Incorporating the Consumer Voice in Everyday Decision Making
What is a Consumer Advisory Group (CAG)?

- A group of **consumers** who represent the **target market**
- Screened for articulation, creativity, teamwork, task management skills
- Meets on an **ongoing basis**, as needed
- Works **with the business team**, everyone in the room together
Why use a Consumer Advisory Group (CAG)?

- **Speeds** time to market
- Helps identify **creative** solutions
- Reduces risk
- Cost effective
- Provides **flexibility** to meet project needs
- Consistent **representative** voice
- Facilitates **active participation** from all business team members
How to set up a CAG:

1. Establish need with business team
2. Screen potential panelists
3. Select panelists
4. Run sessions as needed
Recipe Inspirations—Case Study

- Broaden the variety of flavor products used by McCormick consumers and draw new users into the McCormick franchise.
- Provide involved cooks with a low-risk opportunity to experiment with less familiar herbs and spices in creating an aspirational, yet approachable and achievable recipe that’s a creative “twist on the traditional”.

**MENU INSPIRATION**

Introducing NEW McCormick® Menu Inspiration, a collection of our best recipes, complete with pre-measured packets of all spices you’ll need to make them. When you want to try something new, you won’t have to look through your cookbooks, search your cupboard for spices, or run out to buy a large bottle of an unfamiliar seasoning. Just follow the recipe on the package, using the enclosed McCormick spices and your own fresh ingredients.

Menu Inspiration by McCormick – the easy way to experiment with delicious new recipes.

Each package of McCormick® Menu Inspiration sells for $1.99 and has enough seasoning for a 5-8 serving meal.
Screening/Selection

1. Internet Survey
2. Focus Groups
3. Selection
Screening/Selection - step 1

- **Internet Survey**
  - Identified 60 prequalified potential panelists
    - Met target consumer demographic criteria
    - Responded positively to the product concept
    - Responded thoughtfully and creatively to open ended question on general topic
Screening/Selection - step 2

Screening Focus Groups—(4) 90 minute groups of 10-12 prequalified consumers

- Homework assignment (creativity)
- Small group activity (teamwork)
- Concept evaluation (task oriented, gauged interest)
Screening/Selection - step 3

- **Selection**—Done by internal McCormick team
  - Fit target profile
  - [Evaluation sheet](#) on each consumer
  - Availability

"Here's a composite of our target consumer."
1. Create IT ® Sessions
2. Internet Surveys
3. Product User Groups (PUGs)
4. Video Diaries
5. Create IT ® Sessions with Customer
Create IT ® Sessions

- Homework
- Icebreakers/teambuilding
- Brainstorming
- Discussions/activities

Key: Business team inclusion
9 Products in Three Weeks!

- Methods used:
  - Product User Groups (PUGs)
  - Video Diaries

- Quick turnaround.
  1. Consumers evaluated products in-home
  2. Gave verbal and written feedback to development team (PUG)
  3. Visual feedback incorporated (Video Diaries)
  4. Product modified and produced for National Home Use Testing
Video Diaries
Summary of CAG Contributions

1. Product naming
2. Collectible recipe card functionality
3. Inclusion of food photography
4. Product varieties
5. Preparation instructions
6. Determining featured spices
7. Marketing and advertising
Project Flow with CAG

1. Food and Flavor Trends → Field Research
2. Field Research → Concept Development
3. Concept Development → Consumer Advisory Groups
4. Consumer Advisory Groups → Refined Prototypes
5. Refined Prototypes → Consumer Advisory Groups
6. Consumer Advisory Groups → Protocept Development
7. Protocept Development → Consumer Preferred Products
8. Consumer Preferred Products → Consumer Validation Groups
9. Consumer Validation Groups → Consumer Advisory Groups
10. Consumer Advisory Groups → Concept Development
11. Concept Development → Field Research
12. Field Research → Food and Flavor Trends

Steps:
- 1. Home Use Test
- 2. CLT
- 3. Store Test
Recipe Inspirations Success to Date

- Unprecedented Retailer Acceptances

- Winner of the National Grocer’s Association (NGA) 2010 #1 New Product of the Year Award

- Extra excitement driven by PR
Learnings

What worked well
Challenges
Method Improvements
What Worked Well

- Consumers very invested in the project
  - Were able to attend with short notice
  - Willing to work at home
  - 100% attendance
  - Able to cover a lot of material in a short amount of time
  - Told us what they REALLY thought—very honest
  - Willing to share due to trust level
- Lots of information we couldn’t have gotten from other methods
- Great way to test new methodologies
- Well defined, motivated, involved internal team
- Could continue discussion next time
Challenges

- Finding the “right” consumers
- Constantly changing objectives
- Condensed time and effort
- Ensuring consumers remained objective
Method Improvements

- **Screen more** consumers
- **Select more** consumers
- Utilize **quick reporting/data gathering** methods
- Always have a **give-away!!**

- Use CAGs for **ongoing information gathering**
- Meeting **once/month** is ideal for ongoing groups
Established CAGs to address ongoing and short term needs for most of our Marketing teams.

Used a variety of additional qualitative tools including:

- Bulletin boards
- Shop alongs
- Observational research
It’s a 10!
homework
Icebreakers / teambuilding
brainstorming
Discussions/activities
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Overall score= 1-2 no way  3-5 not likely  6-8 possible  9-10  definite!!!
Creativity, Speaking Ability, Interaction scale of 1-5 where 1=poor and 5=excellent