

## **The It! Knowledge Warehouse™ : Large-Scale Concept-Response Databases Using Conjoint Analysis, Segmentation and Databasing for Development and Marketing**

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**Abstract:** Much of the knowledge today about consumers as customers comes from one of three types of research: Qualitative: probing in depth the motivations of consumers for a particular product or service (knowledge building and insight development) and where appropriate eliciting reactions to specific products or concepts (validation of the corporate efforts by rapid consumer reactions). Primary Quantitative: Including surveys. Systematized Databases: Arising from tracking studies either sponsored by one company for its own use or sold on a syndicated basis by a research/data supplier. We present a fourth category of research and knowledge about consumers and customers. We call this the It! system. It! uses the power of primary research, with a powerful, state-of-the-art research tool (conjoint measurement), executed in-depth for specific categories, applied to an integrated set of 30 different related products or services. This approach generates one integrated, mega-database. Through this integrated database of 30 related studies in a specific area, the marketer, researcher, product developer and agency can: Identify the features and messages that drive interest, Compare these features and messages across different but related product categories, Divide people by their profile of attitudes and Segment consumers on the basis of the pattern of features and communications that interest them.

**Key words:** Conjoint measurement, conjoint analysis, conjoint study, experimental design

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of today's pressing needs is to better understand the mind of the consumer in order to spot newly emerging trends in the market and to capitalize on them. Data themselves are no longer the choke point in the market, for the researcher is awash in data. Data that cannot be easily obtained by subscribing to information services can be obtained by commissioning a custom study. In one way or another, the marketer, the product developer and the researcher are able to answer most of the questions about new and current products, advertisements and consumer attitudes.

Given this abundance of information the question one might naturally ask is why bother with more data? What is missing? Why would the rational businessperson invest in new data when there is so much data from which to choose? The answer, as provided in this presentation, is quite simple. There are lots of sources of data, but unfortunately there is no systematically developed database about the mind of the consumer that can be

interrogated to identify patterns that hint at trends. The situation in marketing today is much like the amalgam of differently sourced computer programs that do the gamut of tasks from spreadsheets to presentations to document control and preparation. Until Microsoft came out with its Office Suite® there were many relatively unconnected alternatives for each task. Going from one task to another, e.g., from document preparation to computation to presentation meant learning all sorts of new tasks, finding how to do things and then doing the task. In the meanwhile the effort was spent on learning the steps to move from one system to another, rather than on the information to be communicated.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Creating an integrated concept database:** Our goal was to create a database that showed the impact or utility of different messages in a particular area, or 'mega-category'. The mega categories we considered were:

- Food acceptance (reported here as the Crave It! Study)
- Healthful foods (Healthy You!)
- Beverages (Drink It!)
- Insurance (Protect It!)
- The buying situation in a store (Buy It!)
- he not for profit world (Give It!)

The organizing idea was to learn about what made people respond strongly in terms of specific messages through evaluation of specific, systematically varied concepts (via conjoint analysis) and learn a great deal more about these same people by having them profile themselves on a conventional, large scale attitude and usage questionnaire (classification).

The unique structural feature about the mega category studies, differentiating them from the conventional segmentation studies is the following:

- Each mega study comprised 30 + smaller studies. Thus the Crave It! Study reported here really comprised 30 different studies. Each study dealt with a specific food or beverage (e.g., hamburger, potato chip, coffee).
- Elements in one study are comparable to elements in another. Each mega study had a conjoint portion comprising 36 elements, divided into four silos. The structure of the elements was set up ahead of time so that each of the 36 elements had a *raison d'être* or rationale. Once this rationale was determined (e.g., brand, simple versus complex product description, emotion), the actual text of the element was created separately for each of the 30 studies. The text of the element was appropriate for the particular study, but was true to the basic overarching design. Furthermore, in quite a number of cases the same text could be used across the 30 studies. This common structure across the studies allowed for meta-analyses, showing patterns transcending a particular study. Table 1 shows an example of the

elements for hamburger and chocolate candy, respectively, presenting the rationale for the element and the way the element was phrased for a specific study. Emphasis in the study was on the balance of functional elements and emotional elements (Lautman and Percy, 1983).

- The classification questionnaire for each study was identical. The same set of questions was used for self-profiling for each of the 30 studies in a particular mega study, allowing for comparison across studies.
- Respondents selected the study that interested them. Rather than allocating respondents to studies in a forced manner, we presented the respondents with a wall or selection of studies. The respondent was free to choose any study that was interesting.

**Field execution:** The Internet-based execution was done in a straightforward manner, following these steps.

**Invitation letter:** The respondents were invited to participate, using an e-mail ‘field house’ (Open Venue, Ltd., Toronto). Table 2 shows the invitation letter. We found that having an interesting invitation letter generated a large number of respondents.

**Crave it! wall:** The respondents were guided to a wall, where they could participate in any of a set of different but related conjoint studies. The wall was set up so that the least popular study (fewest respondents) was at the top left and the most popular study (most respondents) was at the bottom right. This strategy ensured that the studies would not be biased by location. When the base size reached a specific cut-off, the study option disappeared and the button for the particular project disappeared from the wall. Figure 1 shows an example of the wall.

**Conjoint study:** The actual study comprised 36 elements, combined in short, 2-4 element combinations and presented on a screen. The respondent was instructed to rate degree of ‘craveability’ for the particular combination.

Table 1: Example of elements and rationale

EI	Category	Rationale	Hamburgers	Chocolate candy
E01	Primary attributes	Basic physical attributes	Fresh grilled hamburger	A smooth, dense piece of chocolate
E02	Primary attributes	** (continuum: basic to complex/detailed physical attributes) in some cases ... 'healthy'	A chargrilled hamburger with a taste you can't duplicate	Smooth appearance with a light chocolate flavor and a creamy texture
E03	Primary attributes	** (Continuum: basic to complex/detailed physical attributes)	A grilled aroma that surrounds a thick burger on a toasted bun	Crispy wafers coated in thin layers of milk chocolate
E04	Primary attributes	** (Continuum: basic to complex/detailed physical attributes) in some cases ... 'real'	Moist bites of bun, burger and onion	Real chocolate made with ingredients like chocolate, cocoa butter, vanilla and sugar
E05	Primary attributes	** (Continuum: basic to complex /detailed physical attributes)	Juicy burger with the crunch of lettuce and tomato	White chocolate with crunchy cookie pieces throughout

Table 1: Continued

El	Category	Rationale	Hamburgers	Chocolate candy
E06	Primary attributes	** (Continuum: basic to complex /detailed physical attributes)	Goopy grilled burger with rich sauce and fresh lettuce and tomato	Heavy dense chunk of chocolate with complex flavors, velvet appearance... enticing aroma
E07	Primary attributes	** (Continuum: basic to complex /detailed physical attributes)	Layers of burger, sauce, pickles and lettuce on a moist sourdough sesame seed bun	Dense chocolate with swirls of dark chocolate and chocolate sprinkles on the surface
E08	Primary attributes	** (Continuum: basic to complex /detailed physical attributes)	Lots of crispy bacon and cheese on a juicy grilled hamburger on a lightly toasted bun	Clusters of chocolate and nuts, with caramel and marshmallow throughout
E09	Primary attributes	Complex physical attributes; details	Burger smothered in onions and cheese	Golden milk nougat with whole almond pieces on top, caramel drizzled over them and enrobed with semi - sweet chocolate
E10	Secondary Attributes/Mood	Party pleaser/inviting	Burgers are a party pleaser	When it's cold outside, chocolate is cozy and inviting
E11	Secondary Attributes/Mood	Beverages	With a chilled glass of water... or carbonated beverage	With a hot cup of coffee, tea, hot cocoa ... or carbonated beverage
E12	Secondary Attributes/Mood	With...	With great tasting french fries ... and that special sauce	Bite size pieces; ready for a fast taste ... with a chocolate truffle filling
E13	Secondary Attributes/Mood	Premium quality/ classic taste	Premium quality ... that great classic taste, like it used to be	Premium quality ... that great classic taste, like it used to be
E14	Secondary Attributes/Mood	Savor it...	You can just savor it when you think about it during work and school	You can just savor it when you think about it during work and school
E15	Secondary Attributes/Mood	All natural/ changing flavors	100% natural ... a real beef burger!	100% natural ... and new choices every month to keep you tantalized
E16	Secondary Attributes/Mood	With all the extras you want...	With all the toppings and sides you want... pickles, relish, jalapenos ... lettuce, tomato, chips ...whatever	With fruit fillings in any flavor you want
E17	Secondary Attributes/Mood	Imagine the taste...	You can imagine the taste as you walk in the door	You can imagine the taste as you walk in the door
E18	Secondary Attributes/Mood	Lick your lips twice...	So tasty and juicy you practically have to lick your lips twice after each bite	So good... you practically have to lick your lips twice after each bite
E19	Emotional	Quick/ fun/ alone	Quick and fun ... eating alone doesn't have to be ordinary	Quick and fun ... eating alone doesn't have to be ordinary
E20	Emotional	Have to have it... can't stop	When you think about it, you have to have it ... and after you have it, you can't stop eating it	When you think about it, you have to have it ... and after you have it, you can't stop eating it
E21	Emotional	Fills that empty spot...	Fills that empty spot in you...just when you want it	Fills that empty spot in you...just when you want it
E22	Emotional	Cheers you up...	When you're sad, it makes you glad	When you're sad, it makes you glad
E23	Emotional	Escape routine/ celebrations	Now you can escape the routine ... a way to celebrate special occasions	Now you can escape the routine ... a way to celebrate special occasions
E24	Emotional	Multi-dimensional sensory experience	A joy for your senses..seeing, smelling, tasting	A joy for your senses..seeing, smelling, tasting
E25	Emotional	With family and friends	An outrageous experience ... shared with family and friends	An outrageous experience ... shared with family and friends
E26	Emotional	Ecstasy...	Pure ecstasy	Pure ecstasy
E27	Emotional	Satisfies hunger...	It feeds the hunger	it feeds the hunger
E28	Brand or Benefit	Basic brands/ experiences	At QSR A	From Brand Q
E29	Brand or Benefit	** (Continuum: basic to premium brands)	At QSR B	From Brand R
E30	Brand or Benefit	** (Continuum: basic to premium brands)	At QSR C	From Brand S
E31	Brand or Benefit	** (Continuum: basic to premium brands)	At QSR D	From Brand T
E32	Brand or Benefit	** (Continuum: basic to premium brands)	At QSR E	From Brand U
E33	Brand or Benefit	Premium brands/ experiences	At QSR F	From Brand V
E34	Brand or Benefit	Fresh... for you ... by you	Fresh from the grill, especially for you ...by you	Made fresh ...especially for you
E35	Brand or Benefit	Best in world...	Simply the best burger in the whole wide world	Simply the best chocolate in the whole wide world
E36	Brand or Benefit	Safety...	With the safety, care and cleanliness that makes you trust it and love it all the more	With the safety, care and cleanliness that makes you trust it and love it all the more

Table 2: Invitation letter to participate in the Crave It! study

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Take our survey and win CASH!! The more surveys you take, the more chances to win!!

Are you the kind of person who loves FOOD and DRINK? Whatever you eat or drink, here is a survey for you! Tell us what kinds of foods and beverages you CRAVE ... choose from up to 32 different kinds ... then qualify to receive one of four CASH PRIZES and join one of The Understanding & Insight Group's exclusive consumer panels.

Simply click on the link below (if your email does not support hotlinks, cut and paste the link into your browser) and choose one of the easy-to-answer surveys.

<http://12.109.160.54/uics2y4/craveit2002.asp>

You will only have until NOON on XXX to complete this survey, so be sure to respond as quickly as possible. Your opinions are important to us! Depending on your connection speed, each survey should take between 15 and 20 min to complete.

Forward this survey to your friends and family so that we know what kinds of food and beverages they CRAVE, too! Everyone's opinion is important! Please be assured that any information you provide will be held in the strictest confidence. You will not be contacted by any sales or other research organization as a result of your participation in this survey.

If you have any difficulty accessing the survey, you can contact Tom Farrar at [testmaster@theuandigroup.com](mailto:testmaster@theuandigroup.com).

Thanks in advance for your input and have fun!

The Crave IT! Team

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Fig. 1: Crave It! wall

For any particular food, there were 80+ different experimental designs created, each comprising 60 combinations of the 36 elements, 2-4 elements at a time. A respondent was randomly allocated to a specific experimental design. No more than eight respondents were ever allocated to the same design. This strategy ensured that there would be minimal bias due to a particular combination. The respondent evaluated each concept singly, as shown in Fig. 2 and at the end of the interview was shown a concept that they would like best versus a concept that everyone might like best. These optimal concepts were computed 'on the fly' by regression analysis for the particular respondent versus

for all respondents who had previously participated in the study (Fig. 3). The conjoint approach was a self-authoring version of IdeaMap® (Moskowiz and Martin, 1993), adapted for the Internet. Conjoint measurement itself has been commercially used for more than three decades (Cattin and Whittink, 1982).

**Large-scale classification:** At the end of the conjoint study the respondent filled out an extensive classification questionnaire, dealing with demographics (gender, age, market), attitudes towards the product (acceptance using the FACT Scale; (Schutz, 1965.) self-rated hunger and the importance

Fig. 2: Example of an interview screen for a conjoint test

Fig. 3: Example of feedback given to a respondent

of both situations and product features as drivers of 'craveability'. The term 'craveability' was used in the colloquial sense of high degree of liking, not in the medical sense of an addiction.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results from the Crave It! Study and subsequently from studies on insurance (Protect It!),

shopping (Buy It!), health oriented foods (Healthy You!) and beverages (Drink It!) can be looked at in several ways.

**Participation:** How many people participated and who participated? This tells a great deal about the popularity of the issue

**Check-off batteries:** What are the factors that drive perceived 'craveability' of foods? This comes from the

classification questionnaire and is similar to the type of information obtained from conventional attitude and usage studies.

**Conjoint measurement:** What are the phrases that drive ‘craveability’ in particular food categories?

**Meta analyses:** How do concept elements that are the same fare in different product categories?

**Meta analyses:** Are there fundamental segments in the population that repeat from product category to product category?

**Participation:** Participation from the e-mail interview showed the majority of respondents to be women, but not always in the same proportion. Table 3 shows the participation for the first 20 studies run for the Crave It project. The remaining studies were run later. It is clear from these results that although women participate more, there are gender-linked product preferences driving more men to participate in steak than in a product such as cheesecake.

**What is important from the self-defined profile (classification):**

The objective here was to have the respondent profile himself/herself after the conjoint measurement, in order to better understand their values. The information provides a snapshot of how the respondent sees himself. Furthermore, the results can be analyzed from the perspective of each particular food. For example, the respondents were instructed to check reasons why they craved a specific food. One of the reasons was ‘mood’. As Table 4 shows, there are ‘mood foods’ (chocolate most, then ice cream, cola, nuts, pretzels and coffee). From these types of data one can create a profile of foods and occasions/situations when they are most craved. It is important to note, however, that these results are strictly from the self-profiling done in the classification questionnaire.

**The algebra of the customer’s mind and the existence of segments:**

The heart of the Crave It! Studies is the conjoint measurement part, where respondents rated the ‘craveability’ of descriptions about food. These descriptions comprised statements about product features, emotion, brand, situation, etc., providing an

Table 3: Participation of men versus women in the Crave It! Study

Category	Total N	%Men	%Wom	Category	Total N	%Men	%Wom
Chocolate candy	478	14	86	French fries	151	19	81
Pizza	324	33	67	Taco	151	21	79
Ice cream	321	26	74	Pretzels	151	25	75
Cola	239	26	74	Nuts	151	33	67
Coffee	208	31	69	BBQ ribs	151	38	62
Cheesecake	173	16	84	Hamburger	151	40	60
Steak	168	44	56	Tortilla chips	150	20	80
Potato chips	153	24	76	Olives	150	24	76
Chicken	153	27	73	Cheese	150	27	73
Cinnamon rolls	152	20	80	Peanut butter	150	31	69

Table 4: Proportion of respondents saying that ‘mood’ is key fact in ‘craveability’ for 20 of the foods in the Crave It! Study

	Total panel	Crave-mood	Mood/total (%)
Chocolate	472	226	48%
Ice cream	316	115	36%
Cola	237	86	36%
Nuts	149	52	35%
Pretzel	148	50	34%
Coffee	206	69	33%
Olives	147	42	29%
Tacos	148	42	28%
Tortilla chips	148	41	28%
Potato chips	151	41	27%
Cheesecake	172	45	26%
French fries	148	36	24%
Hamburger	150	31	21%
Cinnamon roll	149	29	19%
Cheese	149	28	19%
Chicken	148	27	18%
Peanut butter	149	27	18%
Pizza	318	55	17%
Steak	168	22	13%
BBQ ribs	149	17	11%

array of different types of elements. All the elements were text. From the responses it was possible to create a model at the individual respondent level relating the presence/absence of each of the concept elements to the respondent's ratings. The analysis was done in such a way as to assess the goodness-of-fit of each respondent's data. More than 80% of the individual models created in this fashion were highly significant (adjusted multiple  $R^2$  values  $> 0.66$ ). Figure 4 shows the distribution of multiple  $R^2$  values for the individual models.

Another way to look at the data deals with the respondents as rating the concepts in one of two ways- 'craveable' (rating of 7-9) or not 'craveable' (rating of 1-6). This change of focus from the degree of 'craveability' (1-9

scale) to a yes/no scale (1-6 re-coded as '0' or 'not 'craveable'; 7-9 re-coded as '100' or 'craveable') mirrors the way the marketer looks at data. Marketers and in turn market researchers, are interested in the proportion of the respondents who respond in a particular way (viz., interested). This change in focus generated a model relating the presence/absence of the concept elements to either 'craveable' or 'not 'craveable'. The parameters of that model appear in Table 5 for hamburger.

Table 5 is abstracted from a much larger table that shows the utility value for each of the 36 elements, for each key subgroup. Let us look at a particular result, specifically the winning elements for Segment 2 (Elaborate). The specifics for segmentation will be described after the introduction to the utility values.

Fig. 4: Distribution of multiple  $R^2$  values for the individual models relating presence/absence of concept elements to degree of 'craveability' on a 9-point scale

Table 5: Results from the conjoint study with hamburger, showing the winning elements for the three segments and how those elements perform for the total panel and for the three concept response segments

	Hamburger	Tot	S1	S2	S3
	Base Size	150	54	72	24
	Constant	30	52	9	47
	Segment 1 - Classic				
E08	Lots of crispy bacon and cheese on a juicy grilled hamburger on a lightly toasted bun	17	11	34	-22
	Segment 2 - Elaborate				
E08	Lots of crispy bacon and cheese on a juicy grilled hamburger on a lightly toasted bun	17	11	34	-22
E16	With all the toppings and sides you want ... pickles, relish, jalapenos ... lettuce, tomato, chips ... whatever	10	2	19	3
E09	Burger smothered in onions and cheese	5	-7	18	-5
E03	A grilled aroma that surrounds a thick burger on a toasted bun	10	3	17	4
E07	Layers of burger, sauce, pickles and lettuce on a moist sourdough sesame seed bun	7	6	17	-21
E18	So tasty & juicy you practically have to lick your lips twice after each bite	8	4	14	1
E02	A chargrilled hamburger with a taste you can't duplicate	7	3	14	-2
E05	Juicy burger with the crunch of lettuce and tomato	5	-3	13	2
E13	Premium quality ... that great classic taste, like it used to be	7	5	12	-3
	Segment 3 - Imaginer				
E34	Fresh from the grill, especially for you ...by you	5	-1	7	13
E17	You can imagine the taste as you walk in the door	7	6	6	12

**Base:** There are a total of 150 respondents, of which 72 belong in S2 or the elaborate segment.

**Additive constant:** The additive constant for the Total panel is 30. Since the regression was run on a dependent variable of either 0 or 100, respectively, this 30 means that without the presence of concept elements, 30% of the respondents would rate a concept about hamburgers 7-9. Clearly this is a theoretical, estimated parameter because all concepts comprised 2-4 elements. The low constant means that to achieve 'craveability' it will be the elements that do all the work. S1, the classic segment shows a high constant of 47, as does S3, the imaginer segment. S2, the elaborate segment, shows a very low constant of 9, meaning that it is the elements that must do the work.

**Segment 2, elaborates:** Segment 2, Elaborates, show some very high scoring elements. The highest two elements paint a word-picture of the product (Lots of crispy bacon and cheese on a juicy grilled hamburger on a lightly toasted bun, with all the toppings and sides you want ... pickles, relish, jalapenos ... lettuce, tomato, chips ... whatever ).

**Adding in elements to create winning concepts:** For Segment 2, the utility value of 34 for 'Lots of crispy bacon...bun' means that with that element in the concept an additional 34% of the respondents will say that they crave the hamburger (viz., rate the concept a 7-9 on the 9-point scale).

**Concept-response segmentation:** The segmentation is done in a straightforward manner, using conventional statistical procedures. The input data are the 36 utility values, one set for each respondent. The clustering method divides people in such a way that people in the same cluster (segment) show highly pair-wise correlations between their utility values where people in different clusters (segments) show low correlations (Systat, 1997). Figure 5A and 5B show examples of what a hamburger might look like for the 'Classics' and the 'Elaborates', respectively.

**The utilities are additive:** Thus, for Segment 2 we begin with a 9 (base level of interest), meaning that only 9% of the respondents would say that they crave a hamburger if no elements are present. Recall that this is an estimated parameter. Adding the winning element, however, increases the proportion from 9 to  $9+34 = 43\%$  of the respondents. Adding yet another element 'So tasty and juicy you practically have to lick your lips twice after each bite' adds another 14% of the respondents, to 57% total. One can continue to build a concept, until one reaches four elements.

Fig. 5A: Hamburger for the 'Classic' segment

Fig. 5B: Hamburger for the 'Elaborate' segment

**Value of segmentation:** It is clear from these data and this exercise that for the total panel there are a few winners, but the real information comes from the segmentation. The big opportunities come from identifying the response segments and building products for them.

**The classification questionnaire:** The classification questionnaire, in turn, can be re-cast to consider only the respondents in a particular segment, to discover any particular geo-demographic variables that can identify them, et. In most of these studies the results show the existence of segments, but also the problem that the segments are distributed throughout the population in a way that defies simple cross-tabulation to discover them. One has to use more sophisticated procedures such as data mining to identify patterns in the cross-tabs that predict segment membership. This approach has already proved successful for jewelry (Green and Moskowitz, 2000), where the lift in response rate was measured at more than \$1,000 per purchase. It was a matter of identifying the segments through this type of conjoint exercise and then developing a decision rule to classify new individuals as members of a specific segment.



Table 6: Utility for the element "Simply the best <FOOD NAME> in the whole wide world"

	Total	Male	Female
Cinnamon rolls	7	3	8
Ice cream	5	3	6
Hamburger	5	5	5
Tacos	5	7	4
BBQ Ribs	4	6	3
Chocolate Candy	4	5	4
Pizza	4	6	3
Olives	3	6	3
French fries	3	4	3
Cheesecake	3	7	2
Peanut butter	3	0	4
Tortilla chips	3	-4	4
Coffee	2	-1	4
Chicken	2	-1	3
Nuts	2	1	2
Pretzels	1	4	0
Cheese	1	0	1
Potato chips	0	0	0
Cola	0	3	-1
Steak	-1	2	-2

**How does the same element do when presented in the context of different foods?:** One of the interesting results of the study is the performance of the same concept element when embedded in different studies. The difference in the performance of a claim, for instance, appears moderate when the claim is 'simply the best <food name> in the whole wide world'. For cinnamon roles this is a strong claim (+7), whereas for steak this is a weak claim (-1). Table 6 shows these results. Men, in turn, tend to be more swayed by this type of claim than women, but the pattern is somewhat ambiguous. The key here is that the same element can take on different utility values depending upon the context in which it is presented.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Our experience with the Crave It! Study and the others shows that there is a vast amount of information to be obtained about consumers that is simply lacking in other studies. The information ranges from self-profiling on a variety of features, to understanding the product and communication 'hot buttons' for specific products. The key benefits and conclusions are the following:

- It is possible to create an integrated database, in a short period of time (weeks, rather than months/years)
- Setting up the structure ahead of time makes the usefulness of the database easier. By having a coherent structure it becomes possible to find the right data and where necessary step back and look at patterns across foods or other categories (e.g., insurance).

- There are segments, but these segments are far more profound than one might have thought based upon previous data. Much of the traditional segmentation is attitudinal, but there is difficulty in bringing this segmentation down to the realm of the actionable<sup>[7]</sup>. By segmenting the respondents on the basis of the conjoint results one can create strong segments that are homogeneous with respect to the types of messages that they find interesting.

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