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STRATEGY

How Action Segmentation Cracked a New International Market for a Premium Snack Brand

A case study in launching a category, not just a product, by finding the one consumer worth winning first.

Most international launches fail the same quiet way: the brand travels, the playbook travels, and the customer profile travels. Then, the market refuses to behave the way the home country did.

This was the exact challenge faced by a premium, healthy snack brand entering a major Latin American market. The category barely existed; awareness was low. Attempting a path of least resistance, the team lifted the U.S. playbook, translated the packaging, and targeted the same demographic that built the home business.

The launch failed. They aimed at the wrong consumer, in the wrong aisle, with the wrong story.

Realizing that "health-conscious women 25 to 54" was a demographic rather than a viable launch strategy, the brand pivoted to a precision-based behavioral framework: **The Action Segmentation Model.**



The Strategy: Behavioral Over Demographic

To find the right target, we built a behavioral segmentation grounded in three dimensions that actually shape food choices in this specific market:

- **Food Media Involvement:** Engagement levels with cooking shows, recipes, and food creators.
- **Willingness to Try:** Openness to new flavors, brands, and unfamiliar foods.
- **Health-Seeking:** How actively food choices are filtered through a health lens.

These three axes produced seven distinct segments: mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive, and addressable through third-party data partners. The brand could find, target, and measure them from day one.

Identifying "Charlotte"

One segment emerged as the clear priority. We called her Charlotte.

Charlotte entertains at home once or twice a week and consumes food-related media. Critically, she was 2.5x more likely than the average consumer to try this new healthy snack. However, the insight that changed everything was *why* she bought it: Charlotte wasn't looking for "health food"; she was looking to create a more exciting array of food dishes.

She wasn't the largest segment, but she was the right one. She was curious enough to try, social enough to share, and culturally tuned to food as an experience rather than mere fuel.



Execution: Building from the Ground Up

That insight reconfigured the entire launch strategy:

- **Channel Strategy:** We moved into the aisles and stores where Charlotte shops for the *meals* she is building, rather than the groceries she is restocking.
- **Packaging:** Redesigned from scratch, trading American pantry cues for a "foodie" design that signaled discovery.
- **Creative Platform:** A new narrative invited her to mix, layer, and play with flavor, rooted in the local truth that even tasty foods can be made tastier.
- **Media & Partnerships:** We met her where she lived: cable cooking shows, partnerships with local celebrity chefs, in-store sampling in hypermarkets, and co-merchandising with staples like tortilla chips.

The product remained the same as the one sold at home, but everything else, including later innovation, was built exclusively for Charlotte.

The Result: From Export to Local Brand

The launch stopped looking like an export and started looking like a brand built in-market.

By having one sharp answer to who they were trying to win first, every subsequent decision became easier. The brief, the channel choices, the creative, and the retailer conversations all had a clear filter: Does this deepen Charlotte's experience, or does it just add a SKU? The segmentation didn't live in a deck; it lived in the launch plan.



Why It Matters for Global Leaders

The instinct in an international launch is to translate: the deck, the packaging, the profile. But translation is a trap of familiarity. New markets don't reward what worked at home; they reward a clear point of view on who will buy the brand first and what it takes to earn them.

Growth in a new market doesn't come from a bigger target. It comes from a sharper one.

By applying Action Segmentation, the brand soundly beat Year 1 forecasts and doubled sales every year for the next five years.

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