

Blueberry Aspirations to Attributes: Linking aspirational personas to desired product attributes in the homecare category

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Introduction

Aspirational desires (psychological, social and/or economic) are frequently used to segment consumers and can be a powerful way to understand what drives their behavior. However, little is understood about how to best link those aspirational personas to the consumer's desired product experience. This research provides practical guidance on how to holistically combine product attributes that can help consumers fulfill their aspirations.

The hybrid method utilized in this research offers the ability to triangulate data from multiple aspects of the consumer experience helping to ensure consumers' revealed sensory priorities are uncovered and not simply their stated priorities.

Methodology Overview

Conducted in Suburban Philadelphia, PA, the research consisted of:

- Phase I:** Fourteen one-hour ethnographies*
- Phase II:** Analysis/Prep for Link Labsm
- Phase III:** Three 2.5-hour Link Labssm*
- Phase IV:** Final Analysis

*All participants completed a pre-work assignment about their ideal hand dishwashing accessory.

Key Screening Criteria:

- Women ages 24-54
- Responsible for washing dishes at least most of the time
- Hand wash at least a majority of their dishes
- Must not dislike washing dishes
- Primary purchaser of household products
- Household Income: \$30,000+
- High School Graduate+

Detailed Methodology



Phase I: Ethnography Method:

1. Observation of hand washing dishes
2. Behavioral probing – "What's your strategy?"
3. Kitchen exploration – "What's under your sink?"
4. Tool discussion/unmet needs
5. Ideal tool discussion

Benefits:

- The ethnography allows the research team to:
- Observe consumers' natural and **actual behaviors** which can be difficult to accurately self-report.
- **View all accessories**, many of which had been stored and forgotten until the team asked to look under the sink.
- See the consumers' natural environment (neighborhood/home) and their interactions with household members for **deeper context**.

Phase II: Preliminary Analysis for Link Labsm Prep Method:

- Findings from the ethnographies are used to:
1. **Identify needs gaps** between current accessories and the ideal.
 2. **Develop sensory flights** covering a range of product attributes to potentially solve for these unmet needs.

Benefits:

- This analysis helps **narrow down the sensory stimuli** and ensure the right variety and range of stimuli are available to spark innovative creations.
- The use of in-market products **saves time and cost** versus creating prototypes. However, prototypes can yield a more granular isolation of individual sensory variables.



Figure A. The final stimuli set included various materials from the following categories: abrasiveness, bristles, outside material, inside material, grip, sponge, scraper, fragrance, color, and pattern.

Detailed Methodology (continued)



Figure B. Link Labsm Components

Phase III: Link Labssm Method:

Link Labssm are multi-purpose sessions (Figure B) designed to identify **consumer priorities** and **linkages** between sensory attributes, functional and emotional benefits and aspirations.

Benefits:

- Consumers are able to articulate not only **which** product attributes they want but also the **importance** of each.
- **Prevents** consumers from creating **overly-complex ideal products**.
- Discussion probes force consumers to **connect desired product attributes to the benefits** they provide.

Phase IV: Final Analysis - Linking Aspirations to Product Attributes Method:

1. A proprietary analytical technique is employed to identify the **aspirational segments** and link **product attributes and functional benefits**.
2. **Consumer personas** are created to "tell the story" of each segment.
3. **Consumer priorities** are identified for each segment to guide and focus product development efforts.

Benefits:

- Utilizing data from **multiple techniques and methods yields a more holistic understanding** of consumers and their needs while helping to validate the aspirations, attributes and priorities.
- **Priorities are not based on frequencies, rankings or ratings**, but rather a combination of stated and revealed priorities.



Results

| | Embrace the Task | Relax | Re-Energize | Escape the Task |
|------------------|--|---|---|-----------------|
| Ritualist | Ritualists use hand dishwashing as a distraction from other life stressors. They value the positive emotional benefits of simply being engaged in a mindless task. | Seek tools without extremely stimulating or distracting cues so they can stay in the flow of the task. | The tool, water and soap must create a balance that allows Ritualists to keep a seamless flow. | |
| Warrior | Warriors value an efficient, effective and reliable hand dishwashing process. They begin "ready for battle" and feel empowered after finishing. | Warriors rely heavily on their own expertise to tackle the job with some assistance from a select set of specialized tools. | Seek tools with dependable, superior cleaning effectiveness. | |
| Delegator | Delegators are disgusted by hand dishwashing and value help minimizing the negative sensory aspects of the task. They feel very relieved after finishing the dishes. | Seek tools that require minimal effort and protect them from the mess. | Delegators rely heavily on the tool to do the work. The tool and soap help to minimize disgust. | |
| Sensorial | Sensorials value a pleasant and highly engaging sensory experience. Sensory stimuli make hand dishwashing more enjoyable and leave them feeling invigorated. | Sensorials desire bursts of fragrance, sudsy soap and warm water to excite them throughout the process. | Seek tools that will deliver a variety of stimulating sensory cues. | |

- The x-axis represents the energy level consumers feel after finishing the dishes.
- The y-axis represents consumers' attitudes toward hand dishwashing.
- The pie chart illustrates the importance of each component of the dishwashing process.

Ritualist Priorities



Reliable, comfortable and easy-to-use tools are depended on to deliver a seamless and uninterrupted process.

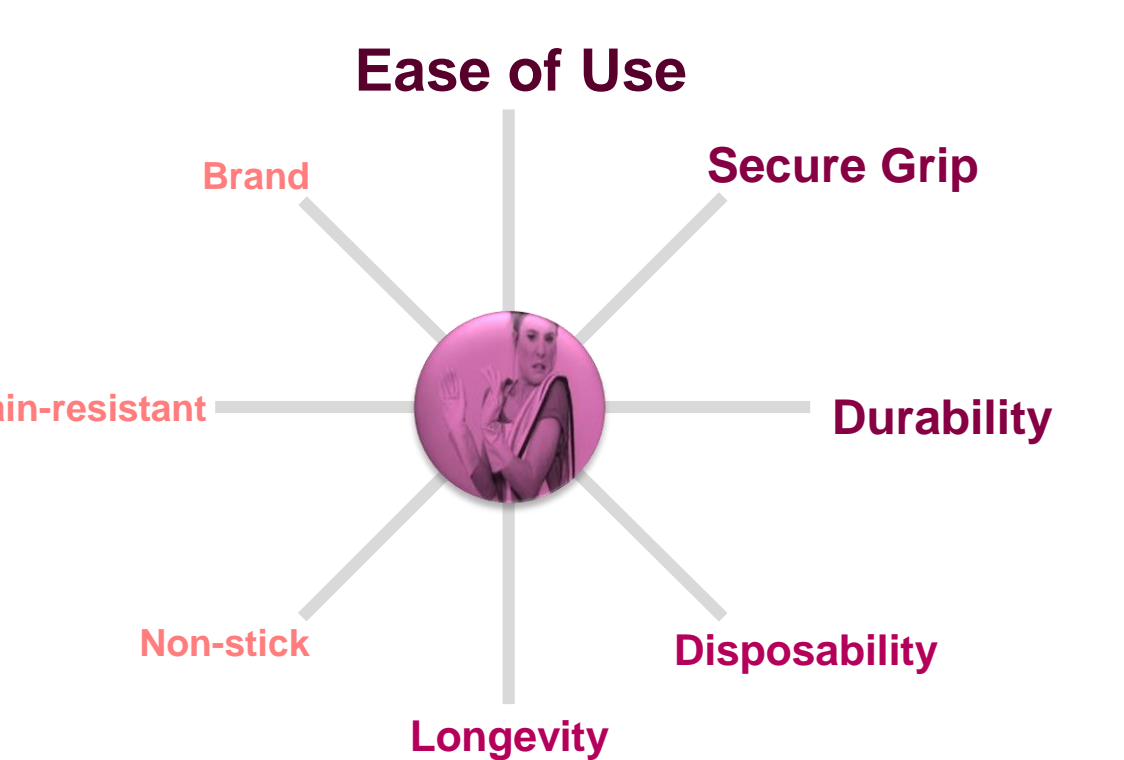
- ✓ **EASE OF USE** – Ritualists look forward to washing the dishes and want simple tools that are easy to grab and do not require intense engagement – no attachments to assemble or need to reposition hand.
- ✓ **COMFORT** – Soft materials and textures that feel good in the hand and are easy to manipulate.
- ✓ **APPEARANCE** – Simple, neutral, soothing colors (no patterns) that are not distracting while washing dishes.
- **LONGEVITY** – Product needs to be long-lasting. Ritualists find comfort in knowing the tool will not inhibit the flow of their process.
- **FRAGRANCE** – Relaxing fragrances (e.g. florals); moderately intense and delivered in an even manner (e.g. no multiple bursts).
- **WASHABLE** – The product needs to be machine washable to keep it smelling and looking fresh.
- **ABRASIVENESS** – Mild abrasiveness delivered through texturing on the entire surface.
- **BRAND** – Trustworthy, nostalgic brands (e.g. Palmolive, Hanes, Hand-crafted, or Cottage Industry brands).

RECOMMENDED DESIGN DIRECTION

- ✓ Textured, neutral-colored microfiber dishcloth that is comfortable to handle
- ✗ Attributes that are too stimulating or distracting (e.g. intense fragrance, abrasiveness, bright colors) should be used in moderation



Delegator Priorities



Tools that offer both physical distance (e.g. wand or brush) and protection (secure grip, durability, non-stick) are depended on to keep Delegators from the negative aspects of hand dishwashing.

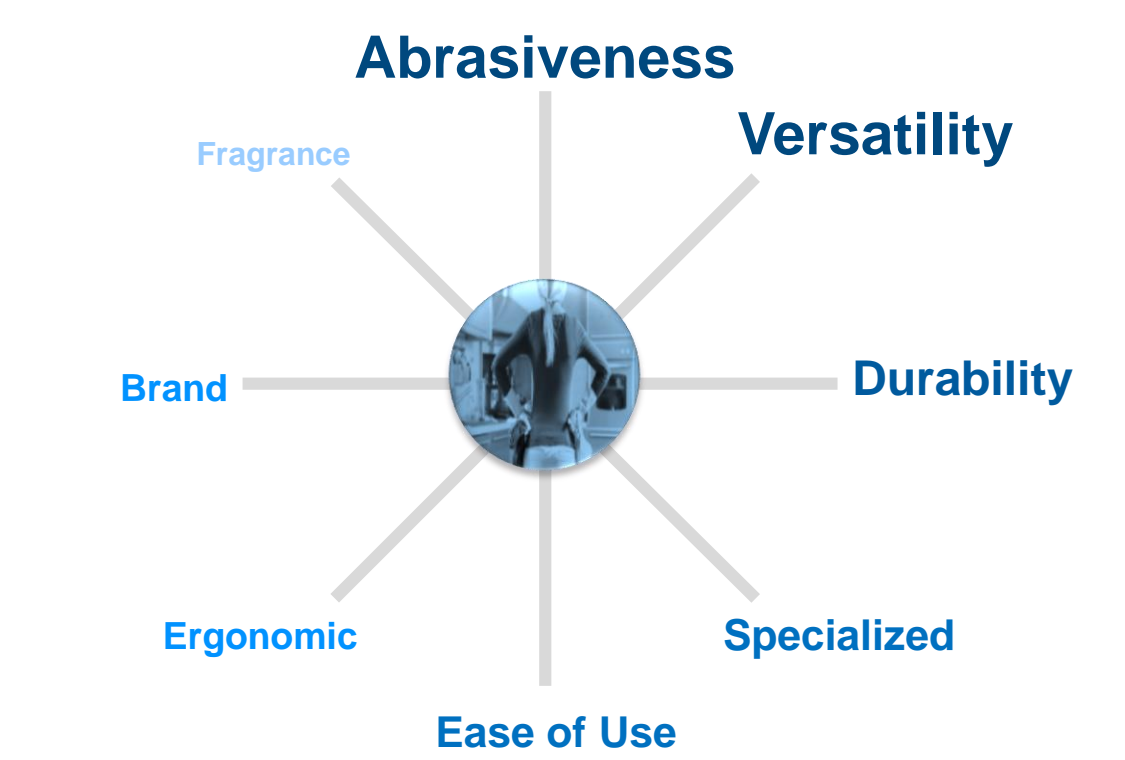
- ✓ **EASE OF USE** – Delegators do not enjoy washing dishes and want tools that require minimal effort. Ideally, they prefer not to scrub at all (e.g. battery operated sonic power).
- ✓ **SECURE GRIP** – Handles made of non-slip material to minimize the risk of touching food or dirty dish water.
- ✓ **DURABILITY** – Sturdy parts that are securely and seamlessly assembled – nothing to reattach before starting to wash the dishes.
- **DISPOSABILITY** – Ability to discard the cleaning surface after each use without touching it.
- **LONGEVITY** – Product needs to be long-lasting and dependable. Having to find a new tool they can depend on is stress-inducing for Delegators.
- **NON-STICK** – Food particles must not stick to the cleaning surface to minimize disgust for Delegators.
- **STAIN-RESISTANT** – The entire tool needs to stay looking new – especially the cleaning surface.
- **BRAND** – Brands that do the work for you (e.g. Mr. Clean, Sonicare, Oxo, Easy Off).

RECOMMENDED DESIGN DIRECTION

- ✓ Battery-operated cleaning brush with sonic cleaning power, rubber grip handle and disposable brush heads
- ✗ Avoid integrating soap into the tool as Delegators want to control soap dosage



Warrior Priorities



Intensely abrasive and durable tools provide the additional cleaning power that Warriors demand. They also want versatile tools that make hand dishwashing efficient.

- ✓ **ABRASIVE** – Tough materials (Teflon, metal, Brillo) for scouring, scraping and scrubbing.
- ✓ **VERSATILE** – Ability to use a few select tools in multiple ways to maintain efficiency during the cleaning process.
- ✓ **DURABLE** – Does not fall apart during heavy usage.
- **SPECIALIZED** – Each attribute of the tool serves a specific purpose, everything about it is functional.
- **EASE OF USE** – Ability to quickly change sides for different cleaning needs for maximum efficiency.
- **ERGONOMIC** – Sturdy grip for leverage, easy to handle/control, especially to access hard to reach areas.
- **BRAND** – Tough cleaning brands (e.g. Brillo, Comet, OxiClean, Rubbermaid, Weber, Brookstone).
- **FRAGRANCE** – Not as important but fragrances that cue clean and fresh are acceptable.

RECOMMENDED DESIGN DIRECTION

- ✓ Durable, multi-sided sponge with three levels of strong abrasiveness for scouring, scraping and scrubbing
- ✗ Many frivolous sensory cues may diminish the tool's credibility making it appear less functional and powerful



Sensorial Priorities

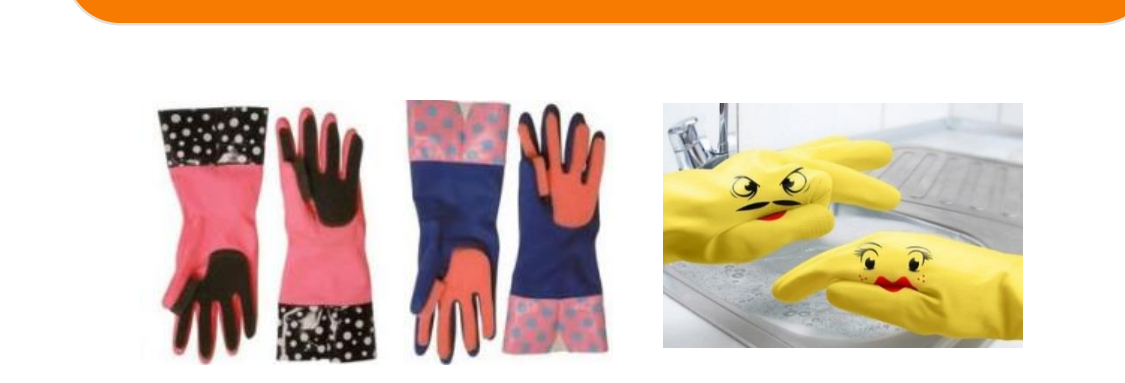


Fragrance plays a key role in delivering an engaging sensory experience for Sensorials. Soft, non-abrasive materials pamper them, while a novel and unique appearance generates excitement.

- ✓ **FRAGRANCE** – Long lasting, moderate intensity that blooms every time it is squeezed; offered in a variety of bright, energetic scents (e.g. citrus, fruit, beachy).
- ✓ **COMFORT** – Feels soft in hand, leaves hands soft/moisturized/massaged – no sweaty or smelly hands.
- ✓ **NOVELTY** – Unique features, "limited edition" additional matching accessories (e.g. drying stand for gloves).
- ✓ **APPEARANCE** – Fun colors and patterns, match kitchen décor, want to leave out on counter/by sink.
- **SOAP DISPENSING** – Delivers a continuous foaming sensation.
- **DURABILITY** – Tool needs to maintain fresh, fun appearance.
- **EASY OF USE** – Does not add additional obstacles to an already unpleasant task.
- **BRAND** – Playful brands possibly outside the dishwashing category (e.g. Method, Bath & Body Works, Swiffer).

RECOMMENDED DESIGN DIRECTION

- ✓ A vibrantly-colored and patterned glove infused with citrus-fragranced soap and made with a soothingly soft inside material
- ✗ Harsh, abrasive materials detract from the pleasant hand feel and pampering experience they look to cultivate in the task



Conclusion

- This research identified four distinct aspirational personas in the homecare category and showed how the desired product attributes align with each persona.
- The hybrid methodology not only provides a better understanding of which product attributes are important to each persona, but also how to best combine and prioritize those attributes to create an ideal experience.
- This foundation of understanding provides a clearly defined and focused approach to developing products to deeply satisfy each segment.
- It also allows for targeting of the segment whose sensory priorities fit best with your brand equities and/or brand strategy.