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TRUE INSIGHT**

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# Create an insight springboard

## CHAPTER 1



### Headlines

True insight is the springboard for creating a great vision, but you won't find it by spending hours sitting behind a one-way mirror watching focus groups. You need to get out more, immersing yourself in the worlds of your consumer, brand and competition.

### Research-itis

Strategy tourists fall into the trap of using consumer research like a drunk uses a lamppost: for support not illumination. They commission deck after deck of dry research that no-one has the time or energy to analyse and spend hour after hour locked in focus groups. This reliance on research means they are divorced from the reality of the consumer's world. It encourages them to see the consumer as living on a completely different planet and almost speaking a different language, with the need for a 'moderator' to translate findings into client-speak.

### Don't understand the consumer. Be the consumer

True insight requires more than just understanding consumers. You need to get much closer to the action to feel the insight in your gut, not just understand it in your head. 'Consumer empathy' (Table 1.1) requires the breaking down of the artificial separation that can still exist between the people who use products ('the consumer') and the people who sell them ('the brand'). In addition, building consumer empathy is not something you do every now and then. It is a way of seeing the world and being open to new opportunities whenever they may spring up.

The visceral, emotional nature of an insight that you feel in the gut is what differentiates it from a run-of-the-mill finding. The best way to get true insight is to be the consumer yourself, or at least have a real enthusiasm for and interest in the category. Building consumer empathy is not a quick fix and requires changes to the way people are recruited. People

**Table 1.1:** Beyond consumer exploration to empathy.

	Consumer exploration	Consumer empathy
Research	‘Overt’ techniques such as focus groups and interviews	‘Undercover’ techniques, such as ethnography and observation
Place	In a research facility, behind a one-way mirror	Immersed in the real life of consumers
Attitude to consumer	Try to <i>understand</i> the consumer	<b>Be</b> the consumer
Emphasis	Rational: what’s in your head	Emotional: feel it in your gut
Time frame	Sporadic and based on project needs	Ongoing injections of deep insight

at Amazon, Starbucks and Egg have a genuine interest in the market, are enthused by the mission of the company and tend to be loyal users of the product. I would never get hired at Nike, as I am a Saturday sports spectator not a passionate and active participant. In a consumer goods business where you change brands it may be harder to always have this level of connection with the category and consumer. However, you can try to influence the assignments you get and also ensure that you spend more time with consumers *in situ*. For example, all new people joining the Pampers brand have to spend time in their first week changing nappies, and doing this on real babies, not just dolls.

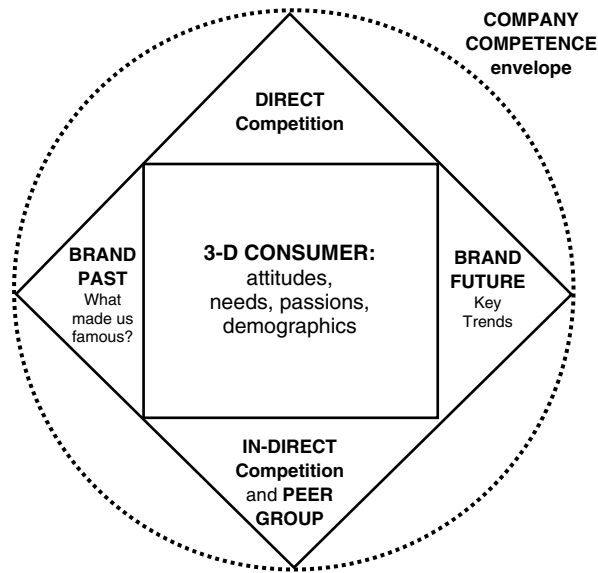
## Opening different windows

You have the best chance of uncovering good insights by looking in more than one place. Andy Bird from Brand Learning calls this ‘opening as many different windows to the brand as possible’. These windows include of course the consumer, but also the competition, brand and company (Figure 1.1), which we will look at one by one.

## Competition: what market are we really in?

One of the parts of brand vision tools that often gets scant attention is the market definition or competitive environment. However, this is a crucial first step in the process of brand visioning. If you don’t know what business you are in, it’s hard to create the right vision. Strategy tourists take the lazy and uninspiring route of using manufacturer definitions such as ‘shampoo’, ‘breakfast cereals’ or ‘computer software’. This narrow view of the world has two big issues:

- *Missing threats*: by looking only at your direct competition you risk overlooking potential threats from indirect competition. For many years Coca Cola was focused on building its



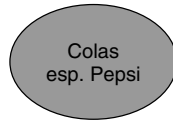
**Figure 1.1:** Insight catalyst framework.

share of the cola market, and taking business from arch-rival Pepsi. However, in today's fast-changing world this was a very dangerous approach. Coke is really competing in a much bigger market you could describe as 'enjoyable, uplifting refreshment', and in the last 10 years has been attacked by a whole army of new competitors from outside the cola market (Figure 1.2). In Holland, the Dubbelfriess brand of refreshing fruit drink has transformed the soft drinks market, creating a huge new category and driving a sharp decline in Coke's business. Dubbelfriess has the refreshment, taste and attractive brand personality for teens that has made Coke strong, but is seen as more 'permissible' by mums as it is a fruit-based drink.

- *Missing opportunities:* by being 'myopic' about your market you are also missing out on new growth opportunities. For example, if Wrigley's had stuck to the chewing gum market, instead of thinking about the 'oral care and refreshment' market, they might not have created innovations such as breath-freshening strips or whitening gum.

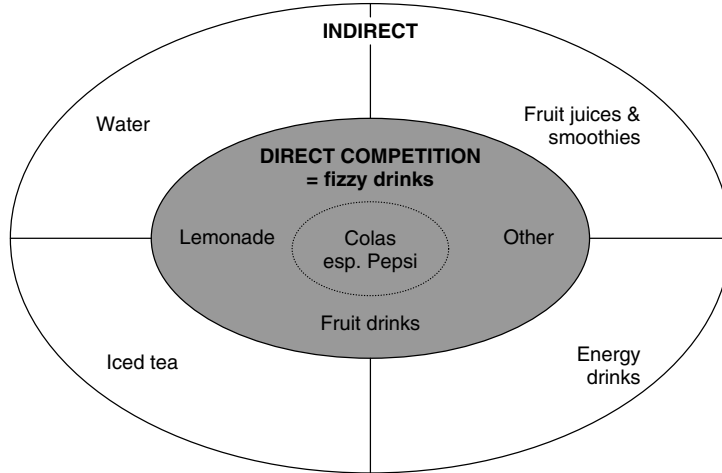
A great question to ask when defining your market is 'who loses when we gain' or 'who gains when we lose'. This will open your eyes up to who the real competition is, both direct and indirect, and where the growth opportunities lie. The other trick we will now look at is to define your market using the benefits consumers want, rather than the products you are selling.

**COKE: MYOPIC, SHORT-SIGHTED VIEW**



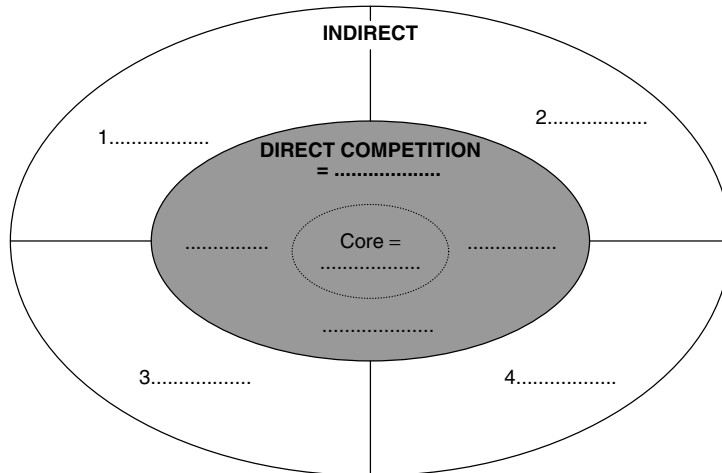
**COKE: SEEING THE BIGGER PICTURE**


Market = 'enjoyable, uplifting refreshment'



**YOUR BRAND**

Market = '.....'



**Figure 1.2:** Who really wins when you lose? 

## Think benefits not boxes

Blockbuster saw itself for a long time as being in the 'video rental' business, a functional and quite limited market definition. Indeed, you may remember the advertising jingle 'Blockbuster Video, what a difference'. However, when the UK board of directors worked on their vision in 2000, one of the key issues facing them was the changing landscape of the media environment. Clearly, sticking to being a video rental company was not an option.

When they were asked to think about the market in benefit terms, they came up with the idea of being in the 'great night in' market. The focus is still on home entertainment, but they now also sell some of the other things needed to enjoy a night in, such as popcorn, soft drinks and ice cream. These product offerings help differentiate the Blockbuster offer but are also valuable sources of additional revenue. The wider market definition also forced Blockbuster to respond to the changes in the home entertainment market. The company decided to over-invest in the DVD market, giving them more than their fair share of store space compared to videotapes. This decision seems easy now, but at the time the format was still small. The company also extended into renting video games, an industry that is now bigger than cinema and music combined. The rental of games was adapted versus movies to allow people to rent them out for longer periods. Finally, the great night in market definition opened up Blockbuster's eyes to the total consumer experience, not just the process of picking up the DVD. One key innovation that came out of this thinking was DVD rental by post, to avoid the hassle of having to drop the movie back at the shop. Now you can just drop it in the post instead.

## Balancing act

You can of course go too broad in the definition and end up so wide as to not give any guidance on appropriate product innovation. Getting the right balance comes down to your judgement and some idea of how ambitious you want to be in stretching the brand. The definition should also be rooted in an area where your brand has added value and your company has competence. For example, in the case of Blockbuster they stuck to the core area of rentable home entertainment based on retailing, as this was where they felt they had systems and processes to do this well, rather than going into the satellite or cable TV business. In contrast, the UK retailer Boots stretched too far from its roots in the pharmacy business when it attempted to become a 'wellbeing' brand, opening 12 wellbeing centres selling services such as botox injections, osteopathy, reflexology and weight management. These were closed down in 2003 so Boots could re-focus on its core business.

## Brand peer group

It can be very inspiring to look at brands that operate outside your category, but who are doing an excellent job of appealing to your target audience, called a ‘brand peer group’.

The Dubbelfriss brand of fruit drink used Axe/Lynx as a source of inspiration to create more distinctive variants and help bring to life their vision of ‘making fruity refreshment more exciting’. A key challenge was to differentiate themselves versus the increasing threat of own-label drinks. The Dubbelfriss team admired the way Axe had created new versions with concept names such as ‘Phoenix’ and ‘Pulse’, not just one-dimensional fragrances. The Axe team described these annual launches as the ‘new album’ that kept the brand fresh and interesting for each new generation of brand users, in the same way that each new Madonna release makes her music relevant for today. In 2006 Dubbelfriss moved away from descriptive fruit-based flavours, such as Melon and Thai Lemon, and instead created two more concept-based versions. These were called Cool Citrus and Wild Berry, with each drink having more of its own personality and being much harder to copy by own-label products (Figure 1.3).

## Consumer: opening the door to your brand

The more vivid and focused a picture of the target consumer you can get, the better the chances of getting a brilliant brand vision. This literally ‘opens the door to your brand’. We’ll start by looking at the tools we want to create (core consumer and insight) and then go on to the techniques you can use to create these.

## Meet your consumer

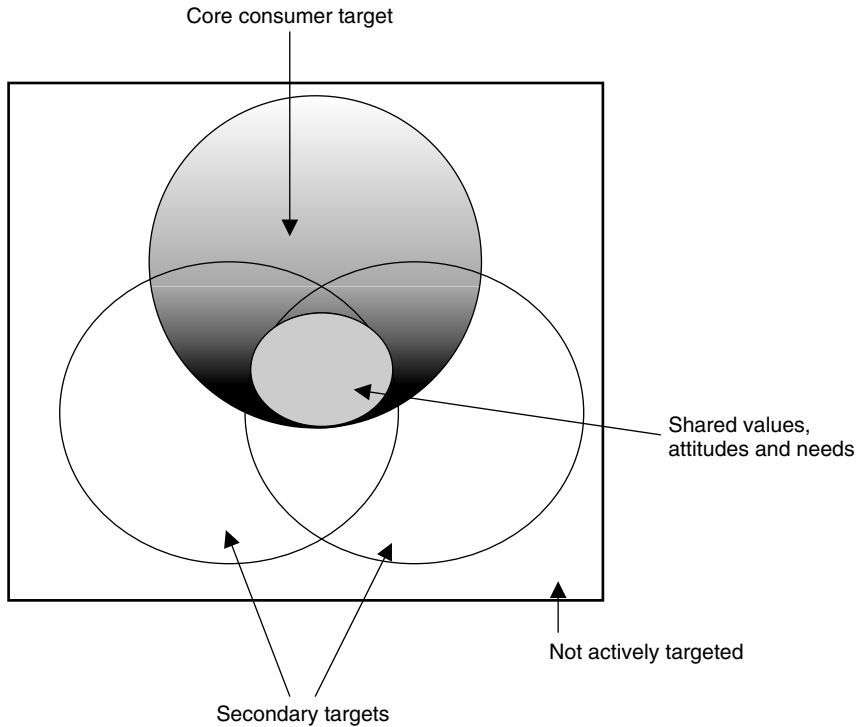
Less is more

One of the commonest mistakes in brand visioning is worrying about meeting the needs of every consumer. For example, the brand team will protest ‘We can’t focus on young families! Half of our brand sales come from people without kids’. However, by trying to please everyone you of course end up by appealing to no-one: a bland vision not a brand vision. As with all strategy, brand visioning is about making choices and this starts with the target consumer. Only by tightly defining the *core* consumer can you develop a deep understanding of their world and uncover true insights about your brand that can add value. Think of them as the people you want to be real ‘brand fans’, not just people who use the product or service.



**Figure 1.3:** Dubbel Friss concept-based flavours.

Reproduced by permission of Friesland Foods.



**Figure 1.4:** Positioning target (try filling in for your brand).



The interesting thing is that by defining a tightly defined *core* target, you can develop a powerful brand idea that will eventually appeal to a much wider *consumption* target. These people will share and aspire to some of the same values and needs as the core target (Figure 1.4), perhaps on certain occasions. The Skip brand of laundry detergent in Europe might focus on appealing to caring mums of large families who account for a big share of all washing done. The key needs the brand is tapping into might be defined as showing care, confidence in getting the job done and being ready to pay more for excellent results. A young woman starting up home for the first time with her partner might not have kids yet, but she may share the same needs and values when it comes to getting the laundry done.

The bigger a brand is, the bigger the number of specific consumption targets is likely to be. This is also more likely to be the case with a service brand than a focused product brand. A mobile phone network like T-Mobile has to think about groups such as students, young professionals, families and business people, and develop services targeted at each of these segments. Even in this case, though, it is useful to highlight the attitudes, needs and

values that are shared by these consumer segments and which the brand can then focus on addressing. This avoids the brand becoming schizophrenic.

### Meet your consumer

The simplest but most important step in defining the core target is to get beyond socio-demographics such as age, sex and social class, or product-usage definitions such as ‘users of premium washing powder’. This sounds like a no-brainer, but pick up a few positioning statements and you can bet that at least one will have a target that is still defined in this way. By all means have a socio-demographic ‘centre of gravity’ that defines the likely profile of the core target. But the key is to go much deeper and bring the consumer to life in three dimensions. These dimensions are illustrated in Figure 1.5, along with an example of a consumer portrait for the Top Gear brand (a car show and magazine), and discussed below:

- *Attitudes to life*: start by understanding your consumer as a person, not as a buyer of shampoo, cereals or mobile phones. What is important in their life? What are their guiding beliefs and principles? What are their hopes and fears?
- *Passion points*: what are the activities in their life that are most important to them? What do they like to spend their valuable time and money on? What magazines do they read, what TV programmes do they watch and which are their favourite websites? Beyond helping you bring to life your consumer, this can guide media selection and help trigger ideas for promotional link-ups.
- *Needs from the category*: this is where you can turn your attention to the product or service and capture what it is the consumer is looking for. Try to make this as specific as possible.
- *Socio-demographic centre of gravity*: use criteria such as sex, age and social class to give guidance on what sort of people are most likely to be in the core target. Be as precise as possible in doing this to make the exercise useful. For example, on age it’s little use to say ‘15–35’ or even ‘15–25’; think back to when you were 15 years old and 25 years old and you will realize how big the differences in lifestyle, attitudes and needs are.

Painting the consumer portrait is best done using a mix of hard and soft research. Quantitative studies such as TGI are great for highlighting attitudinal and lifestyle differences between different targets. You can then use qualitative work or observation to get anecdotes and stories about people. We will come back to these techniques a little later on.

### Make it real

One tip in defining your core target is to create a specific portrait of a consumer and give them a name. This has the benefit of making the consumer target feel more real

### Key questions

<p><b>Attitudes to life</b> Guiding principles which influence approach to life in general (e.g. ambitious, live life for today, concern for environment)</p>	<p><b>Interest centres</b> What they like to spend their time and money on (e.g. exotic holidays, gadgets, sport)</p>
<p><b>Needs</b> Functional and emotional needs from the category (e.g. refreshment, status, indulgence)</p>	<p><b>Socio-demographics</b> Centre of gravity of group in terms of age, sex, social class, etc.</p>

### Example: Top Gear

<p><b>Attitudes to life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand savvy and image conscious</li> <li>• Likes to be seen as a step ahead</li> <li>• Enjoys sociable blokes' banter, one-upmanship</li> <li>• High self-esteem</li> </ul>	<p><b>Passion points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cars and driving: but more as a lifestyle experience</li> <li>• 'Armchair' adventure (e.g. Touching the Void)</li> <li>• Sport: football more than rugby</li> <li>• Holidays abroad with mates</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attitudes to cars and driving</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car needs to be cool and get peer approval</li> <li>• Car is an expression of personality</li> <li>• 'Feels the need for speed'</li> </ul>	<p><b>Socio-demographic centre of gravity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30ish</li> <li>• Lives in his own pad</li> <li>• No kids yet</li> <li>• White collar, office worker</li> </ul>

Figure 1.5: Core consumer portrait. 

and less theoretical. We saw earlier how the T-Mobile brand team in the UK took this route, calling their core consumers 'Claire' and 'Dan' rather than 'white collar mobile aspirers' and 'young connected urbanites'. This made the consumer targets feel more human and also easier to use in day-to-day business discussions. The marketing team were surprised and delighted when they heard the finance director saying 'Oh we can't launch that idea, Claire would never buy it'. The consumer profiles gave the whole team a central point of focus to rally around. One criticism of this approach is that the names are less descriptive and make it harder to remember what the needs and values of each group are. However, this

forces people to get to know the consumer groups and really understand them, rather than pigeon-holing them based on a superficial understanding.

Once you have a clear consumer portrait there are loads of ways of bringing it to life. Some teams like to write mini-biographies of the target. One retailer had a photo of their consumer and a description of what they wanted pinned on the wall of every store's staff room. The T-Mobile team are going even further and are planning to build consumer rooms that literally bring to life the world of Claire and Dan.

### Selecting the right core target

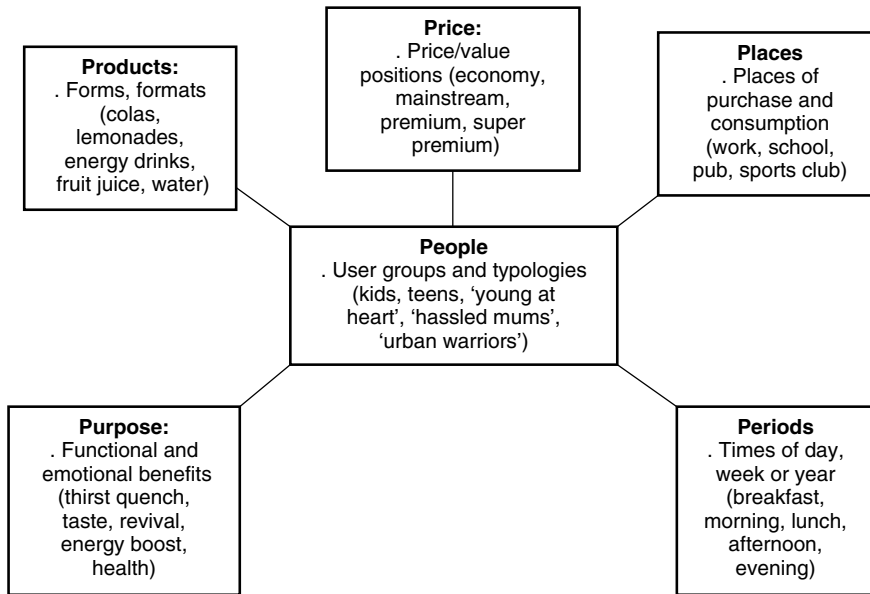
Selecting the right core target is a key decision; focus is great as long as you focus on the right things. The right core target is the one that inspires and guides a business building mix. A good place to start is reviewing the profile of your brand users compared with both the population and users of the category, to see who your brand fans are today. You must then decide whether to focus on retaining these and recruiting more like them, or to go after new user groups. In the case of the Cointreau brand of orange spirit, the brand's heavy and loyal users were over 50. Whilst it was important not to lose these drinkers, the brand team decided that they had to target a younger 30-something group to rejuvenate the brand. Indeed, by appealing to these younger drinkers the brand could also improve the relevance of the brand for the older group, who aspired to the same values of modernity, innovation and adventure.

A checklist to help in the process of selecting the right core target should consider issues including size of target, current and future sales potential and ability to win.

### Market mapping

You may be in a business where management will want to know *exactly* how many people there are in the core target you have selected, and why they are the right choice. In this case you will need to do a 'market mapping' exercise (also called market segmentation).

Market mapping involves looking at different criteria that drive brand choice, that can be summarized as the '6 P's': people, purpose, periods, places, price and products (Figure 1.6). The process starts with hypothesis creation based on existing knowledge and research and then goes into qualitative exploration. The last phase, and by far the most expensive, is quantitative research that will quantify how many consumer segments there are, and for each one will confirm exactly their attitudes, values and habits.



**Figure 1.6:** Market mapping example for soft drinks.

## Beyond findings to insights

Having selected and brought to life the core target, the next step is to uncover the core insight on which you will build your brand idea. The core insight can be defined as:

A discovery of something enlightening about your consumer that opens the door to an opportunity for your brand

The word 'discovery' is important, as it makes the point that the insight process is one that needs time and dedication. The biggest challenge is getting beyond 'findings', observations of consumer behaviour or attitudes that are factually true but superficial and rational in nature. The core insight needs to go deeper and tap into the emotions people feel, not just the things they do and say. For Pampers, we summarized the core insight as:

Babies with healthy skin are happier . . . and so better able to play, learn and develop

The finding that babies are happier when they have healthy skin rather than nappy rash is not big news and is experienced by any new parent. The true insight came from tapping into the consumer at a deeper, more emotional level and discovering that the happier baby is better able to play, learn and develop. In this case, the breakthrough came from talking to researchers into child behaviour, who explained that by being dry and getting a good night's sleep babies were better able to play and that this in turn was key to their development. It

was this insight that led to the brand vision about ‘celebrating baby development’ and being with parents to help them in this every step of the way.

A great trick for uncovering core insights is called the ‘toddler test’. Anyone with young kids will have experienced their seemingly never-ending series of ‘why?’ questions. You take this technique and use it to interrogate the reasons for using your brand and other products in the category until you uncover the deeper, more emotional issues and opportunities.

## Going undercover

Most qualitative research techniques are limited by their use of ‘overt’ questioning to illicit learning, with the limitations we have seen. You need to be more ‘covert’ to get deeper and truer insights. Ways to do this include immersion, cultural decoding, changing the brand’s clothes and prototyping.

### Decoding

Decoding communication and broader cultural codes can be a valuable source of insight and a good springboard for brand visioning. On a project for SAB Miller to create a new brand of beer for the Russian market, called Golden Barrel, cultural analysis helped us understand fundamental aspects of the Russian people, such as the importance of being in touch with other people and not being alone. This had a direct impact on the TV advertising, which portrayed three guys sharing a beer (three is said to be the best number as a drunk can be supported by one friend on either side!).

Decoding of how beer was portrayed in popular entertainment showed that the drink was a light and refreshing beverage compared with the hard-edged, serious side of vodka. One of the favourite films in Russia portrayed a group of friends going to a sauna to celebrate an upcoming marriage. When the guys came out of the sauna, hot and in need of refreshment, a round of beers was ordered. However, when the conversation got more heavy and it was time to start toasting, out came the vodka. This insight guided the whole tone of voice in the brand vision, that needed to be light-hearted and emphasize the refreshing aspect of the product.

### Immersion

Immersing yourself in the world of the consumer and a brand can be more useful than a bunch of focus groups. The team working on Fristi, a Dutch yoghurt drink for children, got an invaluable nugget of insight from this sort of exercise. They did a series of in-home visits talking to mums and their kids together first, and then heading upstairs to the kids’

bedrooms, where the real nuggets of insight were uncovered. In one visit a boy of nine proudly showed us his teddy bear that he still kept on his bed, at the same time as pointing at posters of Eminem, his favourite singer. This apparent conflict brought to life the ‘jump’ that kids make when their growing independence and the influence of their ‘peer group’ becomes more important than the childhood security of the family. Here was a boy literally executing this jump, with one foot in childhood and the other ahead in a more grown-up world. The Fristi team had learnt about this evolution from desk research, and decided that part of their brand vision would be about helping kids make this jump, by encouraging them to express their creativity. However, when they saw things coming to life in front of them they *felt* the insight more powerfully. They also had a story they could tell to other people in the company to bring the insight to life.

### Ethnography

Ethnography uses some of the same techniques as observation, but is much more sophisticated. It is carried out by expert researchers who observe consumers *in situ* as they go about their everyday lives, often filming this experience. The period of observation is long and can last days or even a week. This technique can create very rich insight, as people are not trying to remember what they do and how they use products as they have to do in a focus group. A coffee company looking at how people consumed coffee out of home in cafes and coffee shops learnt a huge amount from using this technique. One key insight concerned the importance of the whole coffee-drinking experience, and showed the team that the coffee beans they sold were but one small part of this. The cup the coffee was served in, the ambiance and the amount of froth on the cappuccino were all vital. This made the team realize they had to do more to help their customers create an ‘end-to-end’ experience to build the brand, and not just focus on selling the quality of the coffee. Again, this insight had come out in quantitative research, but was only really bought into emotionally when the team saw real people talking about it for themselves.

### Stay close

Really building consumer empathy is not a one-off task to help create your vision. Instead, it is something you need to build into the way you do business as you bring the vision to life, to help check you are staying on track. This sounds obvious, but it is shocking to see how many senior people are still living in a different world to the one their consumers live in. So many issues would be solved by spending some time in the shoes of the people who buy their products and services. There are several different ways of staying close to the consumer.

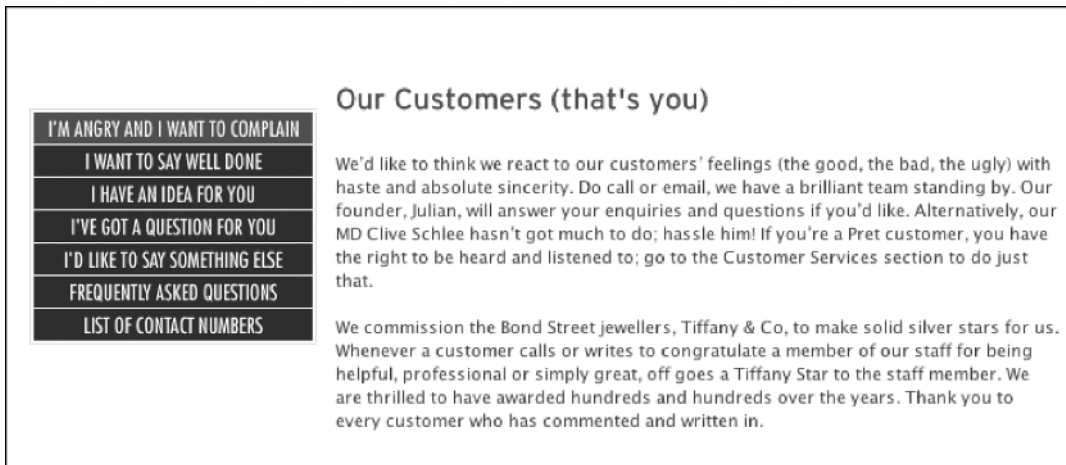
## Consumer panels

The first technique is to have a panel of consumers whom you consult over a period of time to get their ideas and insights into your brand. The difference with typical panel studies is that you go back to the same people and meet them face to face. The most impressive example of this is the Harley Owners Group or HOG, run by Harley Davidson. This club now has 850 000 members worldwide and is an invaluable source of insight. The group was set up in 1983 by Richard Teerlink when he came in as CEO, when the company was on the point of going bust, having been decimated by Japanese motorbikes. He insisted that senior managers go out and ride with the hard core enthusiasts who made up the membership of the HOG, a practice he called 'super-engagement'. When this technique was used in the early days of his time in the company, Teerlink found out that the Harley owners who had stuck by the brand through the bad times loved it and the values of freedom, power and independence that it stood for. However, they were pissed off with the poor reliability and shoddy customer service. Against their will they were being forced to consider Japanese motorbike brands, even though this caused them pain. The encouraging thing was a real consumer passion for the brand and a desire for it to be great again. These insights fuelled the re-launch of the business and helped return it to growth, with a focus on getting the quality back up and with a five-year total return to shareholders of 242% in 2002 and record earnings for the first quarter of 2005 (1).

You might not have the resources to create such a sophisticated panel as the HOG, but you can start small and still get valuable insight. A soft drinks company I worked with set up an '18-18' panel for example, with 18 people who were 18 years old, to serve as a creative team to help with developing new products on a regular basis.

## Consumer feedback (that you really use)

You've seen consumer feedback forms in a million different places and probably never bothered to use them, as you were sure they would drop straight down into a trashcan underneath. However, if you are serious about getting and, more importantly, using this sort of feedback, it can be a fantastic form of free insight. One company that does this is Pret a Manger, the UK sandwich shop chain. Just look at the text on the company's website and see how refreshing it is compared with the normal company blurb (Figure 1.7). It sounds sincere and you do get the impression they intend to use the feedback. You can contact, not some anonymous call-centre operative, but the CEO or founder of the company. And if you comment positively on a member of staff, they receive a silver star from Tiffany & Co! One example of using this type of feedback is the total re-invention of the soup range using one of the UK's leading chefs, with the story of this re-launch told on the soup packaging of the new range.



**Figure 1.7:** Consumer feedback that might actually get read.

Creating consumer empathy and insights is clearly an important part of the springboard for creating a great vision. However, it is just as important to understand your brand and pull off the balancing act between keeping the positive elements that made you famous and adapting to change with the times.

## **Brand: look back, look forward**

### What made us famous?

One of the most valuable parts of many visioning projects is getting teams to remember what made their brand famous. The 'new broom' syndrome caused by frequent changes of brand managers and directors means that over a period of 10 years the whole brand mix can be changed several times. A simple request on projects that leaves many brand teams flummoxed is to see a 15–20-year-old reel of advertising. Often, the response is 'I've worked on the brand for 2 years, so I can go back that far, but before that I'm not sure'. Crazy, but true. Even when people are able to produce the commercial reel, watching it is often like seeing four or five different brands. The campaigns zig and zag all over the place, and you can often link these changes to the arrival of new marketing teams. The other big risk is that brands head off into areas where their brand lacks competence and added value, so diluting the valuable equity they have built up.

You can do some 'brand archaeology' by digging into your past marketing mix and highlighting the moments when the brand was 'hot', growing share and sales, and when it was 'cold'. Here, you are looking for two things. Firstly and most fundamentally, you are

looking at ‘the message’: the content of the brand promise you were making. Secondly, you are looking at ‘the mix’: executional elements such as endlines, creative campaign ideas and visual devices. A good way to do this is creating a poster for each of the last 10 years on the brand, with each one having visuals to summarize the brand mix, such as of communication, events and promotions. You can also summarize how the brand performed in terms of sales, share and brand image ratings. With the brand vision team you can then use green, amber and red stickers to vote for when you think the brand was hot, lukewarm and off the boil.

The Domestos brand is a great example of a brand that has successfully looked back to what made it famous and used this to re-launch itself. For many years Domestos was the leading brand of bleach in the UK, and built up a reputation for germ kill. However, in the late 1990s the brand moved away from this core and stretched into new areas based on a broader vision of ‘home protection’, launching new products such as household wipes and gentler, non-bleach multi-purpose cleaners. These new products were not very successful, and took valuable resource away from the core bleach business.

When a new team on Domestos led by Chris Pote reviewed the brand in 2002, they found that consumers still played back advertising from many years before, recalling the endline ‘Kills 99.9% of all know germs. Dead’. They could also remember the visual device of a big Domestos bottle being crashed down with a thud, acting as a visual metaphor for the brand’s germ-killing prowess. The new team decided to re-focus the brand back on the core, de-listing the poorly performing extensions and supporting the base bleach business. An upgraded product was developed, with increased thickness, a key cue of germ kill efficacy. A new brand campaign was created that went back to the roots of the brand, with the endline ‘Millions of germs will die’. This communication used a mock Hollywood horror movie to introduce the germs as monsters, about to be wiped out by the hero of Domestos (Figure 1.8). Finally several new products were developed, but all of these stuck to the core idea of superior germ protection based on bleach, such as spray bleach for use in showers. The early results are encouraging, with sales up 14% and 19% in the first two quarters after the re-launch.

## Benchmarking the brand today

An important input to the visioning process is an in-depth understanding of the brand’s equity today. At the highest level, you are looking to assess how healthy the brand is. This will help guide the decision on how much change is needed in the visioning process. At one extreme you have healthy, growing brands where the challenge is ‘bottling the magic’: capturing and codifying what makes the brand successful so these success factors can be re-applied in the future. At the other extreme you have brands that need to be re-invented as they are sick and in decline.

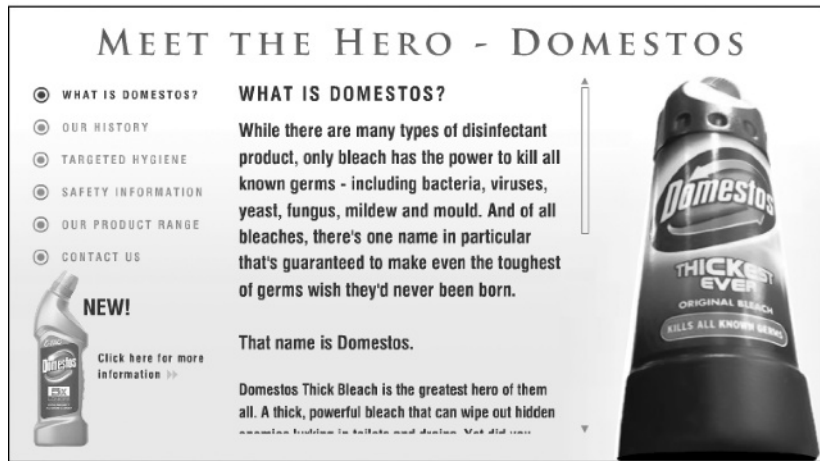


Figure 1.8: Domestos going back to its roots.

Reproduced by permission of Unilever UK Home & Personal Care Limited.

At a more detailed level, it is useful to highlight the brand image attributes that are most strongly associated with the brand. Here, it is important to look at the absolute scores but also to see where the brand is strong relative to competition. For example, a strong brand will tend to score high on all attributes, but what you are looking for is where it is especially strong.

There are a number of different methodologies in use to do this sort of brand equity analysis, all of which seek to answer the same basic questions such as brand awareness, loyalty and brand imagery. The key is to agree the right attributes to measure and then keep these consistent over time so you can track progress.

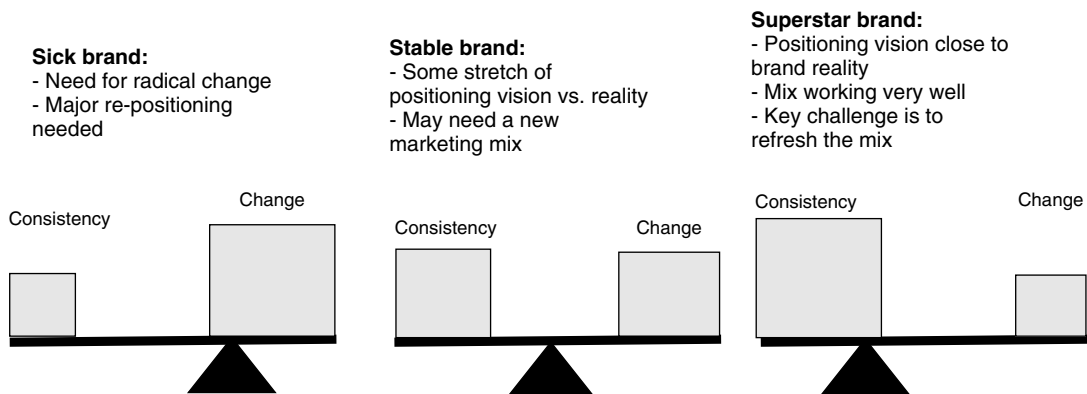
## Brand futures

At the same time as rewinding to look at what made the brand famous in the past, there is also a need to look to the future and how the world is changing. The challenge here is to separate ‘heritage’, on which you can build from ‘history’, brand baggage that has to be jettisoned in order to move forward. You need to decide where to strike the balance between consistency and change, depending on the health of the brand (Figure 1.9).

This approach is illustrated by looking at the history of the James Bond brand. There are a number of elements that have been constant over time and make a James Bond film a James Bond film:

- *The evil baddie* out to bring chaos to the planet and kill Bond.
- *The gorgeous girls*: at least one of whom is actually up to no good.
- *The car* that goes fast but also has loads of gadgets.
- *The music*: dang dang-a-lang-lang...dang dang dang dang dang-a-lang-lang...dang dang dang da da, da da da, etc.

However, the world is moving on and James Bond needs to move with the times. For example, with the rise of global terrorism, baddies are getting badder and more evil. The latest villains in the Bond movies are much nastier and harder-edged than those in the past, such as Dr No and Octopussy. The role of women is also changing dramatically and there is no place for the ‘dumb blondes’ of the past. Bond women are now stronger, braver and much more of a match for James, such as the Halle Berry character Jinx Johnson in the last movie, *Die Another Day* (even though she wore the same bikini as Ursula Andress).



**Figure 1.9:** The brand balancing act.

The direct competition is moving on, with the emergence of other action hero movies such as XXX and the Bourne Supremacy. The indirect competition also needs to be considered, such as TV programmes like 24, with its high-tech feel. In these competitive media properties, the hero is imperfect and has a harder side. Interestingly, Pierce Brosnan wanted to explore the darker side to Bond in one more movie, but the producers denied him this chance by switching to the younger British actor Daniel Craig. By the time you read this book we should know where the new Bond has taken the character.

After completing this analysis (Figure 1.10), it is then possible to decide on which elements need keeping, updating, losing and adding (Figure 1.11). For example, the James Bond music has been kept over the years, but has been re-recorded using contemporary stars such as the techno music maestro Moby.

### **Company: where should we fish for growth?**

The final source of insight is looking inside the company itself. Getting insight from the senior managers in the company is vital on a brand visioning project. Firstly, it helps ensure that the project is aligned with the expectations of senior management and that you are not heading off for a bit of strategy tourism. It can also give some good clues as to where the right direction for the brand is. Top managers have often been in the company for a long time and have bags of experience, developing a good ‘nose’ for what works and what doesn’t. Asking senior stakeholders ‘where the team should fish for growth and where should they not’ gives a good steer on what they see as the right direction for the brand.

### **Technical treasure hunt**

The other great form of internal insight can come from talking to the technical people and finding out what they have hidden in their treasure trove of product ideas. This sounds obvious, but again and again on brand visioning projects this throws up ideas that most of the marketing team didn’t even know existed! These product ideas can sometimes be the seed for brand innovation; it’s not supposed to work like that in the fairy tale world of marketing theory I know, but real life is not quite as tidy. Diageo’s highly successful Bailey’s cream liqueur brand was invented not out of analysing consumer trends, but from a need to figure out how to use up excess stocks of dairy products! And the Viennetta ice cream dessert brand was invented after a faulty production line that vibrated to produce the wavy, thin layers of crackling chocolate that sit between the ice cream.

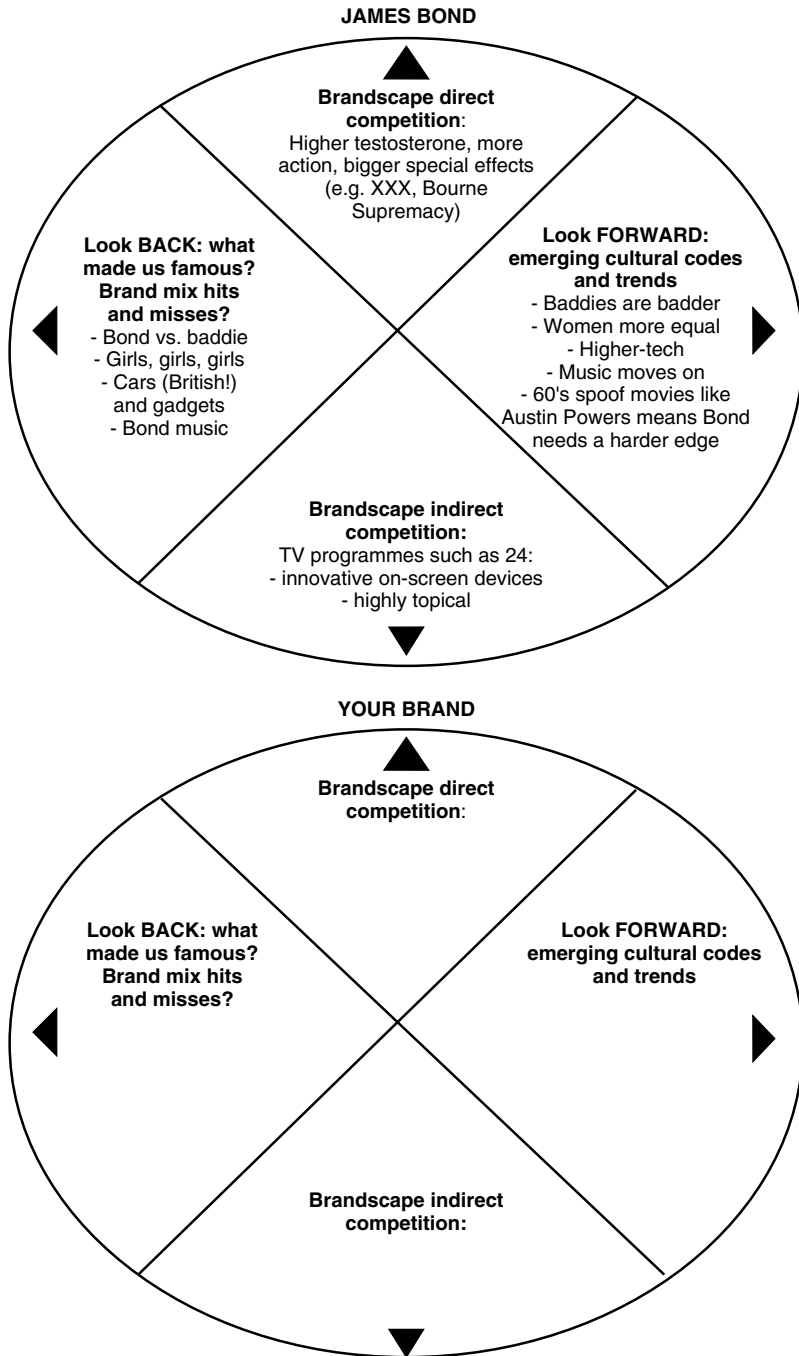


Figure 1.10: the 'James Bond tool'.



**JAMES BRAND**

KEEP	UPDATE	LOSE	ADD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea of 'Bond vs. baddie to save the world'</li> <li>• Core elements of the character: cars, girls, gadgets</li> <li>• Theme tune and 007 ID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core elements such as cars and gadgets need to be higher-tech</li> <li>• Baddies need to be badder</li> <li>• Update music and ID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign influences: e.g. cars should be British!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• References to current affairs and events</li> </ul>

**YOUR BRAND**

KEEP	UPDATE	LOSE	ADD
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•



Figure 1.11: Separating equity from baggage.

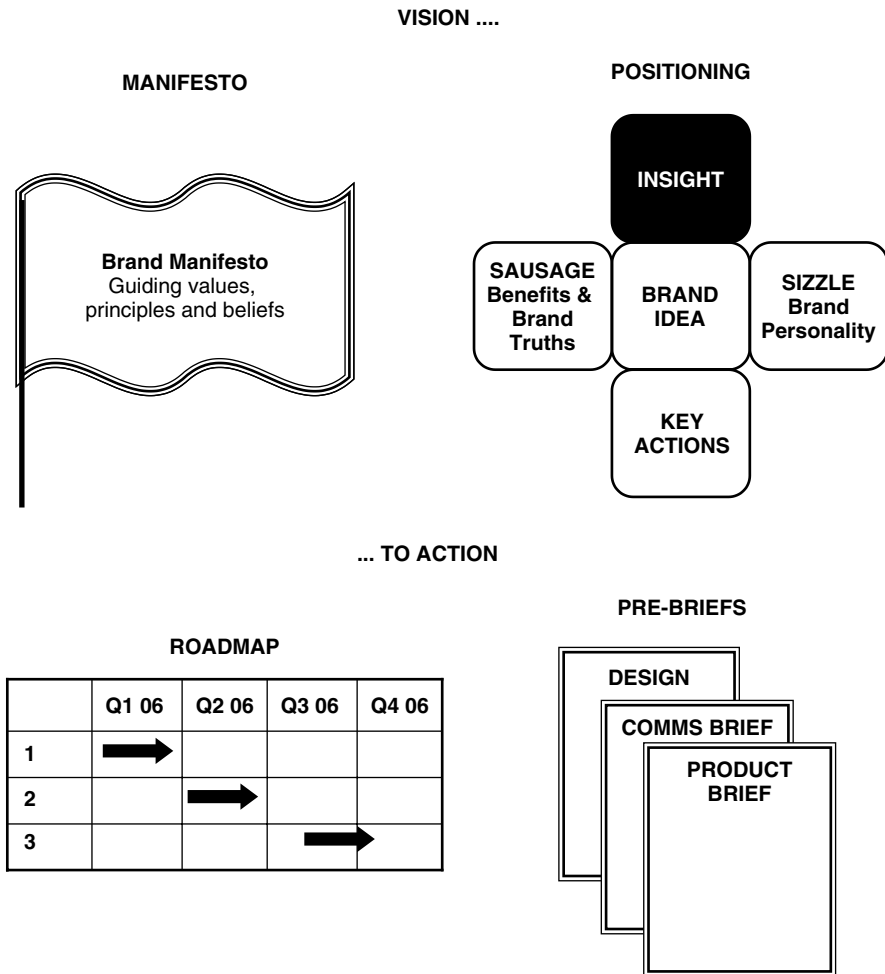
**Checklist 1: Create an insight springboard**

	Yes	No
• Have you defined your market in benefit not product terms, really thinking through 'who loses when we win'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have you brought to life your consumer target in three dimensions, thinking about them as a person and not just a consumer of your products?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have you uncovered a deep and penetrating insight that opens the door to an opportunity for your brand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have you gone beyond consumer exploration to consumer empathy, making use of immersive techniques like observation and ethnography?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Have you looked back and forward to understand what made your brand famous, and how to keep it up-to-date?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Do you have in place ways of keeping the flow of insights up on an ongoing basis, such as consumer panels and feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Handover

We have seen how understanding in depth the market and the core consumer provides the insight springboard for your brand vision (Figure 1.12). We will now move on and work on the brand vision, starting with the challenge of finding what you really want to fight and campaign for in life.



**Figure 1.12:** The insight springboard completed.

