



GutCheck 

Successfully Incorporating User Insights Throughout Development

A Guide to Iterative Agile Research™



With user and customer demands constantly shifting and more competitors entering the space, being innovative and agile within the technology industry is a given for finding success. When it comes to making decisions throughout product and marketing development, you need the ability to pivot quickly. Most importantly, you need feedback from your target users to make sure what you're building is something that people need, want, and will continue to use.

Research is a critical component to supporting innovation efforts. And if you're like most of our clients in the technology industry, finding the right tools to move fast can be the biggest challenge when it comes to soliciting user feedback, prioritizing products in the pipeline, and launching. The race to get your products to market ahead of your competition's is a fast one that requires confidence: confidence to set roadmap priorities, confidence that the demand is there, and confidence to go to market.

Over the past seven years, we've been investigating these challenges and designing research solutions that provide teams with the confidence they need to support innovative product development and evolve their expertise with every insight. We believe in the power of user feedback and its ability to help teams make informed business decisions. That's why we created agile market research, to connect teams with their target users more often and earlier on in development.



Agile market research—built upon tried and true research methodologies—fuses technological advances, methodology, and human expertise to deliver actionable insights at the speed of business. It helps our clients move faster throughout development and launch products with more confidence.

“Having these types of agile approaches available means the entire business is thinking of research in a different way. Instead of being the cog that slows everything down, we’re the group that can strengthen the product and concept ideas regardless of how much time, money, or risk they’re willing to take—we can always handle it with these types of approaches. This gives the research a seat at the table for every decision that’s being made.”

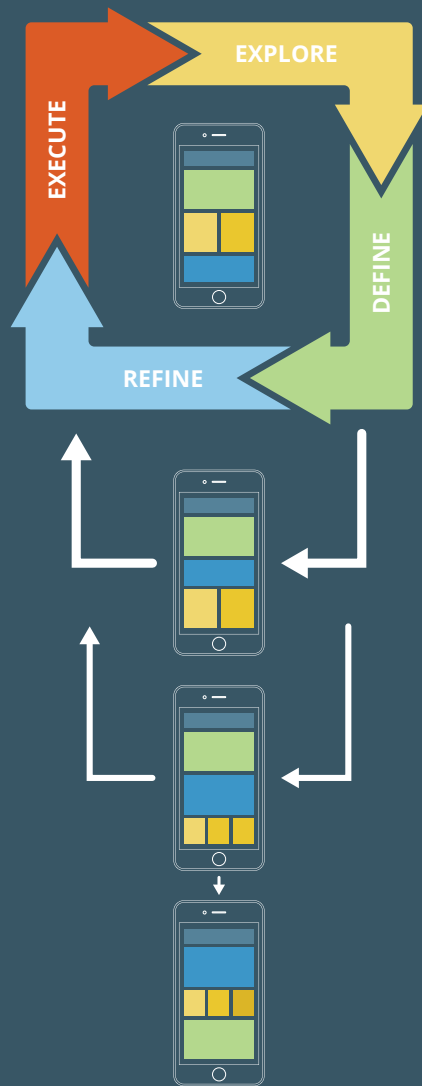
– Consumer Insights Mgr., Technology Industry

“Time is of the essence. That’s one of the best things about GutCheck is that they move quickly. A lot of times we have to move forward without the insights and research—and we do it based off a gut decision. Or we move forward with what we think is right, and then move backward and try to justify that decision.”

– Marketing Analyst, Technology Industry

“Everything is quick. With six weeks to do a full campaign, there’s just no way to spend three to six weeks just to obtain insights.”

– Marketing Mgr., Technology Industry



Our approach to agile market research was inspired by the principles of agile software development; it promotes a humble, iterative approach to learning. Like development, research isn't a one-time thing. The target, whatever or whomever that might be, is always moving and you have to adapt and learn quickly to keep up.

“An agile approach to research frees us up to launch faster, which is the ultimate goal, but it also allows time for more iteration. If the philosophy is iteration, this means we’re learning something every step of the way and want to make improvements.”

– Marketing Mgr., Technology Industry

Having the ability to be nimble and pivot at a moment's notice means you can apply the right research solutions—that give you the targeted feedback you need—at the right time within your development process so you can move as fast as the tech category moves. No two clients' business objectives are exactly the same, but most of our clients in this space take advantage of several benefits that agile research provides them with when they're trying to accomplish the following types of goals:

- » keeping up with their audiences in the face of the incredibly competitive B2C landscape
- » identifying white space opportunities
- » prioritizing features and concepts
- » refining wireframes
- » polishing messaging and advertising efforts

Effectively applying user insights can be the difference between success and a failed product launch. Innovation is not easy and the path is often full of failures. But innovation is as much about killing ideas as it is about moving forward.

“To find the big wins, we need to fail fast, and we need agile research to keep up and stay on the right track.”

– Sr. Product Marketing Mgr., Technology Industry



This eBook is a guide to conducting research in an iterative way throughout new product innovation and development. These best practices are based on thousands of studies conducted over the past seven years with clients in the technology industry. What follows is a look at how these clients use online agile research—both quantitative and qualitative—to get products to market faster using quality user feedback.

CONFUSING USER INTERFACE



FUN TO USE



ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY



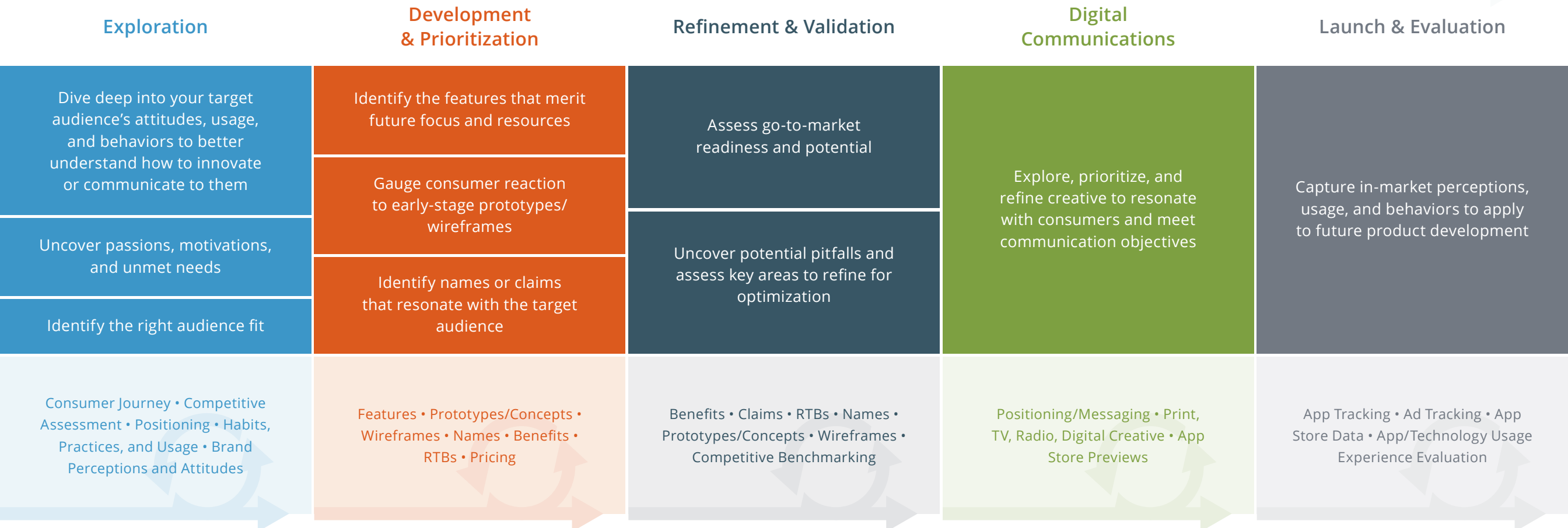
LACKING FEATURES



New Product Innovation & Development

Technology Industry

Here's a breakdown of the average product development process. Each phase includes common objectives as well as topics and/or stimuli you can test within each. Of course, every process and initiative is slightly unique, which is why it's important to work with a flexible, knowledgeable research provider who can tailor research studies to your specific business needs.





A Detailed Case Study

New App for a Healthy Lifestyle Technology Company

Let's take a closer look at each of these phases and the objectives that can be met within them. We'll walk through some research examples that correlate with each phase so you can better understand how online agile methods can help you meet your development goals.

For each phase, we'll share excerpts from a story about how a healthy lifestyle technology company launched a new user-driven app centered on nutrition.

Qualitative Exploratory Research Group™



Sample Size

1 Group of 30 Respondents



Methodology

Exploratory Research Group™

Target Audience

- > Males and Females
- > Ages 18-54
- > Smartphone Users
- > Frequently Reviews Nutrition Information
- > Uses at Least One App Designed for Health/Wellness/Fitness Purposes



Timeline

7 Days Recruit to Report

Recruit to report refers to the number of business days from the start of respondent recruitment to the final report deliverable.

Background

- » A healthy lifestyle tech company was trying to round out their portfolio of apps to include a nutrition app for packaged foods. The product team wanted to explore the features and functionalities that would truly fill a gap while fitting in with their users' lifestyles.

Objectives

- » Understand where users currently find nutrition information and what information is most important to them
- » Identify key benefits and barriers to using a nutrition app available on their smartphone, including likes and dislikes of current nutrition/wellness/fitness apps
- » Explore general user reactions toward fit with brand

Results

- » The team learned that many users are getting nutrition information from product packaging, but there was a strong need for a comprehensive and easy to use nutrition app, given how frequently people eat on-the-go. For example, some fall into a trap of forgetting to consider extra nibbles at work and in the car as part of their daily consumption.
- » While many nutrition apps exist today, there were clear opportunities for ways to add tracking features and enhance the search functions within apps.
- » Users were thrilled about the idea and felt it fit well with the brand's identity. They particularly liked the idea of being able to link it to other apps from the company to create a multidimensional view of their health.

Next Steps

- » Based on this feedback, the team developed an early-stage idea of what their nutrition app would include, with a focus on unique functionality that users expressed interest in.
- » However, they identified a need to better understand their key audience to ensure they were developing an app to meet that target's needs.

Agile Attitudes & Usage™ Study



Sample Size

N=300 Respondents
(50% Gen X, 50% Millennials)



Methodology

Agile Attitudes & Usage™ Study



Target Audience

- > Males and Females
- > Ages 18–34 (Millennials);
Ages 35–54 (Gen X)
- > Smartphone Users
- > Have Used Nutrition App on
Smartphone in Past 3 Months



Timeline

10 Days Recruit to Report

Recruit to report refers to the number of business days from the start of respondent recruitment to the final report deliverable.

Background

- » Following the exploratory phase, the team needed to understand what types of people, based on attitudes and behaviors, they should be targeting for their new app. Gen X and Millennials were determined to be the generational targets for the app, but the team wanted to understand if these two generations would have different needs for the app and which group would be more interested in the app.

Objectives

- » Explore the motivations and barriers to using nutrition apps for Gen X and Millennials
- » Understand the landscape of current nutrition apps among Gen X and Millennial users, specifically focusing on apps used, the reasons why, and high level features they like, dislike, and are lacking to identify white space opportunities

Results

- » Millennials are using nutrition apps more frequently than Gen X and are more dissatisfied with current app offerings than Gen X.
- » Millennials are often using nutrition apps on-the-go and need an app that could easily fit into their fast-paced lifestyle. Features that made it as easy as possible to look up and track food items were the priority. A social component was lacking from many apps, but would need to be done in a sensitive way.
- » Gen X was relatively satisfied with current nutrition apps.

Next Steps

- » The team identified the need to better understand Millennials and how they were using nutrition apps on-the-go, as this was a much larger target audience for the new app than Gen X.

Quantitative Feature Prioritizer™



Sample Size

N=400 Respondents;
200 Respondents per Feature



Methodology

Feature Prioritizer™
(Sequential Monadic Design)



Target Audience

- > Males and Females
- > Ages 18–34 (Millennials)
- > Smartphone Users
- > Either Have Used Nutrition App on Smartphone in Past 3 Months or Interested in Using a Nutrition App
- > Live an On-the-Go Lifestyle



Timeline

5 Days Recruit to Report

Recruit to report refers to the number of business days from the start of respondent recruitment to the final report deliverable.

Background

- » Based on internal product development meetings and the user insights from the previous rounds of research, the team came up with 20 potential app features. They wanted user feedback to drive the prioritization of resources going into development, so they could be sure their resources would be spent wisely and efficiently. This prioritization would also help focus communications further down the line.

Objective

- » Categorize user satisfaction with 20 potential app features using the Kano Model

Results

- » By categorizing the features within the 6 Kano categories (attractive, must be, indifferent, one-dimensional, reverse, questionable), the team was able to identify the set of features that would generate the most interest among consumers and properly dedicate resources to those features.



Next Steps

- » The product team developed prototypes for users to experience the full app with the key features identified from this study.

Qualitative Concept Refiner™



Sample Size

1 Group of 30 Respondents



Methodology

Concept Refiner™

Target Audience



- > Males and Females
- > Ages 18–34 (Millennials)
- > Smartphone Users
- > Either Have Used Nutrition App on Smartphone in Past 3 Months or Interested in Using a Nutrition App
- > Live an On-the-Go Lifestyle



Timeline

7 Days Recruit to Report

Recruit to report refers to the number of business days from the start of respondent recruitment to the final report deliverable.

Background

- » The product team then worked with their engineering teams to build out clickable wireframes to be experienced via a prototyping platform. The team used GutCheck's online qualitative methodology to invite respondents to experience the prototype and then answer open-ended questions in the GutCheck platform to share their feedback.

Objectives

- » Gauge overall user response to wireframes via qualitative feedback with an emphasis on ease of use, navigation, and usage occasions
- » Identify opportunities for improvement, with a focus on red flags or points of confusion/disbelief

Results

- » Users felt this app would be easier to use on the go than other apps they were already familiar with.
- » Help bubbles were suggested by respondents to avoid interruptions in the user flow, as some respondents had questions and/or got lost.
- » Features were positively received but one of the more unique features was difficult to use, perhaps due to lack of instructions.

Next Steps

- » After making slight adjustments to the app based on this feedback, the team moved forward into development and beta testing to further verify the app's functionality.
- » Additionally, the brand team wanted to use a quantitative prioritization study for potential app names.

Quantitative Concept Prioritizer™



Sample Size

Total Respondents N=200



Methodology

Concept Prioritizer™
(Grid Design)

Target Audience

- > Males and Females
- > Ages 18–34 (Millennials)
- > Smartphone Users
- > Either Have Used Nutrition App on Smartphone in Past 3 Months or Interested in Using a Nutrition App
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Timeline

5 Days Recruit to Report

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Background

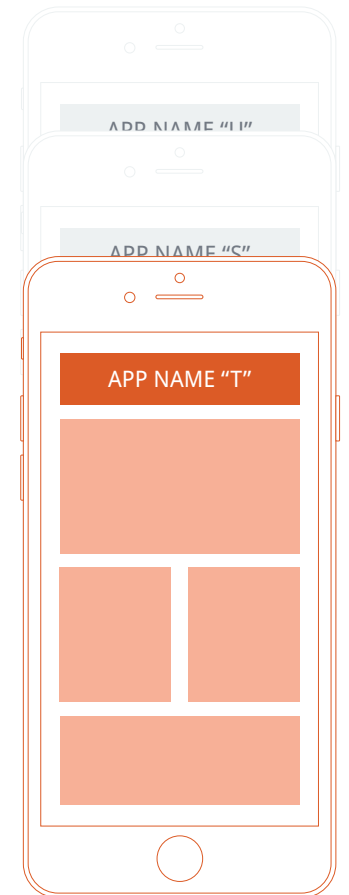
- » Before launch, the team wanted to understand which of 8 app names would fit best with what the app does as well as drive likelihood to download. The team also wanted to include a question to test some product claims, or reasons to believe, that could be used for the app detail page on the App Store/Play Store as well as within digital marketing communications.

Objectives

- » Identify the best name for the app based on likelihood to download, name appeal, fit with product description, and fit with brand identity
- » Understand how names perform with and without the full app description
- » Identify key drivers for an appealing name and those that succeed accordingly
- » Identify the most compelling product claims based on the full app description

Results

- » Name T was the clear winner across several metrics, including appeal and fit with brand identity.
- » None of the app names scored well without the description, but after seeing the description, names T and G rose to the top.



Next Steps

- » The team engaged the creative agency to develop a few different creative executions for a digital ad to gain awareness and attract users.

Qualitative Creative Refiner™



Sample Size

1 Group of 30 Respondents



Methodology

Creative Refiner™

Target Audience



- > Males and Females
- > Ages 18–34 (Millennials)
- > Smartphone Users
- > Either Have Used Nutrition App on Smartphone in Past 3 Months or Interested in Using a Nutrition App
- > Live an On-the-Go Lifestyle



Timeline

7 Days Recruit to Report

Recruit to report refers to the number of business days from the start of respondent recruitment to the final report deliverable.

Background

- » As the team began to finalize the marketing and advertising plan for the new app, they needed to understand which of 2 digital advertisements would be best to drive interest and, ultimately, downloads.

Objectives

- » Understand main takeaways users have from messaging to ensure advertisements are clear and compelling
- » Identify what is and is not working; compare preferences across creative executions

Results

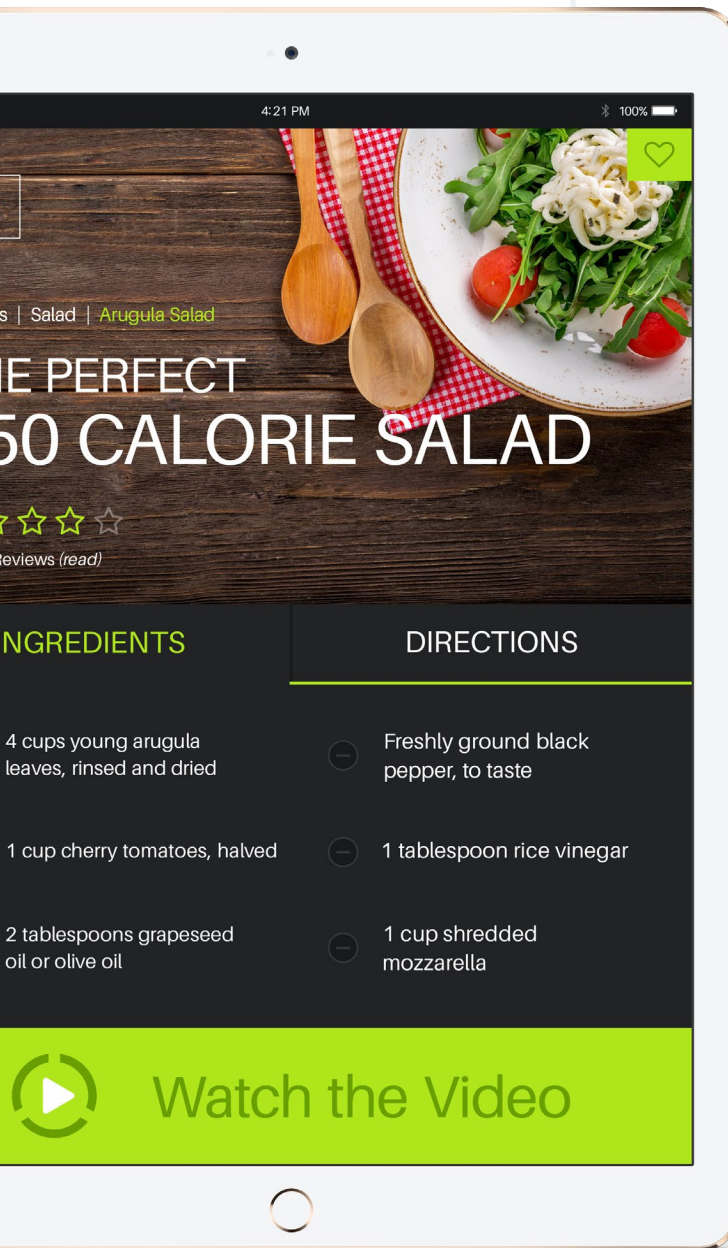
- » Language should be further optimized to be clearer and more direct about the most beneficial features in the app and ultimate benefits to the user.
- » After seeing both advertisements, interest in downloading the app was much higher for execution 1 over 2.

Next Steps

- » The team updated language in execution 1 with consumer feedback on optimizations before moving forward with the campaign.

Launch & Evaluation

The app was promoted through existing apps from the company to get initial usage feedback before the app launched in iTunes and Google Play. The app is meeting current install and usage goals, and is slowly growing in awareness. The team has been brainstorming new features to add to the app in the future in order to continue to engage users.



“Being completely new to the nutrition space, we knew that we would need a lot of consumer feedback to have a successful launch. This approach allowed us to develop an app that was completely driven by consumer needs.”

– Sr. Product Marketing Mgr., Technology Industry

Client Case Studies

For More Client Case Studies, [Click Here](#)

Google's Product Team Used Agile Research to Incorporate User Feedback and Stay Innovative

One Google product team was working on experimental social apps and pursuing better experiences for users. The team wanted to use a fast quantitative and qualitative solution to bring the user's voice and empathy into app creation.

Solution

GutCheck conducted three iterative phases of research, two quantitative and one qualitative, to identify a winning app name and logo.

Findings

- > Provided the confidence to move forward with a logo that users could relate to—one that was a good fit with the product name.
- > Identified strengths and weaknesses for each logo to determine areas for optimization.
- > The team was able to see the statistical significance of the ranked logos and names along with the qualitative feedback to understand the whys.

"Great ideas can come from anywhere, and you must build an environment where everyone has the resources to try new things."

– Product Marketing Manager

A Growing Technology Device Company Prioritized Features for Product Success

The product team was developing a premium device that would combine smartwatch and additional features. They sought to understand how interests in features varied among age and gender demographics to better develop solutions with different features in mind based on those segments.

Solution

GutCheck recommended using a quantitative Feature Prioritizer™ where respondents were asked to prioritize features based on the Kano Method.

Findings

- > Physical features, like battery life and others, were more desirable across the entire group, as they were the easiest to understand.
- > A few specific features that guided the ease of use of the device were found to be more appealing among females.
- > Many features ranked as 'Indifferent' to respondents, meaning those are not likely to drive purchase intent one way or another.

"The results were critical to creating not only a product that our consumers would value, but in creating future products based on the understanding we gained about our consumers."

– Product Team Manager

A Social Media Platform Gained a Deeper Understanding of Users to Drive Product Development

A social media platform sought to determine what new features could encourage more users. The product team wanted to identify groups that were most likely to be in need of photo editing features for future prioritization.

Solution

The GutCheck research team conducted an Agile Attitudes & Usage™ (A&U) study among men and women who share and edit photos via social media.

Findings

- > Across all respondents, there was a desire to have automatic editing options or the ability to apply multiple editing features in one.
- > Millennials share fewer photos on social media per month than older adults but those photos they do share they tend to edit more.
- > One gender tended to edit photos more than the other, particularly photos without people in them.

"Gaining an understanding of our user segments before moving forward into development allowed us to prioritize features based on the most important set of users and their most desired features."

– Product Team Manager

About GutCheck

At GutCheck, we pioneered agile market research to provide our clients with **actionable answers** and insights, globally, at the **speed** of their business. As a technology & services company, we fuse technology, methodology, and human expertise to yield best-in-class research solutions.

We have a team of full-service agile research experts with experience in multiple industries and **tried-and-true methodologies**, not just agile ones. They leverage our online **qualitative** and **quantitative** platform to connect with **targeted users** more often and earlier on in development. Using this critical user feedback, our clients are able to make **confident decisions** based on meaningful, specific answers to their objectives so they can take action and move their businesses forward.

We believe in the power of user **feedback**, and we are dedicated to providing the right solutions at the right time, helping clients **think smarter and act faster**.



Quick Guide to Products

Explore



Instantly connect with your users and consumers to explore their world and uncover market needs and insights.

⚙ Exploratory Research Group™

An online qualitative exploration to better understand consumer attitudes and behaviors.

⚙ Agile Attitudes & Usage™

An exploratory quantitative survey to understand consumer attitudes, behaviors, and trends.

⚙ Shopper / User Journeys

Experience the journeys of your shoppers and users through uploads from their mobile devices.

Build



Build and evolve your products with our research solutions that allow you to iteratively test, prioritize, and refine ideas with your target audience.

⚙ Concept Prioritizer™

A quantitative test that leverages statistical testing on key metrics to identify top performers confidently.

⚙ Concept Refiner™

A qualitative study that gathers consumer reactions and feedback on stimuli to identify opportunities to enhance and refine the product.

⚙ Pricing Evaluator™

A suite of quantitative research tools that assess consumers' expectations of price for new products and services.

⚙ Competitive Checkpoint™

A quantitative benchmark test that shows how your target consumers perceive your concepts relative to your key competitors, while also shedding light on specific areas to improve in product refinement.

⚙ Agile In-Home Usage Trial™

A qualitative in-home usage trial where you ship prototypes or finished products to a targeted consumer group to gather feedback on trial and usage.

Communicate



Gather audience feedback throughout the creative process to build optimized marketing communications.

⚙ Creative Prioritizer™

A quantitative test that presents a set of creative ideas to targeted consumers to rate on key metrics: statistical testing and scorecards are used to identify top performing ideas.

⚙ Creative Refiner™

A qualitative study that gathers targeted consumer feedback on creative to identify key areas for refinement.

⚙ Pre-LinkNow™

A qualitative study to optimize advertising creative iteratively throughout creative development using Kantar Millward Brown's LINK™ framework.



Think smarter. Act faster.

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