PARC Ethnography

OVERVIEW:

Ethnography is the naturalistic, scientific study of human behavior in context. Using various social science research methods, ethnography combines systematic data capture and rigorous analysis to provide a detailed, nuanced, and more complete picture of what people actually do and experience beyond just what they say they do. This reveals people’s real practices, tacit knowledge, and unmet needs or desires with respect to products, services, or processes.

Ethnographic research adds value in business contexts by:

- Uncovering new opportunities
- Informing the design and requirements of compelling solutions
- Finding insightful solutions to murky and seemingly insurmountable business problems

The Benefits

PARC’s use of ethnography to understand human behavior goes beyond traditional market research and user studies to provide relevant insights for discovering new innovation opportunities, transforming business practices, and much more. Ethnography helps:

- Avoid costly mistakes
- Produce more differentiated, potentially game-changing products or services
- Drive a greater innovation hit rate through increased product adoption and customer retention
- Enable faster time to market for product or service innovations through greater focus on relevant activities
- Realize visions in a concrete and less risky manner

The PARC Difference

Ethnography is a defining – and driving – aspect of PARC’s track record of real-world breakthroughs. PARC innovations helped change the way the world works and interacts because our holistic approach keeps people at the center: the initial focus is less on the product or service, and more on how we enable humans, and therefore organizations, to accomplish their goals.

Since pioneering the use of ethnography to support and inform technology innovation and R&D, PARC continues to evolve and develop social science methods to provide actionable insights for clients around the world. Our ethnographers have a unique combination of client exposure, academic research, and field experience in diverse settings – ranging from streets and call centers to inboxes and virtual worlds.
Our world-class team offers **fresh perspectives and deep expertise** because PARC ethnographers are **steeped in innovation culture** and collaborate regularly with a brain trust of diverse experts who are shaping the future in their respective fields. This facilitates seamless knowledge transfer and communication with our clients’ R&D teams, and also allows for rapid prototyping and iteration of advanced technology concepts or needs identified from ethnography engagements.

Most importantly, PARC’s ethnography team **specializes in connecting the dots – from insights to implications – for your business and customers**. Compared to pre-packaged approaches, our approach considers client organization assets, desired direction against the competition, and specific customer needs. **We tailor our methods and project teams to meet the unique needs of each client engagement.**

**PARC Ethnography Services**

**Opportunity Discovery**
Companies can easily miss new business opportunities – especially those that arise from unfamiliar sectors – when innovating incrementally or drawing on entrenched expertise that prevents them from envisioning new and game-changing products or services. PARC Opportunity Discovery, an innovation targeting process that utilizes ethnography, uses a structured and time-constrained yet customizable framework to help companies detect and filter emerging trends, identify real requirements before building products, and address the most appropriate and promising business opportunities.

**Business Practice Transformation**
Most corporations encounter difficulties when attempting to transform their processes or cultures, often due to a gap between presumed or recommended processes and actual work practice. PARC Business Practice Transformation uses ethnographic research to understand the cultural patterns, practices, oft-hidden problems – and assets! – of your company. But it doesn’t stop there: our approach also delivers insights that help initiate strategic organizational change, improve tactics and efficiencies, uncover untapped resources, and address human potential.

**Training and Competency Transfer**
PARC can help your company leverage the power of ethnography-driven insights on a consistent basis by augmenting your in-house capabilities with transferrable ethnography expertise.

**More Information**
Business Development
engage@parc.com

---

PARC, a Xerox company, is in The Business of Breakthroughs®. Practicing open innovation, we provide custom R&D services, technology, expertise, best practices, and IP to global Fortune 500 and Global 1000 companies, startups, and government agency partners. We create new business options, accelerate time to market, augment internal capabilities, and reduce risk for our clients.