The Surrogate Consumer

Mining Chefs' Intuitive Heuristics

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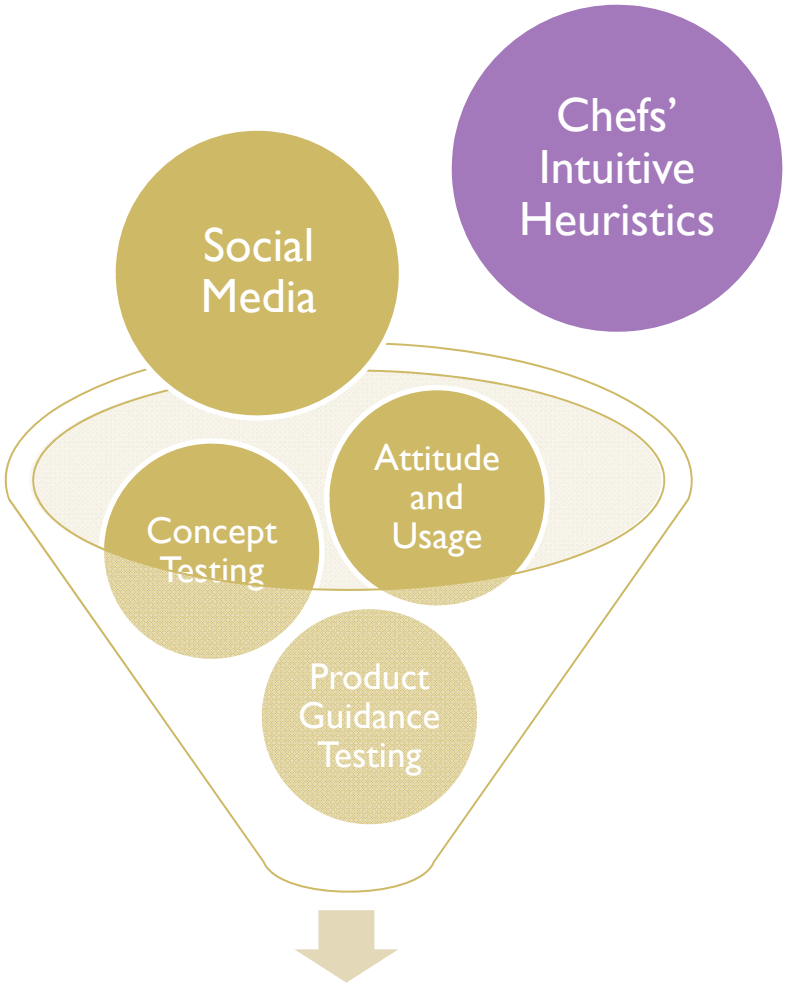
Outline

- Introduction
- Connection to the Consumer
- Role of the chef
- Who's talking about it?
- How do we better leverage?
- SWOT

Introduction

- Status → increasingly competitive global marketplace
- Strategy → product innovation and speed to market
- Consequence → shorter timelines and tighter budgets
- As sensory and consumer practitioners, how do we gather and leverage consumer information?

Connection to the Consumer



intuitive

[in-**too**-i-tiv, -**tyoo**-]

quality or ability of having such direct perception or quick insight

heuristic

[hyoo-**ris**-tik *or, often,* yoo-]

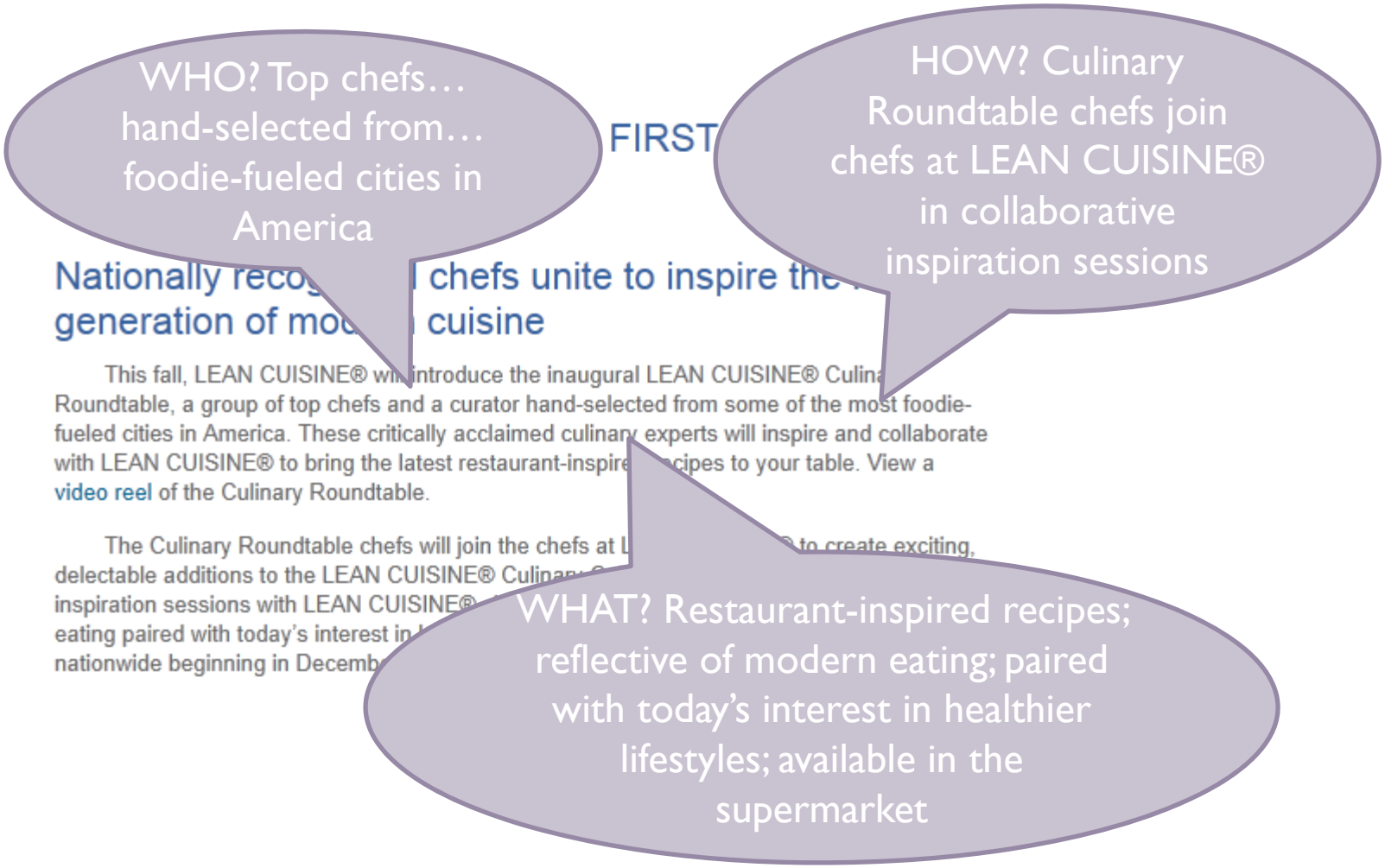
of, pertaining to, or based on experimentation, evaluation, or trial-and-error methods

Role of the Chef

- Instinctual and/or experiential, successful chefs have a special intuition for understanding and delivering what consumers want
- Modern cuisine drives many of the flavor combinations seen in frozen foods and packaged goods
- Evolution



Who's talking about it?



- Press Release: Nestle USA, Solon, Ohio, November 21, 2011

Who's talking about it?



WHO? Hottest restaurant chefs in the WORLD

HOW? Restaurant chefs and chefs, FLAVORISTS and RESEARCH SCIENTISTS from Givaudan are locked in a kitchen together for a week!

WHAT? Collective creativity and passion; inspirational concepts for CUSTOMERS' food and beverage brands; crafting the FLAVORS of tomorrow

- Source: http://www.givaudan.com/Flavours/Innovation/Expertise/ChefsCouncil Retrieved 9/11/14

Who's talking about it?

Food Corporations Turn to Chefs in a Quest for Healthy Flavor

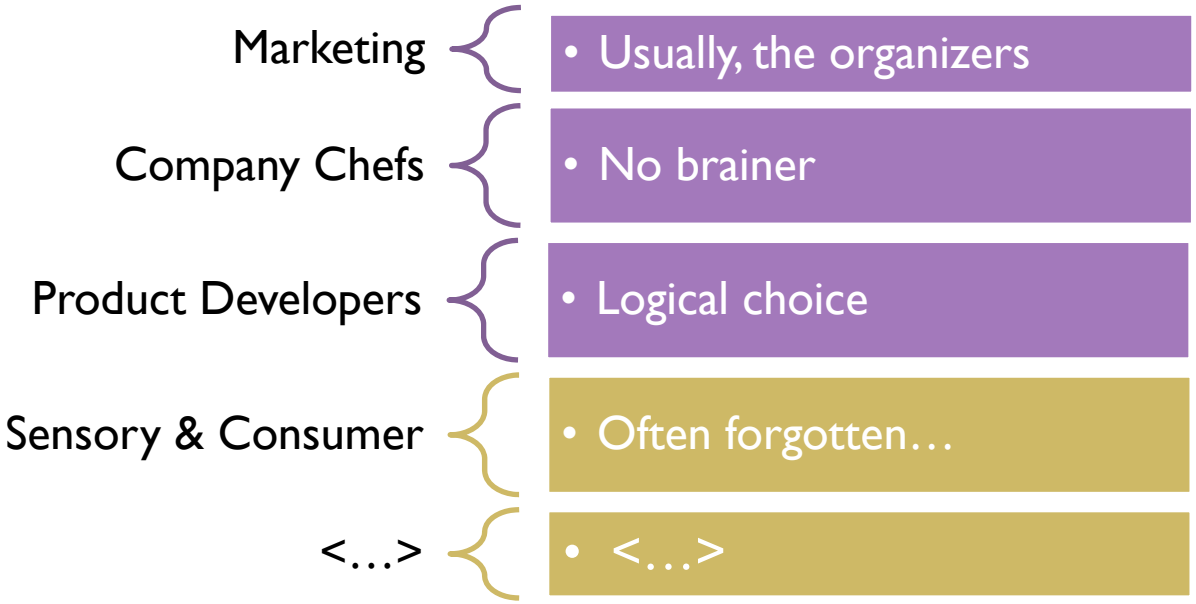


"The challenge facing us and other big food companies today is not easy: to have a great-tasting product without as much salt, fat and sugar," said Greg Yep, senior vice president for long-term research and development at PepsiCo. "Chefs have ways of tricking the taste buds that we can use in our products."

- Source: New York Times article, by Stephanie Strom published July 23, 2013

How do we better leverage?

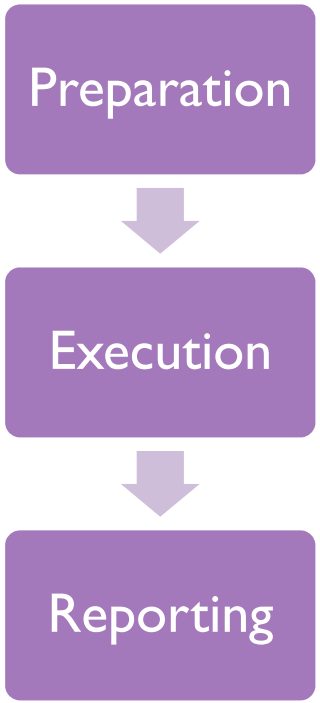
- First, get the right people in the conversation



- Ensure a value-added cross-functional team!

How do we better leverage?

- Second, apply sensory and consumer best practices in:

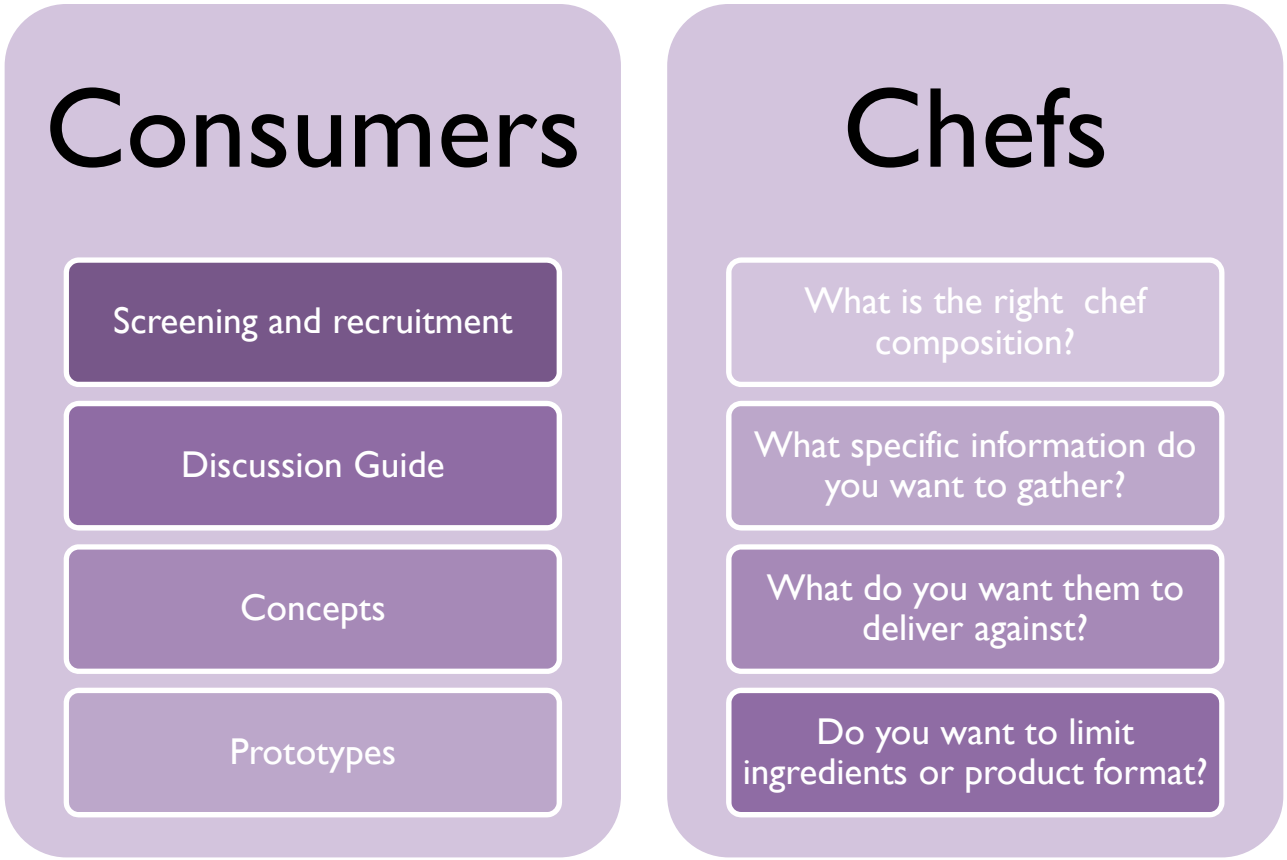


Preparation

- What do we want to get out of it?
  - Start with the desired outcome and plan from there
- What is in scope?
  - Also, define what is out of scope
- What do we already know about the product category and the consumer?
  - Consumer intelligence
  - Global sensory mapping

Preparation

- Example: qualitative focus group



Execution

- Example: qualitative focus group
- Need more than an emcee
  - Think moderator
  - Set the discussion
  - Ask probing questions
- Document the food experience
  - Qualitatively
  - Quantitatively (e.g., flash profiling)

Reporting

- Example: qualitative focus group
- Don't drop the ball
  - Debrief with team
  - Review the "data"
- Don't leave it up to Marketing
  - Report it out – share the knowledge!

Summary

Mining Chefs' Intuitive Heuristics

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Another point of view on the consumer • Richer dialogue when applying S&C best practices	• Chefs are not the consumer • Chefs cannot replace the consumer • S&C don't automatically get a seat at the table (yet!)
Opportunities	**Threats**
• More robust when combined with other data and information • Tailor to changing business needs	• Viewed as a marketing gimmick • Chefs may outgrow the role and move on

Thank you!