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## Joining Nielsen is like 'having a rocket strapped to our backs'

9 June 2011 | By Robert Bain

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Neuroscience researcher NeuroFocus has been [acquired by Nielsen](#), which has held a minority investment in the firm since 2008.

The company becomes part of Nielsen's product innovation practice, which works to develop new solutions for Nielsen clients. We spoke to NeuroFocus CEO AK Pradeep about what the buyout means for the future of the business.

### What changes will there be in how NeuroFocus operates?

The only big change is that we have a giant space rocket strapped to our backs. Nielsen is an extraordinary company that has been revitalised by Dave Calhoun, its CEO, and is globally charging on so many fronts. So adding, integrating and many times leading with the neuroscience that NeuroFocus pioneers creates an extraordinarily charged set of customer value propositions. At NeuroFocus the difference we see is that numerous markets are open to us, numerous clients are open to us but, more importantly, the differentiated strategic Nielsen offerings when combined with NeuroFocus are really capturing the attention of clients around the world.

### In what areas are you combining NeuroFocus's expertise with Nielsen's offerings?

There are numerous places. Any time a company tries to do innovation, most companies use Nielsen Bases as their engine for measuring, predicting and analysing it. Combining what NeuroFocus does with those predictive innovation engines is extraordinarily powerful in the marketplace.

Both Nielsen in the US and AGB across the world create ratings of people looking at entertainment content. Imagine, in addition to getting the number of people that watch a show, being able to integrate with those measurements the neuro metrics of how people felt about that content. That could change the face of how entertainment is being measured.

Imagine being able to integrate neuro metrics with the way things are measured in online panels – where all we have currently are the number of clicks and eyeballs.

Nielsen is the largest provider of retail and media measurement – what consumers watch and what consumers buy. A lot of what NeuroFocus does is investigate why consumers watch and why consumers buy. If you integrate the what and the why, you get a chance at some ground-breaking insights.

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We live in a very exciting time – there's a general recognition of how neuroscience and neuromarketing play a very important role in understanding consumers much better than we ever have. So far we have looked at consumers' words and tried to make sense of them. Now we look at consumers' silences and make sense of them. It's a very interesting way to look at it.

**NeuroFocus chose not to take part in the ARF's NeuroStandards project. How do you reassure clients that what you're doing is scientifically robust?**

We've been in neuromarketing for six years and from the first day we've had neuro standards operating. In fact NeuroFocus is IRB-certified [IRBs are institutional review boards – committees empowered by government agencies in the US to regulate research involving human subjects].

Long before the ARF dreamed up neuro standards, we've been operating with neuro standards. If you look at my advisory board, these are some of the topmost neuroscientists and the same standards by which they run their labs have guided our labs, because they're affiliated with us. We will always offer such standards.

Every algorithm that we use comes from published literature in the world of neuroscience. The scientists that work with us are the ones that created these algorithms. We are very comfortable that the clients that choose us have done enough due diligence on us to choose us over others.

Standards are not just a binder, they're not a study somebody does, they're everyday operating protocols and every NeuroFocus lab across the world has these standards for every study. We live and breathe standards every day.

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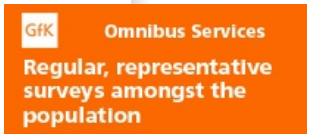
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