

The concept workshop

A Qualitative Technique



***An interactive
client - consumer approach
to concept optimisation***

● ***The issues involved in concept tests***

Developing a new concept and optimising it so that it fits exactly to the expectations of a target group of consumers is often a long and difficult process. A precise positioning corresponding to an identified expectation (a « consumer insight ») needs to be defined for the new concept, and this positioning to be expressed in a clear manner that can easily be appropriated by the consumer. We therefore come up against different problems:

- The concepts drawn up are based on a precise expectation, but are we capable of expressing this expectation clearly enough for the consumers of the target group to be able to recognise themselves in the wording ?
- The promise should be written with words which can be understood immediately by the consumer, and not just by « experts » in the product.
- Often hardly a word or an expression needs to be changed in order to alter consumers' reactions completely. The process of optimisation is therefore a very meticulous one taking into account all the words in the concept.
- Quantitative testing needs to be carried out on totally finalised concepts, at a stage when lots of different options are still possible

● ***Our proposed methodology***

The basic principle is an interactive qualitative methodology going back and forth between consumer reactions and the work of the client team, over a short period of time. This enables a starting idea to be analysed in depth, optimised and developed to produce a finalised concept and possibly certain components of the mix too (name, product characteristics, presentation, pack ...).

The initial concept is thus improved, modified and reworked continuously throughout the groups, in order to end up with a precise concept, finalised down to the last word, which is then ready for quantitative testing.

● Procedure

An interactive qualitative approach over one day:

- Each concept is worked on monadically.
- One whole day per idea / concept.
- Each day is structured into **3 triads** (3 - 4 consumers) alternated with **client meetings** to reformulate the concept and / or inject new material (drawings, texts, packs...).
- The triads last for **2 hours** in order to enable work on both the positioning of the projects and also the concrete components of the mix.
- The triads are **matched across concepts** on the main socio-demographic criteria, it not being possible to introduce an extra element of variation, in addition to the differences in the concepts.

Description of the day:

- **1st triad:** 10 am - midday (duration 2 hours): evaluation of the first wording (V1) watched by the client team behind a one-way glass.
- **Client meeting:** midday - 1.30 pm: debriefing for reformulation and improvement
- **2nd triad:** 1.30 pm - 3.30 pm (duration 2 hours): evaluation of the reformulated concept (V2) + comparison with the old version (V1)
- **Client meeting:** 3.30 pm - 4.30: debriefing for 2nd reformulation and improvement
- **3rd triad:** 4.30 pm - 6.30 pm (duration 2 hours): evaluation of the reformulated concept (V3) + comparison with the previous version (V2)
- **Client meeting:** 6.30 pm: end of day debriefing / specifications for the new concept

● Recruitment

Respondents taking part in the triads are selected according to precise criteria. They have fairly creative, open-minded profiles and hence are able to express themselves with ease.

These profiles are identified by use of a grid of items, for example: sensitivity to new products in general, often go to restaurants / the cinema / the theatre, often travel, regularly read the daily press or magazines, are interested in new technologies (computers, mobile phones, the Internet...), take part in the activities of a sports club / association, etc...