InsightsNow®

Sparking Innovation
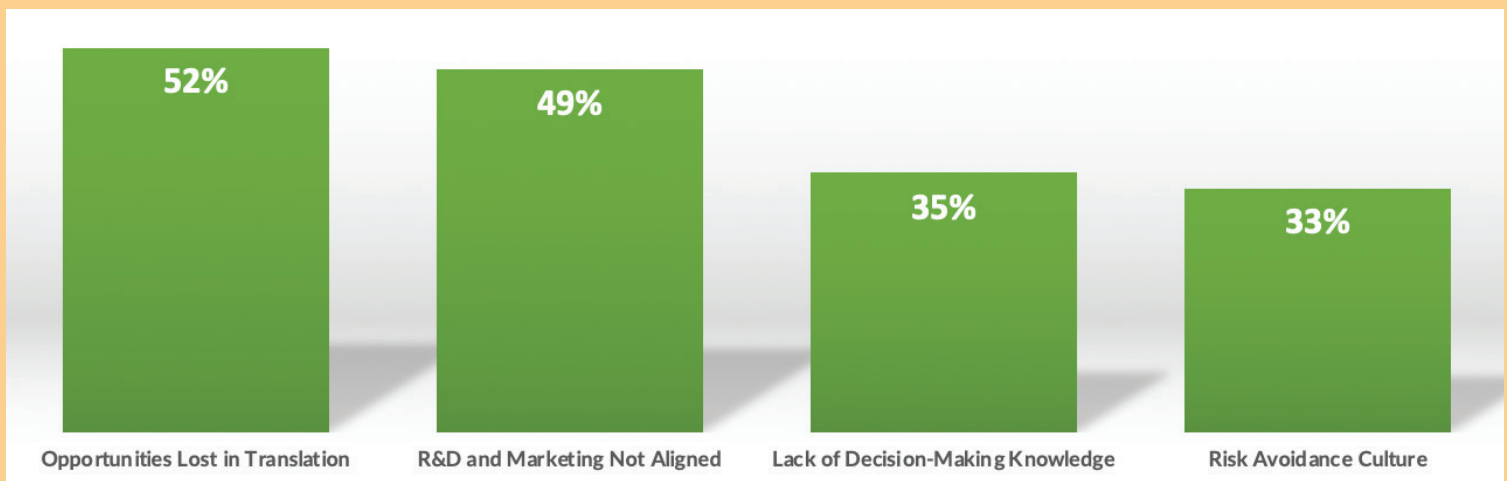## *Why Cues Matter*

Explore the InsightsNow BehaviorLens® Product Spark in this white paper, where we look at translating identified market opportunities into successful products in an efficient approach.

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According to an InsightsNow survey of innovation professionals, the biggest challenge these professionals face is translating market opportunities into winning products.

What is the translation challenge?

Product developers are hard-pressed to design and develop product prototypes that exemplify the brand and deliver key benefits. This manifests in different areas:

- Types of translations (brand pillars to concept, concept to product, platforms to concepts) must be accurate in order for a new product to be successful.

- For concept to product translation, it is one challenge to develop a great concept that motivates trial. It is another challenge to motivate repeat trial. This translation requires product experience to deliver against the promise of the concept. In other words, the concept must be translated into product qualities through design and development activities.

- R&D teams are often challenged to apply a new technology platform to generate benefits that consumers care about. To do this, they must identify the market fit and opportunity for a novel technology. But how?

Opportunities Lost in Translation	R&D and Marketing Not Aligned	Lack of Decision-Making Knowledge	Risk Avoidance Culture
52%	49%	35%	33%

Why is there a translation challenge?

It's simple. Traditional research methods, like focus groups, do not provide the knowledge necessary for accurate translation. Focus group moderators typically ask consumers directly what they want and why. This approach may work for familiar products, but consumers struggle to envision novel offerings.

This type of approach, asking direct questions, only engages the conscious and rational part of the mind. Yet, it's a known fact that as much as 95% of all consumer behavior is driven by the subconscious mind. The mind works below the surface-level where sensory perceptions (not rational thoughts) subconsciously signal benefits through automatic associations that motivate behaviors or signal concerns that motivate avoidance.

Cues to Success

Product cues are implicit connections to benefits. Consumers may not explicitly associate a cue to a complex benefit, for example, "fun" or "authentic."

Research must be designed to unearth implicit connections. In this way, teams working on product innovation and development, or marketing, or brand positioning can truly deliver in a more meaningful way.

This requires **finesse** (to capture subtle, subconscious associations) and **rigor** (to quantify the degree of association between cue and benefit).

CRACKING THE TRANSLATION CODE: BehaviorLens® Product Spark

All this leads to an important question. What is an alternative to traditional focus groups in order to achieve effective and accurate translation?
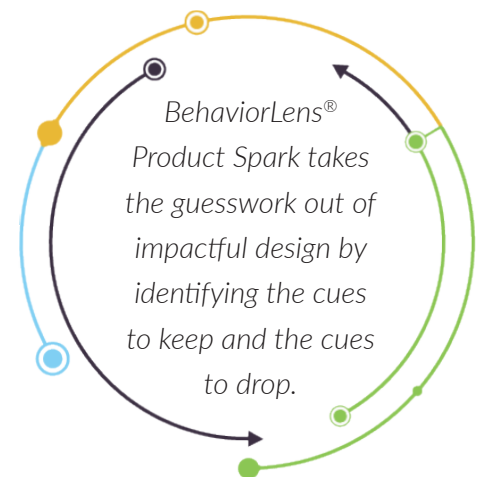
A number of years ago, InsightsNow focused research efforts on cracking the code for better translation to help clients achieve more success, faster—and succeeded with the development of a new research method, BehaviorLens® Product Spark.

The method identifies qualities of a product, package or brand that cue the delivery of important benefits, and to inform successful marketing and brand positioning. These cues become design pillars for ensuring accurate translation.
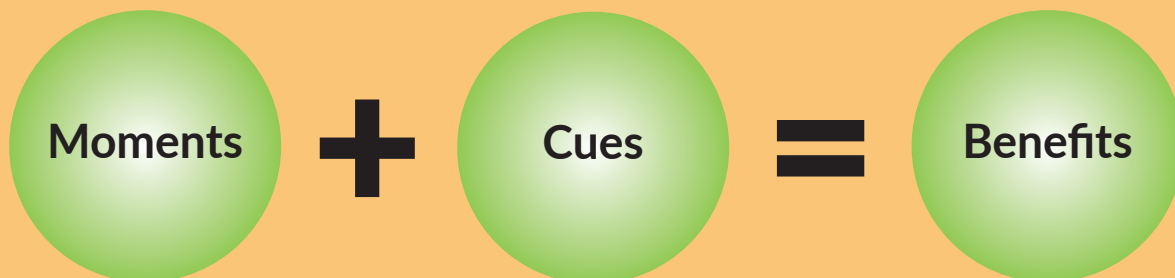
The Job of BehaviorLens® Product Spark

BehaviorLens® Product Spark identifies the most salient product and/ or package cues with respect to key benefits. This provides teams with a direction and target (such as specific product qualities associated with key benefits). It also provides a means to measure how well they deliver against the target (such as cue-based scales which can be used in subsequent product guidance research to optimize against key benefits beyond "liking").

Key cues become pillars for decisions, design and development. For example, using cue scales in product guidance work enables development to ensure new product features and formats successfully deliver meaningful, differentiated benefits. This approach increases clarity and efficacy while reducing associated opportunity costs.

BehaviorLens® Product Spark takes the guesswork out of impactful design by identifying the cues to keep and the cues to drop.

(usually implicit)

A **cue** is a product features that signals a benefit.

Moments **+** Cues **=** Benefits

A **cue** gains meaning given the context of a moment.

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METHOD—A THREE STEP PROCESS: BehaviorLens® Product Spark

Step #1: Moment Immersion

Step #2: Metaphor Exercises
(Spark the Senses)

Step #3: Cue Profiling
(Free Association)

1 First, ground research participants in relevant moments-of-use through immersive research activities. It is within the context of the moment that needs and motivations surface. As motivation varies across moments, so does product consideration, choice and satisfaction. Product cues and their corresponding benefits, live in these moments—it is essential to get the moment right.

2 Next, metaphor exercises (Spark the Senses™) are designed to spark the subconscious mind. They delve into memories primed from past meaningful product experiences where the benefits were important. This generates hundreds of descriptive words about product attributes that may cue the subconscious mind to signal that a specific benefit exists. Each participant generates their own list of associated attributes to these specific benefits. Even though this is a group exercise, the result is highly individualized. The finesse of this approach captures subtleties that would not arise (or be captured) in traditional focus groups.

3 Participants are then engaged in a cue profiling activity, using InsightsNow's free-association profiling method. Cue profiling identifies the most salient cues for each benefit through the implicit assessment of protocepts, prototypes or actual products. Each participant uses their own words generated in Step #2 to rate the items being assessed along with a set of common benefits. Analysis is completed in two parts: First, individual attributes are screened to those significantly correlated to benefits. Second, individual participant models relating screened attributes to benefits over the prototypes are combined into a common model via Procrustes Analysis. This provides translation of the benefit to the attributes of the products. It identifies those attributes which signal (cue) each benefit.

The two part analysis in step 3 quantitatively identifies groups of attributes that separate assessed prototypes in the same way as benefits. This effectively translates benefits to product attributes.
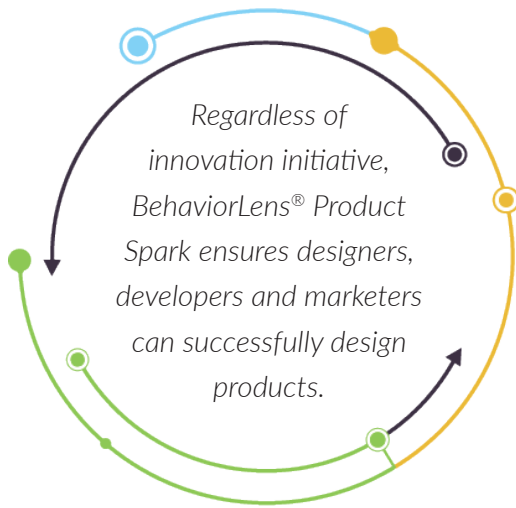
METHOD—INSIGHTS FOR TRANSLATION:

BehaviorLens® Product Spark

Product Spark provides key insights, metrics and measures essential for translation:

- Quantitative measurement of prototypes (such as package mockups or product prototypes) with regard to perceived/expected benefits within target moments.

- Identified groups of relevant product attributes (visual, aroma, taste, texture) which are significantly correlated to benefits.

- Quantitative identification of product attributes that signal (cue) benefits that separate prototypes.

- Identification of potential design elements for product and package that signal benefits promised by the concept.

- Generation of questions that can be included in consumer product or package studies which guide the optimization of development to maximize the signaling of benefits promised through the concept.

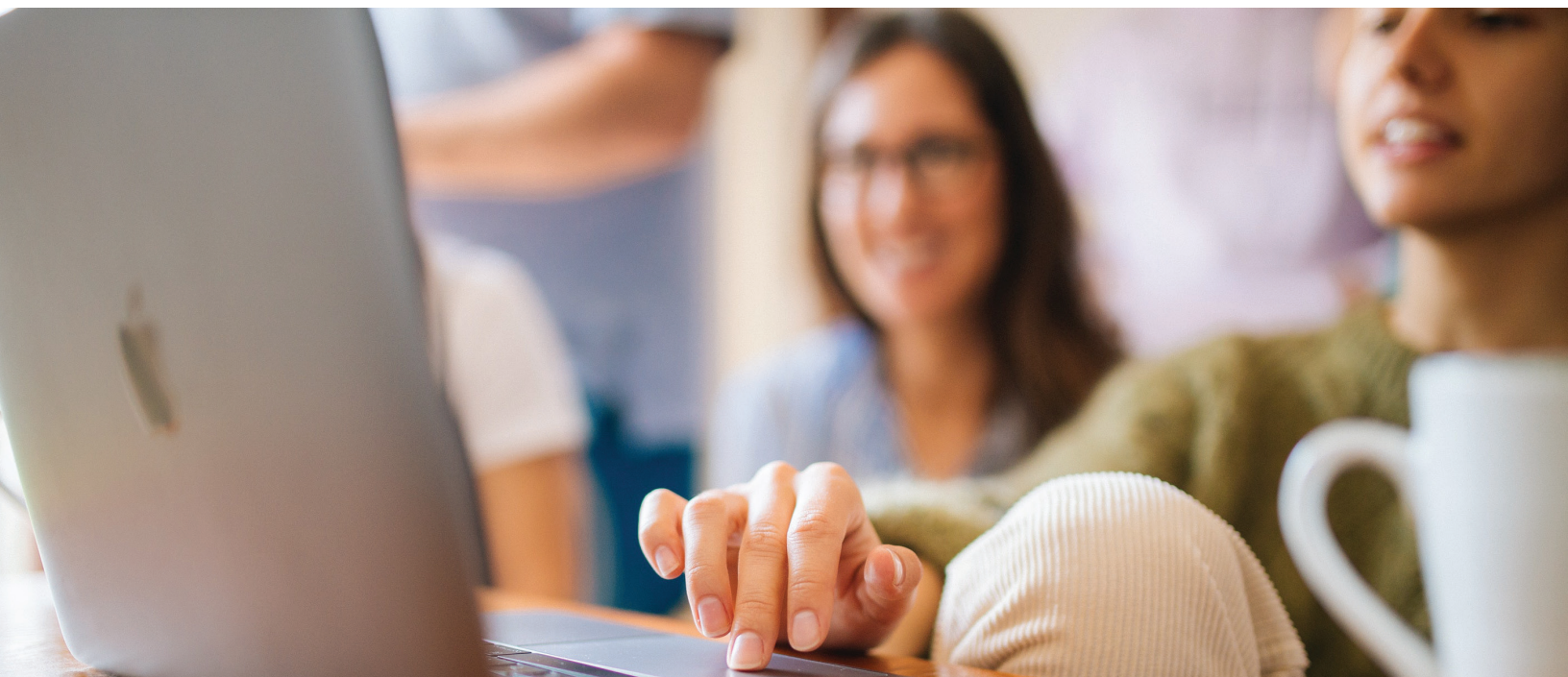| Focus Groups	Product Spark Groups
Not grounded in the moment.	Grounded in the moment where benefits are relevant.
Engages the conscious mind in rational thought.	Engages the subconscious mind through implicit associations to identify cues that signal benefits.
Identifies product attributes that can be rationally associated with benefits.	Identifies product attributes as cues that cannot be rationally associated with benefits.
Will often miss attributes which are important to cue benefits when they are not present within prototypes.	Uses cue profiling to identify how to strengthen any prototype through models that project adding value of new attributes as cues to increase perceived benefits.
Provides qualitative insights that are dependent on the experience of research participants and the expertise of the moderator.	Provides quantitative insights through modeling that uses information from all participants to go beyond the experience of individual research participants and qualitative insights to support the quantitative findings.

BOTTOM LINE IMPACT: BehaviorLens® Product Spark

Regardless of innovation initiative, BehaviorLens® Product Spark ensures designers, developers and marketers can successfully design products.

- Identifying the attributes developers and marketers can control that lead to a meaningful consumer experience—based on key benefits that emerge within target moments.

- Providing a list of scales to use in future screening, optimization and confirmatory product research studies.

- Providing inspiration to design product, package, messaging and brand positioning.

To deliver market leading innovation, new products and packages must connect with desired benefits.

BehaviorLens® Product Spark provides clear insight as to which cues fulfill key benefits that will differentiate offerings. Critically, it also provides the research tools to guide designers to optimize against these cues.

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Reach out to find out more how BehaviorLens® Product Spark today

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