

Research that teams trust enough to act on.

Oliver Barker · Lead User Experience Researcher · London

AI PRODUCT RESEARCH · TRUST AND SAFETY · INTEGRITY · MIXED METHODS · RESEARCH STRATEGY

OTB Research is the independent practice of Oliver Barker, a lead user experience researcher with 13+ years across agency and in-house. At Meta I led research for misinformation, user reporting, fraud and scams: trust and safety and integrity work on AI products used by billions, operating under regulatory scrutiny and at global scale. I design and run mixed-methods programmes that turn ambiguous, high-stakes questions into decisions product, policy and commercial leaders can stand behind.

13+

years in research, agency and in-house

5

years at Meta, at global scope

5

continents where I have conducted international research

1,000+

in-depth interviews and focus groups moderated

01 What I can help with

AI PRODUCTS

AI product research and evaluation

How users understand AI features, whether they trust them, and when they decide to rely on them. Concept testing, conversational tone and guardrails, evaluation rubrics pairing blind human review with LLM-as-judge scoring, and measurement once it is in production and in front of users.

DISCOVERY

Foundational research and strategy

Research that starts in genuine ambiguity and ends as roadmap direction. Understanding needs and behaviours, sizing the opportunity, aligning stakeholders who disagree, and turning the findings into a north star and a prioritised set of bets.

EVALUATION

Product, journey and onboarding evaluation

Usability and concept testing, end-to-end journey audits, onboarding and verification flows, and funnel diagnostics that locate where users drop off and explain why. Recommendations are tied to the metric they should move.

MEASUREMENT

Survey programmes and tracking

Survey design at scale, in-product intercepts at the moment of behaviour, and longitudinal CSAT, sentiment and trust tracking built into product dashboards with data science, so the metrics can act as guardrails for ship or no-ship decisions.

INSIGHT

Market, customer and partner insight

How customers decide, not only how they use the product. Category, brand, shopper and merchandising research, plus B2B audiences: advertisers, trade sellers, estate agents, venues, promoters and artists, each measured against the commercial goal that matters for them.

RESEARCHOPS

Research operations and team capability

Recruitment strategy, screeners and panel management, insight repositories, and coaching teams to run good research themselves. Sample quality sets the ceiling on what a study can claim, so I treat recruitment as part of the method, not admin.

02 Methodologies

Most stalled product decisions are not short of data: they are short of evidence the whole team trusts. My job is to produce that evidence, choosing the method to fit the question rather than the other way round.

Qualitative

Why users behave the way they do, in their own words and settings.

- In-depth interviews, remote and in person
- Focus groups and group moderation
- Contextual research: shop-alongs, in-store intercepts and in-situ observation
- Guerrilla and rapid-turnaround studies
- Moderated usability and concept testing
- Online communities
- Multi-market programmes, including emerging markets
- Research with sensitive and hard-to-reach audiences: users reporting harm or fraud, parents and teenagers, low digital confidence

Quantitative

How many, how much, and whether a change actually moved the number.

- Survey design, scripting and analysis at scale
- In-product intercept surveys triggered at the point of behaviour, such as exit from a flow
- Funnel and drop-off analysis
- Longitudinal tracking: CSAT, sentiment and trust
- Test versus holdout comparisons and experiment readouts, with segment splits
- SQL across large behavioural datasets; Python for analysis
- Shared metric definitions and pipelines with data science and data engineering

Mixed methods and AI-assisted

Behavioural data for the what; qualitative depth for the why.

- Triangulating analytics, support and feedback channels with interviews
- Qual-led hypotheses taken into experimentation
- AI evaluation rubrics: blind human review plus LLM-as-judge across defined quality dimensions
- LLM-assisted analysis of thousands of open-text responses, with human review of the output
- Hands-on with Claude, including custom Projects, Skills and MCP integrations
- Validating outputs, whether they come from a model, a dashboard or a query

03 Sectors

AI products Social platforms Trust and safety
Advertising and B2B SaaS Property software and CRM
Live events and ticketing Online marketplaces
Motors Retail FMCG Food and beverage Media

04 Audiences

Consumers Advertisers and SMBs
Estate and lettings agents
Trade and professional sellers
Venues, promoters and artists Shoppers
Parents and teenagers Users in vulnerable moments

05 How I approach a brief

Start from the decision. Before choosing a method I pin down what the team needs to decide, by when, and what evidence would change their mind.

Fit the method to the question. Qual when the problem is still ambiguous, quant when it needs sizing or proving, and both when stakeholders disagree.

Make it usable. Findings land as recommendations tied to a metric and an owner, not a deck that sits in a folder.

Say what it cannot tell you. Every readout states its limits: sample, method and confidence, so the team knows how hard to lean on it.

06 Selected experience

Meta

SENIOR UX RESEARCHER

Lead researcher for misinformation, user reporting, fraud and scams, working at global scope on products used by billions of users, and on Meta Business Suite with advertisers: onboarding, verification and notifications. Led end-to-end research on the **Scam Protection Center** conversational AI, from concept to global launch in around six months, shaping its tone, guardrails, evaluation rubric and post-launch measurement baseline. On user reporting, combined funnel analysis with exit surveys to find where and why users abandoned, then built a CSAT baseline and ran experiments that changed investment in the post-report experience.

DICE

SENIOR UX RESEARCHER

Sole researcher for the entire business, owning qual and quant from discovery to post-launch across a two-sided marketplace. On the fan side, onboarding, search, discovery and the social feature **Friends on DICE**, contributing to a double percentage point increase in user retention. On the partner side, tooling for promoters, venues and artists, contributing to a multi-million year-on-year increase in partner revenue. Drove the research behind DICE's pivot to livestreaming when COVID closed live events.

Shpock

EXTERNAL CONSULTANT ·
UK LEAD

Delivered consumer and trade insight across the general marketplace and the motors vertical. Answered how to monetise professional seller accounts without driving out the casual sellers a two-sided marketplace depends on, with recommendations that lifted inventory growth and vendor subscriptions by double-digit percentage points.

Razor Research

RESEARCH EXECUTIVE TO
RESEARCH MANAGER

Full-service agency work from brief to debrief across media, FMCG, retail and food and beverage: strategy, branding, merchandising and user understanding. Moderated interviews, focus groups and online communities, ran shop-alongs and intercepts, scripted and analysed surveys, and line-managed a team of up to three researchers. As a vendor there were no internal relationships to carry a recommendation, so the evidence had to do the work.

Fuller Research Group

RESEARCH RECRUITMENT
COORDINATOR

National participant recruitment, screener development and panel management. Three years of getting the right people into a study is where I learned that sample quality decides what research can later claim.

07 Ways to work together

Fixed-scope project

A defined question answered brief to debrief, with a clear timeline, deliverables and fee agreed up front.

Embedded contract

Day-rate research inside your product team, running studies alongside your roadmap and rituals.

Audit and set-up

A review of the evidence you already hold, then tracking, repositories or team coaching so research keeps running after I leave.



I get hired when the question is ambiguous, the stakeholders disagree, and the deadline is real.

CONTACT

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