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Eye Candy for the Market Researcher

Tracking where consumers look reveals what they see, buy.

So you've finally done it! You've created the most fun, delicious, nutritious, kid-friendly parent-approved candy of all time. The formula has been perfected, the recipe patented and the packaged product shipped out to retailers all around the globe. You can almost taste the buzz as the delectable new treat hits the shelves.

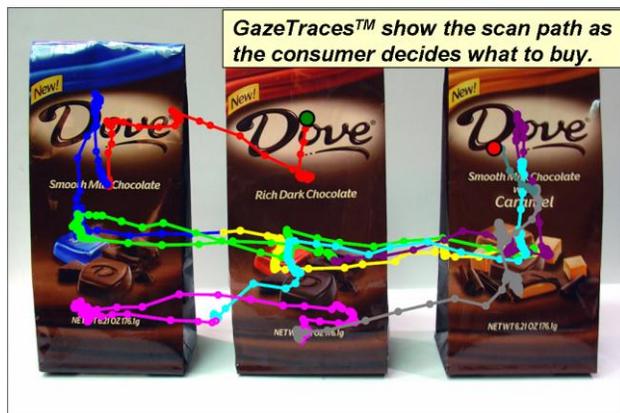
Then the sales figures come in. No one is buying it. The simple fact is that even the best product on the market will not succeed if the package doesn't capture attention and convey the right information. For decades package designers and category management professionals have struggled with this challenge — creating a favorable brand impression



that stands out among the jumble of competing products surrounding it. Discovering the key to package visibility and message optimization has proven itself to be a complicated and enduring question. One new research technology suggests that the answer lies in the eye of the consumer.

Data collected as the consumer searches the shelf is used to show what captures and holds attention, what is ignored and which designs and shelf placements are most effective.

There is a crucial gap in conventional research methods. Researchers can gather information about the shoppers who walk into the store and which products they buy as they walk out, but until now there has been very little data available on what happens in between, on what is going on during the purchase decision."



EyeTracking Inc. is a research company with a visionary new approach to evaluating package designs and shelf placement. The state-of-the-art eyetracking methodology offered by this company allows for detailed testing of the package on the shelf. By tracking exactly where consumers look as they decide which product to buy, a wealth of new information becomes accessible:

What do consumers see? What shelf placements do they ignore? Do they notice the brand name? Do they pay attention to the Spider-Man graphic? All of these facets of the purchase

decision are illuminated through the careful analysis of consumer eye movements.

Candy applications

The confectionery industry will be a major beneficiary of advances in eyetracking research. It's hard to imagine a more hostile environment for selling a product than the candy shelf with its swarm of shapes, sizes, flavors, forms, textures and qualities of confectionery products offered in a given aisle. The research is designed to sort it all out and show what really works.

Previous studies conducted by EyeTracking have shown that there is a method to the madness as shoppers search the shelves for the most delicious confection. Subtle details such as the use of white space, the placement of the product on the shelf or the positioning of the food photography can have a profound effect on the ability of a package to capture and hold attention.

EyeTracking researchers use these patterns as a window into the thought process of the consumer as they decide which product is right for them.

The EyeTracking research team has tested packages in a variety of different industries with clients including Fortune 500 companies in the United States and abroad. The software and tools used in these studies allow real packages to be tested in the store and prototypes to be tested in virtual environments. As this science continues to gain popularity, the solutions offered by this company have the potential to take the guesswork out of package design and shelf placement. For those in the confectionery industry who seek a competitive edge on the shelf, the benefits offered by EyeTracking are indeed a tempting piece of eye candy.