

# World-Link Group Inc.

## Photo-Ethnography™

Qualitative Research Using the Power of Photography



# Deeper, Richer, More Intense Than Traditional Focus Groups

The average respondent spends 8 or more hours  
engaged in a Photo-Ethnography project

# What is Photo-Ethnography?

Using camera phones/digital cameras, target audience respondents address a question such as “What’s snacking like for your family after school/work?”.

The question is directly related to the key client strategic/marketing issue and is phrased in easy-to-understand consumer terms.

Respondents spend several weeks exploring the question and taking photos that express their behavior, attitudes, and emotions -- without the bias of an outside observer.

# Why Photo-Ethnography?

1. Photo-Ethnography produces insights that are generally not possible with traditional 90-minute focus groups
  - Respondents spend many hours over several weeks involved in a Photo-Ethnography project
  - Respondents have non-traditional (that is, non-verbal) ways of expressing themselves thru photos and music
  - Respondents engage themselves in a project in their own home and/or work environments
  - Respondents get family, friends, and co-workers involved, yielding “this is my world” realism
  - Respondents are not observed

# Why Photo-Ethnography?

2. Photo-Ethnography gives marketers insight into consumer attitudes and behavior and is used to develop new products, reposition current products, and develop and refine messaging platforms
3. Photo-Ethnography enables marketers to make faster, “informed-gut” decisions...
  - ...to become immersed in a consumer learning experience
  - ...and be better equipped to help team members and management identify and embrace the big ideas

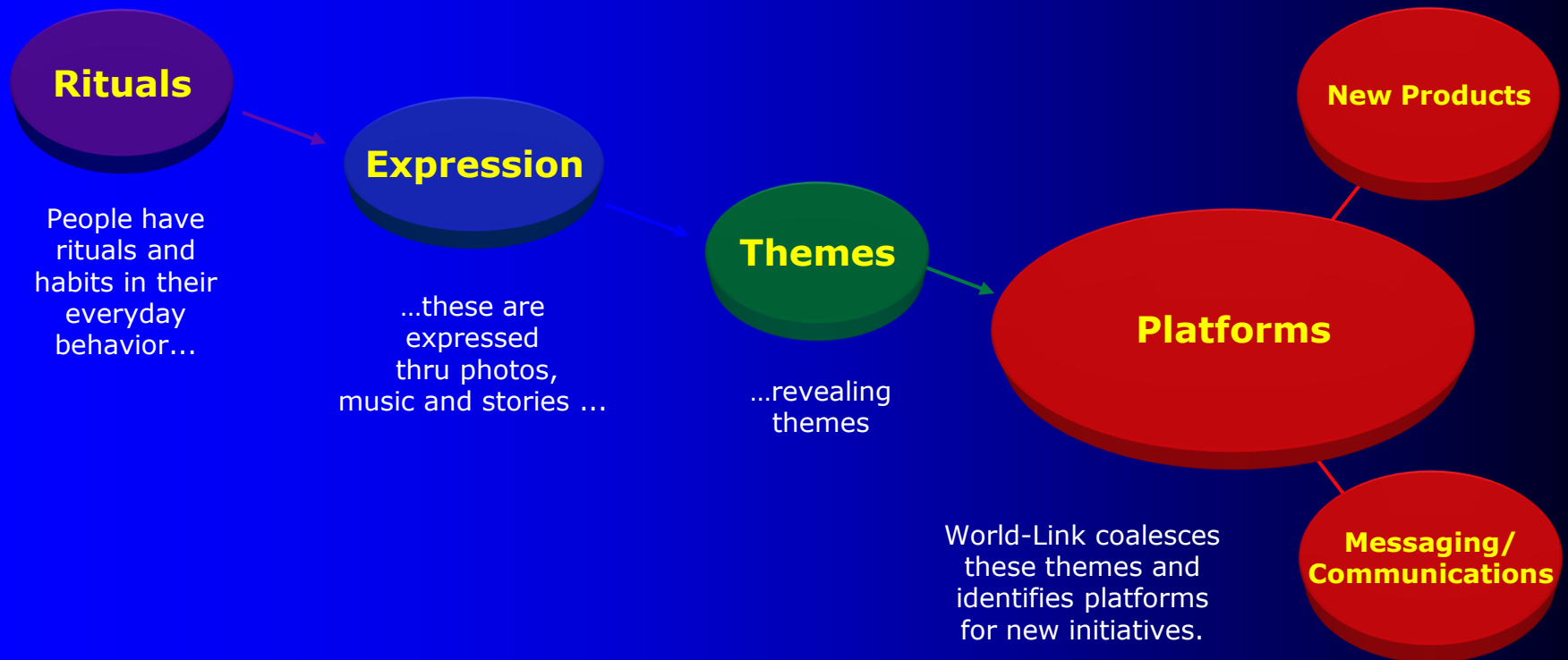
# It's for Adults and Kids

- The methodology is used with adults, as well as with teens and pre-teens. The methodology has been specifically tailored to meet the special needs of teens and pre-teens, who...
  - ... are uncomfortable and often uncommunicative in new situations
  - ... prefer visual expression and find it easier to express themselves with pictures, stories, and music
  - ... have relatively short attention spans and need continual stimulation to keep them focused
  - ... are most productive with projects that truly interest and engage them
- Accordingly, we have specific methodologies for
  - Pre-Teens 6-12
  - Teens

# What Happens During Fieldwork?

- **Phase One**
  - *Orientation*
- **Phase Two (three weeks later)**
  - *Story Telling with Photos and Music*

# How the Methodology Works





# Comparison to Traditional Ethnography

	Photo-Ethnography	Traditional Ethnography
Research Problem Definition	<b>Expressed in broad terms by client during/after Clarification Session</b>	Result of anthropologist's assessment
Means of Respondent Self-Expression	<b>Verbal, photos, music</b>	Verbal
Discussion Guide	<b>Brief</b>	Varies depending on scope of study
Typical Number of Respondents	<b>48</b>	12
Typical Number of Phases	<b>2</b>	1
Typical Number of Sessions per Phase	<b>6</b>	1
Typical Number of Total Sessions	<b>12</b>	1
Respondent Participation	<b>Two fieldwork phases three weeks apart</b>	One meeting
Average Time Spent by Respondent	<b>8+ hours</b>	4 hours
Bias of Being Observed	<b>None</b>	Must be overcome
Involvement of Others	<b>Anytime, at option of respondent</b>	Generally none, but depends on study
Group Synergy	<b>Builds throughout the project</b>	Low to moderate
Assessment of Respondent*	<b>Self-assessment with coaching</b>	Anthropologist's assessment
Method of Analysis	<b>Respondent's own assessment as expressed verbally and thru photos and music</b>	Anthropologist's assessment
Presentation of Findings	<b>Focus on emerging themes, megacepts and umbrella Übercept</b>	Academic

\* Attitudes, Beliefs, Wants, Needs

# Comparison to Focus Groups

	Photo-Ethnography	Focus Groups
Research Problem Definition	<b>Expressed in broad terms by client during/after Clarification Session</b>	Expressed in specific terms by client
Means of Respondent Self-Expression	<b>Verbal, photos, music</b>	Verbal
Discussion Guide	<b>Brief</b>	Can be detailed and extensive
Typical Number of Respondents	<b>48</b>	48
Typical Number of Phases	<b>2</b>	1
Typical Number of Sessions per Phase	<b>6</b>	6
Typical Number of Total Sessions	<b>12</b>	6
Respondent Participation	<b>Two fieldwork phases three weeks apart</b>	One meeting
Average Time Spent by Respondent	<b>8+ hours</b>	2 hours
Bias of Being Observed	<b>None</b>	Must be overcome
Involvement of Others	<b>Anytime, at option of respondent</b>	None
Group Synergy	<b>Builds throughout the project</b>	Low
Assessment of Respondent*	<b>Self-assessment with coaching</b>	Moderator's/analyst's assessment
Method of Analysis	<b>Respondent's own assessment as expressed verbally and thru photos and music</b>	Moderator's/analyst's assessment
Presentation of Findings	<b>Focus on emerging themes, megacepts and umbrella Übercept</b>	Key findings supported by verbatims

\* Attitudes, Beliefs, Wants, Needs

# Example from a Recent Project

# HBA Project

- **Client objectives:** Explore emotional drivers and attitudes among working women age 25-36 regarding their appearance when they walk out the door in the morning on the way to work.
- **Client knowledge going into Photo-Ethnography project:** Client had conducted 12 focus groups which produced “standard stuff” (client’s words).

# HBA Project

“How do you want to feel about your appearance when you leave for work?”

“Looking good enough to be swept off my feet by some good-looking guy. Wow!”



“I want to dodge the photographers instead of the buses.”



“When I walk out of the salon, that’s the best I ever look and feel. I try to get that look at home – but it never is the same.”



“On good days, I’m Betty Boop. Cute, funny, with the world on a string. That’s my goal every morning.”



“You know how good it feels to light a candle and slip into the tub at night? That’s how good I want to feel when I walk out of the door headed for work – totally mellow and feeling good.”

# HBA Project Findings

- **Photo-Ethnography key findings and impact:**

- The study produced a variety of photos, music, and stories relating to:
  - Betty Boop and other “girls with the world on a string” imagery
  - Evening tub, spa, shower, massage imagery equating to no-stress, mellowness, relaxation
  - “Nobody does it like my salon” imagery
- Client developed new product line and advertising concepts which were tested qualitatively and quantitatively
- Based on the quantitative, client is repositioning product lines and has developed new communications strategy

# Summary

- **Respondents use photos and music to address research issues in their own home and/or work environments**

*Benefit: allows respondents to express themselves using cameras and CDs, rather than relying solely on verbal response*

- **Respondents meet for two sessions three weeks apart**

*Benefit: allows in-depth exploration of attitudes and behavior and allows respondents to become very involved with the project. Results in more involvement by respondents vs. traditional focus groups, since they become comfortable with moderator and fellow respondents over two sessions*

# Summary

- **Respondents become their own ethnographers**  
*Benefit: allows respondents to “observe” their private lives without the bias of an outside observer. Allows them to involve family members and friends in the project*
- **Pre-teens’ and teens’ special needs have been addressed**  
*Benefit: generates maximum productivity from these target audiences*
- **A pool of dedicated/experienced/involved respondents is created**  
*Benefit: provides opportunity for follow-up research with the same respondents on concepts, messaging, etc.*



Photo-Ethnography™ is a Service of:

World-Link Group

Market Research | New Product Development | Market Intelligence

150 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 2800  
Chicago, IL 60601USA  
+ 1 312 291 4638

<http://www.world-linkgroup.com>  
<http://www.photo-ethnography.com>  
[info@photo-ethnography.com](mailto:info@photo-ethnography.com)