TOTAL BRAND SUPERIORITY:
A NEW APPROACH TO ASSESSING PRODUCT SUPERIORITY

Overcoming Historical Testing Drawbacks

The historical method General Mills employed for competitive product testing focused on blind product testing . Based on the changing competitive landscape, a new approach was proposed as the previous method

- **Didn't offer learning why preferences might differ from market reality**
- **Didn't capture all aspects of the product such as preparation or nutritional benefits**
- **Offered little insight into why a product was or was not superior**

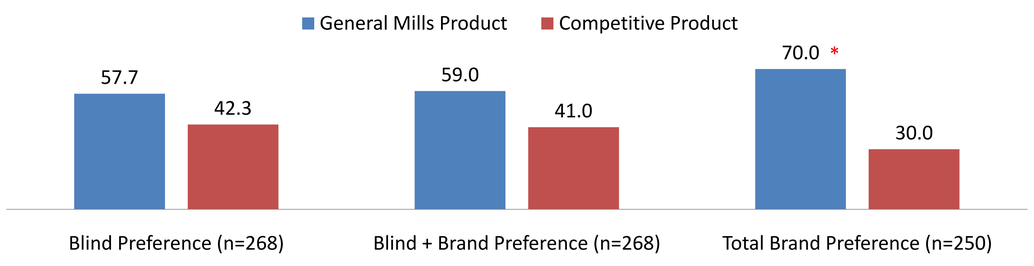
As a result of these and similar questions, research was conducted to expand the capabilities of superiority testing at General Mills. Some of the findings leading to the development of the new methodology are highlighted below.

How to Incorporate Branding and Product Benefits

Two approaches were explored and compared to the traditional blind product test method:

- **Incorporating Brand and Benefit information after traditional blind product test**
- **Incorporating Brand and Benefit information with product to measure Total Brand Preference.**

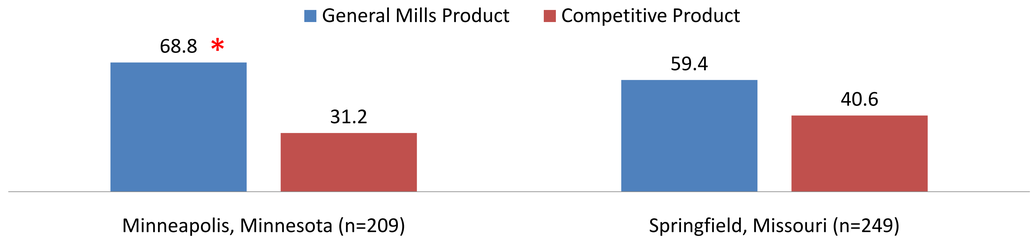
Brand and benefit information only impact preference when presented with product, not after. If brand is incorporated , it should be evaluated with the product.



*Indicates significantly higher score at 95% Confidence Interval

The Impact of Regionality on Testing

With some product categories differences in preference can exist by region. Designing testing to include this as a variable is wise.



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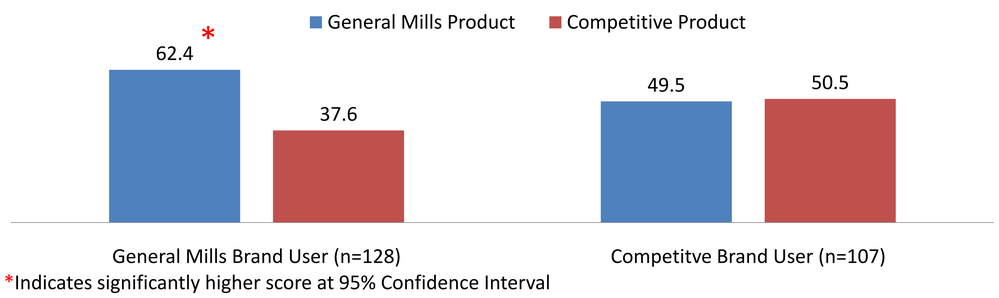
The Impact of Brand Usage on Blind Product Tests

The brand most frequently used by a consumer can impact results. Designing tests to balance brand usage in the sample, gives more insight into understanding strengths and assessing risks.



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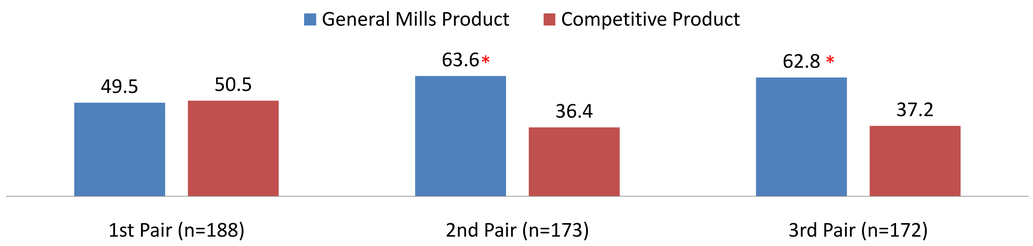
The Impact of Bundling Product Pairs from Different Categories

Having each respondent evaluate multiple product pairs was explored to reduce cost of testing. Concern existed that discrimination power would decrease. Results below shows respondent discrimination between products increases in the second and third positions , thus bundling would be possible.



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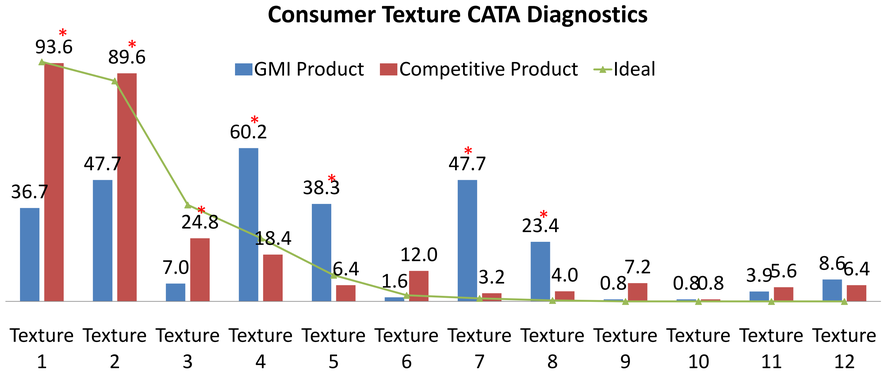
Adding More Product Diagnostics

Combining product diagnostics from the consumer and from the sensory descriptive panel offers more insight into results generating more actionable areas to explore if a product improvement is required.

Consumer Texture CATA Diagnostics



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Sensory Descriptive Plot

TEXTURE	Descriptive Sensory Profiling Differences						
	Much Less	Less	Slightly Less	Similar	Slightly More	More	Much More
Texture A			●	●			
Texture B				● ●			
Texture C				● ●			
Texture D			●	●			
Texture E				● ●			
Texture F				● ●			
Texture G				●	●		
Texture H				● ●			
Texture I				● ●			
Texture J				● ●			

● General Mills Product ● Competitive Product

Slightly Less/More=0.5-0.9 unit diff from GMI TBS; Less/More=1.0-1.4 unit diff from GMI TBS; Much Less/More=1.5+ unit diff from GMI TBS

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