

# Attitudes & Usage Studies Are Most Effective When Informed by Exploratory Studies

## Overview

How can you be sure you're asking the right questions and including comprehensive answer sets in an attitudes & usage (A&U) study? By conducting a qualitative exploratory research study beforehand.

An Agile A&U provides the quantitative validation you need to make confident business decisions, like which direction to take new product platforms, communications, and competitive responses. And executing an Exploratory Research Group (ERG) before developing the A&U questionnaire ensures that you've got a solid foundation to populate the right answer options to make the most of your study.

## Use Cases

Conducting an ERG before an Agile A&U allows you to validate what matters to consumers, in their language.

- **Exploration**
  - Exploring new consumer target groups or a new product idea
  - Understanding the category or competitive threats
- **Root cause analysis**
  - Evaluating macro market trends
  - Assessing purchase behavior patterns
- **Getting out of our own heads!**
  - Compiling a numbers-based executive recommendation, when you don't already know all the possible answers to the questions
  - Inserting the consumer when teams are moving full steam ahead based on established hypotheses without consumer data to validate them

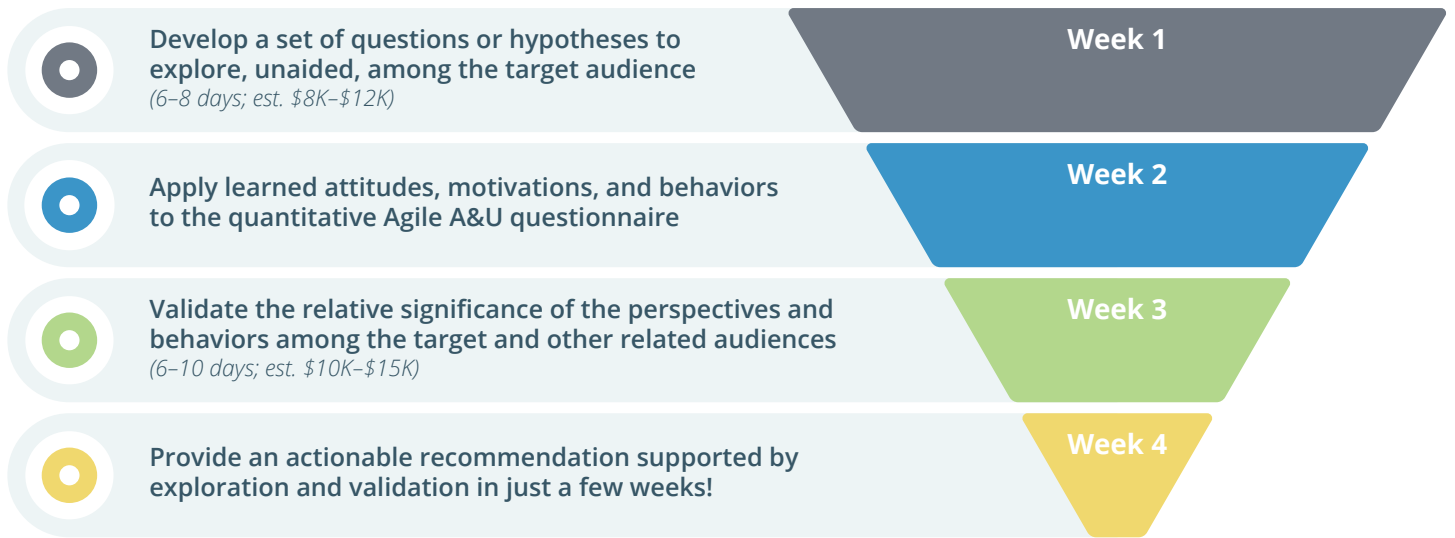


## Benefits

An ERG sets the stage for actionable learnings by helping to develop a robust, meaningful A&U questionnaire.

- **Factor importance:** Get an initial read on the factors that impact consumer buying decisions
- **Unforeseen perspective:** Don't miss a perspective by including only internal hypotheses
- **Comprehensive:** Include areas of exploration and responses to questions that consumers express unaided
- **Resource efficient:** Learn in advance to evaluate only the areas that will impact your decisions

# Approach



## Case Study

How one packaged food brand used an ERG to build a solid A&U and foster learnings for further brand decisions

### The Challenge

This premium packaged food brand has a unique point of difference. They were interested in whether and how to best exploit this difference moving forward. While they had some purchase behavior data, there wasn't enough to drive marketing communications decisions.

### The Solution

The team desired a quantitative look at purchase decision criteria by importance to share with leadership. Rather than trust their initial hypotheses to design the study, they sought to ensure that the questionnaire incorporated all relevant considerations at the point of purchase, as directly heard from consumers. The GutCheck research team suggested an ERG with an in-store shopping exercise, quickly followed by an Agile A&U, developed by the findings of the exploration.

### Execution

**ERG:** As target respondents prepared snacks for their families, they answered several questions and uploaded videos related to their food choices. The research also explored awareness and attitudes about a select set of brands.

**AGILE A&U:** Based on exploration learnings, the research team developed a questionnaire that assessed decision factor importance and also explored factor details, such as the nuanced components of taste, healthy goodness, and quality.

### Outcomes

The team developed a brand strategy to focus on elements of quality that resonate most with the target. Confidently armed with information, they successfully presented a case to update packaging and marketing messaging to incorporate these important characteristics.