Montreaux Case Write Up
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The main motivation and behavior driving this American target market, primarily women ages 45 to 65, is health and fitness. The recommended new product concept appears highly viable because sensory perceptions strongly support consumer acceptance. This demographic already associates premium dark chocolate with sophistication and indulgence, which makes the transition to a health-positioned chocolate seamless. Sensory aspects such as taste and packaging design were central to the NPD plan. For example, when the company tested both a bag and a bar option in focus groups, consumers preferred the bag because it allowed them to control portion sizes. The individually wrapped 70-calorie squares, with that calorie count clearly visible on the packaging, signaled a mindful and healthier indulgence. This aligns with consumer behavior trends showing that health-conscious buyers gravitate toward portion-controlled options. In addition, flavor innovations like pairing dark chocolate with fruits such as blueberry or pomegranate further enhanced the product's distinctiveness and credibility as both a premium and healthy choice.

Consumers' experiences, however, may be influenced not only by the chocolate itself but also by where the product is placed. Apollo's goal was to leverage its own sales force to secure distribution in large supermarkets. While these stores do carry healthy options, health-conscious consumers may perceive Montreaux as "mass market" if it is positioned only alongside traditional chocolate brands. If shoppers do not see the product in health-oriented retailers like Trader Joe's, Sprouts, or Whole Foods, they may doubt its authenticity as a healthy option. Packaging also plays into perception: the stand-up pouch format tested especially well because smaller squares reinforced portion control and health-consciousness, directly affecting how consumers felt about indulging in the product.

Using the Nielsen BASES model was a strong approach because it gave Montreaux a data-driven way to avoid relying solely on intuition. The multiple stages of idea screening, concept testing, and BASES II provided both qualitative and quantitative insights, allowing the team to refine flavors, cocoa percentages, and packaging before making costly production decisions. This structured method helped confirm that health-driven messaging paired with portion control was most effective. If I were to suggest a change, I would add more real-world product trials in smaller health-conscious markets before scaling up. While the BASES II model simulated national outcomes, in-store purchase behavior often reflects variables that surveys cannot capture, such as shelf placement competition and impulse buying. Additional in-store testing could have provided more confidence in their forecasted repeat purchase rates.

Although Montreaux has done extensive product and taste testing, more targeted market research is necessary before launching broadly. The target demographic of health-conscious women ages 45 to 65 does not fully align with Apollo's initial plan to prioritize mainstream supermarkets. To attract this consumer base, Montreaux should focus its rollout in retailers with a strong health-oriented reputation, such as Whole Foods or Sprouts, where premium dark chocolate buyers are more concentrated. A regional rollout would be the most strategic next step, supported by census-based research tools like SimplyAnalytics to pinpoint zip codes with the highest density of likely buyers. This approach balances speed-to-market with thoughtful targeting, minimizes risk, and builds credibility in the premium health space before expanding nationally.

Analysis

  The two forms of AI that I used for this case study write up included Notebook LM, and Chatgpt. Using Notebook LM after I was done reading the case was useful for me to make sure I got all of the points in the case, but in a concise and auditory way which is one of the best ways I can retain information. Once I was confident in my knowledge of the Montreaux case, I typed up paragraph responses to each question. Then, I entered my own wording into Chatgpt to look over and edit any grammar or flow of my sentences, as well as catch any areas where I left an open thought.