

# What Makes Millennials Trust and Buy Household Products?



A group of Millennials share their beliefs about existing household product brands, and react to various claims made by both new and established brands to learn what earns their trust.

## Forward:

A group of Millennials was brought into a Digsite community to discuss common household cleaning products. The objective was to explore what Millennials look for in these products and motivations behind their purchase. Additionally, the group engaged in discussion about what makes a brand trustworthy. Recommendations were given by Millennials as to how brands can gain their trust.

# 40

## Community Participants

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75% Female | 25% Male

Millennials

Primary Grocery Shopper

Wide age range of Millennials

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Participants were targeted on Facebook, Instagram and other social sites and offered an opportunity to participate in a week long discussion about household product brands.



The community ran for 5 days, during which time participants completed a total of 8 activities.



The Digsite Marketing Concept Sprint was set-up and moderated by the Digsite Support Team.



Activity types included surveys, whiteboard activities, conversation activities and community discussion. Due to the high level of participation, the final activity was adjusted slightly to give participants the opportunity write a letter or record a video to marketers on how to gain their trust. (See activity 4).

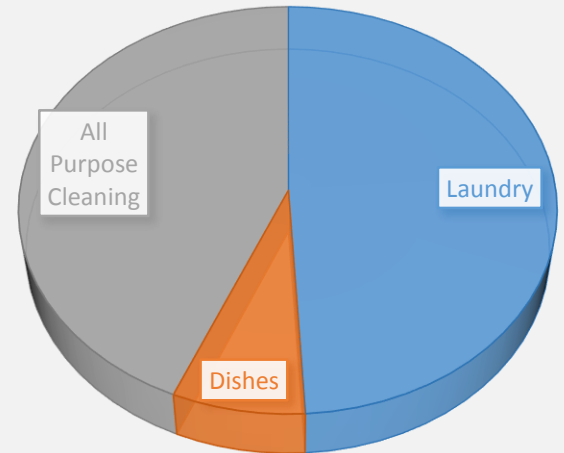


Participants spent 5-10 minutes each day engaging in the community, with about 35 minutes total engagement time over the course of the week long community.

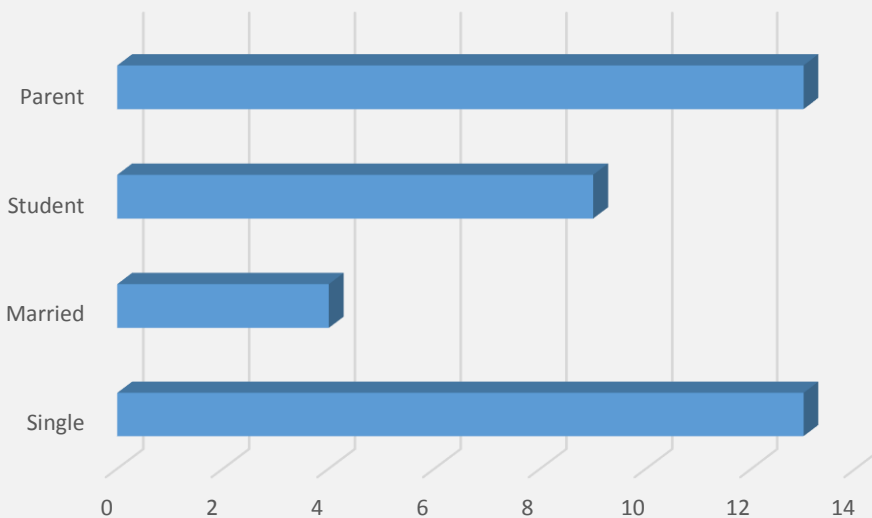
✓ Participants were targeted primarily based on their age and geographic location.

✓ Participants were a variety of age ranges, from 18 years old to 34 years old. These were classified as Early (18-23), Mid (24-29) and Late (30-34) stage Millennials.

## Desired Function of Household Product



## Participant Household Situation



✓ Millennials were not targeted based on specific lifestyle criteria other than that they were the primary shopper in the household. This resulted in a widely distributed sample.

## Sample Participant Profiles



**Melissa**  
Parent, Middle Stage  
Laundry



**Rachel**  
Single, Middle Stage  
All Purpose Cleaning



**Richard**  
Parent, Late Stage  
Laundry



**Abigail**  
Student, Early Stage  
Laundry, Dishes



**Cameron**  
Parent, Middle Stage  
All Purpose Cleaning



**Laura**  
Married, Middle Stage  
All Purpose Cleaning

# Activity 1: What Millennials Want



## THE OBJECTIVE

To get an initial indication of what Millennials value in a household product brand.



## METHODOLOGY

Millennials completed a conversation activity where they shared a bit about their day-to-day cleaning activities. They then completed a survey activity that explored specific attributes of a brand/product that they found valuable.



## Key Findings

### The Product Must Work as Expected/Intended

Most important - Millennials indicated that whether or not a product works as intended is most important when looking at a household product.

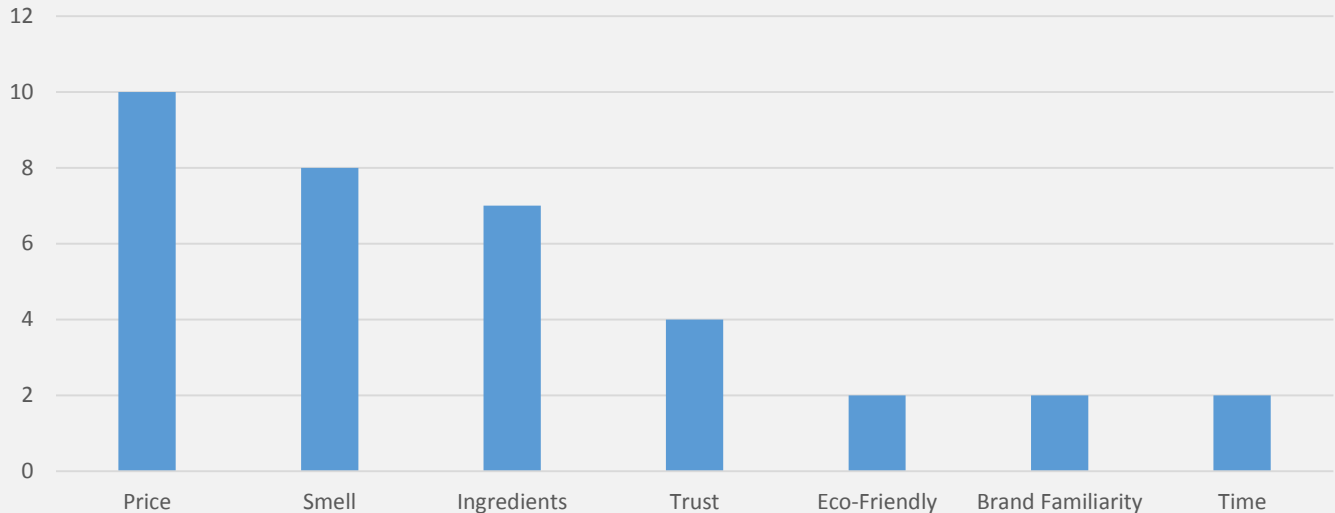
### Millennials Looking for Good Value

Millennials are willing to pay for a product that works, but will select a cheaper product if it works the same or better.

### A Strong Sense of Smell

Smell was indicated as a strong attractant/deterrent for Millennials when selecting a household cleaning product. The product's smell must be pleasant, but not overwhelming.

## “What is most important to you when purchasing household laundry or cleaning products? Why?”



*“Smelly is really important to me I can't stand a stinky product especially if it's laundry detergent that I have to smell in my clothes all day long. I always look for products that are going to help cut my cleaning time down (big fan of scrubbing bubbles) so I can have more family time.”*



**Bianca**  
Parent, Middle Stage

*“Efficiency. It needs to work and work quick cause I don't like cleaning and don't have the time for it.”*



**Nicholas**  
Student, Middle Stage

*“I like convenience and tidy packaging. I don't want extra work to keep my cleaning products clean and organized.”*



**Amanda**  
Parent, Late Stage

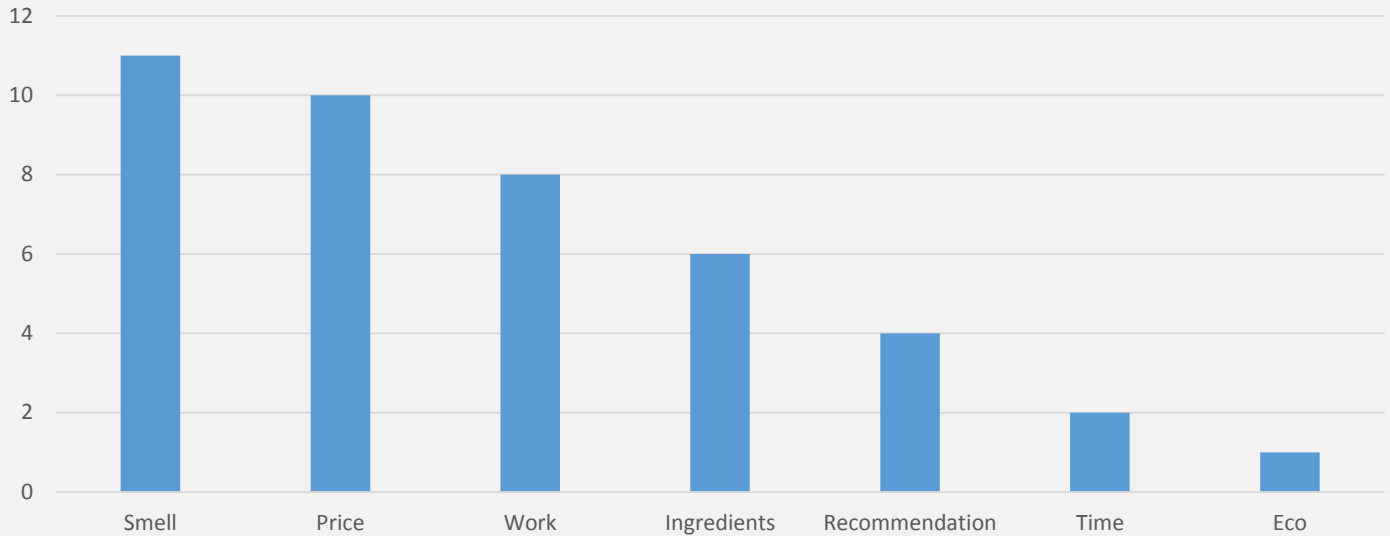
*“I prefer to use products that will clean well. If they happen to be more natural products than that is a big plus for me because I have four cats and a puppy in the house. Things that don't have an overpowering scent are a plus too because my husband has asthma and strong scents can irritate him.”*



**Kaitlyn**  
Married, Middle Stage

## Talking About a New, Recently Purchased Household Product...

### Main Motivators to Purchase a New Household Product



*"I tried it because I've been trying to cut off unnecessary chemicals from my life. Example such as my diet - my body soaps, toothpaste etc... I liked the product! It has a very nice after scent but it seems too flowery. I didn't think it strong enough to pick up a mess."*



**Audrey**

Single, Early Stage

*"It was very cheap at the time and it has done the job. I used to make my own laundry soap and I was very happy with this one."*



**Jake**

Student, Early Stage

*"I related with the message, it is sold at Target, where I frequently shop, it does meet expectations. Cleans well, nice fragrance, goes on sale often.."*



**Laura**

Married, Middle Stage

*"I bought it because I was looking for flavor in my laundry gentle laundry detergents tend to be plain and for some reason didn't make me itch and still made my laundry smell good."*



**Rachel**

Single, Early Stage

## Activity 2a: Sell a Peer a Product!



### THE OBJECTIVE

To get a more clear sense of what Millennials value in a product by having them craft a two-sentence sales pitch for their favorite household product.



### METHODOLOGY

Millennials completed a conversation task. They were presented with a sentence and were asked to fill in the blanks. Afterwards, they were encouraged to participate in further discussion using the discussion board.



### Key Findings

#### **Fast with No Fuss is a Winner**

Millennials consider the effectiveness of a product primary focus. They crafted “sales pitches” that put emphasis on the product working the first time, fast and with minimal fuss.

#### **Looking for Products that are Affordable or Frequently on Sale**

A consistent theme in each of the responses indicated that the product wouldn't break the bank, or that it frequently goes on sale at chain stores, like Target.

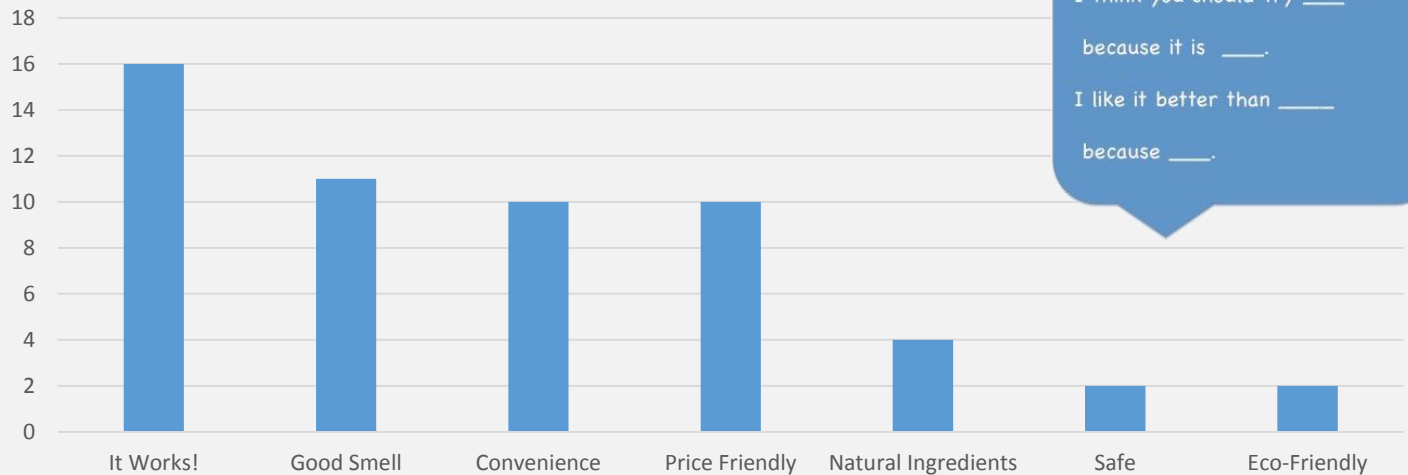
#### **Beyond Product Effectiveness – Easy Does It**

Millennials seek a "convenient" product. They were inclined to emphasize the traits of products that were easy to use, easy to access and easy to store.

#### **Avoid a Strong Chemical Smell**

Smell is a main driver in household products, though responses showed high variability as to which smell is desirable. There was; however, a general aversion to a high chemical smell.

## Top Selling Points



I think you should try \_\_\_\_  
because it is \_\_\_\_.  
I like it better than \_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_.

*"I think you should try the Lysol toilet bowl cleaner because when I use it I don't even have to scrub my toilet! I like it better than any other toilet cleaner because all I have to do is put it in my toilet, and leave it alone! I always had a problem with the ring in my toilet, but using this product makes it barely noticeable. It works wonders. If your toilet has a darker ring you may have to scrub, but after a few times you want have to."*



**Halley**  
Parent, Late Stage

*"I think you should try spray nine because it is the best all purpose cleaner. I like it better than 409 because it can clean just about anything. It is great in the kitchen on greasy stains also kills the germs. We used to have rental properties that it would clean the walls and cabinets better than anything else we used. It was great on the mold and mildew on our boat seats and portion furniture. I have to hide it from my husband because he is always using it the garage and when he his working on the cars. It a great versatile cleaner that is affordable easy to find and has been around a long time"*



**Stacey**  
Parent, Middle Stage

*"I think you should try dawn platinum dish foam, because it is amazing to use for dishes and rinses away tough grime. I like it better than regular dawn, because it doesn't get all thick and stuck on my hands after I wash the dishes."*



**Trevor**  
Student, Early Stage

*"I think you should try Greenworks All-purpose cleaner, because it is all natural and it works well for almost all surfaces. I like it better than bleach based cleaners because the smell isnt so toxic and it works just as well."*



**Abigail**  
Student, Early Stage



## Activity 2b: Brand Feedback



### THE OBJECTIVE

To explore Millennials feelings of both leading and up-and-coming brands.



### METHODOLOGY

Using a whiteboard (image mark-up) activity, Millennials provided feedback on an image featuring the logos of 8 household cleaning product brands.



### Key Findings

#### Millennials are Brand Aware

Brand recognition and equity goes a long way to ensuring millennials of the trustworthiness of the brand. Brands like Tide, Clorox, and Dove all were perceived to have quality products.

#### Family Values and Historical Experience Have Strong Pull

Many participants indicated that they purchased a brand or product because they grew up with it, or had some previous experience with it in their family.

#### New Brands Fight an Uphill Battle Against Established Brands

Newer brands, like Honest Co and 7th Generation, do not have as much brand recognition and therefore drew a more negative reaction from Millennials - they haven't proven their trustworthiness yet and remain a question.

#### Millennials Associate Brands with Smell

Again, Smell plays an overwhelming role in Millennial selections - a positive or negative experience with smell can go a long way to brand selection.

## Rate These Household Brands and Share Why You Chose this Rating



### Sentiment by Section

clorox	+22	-4	?0
tide	+16	-8	?0
palmolive	+15	-7	?2
arm and hammer	+20	-4	?2
honest co	+3	-5	?15
johnsons	+20	-4	?0
seventh gen	+8	-5	?10
dove	+20	-3	?1

	“+” Comment	“-” Comment	“?” Comment
Clorox	<i>“I like the Clorox brand. I use bleach to disinfect around the house, I just wish the smell wasn't as strong” - Shannon</i>	<i>“Effective, although the smell can be a lot. Only use it if absolutely necessary.” -Alice</i>	N/A
Tide	<i>“Trusted, affordable, great customer service” - Rebecca</i>	<i>“I don't like Tide. I prefer Purex. It works just as well and costs half as much.” - Molly</i>	N/A
Palmolive	<i>“This is another brand that I trust because my family has used it for generations. Great products.” – Laura</i>	<i>“Don't like the smell of Palmolive.” - Kelsey</i>	<i>“Not sure, works sometimes.” - Richard</i>
Arm & Hammer	<i>“I love Arm and Hammer laundry soap! I buy this frequently because it is of good quality and very budget friendly.” – Kaitlyn</i>	<i>“doesn't always leave a great scent.” - Mandy</i>	<i>“I have only used the baking supplies from arm and hammer. I've been skeptical on the cleaning supplies because I don't know anyone who has used it.” - Halley</i>
Honest Co	<i>“I think it's a great company. Their products are awesome and a lot more affordable than you'd think.” – Kate</i>	<i>“It is expensive, and I'm not sure to believe them when they say they use natural ingredients.” - Nicole</i>	<i>“Never heard of this company.” – Jacqueline</i>
Johnsons	<i>“Johnson is just a household name. I use many different products by them.” - Nicholas</i>	<i>“Have lost trust in this company from rumors of cancer causing ingredients. Possibly could buy again if rumors disproved.” – Rebecca</i>	N/A
Seventh Generation	<i>“All natural, smells nice, works great.” – Abigail</i>	<i>“It sounds organic and baby related. I have not used it.” – Nathaniel</i>	<i>“Never heard of it.” – Angela</i>
Dove	<i>“I like Dove's advertising campaign and it helps with sensitive skin.” – Amanda</i>	<i>“I don't like using dove products, I rarely buy them cuz I don't like the feel on my skin.” - Trevor</i>	<i>“Not Sure.” - Audrey</i>

## Activity 3: Ad Concept Feedback



### THE OBJECTIVE

To iterate on Millennials indications of brand preference by having them provide feedback on two different ad/product concepts.



### METHODOLOGY

Participants were asked to complete two whiteboard activities. The whiteboard activities featured ads from both Tide and The Honest Company. Millennials were asked to share what they liked or disliked about each ad. After the two whiteboard activities, Millennials participated in a post-activity survey to dissect their feelings a bit more and ask advice on how the ads could be improved.



### Key Findings

#### Health Benefits Attract Millennials' Attention

Millennials had an overwhelming positive reaction to health benefits of the ads - particularly dye-free, natural ingredients and toxic-free. They also appreciated that it was communicated in a simple, effective manner.

#### Color, Contrast and Layout Are Noticed by Millennials

Millennials indicated that the color and layout of the Tide ad was much more attractive and drawing than the plain, “washed-out” ad provided by Honest. Additionally, this sentiment spilled into product packaging – more color, more pop was desired for the Honest co.

#### Keep It Simple, Stupid

Concise, simple and straightforward marketing messaging is preferred. Millennials called out specific instances on both ads where they felt the messaging was “embellished” with unnecessary words. Ex: the use of “beautiful” in the honest co ad.

#### Brand History Influences Millennials' Decisions

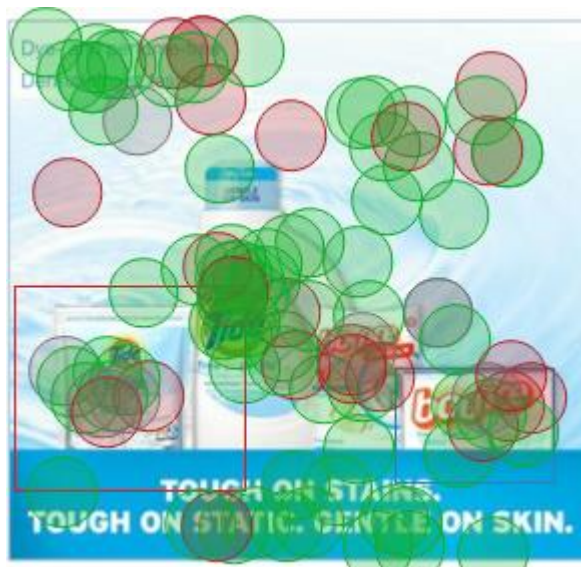
Brand familiarity may have cause bias. Many of the Millennials were very familiar with Tide and had not heard of the Honest company. This in itself indicates that Millennials are drawn to large, high-profile brands, but also that it may influence their perception of a “lesser-known” brand.

# Activity 3 Select Results

Concept 1: Tide



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Overall Sentiment



## General Comments

+ 56   - 16   ? 4

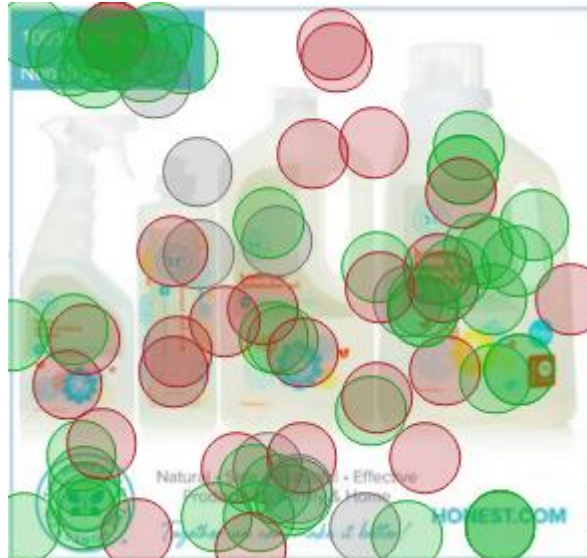
- + Water themed background shows purity of ingredients
- + White packaging is more noticeable than originals of the products
- + I like the slogan and overall colour scheme.
- + I like these descriptions, it is really important for me and my family as we have skin issues.
- + Emphasizing that it is a tough cleaner while being soft on skin is good, not losing cleaning power by being gentle on skin
- + Really like a free and gentle option for dryer sheets, often avoid them as they are highly scented
- + Love that its dye and perfume free!! And honestthe clean and crisp design makes it seem fresh and straight to the point.
- + I like this. The biggest reason i got awat from tide was it started irritating the skin in my daughter and me
- + I have used it and it works well but I am a shopper on a budget and there are similar products for less
- I sometimes don't like the price. Its a great product, but sometimes we get in a hard time. So we cant always buy it
- The water does nothing for me in this ad.
- I dont like the background. Makes everything seem to blend in
- Products do not stand out very well against the light background
- I do not think i would buy this because the packaging looks cheap. I am not familiar with bounce at all.
- I feel like it is being repetitive, tough, something else, gentle. Not tough, tough, in a row
- ? Yes, there's a broad range of things, which is good and means there might be something for every person's tastes but I can't tell what they are.
- ? Dermatologist tested. Doesn't mean anything. Was it approved? Was it better for skin? I sounds really

# Activity 3 Select Results

## Concept 2: Honest Company



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Overall Sentiment

57%

33%

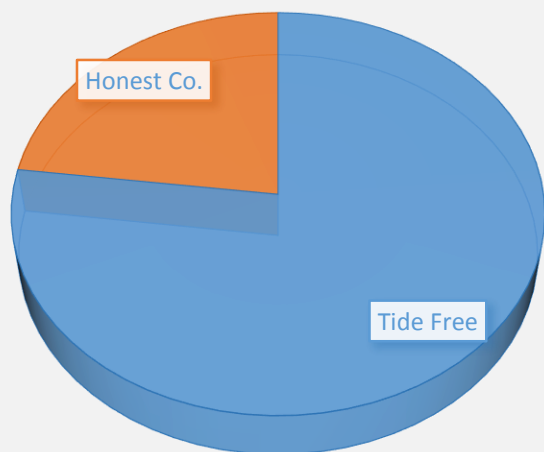
10%

### General Comments

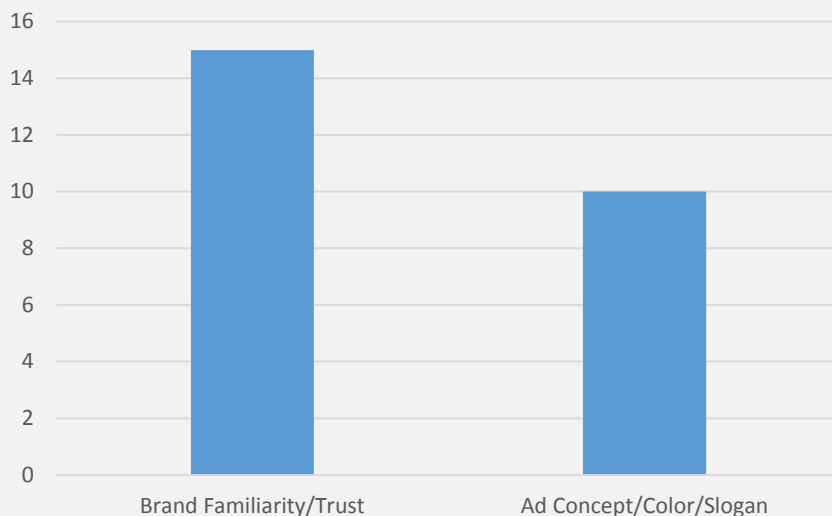
+ 51   - 29   ? 9

- + Natural typically means free from harsh chemicals
- + I've heard good things about this brand. I like that its natural and non toxic!
- + All of these products seem attractive to me.. their simple packaging helps me to believe their claim that they are natural and safe even without ever trying the products
- + The clear bottle makes it very easy to actually see the product inside before you buy. Simple and straightforward. I'd be more inclined to buy a clear, clean and distinct product than a bright and fun one with rainbow colors and toxic chemicals
- + Being natural and non-toxic is great for families with young children, worry about cleaning ability
- + i like that it is non-toxic since i have small children. It seems like a safe approach
- + I like the company name, seems to be backed up by it's packaging being transperant.
- + Like it has the website on there so i can research more information about the product
- + For families and home. That's what I want. A company that thinks about families.
- + For some reason, the whole thing just comes off as "sketchy" to me. I've felt it ever since seeing the commercials. The graphics are not great which makes it seem like it was made in some backyard.
- Crowded on the product front, with an uninteresting background.
- Emphasis on being safe and natural but not on cleaning ability except for "effective". Think some would use it because of it's benefits but most would need to see it could clean just as well as others.
- I woupd not use this for a dish soap maybe a hand soap but i do not think it woild get my dishes clean.
- I feel like there was no thought behind the concept of the ad and product placement.
- Background is to light. Products dont stand out
- Would like them to elaborate a little bit more instead of just 100% natural and non-toxic maybe they dye free fragrance free something about allergies how it's made
- ? I've never seen this brand or heard of it, it sounds pretty good from the description, but i personally wouldn't buy it because the product labeling isn't very appealing at all, compared to others like Tide.
- ? I would want to check for myself the actual ingredients.
- ? I'm not sure what beautiful has to do with these products.

### Which of these concepts was your favorite?



### Why was Tide your Favorite? (Top two answers)



*"Tide stated their attributes simply and didn't rely on using buzzwords to try to appeal to people."*



**Laura**  
Single, Late Stage

*"The Tide & Bounce ad was alot more cleaner, whiter, fresh & clean. The colors popped, the phrase dermatologist tested, makes it believable and credible. The Honest Co. ad felt dingy coloring, no colors popped, it didn't catch my eye. It seems as no effort is made on their ad."*



**Melissa**  
Early Stage

*"The product was labeled much better, it was dermatologist recommended, and dye and perfume free. The honest co. product might have been good as well, but the product label didn't appeal to me at all, compared to the nice white label of the Tide products."*



**Trevor**  
Student, Early Stage

*"Tide is a name I grew up with and trust. The honest co. Ad has very little appeal. The colors of the package are pretty boring."*



**Stacy**  
Parent, Middle Stage

## Activity 4: Advice on Brand Trust



### THE OBJECTIVE

To give Millennials the opportunity to open up and share directly with marketers how their brand can earn and sustain the trust of Millennials.



### METHODOLOGY

Participants were given the direction, "If you had a direct line to marketers to tell them what to do or say to be a brand you trust, what would you want them to know?" Participants were encouraged to upload video testimony as well as text.



### Key Findings

#### **Transparent, Simple, Informative Advertising Wins**

Millennials want Simple, Honest Marketing. Make sure that the marketing claims accurately reflect the quality of the product. No embellishments, keep the message clear and straightforward.

#### **The More you Share, the More Trust you Build**

Millennials would like additional transparency into the product. Millennials indicate that being able to see what is in a product and where it comes from would improve their trust. This is particularly important to back "natural" claims.

#### **Millennials Pay Attention to Packaging and Advertising!**

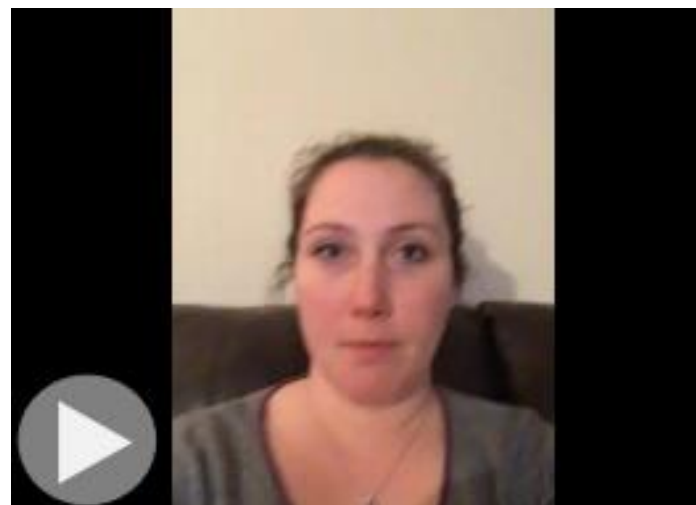
Packaging and Ad Concepts are Important! Millennials indicated that they are more drawn to a package or ad that is "colorful" or "flashy" that "entices them to learn more," about the product.

# Activity 4 Select Results

## Activity 4: Direct Line to Marketers



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*"I would want them to know that it should be a simple straight forward product. (One that helps reduce allergens is a plus since my son has bad allergies). However, I think if its truthful and just a simple marketing would be great. Don't have any hidden ingredients or any hidden information about your product. Maybe even include product testing versus the other leading brands."*



**Halley**  
Parent, Late Stage

*"If I could tell a brand how to become one I trust, a key aspect is good customer service. If there's a problem with a product I've purchased, I want to be assured that the company will make it right, either through a free product coupon, a refund, or shipping me a new container of the product I've purchased. Another aspect is non harsh ingredients. I'm allergic to bleach, so I can't use products with bleach. If manufacturer can promise both gentle ingredients and good customer service, I can definitely say I'd be a faithful customer in the future."*



**Rebecca**  
Parent, Middle

*"I would tell marketers that I want them to be clear and honest about what's in their products. Don't say something is organic or natural when it isn't. Don't make false claims about health in order to sell products. Especially when selling to families. Moms need products that we can access quickly and trust will take care of our family. We don't want to have to sift through misleading claims before we use a product."*



**Molly**  
Parent, Late Stage



# 40

## Community Participants

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75% Female | 25% Male

Millennials

Primary Grocery Shopper

Wide age range of Millennials

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**Millennials seek a functional, cost efficient, convenient, good-smelling household product.**

Millennial testimony identified these factors as the top motivators behind purchasing a household product.



**Transparency in Advertising and Product Will Gain Millennials' Trust.**

Millennials understand that they are being marketed to and are inherently skeptical. Simple advertisements, transparent packaging and real data on product ingredients will go a long way to earning Millennials' trust.



**Millennials Pay Attention to Your Packaging and Ad Concepts.**

The side-by-side ad comparison between Tide and Honest Co made this apparent – Millennials are attracted to color, contrast and layout and these factors have high influence on their purchasing decision.



**Keep it Simple**

A classic rule that is still relevant today. Millennials seek advertisements that do not make them think. Present the relevant information in an orderly, attractive fashion with minimal embellishments. Including resources for them to research the product on their own is also a plus.

## Schedule a Digsite Demo

Digsite was the platform used for this community. If you'd like to see it for yourself, we offer Digsite demos throughout the week at a time that's convenient for you. Join us to get a quick overview of Digsite and discuss how it can help you get closer to your customers. You'll be able to ask questions and dig as deep as you'd like to find out if Digsite is right for your needs.

[Schedule a Digsite Demo »](#)