

IDENTIFYING NEW APPLICATIONS

Companies are often surprised by the unique and unexpected ways in which customers use their products. Identifying these new applications can present significant sales opportunities with new customers in other markets. They also help foster customer loyalty when the company responds with changes in product and packaging characteristics designed to better meet the requirements of the new applications.

New Application Studies Are Used To:

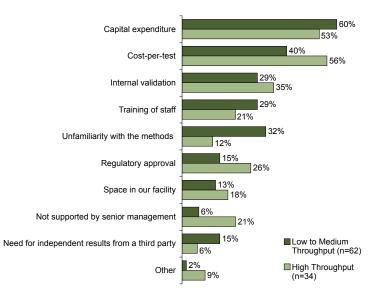
- Identify unique ways in which existing products are being used.
- Examine the potential of new applications for new markets.
- Measure new customer receptivity.

New Application Studies Provide Managers With:

- A better awareness of existing customer's needs.
- Customer profiles to guide to new marketing and sales efforts.
- The ability to plan an incremental market entry strategy.

Case Study: Our analysts surveyed scientists to determine the largest barriers against adopting molecular-based tests (i.e PCR) for in-house food and/or beverage microbiology testing.

BARRIERS FOR IN-HOUSE MOLECULAR-BASED TESTS — THROUGHPUT



PCR is most often used for quantitation of gene expression, microarray verification, or determining copy number variation while only 3% of scientists use it for food safety testing. The above study found that the cost-per-test is more of a concern among high throughput respondents where as unfamiliarity with methods is a concern among low to medium throughput respondents. A study such as this could not only aid in identifying a new application but also determine requirements for development.

Typical objectives of a study include:

Product Features

- Determine target performance/quality objectives.
- Identify percentage of products purchased exclusively for use in new applications.
- Determine why purchases of specified products for new applications will increase, decrease, or remain unchanged in the future.

Research Focus

- Identify research emphasis (area, process, applications).
- Discuss the customer's requirements for additional product functions or capabilities that need improvement or to be developed.

Unmet Needs

- Identify factors that drive minimum order sizes.
- Determine the customer's level of confidence that the Client will be able to meet these needs.
- Identify other researchers that may be interested in the new application.

Summary

Customer innovation often drives the characteristics of products. Reorienting existing products to better meet the needs of customers provides an excellent, low-cost, opportunity to enhance customer retention. It also provides companies with the ability to explore new markets without the substantial outlay of resources that might otherwise be necessary. Identifying new applications, and then categorizing them by type of customer, enable managers to map new strategies for expanding their presence into existing markets while planning their entry into adjacent areas of research.