



# Lean MAGAZINE

SCANDINAVIA'S LEADING PROVIDER  
OF LEAN SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

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**AGILE**  
DEVELOPMENT!

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a huge leap for Industry  
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# UP UP AND AWAY



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to write about  
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business people  
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**HOW TO MAKE  
CUSTOMER FEED-  
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RESEARCH WORK  
FOR YOUR AGILE  
BUSINESS**

# CUSTOMER IS KING

Version  
**2.0**



By Olle Bergman

Responding to market needs at a higher pace and with higher precision requires faster and more accurate customer feedback. Accordingly, Agile Business needs refined methods for market research – such as those advocated by the experienced business advisor Karin Nelsson.

Agile Business means that any action taken in a company should correspond to a market need. Or to put it differently: it's the 2.0 version of

the old business saying “Customer is king”. No matter the size or the age of the company: Agile Business triggers profound changes – not only in leadership, R&D and marketing, but also in the way customer feedback and business intelligence should be managed. Lean Magazine contacted Karin Nelsson, senior partner at Inizio, to learn more about modern market research.

**Hi Karin! How have research companies been working so far to help companies gain insights into market needs and customer feedback? →**



# “You can’t rely on instinct or feeling when your competitors have access to relevant data”

Karin Nelsson, Senior Partner at Inizio  
– a Swedish research company with digital focus

In simple terms, we can say that there are two questions we ask: What? and Why? How many people think What? gets a percentage, for example 42 %, while Why? explains the 42 %. We can find out Why through quantitative interviews and sample surveys, which means that we put questions to a lot of people. Another approach is to carry out qualitative interviews, which means interviewing a few people in a little more detail and depth.

Traditionally, there’s a preliminary stage where questionnaires are drawn up, interviews are carried out, and eventually the survey is reported. This usually takes anything from two weeks to several months. In other words, such methods are far too slow for today’s needs. As a result, there are solutions that allow surveys to be carried out more or less in real time. Companies such as Netflix, Uber and Spotify are in fact built around consumer insight and have research built into the business model.

**Which social and marketing phenomena are the most important “drivers of change” today for your industry?**

The phenomena controlling today’s development are digitization, automation and globalization. These phenomena are sweeping the world and making fundamental changes to the survey industry – just as they are, of course, changing the foundations of our clients’ activities. Fact-based decisions have always been important, but nowadays it is virtually a requirement for every business. You can’t rely on instinct or feeling when your competitors have access to relevant data. Our clients need access to data and insights fast, preferably in real time.

A growing problem for us in the industry is that fewer and fewer people are willing to take part in surveys. It makes it more expensive to do traditional research and places higher demands on statistical analysis to be able to draw correct conclusions.

**Which other players are the survey industry’s competitors today and how does the future look?**

Industry convergence is very marked. Today we see methods such as eye movement studies, big data, social →

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### Three things to remember

**Karin Nelsson on how marketers and product developers can gain insight into customer needs and get feedback on their products – at high speed and with high precision.**

#### 1

**Ask yourself, “What’s my game?”**

What do you need to know in order to operate your business in the best possible way? If you need to know how to assess how satisfied customers are, or how a new product should be marketed and packaged, perhaps you can find out in a better way than through traditional slow methods.

#### 2

**Kill your darlings!**

Never mind time series or that ad hoc survey that you do once a year. These are new times with new possibilities and so it is better to take the plunge for real.

#### 3

**Work agile.**

Involve your customers and get them to help in the continuous ongoing work of developing the business.

media and neuroscience as part of our industry. This also means that, for example, we include Google and Facebook amongst our competitors.

In the international arena, there's an increasing use of so-called insight communities with concise, smart surveys. This means that you invite your customers, readers or citizens to be part of a special group where you can utilize their involvement. When the target group respond to questions, they receive feedback by being shown the results and learning how the company uses their insights. Insight communities also have specific member portals where they can see which tests they have taken part in, participate in discussion groups or communicate directly with company representatives. The company itself gets information in real time, can combine it with other sources of data and has direct access to dedicated customers who want to take part in surveys. Through statistical modeling, definite conclusions can be reached. The approach has proved very successful; I personally think this is the future!

**What are you in the industry doing about developing in a digital world where it is increasingly important to be mobile and nimble?**

The industry has generally followed developments extremely well and in recent years there have been major investments in technology and skills. I'm seeing elegant solutions that

give our customers a deeper knowledge of customer insight. The industry is founded on ethics and quality; respondents should always be anonymous and feel secure when they provide information about themselves. We also ensure that clients receive high quality results that can immediately be used directly in the business.

**Finally: what does "Agile Business" mean for you?**

Agile working means involving customers in the development process, making repetitions and getting things right in a continuous loop. It's fast, relevant and provides a basis for immediate action. It's okay to experiment and try things, provided that you explain and are transparent about what you are doing.

For us at Inizio this became apparent when we began to build an insight community together with Schibsted, one of Scandinavia's largest media houses. Because Schibsted through its various channels (including Aftonbladet, Svenska Dagbladet, Blocket and Let's Deal) reaches 8 out of 10 Swedes every week, you cannot do anything behind closed doors. Everything is out in the open from the start, and so as a company you have to be prepared for transparency and to explain what you do. The agile way of working means therefore that development is much, much faster than if you worked traditionally. Business development at turbo speed with bells on! ■

**Karin Nelsson on the democratization of data:**

"The democratization of data means that we as individuals in a digital society hand over data and get better products and services in return. Although almost all of us have doubts about handing over data, most of us do it anyway when we shop with our loyalty cards, when we place information about ourselves in social media or surf different sites. Unfortunately, what we get

back is still somewhat unsatisfactory in many cases – we may get advertising for hotels we've already booked or for products that we've already bought. But the methodology is continuously being refined and is part of the future where we will have better and more relevant experiences. There is of course a downside to this, but that is another story."