

# Interview with Michael Schiessl, Managing Director and founder of eye square GmbH



**Michael Schiessl**  
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**Prof. Dr. Margit Enke**  
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Michael Schiessl is a qualified psychologist, as well as the founder and managing director of eye square. He is an active expert in the field of implicit market research and publishes in the areas of advertising effectiveness in many research areas, including brand, user experience, and shopper research; some of these publications have been featured in the transfer magazine in the past. Schiessl is a member of the Professional Association of German Market and Social Researchers e.V. and is a part of its advisory board. He has also been a member of the German Advertising Research Association for many years. Alongside of all of that, he regularly speaks at symposia and conferences all over.

*Enke: Mr. Schiessl, you have been an active member of the DWG for many years. When you think of the DWG, what comes to mind spontaneously?*

**Schiessl:** The exchange between science and practice is invaluable. At the DWG, I witness how issues often spotted earlier in academia are discussed, along with their relevance to us. The political framework, like the recent symposium on the metaverse, fuels discussions. Topics like diversity and signals from various domains enrich our understanding and provide fruitful insights. This establishes a radar system crucial for our operations.

*Enke:*

*In a recent article in Cicero magazine, you mentioned, "...we see ourselves as the first company in the world that can measure and represent human experience with AI." This has prompted me to consider organizing a joint symposium on AI next spring. Should we explore this idea further?*

**Schiessl:** We're excited about this opportunity—it's very stimulating and promises a good crossover. Since we'll be celebrating our 25th anniversary this year, June 2024 would be an ideal time for a small, high-quality event. We envision something akin to the symposium held in Bayreuth in March 2023, focusing on the topic of the metaverse.

*Enke: What do you foresee as the main focus of your work moving forward? I recall our Executive Board visiting you around four years ago when the emphasis was largely on qualitative, often device-based market research. Is that still the primary focus today, or have there been shifts in strategy? Could you share any new ideas or approaches for measuring people's experiences?*

**Schiessl:** We refer to it as *human experience*, which may sound quite broad, but our aim is to bridge the gap between qualitative and quantitative research methods. Essentially, it's about understanding people better and leveraging measurement tools like eye tracking and emotion analysis. Moreover, we're delving into capturing the deeper meaning behind people's actions, what we call *semiotics*. A significant concept we're exploring is "visual consciousness," which involves integrating AI with perception to better understand meaning. AI enables us to extract more insights from qualitative data, facilitating individual case analyses. At the same time, we're exploring how large language models can enhance our understanding of data streams. Ultimately, our goal is to use technology to empower researchers, enabling them to explore new territories with ease.

We see opportunities to streamline processes and delve deeper into understanding what's happening. This is particularly valuable for large projection models, ensuring they consistently align with real-world scenarios. While this alignment has always been important, it's becoming increasingly crucial in empirical social research..

*Enke: If you compare market research to activities like bowling or pinball, in the past, it was akin to precise, targeted bowling aimed at gaining insights through diverse device usage for deeper understanding. However, today, we've shifted from bowling to playing pinball. What are your thoughts on this shift?*

#### Schiessl:

In relation to the traditional discipline of media planning, you're absolutely correct. Digital channels have evolved into dynamic pinball machines, although they initially promised the precision of a bowling alley. I anticipate a significant demand emerging at the meta-level of AI. While the future of digital sustainability remains uncertain, it's evident that new interfaces will emerge, presenting fresh opportunities for regular order utilization. Conducting experimental designs digitally over extended periods is highly feasible.

However, it's worth noting that AI alone cannot determine the most suitable communication approach.

*Enke: How do you see the legal situation in this context? Will there be restrictions on its use? How does it look internationally?*

**Schiessl:** Europe is now making good progress with the negotiations. I think the West still has a big advantage. Especially in the area of large language models, countries like China are lagging behind - a lot of things are restricted. China will probably not take the lead there.



*Michael Schiessl in conversation with Margit Enke*

*Enke: What else would have to be taken into account culturally?*

#### Schiessl:

At eye square, we've developed an avatar named "Michael Schiessl" who's adept at answering questions even better than I can. We offer Michael's assistance to our customers, and he's constantly updated with all my articles. This isn't just beneficial for our clients; it's also poised to bring significant changes to the academic space, including enhanced support for professors at universities.

*Enke: Corona has also shown us digital limitations, but in that context, it was more of a supplement than a replacement.*

**Schiessl:** As an agency, we have become even more 'universal'; our international colleagues used to be excluded because we worked a lot in person and by extension on site. Everything took place here in our offices. Now our international colleagues and partners are digitally involved and no longer 'outside'.

*Enke: Do we still need the traditional market research books?*

**Schiessl:** Yes, absolutely. Questions of classical methodology and statistics are becoming more urgent, the reliability of a statement is becoming more urgent, as ChatGPT, for example, cannot check itself.

That's why we especially need traditional methods. Personally, I believe highly in the genuineness of analog mediums, including printed paper.

*Enke: Are terms such as representativeness, sample size and quality of interpretation still important today?*

**Schiessl:** Yes, that's as important as ever, especially in today's landscape. Currently, we're exploring the potential of utilizing projection systems in marketing, which extends to various other domains as well.

While everyone aims to delegate responsibility, it's becoming increasingly clear that it won't always be feasible. Achieving optimal control in digital marketing can be a hit or miss endeavor. In such cases, alternative systems may be necessary.

*Enke: Where do you see eye square in ten years?*

**Schiessl:** eye square continues to thrive and grow on its mega course. We will hopefully do something good for people.

*Enke: Thank you very much for the excellent interview and I hope that our DWG will continue to develop in ten years with even more younger people and a great deal of enthusiasm.*

**Schiessl:** I hope so too. The DWG has the potential. Thank you for the excellent interview.