

# Marketing Research

## Focus Group Report

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1. Some of the integral insights generated from the focus group were:
  - a) The focus group was not aware that Neutrogena is introducing facial sheet masks with a new feature of ear hooks, but most of them have been users of sheet masks which makes their feedback relevant for us.
    - i) While the participants were aware of Neutrogena as a famous cosmetic brand, they were not aware that Neutrogena also produced paper sheet masks.
    - ii) Most of them preferred Korean or Japanese brands due to various reasons such as recommendations from friends/family, quality, effectiveness, price equivalence and the overall reputation of Korean/ Japanese skincare.
    - iii) Several concerns regarding facial sheet masks were around: A lot of remaining serum in the package, quality of the serum, temperature of the mask (eventually got too cold), serum from the mask starts to drip away from the face, misfit of the mask
  - b) The focus group has not used masks with ear hooks before but they frequently use face masks which help us gauge their ideas about face masks and their opinion towards the addition of ear hooks
    - i) The quality of the face mask serum was the most important.
    - ii) They were willing to pay higher amounts for higher quality masks/serums (~\$20) while around \$2-\$3 for daily masks.
    - iii) All members said they would like to know about the design of ear masks involving ear hooks to decide. They were apprehensive about using the masks with ear hooks for varying reasons: 1. Serum on ear hook would get on hair 2. Ear hook would be fragile and possibly break 3. Serum on ear hook would feel gross around the ear.
    - iv) With the addition of ear hooks to sheet masks, people were willing to pay somewhere around \$0 to \$0.50 for this innovation.
    - v) If it was a silicone reusable mask instead, participants were concerned about how hygienic the mask would be. Most of them found it was too likely to have bacteria growth which would be harmful for skin

2. Our discussion proceeded as follows:

Although our focus group discussion was free-flowing with constant interaction and intermediate probes, we outlined our discussion under the following broad topics: general behavior towards existing sheet masks, brands currently being used, design of the sheet masks and finally the pricing.

- a) **General behavior of participants towards sheet masks:** This comprised of questions and interactions around whether the participants use sheet masks, their frequency of usage, reasons for liking sheet masks, preferred time of usage (e.g. before or after shower), time duration up to when they keep the mask on, and how they perceive the time when they have the mask on (i.e. as a wastage of time or as a relaxation technique)

**Responses:** *Most of the participants were users of facial sheet masks. The frequency of usage depended on their schedule but it ranged from a maximum of 3 times a week to somewhere around once a month. The preferred time of usage is mostly during night. The time duration that they would usually keep the mask on was around 15 mins as they viewed that keeping it for a longer time than this is not good for their skin. They usually indulge in watching TV (as movement is restricted), cooking or reading a book while they have the mask on. They do not consider the time duration of 15 mins as a wastage of time.*

- b) **Brands of sheet masks:** We discussed whether our participants had any specific brand preference when it comes to sheet masks, which brand comes to their mind while they think about sheet masks, whether they had heard of any American brands for sheet masks and finally whether they would be willing to try a new sheet mask product produced by a well-known brand that does not specialize in masks

**Responses:** *Participants mostly prefer Korean or Japanese brands as they are known for their quality of ingredients, different varieties and masks which cater to their skin concerns. They haven't used many American brands for sheet masks as they do not perceive them to be that effective. But they are aware and have used some brands previously like Fresh, Farmacy and Dermalogica although the overall liking or preference is less towards American brands. They are sort of willing to try new brands (for instance Neutrogena) only after looking at the reviews.*

- c) **Design of sheet masks :** The next line of questioning and interactions were pertaining to what specific attributes do our participants look for while purchasing sheet masks, problems or concerns they are currently facing with sheet masks, what do they think about the sheet masks with ear hooks, features they would like to see on a sheet mask, whether they would use sheet masks with ear hooks, whether they consider multitasking factor as an aspect for sheet masks and finally whether they would consider buying a reusable mask

**Responses:** *There are various attributes which different participants look for while purchasing a sheet mask, some of them are - masks which have lower amount of serum, simple masks with innovative designs, purchase based on the reviews and research on the internet or friend's recommendation, masks which fits the face properly and solve skin problems. Problems which the participants face currently are- the fit of the sheet masks is not good, other types of masks like gel give you the benefit of concentrating it to the area concerned, lot of essence or serum is left in the mask and the temperature of the mask is also an issue as they find it to be cold. They would like to see features like personalization, different designs or masks which are like moulds for sheet masks. Most of the participants were open to trying the sheet masks with ear hooks but they were skeptical and concerned about few things pertaining to this design. The concerns were- if there is serum on the ear hooks then it would damage one's hair, if the sheet mask would break because of the ear hooks being stretched, price of addition of ear hooks to the sheet masks, some felt the ear hooks might not be that useful. They were not bothered or treated the multitasking factor of sheet mask with ear hooks as a helpful feature. They did not prefer the idea of a reusable mask as it might lead bacterial growth and is not considered hygienic.*

- d) **Pricing:** Finally, we discussed about the pricing of the sheet masks, the general price they currently spend on sheet masks, whether they consider the sheet masks with ear hooks as something which would save them money and how much more are they willing to pay for this feature of ear hooks on sheet masks

**Responses:** *Pricing of the sheet masks for the participants varies and is highly dependent on the quality of the ingredients of the mask and the perceived brand value (whether the mask belongs to a luxury skincare brand or drugstore). The expectation of the results after applying the mask is also seen to be directly proportional to the price, they pay for the*

*sheet mask. Generally, the participants are willing to pay around 2-3\$ per sheet mask. They do not view the sheet masks with ear hooks as a feature which would save them money. The participants are willing to pay an additional amount of 0 to 50 cents per mask for this ear hooks feature.*

3. From the focus group responses, we came up with several hypotheses that we believe would be useful to the managerial decision problem. We would like to explore them further with survey data.
  - a) People don't use face masks with ear hooks because they are not aware, they exist or see no clear benefit. A marketing campaign or video showing this could increase awareness and therefore sales.
  - b) People don't use face masks from Neutrogena because the perceived quality of Korean face masks are very high. A marketing campaign with well-known celebrities or adjusting the serum used in their face mask products could help improve the perceived/actual quality of Neutrogena face masks and increase desirability and sales.
  - c) Korean facial products have a strong perceived quality due to the current K-pop trend and strong links between facial products and Korean pop stars. Neutrogena could partner with Korean pop groups to help bolster the perceived quality of the brand
  - d) People don't have an inclination towards face masks with ear hooks because they are more concerned about the quality of the face mask serum and design is of lesser significance. Neutrogena should focus more on developing serum and increasing quality.
  - e) Most people treat the "sheet mask time" as time for relaxation instead of time for multi-tasking. The main function of the ear hooks is to make the mask better adhered to face so that people can do more dynamic jobs like cleaning and cooking without the risks of mask falling off. If the majority already have the habit of enjoying the short break (like taking a nap, watching videos etc.) provided by applying sheet masks, the ear hook attribute will not be appealing to them.
  - f) People do not show strong brand loyalty in regards to face masks and have a particular set of options to go to always. At the same time, they are not open to trying out new brands. When it comes to skincare, they generally follow what their family/friends recommended to them, or explore new options only as Early Majority or Laggards and not as Early Adopters.