

CMI – History & Milestones

In 1989, Chet Zalesky founded CMI on the premise that marketing research can guide business decision-making and drive bottom-line results. He recognized that it companies needed to understand their customers in the context of their customers' world – the choices they make and why – to know how to effectively deploy resources to get customers to choose particular products and keep coming back. Zalesky's vision for CMI was to make a positive impact on his clients' bottom line.

Zalesky was the “chief cook and bottle washer” for the home-based business until CMI's growth justified additional employees. Today, CMI is a full-service marketing research firm that fulfills Zalesky's vision and continuously leverages new technologies and methodologies for deeper insights. In addition to offering a complete range of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, web-based research capabilities and multivariate techniques, CMI provides relevant research and the expertise to translate research into results that drive the bottom line.

With 2009 revenues of more than \$15 million and a seventh consecutive year of impressive growth, CMI is one of the largest marketing research companies headquartered in Georgia.

CMI's growth has been characterized by several key milestones as described below.

1989 – Chet Zalesky establishes ConsumerMetrics Inc. (dba as CMI since 2002) to drive clients' business results by providing relevant research, a collaborative partnership and deliverables that meet clients' business objectives. First clients are Marriott Hotels, Marriott Management Systems (later Sodexho Marriott Services; now known as Sodexho Inc.) and KBLCOM Inc., a cable television company since acquired by Time Warner Inc. in 1995.

1993 – Marriott Management Systems awards CMI a large business tracking study.

1994 – CMI wins a project from Marriott Hotels in which the company does research for a consortium of Marriott, AT&T and Steelcase. The study serves as the basis for the highly publicized “The Room That Works,” in which selected Marriott hotels offer rooms equipped with a large table, mobile writing desk, adjustable office chair, task lighting, power outlets and PC modem jack.

1995 – CMI wins four additional large business tracking studies from Marriott Management Systems.

1996 – CMI revenues surpass \$1 million.

1998 – Southern Company awards CMI the customer satisfaction studies for most of the energy holding company’s subsidiaries and business units.

1998 – In response to its growth, CMI develops a project team approach for each project, creating a new dynamic that benefits clients through improved work quality and provides CMI employees with greater opportunities for professional development and a sense of ownership and accountability for their work. CMI benefits from the approach through reduced bottlenecks as a result of multitasking, and by improved profitability due to budget accountability and improved efficiencies.

2000 – CMI launches its custom Interactive Learning System, now known as the Web Insights Navigator™ (WIN), an easy-to-use, online reporting system that gives all levels of an organization’s management and all functional areas that touch the organization’s customers access to research data from multiple sources. The system allows users to gain a more intimate understanding of their customers demographics, attitudes, behaviors and needs.

2000 – CMI wins member satisfaction tracking studies from Kaiser Permanente’s Mid-Atlantic and Ohio regions.

2001 – CMI introduces QTabs,TM an interactive web-based product that gives CMI clients 24/7 access to their survey data via the Internet, and more important, allows them to create a customized set of cross-tabulations to answer ad hoc questions outside the scope of a research study's cross-tabs or report.

2002 – In the aftermath of 9/11, when many marketing research companies floundered or went belly-up because many organizations put marketing budgets on hold, CMI ended the year with a modest revenue increase of 5 percent to \$2.5 million.

2002 – In August, CMI formalizes a marketing function by bringing in a senior vice president of marketing whose role is to develop new clients. As a result of this move, the company grew by double digits for five years beginning in 2003.

2003 – MetLife's Institutional Business segment awards CMI customer satisfaction tracking research.

2003 – CMI growth necessitates the hiring of the firm's first business manager.

2003 – CMI revenues approach \$4.5 million and increase an astounding 76 percent over the previous year.

2004 – CMI revenues exceed \$6.7 million, a 51 percent increase over 2003.

2005 - MetLife's Institutional Business segment awards CMI with additional brand tracking research.

2005 – CMI revenues exceed \$8.8 million, a 30 percent increase from 2004.

2006 – MetLife awards CMI with its 2005 Supplier of the Year award in recognition of the firm's consultative approach, creativity, strong analytics, client focus, value-add, and ability to deliver on high-visibility projects.

2006 – CMI moves to new headquarters in north Atlanta, doubling its space to 20,000 square feet. For the first time, the company's revenues exceed \$10 million.

2006 – Allstate Insurance awards CMI with a large agency satisfaction study.

2006 – Chet Zalesky receives *Catalyst* magazine’s 2006 Top 50 Entrepreneurs award. The award recognizes Zalesky as one of 50 business professionals leading Atlanta’s best performing small to mid-sized.

2007 – The company brings a senior marketing consultant on board. The position is created to enhance CMI’s ability to deliver strategic and relevant business insights and actionable recommendations that help its clients achieve their important business objectives and bottom line results.

2007 – Revenues exceed \$13 million, giving CMI a fifth consecutive year of double digit growth.

2008 – CMI expands its ethnographic iSight™ product, including new digital methodologies and conducting several compelling projects like the well-publicized study for Fidelity Investments.

2008 – CMI also enhances its overall expertise in advanced analytical tools and techniques by adding a director of marketing science. This team continues to enhance CMI’s expertise in structural equation modeling (SEM), a powerful analytical tool for testing and estimating causal relationships by using a combination of statistical data and qualitative causal assumptions.

2008 – Despite difficult worldwide economic conditions, revenues grow to \$15 million.

2008 – Chet Zalesky, who served as a board member of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO) since 2003, becomes the trade organization’s chair.

2009 – CMI is named to the Honomichl list of the Top 50 Market Research Firms in the U.S. for the first time.

2009 – CMI is named to the Inc. 5000 list of Fastest Growing Companies for the second year.

2009 – Christina Liao, VP of Analytical Sciences, and Hannah Baker, VP of Qualitative Team, are both asked to present at the University of Georgia’s Advanced School of Market Research.

2009 – CMI releases a new version of Qtabs to give more clients direct access to research results.

2010 – CMI leverages new technology for advanced text analytics and IVR transcription software to efficiently manage studies for deeper insights for fewer expenses.

2010 – CMI moves up three spots on the Honomichl list of the Top 50 Market Research Firms in the U.S. and appears again in the Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing public companies.

2010 – CMI adds three pharmaceutical clients, including the largest international study for a leading global pharmaceutical company.

2010 – CMI launches Decision Pathway Modeling, a new solution to help clients understand the decisions customers make when choosing to make a purchase. This has dramatically improved the way many clients prioritize their resources and deploy their marketing efforts.

2010 – *Inside Research* recognizes CMI as the 6th fastest growing market research firm in the U.S. With that designation, it is also the 2nd fastest organically growing market research firm.

2010 – Creative Growth Group presents CMI with the Client Advisor Award for implementing an incredibly successful thought leadership program.

2011 – CMI expands Operations team, adding Cary Matthews as vice president of operations.

2011 – CMI releases new secure tool for clients to access research results online, powered by MarketSight, to make it easier for clients and their stakeholders to directly access research data.

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