New Product Success

The Art and Science of Developing Winning New Products

From the initial spark of an idea to concept testing and product optimization, Decision Analyst offers an integrated set of consulting and research services to help expand and accelerate your new product development efforts.

Alignment

New products do not magically pop into existence. There must be boundaries, context, and objectives to guide new product development efforts. That's why the process begins with discussions among project stakeholders (senior executives, brand managers, R&D scientists) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the project's goals and requirements.

Exploratory Research

Exploratory research begins with a review of market and industry trends, existing marketing research data, and new product development activity within the target category. Market segmentation data, if available, can often serve as a template for new product development. Decision Analyst recommends exploratory qualitative research among target-market consumers to identify needs, perceptions, motives, and problems that can serve as starting points and springboards for new product ideation.

The Ideation Phase

The next step is Ideation. This phase is guided by the client's objectives, constraints, and business realities. Within these guidelines, hundreds of relevant new product ideas and idea fragments are created, using the *Imaginators*® online community of more than 2,000 exceptionally inventive consumers. (More than 250,000 consumers have been screened and tested to identify these highly creative Imaginators®.) Creativity is amplified by choosing Imaginators® who have relevant category experience.


Decision Analyst's Insights & Innovation Team plans and facilitates ideation sessions, using an array of creativity techniques and stimuli. The combination of clear-cut objectives, category experience, and exceptional creativity yields a windfall of relevant new product ideas. Working in tandem with the client, the Insights & Innovation Team selects the new product ideas with the highest potential and develops them into first-stage, new product-concept boards. Typically, 10 to 20 viable new product concepts are produced at this stage.

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Concept Refinement

Once new product concepts are finished, small-scale qualitative methods (online or offline) are used to make sure the concepts are communicating the intended messages. This is an important step because it provides confirmation that the new product concepts are, indeed, ready for testing. Typically, 12 to 15 depth interviews are used for this qualitative review. If consumers do not understand a concept, it's revised based on the qualitative feedback. Then, the new product concepts are ready for formal testing.

Concept Testing

The next step is to test the concepts using our worldwide online consumer panels. *ConceptScreen*® is the online system used to evaluate many concepts and identify those with the greatest chances of success. Results are entered into a mathematical model to identify the concepts with the best market potential.
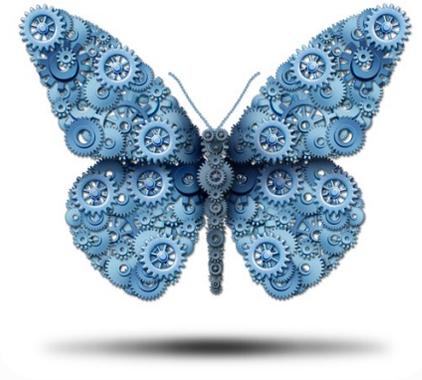
The highest-rated, new product concepts are then tested using *ConceptTest*®, our monadic testing system. Representative samples of target-market consumers see and evaluate the concepts one at a time so that the results can be compared to action standards and norms. It's really important to look at the concept screening and concept testing results through a volumetric lens, not just a minimum purchase intent score or a minimum uniqueness score.

Product Testing

Those new product concepts that appear to offer sufficient volumetric sales potential become the templates for new product development. As new products are developed, *Optima*® *(*our in-home-usage testing system) is essential. Target consumers are recruited online to use the new product in their homes. After a week or two of in-home usage, the Optima® after-use questionnaire is administered via an online survey (PC, tablet, or smartphone). Several iterations of testing and refining are often necessary to achieve the best possible product.

Name Testing

Is the new product's proposed brand name appealing, memorable, readable, pronounceable, and unique? *NameScreen*® is the system used to evaluate up to 100 brand-name candidates to identify the better ones. These better names are then evaluated within the context of a concept, product, or package test.

Package Testing

The new product's package can be tested to make sure that it attracts attention on the retail shelf and accurately conveys the product's story to potential buyers at the point of purchase. This is especially important if the new product will not receive heavy media-advertising support. *PackageTest*® measures attention value, brand-name registration, main message communication, and other key packaging metrics.

Advertising Research

As the new product approaches launch, testing the introductory advertising is essential. Testing the advertising helps to ensure that the new product's story is accurately told to consumers in a compelling way. Many potentially successful new products fail because of poor introductory advertising. *CopyTest*® is the recommended advertising testing system. CopyTest® results can also feed into volumetric forecasting models to refine sales forecasts or to evaluate the effects of different media weights.
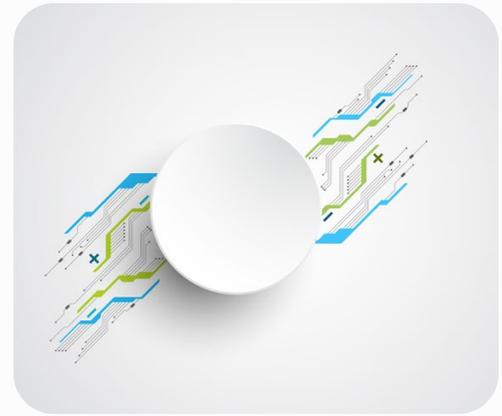
Volumetric Forecasting

Actual sales-volume potential (retail depletions) is estimated through *Conceptor*® forecasting models to predict trial-and-repeat purchase rates during the new product's introductory year, based on inputs from ConceptTest®, Optima® iHUTS, and CopyTest®, as well as marketing-plan variables supplied by the client (such as distribution build, media advertising weights, and consumer- and trade-promotion plans). The volumetric forecasting models are calibrated to each company's history and business patterns to ensure maximum accuracy.

Why Decision Analyst?

Decision Analyst is a global marketing research and analytical consulting firm with more than 45 years of experience in new product research and consulting. Our staff has worked on hundreds of successful new products. With worldwide online panels and interactive systems, innovation processes, and analytical expertise, Decision Analyst can help accelerate the pace of new product development. Give us a call.

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