



Value of Consumer Research

Strategic research is a key Windward Group competency and a hallmark of our strategic marketing practice. We have helped our clients, in 32 projects and in talking to more than 100,340 US consumers, gain actionable insight into positioning, customer segments, decision making process, competitive set, and drivers of loyalty. Windward Group research is foundational to building sound initiatives and creating positive results. The deliverable of our research is simple: an action plan to improve your business.

HIGH QUALITY ANALYSIS LEADS TO STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

The quality of our analysis distinguishes our research from that of marketing research companies. We do far more than provide graphs and client-driven cross tabs; we dig, ponder and work the data until we find the strategic jewels, insights that provide the learnings for future development. These insights come from our dogged determination in analysis (cross tabbing and cross tabbing until we unearth the gems) coupled with intuition gleaned from our experience developing and implementing strategic plans for the companies we have led. Most analysts have a narrow, technical focus; we are strategists, with a passion for examining consumer data and coaxing out learnings which can be profitably translated into strategic initiatives.

CONSUMER RESEARCH AND DATABASE ANALYSIS – TWO DIFFERENT ANALYTICAL TOOLS

Many think that database analysis replaces consumer research, and they couldn't be more wrong. Database research is transactionally oriented, even those with psychographic and demographic overlays. Simplistically, database analysis tells *what* happened; consumer research tells *why* it happened and *what may* happen in the future. Consumer research gives context about customers' *thought process and attitudes* about a brand, category, the economy and more.

However, database research and consumer research can complement each other. Using both tools, Windward Group often unearths amazing nuggets that lead to new marketing strategies and increased profitability. For instance, for a recent client, Windward Group unearthed two segments of lapsed customers. From a database perspective, both groups looked alike, with the same RFM.

- However, one group was satisfied with their experience, and even considered themselves current customers of the brand (even though the database identified them as lapsed).
- The other group, unhappy with the brand, had decided definitively to stop shopping

While the latter group would not be profitable to contact again, understanding and correcting their issues would help the brand achieve greater loyalty in the future. Once we identified these two groups of lapsed customers, we looked again at the database to see if we could identify something in their purchases history which would help us understand why they had such different attitudes and predict the groupings in the future (remember, their RFM was the same). We found the answer, which then informed the reactivation contact strategy, segmentation, messaging and promotional tactics to lapsed customers.

To provide other examples of the important nature of this research, below are some examples of strategic questions we have answered for clients through research:

insight & impact
strategic consulting for multi-channel brands

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Consumer Insight

WHAT ARE MY STRATEGIC CUSTOMER SEGMENTS AND HOW DOES THIS KNOWLEDGE AFFECT MARKETING AND MERCHANDISING STRATEGIES AND GROWTH PLANS?

- Clarify messaging, pricing strategies, tactical contact strategy and promotions
- Understand evolving segments while still in early stages of life cycle
- Identify and influence segment differences in customers' decision making process
 - Decision makers, influencers, timing and response drivers differ by segment. Understanding these differences and informing marketing communication strategy drives response

WHAT ARE MY CUSTOMERS' KEY LOYALTY DRIVERS, strengths and weaknesses of my brand's value proposition?

- Improve retention, increase LTV, allowing for greater growth than competitors

Market Insight

WHO ARE MY REAL COMPETITORS AND HOW CAN I COMPETE MOST EFFECTIVELY?

- Define actual close competitors; understanding lead to modifying the value proposition and merchandising strategies

WHAT IS THE SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF MARKETPLACE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MY COMPANY'S FUTURE?

- Categories and competitors considered allow brands to see the market place as their customers and prospects do, not as management assumes. These two perspectives are often quite different. Understanding consumers' belief modifies the business strategy

WHAT ARE OTHER MARKET OPPORTUNITIES THAT I CAN EXPLOIT PROFITABLY?

- Determine out-of-market categories a brand's customers use. Helpful in growing a brand through merchandise offering

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF CHANNEL FOR MY CUSTOMERS?

- Direct marketers with aging customer bases often underestimate the power of the Internet as a channel, especially to their older customer segments. Understanding how segments really shop changes communication & contact strategies.
- Understand the power of social marketing, while still in early stages, keeps brands relevant

Product Insight

WHAT KEY MERCHANDISE CATEGORIES DRIVE TRIAL AND LOYALTY?

- Findings inform marketing strategies, content (pagination/web design), pricing and promotion
- Category affinity – an inexpensive way of determining adjacencies, core categories to expand, growth categories to build



Benefits of Windward Group Consumer Research – *strategic, practical and action-oriented*

- Analysis that is deep and insightful, cross tabbed rich
- Prioritized key learnings and the implications of how they can affect business performance, in the short- and long-term
- Prioritize initiatives and high level strategies to build on key learnings – the foundation of a plan to maximize the organization’s objectives
- Cost effective

Windward Group’s **research credentials** – we take research seriously

- Windward Group’s partners have conducted hundreds of research studies over the years
- Windward Group has “in-sourced” research and developed best practice competencies
 - Trained and Certified Net Promoter Loyalty Program Associate by Bain/Satmetrics
 - Statistical training at UVM
 - Upgrading internet survey tool to a sophisticated and powerful platform with
 - Complex skip logic
 - Sophisticated piping
 - Extraction
 - Compound and delayed branching
 - Technical expertise coupled with our general management experience building brands leads to insightful and powerful strategic initiatives to drive growth and profits.

Call or email us today to discuss your research needs and how research can be used to propel your sales and profitability.