

# CONVENIENCE IS KING

The convenient consumer

Consumers are a busy and demanding bunch. They want things spotlessly clean, but they want the whole process quick, easy, cost-effective - and they want it now. As a matter of example, 41% of US laundry consumers look for products which are the easiest and most convenient to use<sup>1</sup>.

In the land of the consumer, convenience is king: they have busy stressful lives and feel entitled to 'something better'. They want more for less - and for less to do much more. For example, the increase in the number of smaller machines suited to smaller loads need products that fit the bill - whether it's concentrated products to reduce both dose and package size or combination products that perform complimentary tasks.

Consumers want the flexibility of products that lets them put in variable amounts in to meet different requirements - and unit-dose products that prevent them from putting in too much. And with the increasing spontaneity of household tasks consumers want quicker washing - which means shorter cycles at lower temperatures.

Short cuts, cheats and convenience-variants of every conceivable lifestyle product are the order of the day. As more people struggle to manage their daily obligations, laundry is a hassle they don't need, so solutions that free-up time to do the things that are considered more important are highly valued.

A recent study showed that one of the key characteristics of Brazilian women is the emphasis they put on convenience. With such an emphasis it is not surprising that the most desirable detergent features for the Brazilian consumer are easy to handle package and combined performance as well as combined performance<sup>2</sup>.

## HOW IS THIS MANIFESTING ITSELF IN TERMS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR?

### 1. Going Solo

One-person households account for 12% of all households worldwide - and it's on a steady rise of 1.6% per year<sup>3</sup>. Not only has this created a market for 'single-friendly' products, as single households also require the same amenities as family households, we're seeing growth in the market for scaled-down 'single-sized' domestic appliances<sup>4</sup> - including smaller washing machines and dishwashers with cycles suited to smaller loads.

## 2. Small is the next big thing

We live in a crowded, increasingly urbanized world. By 2050, 70% of the world's population will be crammed into cities<sup>5</sup> - and when space is at a premium, smaller is more practical. In looking for ways to simplify their busy, cluttered lives, consumers want less - less packaging, less storage space, less waste. This urge to downsize is expected to drive the creation of 'multi-tasking' combination products in more compact pack sizes.

## 3. Micro-time management

Consumers feel increasingly overwhelmed by their busy lifestyles. Time scarcity impacts consumers' lives and influences the consumption choices they make. It has created a world of 'micro-time' where no moment is ever too short to be filled with an activity<sup>6</sup>, and many consumers are actively seeking products that to shave seconds off tasks and allow them to feel more in control of their precious time. In line with their need for expedience and efficiency, quick-fixes and cheats seem to be the norm<sup>7</sup>, as consumers look for short-cuts.

## 4. Convenience within convenience

In line with the trend for products, which help consumers fulfil tasks quickly, more easily and with better results<sup>8</sup>, we see convenience itself being broken down into smaller constituent parts. The first element concerns how a product reduces the time, consideration and energy, expended in the consumption process. Secondly is the availability of a product at the most convenient time, i.e. not having to wait. Thirdly, is the specific timing of convenience, i.e. The stage of the consumption process at which convenience is obtained<sup>9</sup> (purchase, transportation, storage, usage, disposal).

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**Together, we can inspire cleaner ideas.**

<sup>1</sup> Mintel

<sup>2</sup> Iconoculture 'Brazil Today: Implications for Laundry' 2012

<sup>3</sup> Euromonitor 'One person households'

<sup>4</sup> Mintel Trends 'The Power of One' August 2012

<sup>5</sup> Mintel Trends 'Minimize Me' September 2012

<sup>6</sup> Trendwatching 10 Crucial Consumer Trends for 2013

<sup>7</sup> Datamonitor: 10 Mega-Trends

<sup>8</sup> Datamonitor: 10 Mega-Trends

<sup>9</sup> Mintel - Top trends in consumer packaged goods