

Overview

This is the second in a series of symposium on Product Testing with Consumers for Research Guidance. The purpose of these symposium publications is to facilitate discussion of approaches for the use of consumers in research guidance testing. The first symposium was on general techniques. This symposium focused on how to investigate special interest groups. We are defining special interest groups as: 1) groups other than just category users in the general population in which special techniques may need to be employed to reach this population; 2) special considerations must be given in designing the questionnaire; or 3) the data needs to be analyzed with different groups in mind.

The first section of this book is concerned with design, analysis, and segmentation. William Neal introduces this section by discussing marketing trends, one of which is segmentation. Howard Moskowitz discusses using sensory perception as a tool for segmenting the population. Rick Bell presents a design to study the ethnic perception of different types of sauces, spices, and names on chicken. Dave Lundahl discusses the effect special consumer groups can have on the data analysis and the implication of not taking these groups into consideration.

Kathryn Word opens the second section by discussing considerations for testing with different special consumer groups. Dave Fishken discusses pharmaceutical products, Edgar Chambers talks about scaling issues with children, Jackie Beckley and Maisie Wong discuss how to recruit and conduct a study with Hispanic women, and Marie-Claude Tromblay discusses differences between French- and English-Canadians.

When dealing with any product development process from R&D to Marketing the most important aspect of the project is for everyone involved to talk with each other. If in the early testing program in R&D it appears the product appeals to a special consumer group this needs to be communicated to the marketing group. Also if the marketing group has a special consumer group in mind to market the product, the development group needs to know so the product will be developed for that group's taste. The key here is good communication between all the groups involved. Without good communication good products will be developed for the wrong target groups and will fail in the marketplace. Both the product and the marketing plan have to be developed for the same group.

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