



Summer 2010

Making Sure Your Segmentation Lives in the Minds of Your Target's Champions

By Joanne French



Successful segmentations are those that “live” in the client’s mind and are executed upon long after the final report is delivered and the baton is passed from market research agency to client. But how do we make segments “live”? The answer may come as a surprise.

While data-heavy PowerPoint slides at the end of the project may seem like the answer, in reality the process of bringing segments to life is an end-to-end one – from the very *beginning* of the study to the final, pre-launch workshop (more about this later). Behind this approach is the assumption that segmentation research is a *means* to an end—not an end itself; thus, if it is not fully *absorbed* and acted upon by the internal clients, it is as good as dead.

Heroes need champions – and so do your segments

Target segments are at the heart of your brand’s story. And, like any good story, it needs a great beginning and an audience to read and champion it. Market researchers need to bring internal segment champions – including brand teams, agencies and senior management – to the table early and often. All of these stakeholders must continue to engage with target segments and refer to them not only as a collection of people held together by common mindsets, behaviors and beliefs, but as the heroes of the brand’s story.

Should a brand manager meet a person who might fall within the brand’s interest sets, the manager should be able to quickly identify which segment that person belongs to and share the water-cooler story the next day. This typifies a successful segmentation. Segments are recognizable. They live.

Success begins at the beginning

So, how do we get ourselves off on the right foot toward success with our segmentation? KN recommends three foundational steps:

- 1) **Bring all key stakeholders (your heroes' future champions) to the table early** via workshops throughout the project's lifecycle. At the earliest possible phase, create a shared vision of the management goals and generate hypotheses of who your brand's friends and foes will be.
- 2) **Get the science right.** Use analytical techniques, like latent class, that will make your segments come into a 360-degree view. Also, make sure you include a rich mix of behaviors and attitudes into your data set, as well as functional and emotional needs.
- 3) **Choose a representative data source.** Accurate sizing of the market and segment opportunity is wholly dependent on the representativeness of the study's sample frame and source.

Techniques for building engagement, ownership

By utilizing the three elements outlined above, you have set the stage for identifying segments that can truly come to life, and put them to action in ways that will be memorable – and fun – for you and your team.

KN's latest technique for this is to learn from, hear and see segments by using [Qual^e VideoSM](#), in which respondents

with webcams are asked to answer pertinent questions via online video Q&A. This is a powerful way to clearly learn more and see key differentiators between the segments, as well as add a face that teams will remember. By sharing videos of people who characterize and add information about your targets, the segments come to life in ways that even the best PowerPoint graphics cannot equal.

In addition, KN strongly recommends holding a final, action-oriented workshop to launch the segmentation internally – after the data have been shared and the bulleted findings reviewed. You can use this session to engage your segment champions and bring the segments to life; in addition to sharing video of the segments, KN has also used the following techniques:

- Start the workshop with a quiz about the segments (give a prize for the highest score);
- Split into teams to create segment collages that include images of celebrities, brands, and day-in-the-life words and pictures aimed at uncovering each segment's personality;
- Develop five-minute skits depicting the exchanges between a target segment and their spouse, doctor, caregiver, or whatever the case may be; and/or
- Use a TV talk show setting and ask your team to be interviewed as a segment, how would they answer the interviewer's questions?

Whatever the technique, plan a day absent of cell phones, laptops and most importantly a deluge of PowerPoint

slides. Make the experience and segments memorable. This will help the segments “live” long after the project is over.

Albina Itskhoki, Nicole Korluka, and Cristina Rugolo of Knowledge Networks contributed to this article.

For information, contact:

Health Care Research

Joanne French, Vice President
jfrench@knowledgenetworks.com
(646) 742-5364

Retail and CPG Research

Meredith Paige, Vice President and
Group Account Director
mpaige@knowledgenetworks.com
(312) 416-3664

*Joanne French is Vice President,
Custom Health Care Research,
at Knowledge Networks.*

