



eye square

See the Experience

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Verborgene Gefühle

Portrait about
the entrepreneur
Michael Schießl



Hidden Feelings

Psychologist Michael Schießl does research for large corporations on how their customers are doing.

His company eye square has revolutionized market research.

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A young man is sitting at home on his smartphone. He has just logged on to a server where he receives a task: "Your puppy has become an adult dog. Find out what food he needs from now on and then buy a suitable product." The man begins his research in a virtual space that looks so much like the Internet. He visits websites, social media and finally decides to place an order with Amazon.

While he is doing this, he speaks into the microphone of his smartphone, for example, about the feelings and thoughts that come to him during the research and ordering process. This is followed by an evaluation in which he answers a few questions. That is the end of his working day. For his client, the Berlin-based market research company eye square, the real work begins now.

A lot has happened in the background in the meantime. The camera of the smartphone recorded the facial expressions, gestures and eye movements of the test person, the touchpad recorded his reaction times, and the sound signal was analyzed simultaneously. The collected data is now evaluated based on the latest psychological findings.

eye square thus succeeds in revealing the and measure the hidden emotional world of consumers. Companies can use this information to determine and improve the success of their digital marketing. This is called implicit market research, and the Berlin-based company is a global leader in this field.

"Our business model is the human experience as a whole," says psychologist and eye square CEO Michael Schießl, who founded the company with friends in 1999. The digital world has opened a radically new field of psychological research, Schießl enthuses.

The technologies that eye square has developed on this basis are selling well: the company now employs 110 people and is represented not only in Germany but also in the USA, Great Britain, India, Japan and Hong Kong. Turnover, which grows by about 20 per cent from year to year, has already reached ten million euros. The research-intensive company has been profitable for around 15 years.

The idea came to the native Bavarian during a study visit to the American elite university Yale. In the USA, the topic of implicit measurement was huge in the 1990s, but more in social research," Schießl reports. An example of application: research on racism.

Although there was recognizable racism against African Americans in society, this was not measurable with the conventional methods of opinion research. This is because respondents often did not want to or could not name their prejudices in surveys. Researchers therefore had to make use of basic psychological research to identify the true emotional world of the respondents.





Back in Germany, Schießl applied the new methods of the implicit measurement to the field of market research. Back then I was blatantly goal-oriented," Schießl says, but that has changed over the years. He has set up an art collection in the company rooms, and in the company, joy and familiarly cohesion are the top priorities, the entrepreneur emphasizes.

More than 700 clients now rely on eye square's analyses, including Deutsche Bank, and insurance companies, but also companies such as Mars, Unilever, Google and Amazon. On this basis, the company wants to double its turnover in the coming years and go public in four to five years.

The eye square founder expects a further boost from the rise of artificial intelligence (AI). In the future, more and more companies will use AI to communicate with their customers. "And we see ourselves as the company that is the first in the world to be able to measure and represent the human experience with AI," says Schießl confident.

