

# Feeling Mutual can deliver insights to innovation clients with the agility they need, with Qualzy

## Client: Feeling Mutual

Independent qualitative research consultancy Feeling Mutual uses Qualzy to keep up with the rapid pace of innovation.



**Tom Woodnutt is a veteran qualitative researcher who runs Feeling Mutual, a multi-award-winning independent consultancy that delivers agile insight for innovation. As an early adopter of online and mobile qual research, he has used various platforms over the last 15 years.**

Tom first worked with Qualzy in October 2021. Since then, Feeling Mutual's agile innovation research methodology has often been powered by the platform.

Qualzy helps Feeling Mutual deliver more agile insight, not just because of their bespoke online qual tools, but also their flexible support and swift integration of AI efficiencies.

## Research is always changing

As technological innovation evolves, qualitative research methods must adapt too, and the pace of change can be intense. Qual research can help sharpen innovation decisions and ensure they are aligned with authentic needs and behaviours. Online qual research is particularly adept at providing authentic insight with agility. 'Agility' means gathering and sharing detailed exploratory insights in near real-time, often across multiple markets.

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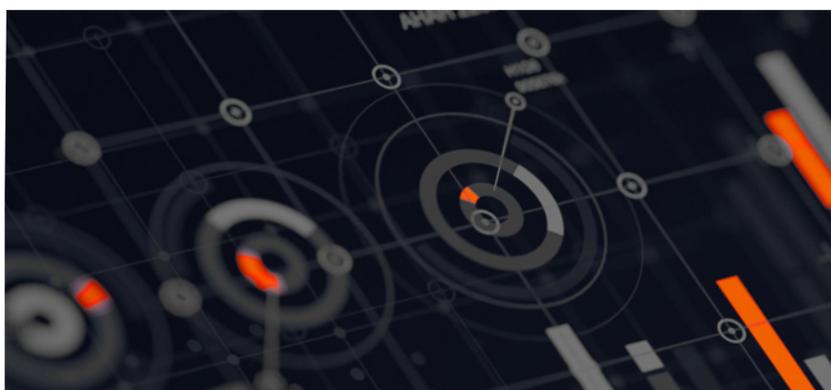


**Tom Woodnutt**  
Managing Director, Feeling Mutual

Tom explained the pressure that innovation puts on qual research: *“Clients in innovation develop, test, optimise and launch digital products with incredibly fast turnaround times. Researchers are under pressure to uncover insights that feed into tight production timelines. They need to not only give innovators an authentic understanding of what people really need (to inspire fresh ideas), but they also need to get timely feedback on how those ideas are performing and sufficient detail on how they can be improved.”*

*“Increasing expectations that qualitative research feeds into agile workstreams have guided us towards the asynchronous online and mobile qual methods that we specialise in. I need a platform partner that can support me on these projects in ways that are more demanding than ever before,”* he continued.

Electric Vehicles are a case in point. The market is moving at high speed with enormous innovation pouring into automotive product and service design. Infrastructure and drivers’ attitudes develop all the time. Research that is truly agile and aligned with innovation workstreams is essential. The traditional linear model of qual research analysis and reporting is too slow.



## Feedback from real-world contexts

Traditional methods like depth interviews or focus groups can struggle to deliver insight that is sufficiently timely, detailed, or authentic. Tom uses Qualzy because: *“I don’t like relying on people’s accounts of what they think they did. I prefer them to feedback ‘in the moment’ of a behaviour so they can share details they might have forgotten. For example, if exploring the experience of electric vehicle charging, I want participants to share what they did before, during and after the experience via mobile and critically how they feel about it.”*

The ability to gather immediate insights in a range of media in the moment is valuable: *“With Qualzy, participants can upload mobile videos, complete a photo diary, or share text about their thoughts, anxieties, and frustrations. Qualzy’s platform helps me delve into the intricacies of their lived experiences – how they feel and what they expect customer experiences to be like. In focus groups or depth interviews, we would be relying on recall, plus they are relatively slow to analyse, prone to bias and lacking in detail. Ethnography can take too long as well.”*

The opportunity to capture people’s experiences in real-time is particularly useful when researching online designs, he said: *“Qualzy has tools that record participants website or app interactions along with their verbal commentary of the experience – I get to see what they do in real time and to hear how digital designs make them feel.”*

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## Greater depth and reduced bias

Tom is acutely aware of how traditional qualitative research methods like focus groups limit the detail and authenticity you get from people. These limitations disappear with Qualzy. He stated, *"If I'm paying for two hours of a participant's time, I'd rather get that full two hours as I do with Qualzy. Rather than the fraction of that time that I would have got from a real-time focus group discussion."*

He explained that focus groups are limited due to the fact only one person can speak at once: *"In a focus group, only 1 person can speak at once. So, in an 8 person, 2-hour focus group, you actually get less than 15 minutes of input per person. That's not enough depth for what my clients need. Moreover, people are prone to being influenced by what the others say. With Qualzy you get a full two hours of feedback per person as they can feedback in parallel. And it can all be in private, so they are not influenced by what others said"*.

This means the way people describe their experiences and judge innovation concepts can be more trusted and go into more detail. It also gives more time for moderators to probe and scrutinise responses.



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## Agile collaboration across countries

Innovation projects usually involve agile workflows. This means that the research team, strategists, and designers have little time to identify the most useful insights and to apply them to concepts. Qualzy has tools that make it easier for all stakeholders to identify the most useful insights and to evaluate concepts more easily.

Tom can invite client and agency partners to observe the discussions and request probes within the platform, which also offers tools that make concept testing at scale easier to analyse. He said: *"Qualzy has tools that allow me to test ideas efficiently, gathering both text response and survey style scores. The data is displayed quantitatively which helps accelerate analysis."*

Qualzy also enables the researcher to cut the data by any of the recruitment criteria. *"I love how you can upload the screener data, so you really know who participants are. This profile information is visible in the platform which helps keep track of who they are as you moderate. And you can get the platform to display the results by any of these criteria through filters. This dynamic way of cutting the data means I can develop hypotheses more quickly, compare subgroups and ultimately have more confidence in the conclusions I make."*

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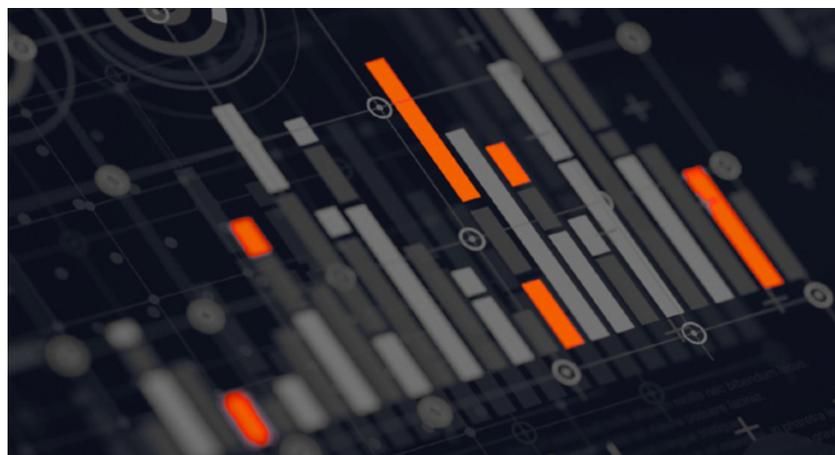
The platform works in different languages. Tom has run projects with Qualzy in over 15 different countries. One project had as many as six markets all running simultaneously. He recalled, *"I honestly felt no stress about having to launch the projects in languages I didn't understand because I can trust Qualzy's attention to detail throughout set up. I just give them translated guides and they all sync up perfectly."*

## Pioneers of AI research tools

As a long-standing advocate of digital innovation in qual, Tom has a strong interest in AI and how it can support the profession. Qualzy shares that curiosity, so early in 2023 the two parties collaborated on an industry initiative on the topic. He noted, *"we ran an event to get the perspectives of more than 150 qualitative researchers from around the world, about AI and how it might impact on qual. We listened to expectations, fears, and hopes of how generative AI might change the industry and ran a virtual workshop."*

Tom has been impressed by how quick Qualzy have been to develop its own suite of AI tools: *"Qualzy was early to ride the wave of generative AI innovation, quickly developing tools that help researchers do their work more easily. It is making the platform more useful, not just using AI for the sake of it."*

Reflecting on what he values most in the relationship, Tom said: *"Ultimately, Qualzy gives me peace of mind. It takes the stress away knowing that I have a technology platform that works really well, and support that is flexible enough to deal with the unexpected and meet the time pressures that come with agile innovation."*



## Flexibility breeds project success

The judgement criteria for an online qual partner includes not just its technology but also its people and the services offered. Tom is a strategic researcher who needs time for analysis and interpretation (rather than just project set up and management). He leans on the Qualzy team as an operations resource. Working under Tom's direction the team builds projects and programmes the questions as required.

In the agile projects that Tom runs, speed is critical. *"I need a really responsive partner. The Qualzy team helps me keep up with the frantic pace of innovation and agile project development by being proactive and flexible in the service offered."*

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*"The team is very good at advising you on how to get the best out of the suite of tools," he added. "My main contact Adam brings an expert understanding of what the platform can and can't do. By suggesting the best tool to use for a particular type of question he helps guide my thinking and keep projects engaging for participants. He's not afraid to challenge my thinking on the best tools for a given task."*

The team and platform make it as effortless as possible for participants. Tom stressed that *"It's important to use tools that make tasks easy for participants. The Qualzy team has a good idea of how labour-intensive or engaging tasks might be for participants which helps the researcher make the right design decisions – sometimes you might ask someone to rate a concept on a scale verbally, but you can also have them drag their scores using a slider on bespoke scales to quantify reactions."*

If challenges arise, Tom is confident that he has the support he needs: *"The team doesn't hesitate to work late when the pressure is on, such as when the list of participants or translated stimulus comes late on a project that is due to launch the next morning."*

Overall, Qualzy's technology and support services help Feeling Mutual keep up with the rapid pace of innovation.

In Tom's words: *"Qualzy's tools and support services help us to be as agile as our innovation clients demand."*

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