data.

Chad: Very good. Great example. I'm sure most organizations can benefit from doing more concept testing. That's when it's inexpensive. When we start getting into prototypes and then certainly into development, our costs really go up high.

Brian: Exactly. That's why it's really important to do concept testing and hone in on a good concept. Then you can spend your millions of dollars on prototypes. But don't prototype garbage.

Chad: Yeah. And from that testing, you also got additional attributes to consider in the product designs.

Brian: Exactly. They provided more input into, "Hey, I want this feature, but this one you're giving me, that's not so important."

Chad: Very good. Thank you very much for sharing those examples. So now that you've done market research consulting, providing services to a number of companies, what's the biggest problem that you encounter or maybe what's the problem that you see most frequently?

Brian: The biggest problem that I see is companies assuming, "Oh we know what our customer wants, Oh yeah this is a great idea, Yup this is what they want, And we don't need to fund a research study, We know the answer, I've worked here for twenty years. I know what the market wants."

Chad: And maybe because you've worked there for twenty years, is exactly why you made a lot of assumptions, and you don't know what the market wants.

Brian: Precisely. So research from PDMA and many, many, many other places, Booz Allen, Boston Consulting Group, huge studies again and again said that the number one problem with innovation is when people don't have a good understanding what the market wants.

Chad: I think too many times as product managers, and I'm certainly guilty of this also, is we assume that we are the customer. I've done enough of either in some sense living with the customer, understanding what the customer needs and I can represent the customer without actually doing the research to have the data.

Brian: And this was easy to do during the recession.

Chad: And why was that?

Brian: During the recession we said, "Oh, we can't afford market research" and that's true. When things were bad, innovation budgets got cut, so then companies got into the habit of not doing research and just going ahead and saying, "We just don't have the money, we're going to make a decision and move ahead." Okay, that was fine for 2008, 2009, 2010, but now they're working on bigger innovations that may have more risk to them so you need to go out and fund some research to confirm your hypotheses.

Chad: Absolutely. And you say that was fine but I'm not sure if you really mean that was fine, right? Because the way I'm thinking about it and I know some other examples that took place during the

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

recession. Sure, we were tight on resources, we were all expected to have much higher productivity as individuals that we had before because money was not there and people were being laid off and that was a very challenging time and so we were, the pressure caused us to skip steps, but spending that money upfront to really get the data, to be able to design the product customers want, saves so much money and not making those failures and mistakes in that design and development process, right?

Brian: Yeah, I agree with you. I think the reason that the cutting of corners didn't hurt so much in innovation during the recession is that companies stopped swinging for the fences.

Chad: So just adding minor features that they already knew the customers wanted.

Brian: Yeah. Exactly. Lower risk. Smaller incremental innovations where, "Hey maybe I don't have to do the research," but now since the recession, companies are saying, "We need new products. We need growth, growth, growth. We need organic growth, natural growth. We got to develop new products, we need breakthroughs." Well, okay if you're going to do that, you got to go out and listen to the market a little bit more.

Chad: And your competitors are doing the same thing.

Brian: Exactly, especially the small ones, the small upstarts.

Chad: Yup.

Brian: They're closer to the market. As you get bigger you get farther and farther back.

Chad: And that's how the small businesses can beat the big companies.

Brian: Over and over, we see it happen again and again. Little companies sometimes don't even need to do market research because they live it. They breathe it. They're there. But the big ones got nice conference rooms, and lots of meetings and PowerPoints and they don't come close to a customer.

Chad: Yeah. It's unfortunate. I talked to too many product managers that, either because of their demands on their time, they don't have the opportunity to talk to customers or in some cases I've been told that they are not allowed to go to talk to customers, which just baffled me.

Brian: It's a just a strong sales force.

Chad: Yeah, exactly. Rely on that sales force. Let's talk about some research tools. So you're a market research specialist, no doubt have a big tool kit for doing market research and really understanding what the customers want and attributes that matter to them and their product. Do you have a favorite tool?

Brian: Well, I'm a bit schizophrenic, so I have two tools.

Chad: And what's the nature of the schizophrenic part?

Brian: If you talk to most market researchers, they're usually more comfortable with the soft, fuzzy, humanistic qualitative data or they're more of a propeller head and they like the quant, numbers, statistics and those types of things. So usually you're on one pole or the other pole. And I'm schizophrenic because I love both sides.

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Chad: Well, it's a good thing like that example you gave us before doing the concept test with the moms and twenty products. You got both data out of that and so you got to be comfortable with those tools.

Brian: Research shows that you got to have both. You got to have the soft data. You got to have the hard data.

Chad: Very good.

Brian: You're not going to sell a project to the boss without hard numbers but you're not going to improve that product unless you got the soft stuff.

Chad: So, what's the favorite tool in both of those categories for you?

Brian: Well on the soft data, best tool is ethnography, walking a mile in their moccasins, living with your customer, getting to know them as well as you can, meeting them in their environment, spending quality time and deeply understanding their needs.

Chad: Okay. So doing those user observations, understand what the problem really is, and what would provide value and a solution.

Brian: Exactly. But not doing drive by ethnography. Drive by is where you go in and spend an hour okay. You're not going to do much in an hour. You need a little bit more.

Chad: You need to go deeper.

Brian: You need to do deeper, spend more time, get to know the person, and really get to know, really what their frustrations and pain points and compensatory behaviors, and all those cool things that you don't get to unless you spend some time.

Chad: Okay. So ethnography, user observations, what about on the quantitative side?

Brian: On the quantitative side, we are now, I'm thinking of something that's on the extreme end, heavy statistical, which is conjoint analysis. Conjoint analysis is a very sophisticated tool to find out what are the tradeoffs people make in their brain and what are the most important attributes that they're going for. So it is used though at the end, or near the end of the development process. It's where the company says, "Well especially in like software. We could put these dozen features in there, but which of these, we can only really do three. Which three of the dozen do people want?" And perhaps, which are worth the most money to the people? Well, that's what conjoint does so well. It really mimics the tradeoffs people make.

Chad: And how do you get the data for a conjoint analysis. Is it the surveys?

Brian: It's a sophisticated survey. Exactly.

Chad: Okay.

Brian: Basically offer the consumer or the customer various scenarios and in each scenario you describe fully the new product and you put a price on it. And you really ask them, "What do you think of this one? One to five? All right, here's another one. It's different. What do you think of this one? One to five?"

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Here's another one. And it's got a different mix of features. One to five, what do you think?" And in the end of the survey you crunch the numbers and you actually are able to see, "Whoa, every time this feature numbered C, letter C was there they said five. I want it. I want it. I want it. Well, therefore, now you know that's the feature of the hot button that they love.

Chad: Very good. So, as you described, we often have more features than we can actually put in a product, and have the resources to do all that and at the same time sometimes we add features to the product that are negative. Actually customers don't want it, lowers the value of the product. So this is a tool for identifying what features are most important, how important, and really if the customer's willing to pay for them or not.

Brian: Exactly. Yup and especially that willing to pay thing is, in today's world, very critical. Lot of times, people don't even want to fund a project unless you got data that shows that people would pay for if you actually did it.

Chad: Very good. So if anyone is listening and wants to learn more about market research, sounds like two good tools to go dive into is ethnography and also users observation, that's on the qualitative side. And then on the quantitative would be conjoint analysis. Do you have a resource for people that want to dive into the information more, a good book, or resource to use?

Brian: You know that the PDMA has some good handbooks, and tool books. The PDMA stands for Product Development and Management Association. PDMA and I believe through Wiley Publishers. They have three handbooks of new product development and at least three tool books of new product development and each one of those has small bite size chapters where you can look into a specific topic.

Chad: Very good. I contributed to one of those tool books once upon a time too and enjoyed the process.

Brian: Yeah. It's a good way to really find out about a variety of different topics. You know, you could find a whole book on ethnography. There are several of those out, too.

Chad: Okay.

Brian: But as far as conjoint, I don't think you find much there because you got to be quite a propeller head to make sense of that but some of these chapters do help you become an informed user of such a tool.

Chad: Okay. So go and look at the PDMA tool book series 1, 2 and 3.

Brian: Good.

Chad: And I always like to ask guests about an innovation quote. What was the favorite innovation quote of yours?

Brian: I heard it said by I think Peter Drucker that "There are only two essential functions of a business and that is marketing and innovation."

Chad: And that's what it comes down to.

TEI 008: Customer Research Approaches

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Brian Ottum, PhD

Brian: Yes because Drucker and others have shown that you can outsource pretty much everything else. But the only way you're going to grow and have a business is if you have innovations and happy customers.

Chad: Very good. That really sums up the business operations, marketing and innovation. I appreciate your time talking with us Brian. What makes this interview a win for you? What do you want the listeners to know?

Brian: I just want the people to spend more time listening to the market. Get out of the cubicle. Get out of the conference room, well and talk to customers. See what they think of your products and your competitor's products and you'll be surprised by the answers.

Chad: Very good. Get to that world feedback. And if people want to connect with you to learn more about your services, and more about market research, how can they do that?

Brian: Just google Brian Ottum. There's not many people with my name.

Chad: So and Brian is B-R-A-N.

Brian: B-R-I-A-N.

Chad: Yeah. Sorry.

Brian: O-T-T-U-M.

Chad: Ok. B-R-I-A-N O-T-T-U-M.

Brian: Yeah. But you have to wave through perhaps some of this astronomy stuff, and you can ignore that if you want to hear about innovation.

Chad: If people want to go and see some of the images from your telescope in New Mexico, I'm sure they can find them.

Brian: They will see those as well. Yes, I put those up pretty often.

Chad: Very good. Brian thank you again for talking with us about product innovation and what you've learned from your experiences.

Brian: Thank you very much. It's been very good.