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Target Audience Profile and Recommendations

Pillsbury Shape Pumpkin Sugar Cookies is a limited edition holiday treat that is released during the fall months of September and October. Pillsbury aims to improve its communication strategies through increased online media content. This document identifies the ideal target audience profile through research based analysis and includes a sample consumer persona. Helpful consumer insights through the use of Simmons and Mintel data analysis have assisted in identifying strategies that are contingent with our focus for Pillsbury's future media efforts.

Recommended Target Audience Description: The Multitasking Mother

The target audience for Pillsbury should include young mothers with children ages 6 to 12 years old. Specifically, mothers who are in search of a quick treat during the holiday season that will capture their children's attention and satisfy their own needs of fitting quality time in on a tight schedule. These women generally tend to have a full time job or are still in school (undergrad, grad school, residencies etc.) so home cooked meals and treats are not an option during the week. These women recognize the importance of family time, but desire activities that can be done without much pre-planned effort. For the children of these mothers, the nag factor also helps persuade them since they hold residual guilt for not being completely present due to outside factors.

The decision to choose "The Multitasking Mother" as the target audience described above is a result of research reviewed from Mintel and Simmons Insights, databases we have been encouraged to use in class that track industry and consumer trends. Simmons research shows increased spending on cookie dough, especially ready-to-eat refrigerated or frozen dough (MRI Simmons Insights, 2017). Children's interest in this type of product depends on variables including bright packaging, taste, and familiarity. Cost efficiency was also a valued factor in decision making when purchasing treats, especially for young mothers and African American mothers (Mintel, 2019).

The research demonstrates that Pillsbury Shape Pumpkin Sugar Cookies should target a similar demographic to the one stated in the client exercise, but rather focus on engaging the mothers of children ages 6 to 12 years old instead of the children themselves. Mintel's "Baking Goods/Mixes and Cookies - US - 2018" report found that women are the primary purchasers of food in the household, 61% believing that packaged goods are more convenient. Loyalty and children as influence also contribute to a mother's purchasing decision. As stated in Mintel's "Family Purchasing - Kid as Influencer - US - 2017", the nag factor contributes to the likelihood that the child will influence the mother's purchase decision in the grocery store. Even more so if she has purchased Pillsbury cookies in the past and associates a positive experience with the product.

The costs of Pillsbury cookies is significantly less than its competitors, including cookie products under the Mondelez brand (Mintel, 2017). Mondelez makes up over 36% of cookie/baked goods sales. Pillsbury challenges this percentage through its added “treat yourself” value. Mothers of children in the target audience find the aspect of a limited quantity treat for their children as an appealing feature, over cookies that can be bought at anytime throughout the year. Pillsbury already succeeds in targeting the children of these mothers so incorporating the mothers themselves into the target audience is the best way to ensure Pillsbury sales increase during Fall 2020.

A Simmons crosstab shows that the percentage of women with children under 18, 79.8% have purchased ready-to-eat cookies for their household in the past. This was out of a sample size of 5,383. Another crosstab identifies this same group of women purchasing higher amounts with children between the ages of 6 to 12 (MRI Simmons Insights, 2017). Pillsbury should target consumers who have previously purchased ready-to-eat cookie dough, appealing to factors of convenience and indulgence.

Target Consumer

A sample target consumer to give life to the target audience described above is, Kate Kelly. Kate Kelly is a 25-year-old mother of twin boys. She is in the first year of her residency at local hospital in Detroit. Due to her fluctuating schedule, she has a hard time fitting in activities to spend quality time with her children and also get a reasonable amount of sleep thanks to the night shift. Most of the other mothers at the preschool her boys attend are stay at home moms who have ample amount of time to bake for the holiday parties planned for the children. With Halloween around the corner, Kate is looking for a product that will appease the other mothers, excite her children, be cost efficient and convenient. She sees an ad for the new Pillsbury Shape Pumpkin Sugar Cookies while scrolling through instagram during her break and decides to swing by the 24-hour Walmart on the way home from her shift to buy some. Her decision is made even easier once recalls her boys bringing similar Pillsbury seasonal cookies home from the Saint Patrick’s Day party earlier in the year.

Consumer Insight

Multitasking Moms like Kate, have to put a time limit on every aspect of their life while in transition to reach their goals and provide for their children. These mothers value convenience and cost efficiency since raising young children comes with so many unforeseen expenses. Although they are constantly on the go with work or school, these mothers try to prioritize quality time with their children. Pillsbury’s seasonal cookies offer convenient and cost efficient options that appeal to the needs of these mothers. Since holiday treats are an easy excuse to splurge on sweet treats, even health conscious young mothers will be satisfied with Pillsbury due to the indulgence factor and Pillsbury’s tried and true sugar cookie taste.

In conclusion, this research of the ideal target audience and consumer insights necessary for Pillsbury to exceed in cookie sales in Fall 2020, will allow them to focus on communication efforts on social media and in-store. Since as of now Pillsbury has an extreme lack of advertising, expanding its efforts on Pinterest, Facebook and Instagram

will ensure Multitasking Mothers become familiar with Pillsbury and ultimately decide to purchase the Shape Pumpkin Sugar Cookies for their children.

Citations

MRI Simmons Insights. (2017, Spring). *Consumption of Cookie Dough (Frozen/Refrigerated) Monthly based on Age Demographic* [Data file]. Retrieved from Simmons Insights database.

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