Sensory from the Ground Up
an Industry Perspective

Bob Baron
Director of Sensory and Consumer Insights
Mars Snackfood US

Society for Sensory Professionals
November 2008
“The Sensory Evaluation Group is one of the most important functions in any Consumer Packaged Goods Company”

Bob Baron
My perspective

• I am fortunate to work within a company where the Sensory Group is well respected and heavily utilized
  • Involved through the entire product life cycle
    • Our capabilities include
      – Qualitative and Quantitative Consumer Research
      – Descriptive Analysis
      – Difference Testing
      – Conformance Testing (Degree of Difference)
      – Statistical Analyses
      – Ideation and Brainstorming

• There are several ways to measure how integrated your group is in the overall organization
The Oh Shucks Factor
The Oh Shucks Factor

- How and When does your organization say “Oh Shucks Call Sensory?”
  - If this happens early in the project, then your group is seen as a partner in the process
  - If it happens often through the project, then your group is adding value, solving problems, and creating solutions
  - If this happens project after project, then your group is highly valued in the organization
  - If it happens with many partners, then your group is essential
  - If it never happens, great opportunities are being overlooked by the organization
The Oh Shucks Factor

• **How you react to Oh Shucks is also very important**
  • It should be seen as an opportunity to show how valuable your group is to the company
  • It may be a way to evaluate new methodologies
  • It’s a development opportunity for your associates
  • It might even be fun

• If it’s seen as an annoyance, a bother, not worth your time… Before long the company won’t be saying “Oh Shucks call Sensory” anymore
Oh Shucks in Practice

- The Dove® Chocolate Brand wanted to reinvigorate the Premium 100 gram Chocolate Bar Market and introduce a new line of bars
  - They wanted
    - New Packaging
    - New Graphics
    - Different Bar Design
    - New Flavors
  - Which lead to
    - New Raw Material & New Processes
  - By the way, this had to be done fast, with limited testing, and a high level of risk taking
Reality Time

• How do we know...
  • people will like the new bar design?
  • if people will like 3 individually wrapped bars?
  • which flavors to use?
  • the amount of inclusions to add?
  • the best thickness of the bars?
  • if our new raw materials are robust and stable?
  • the shelf life?
  • If we can insure consistent quality?
How we answered

- We were able to address all of the questions through a variety of techniques
  - Worked closely with a cross functional team to understand project needs, timing and deliverables
  - Used Descriptive Analysis and Quantitative Consumer Testing to refine the flavor and inclusion variants
  - Interviewed and observed consumer as they interacted with packages
  - Compared a variety of bar thicknesses to define the appropriate bar design
  - Used Difference testing to define shelf-life and qualify new raw materials
How we answered

Questions

- Flavors
- Inclusions
- Mould Design
- Packaging Structure
- Graphics
- Raw Materials
- Shelf-life
- Production Quality

Tool Box

- Bench Screening
- Descriptive Analysis
- Qualitative Research
- Quantitative Research
- Observational Research
- Difference Testing
- Conformance
Discover a Large Bar Experience Like No Other

The #1 Brand in Premium Chocolate is Redefining the Category!!

Allow us to introduce you to...

- 6 New Captivating Flavors of DOVE® Silky Smooth Chocolate
  - Milk Chocolate, Raspberry Almond
  - Dark Chocolate, Raspberry Almond
  - Milk Chocolate extra Creamy
  - Milk Chocolate Peanut Butter Cups
  - Dark Chocolate, Roasted Almond
  - Milk Chocolate, Roasted Hazelnut

- BEST IN CLASS Packaging Innovation
  - Groundbreaking New 3-piece Large Bar Format

New elegant, premium packaging.
The Evolution of Oh Shucks

- In the early stages it is often related to urgency
- As you react positively and effectively, attitudes begin to change
- One or two groups start to recognize the value of Sensory and they start to rely on you more and more
- You start to be a partner early in the process and the urgent projects lessen
- The good news starts to spread
Before you know it…

The Sensory Group is truly one of the most valuable groups in the organization.
Thank You