

# Maximum/Difference Scaling: An Innovative Tool to Prioritize Consumer Preferences

A familiar challenge in understanding consumer preferences is that typical benefit testing (i.e., promise or claims testing) often does not yield enough discrimination. Without the opportunity for real benefit discrimination to emerge, you cannot know that you are recommending optimal benefits.

The Maximum/Difference (MaxDiff) technique overcomes this challenge and provides a solid foundation for informed decisions. MaxDiff is essentially a series of forced choice tasks that are consumer-friendly and generate easy-to-analyze results that can be clearly communicated to all management levels.

**What is MaxDiff? It is a technique/modeling tool that:**

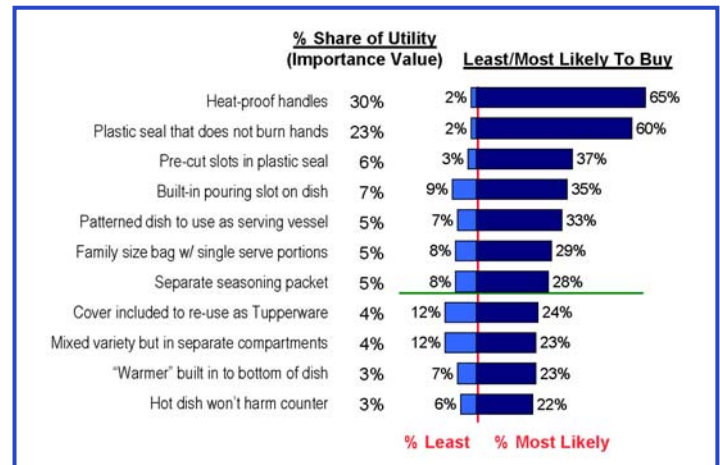
- Trades off a large number of items in an efficient manner
- Forces preferences to maximize discrimination
- Displays benefits in random groupings and respondents choose the item that is *most important/least important*
- Utilizes Conjoint-based modeling to assign utility values (relative importance) to each item
- Allows priorities to be estimated for key consumer segments

Unlike other modeling tools, such as strict Conjoint designs, the benefits do not have to be forced to fit the specific research technique. This means there are no restrictions on what is shown. Rather, marketers ideate a complete list of benefits, all of which are traded off several times to gain consumer preferences.

**What is the MaxDiff deliverable?**

Simple graphic depictions highlight the MaxDiff model output. First, a hierarchy of importance is displayed using modeling utility values. Along with this, a graph shows the percent of times each benefit was most likely vs. least likely chosen. The % most/least likely scores also indicate polarization with any benefit.

**The chart below shows a typical MaxDiff output.**



**MaxDiff is the recommended approach to solve for optimal benefits when you need...**

- To screen down a long benefit list to a manageable number
- Confidence that maximum discrimination is produced to support high visibility initiatives
- A "universal" scalar measurement for global research

**Let RTi Research help your team uncover true consumer preferences using the dynamic MaxDiff technique.**

