



The Power of Presence: UK Viewing Facilities Launch Nationwide Campaign to Champion Face-to-Face Research

A newly formed collective of UK viewing facilities has launched a bold new campaign - The Power of Presence (POP) - to spotlight the irreplaceable value of face-to-face (F2F) research in an increasingly AI-driven world.

As AI and digital tools transform how insight work is conducted, POP puts the spotlight back on what can't be replicated by automation: the depth, nuance, and connection that occurs when real people share a room.

"AI can enhance what we do, but it can't replicate the spark that happens when people connect in a room. The nuance in someone's body language, that moment of unspoken truth or the magic of an in-the-moment backroom brainstorm. That's where the data becomes insight," says Sam Grey, Managing Director at i-view London and one of the campaign's leads.

Campaign Purpose

POP champions in-person research not as a step back, but as a progressive, people-first movement that coexists with innovation. It stands on three core principles:

- **Pro-people, pro-progress, pro-presence**
- A collaborative, non-commercial stance from competitors who believe in the value of unity
- An invitation to researchers, moderators, fieldwork partners and end-clients to reconnect with the power of "the room"

The campaign will roll out social content, creative assets, and a national conversation - inviting the industry to reflect on what makes insight truly meaningful. It also highlights how a new generation of researchers and moderators can experience the impact of face-to-face work, many for the first time.

A Collaborative Industry Movement

The POP campaign is being led by a re-formed collective of UK viewing facilities, many of whom first came together during the pandemic under the Viewing Facilities Action Group (VFAG). Now, the group has evolved from urgent coordination into long-term collaboration, driven by a shared belief that working together strengthens the sector as a whole.



“This is not just a campaign, it’s a movement. We’re combining our voices to remind clients, researchers, and fieldwork teams that the room matters more now than ever,” Grey adds.

Why Now?

With remote interviews becoming a standard and the drive toward synthetic data to cut costs, researchers are raising the alarm that the absence of presence is creating a deficit in depth. Participants are more distracted. Clients are more detached. And researchers are missing the subtle signals that never show up on screen.

“This isn’t about going backwards,” says Liz Knibb, Marketing Lead for the campaign. “It’s about remembering the human heartbeat behind our best research and keeping it alive.”

What’s Next?

The POP campaign will include a client sentiment survey, collective insights from studios across the country, and a rollout of engaging digital content under the banner #PowerOfPresence. It is being developed by a group of viewing facilities who see collaboration as strength - not competition.


A future newsletter - tentatively titled The POP Drop - will spotlight face-to-face insight stories from the field, highlight rising moderators, and explore how AI and in-room research can complement one another.

“What’s been most inspiring is how instantly people connect with POP. It’s a shared belief that presence matters - being in the room, face to face. In an AI-driven world, human connection isn’t a luxury, it’s what makes the difference.” Knibb adds.

For media enquiries, interviews, or to get involved in the POP campaign, please contact:

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