

Omnichannel Shopper Experience: Multiphased Qualitative Research

Case History

Category: *Beauty Products Manufacturer*

Methods: *In-Person Focus Groups, Qualitative Research, Remote Desktop Viewing, Screen Sharing, Time-Extended™ Online In-Depth Interviews, Virtual Ethnography*

Summary

A large global manufacturer and marketer of beauty products wanted to understand beauty shoppers' motivations, perceptions, and usage of various stores and websites.

Strategic Issues

The company wanted to understand why and how consumers use stores and websites for shopping and purchasing beauty products. They wanted to be able to deliver on functional and emotional needs both in store and online.

Research Objectives

The overarching purpose of the research was to obtain a holistic assessment of the customers' shopping experiences and desires for various stores and online retailers. Specifically, the client wanted to:

- Identify linkages between the shopping experience, product experience, and loyalty to the brand/product, as well as to the retailer.
- Explore shoppers' desired in-store and online beauty experiences, identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- Explore ways to enhance the customer journey as they move between in-store and online shopping.



Research Design and Methods

A multiphase qualitative approach was used to gain a deep understanding of consumers' needs, desires, shopping experiences, and shopping decision-making behaviors, both in store and online. Three phases of research were conducted:

- **Phase 1:** In-person focus groups conducted in two markets, with two groups in each market (one with consumers who are heavier in-store shoppers and one with consumers who were heavier online shoppers).

- **Phase 2:** Two-day Time-Extended™ online in-depth interviews conducted via our proprietary bulletin board platform among two groups (heavier in-store shoppers and heavier online shoppers). The interviews each lasted approximately one hour and provided a deeper understanding of participants' in-store and online buying behaviors.
- **Phase 3:** Phone interviews with remote desktop viewing (virtual ethnography) that included remote viewing of participants' computer screens. This approach allowed observation of how consumers use various websites to research and purchase beauty products. Webcams were used to allow observation of facial expressions and emotional engagement with the websites visited.



Results

Research results were able to show the level of loyalty to the beauty product/brand compared to level of loyalty for the shopping experience or the place women choose to shop for beauty products.

The research was able to identify the benefits of in-store shopping and compare them to the benefits of online shopping benefits. The research was able to reveal how women felt about shopping in a store versus shopping online. The research also showed the level of trust that shoppers had in the online retail stores and the products that they offer.

The clients were able to improve in-store experiences as well as online customer experiences based on detailed recommendations. Suggestions were provided enhance the in-store experience, as well as to appeal to the emotional side of beauty shoppers by incorporating elements that excite and entice shoppers online at store and beauty websites. There were also recommendations to improve the experience as shoppers moved between in-store and online environments before, during, and after purchasing products.