Using Claim Substantiation for Product Strategy: Case Studies with business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) Brands



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Background & Objective

In the rapidly changing world of the food industry, it has become essential to differentiate your product offerings from key competitors. With this in mind, Cargill was interested in demonstrating the superiority of certain products over competitors for both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) brands to use in marketing communication.

(i) For the B2B brand, the objective of the research was to determine if consumers preferred Cargill's Tasty-N-Tender (TNT) beef patty over a competitor's beef patty. Findings from this study provided the team with necessary supporting data to make the claim that beef burger consumers across the US preferred the TNT patty over its competitor.

(ii) For the B2C brand, the Cargill team developed new and improved case ready ground turkey, offering juicier, more tender and more flavorful ground turkey. The claim test results strongly supported the on-pack claim "Preferred over other leading ground turkey brands". The new Shady Brook Farms® Ground Turkey (85%, 93% and 99% Lean) launched in fall of 2022 on the West Coast.

National Claim: Test Method

Type: B2B Brand **Category:** Beef Patty
Number of respondents = 638
Locations: 8 disbursed US cities
Products: Cargill's Tasty-N-Tender (TNT) beef patty **vs** Key Competitor

Study Protocol:

1. Consumers were served and asked to taste the two patty samples one-at-a-time (order was balanced across a complete block design). After the second sample evaluation, consumers were asked to indicate their preferred sample ('No Preference' was given as an option).

Regional Claim: Test Method

Type: B2C Brand **Category:** Ground Turkey
Number of respondents = 616
Locations: Western United States US cities. Note that these locations were chosen to support a claim for the product only launched on the west coast
Products: Cargill's Ground Turkey (85%, 93% and 99% Lean) **vs** two Key Competitors

Two-step Study Protocol:

1. Consumers were first served all three samples (order was balanced across a complete block design), asked to taste the samples from left to right, and then asked their preferred sample ('No Preference' was given as an option).
2. Following a break, consumers evaluated the three samples again (sequential monadic presentation, balanced complete block design) and answered acceptability questions.

Claims Substantiation *General Guidelines*

Align on the Claim Statement, Type and its Potential Application

- Cargill's R&D, Marketing and Legal team together decided on the exact claim statement of interest, type of claim, in this case it was superiority as opposed to equivalence, and its intended use in sales material as well as on-pack design.
- Cargill collaborated with Curion to finalize the research design and execution to substantiate the claim statement.

Finalize Details: Sample Size, Recruit, Product, Test Location, Questionnaire

- Cargill and Curion leveraged the ASTM guidelines to finalize sample size for statistical robustness of the CLT results.
- Screening criteria included recent category users and future non-rejectors. It was not restricted to any specific subset, such as heavy or light users. Demographics were balanced per target audience and census data, depending on national or regional relevance.
- Per guidelines, participants were recruited from an unbiased source representing different regions, and multiple cities per region.
- The questionnaire focused only on answering the claim statement phrased as a preference question with 'no preference' option included.
- It was ensured that the claimed benefit of the product resulted from the product itself and not from special handling or production or shelf-life.
- A double-blinded approach was followed where the consumer as well as the server were unaware of the brands tested.
- All materials were reviewed and approved by Cargill's legal team.

Statistical Analysis & Interpretation

- 'No preference' responses were split equally across all products. For a paired preference, if an odd number of consumers expressed no preference, the extra no-preference response was awarded to the competitor. Statistical Analysis was performed at 95% confidence interval.

These guidelines are consistent with the **ASTM Standard Guide for Sensory Claims Substantiation**, E1958 – 2021 version.

Results & Business Impact

National Claim: B2B

Cargill's Tasty-N-Tender (TNT) beef patty was significantly more preferred over its key competitor.

The brand team incorporated national claim test data into Burger Bites Webinars and flyers to promote the sales of TNT Burgers.

Sales team was able to convert accounts from competitive products to TNT Burgers.

Regional Claim: B2C

In the different lean categories, Cargill's ground turkey product was significantly more preferred over its key competitors.

Cargill successfully launched Shady Brook Farms® Ground Turkey in West Coast markets last September.

Claim results were printed on the package. QR code was utilized for easy access to more information.



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