

# How Endangered Species Chocolate Brought Their Consumers to Life to Inform a Messaging & Activation Strategy



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The insights from GutCheck’s solution allowed us to receive a deeper understanding of each core consumer persona we had developed. The depth of information captured and the ability to leverage big data to provide additional context were extremely helpful and allowed us to better understand the messaging our consumers are interested in. We will now use this information to build out our creative and messaging to better reach existing and new consumers.

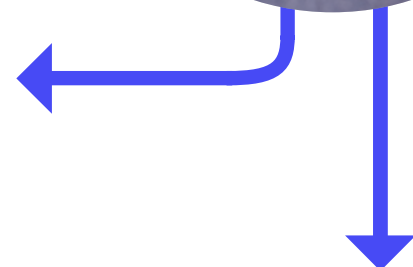
Tod Dalberg,  
Director of Brand & Marketing, Endangered Species Chocolate

## The Challenge

Going into 2018, the Endangered Species Chocolate (ESC) team had an initiative to acquire new customers by way of more targeted marketing strategies and activities. Having recently completed a segmentation analysis, the team wanted to take a deeper dive into three of their five audience segments to better understand nuances and what makes each one unique.

As part of this initiative, the team wanted a more holistic view of

- The shopper journeys of each segment
- How best to reach and message to key consumer segments to convert over to more loyal consumers



Armed with unique audience intelligence, the team would then be more enabled to engage with its highest-value consumers.

## The Solution and Research

To achieve their goals, the ESC team leveraged GutCheck's agile market research solutions to provide a holistic picture of consumers and how to effectively reach them. This offering allows teams, like ESC, to further analyze and enrich their consumer segments and understand how to target them based on attributes like media consumption, lifestyles, interests, personality profiles, social listening, and other behavioral and purchase data.



This research focused on the following key question and objectives:

How can the ESC team leverage a deeper understanding of their segments to reach consumers more effectively and guide their business strategy?

- Explore habits and practices by occasions across the chocolate category to build a more complete picture of purchase and consumption behaviors
- Understand media consumption by segment to learn where they spend their time and how they can be reached
- Identify key personality profiles, lifestyles, interests, and other traits by segment to better understand how to design products and messaging that appeal to them



Audience  
Understanding

Product &  
Promotion

Creative  
Development

Activation



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This research provided a depth of understanding to key barriers in purchasing; in particular, it helped us to explore and better understand how to leverage various marketing and promotional opportunities. Armed with this knowledge, we are able to more effectively and efficiently focus our time and investments to maximize both reach and ROI.

Tod Dalberg,

Director of Brand & Marketing, Endangered Species Chocolate

## The Results

Within weeks, the ESC team had unique audience insights for each of their segments, including how to position the brand to the masses, as well as to each segment's individual persona. Understanding what drives choice and usage for each of the segments formed the foundation for building more relevant and high-impact messaging.

### Flavors & Product Preferences

All three segments have three favorite flavors, but segment Y is much more likely to purchase one flavor in particular compared to the other groups, especially based on this segment's personality type. Even though segments X and Z have two favorite flavors in common, the messaging and positioning needed to reach both of them must be different to speak to their unique personalities.

### Creative & Positioning

Based on the results of this study, the GutCheck team had specific recommendations for each of the segments when it came to creative and positioning. For example, based on personality type and needs, one of the segments is more drawn to upbeat messaging, while another would pay more attention to a notable flavor combination as well as sustainability practices. With conflicting attitudes about healthiness, the third segment needs to see a certain type of imagery both in stores and online.

## Media, Reach, & Placement

All three segments are looking for something different when it comes to why they purchase chocolate. Further, one of the groups could be most efficiently reached through traditional television, while the other two lean more toward digital options, including certain social media channels.

To stand out on the shelf, segment X can be reached via coupons and sales at one mass retailer in particular, while segment Y is more likely to notice distinctive new flavors that appeal to the entire family. Segment Z, on the other hand, is more likely to be shopping at a different grocery retailer than the other two segments.



## Supplemental Findings

The ESC team was also able to understand

- The best way to position its chocolate to the masses.
- The types of blogs and online publications each segment frequents and where traditional media opportunities exist.
- Which additional foods and drinks each of the segments consumes alongside chocolate.
- Which segment was more cost-driven and had a particular go-to chocolate brand.
- Which segment had a wider range of interests compared to the other two groups and tended to lean more toward smaller brands.
- The television topics each group prefers, like cooking, action and adventure, and game shows for example.

Based on specific insights for each group, the ESC team better understands which messages to lead with, including where, how, and when to present them—to not only ensure individual campaigns will speak directly to the intended segment but also that communications for the masses will resonate as well.

This diversified strategy will allow the company to achieve maximum growth across the consumer segments.







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We pioneered agile audience intelligence to provide clients with multi-layered, actionable insights that enable them to accelerate time to market and compete with disruptive brands that steal share. Our technology-enabled solutions and experts use a connected data approach to deeply profile specific audiences, helping clients activate successful consumer-centric strategies.

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