

CASE STUDY

identifying opportunity through custom research

Claim Substantiation

The Issue:

An apparel manufacturer wanted to make a claim that its product was preferred over its two main competitors.

The Solution:

In order to make the claim, the respondents had to try on the products to compare. MRSI designed the research in such a way that the respondents would have no way of knowing the brand of the products they were trying on. This was a difficult task as the products all had well-known logos on them making them easily identifiable. MRSI's creative solution was to blindfold the respondents, ask them to try on the client's product, along with one of the competitor's, and state which they prefer. Research was conducted via mall intercepts across the country among adult men 18 and older.

Business Implication:

Respondents preferred the client's product to the competition 2 to 1. Thus, the apparel manufacturer was able to make that claim in its national ad campaign in an effort to increase sales.

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ENFOQUE® Step One: *Discover* Case Study

The Issue:

A consumer packaged goods company hired a Hispanic ad agency to develop a marketing program for one of its key, well-known cleaning product brands. The company and agency agreed on an advertising platform based on preliminary data from other sources. Although the ad tested very well and met all necessary standards, after it ran for a year, sales and brand awareness remained flat.

Solution:

MRSI was asked to help. We designed an innovative qualitative program based on in-home interviews, product usage diaries, and follow-up focus groups. Through this program, we helped the client Discover consumer hot buttons for this product.

Business Implication:

Research found that the original strategy was completely wrong because the attribute on which the ads were based was neither the most relevant nor the most emotional to Hispanics. A new campaign focusing on those more important attributes was developed and ran with much success.

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ENFOQUE Step Two: *Explore Case Study*

The Issue:

A manufacturer of a food product common among Hispanics had successful distribution and sales among Hispanics on the West Coast and Central United States, yet the company wanted to identify additional opportunities in other areas of the United States and in other market segments.

Solution:

MRSI developed a quantitative research program designed to Explore opportunities for the client among Hispanics as well as the general market. Research focused on assessing different products being used now and obtaining reactions to different product concepts. The research also considered effects of acculturation on usage and product appeal, something the client had not even considered.

Business Implication:

The research identified specific products and messages that should be incorporated into the client's advertising. Specifically, MRSI determined the best positioning was to leverage a key ingredient used to manufacture the product. Consumers were familiar with this ingredient and it communicated authenticity - a critical attribute. Moreover, using trend secondary data provided by the client, we recommended a product line enabling them to lead the trend.

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New Product Development Process

The Issue:

A major consumer packaged goods (CPG) manufacturer was interested in conducting an internal audit of its entire product testing process. The goal was to evaluate whether or not the process was the best it could be, if it met all their needs, if there were any gaps, and also to compare their process to that of other CPG manufacturers.

This was the first time in the company's history that it had audited this process and it was in search of a trusted partner with broad experience in new product development to consult during this project. This was a highly sensitive project as it involved sharing proprietary information, so trust was essential.

The Solution:

From a field of vendors, MRSI was one of two chosen to partner with the client throughout this effort based on the length of time servicing the client's business, the respect and trust MRSI had earned over the years, and our significant CPG new product development expertise.

Business Implication:

Based on the research, the company was able to validate portions of its product testing process that were working efficiently, as well as identify improvements in other areas. The initial results suggest an achieved cost savings and a higher new product success rate for the company, and MRSI continues to help the client refine, test, and implement process changes.

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Product Label Design

The Issue:

A food manufacturer wished to completely redesign the label of one of its canned food products to update the brand's image, but to still be easy to find on the shelf (i.e., still communicate brand and key information about the product).

The Solution:

MRSI designed a three-cell monadic Internet study comparing the current label to two new redesigned labels. A computer image of a shelf set including key competitors was flashed on the screen (for 2, 5 and 10 seconds total) and respondents were asked about shelf recall after each exposure.

Business Implication:

The new designs were recalled, as well as the current design in a realistic shelf setting. In addition, the new designs were preferred 3 to 1 over the current label. They also served to improve the brand's image because they were seen as more modern, appetizing, and exciting. The stronger of the two new label designs was successfully expanded nationally.

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Product Line Optimization

The Issue:

An apparel manufacturer looking for new opportunities in the marketplace was interested in identifying gaps in its existing product lines.

The Solution:

MRSI pre-recruited current customers from the company's database. Customers were asked which of the client's product lines they purchased and what size. Precise body measurements were collected using scanners to determine if customers were actually wearing the appropriate sizes for their body type.

Business Implication:

The body scans were used to identify gaps in the current product line. Research determined where product lines were falling short and identified opportunities for new products. From this research, the company plans to launch new products and potentially eliminate product lines to achieve the most profitable mix of products.

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Product Testing

The Issue:

Faced with impending government requirements on food labeling, a major consumer packaged goods manufacturer was prompted to reformulate a significant portion of its products. The client needed to find a way to reformulate those products with healthier ingredients without sacrificing quality and taste.

The Solution:

MRSI was asked to partner with the client throughout the multi-year process. We developed intensive comparative product tests among heavy-users of each product to determine if the new formulations performed as well as, if not better than, the current in-market products. Testing was conducted across multiple product lines, as well as flavors within lines. MRSI worked closely with the client to identify areas for refinement until the new products were acceptable.

Business Implication:

The client was able to successfully reformulate its products with healthier ingredients while continuing to meet consumer expectations for taste and quality. What's more, the client was able to comply with the new food labeling guidelines without any negative impact on sales or market share.

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Promotion Effectiveness

The Issue:

A client is in a mature market and is experiencing declining brand penetration. The client hopes to revitalize the brand using a national sampling program. Which sampling method is most cost-effective in gaining new users: in-store product sampling, direct mail sent with other samples, solo direct mail sampling, or newspaper inserts?

The Solution:

A test/control telephone methodology was utilized to assess the effectiveness of the various sampling methods. After determining the purchase rate for each sampling method, a cost-benefit analysis was performed to identify the most cost-effective means of driving purchase intent.

Business Implication:

The client was able to execute a cost-effective program and understood what the end result would be prior to implementation.

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