HOW TO ATTRACT CHILDREN AND ADULTS TO THE SAME BEVERAGE THROUGH PACKAGE DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to determine if children and adults could be attracted to the same beverage through package design. This study surveyed participants in the San Luis Obispo Area on preference of different juice labels. The survey asked the preference of different juice labels based on typeface, size and layout of the logo, contrast, type of substrate, and color. The survey participants were in different age groups ranging from 4 years old to those over 40 years old.

Results from one hundred sixty-one responses indicated although not all age groups were attracted to the same elements of a beverage label, patterns did arise in some age groups’ preferences. This data can allow beverage companies to reach a larger target market successfully, thus increasing sales.
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CHAPTER 1

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Statement of the Problem

There are certain commercial products such as beverages, snacks, cereals, and electronics that children and adults both consume. However, how does a consumer product company or advertising agency promote a product to two completely different age groups and target markets who have different tastes and opinions? There are many attributes consumers are attracted to in package designs; however, this research focused specifically on the packaging of beverages. Studies have found children are attracted to certain characteristics of a package such as bright colors or a variety of different shapes; however, adults might find packages with darker colors or a minimalistic design more engaging. There are few studies which provide information on what both children and adults are attracted to in a package design. The purpose of this research is to find how a consumer product company can design a single beverage package that attracts both a younger demographic and the older demographic. The key elements assessed in the success of attracting both children and adults to the same beverage package design were color, typography and layout.
**Significance of the Problem**

In a store environment, many consumers are overwhelmed by the amount of choices with which they are faced. Often, consumers in a hurry will pick a product whose package stood out the most. Studying children and adults and their reactions to certain designs, color, typographic, and material choices in beverage packaging will give companies access to data depicting certain similarities of design both groups are attracted to. Understanding the key factors in getting the attention of both children and adults will change how companies design their packages. As a result, these new packages would broaden the scopes of target markets, allow more consumers to be attracted to the product design—therefore making it more successful and competitive in the marketplace.

**Interest of the Problem**

I minored in Industrial Technology Packaging and my Graphic Communication concentration was Digital Reproduction Technology. I am fascinated in the link between packaging and design and how they work hand in hand with each other. I think it would be interesting to test how adults and children are similar in regards to what draws them in to a beverage’s packaging. Whether it be a certain color that both children and adults like, a type face, or any other design characteristic the two groups are both attracted to.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Packaging in Grocery Stores

In a grocery store, consumers are faced with thousands of products to choose from. Consumers seldom have the time or the patience to look at every item in the store, so they often purchase products they are loyal to or try products that are visually stimulating.

Once a customer is in the store, the print and television advertising of a product no longer matters, because the packaging design will either grab their attention or they will walk past the product completely (Jacobsen, 2012). With a multitude of choices in a grocery store, it is imperative that a product stands out from its competition in order to be successful. Consumer product companies and advertising agencies conduct research on target markets and consumer behavior to better understand consumers’ needs—what they look for in a product, and what they look for in a package design. These companies spend billions of dollars each year on research in order to produce products whose package design will encourage consumers to buy the product. For example, according to PepsiCo’s 2011 annual report, costs of marketing and advertising (including consumer research) for the corporation totaled $3.5 billion in 2011. The corporation had additional plans to increase those costs by $500-$600 million for the 2012 year (PepsiCo, 2011, p. 59, 24). Companies in the beverage industry
are aware that strategic packaging communication can potentially attract a larger client base, thus increasing revenue.

**Key Elements in Packaging Design for Beverages**

They key elements in a package design that customers pay attention to – either consciously or subconsciously – are color, typography, and layout. Through these elements, products are able to establish a personality and attitude that consumers can relate to. According to Theodore (2001), packaging design must be done with great consideration of the target market because “the package must fit consumers’ lifestyles or they will not continue to buy the product”. Additional research has illustrated the emotional responses from consumers in a shopping experience. These “emotions, in turn, influence shopping behaviors and outcomes” (Machleit & Eroglu, 2000, p. 101).

**Color**

Color can make a package stand out from other products on a shelf. It can grab a customer’s attention even if they are too far away to see or read what the product is. Colors on packaging – if done effectively – have the potential to create a positive emotional response in consumers. For these reasons, knowledge of color psychology is essential in packaging communication. Consumer product companies study the effects of color on their target markets to decide how to design their product. Aslam (2006) states the importance of color in products and their packaging, as color reveals product attributes and influences customer perceptions of price, quality, and flavor of food. Color can also function as an association cue for consumers. Chestin & Mastin Inc. (1987) found common color associations in the USA:

- Blue is associated with toys, health foods, dairy foods, desserts and financial services, red is related to toys, pizzas and meat entreés, silver is related to dairy foods, green is related to health foods, vegetable entreés, toys and financial services, yellow is related to toys, dairy foods, health foods and desserts and pink is related to cosmetics and Barbie dolls (as cited in Aslam, 2006, p. 23).
Color also has symbolic meaning customers can relate to. For example, in the United States, blue is a color that represents masculinity and premium quality; black is used to evoke an expensive taste as well as establish authority; red represents both love and activity (Aslam, 2006.).

Interestingly, the effect of color on consumers changes for different age groups. For example, in an article about color preferences in children, Lowenberg (1934) stated that pre-school children usually preferred yellow and orange colored food (as cited in Walsh, Toma, Tuveson, & Sondhi, 1990, p.646). On the other hand, adults often will choose a package with a darker, simpler design.

Typography and layout

Typography and layout involved in a package design contribute to the overall attitude and attractiveness to a product. Consumers are more often drawn to purchase the most visually appealing packages. A study on packing and purchase designs found that a majority of consumers today shop under time pressure and “a package that attracts consumers at the point of purchase will help them make decisions quickly in-store” (Silayoi & Speece, 2004, p. 611). These time pressured customers have a tendency to make impulse purchases based on what catches their eye. In a study on impulse purchases, Karmali (2007) interviewed Coca Cola’s CEO Muhtar Kend who argued “more than 70 percent of Coke’s sales are due to [these] impulse purchases” (as cited in Mohan, Sivakumaran, & Sharma, 2013, p. 1711). In addition to a package being visually attractive, Professor Paul Luna from the Department of Typography at Reading University also noted the necessity of clear and legible typography to communicate to consumers what the product is (as cited in Richardson & Dennis, 2003).

What Children are Attracted to in a Package Design

Advertisers have recently started to realize the influence children have in grocery store purchases. In a study from the British Food Journal done on the packaging of children’s breakfast cereal, it was stated that children have a high purchasing power. Mcneal (1969)
stated that children “may observe, request and select goods with permission while accompanying their parents shopping as well as make independent forays to shops themselves” (as cited in Hill & Tilley, 2002, p.768).

Color psychology changes with age – as does taste in packaging design and what attracts a consumer visually. It is vital to know what attracts children to packaging, in order to reach them in the market place. Walker, Hill, & Millman (1973) found “that colors associated with fruits were strongly linked to favorable taste expectations” (as cited in Walsh, Toma, Tuveson, & Sondhi, 1990, p.646). In a similar study, colored paper was used to determine color preference among children:

Staples (1932) found that red and yellow attracted the most consistent interest in children under 2 years old. Sharpe (1980) documented red as the most favored color of children ages 2, 3, and 4, as did Staples, who also noted that, after red, children preferred green and then blue” (as cited in Walsh, Toma, Tuveson, & Sondhi, 1990, p.646).

In addition to color, a study of packaging for children’s breakfast cereal, products with cartoon characters such as Tony the tiger on Frosted Flakes were successful in gaining product and brand recognition and desire of purchase with children (Hill & Tilley, 2002).

**What Adults are Attracted to in a Package Design**

While children may be more apt to colorful and bright designs with characters, the tastes of adult target markets in the beverage industry are also different. Color selection also plays a role on perceiving the quality of a product. For example, high priced and higher-quality products directed to a mature, upper middle class target market often have darker colored packaging (primarily black packages) (Ampuero & Vila, 2006). Especially in the alcoholic sector of the beverage industry, adults are often drawn to simplicity of packaging and glass materials. Glass has a quality element that gives a product a premium feel, for which many liquor companies strive. However, some alcoholic brands have recently crossed into the plastic material world. For example, United Distillers & Vintners, Stamford, Conn. recently switched from glass to
plastic for its TGI Friday’s On the Rocks line of single-serve, ready-to-drink cocktails (Theodore, 2001).

In the wine industry, most wine bottles are similar in shape and material; however, their labels are what set them apart. According to Franson (2006), there are about 10,000 brands of wine available in the United States (as cited in Sherman & Tuten, 2011). Colorful wine labels can be perceived as somewhat frivolous and less serious (Teague, 2004). Labels with different styles signal different cues to the customer. For example, traditional labels are depicted with rich, neutral colors that cue high quality. (Elliot & Barth, 2012). When wine is given as a gift, research found the appearance of the label as well as the brand name are among the most important purchasing factors (Sherman & Tuten).

Millennials (those aged 9 to 30 accounted for approximately 76 million people in the United States in 2009) are the largest consumer group in the country (Henley, Fowler, Yuan, Stout & Goh, 2011). In a study on Millennials and wine purchasing, (Thach & Olsen, 2006) stated the importance of innovative package design and labels during purchase decisions (as cited in Henley, Fowler, Yuan, Stout, Goh, 2011). According to (Wolf and Thomas, 2007), “The highest rated factor for millennials is eye catching… labels [that] draw attention based on… design, font styles, color, and overall appearance” (as cited in Henley, Fowler, Yuan, Stout, Goh, 2011).

**Similarities Between Adults and Children in Packaging Influences**

In a study of color psychology, Katz and Breed (1922) documented a shift in preference to blue as school-age children got older. The researchers also noted blue is a popular color in both children and adults (as cited in Walsh, Toma, Tuveson, & Sondhi, 1990, p. 652). Although there were few studies done on the similarities between adults and children in packaging influences, the topic was further explored and tested in this research with results in the upcoming chapters.
Conclusion

Despite research in colors, typography, and layout, there is a lack of viable research that depicts similarities of attractiveness to package design in both children and adults. Although there are different segments in the beverage market for adults and children, the two age groups do share a commonality in certain types of beverages such as milk, soft drinks, and juice. Exploring ways to attract both age groups to the same beverage product would benefit companies competing in the beverage industry. By making a beverage appealing to a broader range of people, purchasing potential also increases.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The goal of this research was to study what children and adults are individually drawn to in the package design of a beverage, and then explore how to attract both groups to the same beverage package through the use of design elements such as color, typography, and layout. With a multitude of products in today’s beverage industry, a beverage needs to stand out and attract a large audience to be successful. It will benefit a company to expand their target market to include different age groups such as children and adults. These groups have different tastes in the design of a package but discovering a common link(s) between the two groups will increase the amount of potential sales.

_The objective of this study was to determine the design elements that successfully attract children and adults to the same beverage through package design._

_Key elements explored were color, typography, and layout used in the packaging of a beverage._

Data Collection Plan

For the purpose of this study, a survey (see appendix) was administered to six age groups. Group one had ages ranged from 4-10 years old; group two ranged from 11-14 years old; group three ranged from 15-18 years old; group four ranged from 19-24 years old, group five ranged from 26-40 years old, and the last group were those over 41 years old. They
survey was administered in person to participants aged 18 years old and younger. Survey respondents older than 18 took the same survey online. Participants were asked questions two questions about their demographics (age and sex) and 5 questions about preference based on color, layout, and typography.

**Data Analysis Plan**

The results from the survey and experiment were documented and assessed. The information was categorized by age of the subjects and preference of labels. The relevant data and results from the experiment were used to verify if there was a link between what children and adults are attracted to in a beverage package design.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The label preference study was conducted amongst different age groups. The age groups were the following: 4-10 years old; 11-14 years old; 15-18 years old; 19-24 years old; 25-40 years old; and 40+ years old. Some surveys were printed out and administered at local schools in San Luis Obispo County. The grade level of children surveyed ranged from pre-kindergarten to high school. For those aged 19 and older, the same survey was administered online.

The results were organized in the following order: preference of typeface, preference of position and size, preference of substrate color, preference of color contrast, and preference of typeface color. Each age group was analyzed individually, then further discussed and analyzed in the conclusion. The goal of the label preference study was to discover potential patterns that arise between age groups. The goal of this study was also to determine if an ideal label could be created to attract both adults and children to the same beverage through package design.
Typeface Preference

(Figure 4.0) The above images were shown to survey respondents and were asked to select their favorite label based on typeface alone.

(Figure 4.1) Results of survey displaying the percentage of each age group's typeface preference.
Typeface Preference

Most preferred typeface

The group of 11-14 year olds, 26-40 year olds, and 40 years and older all preferred the script typeface with a preference percentage of 35%, 59.2%, and 41.6%, respectively (reference Figure 4.1). For the 4-10 year old age group and the 15-18 year old age group, the most preferred typeface was modern (label C). Label C was preferred by 55% of the 4-10 year old age group and 34.5% of the 15-18 year old age group. The bold sans serif was preferred by 37.3% of those between the ages of 19 and 25 years old.

Least preferred typeface

The normal sans serif (label D) had a low preference rating in a large portion of the age groups. Those aged 11-14 years old, 26-40 years old, and older than 40 years old all preferred label D the least (reference Figure 4.1). In the 4-10 year old age group, the script typeface was the least popular option, only receiving a 5% preference rating. The normal sans serif typeface (label D) was only preferred by 4.2% of those older than 41 years old.
Position and Size Preference

(4.3) Survey respondents were asked to select their favorite label based on size and position alone.

(4.4) Chart shows results from survey on preference of position and size of logo.
Position and Size Preference

Most Preferred

The 4-10 age group preferred the size and position of the smaller horizontally and vertically centered logo on the label (see Figure 4.5). 50% of respondents aged 4-10 years old chose this smaller, centered logo (Label A). In the 11-14 year old age group and the 26-40 year old age group, label F was the most popular with 25% votes and 51% votes, respectively. Label F had a large, left aligned vertical logo. The three labels that received the majority of
votes in the 19-25 age group were labels A, B, and I – receiving 20.1%, 17.2% and 13.8% of votes, respectively (see Figures 4.3 and 4.4). Lastly, label A was the most popular in those aged over 40 years old, receiving a preference of 20.8%.

Least Preferred

The least popular labels across all of age groups were labels D and E (reference Figure 4.3). Label D and E were similar in appearance– each was smaller and aligned to the bottom in a vertical orientation. Label D had a 0% preference rating in both the 4-10 and the 26-40 age groups. In the 11-14, 15-18, and the 19-25 year old age groups, label D received 6.5%, 6.9%, and 6.0% popularity, respectively. Label E had a 0% popularity rating in the 4-10 year old age group and the 26-40 age groups. Label E received 1.1% popularity in the 11-14 year old age group and 6.9% popularity in the 15-18 year old age group. Lastly, label E was preferred by 2.2% of the 19-25 year old age group and by 4.2% of those older than 40 years old.

Paper Color Preference

(Figure 4.7) The above images were shown to survey respondents whom were asked to select their favorite label based on paper color.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-10 yrs</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-14 yrs</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-18 yrs</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-25 yrs</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-40 yrs</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41+ yrs</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.8) Chart shows results from survey on preference of paper color.
Most preferred

There were two popular choices for paper color in the 4-10 year old age group. The most popular was the black text on white paper (label C) which received 40% of the votes, and the next popular was the white text on the black paper (label B) which received 35% of the votes. In the 11-14 year old age group, label B was the most popular with 39.1% popularity (see Figure 4.9). Label B was also the most popular in the 15-18 year old age group with 65.5% popularity. In the 19-25 age group, the kraft paper label with white text (label A) was preferred by 37.3%. The second most popular label for those aged 19-25 was the black label.
with white text, which was preferred by 28.4% of respondents. The kraft paper label with white text (label A) was the most popular label in both the 26-40 year age group and those older than 40 years old. Label A was preferred by 52% of those in the 26-40 years old age group and by 41.7% of respondents older than 40 years old. On average, labels A and B were the top two labels selected in each age group. Figure 4.10 depicts their popularity showing a trend in the younger age groups’ preference of label B and the older age groups’ preference of label A.

**Least preferred**

Only 5% of the respondents in the 4-10 year old age group selected label D as their preferred label. Label D was also the least popular in the 26-40 year old age group. Label C was the least popular across four age groups: 15-18, 19-26, and 40+ (see Figure 4.9). Both labels C and D had black text.

**Contrast preference**

(Figure 4.11) The above images were shown to survey respondents whom were asked to select their favorite label based on color contrast.

**Most preferred**

When prompted to choose a label based on contrast between background and text color, the majority of respondents selected label A—the colorful and high contrasting blue and lime green label (see Figure 4.11). The 4-10 year age group, the 11-14 year age group, the 15-18 year age group, and the 26-40 year age group preferred label A with a popularity percentage
of 55%, 58.9%, 61%, and 48.1% respectively (see Figure 4.12). 51.5% of the 19-25 year age group preferred colored text on a white label (option C). Lastly, the 41 years old and over age group preferred label A and label B equally.

**Least preferred**

Based on the survey results, all age groups with the exception of those older than 40 years old preferred the low contrast label (label B) the least. For those older than 40 years old, label was least preferred with a preference rating of 16.7%.

(Figure 4.12) Graph shows the popularity of labels across all age groups based on color contrast
(Figure 4.11) The above images were shown to survey respondents whom were asked to select their favorite label based on color contrast.
(Figure 4.13) This pie chart shows the preference percentage of typeface color in the 4-10 year old age group.

(Figure 4.14) This pie chart shows the preference percentage of typeface color in the 11-14 year old age group.

(Figure 4.15) Preference percentage of typeface color in the 15-17 year old age group.

(Figure 4.16) Preference percentage of typeface color in the 19-25 year old age group.

(Figure 4.17) Preference percentage of typeface color in the 26-40 year old age group.

(Figure 4.18) Preference percentage of typeface color in the 40 year old and over age group.
Typeface color preference

Most preferred

Figure 4.11 illustrates the variety in preference for typeface colors across the different age groups that were surveyed. Orange was the most popular color of typeface amongst the 4-10 year old group. 30% of the group chose orange (reference Figure 4.13). Orange was also the most preferred typeface color in the 19-25 age group with a 25.4% popularity. In the 11-14 year age group, the green and the blue typefaces were preferred by 43.5% of the respondents. 22.8% of the students preferred the green typeface and 20.7% preferred the blue typeface (Figure 4.14). In the 15-18 year age group, black, purple, and blue typefaces were preferred by a collective 58.6% of survey (Figure 4.15). Black and purple typefaces were each preferred by 20.7% of respondents and the blue typeface was preferred by 17.2% of respondents. Orange was the most favored typeface color in the 26-40 age group with a 33% popularity. In the 41 and older age group, a red typeface was preferred by 25% of respondents.

(Figure 4.19) Graph and chart show preference of typeface color across all age groups
Least preferred

According to survey results, in the 4-10 year old age group, the purple and black typefaces each had 10% of votes and red had no percentage of votes. The least preferred typeface colors in the 11-14 year old age group were orange and yellow. Orange text was preferred by 8.7% of respondents and 5.4% of survey respondents preferred a yellow typeface on their beverage label (Figure 4.19). In the 15-18 year old age group, yellow was the least popular – receiving a preference rate of 6.9%. According to results, the least popular colors for a typeface for those aged 19-25 years old were black, purple, and yellow with a preference percentage of 8.2%, 7.5%, and 3.7%, respectively. Red was the least popular color in the 26-40 year age group with no votes. Yellow and purple were the least popular typeface colors for those aged over 40 years old. Survey respondents preferred yellow and purple with a preference percentage of 4.2% each.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Although the survey respondents did not prefer consistent package design elements, significant patterns did develop between the age groups’ preferences of juice labels.

Overall, the label with a normal san serif was the least popular (label D). The script typeface was high ranking in five out of the six age groups, except for those aged 4-10 years old. Additionally, the modern typeface was either first or second in preference amongst five of the age groups.

According to the survey results, a small horizontally centered logo was preferred on a beverage logo by many respondents (label A). Other preferred labels had logos that were small and horizontally aligned to the bottom left (label B); large and vertically aligned to the left (label F); large and horizontally centered at the bottom (label I); and small and horizontally aligned to the bottom right (label C). The least preferred labels amongst the age groups had logos that were small and vertically aligned to either the left or right (labels D and E). Interestingly of the two labels that were both large and vertically aligned, one was significantly more popular. Label F which read from the bottom to the top was preferred over label G which was read from top to bottom (reference Figure 4.3).

A kraft paper label with white text and a black label with white text were both popular choices amongst all age groups. The kraft paper with white text (label A) was most pre-
ferred by those older than 19 years old while the black label with white text (label B) was most preferred by those aged 18 and younger.

According to survey responses, a label with high contrasting colors was popular for all age groups questioned. The label with low contrast was least popular, most likely due to its poor readability.

Yellow and purple colored typefaces were least popular overall (reference Figure 4.19). The red typeface received no votes in the 4-10 age group and the 26-40 age group. The green typeface received the highest percent of preference – over 10% or higher for all age groups (Figure 4.19). The next most popular color typefaces were orange, blue, and black.

In conclusion, a single label consisting of the qualities surveyed would not be successful for all age groups; however, there are individual elements favored by all age groups that could be applied to a beverage label’s design. Although a script typeface was highly favored by all except one age group, the modern typeface was popular in all age groups. A centered horizontal logo was appealing for all age groups. Both the black and white label and the kraft paper logo with white text were attractive to all age groups. On average, all age groups preferred a high contrast beverage label. Lastly, a green typeface was not the number one choice for all age groups, but it ranked high overall in all age groups compared to the other colors.

Below are three examples of what an “ideal” label would look like based on survey results. These labels possess elements more than one age group was attracted to. The first label is on kraft paper with white text. A small, centered modern typeface is used in this label. The second label is black with white text. The script typeface is small and horizontally aligned to the bottom left. The third label has a modern typeface logo that is large and vertically aligned to the left. The third label also has high contrasting colors.
A beverage label with one or more of these key qualities would likely be popular for consumers of all ages. If beverage companies designed their labels in a way to attract more customers, it is projected their sales would be more successful than beverage companies that target only one target market.

An interesting study for the future might be the same research for different types of beverages such as water or carbonated soft drinks.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Senior Project Survey

Hello, please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. You will be asked 5 questions about a generic juice label. For the purposes of this survey, the flavor of the juice is not important. Circle the letter that best answers each question.

1.) What is your age range?
   a) 4-10 years old
   b) 11-14 years old
   c) 15-18 years old
   d) 19-24 years old
   e) 25-40 years old
   d) 41+ years old

2.) What is your gender?
   a) female
   b) male
3.) Based on typeface alone, please circle the letter of the label you like best.

a) JUICE  

b) Juice  

c) Juice  

d) JUICE
4.) Based on position and size alone, please circle the letter of the label you like best.

a) JUICE

b) JUICE

c) JUICE

d) JUICE

e) JUICE

f) JUICE

g) JUICE

h) JUICE

i) JUICE
5.) Based on paper color alone, please circle the letter of the label you like best.

a)  

b)  

c)  

d)
6.) Based on the type color and background, please circle the letter of the label you like best.

a) Juice.

b) Juice.

c) Juice.
7.) Based on type color alone, please circle the letter of the label you like best.