



THE BRAND CHALLENGE

How do you move your advertising message, imagery, and targeting downstream faster? An advertising team and their Organic Coffee Client needed to do just that. They had a couple different strong messages, a few consumer targets in mind, and story boards the Client loved. But no one knew how they all aligned and what should be in front. In the past the marketing team would start by spreading their ad buy thin and see what resonated then move more dollars to the message and target that responded. However, this was expensive, took time, and didn't always yield optimal results. So how does the advertising move downstream faster?

THE APPROACH

PortMA was asked to help solve this problem. We started with some in-depth conversations with the advertising account team, their creative leads, and the brand manager. We did our homework on the industry and got a clear picture of the challenge. From there, we recommended a series of research steps to test the ideas against different consumer targets. We'd start vague and get specific. When we were done, we'd know what resonated, why, and provide clear direction to the brand, creative, and the account manager that would move the advertising further along sooner.

THE RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research strategy focused on uncovering what we didn't know, using that to hone the message, and then testing this result with statistical rigor to identify the prevalence and priorities of those we want to effect.

- **In-Depth Interviews.** We organized the possible consumer targets into four key groups: 1) those who buy organic coffee and 2) those who buy organic food, but not necessarily organic coffee. We then split each of these first two groups into 3) those who mostly brew coffee at home and 4) those who buy their coffee most often ready-to-serve (RTS).

We developed a short survey designed to recruit people that fit these four categories and invited them to participate in a 20- to 30-minute one-on-one in-depth telephone interview. We used our resources to recruit six to eight people per group and completed the interviews. The results were fascinating!

What Did We Learn?

All consumers in the category bought organic due to the health benefits. It was about knowing where the ingredients come from and that they felt there was a better (be it less consistent) taste. RTS buyers were more focused on fair trade and their loyalty to one supplier over another depended on this. However, not all organic food buyers identified with the need for Organic coffee. While it made perfect sense and aligned with their shopping values, they had simply never thought that their coffee should be organic too.

- **Market Survey.** This, and much more gave us a lot to work with. The creative team re-worked their storyboards now excited about new possible directions. We took these fleshed out concepts and fielded a national survey to a refined set of consumer targets to see what resonated and why.

What Did We Learn?

Of the three possible brand positioning statements, one out-performed the others by over 300% so long as we were talking to home brewers or those who do not currently buy organic coffee. Furthermore, with eight possible "reasons to believe" it was two that rose to the top among this same group. This clearly defined the features to highlight.

HOW THE RESULTS WERE USED

The agency creative team made another round of tweaks and launched the advertising with a single concept, clear consumer target, and a message they knew would work. They then tested the secondary messages against target variations and found their split-testing much more advanced than would otherwise be the case. They moved the marketing performance ahead 12 months with an up-front investment one-tenth their annual budget for better results faster.