

TOPLINE SUMMARY  
FOR  
A QUALITATIVE STUDY  
ON  
CAMEL QQ

- Dallas, Texas  
June 17, 18, 1991

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## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Camel is currently examining the possibility of introducing QQ, a smooth tasting cigarette with a wider circumference than conventional cigarettes, as a Camel line extension.

The purpose of this project was to gain insights into prospective smokers' feelings and attitudes toward the QQ product as well as a number of Proposed QQ Introductory Advertising Campaigns.

## METHOD

A qualitative research probe was conducted utilizing the focused group technique. Six focus group sessions were held in Dallas, Texas on June 17 and 18, 1991. The specs for the groups were as follows:

- \* For all groups:
  - All smoke at least 10 filtered non-menthol Marlboro cigarettes per day
  - Education: some high school education or better, but no current high school students
  - No previous cigarette participation in past year; no participation in last six months
  - Standard RJR security screening

\* Group composition:

- Two groups of female Marlboro smokers
  - o all aged 18-34 (but respondents were selected to skew younger)
  
- Four groups of male Marlboro smokers
  - o two groups aged 18-24
  
  - o two groups aged 25-34 (but respondents were selected to skew younger)

## A WORD OF CAUTION

As with all qualitative research, the indications are to be viewed as suggestive, rather than definitive. The emphasis in this project is primarily on the quality of what the respondents say and the implications of their feelings and emotions. The pertinence and importance of any comment and finding develop as the point comes up in various sessions, and is manifested in one way or another by the respondents in the different sessions.

Since we have too often been unwilling witnesses to the misuse of qualitative research in formulating marketing strategy, we feel obligated to inject a note of caution for the reader of this report. There are a number of clear-cut purposes served by qualitative research as well as a number of objectives that it cannot and should not attempt to meet.

### Qualitative research can:

- Develop hypotheses about the subject.
- Obtain insights into the social processes of group interactions as they relate to the subject, as well as how they are discussed.

### Qualitative research cannot:

- Quantify any of the above so that a "representative" picture is obtained..
- Determine how the market will react behaviorally to a subject that group participants have discussed.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- \* A number of alternative QQ Introductory Campaigns were presented to respondents including:
  - "Wide Side"
  - "Fat City"
  - "Search Light"
  - "Wide Thang"
  - "Camel Rounds"
  
- \* Greatest overall appeal and interest in the Camel Wides proposition seemed to be generated by:
  - The "Wide Side" introductory board "Walk on the Wide Side" including an introductory date
  - Followed by "New Camel Wides," with either "Way smooth" or "Smooth to the max" as support copy
  
- \* The appeal of the "Wide Side" Campaign seemed attributable to a combination of a number of elements including:
  - An eye-catching visual, considered:
    - o colorful
    - o interesting in its depiction of city buildings
    - o unique
    - o including a Camel character to alert smokers that the ad was for Camel

- An appealing headline
  - o that provided an invitation
  - o that seemed to speak in a language smokers understood
  - o that was a familiar take-off of a popular song ("Take a Walk on the Wild Side")
- A fulfillment date
  - o which alerted smokers that there was more to the story
    - . there could be a follow-up
    - . they knew when to look for something new
- Communication of a new Camel product that seemed likely to be unique
  - o "New Camel Wides"
  - o expected to be bigger/wider than other cigarettes
- A reassurance that the product would be smokeable
  - o "Way smooth" or "Smooth to the max"
  - o helping to mitigate harshness associated with a larger/wider cigarette

- \* Yet in spite of the clearness of the Camel Wides proposition to respondents, and the seemingly high likelihood of awareness of the product, trial intention for the new product seemed low:
  - Due to masculine associations of a wider cigarette for many females
  - Due to expectations of excessive strength or harshness among males
  
- \* Many respondents, when presented with prototype Camel Wides products:
  - Asked how many were in a pack, since they expected them to be much larger than conventional cigarettes
  - Were reluctant to try them for fear they would be:
    - o overpowering
    - o too strong/harsh
  - Were surprised at how smooth and relatively enjoyable Camel Wides were when they smoked them
    - o the white filter lights product seemed universally preferred over the cork filtered product
    - o many smokers seemed to feel that the Camel Wides product might be an acceptable alternative to their current brands

- Took a strong notice of the larger circumference of the Camel Wides product
  - o critics felt it was too large
  - o many men and women thought it was cumbersome in their hands and felt odd to smoke
  - o yet acceptors believed it felt
    - . comfortable
    - . substantial
    - . for men, manly
  
- \* The "Fat City" Campaign, although appealing to some men
  - o was soundly rejected by most women and some men due to negative associations with the word "fat"
  - o was meaningless to most to the extent that they had no idea what "Fat City" meant (although some liked the sound of the expression)

## HYPOTHETICAL CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

These hypothetical conclusions and implications are based on four focus group sessions and as such should be viewed as suggestive rather than definitive.

- \* Further examination of an Introductory Campaign for Camel Wides appears to be in order
- \* Respondents' reactions to Max as the introductory spokesperson for Camel Wides differed greatly vs. when the concept was first introduced several years ago
  - At the previous exposure:
    - o the idea of a second Camel character was revolutionary
    - o Max's character seemed to dominate perceptions of the new product
    - o Max was considered:
      - . smooth
      - . cool
      - . slick
      - . street wise
      - . happening

- o perceptions of the Camel product seemed to be:
  - . wider
  - . smoother
  - . more of a good thing
  
- At the current exposure:
  - o the idea of another Camel character was not news due to great awareness of The Hard Pack
  - o interest in Max's character seemed diminished
  - o perceptions of the new Camel product seemed to be based on perceived product attributes:
    - . much larger
    - . much stronger
    - . much harsher
    - . too much to handle
  
- \* Consideration should be given to greater emphasis on advertisement elements which mitigate potential negative end benefits
  - E.g., V-8 engine advertising emphasizes power and performance to detract from perceptions of poor gas mileage/expensive to operate

- For Camel Wides, associations with excessive harshness or too much smoke might be reduced by:
  - o presenting a character who somehow epitomizes smoothness
  - o concentrating on the smoothness message (A Smooth Wide Camel vs. a Wide Camel That's Smooth)
  - o perhaps leading with the Lights product (to avoid impression of going stronger when the trend is to go lighter.