

# Flume augments & accelerates digital market research and analysis with Qualzy to reveal rich, real-time, real-life consumer insights

## Client: Flume

Independent research agency Flume leveraged Qualzy's flexibility to power its digital market research through the pandemic and beyond.



**Finding fresh ways understand the lives and behaviour of buyers and users is a priority in modern consumer marketing. Many major grocery, food and beverage brands turn to independent research agency Flume for this. It uses an array of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to help them connect with customers.**

Flume has used the Qualzy digital research platform since April 2017. However, the agency's adoption of online research surged in 2019. The pandemic drove the need to create new ways to connect remotely as opportunities for face-to-face research faded. As it shaped innovative new research offerings, its use of the Qualzy platform grew rapidly.

Managing Director, Debbie Newbould explained, *"We experimented with many digital research platforms over the years. Previously we used these more for 'homework' tasks – such as to understand what consumers had in their cupboards, before meeting them in a focus group. We realised that Qualzy could deliver us broader capabilities."*

## Revealing rich stories behind real lives

Flume's philosophy rests upon making brands easier to think of, buy, and use. It excels at helping capture deep insights into what buyers are feeling and thinking.

**We experimented with many digital research platforms... we realised that Qualzy could deliver us broader capabilities.**

**Debbie Newbould**  
Managing Director, Flume

Debbie reflected *"We have always tried to embrace new ways of doing things, and so have been advocates for online and digitally enabled research work for a long time. It doesn't replace face-to-face interactions, but it helps capture rich stories behind people's lives."*

Qualzy provides many ways of engaging with users and capturing insights. This flexibility is one of the factors that Flume enjoys: *"Our platform must be as fluid as our projects, because no two projects are ever the same. Qualzy is fantastic at providing this kind of fluid partnership. As an agency end user, we can set up so many amazing tools."*

Working digitally reduces the practical limitations of connecting with large audiences. Since 2019, Flume has delivered more than 50% of its qualitative research methods online, connecting with around 2115 individuals. That is around four times the number it can work with via face-to-face groups. It has generated 1433 tasks, captured 66685 posts, and supported 5438 hours of buyer engagement via the platform.



## Ongoing insight via online communities

Flume uses Qualzy as a mainstay of its online communities research. These projects can extend long beyond traditional research timeframes, helping build deep and ongoing insights into buyers lives. Qualzy can scale as required and reach consumers anywhere, so Flume has built several sizeable communities of up to 75 respondents.

The ability to customise the platform to a client is a powerful enabler. Debbie explained *"We are using Qualzy to support a pub chain client to evolve its brand proposition with the help of a community that has been going for more than a year. We have badged the platform for that client, so users feel that they are engaging with the brand itself."*

Emily Hale is a Research Manager, for whom using Qualzy is part of the job. She commented, *"We can be on Qualzy for hours every day reviewing and filtering people's feedback. It gives you a rich insight into what people are doing and thinking over time, which you can't get in the more limited time for face-to-face research."*

Communities can also evolve over time, Debbie added: *"One of the advantages of Qualzy is that we can refresh communities with new participants. This makes it a living resource that can answer not only the questions you have today, but those that may arise in future."*

Our platform must be as fluid as our projects... Qualzy is fantastic at providing this kind of fluid partnership.

**2115**  
People connected

**1433**  
Tasks generated

**66685**  
Updates posted

**5438**  
Hours of buyer engagement

**36417**  
Images shared

**2316**  
Videos uploaded

We have badged the platform for that client, so users feel that they are engaging with the brand itself.

## Easily capturing any consumer voice

When Flume recruits new participants, it is confident they will be able to use the platform. Debbie stated *"The Qualzy interface is just so easy that we never need to worry. We have platform users aged from 17 to 70. Qualzy is so intuitive that we get fantastically rich content from them."*

Emily concurred, saying: *"Qualzy is as user friendly as Facebook or Instagram. People just post a picture or leave a post. It's like leaving a review, but the great thing about Qualzy is that it gives you private and anonymised routes, as well as open forums."*

Consumers come in all ages, but none find the platform difficult. Emily said: *"To digital natives, giving responses via Qualzy just makes sense. It is a natural way for them to give their feedback or express their views. Yet older audiences don't use it any differently. It is not hard for them, and Qualzy has a great help system."*



## Seeing sausages through consumers' eyes

Nothing tells a story better than through the lens of a consumer's real life. Qualzy helps Flume gather rich first party insights into people's lives, likes, and habits, through posts, images, and videos directly from people's homes and dinner tables.

*"We need to see things through our participants eyes. What I love about Qualzy is that you can capture a true end-to-end journey. It helps us bring our clients' customers to life, sharing their opinions about brands first-hand," said Debbie. "It reveals quality intelligence that helps clients make business decisions confidently and turn our findings into action."*

She continued: *"One project involved seeing how sausages were shopped in supermarkets. We could task people to go and see how they look and how they are merchandised. Then we could see what they did next – how they stored them in the fridge, cooked them, and see actual reactions when people served them to their family."*

Without an accessible online platform, such insights would be impossible, believes Emily: *"You just wouldn't get the volume of information nor the richness from any other research methodology. It's just not possible without a platform like Qualzy."*

In total, participants have shared 36417 images and 2316 videos on the Qualzy platform.

The Qualzy interface is just so easy that we never need to worry.

What I love about Qualzy is that you can capture a true end-to-end journey. It helps us bring our clients' customers to life.



## Quality analysis at scale

Connecting with larger communities over a longer period generates high quantities of data that Qualzy helps Flume to capture, organise and analyse. Emily explained: *"Qualzy gives us a one page view where we can see everything all in one place, and it has lots of cool features. You can tag participants when you upload them, and easily filter responses by things like gender or location later. But you can also tag things dynamically as people upload posts, such as when they mention price or quality."*

Enabling participants to input in real time boosts the quality of analysis, she noted: *"Qualzy helps us see behaviour as it happens in the moment. Food diaries are a good example: you can't get an accurate snapshot if you ask people to recall their meals and feelings afterwards because memory is both fallible and filtered. With Qualzy we get a far more accurate view – it just wouldn't be possible to get this perspective without it."*



Qualzy helps us see behaviour as it happens in the moment.

## Driving cost-effective delivery

With a wide range of tools available, the Flume team can work and deliver results faster, and set up and deliver a higher volume of projects within shorter timeframes than would be possible offline. Debbie said, *"Online communities play an important role in our business success. Using Qualzy helps us to review, analyse and deliver results in a much more timely and cost-effective way."*

An accessible platform helps individuals work more efficiently and deliver more value. Emily shared that *"Qualzy saves so much time. I've used other platforms and they don't have this level of user-friendliness. It makes my job easier and quicker, freeing up time to do the analysis instead of spending it on manual tasks."*

Using Qualzy helps us to review, analyse and deliver results in a much more timely and cost-effective way.

## Reciprocal value builds relationships

Since 2019, the two teams have developed a strong relationship that helps Flume respond fast to fresh challenges. Debbie observed that *"the great thing about the Qualzy team is that they are really open. No project is ever the same – at the start you never know what might happen later. Qualzy have been amazingly accommodating with our requests, helpful at getting things to work as we want, and super-responsive on long-term projects."*

The platform has become an integral part of how Flume works and the services it offers. Debbie sees a two-way bond: *"Qualzy has been a good partner for us. We push them for new things we need, and they push us a bit about new ways we might do things."*

There have been other benefits also, she added: *“Qualzy has even made recruitment easier. New and younger team members find it intuitive and a natural way of communicating, so they harness all its capabilities quickly.”*

## Enabling a promising future

Qualzy doesn't replace traditional market research methodologies but has augmented and helped to accelerate them. Debbie sees this as a natural evolution, saying that *“Platforms like Qualzy are part of the hybridisation of research. You can use it pre- and post- face-to-face and group work – getting to know people better before they come and staying better connected with them afterwards. You get more personal and honest conversations, and deeper insights as a result.”*

Flume's effective use of Qualzy helped it win a West Midlands Tech Award in 2022. Debbie said: *“We never saw Qualzy simply as technology, but as an enabler. We were delighted to win. That is an immeasurable benefit, and it helped the entire team feel good.”*

She has no doubt that Flume and Qualzy will continue to deliver value. In conclusion she stated: *“Working together we will do even more award-winning work. Qualzy is now part of our pitch to new clients, who truly value seeing things through consumers' eyes.”*

Working together we will do even more award-winning work. Qualzy is now part of our pitch to new clients.



Debbie Newbould and the Flume team accepting their West Midlands Tech Award, joined by Qualzy's Paul Kingsley-Smith.