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**ANALYZING CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS: THE
CASE OF THE NATURAL AND ORGANIC
CATEGORY OF COSMETIC PRODUCTS**

Masters Thesis

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INTRODUCTION

This Master Thesis will commence with the justification for the chosen topic. First, it is relevant to study the natural and organic cosmetics segment of the beauty industry as a vast number of industries are developing products and services, which utilize alternative approaches and follow ‘green,’ sustainable and ‘environmentally friendly’ initiatives. Everyday, consumers are subjected to lifestyle choices in selecting alternative products and services and are considering specific features or solutions as factors in his or her purchasing motives. In the case of a spa or a cosmetics brand, a customer is faced with the possibility of selecting a product or service, which exhibits qualities that are biologically appealing to that of the opposite. Additionally, the customer follows-up with products and services, that he / she utilizes, deems trustworthy and demands greater knowledge to ensure that he / she is making a suitable purchasing decision each and every time. Thus, industry professionals must be prepared to respond to consumer expectations, personal needs and changes that may arise in the marketplace.

Continuing with this Masters Thesis, the hypothesis seeks to investigate the consumer perceptions of cosmetic products of this segment as drawn out by a research approach. The research intends to examine the use and demand of natural and organic cosmetic products through consumer behavior and lifestyle habits as regarded by the perception of natural and organic cosmetic products. The author seeks to discover a commonality, new development, key themes and / or set of values.

Concerning the aims set out for this Thesis, the following have been developed to address both the theoretical review and research portions of this text:

1. To provide an analysis of general consumer behavior as distinguished on the context of health and wellness in terms of sustainable living and concepts related to the consumer persona, values, lifestyle characteristics and demand.

2. This subsequent aim is to examine a theoretical framework of marketing, introduced with industry terminology and the functions, which support the development of natural and organic cosmetic products.
3. The final aim proposes to analyze consumer perceptions by addressing a representative population of the users of natural and organic cosmetic products through research analysis of consumer product reviews.

This Masters Thesis will accomplish the aforementioned aims as set out by tasks. The first and second aims will seek achievement by a research of thematic literature review based on a theoretical context and further supported by works pursuant to the topic of this Thesis. The final aim will be attained by the completion of qualitative research on the part of consumer analysis, which will result in the collective research of secondary data.

The issues, which are industry wide, may alter the consumer's decision and trust in selecting natural and organic cosmetic products. The consumer's lack of understanding of industry terminology, a need for more sustainable practices, false product claims, as well as the uncertainty and lack of unified definitions and policies have led to what are the current issues at hand. In response to this is the emergence of various entities, which strive to develop a definitive, set of standards (i.e. certification bodies). The formation of a global movement (i.e. LOHAS) also embodies a new era in which sustainable alternatives are the basis for industrial sectors. The consumer is empowered in his or her choices to lead a quality lifestyle and seek greater demand that further supports his / her choices of products and services (i.e. also Consuhumanism). As a final point, further text will specify industry terminology (i.e. greenwashing, efficacy, etc.) as connected to the functional areas that contribute to the development of natural and organic cosmetic products.

Conclusively, a theoretical overview, a research portion with a discussion and recommendations, the conclusion of this work, references, appendices and summary in the Italian language will divide this Masters Thesis. It should be noted that the theoretical review will consist of a first and second chapters of consumer behavior and marketing

sections with sub-sections relevant to those topics. This Masters Thesis will also include in the summary a reference to Estonian contributions of the natural and organic market of cosmetic products and sustainable alternatives.

1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN HEALTH AND WELLNESS

1.1 A Brief Theory of Consumer Behavior: Definitions and the Market Segmentation

The author of this Masters Thesis will commence the first chapter of this work with a theoretical context, which defines the science of consumer behavior and examines the identity of the consumer. This individual is further personified in terms of lifestyle choices and demand for products and services that provide health-conscious and sustainable values. Hence, this chapter will give light to the institutions that investigate the classification of the consumer and interests relative to this individual.

The term “*Consumer behavior* can be defined as *the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using and evaluating products, services and ideas which they expect will satisfy their needs*” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1978:4). “The study of consumer behavior is the study of how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (money, time, effort) on consumption-related items. It includes the study of *what* they buy, *why* they buy it, *how* they buy it, *when* they buy it, *where* they buy it, and *how often* they buy it” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1978:4). Schiffman and Kanuk (1978:4) also state that, “The study of consumer behavior goes even further and examines the feelings and the actions of the consumer *after* she makes her purchase.” Accordingly, the consumption of natural and organic cosmetic products means that purchasing could reflect values regarding specific product ingredients (i.e. that the ingredients contained in the product contribute to the individual’s personal wellness) or that the components of the product follow an efficient life cycle or even that the firm contributes to sustainable activities.

From the understanding of consumer behavior is the closely linked relationship between market segmentation. Schiffman and Kanuk (1978:13) state that, “*Market segmentation*, in brief, is *the process of dividing a potential market into distinct subsets of consumers and selecting one or more segments as a market target to be reached with a distinct marketing mix.*” The connection shared by these concepts is the unique identification of the consumer

as segmented into smaller markets on the basis of specialized variables. However, determining criterion must first be considered prior to segmenting markets. “Segments must be identifiable; that is, a significant proportion of a firm’s potential market must have a common need or characteristic that can be identified by the marketer” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1978:13). Moreover, the authors’ from the referenced text state that, “There must be a sufficient number of people with the same characteristic to make it profitable for a marketer to adopt a policy of market segmentation” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1978:14). Accessibility is the final criterion cited by Schiffman & Kanuk (1978:14) stating that, “Another requirement for effective market segmentation is that the segment be accessible; that is, the marketer must be able to reach the market segmentation efficiently through appropriate media with a minimum of waste coverage.”

Following the aforementioned criterion is the differentiation of market segments in the following Table 1-1. These variables are indicative of the essential demographics needed in further attaining more definitive segmentations.

Table 1-1. Market Segmentation Categories and Selected Segmentation Variables

Variables	Examples
Geographic Characteristics	
Region	Northerners, southerners, easterners, westerners
City size	Major metropolitan areas, small cities, towns
Density of area	Urban, suburban, exurban, rural
Climate	Temperate, hot, humid
Demographic Characteristics	
Age	Under 11, 12–17, 18–34, 35–49, 50+
Sex	Male, female
Marital status	Singles, marrieds
Family size	1 child, 2–4 children, 5 or more children
Income	Under \$10,000, \$10,000–\$14,999, \$15,000 and over
Occupation	Professional, blue-collar, white-collar, agricultural
Education	Some high school, high school graduate, some college, college graduate
Psychographic Characteristics	
Life-style	Swingers, straights, conservatives, status seekers
Personality	Extroverts, introverts, dogmatics
Attitudes	Positive, negative, indifferent
Benefits sought	Convenience, prestige, economy
Social-Cultural Characteristics	
Religion	Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, other
Race	Black, Caucasian, Oriental
Nationality	American, Italian, British, Chinese, Mexican
Social class	Lower, middle, upper
Family life cycle	Bachelors, young marrieds, empty nesters
User Behavior Characteristics	
Usage rate	Heavy, medium, light users, non-users
Brand loyalty status	None, medium, strong

Source: Consumer Behavior, 1978, p. 18.

Further context on the topic of market segmentation suggests that, “One of the most important uses of demographics is in the development of segmentation strategy – that is, the selection of the “best” potential segments, or sets of consumers, for a product. The potential of a segment depends on the level of need for the product or service and the likelihood of repurchase” (Robertson, Zielinski & Ward, 1984:341). “A population breakdown by age, income, education, and so forth provides a starting point for

determining the most feasible and potentially profitable target market. After demographic targeting of the segment, a consideration of values held by that segment adds to knowledge about consumer needs and tastes” (Robertson et al.: 341).

Thus, segmentation strategy is effective in different scenarios:

1. “**Introducing New Products or Services:** An accurate demographic and value profile of the target market helps managers discover new product ideas.”
2. “**Repositioning Products or Services:** A knowledge of demographic trends and values also help in repositioning products.”
3. “**Media Strategy:** ...In general, consumers with different demographic profiles tend to expose themselves to different print and television media vehicles.”
4. “**Long-Range Planning:** Monitoring changes in society can assist managers in long-term planning.”

(Robertson et al., 1984: 341,342).

As the health and wellness market interlinks with a multitude of product and service categories (i.e. personal care, tourism, building, transportation, etc.) it seems that consumer market segmentations are definitive, but share a common objective to ultimately reach a unique consumer and in essence to educate themselves (i.e. the institutions) in better serving this individual.

1.2 A Theoretical Framework and References to Segmentations: Natural Marketing Institute (NMI) Health and Wellness Segmentation and Organic Segmentation

Segmenting consumer data is an efficient means of collection and application in lifestyle analysis. Loudon and Della Bitta (1988:119) affirm that, “Lifestyle-segmentation research

measures (1) how people spend their time engaging in activities, (2) what is of most interest or importance to them in their immediate surroundings, and (3) their opinions and views about themselves and the world around them. Together, these three areas are generally referred to as *Activities, Interests, and Opinions*, or simply AIOs.” The following Table 5-1 illustrates characteristics relative to the abovementioned areas in the form of lifestyle dimensions.

Table 5-1. Lifestyle Dimensions

TABLE 5-1

Activities	Interests	Opinions	Demographics	Lifestyle Dimensions
Work	Family	Themselves	Age	
Hobbies	Home	Social issues	Education	
Social events	Job	Politics	Income	
Vacation	Community	Business	Occupation	
Entertainment	Recreation	Economics	Family size	
Club membership	Fashion	Education	Dwelling	
Community	Food	Products	Geography	
Shopping	Media	Future	City size	
Sports	Achievements	Culture	Stage in life cycle	

Source: Joseph T. Plummer, "The Concept and Application of Life Style Segmentation," *Journal of Marketing*, 38:34, January 1974, published by the American Marketing Association.

Source: Consumer Behavior Concepts and Applications, 1988, p. 119.

Loudon and Della Bitta (1988:120,121) further distinguish lifestyle segmentation as utilized on the basis of the following four methods of application:

1. **“Segmentation Based on General Lifestyle Characteristics:** the marketer seeks to classify the consumer population into groups based on general lifestyle characteristics, so that consumers within the groups have similar lifestyles.”
2. **“Segmentation Based on Product-Specific Lifestyle Characteristics:**seeks to understand consumer behavior related to a particular product or service.”

3. **“Profiling Based on General Lifestyle Characteristics:**may need to profile a homogenous group of respondents according to the “typical” individual in the group.”
4. **“Profiling Based on Product-Specific Lifestyle Characteristics:** when a psychographic study is devoted to a single product category.... the researcher can focus instead on a limited group of relevant, product-related dimensions.”

The Natural Marketing Institute (NMI) is a consultancy firm that plans and conducts primary research through the expertise of in-house staff and in its affiliates with global partnerships. The firm is qualified in performing a full range of custom qualitative services and quantitative methodologies, which seek to provide insight and strategy to businesses. The firm services a multitude of areas including, but are not limited to: “Strategic Marketing and Business Consulting; Innovation and Growth Development; Full Service Qualitative and Quantitative Research; Brand Development / Expansion / Positioning; Consumer Segmentation Strategies; Emerging Trend Identification; Communications and Media Strategy” (NMI, 2011-2014).

NMI has worked to perfect its consumer segmentation models through conducting effective research across a host of products and services on a global scale. Segment analysis is beneficial among several facets of which to identify consumers. Analysis could be used for, to name a few: “Category and Brand Purchases; Cross-category Purchases; White Space and New Concept Opportunity Development; Value of Potential Promotions; How to Identify and Reach Your Target” (NMI, 2011-2014).

Relative to the topic of this Masters Thesis, the author wishes to explore Natural Marketing Institute’s Health & Wellness Segmentation cross-examined by the firm’s Organic Segmentation. Additionally, an upcoming sub-section of this Thesis will be devoted to identifying the LOHAS organization, which will also include a referenced consumer segmentation. First, the following tables identifying indicators from both segmentations are illustrated below:

Table 1. NMI’s Health and Wellness Segmentation (NMI, U.S.A., 2011-2014)

INDICATOR				
<p>Well Beings®</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most health proactive • Market leaders & influencers • Highest organic usage • Use some supplements • Use many health modalities • Most green 	<p>Food Actives®</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream healthy • Basics, balance and control • Desire inherently healthy foods • Most influenced by physicians • Least eco-friendly • Price sensitive 	<p>Magic Bullets®</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience driven • Heavy pill usage – supplements OTC, Rx • Health managers vs. preventers • Weight managers • Least likely to cook at home • Least likely to exercise 	<p>Fence Sitters®</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% have children in HH • Stressed out, want help and control • More health kicks but no clear goals • Receptive to eco-friendly • Active weight loss • High social media usage 	<p>Eat, Drink and Be Merrys®</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least health active • Unconcerned about prevention • Focused on taste • Most price driven • Younger

Source: Natural Marketing Institute (NMI), 2011-2014. Recreated by author.

Table 1.2 NMI’s Organic Segmentation (NMI, U.S.A., 2011-2014)

INDICATOR			
Devoteds®	Temperates®	Dabblers®	Reluctants®
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed • High usage and willingness to pay premium • Integrated into lifestyle • Highest belief in diet / health connection • Most likely to influence others to try products they like 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pragmatists • Moderate organic attitudes • Fit organic into existing lifestyle • Above average orientation toward healthy living • Pathway to organic show strong health orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-committal • Price sensitive • Only 45% indicate usage • Higher orientation toward disease prevention • Less trust in and understanding of organic regulations and benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t trust organic labeling • Don’t feel organic is worth the money • Believe conventional foods taste better • Only 29% indicate usage

Source: Natural Marketing Institute (NMI), 2011-2014. Recreated by author.

The author of this Masters Thesis created the above tables with content derived from the Natural Marketing Institute (NMI) official website. The tables function as an illustrative support to the discussion of consumer segmentation.

The above tables seem to indicate segments on a scale from most following consumers to least following by the names (and attributes) of the segment indicators (as described in the tables). Both segmentations are orientated on health or an aspect of healthy living, which

is the reason why the author chose to examine the above segmentations. Organic fits into health and wellness and could be considered a lifestyle choice. For instance, the Well Beings® consumer of the Health and Wellness Segment seems to indicate that this category demonstrates the highest organic usage. Among the Health and Wellness Segmentation are references to medication usage (i.e. alternative means or medical science), food / diet, personal health (i.e. weight management, consumption of medication, exercise) and green / eco-friendly values. The above Organic Segmentation seems to correlate diet, healthy living and the overall concept of integrating organic into the daily lifestyle. Popular belief may suggest that organic is connected to diet and particular food consumption, but it encompasses a broader range of organic living, which could also include the author's topic of natural and organic cosmetic products.

Health and wellness is a driver of each definitive segment related to health (i.e. organic), and the segments reflect particular habits or lifestyles subject to health and wellness. The traits outlined in each indicator reflect lifestyle, habits, demographics related to household and price in particular, eco-values, beliefs and personality traits. Some indicators also provide statistics linked to usage or household demographics. In terms of cross-examining both segmentations, similarities exist between each corresponding indicator. For instance, if examining the Well Beings® indicator of the Health and Wellness Segmentation to the Devoteds® indicator of the Organic Segmentation, it seems that the consumers from these indicators adhere to the highest level of healthy living (as presented on this scale). The consumers from these indicators share common attributes related to achieving a healthy lifestyle in terms of integrating the overall facets of health into his or her daily routine. At the same time, consumers (from both indicators) act as influencers of his / her category denoting a common trait of the consumer of demonstrating the most pro-activity. The pattern (for both segmentations) suggests a descending direction among the consumer denoting more relatively devoted lifestyles to more disbelieving consumers, those with alternate preferences, or those struggling or not achieving personal wellness.

As the Health and Wellness Segmentation and Organic Segmentation are similar, the difference appears to be that the Organic Segmentation branches from the whole concept

of health and wellness distinguishing this segment to that of its own category. It is an advantage for organizations (i.e. NMI) to develop and utilize the consumer segmentation models, as it illustrates the consumers (i.e. indicators) and allows for a close analysis suggesting patterns and correlations internally and externally of the segmentation. Consequently, industry professionals could make business decisions on the basis of these segmentations (and others) as well as utilize these tools as a foundation for developing strategies in terms of improving the lifestyle for consumers of a particular indicator, for instance. Professionals may raise questions regarding specific groups (i.e. Eat, Drink and Be Merry's® and Reluctants®) that are least concerned with personal wellness and work toward integrating targeted groups. The same could be said for well-integrated groups, but with the objective to maintain consumer interest.

Referring back to the methods of applying lifestyle segmentations, definitive segmentations such as those developed by NMI allow researchers and marketers to understand the consumer and specify problems related to general lifestyle characteristics, those related to products and services, identification of common users and an analysis of the user as related to product-specific features.

Accordingly, Loudon and Della Bitta (1988:124,125) refer to uses of lifestyle information in terms of meeting un-served market segments (i.e. "Developing New Products"), through a strategic framework (i.e. "Developing Promotion Strategy") and the platforms in which they are launched (i.e. "Selecting Media / Determining Creative Strategy"). The author wishes to conclude this section by citing Loudon and Della Bitta (1988:126,127) referencing the benefits of lifestyle segmentation by stating that, "The marketing manager may be able to develop improved multidimensional views of key target segments, uncover new product opportunities, obtain better product position, develop improved advertising communications based on a richer, more lifelike portrait of the target consumer, and generally improve overall marketing strategies."

Both sub-sections 1.1 and 1.2 provided general insight into consumer and lifestyle behavior on a theoretical basis. This was further substantiated by industry references of

consumer segmentations, which also depicted a generational development as the referenced theoretical works date some decades ago. The link between these sub-sections and the next will discuss further the concept of customer / brand loyalty and as related to consumer data.

1.3 Understanding the Consumer: A New Consumer Approach and Customer Loyalty

The previous sub-sections introduced the study of consumer behavior and discussed lifestyle segmentations supported by industry references. The author will commence this sub-section with a brief theoretical overview of brand loyalty. First, a basic understanding of the concept will be introduced followed by supporting models that attempt to better understand the concept of customer loyalty to a brand. The author has chosen to focus on brand and customer loyalty, as it is the basis for the referenced industry insight and is an essential strength for the success of a firm.

“Brand loyalty refers to the tendency of consumers to consistently purchase a particular brand over time (Block & Roering, 1979:535).” As brand loyalty is a concept that is often misconstrued, the above referenced authors first discuss the basis for this reasoning. Block and Roering (1979:535) assert that, “The controversy and misunderstanding result from the fact that brand loyalty has been conceptualized as both the result of consumer choice and the cause of consumer choice.” Consequently, consumer behavior researchers and marketers understood brand loyalty as the sequence of purchasing a particular brand. Consumers were grouped and implemented in the following categories:

1. *“Undivided loyalty* – consumers who consistently purchase the same brand, that is, consistently purchase brand A or brand B or brand C”
2. *“Divided loyalty* – consumers who regularly purchase two brands, thus manifesting the choice pattern ABABAB”

3. “*Unstable loyalty* – consumers who purchase a product several times then switch to another brand for several purchases, thus manifesting the choice pattern AAABBBCCC”
4. “*No loyalty* – consumers who consistently purchase different brands.”

(Block & Roering, 1979:535)

Thus, the brand-choice sequence definition seems to vary among different types of products, which has led to the proportion of purchases definition. This states that, “Brand loyalty is considered to be the proportion of total purchases within a given product category devoted to the most frequently purchased brand or set of brands (Block & Roering, 1979:536).” Accordingly, this definition of brand loyalty applies the concept of “*multibrand loyalty*” in terms of “*dual-brand loyalty*”, which asserts “the percent of total purchases devoted to the two most favorite brands” and “*triple-brand loyalty*” “refers to the three most favorite brands (Block & Roering, 1979:536).”

However, the concept of brand loyalty is inclusive of (and most distinguished with) consumers’ preferences and purchases. Thus, Block and Roering (1979:536) state that, “Brand loyalty is considerably more than repeat purchase behavior, and explicit recognition must be made of the difference between intentional loyalty and spurious loyalty.”

Block and Roering (1979:536) assert that the most useful and complete definition of brand loyalty is the following: “Brand loyalty is (1) the biased (i.e., non-random) (2) behavioral response (i.e., purchase) (3) expressed over time (4) by some decision-making unit (5) with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and is (6) a function of psychological (i.e., decision-making, evaluative) processes,” Consequently, the authors affirm that, “The two major strengths of this definition are: (1) it distinguishes repeat purchase behavior, which focuses only on behavior, from loyalty, which encompasses the antecedents of behavior, and (2) it emphasizes that the unit of analysis must be the “decision-making unit” (Block & Roering, 1979:536-537).”

The author of this Thesis wishes to further support this concept with the following visuals, which aim to discern an understanding of customer loyalty.

Allen and Rao (2000:8) suggest that, “Loyalty may have two primary dimensions: affective and rational as shown in Figure 1.5.” The authors further state that, “The *affective* dimension of loyalty has emotional underpinnings and involves human interaction.” In contrast, “The *cognitive* dimension of loyalty includes evaluations of the business relationship that involve price, proximity, timeliness, and so on” (Allen & Rao, 2000:8).

Figure 1.5. Affective and Cognitive Dimensions of Loyalty

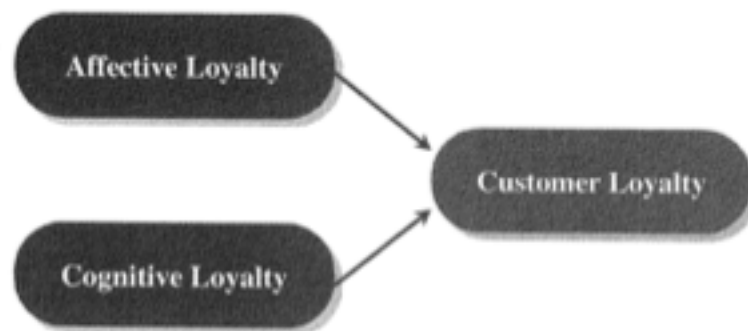


FIGURE 1.5 Affective and cognitive dimensions of loyalty.

Source: Analysis of Customer Satisfaction Data, 2000, p.8.

The following visual representation depicts the evolution of customer loyalty as it develops to customer retention. It should be noted that the abovementioned figure is also integrated within the chain. Essentially, the following Figure 1.6 acknowledges the relationship between loyalty and satisfaction, as it depicts the variables, which lead to customer retention.

Figure 1.6. Relationship Between Loyalty and Satisfaction

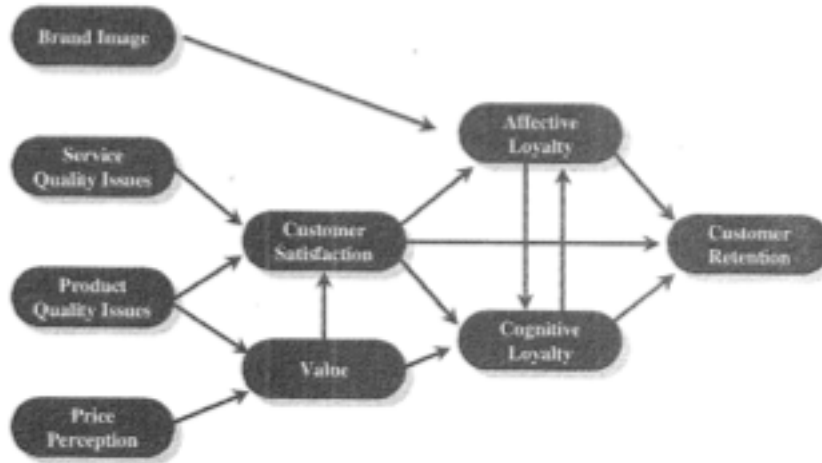


FIGURE 1.6 Relationship between loyalty and satisfaction.

Source: Analysis of Customer Satisfaction Data, 2000, p. 9.

A causal chain is suggested by the above figure, which is analyzed in the following text. The *predictor variables* begin with: *brand image, service quality, product quality* and *price*. Following this is the *first set of intermediate variables*, which are *customer satisfaction* and *value*, “a function of both product quality and price perceptions and directly affects customer satisfaction” (Allen & Rao, 2000:8,9). Continuing is the *second set of intermediate variables* of *affective loyalty* and *cognitive loyalty*. Brand image perceptions impacts the emotional factors (affective loyalty) of loyalty, whereas value perceptions and customer satisfaction influence the rational aspects (cognitive loyalty) of loyalty. Thus, customer satisfaction, affective loyalty and cognitive loyalty directly affect *customer retention*.

Relative to brand loyalty and customer loyalty is the connection of consumer perceptions in selecting products and services. The following six principles are based on the context of perception:

1. "Perception is *selective*. An individual cannot possibly perceive all stimulus objects within a perceptual field; therefore, only certain objects are selected."
2. "Perception is *organized*. Perceptions have meaning for the individual: they do not appear to be a "buzzing, blooming confusion.""
3. "Perception depends upon *stimulus factors*. The nature of the stimuli presented have a strong bearing on whether something is perceived and how it is perceived."
4. "Perception depends upon *personal factors*. The individual's physiological, emotional, and experiential characteristics have a powerful impact on perception."
5. "*Sensory threshold levels* operate in perception. Human beings have upper and lower limits in responding to sensory stimulation and have differential thresholds in noticing minimal differences in stimuli."
6. "Perception is subject to a *halo effect*. This is a tendency for the person to apply general impressions, frequently based on limited information, to specific attributes."

(Robertson et al., 1984:167)

The principles expressed in the perception theory apply to the author's (of this Thesis) research proposal to investigate consumer perceptions. Perceptions to natural and organic cosmetic products are present in the consumer's thought process when purchasing or considering purchasing a product and are influenced by a range of factors. These are related to personal values, external influences (i.e. corporate, community, family and friends) and the overall experience in product usage, to name a few and collectively, impact consumer perceptions.

In natural and organic cosmetic products, personal values are numerous and are likely to include factors relative to preference (or non-preference) to specific ingredients, values related to animal testing and the quality assurance and regulation of products that are marked certified. Essentially, personal values are significant to the product category of natural and organic cosmetics as it represents areas of personal care, health and wellness and function as an influential part of consumer expectations of these types of products.

External influences also have a stronghold on consumer perceptions to these products, especially in the organizational practice of ethically producing natural and organic cosmetic products and in supporting various causes that consumers are passionate about. Family, friends or close influences also impact consumer perceptions suggesting particular values that also become integrated into the consumer lifestyle.

The consumer perceptions in the overall experience during product usage are significant among consumer senses resulting in somewhat directly perceived values of the product. Product quality, texture, functionality and efficacy are a few of the many perceptions that consumers value during the product usage experience and is especially valued to a consumer of natural and organic cosmetic products.

The analysis of consumer data seeks to provide a more in depth and tailored approach of marketing to the consumer, including a focused view on such factors as purchasing patterns, tastes, preferences, unmet needs, affiliation for newness and demographic data such as age, income and ethnicity. As consumer data is collected and analyzed, marketers and researchers evaluate overall shifts in consumer behavior with the ability to make more efficient business decisions. Conclusively this has resulted in what Forrester Research deems the “Age of the Customer,” which asserts that, “Brands are no longer marketing to their consumers – rather, they turn to their consumers for insight into how they want to be marketed to” (Katz, 2013). As opposed to a generally “product-centric” focus, “a consumer-centric approach” (i.e. “identifying consumers and their preferences first”) has emerged in response to highly available consumer data and complexities in the current business environment, also requiring brands to prioritize to existing consumers (Katz, 2013).

Accordingly, a concentration on better understanding the consumer through collecting and effectively implementing data (which could be attainable across different platforms, i.e. channels, like technology) could also blossom into identifying new opportunities and

redefine success metrics. It is affirmed that, “The core strength of consumer data lies in its ability to validate actual purchasing behavior and...chart changes in behavior over time” (Katz, 2013).

In summary, the following points reflect the strength of utilizing consumer data to successfully achieve a more effective outcome:

- “As more consumer data becomes available, beauty brands need to optimize it and the resulting knowledge of how their customers shop.”
- “Prioritizing customer retention over new customer acquisition is a growing necessity in the beauty marketplace, and customer data lends a mountain of information on consumers’ habits, buying power, likes, dislikes and more.”
- “The ability to study customer behavior over time is significant, as it allows for better data despite variations and changing consumer preferences.”
- “With the various media available to beauty brands, the data to gather and analyze is more prevalent than ever.”

(Katz, 2013)

In support of the reference to consumer data previously discussed, Dunnhumby (as mentioned in the above source) is a consultancy firm, which emphasizes a consumer-focused approach, referring to themselves as a “customer science company” (Dunnhumby, 2014). As loyal consumers are the focal point of brand development, the firm seeks to deeply analyze consumer data forming insights, which are tailored to making the most suitable marketing decisions leading to a measurable means of effectively evaluating brand outcomes.

Thus, Dunnhumby implements the following process across a multitude of platforms:

Table 1.3 Approaches for Effective Consumer Reach (dunnhumby Ltd., U.K., 2014)

<p>PLATFORM <i>Data</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data discovery • Data Partnerships • Data sourcing • Data strategy 	<p><i>Science</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecasting • Insight delivery • Insight governance • Targeting 	<p><i>Customer Knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attribution • Customer measurement • Customer research • Segmentation
<p><i>Category, Channel, and Format</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability • Category strategy • Merchandising • Multi-channel strategy • New product development • Range • Store decisions 	<p><i>Communications and Media</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact management and strategy • Customer activation • Loyalty Retention • Media measurement • Retail media 	<p><i>Price and Promotions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zone and banner strategy • What-if scenario planning • Competitive strategy • Predictive analytics
<p><i>Customer Strategy and Engagement</i> <i>For Brands</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand management • Customer strategy and capability • Demonstrating measurable value • Internal planning and alignment • Optimising market effectiveness • Winning with innovation • Winning with retail 	<p><i>For organizations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer-first culture • Customer strategy and planning • Organisational change • Customer training and education • World-class capabilities and tools 	<p><i>For retailers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized shopping experience (in-stores and online) • Multi-format, multi-channel strategy and execution • Customer insight and tools for HQ and store colleagues • Loyalty and advocacy programme execution

Source: dunnhumby, 2014. Recreated by author.

Hence, the author of this Masters Thesis created the above table with content derived from the dunnhumby official website. This visual representation serves as a comprehensive means of chronologically following the consumer reach from data collection to the various forms of implementation ultimately leading to a personalized experience (i.e. enhanced customer loyalty). Dunnhumby partners with numerous client brands with the aim of providing a more superior impact in retaining customer loyalty.

The process is divided by a determination of consumer data on different spectrums. This begins with a focused examination of the consumer (drawn out through various approaches), followed by the implementation among a scientific platform for even further analysis and then applied through a representative form (i.e. measurement, model).

The process proceeds to the next phase of personalizing the experience as marketers and researchers strategize suitable platforms in which to distribute. Effectively delivering the message in communicating to the customer contributes to the personalizing the customer experience phase. Thus effectively planning for promotional activities also contributes to the customer experience during this phase.

In concluding the process, customer strategy and engagement are targeted among the brand level, organization and retailers where the customer experience is developed and integrated and customer loyalty is key.

This sub-section addressed brand / customer loyalty on a theoretical basis followed by an industry citation relating the concept to beauty brands, further supporting this concept as practiced on an organizational level. The last sub-section of this chapter will acknowledge the concepts suggested throughout this chapter by referring to an industry-specific example (i.e. LOHAS). Sustainable living and the consumer demand for such lifestyle choices will also be discussed and connected relative to the topic of this thesis, as proceeding further into the following chapter.

1.4 The Integration of Sustainable Living as a Lifestyle Choice: Understanding the Global LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) Movement and Defining 'Conshumanism'

In this final sub-section of the first chapter, the author will introduce practical and theoretical insight, which includes reference to the Global LOHAS Movement and Conshumanism, a concept that extends from LOHAS.

The following text introduces the significance of LOHAS, which represents a vast market that continues to evolve and a consumer share that is representative in size and in future progression, but remains largely untapped. LOHAS Online, “Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) describes an estimated \$290 billion U.S. marketplace for goods and services focused on health, the environment, social justice, personal development and sustainable living.” “Approximately 13-19% percent of the adults in the U.S. are currently considered LOHAS Consumers.” “This is based on surveys of the U.S. adult population estimated at 215 million.” “Research shows that one in four adult Americans is part of this group – nearly 41 million people” (LOHAS, 2010). Hence, in spite of the global economic recession, studies show that the demand for LOHAS-oriented products has remained consistent (Ning, 2010).

Although this group is made up of more than 50 million individuals from the United States ages 18 and older, this demographic is not confined solely to the U.S. but has extended consumer base globally in Europe and Asia. Statistics claims that, “Worldwide; this market segment is currently estimated to be worth \$540 billion annually” (Howard, 2008). For instance there exists a German LOHAS consumer and a LOHAS segment for the Australian market. Numerous types of firms (i.e. marketing, research, branding, consultancy, etc.) collaborate to develop insights and expand consumer share of the LOHAS segment. Accordingly, LOHAS is considerably dominant among the Asian markets. In Japan, the term was introduced around 2005 and claims to be understood by 60% of the Japanese population, according to a report by a Japanese based firm. The concept has extended into LOHAS-branded restaurants, bottled water and apparel. The Asian counterparts namely China, Taiwan and Philippines has also taken to the concept implementing LOHAS influenced alternatives ranging from recreational areas to department store themes to hotels (Ning, 2010).

“LOHAS is an acronym for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability.” The term was originally named “cultural creatives” by sociologist Paul H. Ray, PhD, and psychologist Sherry Ruth Anderson, PhD. Consequently, both individuals are also co-authors of “*The Cultural Creatives: How 50 Million People are Changing the World*” (Three Rivers Press, 2000) “LOHAS is defined as a group of consumers who make conscientious purchasing and investing decisions based on social and cultural values” (Howard, 2008).

The LOHAS market is attributed to basing purchasing decisions related to interests in the environment, sustainability, corporate social responsibility, organic foods and products, health and wellness, and a mind / body / spirit balance (Howard, 2008). Characteristic to LOHAS consumers are that they commonly are early predictors of future trends and cultural shifts following a habitual lifestyle, product or service life cycle. They also boast qualities asserting themselves as value-driven individuals. “LOHAS consumers become aware of products or services (i.e. organic products or alternative health therapies), try them, adopt these products into their lifestyle, become loyal consumers, then influence their families and friends to do the same” (Howard, 2008). Consequently, these individuals are influencing the way in sustainable economy, personal development, ecological and healthy lifestyles, and alternative health care (Howard, 2008).

“The LOHAS market itself was originally founded in 2000” (LOHAS Lesson, 2008). Accordingly, as distinguished in the table below, The LOHAS markets includes the following six sectors:

Table 1.4 LOHAS Division of Market Sectors (LOHAS, U.S.A., 2010)

SECTOR Personal Health \$117 billion Natural, organic products Nutritional products Integrative health care Dietary supplements Mind body spirit products	Green Building \$100 billion Home certification Energy star appliances Sustainable flooring Renewable energy systems Wood alternatives
Eco Tourism \$42 billion Eco-tourism travel Eco-adventure travel	Natural Lifestyles \$10 billion Indoor & outdoor furnishings Organic cleaning supplies Compact fluorescent lights Social change philanthropy Apparel
Alternative Transportation \$20 billion Hybrid vehicles Biodiesel fuel Car sharing programs	Alternative Energy \$1 billion Renewable energy credits Green pricing

Source: LOHAS, 2010. Recreated by author.

The author of this Thesis created the above table with content obtained from the LOHAS official website. It outlines the market sectors that serve the LOHAS consumer. Despite the fact that each sector is indirectly related to one another, the commonality that exists among this consumer are the interconnections of mind, body and spirit emphasizing personal development or achieving his or her full human potential. The sectors are different, but the set of values embodied by the consumer are similar. At the same time, the interconnections between global economies, cultures, environments, and political systems (which are also impacted by the above sectors) play a large role in the holistic mindset of the LOHAS consumer (LOHAS, 2010). The author would like to note that the Personal Health sector seems to be leading in profitability with \$117 billion showing the stronghold that this particular sector has on the LOHAS consumer.

The breakdown of each customer type of the LOHAS Consumer Segmentation is indicated in concurrent with the following Table 1.5. The Natural Marketing Institute (introduced in previous sub-sections) is a firm identified with LOHAS.

The five categories that make up the LOHAS Segmentation include *LOHAS*, *Naturalites*, *Conventionals*, *Drifters* and *Unconcerned*. Of the five categories, *Naturalites*, *Drifters* and *Conventionals* are, “Collectively referred to as “Sustainable Mainstream”” (NMI, 2011-2014). Each category is outlined in the following text:

LOHAS: As previously mentioned earlier in the text, “LOHAS consumers have comprised approximately 13-19% of the adult population in the United States” (Ning, 2010) with this percentage remaining steady. Usage of LOHAS products surpasses most other segments, as this individual is also demanding greater sensitivity to these issues from numerous corporate activities. Essentially, “consumers within this segment continue to be early adopters, influential among friends and family, less price-sensitive and more brand-loyal.” This group is a choice target for strategic marketing activities as personified by their internal values and ideals of social structure (Ning, 2010).

Naturalites: In general, this segment has been one of the largest of the U.S. adult population. This individual is health-conscious in terms of personal health and tends to utilize many healthy and natural consumer packaged good (CPGs). They prefer health-related products due to the health benefits offered (i.e. air purifiers, hypoallergenic mattresses). Differing from the LOHAS group, Naturalites are less concerned with planetary health and possibly even social standards (i.e. fair labor practices of companies or whether a product could be recycled in the future) (Ning, 2010).

Conventionals: “This is the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population due to the economic downturn, and the shift in consumer attitudes toward cost-savings” (Ning, 2010). This group leans toward products that emphasize usage qualities with a combination of monetary value and conservational efficiency. For instance, energy-efficient electronics and

appliances or green building products fall into this group. This group has a propensity to be more similarly inclined to reflect aspects of the LOHAS customer in terms of products and activities (Ning, 2010).

Drifters: This group tends to more balanced on some aspects of the LOHAS consumer in terms of attitude, but behaviors of this individual lag behind that of the average U.S. adult. In general, this group is young, and has more financial instability. This group's values structure and ethical consumption standards are not fully developed (Ning, 2010).

Unconcerned: The individuals in this group are generally not concerned about the environment as a result of personal values or economic circumstances (Ning, 2010).

The following Table 1.5 coincides with the previously mentioned discussion of each consumer category of the LOHAS Segmentation. Outlined in each column are the traits, lifestyle habits and behaviors that are generally characteristic to the specified consumer segment. It should be noted that the Drifters® segment proceeds the Conventionals® segments in Table 1.5 (i.e. whereas in the above text it is indicated opposite).

Table 1.5 NMI’s LOHAS Segmentation (NMI, U.S.A., 2011-2014)

INDICATOR	Naturalites®	Drifters®	Conventionals®	Unconcerneds®
<p>LOHAS®</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active stewards of the environment • Dedicated to personal <u>and</u> planetary health • Lifestyle oriented • Heaviest purchasers and influencers of green / socially responsible products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated by personal health more than planetary health • Searching for healthy products, which may (secondarily) be green • Income restricts behavior, creating attitudinal versus behavioral disconnects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green followers • Relatively new to the green space; in search of easy lifestyle and product changes • Want to be seen as doing their part • Currently responsible for market growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste-conscious, practical, and rational • Primarily driven by cost savings; eco-benefits secondary • Well-educated and above-average income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unconcerned about the environment and society • Dealing with day-to-day challenges

Source: Natural Marketing Institute (NMI), 2011-2014. Recreated by author.

It could be said that each consumer segment is unique, as the individuals from these segments possess his / her own values and reasons affirming specific product and service choices (or not choosing them) and lifestyle choices. In addition to this, external factors including political, economic and social also influence many consumer choices. Thus, marketers, researchers and industry professionals in general, must be aware of the reasons surrounding why the individuals of a particular category are attributed to the qualities of that category (i.e. external factors could refer to demographic data such as income or

education). The connection between industry and retaining consumer base is essential, and at the same time industry professionals must also thoroughly understand the consumer and utilize insights to purposefully tailor specific interests to the consumer, but also by knowing how the consumer wishes to be marketed to.

Consumer movements (i.e. LOHAS) and trends (i.e. including LOHAS and trends labeled under names such as 'green,' 'natural,' 'organic,' 'fair trade,' etc.) have paved the way industries develop products and services resulting in concepts such as 'Conshumansim.' This term defines "conscious and humane consumption' or 'consumption with maximal awareness, efficiency and enjoyment and minimal pain, energy, waste and pollution'" (Cohen, 2008:13, 211).

Ideally, this concept sets out to inform the consumer while also addressing awareness of 'consciousness' about 'consumption habits'. Thus, "conshuman consumption' implies that consumers ask a range of questions about the products they are consuming such as" (Cohen, 2008:13):

- "What is in it?"
- "Who made it?"
- "Who benefits from the purchase?"
- "Where did it come from?"
- "How did it get here?"
- "What is its lifecycle and embodied energy?"
- "What is its environment and social impact?"
- "What are the alternatives?"
- "Is the product really necessary?"

(Cohen, 2008:13)

Concurrently, questions could arise from the corporate perspective, suggesting the thought process assumed by the individual(s) commencing a project or planning to purchase products or equipment that could contribute in a more superior manner (Holzberger, 2010). The author of this Thesis found the following questions crucial in any development as parallel with those above.

- "Do I need it?"
- "Can I live without it?"

- “Can I borrow, rent or get it used?”
- “Is the project designed to minimize waste?”
- “Can it be smaller, lighter or made from fewer materials?”
- “Is it designed to be durable or multifunctional?”
- “Does it use renewable resources?”
- “Are the product and packaging refillable, recyclable or repairable?”
- “Is it made with postconsumer recycled or reclaimed materials, and if so, how much?”
- “Is it available in a less toxic form?”
- “Is it available from a socially and environmentally responsible company?”
- “Is it made or available locally?”

(Holzberger, 2010)

Conclusively, this chapter, which commenced with a theoretical foundation to customer behavior and market segmentations, was substantiated by industry constructs of lifestyle segments. Understanding a theoretical basis to brand / customer loyalty was essential, as the sub-section provided further insight through industry report and organizational practice. This chapter concluded with a practical knowledge of the LOHAS Global Movement and affiliate segments, coincided with key consumer questions resulting in consumer demand for preferred lifestyle choices. The second chapter of this Masters Thesis will coincide with an introduction to the terminology interlinked with the functional areas in the development of the natural and organic cosmetic products category.

2. A THEORETICAL APPROACH OF MARKETING FOR WELLNESS AND COSMETICS

2.1 A Brief Theoretical Basis in the Context of Authenticity: The Evolution of Authenticity in a Consumer Economy

The second chapter of this Masters Thesis will establish a theoretical framework of the concept of authenticity as it applies to the current state of industry as well as its position to the natural and organic category of cosmetic products. This chapter will examine industry terminology that represents the functional roles in the development of natural and organic cosmetic products. This Masters Thesis will reference the Gilmore and Pine interpretation of authenticity only, as there is no space to further discuss its complexity in this Thesis.

Based on the author's (of this Thesis) perception, authenticity describes a quality that an individual perceives with some variance of value to a product, service and in current industry, experience. As for natural and organic cosmetic products, authenticity could be valued in the perceived benefits to the suggested claims, deeming a product to be more or less authentic in its perception. Authenticity could also account for the consumer's ideals, value system and perceived self-image as reflected in the choice product purchase.

The authors Gilmore and Pine (2007:4,5) state the following, "Practically *all* consumers desire authenticity. Every person is unique – intimately aware of and valuing his own uniqueness. The consumer sensibility for authenticity evidences itself whenever informed individuals independently purchase *any* item with which they are intensely involved. What differs is the combination of categories and times underlying these purchases, the particular offerings they personally view as authentic or inauthentic, and the terms they use to describe their opinions."

In relation to this, the following consumer sensibilities are shown below, with “Authenticity” representing the most current development in a service-driven economy:

1. “**Availability:** Purchasing on the basis of accessing *a reliable supply*”
2. “**Cost:** Purchasing on the basis of obtaining an *affordable price*”
3. “**Quality:** Purchasing on the basis of excelling in *product performance*”
4. “**Authenticity:** Purchasing on the basis of conforming to *self-image*”

(Gilmore & Pine, 2007:5)

It seems that each consumer sensibility has its own value and leads to the subsequent generation of factors deemed critical in the marketplace. Authenticity seems to be connected with self-image as product and service purchases reflect the individual’s identity as well as their aspired self-image relative to his or her perception of the world. Perhaps factors supporting this could include consumer tastes, preferences, personal feelings, etc., through choice products purchased or services experienced.

Following the previous description of consumer sensibilities (Numbered 1 to 4) is Figure 1-1, which links the consumer sensibility with the business imperative as driven by the relevant economic output.

Figure 1-1. Successive Imperatives and Sensibilities

FIGURE 1-1

Successive imperatives and sensibilities

Economic output	Commodities	Goods	Services	Experiences
Business imperative	Supply	Control	Improve	Render
Consumer sensibility	Availability	Cost	Quality	Authenticity

Source: Authenticity, 2007, p. 6.

It could be understood from the above Figure 1-1 the relationship between output, imperative and sensibility. Each element of this figure fosters the activity needed in reaching all successive outcomes that promote the intended result. The author of this Thesis would like to note the most current “output” / “imperative” / “sensibility” combination of “*Experiences Render Authenticity*” as a key driver for today’s consumer economy.

2.2 Natural and Organic Cosmetic Products: An Interlink of Industry Terminology and the Functional Areas in the Development of Cosmetic Products

2.2.1 Terms: Authenticity – “Informed Consumer”

The following sub-sections of this Masters Thesis continue with industry-based terminology connected with the functional areas that contribute to the development of natural and organic cosmetics. The author deems the following terms as critical in obtaining a general understanding of the concepts widely suggested or delivered. The author placed

these terms so as to illustrate the connection each has to one another examining this field as a whole.

Authenticity: The concept of authenticity is applicable to all of the factors that contribute internally and externally to the development of natural and organic cosmetics.

As indicated from an industry standpoint, “Using natural and organic ingredients does not make a product green” (“Authenticity” Theme of Sustainable, 2010). Essentially, the consumer seeks value in all of the elements that surround a development, especially in factors that are linked to its impact such as demonstrating commitments to reduce waste, utilize energy efficient methods, initiating efforts in controlling pollution and utilizing ecological packaging options (“Authenticity” Theme of Sustainable, 2010). Authenticity is evident throughout the life cycle of natural and organic cosmetics, and although each function implements different concepts and practices its credibility, once at the customer level is apparent to this individual. The company level places high importance on its practices to gain a credible image from the consumer, but also importantly in demonstrating a responsibility for all of its activities performed. For instance, the ethical sourcing of raw materials from its native environment has led to the implementation of sustainable projects that protect biodiversity and support local communities while responding to the ingredients needs of the company (“Authenticity” Theme of Sustainable, 2010).

On the marketing side, the significance of utilizing eco-labels and maintaining regulatory standards also remains crucial to the company portrayal, overall reflection of the industry as carried through to the consumer perceptions. However, numerous standards set out by groups of interest and a lack of unified regulations supplemented by the multitude of labels create for a challenging environment to guide the consumer. Greenwashing and natural claims, regarding a product as authentic to certain environmental claims, ingredient used, etc. also creates barriers in deeming a product’s authenticity and often raises questions among the consumer. In view of this, the company level must work efficiently to present products authentically. For instance, social media is gaining momentum in strengthening

consumer relationships, with this communications tool showing presence on the company level (“Authenticity” Theme of Sustainable, 2010).

The above-mentioned references were a few of the many themes that ultimately shape the idea of authenticity in the mind of consumer. Moreover, the impact of each functional area is evident among these examples showing how relationship-based this industry is and that authenticity is recognized and bears significance to the consumer on many levels.

Transparency / Integrity: Transparency is a term utilized among professionals of the natural and organic cosmetics industry. It generally refers to how the aspects that contribute to the development of a cosmetic product are carried out to the consumer in terms of being honest and straightforward. Integrity is relative to transparency, and the two are linked together many times as integrity refers to qualities such as responsibility or commitment as demonstrated in practice.

A brand could assert itself with integrity in its practices that are deemed credible, honest and forthright. Transparency is indicated in how the brand’s message is communicated to the consumer. Resonating from the brand message include the development of the product itself such as factors related to choice ingredients contained in the product and if these ingredients are consistent with the theme depicted. Transparency could also be emphasized in the sustainable activities claimed as practiced by a company, or that a company adheres to standards set out by product certification of ingredients utilized, or practices fair sourcing of ingredients. These elements (although not limited to) ‘show through’ or are ‘transparent’ as the term suggests when the message is ultimately communicated to the consumer.

Consumers are quite informed and are willing to ask questions to further inquire (Mason, 2012). Sharing a vision and a plan for addressing key impacts (i.e. sustainable impacts) among consumers or even company employees and suppliers builds a basis for transparency (Longworth, 2010). Often times, companies veer away from sharing their actions for fear

of being accused of greenwashing, but the benefits outweigh the risks as it demonstrates a commitment to responsibility and values (Longsworth, 2010).

Distinguishing a transparent message from one that does not appear so results on the side of the consumer; however, it is also the company commitment to deliver responsibly so consumers are also aware, thus providing greater transparency and integrity that the market and regulations alike need.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) involves the practice of acting on sustainable initiatives and activities on the part of the entity as being represented as ‘good corporate citizens’ (Strategic Insights: CSR & Sustainability, 2010).

CSR is not limited to demonstrating practice of ecologically conscious initiatives to consumers, but also emphasizing increasingly ethical values (CSR & Sustainability, 2010). CSR initiatives undertaken by beauty companies and affiliates alike (i.e. suppliers) invest in activities linked to reducing the social and environmental footprint (i.e. by-products left behind during the development phase or post-product life cycle). These include the development of greener formulations through utilizing natural, organic and / or fair trade ingredients and developing innovative ways to reduce packaging (i.e. implementing novel designs, utilizing alternative materials), which is subject to a high ecological footprint (Strategic Insights: CSR & Sustainability, 2010).

Companies are also exploring the social impact including initiatives related to fair trade activities and corporate philanthropy (Strategic Insights: CSR & Sustainability, 2010). CSR initiatives extend further and include an array of practices. Initiatives explored include implementing corporate programs that contribute to organizations which support various environmental causes, efforts initiated to ethical sourcing, actions taken in biodiversity preservation, eliminating or redesigning product packaging, reducing resource consumption (i.e. energy and water) and pollution-drivers (i.e. waste, greenhouse gas emissions) (CSR &

Sustainability, 2010). Suppliers are also taking further initiative to support product formulators by publishing guides to assist formulators with ingredient selection and use (CSR & Sustainability, 2010).

CSR extends its values to the consumer level, as stated that, “With consumerism stronger than ever, consumers have begun to sit up and think about how they can give back to the world and they’ve started to expect the same from not only the government but also the companies from which they purchase their consumer goods” (CSR – You reap what you sow, 2009). Thus, major emphasis is placed on developing CSR in small and large companies alike.

The corporate level is perceptive to the knowledge that, “Consumers increasingly want to feel reassured when purchasing beauty products that they are not harming the earth while doing so and that their money can help to give back to the environment and charitable causes...” (CSR – You reap what you sow, 2009).

Further industry insight states that, “Just because a product is natural it does not mean it was produced via sustainable means. The purpose of making organic cosmetics is to offer the consumer a quality product (a purer product with minimal risks to health) and, equally important, to observe good environmental practices. By purchasing an organic product the consumer is ensured that the product was manufactured without harming the environment and that using the product means eventually discarding an environmentally safe residue” (CSR – You reap what you sow, 2009).

In addition to contributing to factors related to preserving the environment and a socially responsible production of the product, consumers also value corporations that contribute to global causes. A few of the many causes in practice include campaigns aimed to assist disadvantaged children, women, medical causes, aims to provide basic human rights, preservation to biodiversity and projects relative to education, sustainable development, the arts and health (CSR – You reap what you sow, 2009).

Further affirming the point of consumer awareness, insight from the industry perspective states that, “Consumers now have tremendous insight into how corporations do business, how products are manufactured and the potential environmental consequences of the manufacturing process. The majority of consumers will remain loyal to a company that has a social and environmental commitment and will continue to support brands whose values resonate with their own” (CSR – You reap what you sow, 2009).

Of relative importance to companies developing CSR is the practice of fair trade in the production of natural and organic cosmetic products. In this case, companies that source ingredients from producers that are fair trade certified and follow standards are entitled to bear such a mark on product labels. As indicated from an industry standpoint, “...Companies are now aware of what impact their actions can have and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) forms a much larger part of their remit these days” (Fairtrade – an ethical investment, 2010).

One such industry perspective states that, “Having a Fairtrade logo on my product is a very simple and effective way of showing a commitment which is both public and provable. Many more beauty products could and should go down the fairtrade route and research shows that if a company is less than ethical this will be reflected in its share price” (Fairtrade – an ethical investment, 2010).

The point of consumer awareness continues to make a presence in CSR as stated on the corporate level; “Our customers are actually very interested in where we source our ingredients from and about whether they are from fairtrade or ethically traded projects. I think the fairtrade message is easily understandable and retains a strong customer loyalty even in tough times” (Fairtrade – an ethical investment, 2010).

The key theme in exploring CSR seems to be in taking initiative, where group efforts demonstrated by a proactive attitude and mindfulness to the diversity surrounding are an integral part of improving impacts.

“Informed Consumer” (Berry, 2011): An “informed consumer” (Berry, 2011) is described as an individual who is well-informed (as the term suggests) in terms of ingredients (or alternative ingredients), types of products as well as the values surrounding these products.

The consumer is even more knowledgeable with the multitude of information and accessibility to content. With the numerous choices available and uncertainty in product choices resulting from controversy surrounding the industry, consumers are also challenged in terms of distinguishing claims and understanding the themes presented. As affirmed by the Natural Marketing Institute’s annual report, “Consumers now include their own personal health as a microcosm and reflection of the health of the planet” (Mason, 2009). Consumers’ values are progressively leaning towards companies that are able to intermix both a personal and planetary perspective into their brands (Mason, 2009). Thus, the company level has determined “That 68% of consumers will remain loyal to a company that has a social and environmental commitment” (Mason, 2009). “Consumers of organic products are very information-based, and want to know what is in the products and behind the company” (Mason, 2009). Also, “Today’s information technologies provide consumers with tremendous insight into how corporations do business, how the product is manufactured and the potential environmental consequences of the manufacturing process” (Mason, 2009).

Thus, transparently placing on the forefront core values, direct insight and successes the consumer gains more trust and makes more educated decisions.

Before closing this section, the author of this Thesis would like to reflect on the power of terminology by referencing findings related to particular language choices from research conducted evidencing the consumer impact of these word choices. Findings indicated that

regarding beauty products, “The term ‘FREE,’ meaning free of harmful chemicals”, etc. was 73% of the participants top choice as most appealing terminology on a beauty label. Other favored terms were clean, antioxidant, natural, and hypoallergenic. From a list of 17 choices, the least preferred terms were therapeutic (40%), radiant (37%), dermatology (32%) and science (9%) (Study Explores Consumer, 2008).

It seems that the use of specific language words or phrases in marketing cosmetic products, especially those of the natural and organic types is imperative to the consumer perception, as it suggests the values that consumers seek when utilizing these products.

2.2.2 Terms: Natural – Certification bodies / Eco-labeling

Natural: The term ‘natural’ has been difficult to define within the beauty industry, as there does not seem to exist a uniformly regulated and accepted definition in terms of a reference for industry standards, but also to aid in consumer understanding (Newman, 2006).

However, in attempting to create more definitive terms for this category and gain a sense of understanding among the industry and consumers alike, a definition for the term ‘natural’ has been drafted under a task force by the name of the International Association of Natural Products Producers (IANPP) (Duber-Smith, 2013). Thus, the work completed by this task force has resulted in the NPA Natural Seal (Duber-Smith, 2013).

Many certification bodies have developed their own set of standards and recognized seal to address the natural products segment. Recognized certifications include, to name a few, Cosmetics Organic and Natural Standards (COSMOS) (European standard developed by a well-established group of certifiers) (Duber-Smith, 2013), Ecocert, which now includes organic and natural spa certification (Ecocert Launches International, 2013), Natural Products Association (NPA) NPA Natural Seal (United States) as well as NaTrue’s “Natural Cosmetics” label (Europe, Belgium) (Whittaker, Engimann, & Sambrook, 2009).

However, the author of this Thesis will only specify criteria on general terms for a product to be recognized as natural. Although this industry is quite complex, “The guidelines for accreditation of ingredients for natural and organic cosmetic products or skin care lines are similar for all certifying bodies, with some variation on the percentage of organic content and allowed preservatives” (Lyon & Patterson, 2010). Standards are quite extensive; require a strong working knowledge and span across a multitude of certifiers.

The following criteria are the most common among formulas that meet claims for natural standards:

- “Based on environmentally conscious and ecologically sound practices that are socially responsible with regard to the use of resources, and that impart minimum human impact on the environment”;
- “At least 90% of the formula composition, sans water, is based on renewable feedstock and ingredients with neutral carbon footprints;”
- “Incidental ingredients such as preservatives, chelating agents and antioxidants do not have to be included in the calculation – so long as they represent less than 1% of the non-water portion of the composition, and there are no renewable resource alternatives;” “and
- All raw materials used should represent the best approach to safe exposure to humans; safety measurements are based on scientific studies demonstrating their long-term safety to humans.”

(Abrutyn, 2010)

In brief, these criteria apply concepts related to utilizing ingredients deemed suitable for natural standards as well as adhering to processes that promote sustainable outcomes, such as reducing the carbon footprint. However, understanding the requirements needed to meet standards is key, as further analysis suggests that this could vary based on such factors as how the percentage of natural ingredient is determined, or the level of modification allowed to a naturally-derived material. For that reason it clearly states that, “Some natural ingredients are either not functionally suitable to create good aesthetics, are not stable, or are not sufficiently pure – odorless and colorless” (Abrutyn, 2010).

Although formulating for natural cosmetic products seems to promote good practice, the difficulties that chemists face also create for a challenging situation.

Biodynamic Agriculture: Biodynamic Agriculture suggests, “A method of organic farming that emphasizes the holistic development and interrelationships of the farm as a self-sustaining system that conserves resources such as water and soil. Composting, fertilization and pest control use natural farm resources, and chemicals or growth hormones are forbidden (Mason, 2012).”

Further research adds that, “Biodynamic Agriculture considers the farm to be a self-contained entity. There is a strong correlation between the crops, livestock, careful maintenance of the soil and recycling of nutrients in order to maintain an ongoing, pristine quality compost and astronomical sowing and planting calendar based on the phases of the moon (Lyon & Patterson, 2010).”

Thus, Biological products are the products developed for the ‘superfood,’ category (i.e. food products, supplements) originating from biological agriculture practices (Dell’Acqua & Calloni, 2013). The ingredients sourced for these products generally contain high levels of vitamins, minerals or other active molecules (Dell’Acqua & Calloni, 2013).

In view of this, the company level demonstrates a commitment to sustainable fair trade practice through establishing partnerships, which allow sourcing ingredients from other agricultural contributors (i.e. farms, cooperatives, cultivation projects) also resulting in the promotion of the advantages of organic and biodynamic principles and to develop more land to reach these standards (Mason, 2012).

Organic Farming: Organic Farming involves the chemicals used to grow crops, prepare fields and control pests. Only natural and environmentally safe chemicals are utilized, and composted material is a critical function in the preparation of the field (Lyon & Patterson, 2010).

Another definition further examines organic farming, “As a production system that avoids or largely excludes the use of synthetically compounded fertilizers, pesticides, growth regulators and livestock feed additives. To the maximum extent feasible, organic farming systems rely upon crop rotations, crop residues, animal manures, legumes, green manures, off-farm organic wastes, mechanical cultivation, mineral-bearing rocks and aspects of biological pest control to maintain soil productivity and tilth, to supply plant nutrients and to control insects, weeds and other pests” (Steinberg, 2010).

Organic: The term organic has been defined as, “Plant material that has been grown and harvested according to strict agricultural standards,” per the governments of the United States and Canada (Lyon & Patterson, 2010).

The author of this Thesis will examine the organic category of cosmetic products from an industry standpoint focusing on the position of this concept in the industry. Thus, providing detailed criterion including the various ingredient percentages, processes and other requirements of a product deemed at various level of organic is much too extensive and complicated, as this industry is also quite global spanning a host of organizations that contribute to this category.

The author of this Thesis will reference the industry position of organic cosmetic products in the United States market, as industry and consumer perception within this category is quite blurred. Additionally, reference to European standards pertaining to this category will also be acknowledged.

In the United States, “The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) does not have an official, enforceable definition for “natural” or “organic products,” and any references to natural through the FDA are in direct relation to food, not cosmetics” (Thornfeldt MD, 2009). Organic ingredients are defined by the USDA, but are enforced by other government agencies, namely the FDA and FTC (Federal Trade Commission) (Newman, 2006). In

tandem to the aforementioned, “FDA does not define or regulate the term “organic,” as it applies to cosmetics, body care, or personal care products” (United States Department of Agriculture, 2008). Thus, “USDA regulates the term “organic” as it applies to agricultural products through its National Organic Program (NOP) regulation” (United States Department of Agriculture, 2008).

Further supporting this, the National Organic Program (NOP) states that, “Organic crops are raised without using most conventional pesticides, petroleum-based fertilizers, or sewage sludge-based fertilizers (Thornfeldt MD, 2009).” Therefore, this asserts the basis for placing organic skin care products under the USDA guidelines for a product to be deemed organic, thus also following extensive documentation maintained by all parties, including ingredient suppliers and product manufacturers (Thornfeldt MD, 2009).

However, regulations set out for food products is challenging for cosmetic product developers and manufacturers seeking certification among these standards, as some ingredients that are not permitted in consumable products are found in topical products (Duber-Smith, 2012). The concern of organic regulations not applying to personal care products have been addressed, expanding the opportunities for companies seeking to gain product differentiation and competitive advantage by positioning brands as organic (Newman, 2006).

The complex situation of this industry is further substantiated as global producers of natural and organic products function under different regulatory and standard criteria (Newman, 2006). Therefore, adhering to the standards and utilizing such visible indicators (i.e. logos, seals) are essential in communicating with consumers about the quality of products (Newman, 2006).

On a global scale, standards are generally quite similar, but standards are essentially intended for products made and marketed within the country or region of the certifier

(Duber-Smith, 2013). Products are examined and evaluated by different requirements, including the following:

- Origin and processing of their ingredients;
- The total composition of them in the product;
- Storage;
- Manufacturing and packaging;
- Environmental management
- Labeling and communication;
- Inspection;
- Certification and control

(Duber-Smith, 2013)

Noteworthy to mention is Cosmetics Organic and Natural Standard (COSMOS), which unify standards of several different certifiers within Europe (Duber-Smith, 2013). However, each certifier functions as its separate entity (Duber-Smith, 2013). Essentially, the product of one certifier must adhere under the same requirements as another (Duber-Smith, 2013).

The following organizations are the acronyms of the certifying body, and each entity name is fully defined in the subsequent section regarding certification bodies and eco-labeling.

Thus, COSMOS was developed by the following certifiers: BDIH; COSMEBIO; Ecocert; ICEA; AIAB and the Soil Association (Duber-Smith, 2013). These groups founded an international non-profit association by the name of the Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif (AISBL), which resulted in a joint effort to define common requirements and definitions for organic and natural cosmetics (Duber-Smith, 2013).

Certification bodies / Eco-labeling: These are numerous global organizations that generally function as third-party certifiers specific to categories related to green, natural and organic type of products.

Relative to certification bodies are eco-labels, which are “Used to identify products, raw materials, or companies that meet a particular organization or government agency’s

standards in terms of organic content, sustainability or minimizing risks to humans, animals or the environment” (Whittaker et al., 2009).

Eco-labels extend further and exhibit other specific features. However, this Thesis will concentrate more definitively on the general concept of certification bodies and labels.

The emergence of certification bodies works to differentiate products through validating those, which adhere to the requirements, set out by the certifier thus represented by a symbol, seal or mark visibly indicated on the product (Duber-Smith, 2013). Certification bodies attempt to establish credibility in a situation where consumer understanding and confidence in these types of products is sometimes implicated with uncertainty.

The following certification systems are major global certifiers that recognize and serve various sectors of the natural and organic products category:

- The United States Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A.) / National Organic Program (NOP)
- National Science Foundation (NSF)
- Natural Products Association (NPA)
NPA Natural Seal
- Organic and Sustainable Industry Standards (OASIS)
- Cosmetics Organic and Natural Standard (COSMOS) / Europe
- Bundesverband Deutscher Industrie- und Handelsunternehmen (BDIH) / Germany
- Association Professionnelle de Cosmétique Ecologique et Biologique (COSEMBIO) / France
- Organisme de Contrôle et de Certification (Ecocert) / France
- Istituto per la Certificazione Etica e Ambientale (ICEA) / Italy
- L'Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica (AIAB) / Italy
- Soil Association / United Kingdom
- Organic Farmers and Growers / United Kingdom
- International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM) / Germany
- Eco Garantie / Netherlands
- NaTrue Natural and Organic Cosmetics Program / Belgium

- The National Association for Sustainable Agriculture (NASAA) / Australia
- Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA) / Australia
- IBD Certifications / Brazil

(Duber-Smith, 2013)

2.2.3 Terms: “Greenwashing” – Biomimicry

“Greenwashing”: Greenwashing is, “A term used to describe unfounded or irrelevant environmental claims” (Matthews, 2008).

Another definition of greenwashing suggests claims in terms of ingredient use. The following definition asserts that, “Using green words, such as organic, natural, vitamins or botanicals, when they are present in concentrations too low to have any effect is a form of greenwashing” (Lyon & Patterson, 2010).

The definition adds that, “Another form is when the green ingredients are used with other questionable ingredients” (Lyon & Patterson, 2010).

Greenwashing is also referred to in other terminology; one in particular being “green sheen” (Sabará, 2009).

The deeper conflict surrounding this issue suggests most fittingly, “That companies truly committed to sustainability and naturals and those that are not sometimes look very similar through the customer’s eyes, due often to very convincing marketing strategies” (Sabará, 2009). In addition, the increased possibility of cynicism regarding label claims, whether deemed legitimate or not could negatively impact credibility and business (Sabará, 2009).

Greenwashing is prevalent among natural and organic cosmetics especially due to the specific nature of this category, which further validates the need for consumer awareness and education, but most significantly as fostered on the organizational level.

“Natural-inspired” (“semi-natural”) products: This term refers to products that contain mostly synthetic ingredients with low amounts of natural ingredients and are marketed with natural claims, or in some cases claiming to be 100% natural.

The themes distinguished in this term also resonate similarly with the previously discussed “greenwashing.” In support of this definition, research linked to the concept of “natural-inspired” products assessed the naturalness of products finding that some contained certified organic ingredients formulated with synthetics not common to natural and organic products (Schaefer, 2011).

Findings also determined that some fair trade organizations are certifying products with a minimum level of fair trade ingredients continuing to allow those products to be formulated with synthetic ingredients (Schaefer, 2011).

However, certified products were viewed more favorably as standards provide a list of approved ingredients and processes to formulators (Schaefer, 2011). Thus, products approved by certification bodies built consumer trust, as symbols and logos are recognizable in establishing trustworthy products (Schaefer, 2011).

It could be understood through the above-mentioned research the connection that “natural-inspired” products have with product certification and certification bodies, especially in terms of challenges in utilizing approved product ingredients and the influence marketing has on the overall perception of the product credibility.

Sustainable Packaging / Natural Packaging: Alternative methods of utilizing packaging, particularly categorical types such as sustainable packaging and natural packaging are advancing in this area, as consumer demand and expectations rise.

Research indicates that, “In 2011, 36% of shoppers were likely to choose environmentally friendly packaging, a 28% increase over 2010” (Scherer, 2012). Furthermore, research conducted in 2012 stated that, “73% of consumers want companies to provide more environmental information on the product packaging to help inform their shopping decisions” (Scherer, 2012). However, uncertainty still remains among the consumer as it was also determined that, “Many shoppers also said that they didn’t know which packaging was better for the environment” (Scherer, 2012). Accordingly, research also affirmed that, “The majority of consumers (71%) wish companies would do a better job helping them to understand the environmental terms they use to talk about their products and services” (Scherer, 2012).

“Sustainability is the concept of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Grubow, 2007). “Sustainability maximizes the use of renewable and recyclable materials, encourages waste reduction and resource conservation, reduces dependence on nonrenewable resources and recovers materials biologically” (Grubow, 2007).

As developed by The Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC), a set of definitions describes the meaning of sustainable packaging in terms of its implementation in practice and performance. Thus, sustainable packaging:

- “Is beneficial, safe and healthy for individuals and communities throughout its life cycle”;
- “Meets market criteria for both performance and cost”;
- “Is sourced, manufactured, transported, and recycled using renewable energy”;
- “Optimizes the use of renewable or recycled source materials”;
- “Is manufactured using clean production technologies and best practices”;
- “Is made from materials healthy throughout the life cycle”;
- “Is physically designed to optimize materials and energy”; “and
- Is effectively recovered and utilized in biological and / or industrial closed loop cycles”.

(Scherer, 2012)

In terms of natural packaging, “Natural packaging is defined by its source (for materials), how it has been created and its recyclability” (Falk, 2006). Natural packaging supports a brand ideal; meaning that the message emphasized through the product itself and the company’s values are conveyed through the packaging (Falk, 2006). Required of natural packaging is to adhere to renewable and biodegradable materials with the minimal use of packaging bearing in mind the consumer’s expectations to this (Falk, 2006). In essence, “Naturals allow companies to emphasize their philosophy and embrace socially and environmentally responsible business practices, which includes sourcing packaging and consideration for its entire life cycle” (Falk, 2006).

Continuing further on the topic of natural packaging, “Research shows that approximately 70% of consumers’ product-buying decisions are based on presentation” (Thalhammer, 2007). Thus, it is a combination of the product’s visible features (i.e. packaging material, print, colors and communication) that first capture the consumer’s interest. As the idea of natural and organic cosmetics promotes such health-oriented or planetary conscious values, than packaging must also communicate the same message. Attention must be brought to the overall packaging material, utilizing biodegradable materials in its design as well as consideration to the product’s structure and graphic art (Thalhammer, 2007). “Consumers of health-conscious, natural, organic and sustainable products comprise a progressive group that is not afraid to try new things” (Thalhammer, 2007).

The LOHAS segment of consumers represent a significant part of this category (of natural and organic cosmetic products) in terms of demand and expectations (Falk, 2006).

Thus, seeking branded products that elicit innovative and unique qualities to capture consumers on a sociological and aesthetic level and altogether emphasized by a company’s unique philosophy result in the idea that packaging must be reflected in the product concept, so that each aspect matches with one another creating a brand identity (Thalhammer, 2007). It is further stated that, “The entire design of a product, from the

company's story and its purpose to its ingredients and packaging, should reflect a successful synergy" (Thalhammer, 2007).

Both natural packaging and sustainable packaging adhere to values that are dependant on the products positioning. The difference between natural packaging and sustainable packaging seems to be linked to the brand philosophy (natural packaging) as emphasized by values and development of the product itself whereas sustainable packaging is associated with the life cycle of the product throughout all of its phases.

Green Chemistry: The practice of implementing green chemistry involves, "The utilization of a set of principles that reduces or eliminates the use or generation of hazardous substances in the design, manufacture and application of chemical products" (Herman, 2006).

From this definition it could be understood that green chemistry is quite central to the issues involved in developing an environmentally sound product. However, it is not solely limited to the product itself but is inclusive of many factors (internal and external) that affect the production of a product.

Green chemistry has a profound impact on environmental preservation (i.e. eliminate / reduce hazardous waste) in turn impacting the health of people, plants and animals, the use of alternative materials and technologies (i.e. widespread in all areas of manufacturing) and the decrease of hazardous materials used in processes, resulting in the decrease of costs in turn reducing the handling, transportation, disposal and compliance issues related to these materials and processes (Herman, 2006). This impacts a host of functional areas, especially research and development (R&D), manufacturing and production, the supply chain, logistics and regulatory.

Despite the challenges formulators face in green chemistry practice, the benefits certainly outweigh the risks. Research reflects the recognition this field is gaining as it forecasts

growth to approximately \$100 billion in 2020 (Green Chemistry, 2011). Research continues to predict that total cost savings (pertaining to both green chemistry alternatives for industrial activities and the prevention of external liabilities due to environmental and social impact) will reach \$65.5 billion by 2020 (Green Chemicals Will Save, 2011).

If adhering to green chemistry practice, cosmetic chemists are guided by the 12 Principles of Green Chemistry, which are crucial in the development and ecological impact of a product (especially of this type). The author of this Thesis will provide only the principle title.

1. "Prevention"
2. "Atom Economy"
3. "Less Hazardous Chemical Synthesis"
4. "Designing Safer Chemicals"
5. "Safer Solvents and Auxiliaries"
6. "Design for Energy Efficiency"
7. "Use of Renewable Feedstocks"
8. "Reduce Derivatives – Unnecessary derivatization"
9. "Catalysis"
10. "Design for Degradation"
11. "Real Time Analysis for Pollution Prevention"
12. "Inherently Safer Chemistry for Accident Prevention"

(Herman, 2006)

Biomimicry (derived from Biomimetics): Biomimicry is essentially a new corporate discipline that studies the knowledge and functional processes from nature and then replicates these processes to create more superior ingredient applications (Mason, 2012).

Accordingly, these processes make it possible to produce ingredients that are deemed safer and more preferred for consumer use as well as considerate to the outside environment (Mason, 2012).

However, biomimicry is not limited to replacing an ingredient with an alternative, but could instead involve substituting or improving on a structural or engineering concept (Mason, 2012).

Additional examination of the biomimetic process suggests identifying the key function of the chemical under investigation and then exploring nature for similarities (i.e. functional properties, ingredients) (Mason, 2012).

In coinciding with the biomimetic processes, current technological advances provide the opportunity to study nature and its chemistry in greater depth meanwhile, promoting innovation, as it seeks nature for inspiration and paves the way for more effective solutions to challenges faced by chemists (Mason, 2012).

2.2.4 Terms: Cradle-to-cradle Marketing (C2C) – “Cruelty Free” / “Not Tested on Animals”

Cradle-to-cradle Marketing (C2C): ‘C2C’ implies, “A design protocol that supports the elimination of waste by recycling materials or products into new or similar products at the end of its intended life, instead of disposing of it in landfills” (Grubow, 2009).

It is opposite to that of the “traditional cradle-to-grave design and manufacturing” where the product cycle is complete at the end of its use.

C2C certification contains such criterion as “using environmentally safe and healthy materials; designing for material reutilization, such as recycling or composting; the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency; careful use of water, and purest water quality linked with production; and instituting strategies for social responsibility” (Grubow, 2009).

Many companies are practicing the C2C concepts as reflected in the following examples related to packaging. These include utilizing refillable products / packaging, also enabled with the development of programs encouraging to recycle empty containers, utilizing biodegradable materials and even eliminating the packaging (when possible) (Grubow, 2009).

Green / “Going Green” / ‘Eco’ / Eco-friendly / Environmentally friendly: These terms are a similar grouping of terminology that suggests claims to personal health, planetary health or a combination of both. There exists no universal definition for green as related to cosmetics and skin care product regulation, “Although it is often assumed that a green product adheres to a variety of eco-friendly philosophies” (Lyon & Patterson, 2010).

These terms are commonly utilized in advertising, on product labels and in reference to packaging and also suggest contributions in consumption habits, adhering to fair or ethical practices and / or utilizing alternative materials, ingredients and methods.

“Eco-beauty” Products: These refer to types of products regarded as either natural, organic, green / eco-friendly or socially conscious / responsible beauty products (NPD Says Eco-beauty, 2008).

Research data indicates the differentiation in usage of these product categories stating that natural beauty products account for the largest category with about two-thirds (64%) of women who use beauty products of the natural types. Organic usage accounts for 32% and green / eco-friendly accounts for 26% of product usage (NPD Says Eco-beauty, 2008).

Biodiversity / Wild crafting / “Ethically Wild crafted”: Biodiversity, in its traditional meaning, refers to the numbers of wildlife (i.e. plant and animal species) (Schaefer, 2010). In the development of natural and organic cosmetics, natural ingredients utilized in these products are commonly derived from biodiversity (Schaefer, 2010).

Consequently, findings have indicated, “That species have been disappearing at up to 1000 times the natural rate” and is predicted to increase (Schaefer, 2010). In response to these ecological issues, raising awareness to protect biodiversity is demonstrated in organizational values urging the ethical sourcing of natural ingredients in preservation of habitats and wildlife alike.

Relative to biodiversity is wild crafting. This is defined as, “The practice of gathering plant materials from their native wild environment in a manner that causes the least disruption and exhibits sensitivity to the natural ecosystems, thereby ensuring the survival and ecological balance of the stand” (Jeffries, 2007).

Thus, The International Standard for the Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP) seeks to develop a standardized and certified set of protocol for ethical wild crafting (Jeffries, 2007).

Similar to the issues faced by certification bodies, there exists no universally accepted or certified wild crafting practices but is maintained by environmental organizations found in the country of harvest (Jeffries, 2007). Despite the lack of set standards, numerous raw material suppliers practice ethical wild crafting (Jeffries, 2007).

Fair-trade: “Fair-trade involves purchasing raw materials or ingredients that provide stable revenue and support local businesses” (Dell’Acqua & Calloni, 2013).

Sustainability, in the context of fair trade practice, “Refers to helping local companies maintain their social and environmental commitment in the supply chain by monitoring and auditing their activity, to ensure standards are met to market success” (Dell’Acqua & Calloni, 2013).

In general terms, the supply chain refers to sourcing, following production and shipping (Dell’Acqua & Calloni, 2013).

The following statement maintains the core meaning of fair trade by suggesting that, “The vision behind fair trade is of a world in which justice and sustainable development are at the heart of trade structures and practices so that everyone, through their work, can maintain a decent and dignified livelihood and develop their full potential” (Matthews, 2009).

Natural and organic cosmetic companies are pioneers of and good advocates in fair-trade, as they contribute to many practices from sourcing fair-trade ingredients and launching certified products to developing fair-trade projects to protect endangered plant species and promote sustainable practice or to guarantee long-term supply of organic ingredients (Strategic Insights: The Potential of Fair Trade, 2008). Increased consumer interest in social inequality and sustainability is a motivator for fair-trade products. Fair-trade appeals to consumers as it guarantees producers in developing countries receive fair-trade ingredients at a preferred cost and also supports sustainable farming practices and investment in social community projects (Strategic Insights: The Potential of Fair Trade, 2008).

Various types of fair trade organizations have emerged, especially in terms of labeling and maintaining fair trade standards particularly among natural and organic cosmetics.

Two conditions are significant to fair trade labeling emphasizing that, “All ingredients in the product that can be, must be fair trade certified; and companies must have a trading partnership plan in place outlining how they will additionally support producers to develop their businesses and communities” (Matthews, 2009).

Efficacy: Efficacy questions the effectiveness of a product’s functionality especially in terms of the ingredient formulations contained in the product. Efficacious products must lead to a perceived a result in the eyes of the consumer, especially from an alternative group of products such as natural and organic cosmetics.

Consequently, “The need for efficacy and the need for purity” are increasingly demanded product features in terms of consumer perception (Dell’Acqua & Calloni, 2013).

Consumer demand is heavily present in perceivable efficacy, which takes into account a product’s features some of which are related to, “Color change, wrinkle reduction, increased detergency, reduced body odor” (Dell’Acqua & Calloni, 2013).

Efficacy is certainly of considerable importance to the supply-side of cosmetic products, especially regarding the development of formulations that contain active chemical compounds. Formulations that contain a plant's active molecule in conjunction with the extract of the host plant are deemed to have a greater effectiveness than that of the opposite, given the support of the active molecule (Mason, 2012).

The possibility to support research with technological applications, for instance referring to those of the encapsulation methods could provide chemists and researchers the possibility to perform certain scientific functions in hopes of creating an even more efficacious product (Mason, 2012).

In the perspective of a cosmetic chemist, ideally, a natural or organic product would have the formulaic properties of being, "Silky smooth, neutral or pleasantly scented, neutral or pleasantly colored, pleasantly textured, easy to absorb, non oily / non greasy, noncomedogenic, nonallergenic, hydrating, fair trade, eco-friendly with a reasonable shelf life" and equally as effective as a conventional product, or more superior altogether complied by natural or organic standards and meeting the consumer demand for these qualities (Berry, 2011).

Cosmetic Preservatives: The industry use of preservatives in cosmetic products has gained much attention, particularly over the recent years. However, this section will not discuss the controversial issues surrounding the use of preservatives, but provide the purpose of preservatives, a brief identification of common preservatives and the challenges chemists face in substituting preservatives with a natural type.

"Preservatives are needed (1) to stop microbes from spoiling products; and (2) to stop microbes from causing disease" (O'Lenick, 2010).

Parabens are a chemical group of preservatives that are commonly used in cosmetic products. “Most parabens used in cosmetics include MP, EP, PP and BP and their sodium salts” (Baillet-Guffroy, Laugel & Jungman, 2011). Abbreviations are: methylparaben, ethylparaben, propylparaben and butylparaben.

Developing alternative preservatives is rewarding in gaining support and boosting consumer confidence but is challenging to develop in meeting the needs of an efficacious product.

Chemists face some of the following challenges in formulating with alternative preservatives: (1) Newer preservatives lack an extended record, therefore its safety and the possibilities of adverse effects after prolonged use are not yet known (Abdullah, 2013). (2) Newer preservatives must frequently be formulated in greater numbers to provide a similar level of protection to traditional preservatives and could pose difficulty in terms of effectiveness among formulaic conditions (Abdullah, 2013). Before preserving a product, natural ingredients (i.e. essential oils and organic acids) must also be added in high concentrations and could cause the product to be irritating to many consumers (Abdullah, 2013). (3) As opposed to traditional preservatives, alternatives (especially natural) are more costly to produce, resulting in a higher product cost (Abdullah, 2013). Thus, consistently maintaining the quality and characteristics of natural preservatives from batch to batch poses as challenging (Abdullah, 2013).

As it is gratifying to contribute to developing unique alternatives to ingredients, traditional preservatives provide the proven experience, but with further research required to better understand the qualifications needed for an alternative formulation to perform equally or more superior, challenges will continue to persist. At the same time, the perception to utilizing a more chemically favorable alternative still exists among the consumer population.

“Cruelty Free” / “Not Tested on Animals”: These are terms commonly utilized by cosmetic companies, which are generally promoted in the labeling and advertising of

products. The use of these terms is unrestricted, as there exists no legal definition (FDA, 2000).

A closer analysis into these terms considers the awareness needed when choosing products with this claim and suggests the uncertainty that surrounds the issues among these types of cosmetic products.

It is possible that some companies could apply these claims only to the finished products, but may refer to raw material suppliers or contract laboratories to perform any animal testing necessary in support of product or ingredient safety during the development phases (FDA, 2000). Other cosmetic companies could refer to numerous scientific literature, non-animal testing, raw material safety testing, or controlled human-use testing in support of product safety (FDA, 2000). Many raw materials used in cosmetics were tested on animals in previous years, originally. Thus, it is possible that a cosmetic manufacturer could only use those raw materials during development phases and support “cruelty-free” claims with the notion that the materials or products are not “currently” tested on animals (FDA, 2000).

The organizational level is taking stride in the uncertainty posed by these issues through implementing product certification, which is backed by rigorous standards. A product bearing such mark shows that it is certified ‘cruelty free’ under internationally recognized standards (Cruelty Free International, 2011). Thus, “These rigorous standards stipulate that no animal testing is conducted or commissioned for finished products or ingredients in any phase of product development by the company, its laboratories or its suppliers after a fixed cut-off date” (Cruelty Free International, 2011).

The certification further supports consumer awareness and includes website access to a comprehensive search directory to locate cruelty-free brands and provides the opportunity to gain involvement among other opportunities.

The second chapter of this Masters Thesis examined the functional areas that serve the natural and organic category of cosmetic products, the contributions to its development and the connection that each functional area has to another.

Conclusively, the literary analysis of this Masters Thesis discussed the theoretical concepts of consumer behavior in the context of health and wellness as well as a framework of marketing in an analysis of the cosmetics industry.

The framework established in the chapter of consumer behavior suggested concepts and visual representations from authors that analyzed market segmentations in terms of the collection of demographic and lifestyle data, defining segmentations and strategic methods. Industry references affirmed these points of view through practical examples of market segmentations. The viewpoints affirmed in concepts relative to brand loyalty suggested factors that identified brand loyalty, influences of these concepts through visual depictions and the connection to consumer perceptions. Practical examples cited consumer data and corporate strategic methods in retaining brand and customer loyalty.

The theoretical content was structured to show consumer behavior with focus on the development of market segmentations and the different elements of brand loyalty. The theoretical concepts of consumer behavior showed similar viewpoints from authors on the general basis of examining market segmentation but with concepts presented differently. The practical examples show how theory is implemented in current practice.

Many authors' perspectives were analyzed in the chapter examining the natural and organic cosmetics industry. In general, many perspectives were similar, but shared current issues, the integration of consumer significance and awareness and advancements in the topics discussed.

3. A RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION: ANALYZING CONSUMER PERCEPTION IN NATURAL AND ORGANIC COSMETIC PRODUCTS

3.1 Research Aims, Methodology and Action

The research section of this Masters Thesis will commence with the proposed research aims, which coincide with the aims introduced earlier in this Thesis. Following will include an analysis of the chosen methodologies and action taken during the research investigation. An analysis of the research results, discussion and recommendations will conclude this chapter.

The aims of this research seek to address the following:

1. To conduct a research investigation by analyzing and categorizing consumer data on the basis of themes and terminology relative to consumer perceptions of natural and organic cosmetic products.
2. To illustrate and present a value system in the form of visual representations suggesting key factors relative to the consumer buying process.
3. To make recommendations on the basis of this research to product developers, manufacturers and marketers of natural and organic cosmetic products who seek to promote their products in an increasingly competitive market.

The approach taken during this research involved a cross between different methodologies, of observation, content analysis and netnography methods on the basis of qualitative research. First, *Qualitative research* “Is used to study social and cultural phenomena in depth, with a focus on text” (Myers, 2013:254). Some of the data collected are of *Secondary data*, which is, “Data that have been previously collected for some purpose other than the one at hand” (Zikmund, 2003:136). During the research process, the author of this Thesis implemented a means of data conversion to more

clearly present the content collected. Thus, “*Data conversion* is the process of changing the original form of the data to a format suitable to achieve the research objective” (Zikmund, 2003:137). This particular research involved the analysis of content expressed in consumer reviews, which then extracted key themes and terms as distinguished on a multiple table platform.

The methodologies utilized included some aspects of observation, content analysis and netnography resulting in a mix of these three tools. This research involved the collection of records from past content, concerning an observational perspective, the analysis for identifiable data, in terms of a content analysis and the use of the Internet as the platform of data collection and analysis, regarding a netnographic approach.

The research also exhibits qualities of a direct observation, which states that, “*Direct observation* can produce a detailed record of events or what people actually do. The observer plays a passive role; that is, there is no attempt to control or manipulate a situation. The observer merely *records* what occurs” (Zikmund, 2003:238).

In further exploring the research methods utilized, “*Content analysis* obtains data by observing and analyzing the content or message of advertisements, union contracts, reports, letters, and the like. It involves systematic analysis, as well as observation, to identify the specific information content and characteristics of the messages” (Zikmund, 2003:248). However, characteristic to content analysis is the involvement of a quantitative description, which is not utilized in this particular research.

In concluding the methods utilized, this research has slightly touched on a netnographic approach (derived from ethnography). First, it should be noted that the netnography research method is a more interactive method generally tailored to research of online communities. The connection to this research is the commonality of utilizing an online platform of collecting data. Thus, “Netnography adapts common participant-observation ethnographic procedures to the unique contingencies of computer-mediated social interaction: alteration, accessibility, anonymity, and archiving. The procedures include

planning, entrée, gathering data, interpretation, and adhering to ethical standards” (Kozinets, 2010:58).

In concluding the methodologies utilized, the author of this Thesis would like to note that a supplement of the industry perspective was planned to coincide with this research, but was eliminated from the research process due to the timeframe for this Masters Thesis as well as perceived problems of access and response rate from companies. However, the author opted to accomplish a more thorough research process in analyzing the consumer reviews.

From the mixed methodologies utilized, the research action taken includes a planning, collecting, interpreting and data presentation phases. The author of this Thesis first commenced the research by a general analysis of consumer reviews from different Internet websites to gain an understanding of the consumer perceptions, noting the key themes expressed as well as the quality of the written reviews.

One product type was considered for analysis so as to adhere to one standard product that a large number of individuals commonly utilize. A facial moisturizer that promotes anti-aging benefits was chosen. Moisturizing products with anti-aging benefits in particular were chosen, as the population of users of these products (which are generally female) seeks natural alternatives with the benefits of lessening the appearance of the signs of ageing. This is a key feature (as well as preferred) in many natural and organic cosmetic products, especially those that pertain to skin care products. The following is a brief description of the product selection process at the commencement of research:

- Seven (7) products that maintain natural and / or organic ingredients, proposing anti-aging properties, with some products containing a preferred SPF ingredients / functionality for sun protection
- Products are represented anonymously as Product A, B, C, D, E, F, G from one anonymous Internet source, as it indicates one type of consumer (the cosmetics shopper), reviews were of an abundance, current and of good quality

- Products are of varying price points ranging from approximately \$25.00 to \$165.00 to gain a variety of perceptions
- Formulated in generally a cream texture and carried out by various delivery systems (i.e. jar, tube, pump mechanism) based on the perceived Internet appearance
- Brands chosen reflect distinguishing features that include products pertaining to, (but not limited to): natural ingredients, organic ingredients, planetary commitment, preservative-free products, natural remedies, botanical ingredients, adhering to animal related ethics, incorporation of the spa experience, packaging alternatives, environmental commitment, support of diverse causes

Altogether 210 consumer reviews were collected with 33 consumer reviews based on Product A, 49 based on Product B, 28 based on Product C, 24 based on Product D, 25 based on Product E, 23 based on Product F and 28 based on Product G. In collecting the research, the author followed a systematic approach, as the consumer reviews considered were generally well over 100. As Products A and E contained over 100 reviews, the author analyzed every 5th review. Whereas Products B, C and G accounted for a number greater than 200, therefore, every 10th review was analyzed in this case. The author read each review for Products D and F as less than 30 reviews were written.

As demographic information was indicated providing a sample-like indicator, the author accounted for the two provided data of location and age group. In the case that neither was indicated, the author accounted for this as N.G. (not given). Accordingly, if the brand, product as well as other brands or products were indicated in any part of the review, the author of this Thesis removed these names and replaced with three asterisks as ***. In the case that a term was named the product or the product was named within the term, these were eliminated from the research.

Terminology (in the form of “Quick Takes”) were indicated by the consumer and analyzed in this research. Terms suggested reference to product texture, perceived use to aspects of the skin / biological factors, non-preferences, preferences, scent, efficacy, ingredients, product functionality, use of product and adjectives. The actual consumer

review (and relevant title, if given) was analyzed for thematic values ranging from product texture to beauty rituals with a variety of themes in between. Essentially, the process involved placing the terms on one side of a table and the themes on the opposite side resulting in the count of each subsequent occurrence of the term and theme in parentheses. If a theme was indicated more than once in a review, only once was it accounted for per review, as indicating each and every theme would be far too complicated and tedious as accomplished manually without software. Two separate tables (indicating terms and themes) illustrated the collective results by totaling the number of occurrences indicated for each theme and term from each product and placed in order commencing from highest to lowest values.

Enclosed in the Appendices is Tables 1-1.6 (see Appendix 1), which represent the research collection of consumer reviews of Products A-G. Tables 2–2.6, which represent interpretations of Products A-G as well as their collective interpretations, Tables 2.7 and 2.8 (see Appendix 2) are enclosed. It should be noted in each table that “Indicator” defines “Term” and “Theme,” which function as the interpretative code.

In further understanding this analysis, the author of this Thesis maintained a reference indicative of themes expressed and the phrases and terminology that contributed to the development of these themes. Many themes are not limited to one meaning, but contain more than one factor in its meaning. Therefore, a brief explanation of each indicating how the results were achieved is useful. Only a few references will be indicated for each theme, as the data contains many instances (in most cases), which would result in quite a lengthy process. In general, themes were defined based on the context of the review. Enclosed in the appendices (see Appendix 3) are brief “note-style” guidelines developed during the research process and indicate the strength, complexities and values that define consumer perceptions.

As nethnography research is intended for online communities, it is difficult to discuss the disadvantages and biases of this method utilized in the collective research of consumer reviews. The author originally planned to conduct surveys or questionnaires

on the part of the consumer and expert interviews on the part of the industry professional. It is difficult to predict if these methods would have resulted in a higher or lower yield, but these methods, would have accounted for a triangulation of data. It is likely that data collected from these methods would have more diverse results affirmed from both the consumer and industry professional and a more established representative sample from the consumer research.

However, the methods utilized in this research were controlled, as the author was not limited in collecting data. An advantage of this research was that consumers freely expressed perceptions of the products, whereas if consumers were asked questions, perhaps results would have yielded more limited data.

An ideal research scenario would include a triangulation of data affirming perceptions from individuals at different angles, including retail consumers, online consumers and industry professionals to gain a broader perspective. This would be possible to accomplish if the author had more available resources of time, funds, access to special software and possibly even collaborations.

3.2 Research Results and Analysis

The author chose to perform this type of research, as it indicated a unique perception into the “freely written” context of the consumer. In doing so resulted in clear identifiable variables integral to the consumer purchasing experience. The research results for most terms were categorized in groups, as many terms were quite similar or shared a commonality. A total of 76 terms resulted from data collection. As the contents are much too extensive, the author will only indicate the categorical groups with the highest number of occurrences of the term or set of terms. Collectively, the research results for terms indicated the following:

- The term “Absorbs Quickly” occurred the most times with 79 occurrences of this term.

- The set of terms “Lightweight” / “Light” / “Light Texture” (all derived from the same term) resulted in a collective total of 71 occurrences of these terms.
- The set of terms, which include “Preventative” / “Treats aging skin” / “Lifting” / “Firming” / “Noticeable Firmness” / “Tightening” / “Fine line reducer” / “Diminishes fine lines” / “Antioxidants” concluded with a collective total of 66 occurrences of these terms.
- The term “Intensive” resulted in 47 occurrences of this term.
- The set of terms “Hydrating” / “Hydrates” / “Hydration” / “Moisturizing” (all derived from or similar to each) resulted in a collective total of 30 occurrences of these terms.

It seems that terms related to product texture are of essential value during the consumer experience of utilizing the product, as it probably illustrates the consumer perceptions to the overall quality of the product. Also of essential value are product features that exhibit benefits to age-related concerns.

The research results for the highest collective occurrences of themes (values) expressed correlate quite similarly to those of the terms. Collectively, 38 themes were developed. Also, as contents are quite extensive, only the following categories with the highest values will be indicated:

- Consumer reviews that indicated terms, phrases or comments related to Product Texture / Quality / Functionality held the highest number of occurrences of 144.
- Consumer reviews that indicated terms, phrases or comments related to Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims held the next highest number of occurrences of 139.
- Consumer reviews that indicated terms, phrases or comments related to Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions held the third highest number of occurrences of 135.

Similar to the above results indicated by the terms, the overall product texture as a commonly referred to theme seemed to indicate an essential consumer value. Variables indicative of the overall delivery of the product to probably achieve the suggested benefits for age-related concerns are also of perceived consumer value. Thus, the relationship of the terms and themes provides that product features suggesting benefits to age-related concerns and factors related to the perceived efficacy of the product are of essential value during the consumer buying process.

In analysis of the consumer reviews as a whole, many reviewers were descriptive of the product usage experience and demonstrated a passion for the products. Many reviews were consistent, as consumers expressed similar values and terminology in describing the experience and product itself. Commonalities were suggested among texture, efficacy, product routine, product application, indication of others products, skin conditions, loyalty, recommendations, price and scent among numerous others. Common terms expressed qualities related to texture, such as “Absorbs quickly,” “Lightweight,” “Intensive,” “Hydrating” and to those related to ageing concerns, such as “Diminishes fine lines.” “Tightening,” “Firming” and “Preventative.”

The collective results were presented in the form of two visual representations depicting terms stylized in “callout clouds” indicating the consumer thought perceptions surrounded by the concept of “Consumer Perceptions.” This visual (referenced as Figure 1 of Appendix 4 in the Appendices) is referred to as The Consumer Callouts For N&O (Natural and Organic) Cosmetic Products A-G. The next visual representation is indicative of a value system stylized in the form of a cosmetic ingredient list (which, like an ingredient list indicates contents from highest to lowest percentages) depicting themes ranging from the greatest to least perceived values. This visual (referenced as Figure 2 of Appendix 4 in the Appendices) is referred to as The Consumer Values Formulation For N&O (Natural and Organic) Cosmetic Products A-G.

3.3 Discussion and Recommendations

The author of this Thesis will conclude this research section with a brief discussion correlating the significance of the author's research findings to the theoretical review (from earlier in this Thesis) as supported by a contribution of recommendations.

As the research findings seemed to indicate textural, quality and functional properties of cosmetic products as well as preferences connected with combating the signs of ageing as valuable to the consumer purchasing process and experience, the theoretical approach also refers to the challenges that product developers face in formulating natural and organic cosmetic products and in achieving the consumer demand for quality products. It seems that the relationship between product texture and efficacy are connected in the development phase meaning that the outcome of the formulation impacts consumer perceptions, in terms of specific values, such as product feel or consumer expectations (i.e. reducing the signs of aging).

Product developers work through the difficulties posed in creating good aesthetics for natural and organic cosmetic products, specifically in the functionality of natural ingredients and stability during formulation phases, while creating a pure formulation in terms of being odorless and colorless (Abrutyn, 2010). Thus, product developers' account for the perceived product qualities as the "perceivable efficacy." This describes the perceived features while utilizing the product, as essential to the consumer experience. Perceivable product features include a number of features, such as color change, wrinkle reduction, increased detergency and reduced body odor (Dell'Acqua & Calloni, 2013).

The greatest challenge is to meet the expectations of the consumer in terms of creating a quality product that adheres to a suitable texture, scent, and functionality, maintains stability throughout the duration of its shelf life, considers the consumers personal skin conditions, contributes to ethical sourcing, planetary health, is equally

as effective or more superior than a conventional product and complies by natural or organic standards (Berry, 2011).

In support of the above discussion, which synthesized the link between the theoretical framework and the author's research context, the author of this Masters Thesis seeks to accomplish the third research aim. Thus, the author provides recommendations to product developers, manufacturers and marketers of natural and organic cosmetic products who seek to position their products among a highly competitive marketplace. The following are three recommendations formed on the basis of the author's research contribution:

1. It could be suggested to product developers and those individuals serving the product development sector to examine consumer perceptions in terms of understanding the product features that create for a favorable experience with insight that could aid in product enhancement.
2. Marketers could benefit from gaining insight into the decision-making and buying behavior patterns from a set of values, which seeks to explore consumer perceptions from an Internet based approach. Perhaps differences could be present among the consumer who purchases by means of e-commerce as opposed to traditional retail outlets and could aid in making more informed marketing decisions.
3. Lastly, as this Master degree program is of the context of spa and wellness; spa professionals certainly could seek advantage especially in choosing a range of products suitable to promoting the concept of a spa with the presence of natural and organic cosmetic products. In doing so, exploring the values of the consumer could provide these individuals with insight into the consumer as a unique individual and account for a stronger relationship with the spa guests.

The final sections of this Masters Thesis will close with the conclusion, references and appendices as well as a summary in the Italian language.

CONCLUSION

This Masters Thesis examined consumer perceptions in the natural and organic category of cosmetic products. The objectives to this work were introduced, followed by a theoretical overview of consumer behavior and a marketing analysis of industry terminology and the functional areas that contribute to the development of natural and organic cosmetic products. This was further supported by the author's own research contribution to the consumer perceptions of these products. This concluding section will discuss the aims, probable solutions, discussing the implementation in practice as well as a reference to those issues that exist, concluded with the accomplishment of the aims and research tasks as presented in this work.

The aim maintained to investigate the consumer perceptions of natural and organic cosmetic products by examining the use and demand of these products through the consumer behavior and lifestyle habits of the cosmetics shopper, utilizing the Internet to explore the consumer's role as a purchaser of these products. As opposed to predicting a specific outcome, the author opted rather to explore perceptions through analysis of consumer product reviews.

The author discovered from this research a common pattern to consumer perceptions among a range of products, related to product texture, efficacy, skin conditions, product routine, loyalty and scent among numerous others. Further analysis specified essential value among perceptions to product texture and efficacy in themes and terms alike, as well as a relationship of the themes related to product efficacy and terms that indicate age-related qualities. This illustrates a connection to product effectiveness relative to age-related concerns.

The author developed a set of values from the research investigation proposing recommendations and probable solutions to cosmetic product developers, marketers and spa professionals on the basis of enhancing the consumer experience and buying

process. The visual representations created by the author define a sample population of the perceptive values and terms indicated by the consumer.

These data insights seek to provide marketing professionals the opportunity to make informed marketing decisions through analysis of consumer decision-making and buying-behavior patterns. Enhanced product development on the basis of data insights, specifically with consumer perceptions to product features is beneficial in creating more superior products. As the spa professional is perceptive to needs; wants and expectations; data insights are of value to strengthening relationships with the spa guests and also in opting for a range of products suitable to the spa concept and consumer values alike.

Data insights to consumer perceptions are applicable to industry professionals in terms of the challenges faced. In the development of natural and organic cosmetic products, these involve how consumers want to be marketed to as well as the challenges involved in the developmental phases of formulating natural and organic cosmetic products.

Conclusively, the aims and tasks of this Thesis linked the theoretical overview of consumer behavior and the marketing context of the natural and organic category of cosmetic products. The research objectives of this Thesis successfully examined consumer perceptions on a practical level of a qualitative collection of research and mixed methodologies, then presented in data analysis. Consumer perceptions were the suggested theme of this text and were successfully presented throughout the context of this work.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Products A-G For Tables 1-1.6

Table 1. Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Product A (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

SAMPLE Product	Location / Age	Review
A	Canada / 25-34	<p>***** “Love it!” -01.29.14 Quick Take: “hydrating, moisturizing” “I love this one! I use it as overnight treatment. In the morning my skin feels well moisturized, the colour is more even and it look so fresh and dewy!”</p>
A	N.G. / N.G.	<p>***** “The One” -10.25.13 “This is the one that I always come back to. Nothing else soothes my dry, sensitive skin as well. I just wish my local store carried it. I ran out a couple times and substituted other products. Never found a good enough substitute. Now I plan ahead and order on line.”</p>
A	U.S.A. / N.G.	<p>***** “Holy Grail Product!!!!” -08.03.13 Quick Take: “moisturizing, light” “This is an HG product for me. I use it as a moisturizer, not a mask. It is more like a gel than a cream and soaks in quickly. It is light and works like a charm. It keeps my chin from flaking, which is a major plus. Most moisturizers can't do that. I have purchased it at least 8 or 9 times and will continue to keep it stocked, as long as they don't stop making it. I love this stuff!”</p>
A	U.S.A. / N.G.	<p>***☆☆☆☆ “It works but clogs pores” -05.13.13 Quick Take: “heavy”</p>

A	N.G. / N.G.	<p>“This truly provides rich & intense hydration if used as a cream, but, sadly, made me breakout every time I used it. When I used it as a mask and washed it off, it didn't provide the moisture I needed.... Going back to the store” :(</p> <p>*****</p> <p>“Fantastic for Sensitive Skin” -09.23.12</p> <p>“Love it, and use it 2x daily.”</p>
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“My skin feels great” -03.12.12</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive”</p> <p>“I use this as a mask 2 times a week and my skin feels really soft afterward. It has virtually no smell, and leaves my dry skin looking and feeling great.”</p>
A	U.S.A. / 18-24	<p>*****</p> <p>“Fav!” -01.25.12</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive, lightweight, absorbs quickly”</p> <p>“I use this as a night time moisturizer, not as a mask. Tiny amount- like half a pea, is sufficient. Glides on, absorbs instantly. Makes my face feel quenched, not greasy in that amount.</p> <p>My face loves this stuff in the winter. *** products seem to just calm and soothe my skin which is combo and breaks out. Easily from stress and environment.</p> <p>:) tried a couple other moisturizer but keep coming back to this one ! In the summer I only use every so often for extra moisture, in winter I use every night.”</p>
A	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>*****</p> <p>“Extreme Moisture” -01.09.12</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive, absorbs quickly”</p> <p>“*** is the most luxurious moisture cream I have used to date. It leaves my skin feeling silky and hydrated..at 50 years old, I so need the moisture.”</p>
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“Soothing for dry skin” -11.06.11</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive, soothing”</p> <p>“I have very dry skin and this mask is very nice and soothing. It works particularly well in the morning or after a shower when pores are open and can absorb more of the product. I wouldn't recommend it for anything other than dry skin since it does leave a light layer of oil on the skin. Although the mask is kept on for a short time (2-3 minutes) I do feel the moisturizing effect throughout the day. I didn't find any advantage to leaving the</p>

mask on any longer than that or keeping it on all day as a moisturizer. Overall I am really happy with the product and will buy it again.”

A U.S.A. / 25-34



“Keeps Me Coming Back”

-05.21.11

Quick Take: “intensive, lightweight, absorbs quickly”
“I keep trying other moisturizers because I'm afraid of being in a rut and missing out on something amazing. No matter what I try I'm never satisfied and keep returning to this. It does everthing I want and nothing I don't. With sensitive and acne-prone skin, that's saying a lot.”

A U.S.A. / 45-54



-03.29.11

Quick Take: “intensive”

“Love the *** line of products. They work really nice and give my skin nice moisture and blissful look.”

A U.S.A. / 35-44



“Too Heavy and sticky”

-02.02.11

“It felt like it just laid there I want my skin to drink it in”

A U.S.A. / 25-34



“NICE”

-12.09.10

Quick Take: “lightweight”

“I use at night as a moisturizer and it works really well!”

A U.S.A. / 18-24



“Don't like. Gave it away.”

-10.23.10

“And the person I gave it to gave it away! She said it was too heavy/ greasy for her. I didn't like the consistency (very heavy) and it was ineffective on my skin. In fact, my skin looked worse after using this product. I should have returned this and I wish that I would have now.”

A U.S.A. / 35-44








“soothing and helps diminishing my breakouts”

-08.11.10

“I have brought at least 3 tubes now and It seemed to help everytime when I started to have breakouts before my period. It didn't make my acne disapear all of a sudden but I can feel it definitely soothe the swelling and inflammation.”

A	N.G. / 18-24	★★★★★	-07.13.10	Quick Take: “absorbs quickly” “my skin feels saturated the next morning. it's not good for oily skin.”
A	U.S.A. / 35-44	★★★★★	“nice and mild”	-05.13.10 Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly” “I use this product both as a moisturizing mask as well as a moisturizing booster. Every few days, I would put a thin layer on my face, neck, and chest right after shower, then follow with my regular lotion. It has not made me break out eventhough I have super sensitive combination skin. As a mask, I don't really see a huge difference right after usage. But as a leave in booster, my skin is soft and supple the next morning. Would definitely recommend. Especially since a little goes a long way, this tube will last me a long time!”
A	N.G. / 18-24	★★★★★	“might have been more effective”	-04.20.10 Quick Take: “intensive” “Great as a mask, but I simply couldn't use it as a moisturizer. Even after wiping it off with a tissue, it was a tad sticky for my taste. I really wanted to like it though.”
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	★★★★★	***	-04.03.10 Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive” “ *** I like it very much. I gave more water on my face, espeacilly in spring .I will introduce this wonderful product to my friends. I t is five star product.”
A	N.G. / 25-34	★★★★★	“My 'Must Have' Product”	-03.19.10 Quick Take: “intensive” “I have ridiculously dry skin - and in the winter, it's near impossible to keep my faced moisturized. Nothing worked until a *** gal recommended the *** Mask. I use it at night, on freshly cleansed skin, and in the morning - I put my makeup on as usual with a different moisturizer if needed. There is a CLEAR difference on days I use the product the night before or don't. I love it - it smells great, is light and not oily and it WORKS!!!”

A	N.G. / N.G.	 "So far so good" -01.31.10
Quick Take: "intensive" "I've been looking for a good moisturizer for a while. As I have acne-prone skin I wanted something natural, with no added preservatives or chemicals. So far all the ingredients in this moisturizer are completely natural. I noticed that I only need to use a very small amount and my face is fully moisturized. However, one of the drawbacks I've been noticing is that I can't really wear this under my makeup. My makeup seems to start falling apart after just a few hours if I wear this. It doesn't seem to mix very well. Either way I plan to continue using this because it feels pretty good on my face and its one of the few brands out there that are certified organic."		
A	N.G. / 18-24	 "New Favorite!" -01.05.10
Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, intensive, smooths skin" "I've been using this as a moisturizer everyday & it has made my skin look & feel amazing! It leaves skin feeling smooth, so it's great under makeup!"		
A	U.S.A. / 45-54	 "best moisture!" -12.25.09
Quick Take: "intensive, non-greasy" "I started using a *** treatment which left my face horribly dry. I was looking for an intensive moisturizer that wouldn't leave my face greasy. This is perfect! Deep moisture with a soft face in the morning and no grease!"		
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	 "Good moisture" -11.07.09
Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, lightweight" "The moisture provided by this lotion is great. My only issue is that now that the heater is on, its not quite enough. I was trying to get away from layering moisturizers for my severly dry skin, but can't do that with this--- unless I apply it 2-3 times a day. It works better if I put a thick layer on before bed and a lighter layer in the morning., but I'm not always good at that. Make-up doesn't always go over it easy either. However, a little goes a long way and I like it enough I will buy it again."		
A	U.S.A. / 18-24	 "LOVE IT" -10.01.09

		Quick Take: "perfect" "Would recommend to anyone. Using an amount smaller than a pea moisturizes your entire face - and keeps it moisturized - all day long. An excellent product."
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	***** "Effective" -09.12.09 "I like being able to wash the moisture mask off and it leaves the skin soft and non-greasy. It is gentle and I use it around my eyes, neck, and decolletee."
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	***** "Great Stuff!" -08.12.09 Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive" "This mask/lotion is wonderful. Light enough you do not have to rinse off but really helps provide moisture to thirsty skin! I would recommend this to anyone who needs a quick dose of moisture!"
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	***** "great moisturizing lotion" -06.09.09 "I love this moisturizer. I use it at night and I wake up with a glow. It's a little to thick for me to use during the day, but I don't have really dry skin. It goes on so smooth and the smell is nice too. I noticed a difference in my skin immediately. I think it gave me a glow I hadn't had before. I would recommend this to friends for sure. Oh and a little goes a long way!!!"
A	U.S.A. / 18-24	***** "great!" -04.28.09 Quick Take: "intensive" "very effective, can be used as a mask or a spot treatment moisturizer."
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	***** "So Smooth" -03.24.09 Quick Take: "lightweight, intensive" "There is nothing like a soft, smooth face. I love after I have been out in the sun, or even just after a long day, doing this treatment. It doesn't take a long time but gives you a great relaxing feeling"

A	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Works like a charm” -01.16.09</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, intensive”</p> <p>“I was amazed at the results from using this cream. During the winter months I get very dry irritated skin on my face and dry patches and everything I have used does not seem to work. I started using this and even my husband could notice a quick change in my skin as it no longer showed all the dry spots and also gave a natural glow to my skin that I am usually lacking in the winter.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I would highly recommend this to individuals who have problems with dry skin in the winter”</p>
A	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Such an intense, wonderful moisturizer” -09.19.08</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive”</p> <p>“I use it as my regular moisturizer, as I have quite dry skin. It keeps my skin soft, and the dryness in check (no easy feat). It does not get greasy or feel too heavy, even for morning moisturizing.”</p>
A	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p style="text-align: center;">*☆☆☆☆</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-09.13.08</p> <p>“tried it for about a month or so, and it did absolutely nothing!! would not recommend it!!” : (</p>

N.G. Where data is not given

*** Where brand / product name is anonymous

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Recreated by author.

Table 1.1 Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Product B (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

SAMPLE		Review
Product	Location / Age	
B	U.S.A. / 18-24	<p>*****</p> <p>“The best moisturizer ever!” -04.09.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive” “I have combination-oily skin, and this cream was perfect for winter months. It's lightweight and fast-absorbing, but also rich and moisturizing. My face stayed moisturized for almost 12 hours after one application. I don't think I will use this during the summer since it's a bit on the oily side and I tend to sweat a lot in hot weather, but this is undoubtedly the best moisturizer for all skin type during the winter!”</p>
B	U.S.A. / 18-24	<p>*****</p> <p>“love it, smells great” -04.03.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly” “smells awesome. I use with *** oil and its a perfect combination.”</p>
B	N.G. / 35-44	<p>*****</p> <p>“Expected More” -04.01.14</p> <p>“I've been using this product for about 6 weeks, and am not overly impressed. I was looking for a product with more anti-aging benefits than my old stand-by, but haven't noted any particular improvements. The texture is nice, but I notice that I have to use more product to cover my face and neck than I am used to. My skin is moderately moisturized; I'm still seeing dry patches to my chin and nose despite applying morning and night. The smell isn't bad, just too strong. It reminds me of when I run kale through my juicer! Overall, I won't purchase this again. I'll return to my ***.”</p>
B	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>*****</p> <p>“Great moisturizer” -03.27.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive” “This is a great lightweight moisturizer that gives my skin a healthy glow. My only con is that it doesn't have an SPF in it. I use Vitamin C serum, this moisturizer, and primer and I don't like having to add another layer of something on my face.”</p>

B U.S.A. / 35-44



“Love it!”

-03.18.14

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly”

“I cannot say enough good things about this cream. I use it as a day lotion and it makes my skin absolutely glow (not shine). I have oily skin with a tendency to break out and have not had issues with this. The price point is also amazing for a *** product.”

B U.S.A. / 45-54



“Dewy”

-03.07.14

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly”

“I truly like this face cream! It moisturizers wonderfully and leaves my face feeling refreshed and dewy!”

B N.G. / N.G.



“Love”

-02.21.14

“I use this every day and night (when I don't use my thick night moisturizer) I love it. So light and absorbs quickly.”

B Canada / 35-44



“Nice moisturizer, but not above average”

-02.15.14

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, nice light fragrance, not greasy”

“I was looking to try something new in a moisturizer, so after reading some reviews, I settled on this one. This is overall a very nice moisturizer, but I did not feel that it was above or beyond any others I've tried from around the same price point. I did stick with it through the whole jar. This has a nice light scent, and absorbs really well. I didn't find it to be too heavy for my oily t-zone, but I didn't feel it had any huge anti-aging effect. Overall, just a nice middle-of-the-road face cream.”

B U.S.A. / 45-54



“Broke me out...”

-02.08.14

“In the beginning I really liked this product, but after about two weeks I developed these tiny acne bumps... like blackheads, but they are white/clear looking. Sadly, I returned this product. I rated fair because it went on smoothly, had no offense odor, loved the glass jar, and you did get a fair amount for the price.”

B N.G. / N.G.



<3

-02.01.14

"It feels so nice for all skin types."

B U.S.A. / 25-34

-01.24.14

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"

"I wanted to try a new moisturizer since I ran out of my *** brand one and just turned 25. This one makes my skin so soft! I've definitely noticed an improvement after about 2-3 weeks of use. I have oily skin and put in on after I shower. It's lightweight and sinks in quickly. Definitely recommend!"

B N.G. / N.G.

"Best moisturizer"

-01.17.14

"Have tried numerous moisturizers and this is by far the best. I have combination skin. This moisturizes dry areas without causing break outs or oily skin. Is great for all year round."

B U.S.A. / 45-54

"Delightful!"

-01.10.14

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"

"I could just copy and paste the description! That's just what it does. I've been through a million moisturizers. Love this one."

B U.S.A. / 45-54

"Excellent"

-01.02.14

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive"

"Love this facial cream. It absorbs wonderfully into the skin and my face stays dewy all day/ night long. In this harsh winter wind, my face has not chapped at all. Make up goes on with out an issue and stays."

B N.G. / N.G.

"Caused breakouts"

-12.28.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"

"I received a deluxe sample of this. I liked the light scent and how it felt on the skin, but it did cause my entire forehead to break out. This is not an area I would normally break out, and nothing changed but this cream. I quit using it and the breakout ceased. I do have sensitive skin though and often break out from new things, so if you do not have sensitive skin, it was a nice lightweight cream."

B U.S.A. / 25-34



“Skeptical at first”

-12.16.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, brightening, evens tone”

“I was initially skeptical because I have been using the *** moisturizer for years. Apparently it was recently replaced with this cream, so I was forced to try this. I am certainly glad I did though! It is much lighter than the previous one but just as moisturizing, if not more. It absorbs nicely and keeps my skin moisturized through the day without feeling greasy. I have very sensitive, combination skin (mostly oily in the summer) and this product has been great at addressing my issues. I have noticed a change in the overall skin texture and brightness. My complexion is more even and my skin feels amazing. The scent is very light and dissipates quickly. I would definitely recommend this product to everyone!”

B N.G. / N.G.



“In love.”

-12.06.13

“Love love love this face cream. I got a sample from my October ***. I've been using it for a couple weeks now and I can truly say my skin has improved. I noticed it's much softer and looks radiant. I got a 15ml sample and I still have a lot more left. A little goes a long way! It goes on like butter and is a great face primer. My foundation looks flawless on top of it. I'm looking to buy the full size after I finish my sample. Although it is kinda pricy, you will get your money's worth!!”

B Canada / 25-34



“Ouch...”

-11.27.13

“Burned my skin.... I also have dry thumbs from washing my hands a lot and this burned my dry thumbs so bad that it literally hurt for days. Not for me. Definitely not good on sensitive skin.”

B U.S.A. / 45-54



“Beautiful lightweight product”

-11.19.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly”

“I received this as a sample and was better than the moisturizer I had orders.

Light scentmy skin has a tendency to be oily and I found this controlled my shine throughout the day. I do not wear any foundation.....just a dab of moisturizer.

I will purchase this the next time.”

B U.S.A. / 25-34



“Lightweight, great for sensitive skin!”

-11.13.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly”

“This is officially my new day cream! I find that it is lightweight and moisturizing, with the product absorbing into my skin almost instantly!”

B U.S.A. / 35-44



“Love this stuff!”

-11.08.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive, smells great”

“This product along with the *** oil saved my paper-dry early, mid west winter , acne treated skin. My skin is very sensitive and Ive not had one breakout and my dryness is resolved. I love the smell of this. yes, it is a little pricey. But, really not that bad as you do not need alot. I have spent way more on moisturizers that were either ineffective and/or broke me out.”

B N.G. / N.G.



“good but the smell”

-11.03.13

“I got a sample of this which I liked but the smell was so bad! It smelled like legit pickles and nothing *** about it! Would not purchase.”

B U.S.A. / 25-34



“Awesome - but make one with SPF!”

-10.25.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly”

“I have been using this cream for about a year, coming from more expensive creams from *** and this is far superior (and less expensive!). It leaves my skin supple, soft, and glowing. Would live a SPF option, only reason for 4 stars. I like the fresh scent, and the cucumber leaves a nice cooling sensation. Try it with the *** mask for added radiance!”

B U.S.A. / 25-34



-10.15.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly”

“I had been using an alcohol based toner for many years and had managed to burn my skin raw. I tried many products in the store, but this one really made my skin feel silky. This product managed to allow my skin to heal, while making it feel soft and hydrated. I suppose it could be more hydrating, but it's very lightweight vs a thicker creamy moisturizer, and still gets the job

done. It tingled the first time I put it on my face, but now that my skin has healed, I don't notice any tingling. I really commend it's ability to be a gentle, yet effective product. I hardly noticed any smell, and it certainly does NOT smell unpleasant."

B N.G. / 18-24



"Effortless"

-10.08.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"

"My skin loves this cream. After searching high and low for something my skin liked, I have found something for my dry-combination skin. I use this cream morning and night, in conjunction with the *** facial cleanser. I find that after using the cream, my skin absorbs it quickly and my skin is left feeling smooth and hydrated. I would say that the lasting power is pretty good, we're approaching the colder months here so I may have to invest in something heavier later on, but for now it's wonderful. My only peeve was that the one I got (which was part of an add on for the moisturizer) was in a jar. I like the idea of a pump because it's more sanitary. Even just having a little scoop or spoon would be good. Overall, very good moisturizer."

B N.G. / N.G.



"*first impression, half full"

-09.25.13

"Just received my jar today... Mine seems to be half full? I know it's only 1.7 ounces, but why is my jar half full?? Why not a smaller jar? Makes me think this product is used. But on the up side It smells ok, kinda like alcohol actually. (The drinking kind) and the jar is nice, big..but nice, it's matte. Packaging was lovely."

B U.S.A. / 45-54



"Exactly as promised!"

-09.10.13

Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, intensive"

"After having tried the face cleanser and the trio of masks by the *** brand which I love, I felt confident enough to order the face cream also. I am very pleased with it. My dry skin feels moisturized without looking too greasy. It feels smooth and appears fresh and well rested. Exactly what I had in mind. I will definitely order this cream again!"

B U.S.A. / over 54



"What a GREAT CREAM"

-08.21.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive, fine line reducer"

"Was given a sample of *** when I purchased something else."

Used the sample and liked the texture and non greasy feel.
Purchased a jar for myself and have seen such a great improvement in both the texture, color and firmness of my skin.
At 72, I again feel I can sometimes go without makeup.
Something I haven't considered doing for years! Love this miracle in a jar!"

B N.G. / N.G.



"Feels great, strong smell."

-07.28.13

"I have very sensitive, dry skin, so I have a hard time finding a moisturizer that gives me the moisture I need without irritating my skin. I have been really pleased with how this moisturizer has softened and smoothed my skin, without any of the itchy, flaky, splotchy drama that has become my norm. The only thing I wasn't expecting was the odd scent. It's very natural and earthy smelling, but it is strong."

B U.S.A. / 35-44



"Excellent, great cream!"

-07.04.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"

"This cream dit excellent job in my skin, look more young and radiance.

Definitely I will buy again."

B U.S.A. / 18-24



"Perfect for Young Skin"

-06.12.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"

"Of all the face creams in *** line, this one was perfect for me. Everything else felt so heavy and made my skin look and feel oily. This one makes my skin soft and moisturized without getting oily or feeling gross. One of the sales ladies in *** said that this one was best for younger people who are trying to prevent wrinkles rather than correct them, and so far it works for me."

B U.S.A. / 45-54



-05.24.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive"

"Wow- this is a great moisturizer! It has a cool, clean feel, and lots and lots of moisture. I've been using it for both day and night. It has a cucumber-y scent that's pleasant, and goes away quickly."

B U.S.A. / 25-34



“Best moisturizer”

-05.09.13

Quick Take: “lightweight”

“I have an oily face so this is perfect. Non greasy. Goes well under my makeup. Smells absolutely divine.”

B U.S.A. / 25-34



“Love the scent and how it makes my face feel”

-05.01.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, hydrating, non-greasy”

“I love this face cream from ***. I purchased it after reading other *** costumer reviews and am very pleased I did. The scent is a is a very lovely, light cucumber. I love how soft it makes my face feel after applying. I've been using it in the AM and PM for about 3 weeks now and have noticed a significant reduction in the appearance of fine lines on forehead and around my eyes. I love the fact that it can be used both as a morning and evening cream. It's a great new addition to my beauty routine, and definitely a keeper.”

B U.S.A. / 25-34



“Whoa”

-04.20.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, radiance-boosting, evens skin tone, reduces redness / soothing, ultra-moisturizing / softening”

“Got a sample of this, and after the first use I saw & felt a HUGE difference in my skin the next morning. I've previously used *** but it's a bit heavier and I haven't seen nearly as dramatic results as with ***. I have dry skin with redness/uneven skin tone. Yet when I woke up the next day, it looked and felt like I'd had an ultra-moisturizing facial. To make sure it wasn't a fluke, I used it again a couple nights later - yep, no fluke. I've honestly never written such a glowing review about any product on *** before since I bought my first product from the site eight or nine years ago. SOLD! (PS - I think it smells heavenly - kind of a green/plant-essence)”

B U.S.A. / 25-34



“very very fresh for the \$”

-04.04.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, intensive, fresh”

“I was using *** moisturizer before, and LOVED it, but alas it is so expensive!! My husband put the guilt trip on me about my beauty expenses, so I decided to downsize. Well I tried many

creams and then found the *** moisturizer. And you know what - it works better than my beloved *** moisturizer. Gasp! It actually gave my skin more clarity and more brightness, it lasts longer throughout the day, it shrunk my pores, and it has enough umph to work as my night cream as well. All for under \$50! It's a steal, seriously. ***, please don't raise the price! Also, I don't understand why people don't like the smell. I think it smells... well, fresh!"

B N.G. / 18-24

"heavenly"
-03.28.13

Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, moisturizing"
"this is a GREAT moisturizer! I have been looking for a moisturizer that is light weight yet absorbing! I have combination oily skin that gets fairly dry in the harsh winter months so it can be quite difficult to find a moisturizer that works with my skin. The *** definitely does the trick! Moisturizes the dryness but keeps the oil in the t-zone under control and I don't break out!!"

B U.S.A. / 45-54

-03.22.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"
"Love this Face Cream. I am a moisturizer junkie and am so glad I found this product. Love Love Love everything in this line. It does wt it says it will do, now how refreshing is that!"

B N.G. / N.G.

"Pretty good"
-03.18.13

"I agree...my skin does look brighter after use with a nice glow, but the scent is a bit cloying. Sample size not quite large enough to see any effect on wrinkles. Moderate moisturizing effect for dry skin types."

B U.S.A. / 25-34

"Great for sensitive skin!"
-03.07.13

"Wonderful product! Offers great moisture without being too heavy. Woke up with noticeably fresher skin. Definitely worth the bucks!"

B U.S.A. / 25-34

"Amazing"
-02.23.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive"
"I love this stuff so much. It soaks in quickly without a greasy residue and makes my skin so luminous and healthy looking! It also doesn't irritate my skin or break me out either. It smells kind of earthy and faintly like cucumbers, so if you aren't into those type of smells, maybe check this out in person first."

B U.S.A. / 25-34

"Perfect!"
-02.13.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive"
"I received a few samples of this moisturizer and have used up every last bit, must go out a purchase the full size because this is the best moisturizer I've used. I was using the *** moisturizer, so now I just use that in the morning since it has SPF and I use the *** moisturizer at night. But I must say...I am always tempted to use this one in the morning too because I love it so much! It's very moisturizing, but very light. Absorbs quickly, smells nice. I used to have mild acne, but not anymore. I wash my face with the *** and ***, then follow up with this moisturizer. These three products combined leaves my face silky smooth and fresh."

B U.S.A. / over 54

"it is the rage"
-02.08.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly"
"The sales lady told me this was the best. I found that it doesn't give me enough moisture. It is lightweight and goes on great. The price for me is good. But for a mature woman not enough moisture. Bought the *** oil to put on top still not enough. For me I need a more intensive skin cream."

B U.S.A. / 25-34

"Meh"
-01.30.13

Quick Take: "lightweight, absorbs quickly, dulling"
"I really, really wanted to love this. It smells very clean and the texture is rich but not greasy, leaving my skin super soft all day. The formula absorbs very well and doesn't leave a thick, oily, shiny film on the skin. For reference, I'd say my skin is between combo and dry, leaning toward the dry side. I also live in Hawaii, which is humid for the most part. The reason I don't like this cream is that it makes my skin look dull dull dull. When using it at night, I wake up with bleh skin. I know it's this cream because swapped it with other products, just to test my theory. I do like this cream and the way it delivers moisture; just don't like that it makes me look dull."

B U.S.A. / 25-34

		<p>“Lovely scent” -01.28.13 Quick Take: “luscious” “Smells like cucumbers so I feel like I'm at the spa every night I smooth this lush cream on. Love it. Absorbs well and never feels greasy... My first of many jars!!!”</p>
B	N.G. / 18-24	<p>***** “LOVE THIS” -01.24.13 Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly” “I got a free sample of this with a purchase and have used it for a few days now. This product is a dream! My skin is noticeably dewier- the lotion soaks into your skin so easily, leaving it feeling clean and satiny. I have fairly normal skin, but tend to break out in my T-zone around that time of month. I also have the very beginnings of forehead wrinkles, and with this I can't see them at ALL!”</p>
B	U.S.A. / over 54	<p>***** “ *** Face Cream” -01.19.13 Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive” “First cream I've found that doesn't make me break out.”</p>
B	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>***** “ *** Cream” -01.15.13 “This cream has a wonderful scent and adds just the right amount of moisture, without leaving my face greasy 1/2 way through the day.”</p>
B	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>***** “LOVE! All day moisture!” -12.22.12 Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, moisturizing” “My new must have, I am loving this new face cream, thank you ***! It keeps my skin hydrated all day long and looking bright too.”</p>

N.G. Where data is not given

*** Where brand / product name is anonymous

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Recreated by author.

Table 1.2 Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Product C (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

SAMPLE	Product	Location / Age	Review
C		N.G. / 25-34	<p>★★★★★</p> <p>“Sticky and stinky”</p> <p>-04.06.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive”</p> <p>“I researched this product forever before I finally ordered it. On paper, it should be PERFECT for me: natural ingredients, anti-aging, anti-wrinkle, SPF, almond oil, shea butter, no parabens....But it was not to be. First of all, it has a very... unique... smell. It took me a while to place it, but it smells like the *** I had 25 years ago. Because it seems to be a natural smell, and not the result of perfume, I can deal with that. But the biggest problem I had was that it never seemed to "sink in" and my makeup didn't apply very well over it. It DID make my face feel very hydrated and plump and that feeling was lasting. But I felt like it was a little too oily for me and it just stayed there on top of my skin. So disappointing. I would say that the product description is dead on about this being best for normal to dry skin. I don't think it would work for oily skin at all. I will say that this is a very high quality product and I think it would be a great everyday moisturizer for the right kind of skin.”</p>
C		U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>★★★★★</p> <p>“Love it!”</p> <p>-01.03.13</p> <p>“Love how this tightens without feeling dry. The sun protection is very limited but it's a great cream for day or night. And my skin feels great after I use it.”</p>
C		U.S.A. / over 54	<p>★★★★★</p> <p>“I'm really beginning to love ***!”</p> <p>-08.03.12</p> <p>“This is a great day cream! It goes on a bit thick, but within a few minutes has absorbed well enough that even mineral makeup goes on just fine. No more dry spots anywhere. I'm starting to get hooked on this brand!”</p>
C		U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>★★★★★</p> <p>“Will buy again”</p> <p>-02.07.12</p> <p>Quick Take: “preventative”</p> <p>“Purchased this a few months ago. It is a little thick and takes a while to rub in, but I started adding a drop of the face serum to it</p>

and that thins it out enough to make it absorb faster. Plus, I "kill two birds with one stone" applying it that way!"

C U.S.A. / 35-44



"Awesome product"

-09.26.11

Quick Take: "tightening, preventative, diminishes fine lines"
"I tried a sample of the day cream. My dry, sensitive skin loved it! It's not at all greasy, absorbs well & my skin stays soft all day. Only a little bit is needed, not like some of the comparably priced creams I have tried. I also have a definite improvement in fine lines & firming, after only 2-3 days use. It's pricey, but worth it!"

C U.S.A. / 35-44



"Love it"

-05.18.11

"I've only used for a few days but, I really love this product. I have been using the *** moisturizer from ***, which I also love. This seems to be more hydrating and I am using the one for normal to oily skin. Don't know about the fine lines yet but, my skin has not felt this hydrated in a while!"

C Canada / 18-24



"Super effective!"

-02.07.11

Quick Take: "diminishes fine lines, tightening, preventative, effective"

"Apply it sparingly, you only need about one pump of this stuff to cover the face as its a super rich! The only reason it should feel strange on the skin is if its over-applied. (If you are really bothered by the texture I recommend *** Face Cream as an alternative)

It smells great too unlike other products such as ***. It only really takes a week to start seeing results. My skin is way smooth, soft, firm, and well hydrated. If you normally have really dry skin like I do, this cream works wonders! It's well worth the money you pay for it, and I will definitely replace it when I run out."

C Canada / 35-44



-12.11.10

"have only used for about a week, but so far this is very nice and paraben free."

C U.S.A. / 25-34



"Love this stuff!"

-10.26.10

Quick Take: "diminishes fine lines, rich"

“I really, really like the *** anti-aging/anti-wrinkle line; I've been quite pleased with everything I've tried. This is especially good for my combination skin. It's kind of thick when it comes out of the bottle, but it absorbs quickly and feels really nice on my face. I just wish they made it in a SPF 30!”

C U.S.A. / 35-44



“Didn't work with my oily skin...”

-09.12.10

“I wanted to try this because I like *** brand products and because it is made with more natural ingredients than a lot of other similar products. The texture of this cream is nice and light and absorbs pretty well, but not completely—it left my skin with a little bit of a greasy residue which was not compatible with my very oily skin. Even though it made my skin look oilier I kept trying it for a couple of weeks to see if I could see any visible improvement in my skintone, but I didn't. What I wanted from this cream was an age / wrinkle-fighting cream with sun protection that would not leave me feeling greasy. I didn't see any improvement in my skin, but I only used it for two weeks so maybe if I had stuck with it a little longer it may have shown some visible signs of it working, but I just couldn't handle the extra greasiness layered onto my skin—it caused me to have to use a lot of oil-blotting sheets throughout the day. Also, I wanted a higher SPF than 10 for my face. I like to use at least a 30 SPF on my face. Anyway, this cream just didn't work out for me, but it might work better for people with a drier skin type because it does have a nice texture and lots of natural ingredients.”

C N.G. / N.G.



-08.05.10

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines”

“LOVE this, I feel like my wrinkles are really fading! I don't love the smell of it...very woody but totally worth it to remove the wrinkles!”

C U.S.A. / 45-54



“Skin drink it in but not for combination skin”

-07.05.10

Quick Take: “preventative”

“I love how this sinks in immediately to the skin. Unfortunately, my face turns shiny (t-zone) during the day when I wear this, so I now I am just using it up as a night cream. I have no breakouts from this product.”

C U.S.A. / 25-34



“Not as good as the night version”

-05.23.10

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative”

“I got this cream because I love the *** night cream. Unfortunately I didn't like the day version. This cream dried my skin. I didn't like the smell either. The only good thing is that it has SPF.”

C U.S.A. / 25-34



“Love it”

-05.10.10

Quick Take: “preventative”

“This is a great moisturizer - I wish it had a higher SPF, but it goes on creamy and not oily or cakey. I have normal skin, so moisturizer can make my face oily very quickly, but this doesn't. I love using it, it has a great light scent and I use it on my neck everyday even if I don't use it on my face just for that added protection. It's almost like a body butter for your face, but lighter? I'm replacing my normal moisturizer (***) with this because I think it does the trick better.

I haven't noticed any actual anti-ageing yet - I bought this because I am noticing I have expression lines - but I don't necessarily expect this to help out with that.”

C U.S.A. / 45-54



“Perfect moisturizer”

-04.26.10

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines”

“Perfect daytime moisturizer, great texture and light sent”

C U.S.A. / 25-34



“Love this line!”

-04.11.10

Quick Take: “tightening”

“The entire line of *** products is great. The day cream in particular is a LITTLE heavy when it goes on, but it soaks in nicely, not leaving a greasy film on your face. I use it after washing my face in the morning and applying the oil control cream. Even with the two layers of cream, once it dries my face doesn't feel heavy.

I already notice a difference in the firmness of my skin around my jaw line after 2 weeks of daily use.”

C U.S.A. / 45-54







“ *** Day Cream”

-03.23.10

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening”

“I love this cream and glad I bought it. I am already seeing a change in my skin - smoother skin, less wrinkles.”

C	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>***** “Effective cream” -02.28.10</p> <p>Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative” “This was pretty much the first cream I've used that has had any effect on my skin. I definitely notice firmer, smoother skin. It is quite heavy but as a result it doesn't take much. I did think, " if the day cream is this heavy what is the night cream like?" I checked the ingredients for both the day and night version. They look pretty much the same so I use the day cream in the morning under my makeup and at night as a night cream.”</p>
C	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>**** “It's ok..” -02.18.10</p> <p>“I absolutely love the smell and I love that it is natural without all the parabens and junk in it, but I have to use a lot of it for my face to feel moisturized and because it is rather heavy and sticky I have to wait about 5 to 10 minutes to apply my makeup. I've been using it for almost a month now and haven't noticed a difference in fine lines or wrinkles. However it doesn't irritate my skin and it does keep my face nice and moisturized all day. I'm not sure I'll buy it again for the price.”</p>
C	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>***** “Very Pleased” -01.16.10</p> <p>Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening” “Being a man, this is the first time I have invested in a product for anti aging. I was interested but skeptical when I purchased it. The results are pretty darn good. I lady that I was dating told me that I looked younger and my skin looked great after only a week of use. I have been using it for 2.5 weeks and I must admit: when I look in the mirror I see a younger me. I'll keep using it unless my skin adjusts to the cream and it's results diminish.”</p>
C	U.S.A. / 18-24	<p>**** “smelly and too thick” -01.02.10</p> <p>“this stuff is so smelly :(but that's what you get for buying a natural product! i found that this was far too thick to wear as a daytime moisturizer so i tried using it at night.... turns out it's not that great as a night time moisturizer either... had to return it”</p>
C	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>**** -12.28.09 Quick Take: “drying” “It was too heavy for my face it seemed weighted and dry. This is the first face cream I have ever returned”</p>

C	U.S.A. / 18-24	 “smells so strong...” -12.13.09
		“‘This lotion is a little on the thicker side of the spectrum and it smells SO strong. My bf and roommates kept asking me why I smelled like a tree. no joke. For it's price and size, I'd say this is a great deal but if you are adverse to strong smells, then this is not the product for you.’”
C	N.G. / 45-54	 “fabulous product” -11.13.09
		Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative, oil controlling” “controls oil and moisturizes, without the toxins of other products. one of the best day creams i've ever used.”
C	U.S.A. / over 54	 “Just a dab” -10.09.09
		Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative, hydration” “I use it over the *** serum, and one or two pumps,spread out is all you'll need.Let is absorb and go for it.”
C	U.S.A. / N.G.	 “Light and mattifying cream” -09.12.09
		Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening” “‘This cream feels light on the face, moisturizes, and has a slightly mattifying effect. It seems to have firming and slight skin-plumping qualities. I did not give it 5 stars because it may have been too rich for my sensitive, combination, breakout-prone skin and contributed to breakouts.’”
C	U.S.A. / 35-44	 “Excellent Product” -08.22.09
		Quick Take: “tightening, preventative, light texture, non-greasy” “I love the texture of this cream and the way it melts into my skin. It is all natural and is packed with great ingredients, which is a big plus. It does not make my skin greasy or shiny and makes a great base for my *** foundation. I highly recommend it to everyone with oily to combination skin. This is a great product!”

C U.S.A. / 25-34



-07.04.09

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines”

“This product is great. Makes your skin feel refreshed”

N.G. Where data is not given

*** Where brand / product name is anonymous

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Recreated by author.

Table 1.3 Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Product D (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

SAMPLE Product	Location / Age	Review
D	N.G. / N.G.	<p>*****</p> <p>“Terrific anti aging moisturizing sun protection” -04.10.14</p> <p>“I hate that sunscreen feel and smell so I'm so happy I found this one. Love it! No reason to ever switch. My skin feels and looks great.”</p>
D	N.G. / N.G.	<p>*****</p> <p>“Skin feels awesome” -04.07.14</p> <p>“I'm 37, people think I'm 27. Good enough for me, this convinced with the night cream leave my skin soft and radiant and it's maintaining the firmness. Just be careful with your eyes when applying it does burn!”</p>
D	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“Good morning moisturizer.” -04.06.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly” “I love that it is light, and does not feel oily like some other morning ones I have tried, so make-up application afterwards is easy. I find it best used after a nice hot morning shower, and it has helped my light eye wrinkles and under eye imperfections.”</p>
D	N.G. / N.G.	<p>* ****</p> <p>“ouch” -04.05.14</p> <p>“I Might Have Been Alergic To This Product, by the middle of the day my face was so itchy, not to mention my neck as well (I like to apply my creams on my neck too). That's the reason I have it a one Star! Unfortunately this is not. Product for me!”</p>
D	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>*****</p> <p>“ *** w/ SPF 25” -04.01.14</p> <p>“Love this daytime moisturizer! All the other products I've tried with a decent SPF are SO drying to the skin. Counter-productive!! Makes my skin look ten years older than it really is. NOT this one! Goes on very rich, dries nicely, and keeps my skin looking moist. I am very happy!”</p>

D	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>*****</p> <p>“A great option for night moisturizer” -02.18.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive”</p> <p>“As part of my morning routine, I found this cream a bit heavy in the am. I decided to give it a try in the pm and am very happy with it! I use the *** moisturizer in the am since it is much lighter with my routine. I do feel that my skin is much softer and healthier looking on behalf of BOTH moisturizer products.”</p>
D	Canada / 18-24	<p>*****</p> <p>“BAD” -02.09.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly”</p> <p>“It broke me out real bad and it did nothing for my skin.”</p>
D	N.G. / N.G.	<p>*****</p> <p>“anti aging cream” -02.04.14</p> <p>“I recieved this as a sample. It left my skin feeling greasy and filmy, definitely not my favorite anti aging product.”</p>
D	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>*****</p> <p>“Not for me” -02.03.14</p> <p>“I wanted to love this product but it did nothing for me. It kind of burned alitte and I just couldnt get past the smell.”</p>
D	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“works for me!” -01.30.14</p> <p>“My combination skin gets super dry in the "winter" - it's Los Angeles - this stuff really does the trick. And I only need to use a small amount of product to get the effects.”</p>
D	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“Winter companion” -01.30.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly”</p> <p>“I love this product! I have oily skin and I don't find it greasy at all! Although I am currently in the midst of a Chicago winter. If it gives me any trouble during the summer I will try the oil-free version. But for now, I love that it gives me moisture while working to improve fine lines. Although it is too soon to tell if the anti-aging is working. I need a morning cream with SPF that hydrates and this is perfect! I think it smells lovely.”</p>

D	Canada / 35-44	<p>*****</p> <p>“Great for winter” -01.29.14</p> <p>“I bought this in the spring and found it too oily throughout the summer. I switched back to it recently and found it perfect for winter. I put it on first before primer and foundation. It still leaves my skin dewy, and requires a powder finish. I have not had any flakes this winter at all and I credit ***. I will definitely purchase again for next winter.”</p>
D	N.G. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>-12.30.13</p> <p>“While I do not think this has had major benefits in terms of reducing fine lines it is very hydrating but not greasy at all. I have dry skin especially around the nose and this stuff works. This is also calming to skin issues.”</p>
D	N.G. / 35-44	<p>*****</p> <p>“Must Have” -12.05.13</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly”</p> <p>“Never would have purchased something so expensive, but after using a sample I had to get more. Makes my skin so smooth; makeup goes on like a dream. Doesn't make my acne flare up.”</p>
D	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“perfect for winter” -11.27.13</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, intensive”</p> <p>“I have very dry, sensitive skin and I need a thicker, creamier moisturizer for the winter. This is perfect. Very moisturizing and fast absorbing. Smells great too!”</p>
D	N.G. / N.G.	<p>*****</p> <p>“Plant-tastic!” -11.25.13</p> <p>“I received this product in a sample bag about three weeks ago. I was actually looking for a face cream to apply first thing in the morning. This product makes my skin glow! I really don't even need makeup after I apply. I even got a compliment from a co worker asking if I was wearing make up because my skin looked amazing. I will say a little does go a long way! It's apart of my daily routine now and when I run out I'll be purchasing the full size” :)</p>
D	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“My skin is too sensitive” -09.26.13</p> <p>“I wanted to love this. It felt REALLY good on my face. But it</p>

did cause me to break out.”

D U.S.A. / 35-44



“TOO GREASY”

-06.29.13

“too greasy. Can't use it with mattifying primer under the makeup. Makes my face covered with oil. Returned after a couple tries.”

D U.S.A. / over 54



“Best ever”

-06.17.13

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, intensive, not sticky”
“I have spent lots of money on face creams but this made me feel like a real woman! My husband thought so too.”

D U.S.A. / 25-34



“Very greasy and smells like sunscreen”

-06.14.13

Quick Take: “greasy, smells like sunscreen, heavy, shiny, doesn't absorb, unpleasant”

“The sunscreen smell in this is very strong and doesn't go away after application. The product is greasy, use only a little bit and it never absorbs, if I touch my face my fingers slide on the skin like it's covered in *** . Doesn't feel good on the skin, it feels exactly like it smells, like a heavy sunscreen. Nor does it look good (look like a greaseball). Products with SPF can market themselves as anti-aging, and given the strong sunscreen, I strongly doubt the anti-aging properties of this product extend in any meaningful way beyond the fact that this is a sunscreen. I dislike this product way too much to put up with it to find out.”

D N.G. / 25-34



“Glowing”

-05.04.13

“I have been using this product for the past two weeks and love the glow it gives my face. I just use the cream with some light powder and I'm ready for my day!”

D U.S.A. / over 54





“Good result”

-04.22.13

Quick Take: “ *** cream”

“So far so good. Definite improvement after a few weeks. See fewer wrinkles. No funny smell & no irritation.”

D	U.S.A. / over 54	 “Good morning shine” -04.12.13 “this may be a good product, but it is too shiny for use under my foundation. Would prefer a lotion or serum with the spf in it.”
D	U.S.A. / 35-44	 “It's Nice but not amazing. (Reg, not oil free)” -04.07.13 Quick Take: “greasy, smells nice” “Pros: This is a rich cream that feels luxurious and has a lovely lemony type scent. Spf of 25. Cons: This stuff is GREASY. If you use too much it never absorbs in and be very careful around the eyes as the oiliness of it causes migration and BURNS. I have had it migrate and start burning one of my eyes hours after application. More than once. My *** never does that (but is a lower spf)”

N.G. Where data is not given

*** Where brand / product name is anonymous

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Recreated by author.

Table 1.4 Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Product E (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

SAMPLE Product	Location / Age	Review
E	N.G. / N.G.	<p>☆☆☆☆☆</p> <p>“smells funny” -03.02.14 “And.... I broke out.” :(</p>
E	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>☆☆☆☆☆</p> <p>“Very Nice Natural Anti-Aging Moisturizer” -10.25.11</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive, lightweight, absorbs quickly” “Tried this awhile ago, but it was too rich for my skin at the time. I love *** natural products, so I tried this again recently, for anti-aging. I just wish there was an updated complete list of ingredients posted in the description for this cream. On the jar I just bought, there are no longer parabens, a big plus! The fragrance is pleasant, but light, and I am very sensitive to heavy fragrances. Best of all, I walked by the mirror and my lines seem less noticeable. I will repurchase.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>☆☆☆☆☆</p> <p>“Burned my face!!!” -04.13.11</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, irritating” “I like the texture of this cream. I thought it would be perfect for my combination skin in the summer since it's a light cream. However, after two days of use my skin is on fire! My face is red, stinging and dried out. I've used *** products with little to no irritation, so I'm really shocked this irritated me so much. It does have a very strong fragrance, so I don't know if it has something to do with that (?)”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>☆☆☆☆☆</p> <p>“Best moisture cream ever” -03.07.11</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly” “It's my second time purchasing this product. My skin break out easily but this product helps me from that.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>☆☆☆☆☆</p> <p>“bye bye winter dry” -01.06.11</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly” “My face always gets dry during the winter weather, and this moisturizer has been the best at remoisturizing my skin and not</p>

		looking oily (like other products I have tried). I love how it makes my face feel and I am hopeful that it will keep lines and wrinkles at bay for a while longer!”
E	N.G. / 35-44	<p>*****</p> <p>“Rich and wonderful!” -11.17.10</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive”</p> <p>“This cream is thick and buttery. It hydrates my skin and feels so silky. One layer of this cream does what it takes many layers of other creams to do.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>***</p> <p>-06.18.10</p> <p>“This product makes my face break out which hasn't happened to me in many years.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“Best night cream!” -05.13.10</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, intensive, hydrating, good smell”</p> <p>“I have now bought this for the 3rd time so I must love it!!! Super smooth, non-irritating, very hydrating, and the tub lasts for 3-4 months. I only use at night as it is a little rich for under makeup. LOVE IT!”</p>
E	N.G. / 45-54	<p>*****</p> <p>“Excellent” -04.30.10</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, intensive”</p> <p>“I have tried so many cream, but this one really works!!!”</p>
E	N.G. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“Moisturizing and comfortable.” -03.19.10</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive”</p> <p>“I tried this a while ago and it is very moisturizing with out feeling greasy. I know this brand is expensive so I do not buy often but the high quality is really there.”</p>
E	N.G. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>-02.14.10</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight”</p> <p>“i use it day and night, i live in a dry climate so it is perfect, i just wish the spf version wasn't so greasy. other than that it is awesome!”</p>

E	U.S.A. / N.G.	<p>***** “the best moisturizer” -01.20.10 Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive, non-irritating” “I have dry, sensitive skin. This is the best product I've ever used. All the *** products are wonderful.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>***** “Fantastic” -12.30.09 Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive” “I was concerned about this cream as I normally need to use an oil-free moisturizer, so I wasn't sure how my skin would respond. This cream is absolutely wonderful. Within a day or two (honestly!) my skin felt soft and very supple. My complexion is clear and my skin tone is even. I highly recommend this product--you will not be disappointed.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>***** “rich and moist” -11.28.09 Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive” “I bought this *** cream based on the review and my friend's opinion. It is very moist, rich and very smooth. If someone has dry skin you should try this for this winter!”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 18-24	<p>***** “Unscented, matte finish” -10.31.09 Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive” “This is an intensive moisturizer, but it feels light. It absorbs into your skin and doesn't leave you looking shiny. I was a little hesitant about the smell based on the tester at the store, but the new product was scent-free. The tester must have been old or maybe exposed to too many different hands.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>*****(*) “*** Cream” -08.08.09 Quick Take: “absorbs quickly” “This cream works so good on my dry skin. I have tried everything and this is one that works well for me.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>***** “French lovliness!” -07.20.09 “*** Cream moisturizer is one of those delicious luxuries that is definitely worth the price. This product not only lasts it's user a</p>

long time, you will definitely see the dramatic difference in your skin after a few months. Apply nightly and also in the mornings during a particularly dry period. Works well to counteract sun exposure and keep your skin looking young and vibrant. Plus it's french, and who doesn't adore anything french?"

E U.S.A. / 35-44



"Excellent moisturizer!"

-05.08.09

Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, lightweight, intensive"

"This is my second purchase of *** Cream. I've been using it since Fall 2008 because I suffer from dry skin with dry patches on my cheek and forehead. During the Fall, it gets really bad.

Well I have to say that this cream has worked wonders for me, I have NO dry patches and my dry winter skin has all but disappeared! When I first bought it in October, I used it in the morning and at night. Now, since the dryness has gone, I only use it in the mornings.

I highly recommend this moisturizer for anyone with dry skin!"

E U.S.A. / 35-44



"Wonderful cream!"

-04.11.09

Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, lightweight"

"I have tried several *** products and probably like this one the best. It has a nice light smell, absorbs well and leaves me moisturized without feeling greasy."

E U.S.A. / 25-34



"I love it"

-03.23.09

"I've been using the *** Cream for over two years and I still love it, even when I've tried other products, there is no other one that makes my skin looks so good.It is totally worth it!"

E U.S.A. / 25-34



"Love it!"

-03.20.09

Quick Take: "absorbs quickly, lightweight"

"I just think it is a great product. Lightweight yet it moisturizes effectively. Plus,it smells lovely. I have tried many products and I am happy with these results":)

E U.S.A. / 25-34



"Wonderful!"

-01.19.09

"My skin is combination and sensitive with dry patches. After trying several other types of moisturizers, such as ***, that broke my face out, this cream is wonderful! Even in the middle of

		winter, it has evened out my skin out and make it silky smooth and hydrated. After only using it for a week, my skin feels soft and looks younger, with the wrinkles around my mouth and eyes seeming not as deep. I will recommend to everyone I know!”
E	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>***** “great!” -12.16.08</p> <p>“My skin had been acting up (acne, super oily but with dry patches, and itchy) for about 6 months, and this cream seemed to get everything under control. My face is sooo smooth and comfortable now, and it got rid of the uneven tone I had around my mouth. Love it! It even keeps it clear and looking nice when I'm not getting enough sleep. Normally I don't like really scent-y lotions (which describes most *** products, IMO) but this cream smells pretty nice. I think I'll buy the other products in the line, too.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>***** “Can't live without it - it really changed my skin” -10.29.08</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, treats aging skin, great for combination skin”</p> <p>“I love this entire line. There really is something going on with this secret ingredient. LOVE IT. I'm 45 with combo skin. This cream just works on all my issues. And my skin looks like I'm ten years younger as a result of this in combo with the ***. A tip, I use these *** products on my hands, too.”</p>
E	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>***** “Luscious and velvety” -09.13.08</p> <p>Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, lightweight, rich feeling” “this cream leaves your skin with a velvety touch. Easily absorbed into the skin without feeling greasy. Love the velvety softness my skin feels afterwards.”</p>

N.G. Where data is not given

*** Where brand / product name is anonymous

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Recreated by author.

Table 1.5 Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Product F (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

SAMPLE Product	Location / Age	Review
F	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>★★★★★ “very strong” -12.18.13 “be careful with this product. it was like acid on my skin. i was left with little cuts/scrapes/breakouts with only 2 light applications. i used it with the *** serum. i returned it right way.”</p>
F	U.S.A. / over 54	<p>★★★★★ “Tightening” -12.03.13 Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly” “Was looking for a moisturizer that wasn't heavy but would keep my aging skin from sagging. I can definitely feel the difference. I wish it would last all day, but the tightness does go away. Maybe with continued use it will improve.”</p>
F	Canada / 35-44	<p>★★★★★ “disappointed” -11.26.13 Quick Take: “lightweight” “I am just your regular gal who knows what she likes. I every once in a while am enticed to try a new brand. I finished using the product as directed and disappointed that I didn't return it earlier. It moisturizes, but no signs of firming.”</p>
F	N.G. / N.G.	<p>★★★★★ “great” -11.11.13 “I have very dry skin”</p>
F	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>★★★★★ “super” -10.25.13 “love love love this ! I have dry-ish, sensitive skin and this lifts as well as clarifies while adding moisture. It absorbs quite nicely- I have a tendency to over-apply. I have learned to 'pat' this on at night rather than rub. Think I will be trying additional *** products, this one convinced me...”</p>
F	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>★★★★★ “Love, love!” -01.04.13</p>

“I really notice the difference and have received a lot of compliments since I started using this product. Hydrates well, tightens and feels great going on.”

F U.S.A. / 35-44



“Bought it for my mom who loves it”

-01.02.13

Quick Take: “creamy, moisturizing, lifting, softening, it works”
“I bought this for my mom, who is 63, because her budget has changed and she couldn't afford to get her usual creams any longer. I have heard about *** in the past, but hadn't ever tried any of their products. My mom has extremely dry skin, but it is also very delicate and sensitive. She has tried so many before this one, I figured it wouldn't work, but I was surprised. It did. Not only has it done everything that it was supposed to do, it has also given her more results than the far more expensive line that she was using for decades, previously. She has had a dry spot on her forehead for years that has finally disappeared and her face looks smoother and more lifted. I can't believe the results and she is thrilled with them. I guess this is the cream that she has been hoping for all along.”

F U.S.A. / 25-34



“Very drying”

-12.13.12

Quick Take: “drying, heavy”

“Honestly, this is drying. Very drying. I can't use it more than a couple nights in a row because my skin starts to get so dry it cracks, then I need to use a normal moisturizer for a few nights to get my skin rehydrated. I think any "fiming" this cream claims to do is through the tight feeling that dry skin gives you. When it's applied, it feels very heavy, and since I have sensitive skin, I was worried the first time that it would end up breaking me out, but it didn't, so that's the only plus side I saw with this.”

F U.S.A. / 35-44



-11.16.12

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, a bit drying”

“I only used for about two weeks. My skin did feel firmer, esp around eyes (which is not really a problem area for me). I ultimately returned since it actually made my skin feel on the dry side. Did not notice any improvement in fine lines but product is listed to improve firmness and does not claim to improve in other areas. This is ight weight - if it was more moisturizing I would have continued using it.”

F Canada / 25-34



“Really Organic and Luxe?!”

-11.01.12

		<p>Quick Take: “intensive, firming, hydrating”</p> <p>“Just like everyone else here, I'm surprized and impressed by this moisturizer. It is pretty intensive, so I only need a little drop for my combo skin. I am in my early 30s, so while the 'lifting' aspect is not needed, I really feel it happening. I know. Actual plumping and lifting is redundant on young skin, but this stuff is INCREDIBLE. Glad to know there are products that really deliver their promises.”</p>
F	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>*****</p> <p>“Softening and Firming”</p> <p>-04.08.12</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, firming, hydrating”</p> <p>“I have VERY sensitive skin and this product not only delivers all it says, but it does not result in anything negative happening! Softer skin, and you can see/feel the firming effects. VERY lightly scented and deliciously moisturizing and hydrating. I live in the desert; this product is truly a lifesaver for my dry and sensitive face.”</p>
F	U.S.A. / 18-24	<p>*****</p> <p>“Very Hydrating”</p> <p>-03.07.12</p> <p>Quick Take: “intensive, lightweight, absorbs quickly, firming, hydrating”</p> <p>“I love *** day cream, so i got a few samples of this online when they were available. I love the smell of this, it is a bit more hydrating than the day cream. I like the packaging and price of the day cream better, but I would consider purchasing this because its so hydrating. I cant speak to the antiaging, but my skin did feel more firm. This helped my flakey, dry combination skin a lot without breakouts. Another great product from *** !”</p>
F	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>***</p> <p>“Firms and pills”</p> <p>-03.04.12</p> <p>“I wanted to make this work. It does seem to make my skin firmer, but it dries matte - almost like a layer on top of my skin. So when I put sunblock or makeup on after, it all starts to pill. I tried using less, waiting longer in case it needed more time to fully absorb, but it kept pilling. Had to return.”</p>
F	U.S.A. / over 54	<p>*****</p> <p>“Works Great”</p> <p>-02.15.12</p> <p>Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, firming”</p> <p>“I first tried this moisturizer in a free sample. Having older skin, I was skeptical of its claims but this really does help firm your skin without any tight feeling. It absorbs completely and I do not</p>

have to wait long before applying makeup. Few products live up to its claims but this one truly does.”

F U.S.A. / 35-44



“Great great great”

-02.04.12

Quick Take: “intensive, lightweight, absorbs quickly”

“This is actually an addition to my previous review. I've now been using this product for a few weeks. And I'm amazed. The faint lines around my eyes are noticeably diminished. Even the deeper line on my forehead is fainter and softer. I've never used a product that worked this well, this quickly, and especially at this price.”

F U.S.A. / 25-34



“FANTASTIC!”

-01.23.12

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, paraben free, hydrating, noncomedogenic”

“I received a sample of this cream to try out. I am not usually a person that will buy something because I liked the way the sample worked. However, I made an exception with this one! I apply this cream as a moisturizer during the day and dab a little on at night. My skin becomes soft and supple. You really DO NOT need a lot of this stuff on your face so I would not get too carried away if I were you =P

I am 28 years old with fine lines starting to show around my forehead. I have combination skin and it is VERY sensitive. This cream helped the lines, smoothed my skin, and hydrated. I have not experienced any acne break-outs that I typically get from changing my skin care regimen. The ingredients are better for you too! what more could a girl ask for?”

F U.S.A. / 35-44



“My favorite moisturizer”

-01.19.12

Quick Take: “absorbs quickly”

“I initially got a sample of this and liked it so much that I spent the big bucks on the jar. The reasons I like it: I normally have problems with oil in the t-zone area. No matter what I've tried, by the end of the day, oil!!! Not with this. At the same time, my skin doesn't feel dry. As far as the firming and lifting aspect, I'm not sure. I've only been using it a couple of weeks. I'll post again in a month or so for an update.”

F U.S.A. / 25-34



“Amazing results”

-12.27.11

Quick Take: “intensive”

“I tried this product based on a one of the free samples and ended up buying the full size. Amazing results in just a couple of days, especially for my under eye circles. *** sealed the deal when I searched and found out they don't do animal testing and none of their products contain animal content!”

F U.S.A. / 35-44



“WOW WOW WOW - The best yet”

-12.21.11

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly, illuminates!”
“Been searching for a good moisturizer for my sensitive skin. *** was way too heavy. I searched high & low & came across this product - was happy to hear that it firmed & lifted, too. Normally I'm jaded & critical, but this is an outstanding cream. It moisturizes nicely, I actually feel mu face feel tighter (but not a dried out kind of tighter). ANd then I looked in the mirror & couldn't believe what I saw - after one use my face looked "radiant" as described. To describe this better, my face looks like it has a healthy glow after just one use. The cream is white, so it's not a stain or coloring. I'm new to the brand & will try other products based on this jar's results.”

F U.S.A. / 45-54



“Really like this”

-12.12.11

Quick Take: “lightweight, absorbs quickly”
“I received this as a sample in my most recent *** purchase. I'm always looking for skin care items that will improve the look of my skin without leaving it feeling "tacky". This product really felt good on my skin - no sticky residue, absorbed quickly and made my dry skin feel great. The sample didn't last long enough to see if it really "firmed & lifted" my skin but both days I used it, people complimented my skin. I'm going to buy a jar with the serum once I finish my current product.”

F U.S.A. / 45-54



“disappointed”

-10.22.11

Quick Take: “lightweight, gross looking on skin”
“bought this because i loved the eye cream, but this pills up on my face. It looks gross, so I only use it at night. It does actually moisturize, but not sure it firms at all..”

F U.S.A. / 35-44



“So new, SO FABULOUS!”

-09.27.11

Quick Take: “absorbs quickly, noticeable firmness”
“Finally--an anti-aging moisturizer with good-for-me ingredients and good-to-see results! The scent reminds me of a spa in a

jar...not too heavy and you can feel it doing its thing. The older I get, the less "gunk" I want to put on my skin. This is the best of both worlds because its natural and I can see improvement--my skin looks perkier" :)

F U.S.A. / 25-34



“Better than *** !”

-09.27.11

Quick Take: “intensive, lightweight, brightening, firming”
“I am obsessed with anything promising quick results for my lines and dark spots, a constant battle in my 30's. I've used every *** out there and even prescriptions but unfortunately my skin reacts by peeling and becoming super sensitive. I was introduced to this as natural *** alternative. It's been 3 wks and I am loving the results :) Treatment + moisturizer = Done!”






N.G. Where data is not given

*** Where brand / product name is anonymous

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Recreated by author.

Table 1.6 Representation of Consumer Reviews of Anonymous Product G (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

SAMPLE Product	Location / Age	Review
G	U.S.A. / 35-44	<p>*****</p> <p>“Absolutely LOVE this” -04.11.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “hydrating, moisturizing” “This is the best moisturizer that I have tried (and I've tried many). Unfortunately it is pricey but it is a wonderful product: it feels great when it goes on and leaves the skin moisturized all day long.”</p>
G	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“Love love this product, a little pricey maybe...” -03.27.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “hydrating, moisturizing” “Ok, I gave 4 stars because this product is definitely on the expensive side, but still debating 5 since the product is so fantastic... so how about 4.5! I am just coming to the end of the bottle and am so sad as it might be too expensive for me to repurchase at this time :(I've actually been using it as a night cream as it is SO incredibly moisturizing and almost feels like an overnight hydrating mask (but not as thick or goop-y). My skin is super dewy and literally glows immediately after application... no serum or anything additional necessary (I don't even feel the need to apply eye cream- although sometimes I do). Anyway, this product is amazing and great for dry skin (or if you live in dry climates, like Las Vegas), your skin will thank you for it... if you can afford it that is!”</p>
G	U.S.A. / 25-34	<p>*****</p> <p>“great!great!great!5+” -01.31.14</p> <p>Quick Take: “moisturizing” “nourishing,soothing cream with a pleasant texture. Ideal for sensitive and dry skin.really great product.i love the *** eye cream from this line. This two products works perfect and perform all declared functions.I LOVE IT”</p>
G	U.S.A. / 45-54	<p>*****</p> <p>“WORTH EVERY PENNY” -11.24.13</p> <p>Quick Take: “moisturizing” “I got this as a sample and then had to have a full bottle. Maybe I am dreaming, but my skin looks smoother and plumper already.”</p>

G	U.S.A. / 45-54	 “ *** ” -10.04.13 Quick Take: “moisturizing” “after several weeks of trying out samples of new moisturizers I chose ***.....now I have used it for over 1 month and I dont think its "the " one for me, my cheeks and lip area do not seem fully hidrated...so I guess I will either return back to *** products or go thru trials of samples again”
G	N.G. / N.G.	 “Expensive moisturizer” -07.13.13 Quick Take: “moisturizing” “I've been using this twice a day for about 6 months. As a moisturizing face cream, it's great. It has a pleasant mild scent and a nice consistency. It works well with my skin in that it moisturizes but doesn't cause me to break out or appear sticky or greasy. As an anti-aging cream, it's a sham. I am 33 with fine wrinkles around my eyes. My wrinkles do not appear diminished in any way whatsoever.”
G	U.S.A. / 25-34	 “The Best!” -05.21.13 Quick Take: “hydrating, moisturizing” “I have tried all of the best creams from all of the top brands. I have wasted hundreds and been completely disappointed. This is the first cream that I found that actually does what it says it will (and quickly). Works amazingly with the eye cream. My skin has never looked better!”
G	N.G. / 45-54	 “This stuff stinks!” -04.21.13 Quick Take: “smelly” “Got a free sample of this and there was no place on my body far enough away from my nose I could apply it. Why oh why do companies put perfume in skin care products? If I want a scent I'll apply it separately and not on my face! And the price, ooh la la what a rip off.”
G	U.S.A. / 35-44	 “ *** Delivers!” -03.11.13 Quick Take: “hydrating, moisturizing, revitalizing, brightening” “I tried a sample on a lark. It blew me away. My skin feels velvety, denser, brighter, more youthful after only a few days use. In the past I would never imagine spending \$155 on any

beauty product. When I think of the dozens of things I've tried, was disappointed in and threw out, this is worth every penny. Can't recommend this enough."

G U.S.A. / 25-34



"Absolutely worth every expensive penny!"

-10.17.12

Quick Take: "hydrating, moisturizing"

"*** must be having some sort of sample promotion for companies cause I just recieved a sample of this in my *** this month plus got another when I ordered online from ***, I'm on such a strict budget but still made room to buy a full size bottle of this. It made my skin extremely healthy. I always had an unhealthy looking complexion and this made my completion look like I stepped out of a week long spa trip. I absolutely lovethis priduct and will definitely try to make this part of regimen from here on out."

G U.S.A. / N.G.



"Greatness in a bottle"

-03.26.12

Quick Take: "perfects melanin production, preventative antioxidants"

"I've been using this product for about 3 weeks consistently in the morning and sometimes in the evening. I absolutely love this product! I have a higher concentration of melanin in my skin that shows in my black eyebrows that always need to be waxed and I tan very easily. This reduces my need to just plucking eyebrows myself. I only use one pump for my whole face and neck that balances the oiliness of my skin. The only negative is the price, but it is worth purchasing."

G U.S.A. / 25-34



"Great Stuff!!"

-09.01.11

Quick Take: "dimishes fine lines, preventative"

"What's not to love? The texture is amazing - highly moisturizing but not greasy. This gives my skin a radiance and does not cause blemishes. The \$150 price tag can give some people sticker shock...BUT, it's 1.7 oz, 2 pumps are enough to cover both my face and neck, and I am still on the same bottle after using this product night and day for two months straight."

G U.S.A. / 35-44



-06.02.11

"lovely but overpriced. it provides a glow and skins soaks it up/"

G U.S.A. / 35-44



“Worth every penny!”

-03.14.11

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative, brightening, hydrating”

“I have been trying every cream known to man and have had some success. I received some samples of this at a recent *** event at my local *** and loved the results. After using the samples for a few weeks (yes, they are that generous!) I purchased the full size. My skin is much more hydrated, brighter, fine lines are less noticable and age spots are slowly fading. I was so impressed by this that I purchased the *** eye cream and love that too! This is the equal of a serum and cream together so when you do the math on what you spend on those two items combined it equals out. Plus this is faster and who does not like faster beauty regimine when trying to get out the door? Try it ladies, you will be amazed!”

G U.S.A. / 25-34



“Results not worth the money”

-12.12.10

“For \$150, this treatment was not worth the money. Results were minimal if any. I have seen more effective products come out of ***. I overall love this line but feel its more for maintaining then correcting.”

G U.S.A. / over 54



“love this product”

-10.17.10

“this is my second time buying. becasue of price I tried top rated drug store brand when I ran out. Nope, came back to this. The glow in my face after using is great”

G U.S.A. / 25-34



“Evens skin tone and helps my pores”

-07.29.10

“I stopped using this because I thought it was causing my breakouts. However, now I don't think that's the case. I started using it again, and faithfully have followed through for one week. At first, I did not see dramatic results except for moisturization. However, after one week of using this faithfully 2x per day (after cleansing with a mild exfoliating cleanser), my pores on my nose look smaller and my skin looks more radiant and healthy. I saw some small acne whiteheads when first using this, but still continued using (those may have been from hormones or some other products I was experimenting with), and those spots of acne have healed remarkably well, while using this product. I first wash with a gentle milky exfoliating cleanser that

contains allantoin and witch hazel (key is that it's gentle and contains witch hazel if you have acne-prone skin), then pat-dry my face completely with a clean towel, then apply *** using clean fingertips from my nose outward. I don't use any serum underneath because I already have oily sensitive skin with a tendency to break out. I used this before and got to the point where I really didn't need to use any makeup-- my skin started to look flawless and glowing, au natural. It was amazing. So, the key is to be patient and always apply the product with clean hands after washing your face (with a mild exfoliating cleanser), in my opinion.”

G U.S.A. / 25-34



“completely obsessed with this product!”

-06.09.10

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, preventative”

“I'm obsessed with this product. I love the formulation. It's creamy, yet not too heavy and the scent is amazing. I can already see results after just a few weeks of use and it's part of my nightly routine. My skin is more luminous and bright. The price is steep but well worth the products. It's 2 in 1 product (serum and moisturizer) that fights fines and wrinkles and is incredibly hydrating.”

G U.S.A. / 18-24



“LOVE IT!”

-04.28.10

Quick Take: “moisturizing, evens skin tone, smells good”

“I'll be honest, I'm only 22 so I don't really need the anti-aging benefits of this product, HOWEVER... I'm in love. It smells like roses, it makes ur face baby butt soft and my skin likes better than ever. It has helped to even my skin tone a bit and my skin looks radiant and gorgeous. When my face is dry this immediately relieves its thirst. I just wish it wasn't so expensive!”

G U.S.A. / 45-54



“Great moisturizer-but...”

-03.14.10

Quick Take: “none of the above”

“Sorry, I did not see the results that I should have for this product. While it was a great moisturizer-I did not see the results to my complexion, tone or color. I did return the product after 11 days-as directed by the consultant.”

G U.S.A. / 45-54



“Love this product”

-02.09.10

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines”

"I have used *** and *** and really liked them. This one is a combination of both. Since the serum is included in this product, it's one less step I have to put on my face. Great when you have to get out the door fast. My skin looks healthy and smooth. I wouldn't say my fine lines are gone but they are not as noticeable."

G U.S.A. / 25-34



"Patience is a virtue"

-01.28.10

"I heard rave reviews for this product and was really excited about using this wonder cream but to be honest I am still waiting to see any improvements in my skin. I have actually never broken out on my nose even when i had acne as a teenager but i did with this stuff. I am still willing to give it a go for awhile since i just recently purchased it about two and half weeks ago to see if my skin needs some time to adjust... still being patient!"

G U.S.A. / 25-34



"Truly Awesome"

-01.20.10

Quick Take: "dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative, glow enhancing"

"I can finally say that this is something that lives up to its claim and more.... I have been using this for almost a week now and my skin is not only brighter and firmer but i look like 16.... the other day i got carded!! I am in love with this and will keep buying forever. Bonus my skin is glowing so good and its only been a week. Wish it was cheaper."

G Canada / 45-54



"Good cream but too expensive"

-01.04.10

Quick Take: "preventative"

"Very pleasant cream but nothing special to justify the price."

G U.S.A. / 45-54



"I'm in Love!!"

-11.28.09

Quick Take: "dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative, rich, smooth"

"It is the cream above all creams. It leaves my skin refreshed and young looking. *** did a great job by combining their top 2 ingredients and by adding the new 3rd ingredient. I love this product!!!! Thanks *** you have my daughter asking me "What have you been using???? I need some!!!" That made me glow and feel warm all over!!!! Thanks again!!! Ladies you got to try it!!! Thanks *** for everything....."YOU are the greatest!!!"

G N.G. / 25-34



“Overpriced for what it delivers”

-11.14.09

Quick Take: “hydrates, softens”

“I received this as a deluxe sample and have been using it for a month. It does make my skin softer and hydrates well, but I have not noticed any reduction in wrinkle size/depth. I'm 27 and starting to get my first serious wrinkles, so I'm on the lookout for a good product that targets wrinkle reduction, and this just wasn't it.”

G U.S.A. / N.G.



“Best Treatment/Moisturizer Combo!”

-10.30.09

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative, not heavy and sticky, great protection for skin barrier, all-in-one product, makes great eye cream, best treatment for my dry skin bar none, no breakouts, soothes sensitive skin, brightens without greasiness, great over *** at night, use morning & night”

“This is really the only treatment that I can say made a difference on my skin immediately. I use it day and night. Great protection for my dry, sensitive outer skin barrier. My skin doesn't feel dry anymore. It feels what I would think normal skin would feel.

Leaves no greasy areas or dry areas. Balances out my skin completely. I use it as eye cream, too. I put this treatment on my ears (pixie cut), my neck (back & front), behind the ears, chest and all exposed areas including hands - my hands and cuticles look great! It is an investment but a little goes a very long way! Wish they came out with one with SPF! I love *** products in general - have never found anything that doesnt work! Have pretty much everything. If you don't have much money all you need is this and an SPF! Totally change my life. By having added this to my *** skincare I can really say my skin is now perfect. Oh, and it brightens without greasiness . Plus great over my ***!!!! But I break out from anything and no dermatitis or breakout since. Skin is smooth as a baby's! Good for every skin type - but get sample first and try for a few days. That's what I did. Oily skin should definitely try it first. Looks like it would be heavy and great but amazingly absorbs into skin but you still get the benefits! Love it!!!! And you can use with your other favorite skin products. Even mix a little with other creams or treatments - still works great. I would recommend this for women (and men) who don't have time for a complicated skin care regimen or don't want one can use this as their moisturizer/treatment/eyecream but want something that really works - this is it! Just remember to add an SPF during the day. Add it to any other skin care regiment you currently use and it will increase the efficacy of those products. Adore this product - can you tell!!!!!!!!!!!!”

G U.S.A. / 45-54



“wow!”

-10.13.09

Quick Take: “dimishes fine lines, tightening, preventative”
“i am in LOVE with this stuff! it was recommended to me by
one of those awesome *** helpers and so i bought it for my
neck, (as at 46 years old i am starting to see things looking a
little scary in the neck region) but now it's my favorite all over
facial moisturizer! i've tried 'em all (literally) and i gotta say this
one is FANTASTIC! thank you again ***! Jb”

N.G. Where data is not given

*** Where brand / product name is anonymous

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Recreated by author.

Appendix 2. Interpretive Tables of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Products A-G For Tables 2-2.8

Table 2. Interpretive Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Product A Based on 33 Consumer Reviews (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR Term	Theme (Value)
Hydrating (1)	Product Routine / Time Span of Use (13)
Moisturizing (2)	Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims (29)
Heavy (1)	Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use (7)
Intensive (17)	Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions (17)
Lightweight (Light) (10)	Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application (11)
Absorbs Quickly (11)	Product Texture / Quality / Functionality (17)
Soothing (1)	Scent (3)
Smooths Skin (1)	Consumption Patterns (6)
Non-greasy (1)	Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location (4)
Perfect (1)	External Triggers (2)
	Recommendation / Non- recommendation / Advisement (11)
	Ingredients (1)

Other Products (5)
Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants (2)
Lifestyle (1)
Sensation / Emotion (2)
Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals (5)
Product Returns (2)
Product Categories (1)
Biological Processes (1)
Distribution Channels (1)

(#) Where there is the number of occurrences
Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.1 Interpretive Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Product B Based on 49 Consumer Reviews (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR	
Term	Theme (Value)
Lightweight (33)	Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions (33)
Absorbs Quickly (33)	Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location (8)
Intensive (11)	Product Texture / Quality / Functionality (40)
Nice light fragrance (1)	Product Routine / Time Span of Use (20)
Not greasy (2)	Biological Processes (3)
Brightening (1)	Scent (24)
Evens tone (Evens skin tone) (2)	Other Products (23)
Smells great (1)	Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants (7)
Fine line reducer (1)	Product Categories (2)
Hydrating (1)	Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims (20)
Radiance-boosting (1)	Consumption Patterns (7)
Reduces redness / soothing (1)	Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application (10)
Ultra-moisturizing / softening (1)	Analogies (7)
Fresh (1)	Intent Not to Purchase / Repurchase (2)
Moisturizing (2)	Ingredients (3)
Dulling (1)	Price (10)
Luscious (1)	Other Influences (2)
	Product Returns (1)
	Packaging (3)
	Age (2)
	Recommendation / Non-recommendation / Advisement (6)

Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase (11)
Sensation / Emotion (7)
Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use (9)
Distribution Channels (7)
Cleanliness / Sanitation (1)
Product Impression (5)
Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals (3)
External Triggers (1)
Consumer Identity (2)
Informed Consumer (1)

(#) Where there is the number of occurrences
 Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.2 Interpretive Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Product C Based on 28 Consumer Reviews (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR	
Term	Theme (Value)
Intensive (1)	Informed Consumer (2)
Preventative (10)	Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants (3)
Tightening (11)	Ingredients (10)
Diminishes fine lines (13)	Product Texture / Quality / Functionality (21)
Effective (1)	Scent (9)
Rich (1)	Other Products (12)
Drying (1)	Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims (17)
Oil controlling (1)	Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions (18)
Hydration (1)	Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application (10)
Light Texture (1)	Sensation / Emotion (3)
Non-greasy (1)	Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use (4)
	Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase (2)
	Consumption Patterns (4)
	Price (5)
	Product Routine / Time Span of Use (9)
	Recommendation / Non-recommendation / Advisement (6)
	Gender (1)
	Product Categories (2)
	Lifestyle (1)
	Product Returns (2)
	Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals (1)
	Analogies (1)
	Product Size (1)

(#) Where there is the number of occurrences

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.3 Interpretive Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Product D Based on 24 Consumer Reviews (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR	
Term	Theme (Value)
Lightweight (2)	Ingredients (5)
Absorbs Quickly (6)	Product Texture / Quality / Functionality (18)
Intensive (3)	Scent (7)
Not sticky (1)	Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use (4)
Greasy (2)	Product Categories (4)
Smells like sunscreen (1)	Age (1)
Heavy (1)	Other Products (8)
Shiny (1)	Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims (12)
Doesn't Absorb (1)	Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions (13)
Unpleasant (1)	Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application (3)
Smells nice (1)	Recommendation / Non- recommendation / Advisement (2)
	Product Routine / Time Span of Use (5)
	Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase (3)
	Sensation / Emotion (5)
	Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location (4)
	Consumption Patterns (4)
	Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants (4)
	Price (2)
	Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals (2)
	Product Returns (1)
	Gender (1)

(#) Where there is the number of occurrences

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.4 Interpretive Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Product E Based on 25 Consumer Reviews (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR	Theme (Value)
Term	
Intensive (10)	Scent (7)
Lightweight (13)	Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions (16)
Absorbs quickly (18)	Product Texture / Quality / Functionality (15)
Irritating (1)	Product Categories (1)
Hydrating (1)	Ingredients (3)
Good smell (1)	Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants (2)
Non-irritating (1)	Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims (17)
Treats aging skin (1)	Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use (7)
Great for combination skin (1)	Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location (6)
Rich feeling (1)	Product Routine / Time Span of Use (6)
	Other Products (12)
	Consumption Patterns (2)
	Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application (5)
	Price (2)
	Recommendation / Non-recommendation / Advisement (6)
	Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals (1)
	Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase (1)
	Sensation / Emotion (2)
	Distribution Channels (1)
	Biological Processes (1)
	Informed Consumer (1)
	Age (1)

(#) Where there is the number of occurrences

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.5 Interpretive Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Product F Based on 23 Consumer Reviews (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR Term	Theme (Value)
Lightweight (12)	Recommendation / Non-recommendation / Advisement (3)
Absorbs quickly (11)	Analogies (2)
Creamy (1)	Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions (21)
Moisturizing (1)	Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims (20)
Lifting (1)	Product Routine / Time Span of Use (16)
Softening (1)	Product Texture / Quality / Functionality (16)
“It works” (1)	Other Products (12)
Drying (1)	Product Returns (4)
Heavy (1)	Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use (5)
A bit drying (1)	Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants (5)
Intensive (5)	Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase (10)
Firming (Noticeable firmness) (6)	Consumption Patterns (6)
Hydrating (4)	Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application (4)
Paraben free (1)	Sensation / Emotion (8)
Noncomedogenic (1)	Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals (1)
Illuminates (1)	Age (6)
Gross looking on skin (1)	External Triggers (1)
Brightening (1)	Price (4)
	Informed Consumer (2)
	Product Categories (3)
	Scent (3)
	Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location (1)
	Distribution Channels (1)
	Packaging (1)
	Repeat Review (1)
	Ingredients (4)
	Gender (2)
	Animal Testing (1)

(#) Where there is the number of occurrences

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.6 Interpretive Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Product G Based on 28 Consumer Reviews (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR	
Term	Theme (Value)
Hydrating (Hydrates) (7)	Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase (9)
Moisturizing (10)	Other Products (13)
Smelly (1)	Price (20)
Revitalizing (1)	Product Texture / Quality / Functionality (17)
Brightening (2)	Product Routine / Time Span of Use (17)
Perfects melanin production (1)	Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims (24)
Preventative (9)	Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use (6)
Antioxidants (1)	Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application (11)
Diminishes fine lines (8)	Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions (17)
Tightening (5)	Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location (1)
Evens skin tone (1)	Scent (4)
Smells good (1)	Product Categories (4)
“None of the above” (1)	Age (4)
Glow enhancing (1)	Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants (2)
Rich (1)	Recommendation / Non-recommendation / Advisement (6)
Smooth (1)	Consumption Patterns (5)
Softens (1)	Distribution Channels (3)
Not heavy and sticky (1)	External Triggers (1)
Great protection for skin barrier (1)	Analogies (3)
All-in-one product (1)	Beauty Rituals / Services (1)
Makes great eye cream (1)	Product Size (1)
Best treatment for my dry skin (1)	Biological Processes (1)
No breakouts (1)	Ingredients (3)
Soothes sensitive skin (1)	Product Returns (1)
Brightens without greasiness (1)	Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals (3)
Use morning and night (1)	Lifestyle (3)
	Other Influences (2)
	Life Stages (1)

Sensation / Emotion (4)
Gender (3)
Informed Consumer (1)

(#) Where there is the number of occurrences

Source: Anonymous Internet Source, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.7 Analysis Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Products A to G Based on 210 Consumer Reviews of 38 Themes (Values) (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR Theme (Value)	Total Number (#) of Occurrences
Product Texture / Quality / Functionality	144
Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims	139
Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions	135
Product Routine / Time Span of Use	86
Other Products	85
Scent	57
Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application	54
Price	43
Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use	42
Recommendation / Non-recommendation / Advisement	40
Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase	36
Consumption Patterns	34
Sensation / Emotion	31
Ingredients	29
Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants	25
Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location	24

Product Categories	17
Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals	16
Age	14
Distribution Channels	13
Analogies	13
Product Returns	11
Gender	7
Informed Consumer	7
Biological Processes	6
External Triggers	5
Lifestyle	5
Product Impression	5
Packaging	4
Other Influences	4
Product Size	2
Consumer Identity	2
Intent Not to Purchase / Repurchase	2
Animal Testing	1
Repeat Review	1

Life Stages	1
Cleanliness / Sanitation	1
Beauty Rituals / Services	1

Note: Occurrences commence on a scale from highest to lowest values

Source: Data collected by author, 2014. Created by author.

Table 2.8 Analysis Table of Consumer Perceptions of Anonymous Products A to G Based on 210 Consumer Reviews of 76 Terms (Anonymous Internet Source, U.S.A., 2014)

INDICATOR Categorical Group	Set of Terms	Collective Number (#) of Occurrences
Texture / Functionality	Absorbs Quickly	79
Texture / Quality	Lightweight / Light / Light Texture	71
Preferred Qualities For Aging Skin	Preventative / Treats aging skin / Lifting / Firming / Noticeable Firmness / Tightening / Fine line reducer / Diminishes fine lines / Antioxidants	66
Texture / Functionality	Intensive	47
Texture / Quality	Hydrating / Hydrates / Hydration / Moisturizing	30
Terms Describing Least Preferred Product Qualities	Greasy / Unpleasant / Irritating / Gross looking on skin / Smelly / Smells like sunscreen / Doesn't absorb / Shiny / Dulling	10
Terms Describing Most Preferred Product Qualities	Brightening / Radiance- boosting / Illuminates / Revitalizing / Glow enhancing	8
Preferred Product Qualities For Problematic Skin	Non-irritating / Noncomedogenic / No breakouts / Oil controlling / Evens Tone / Evens Skin Tone	7
Texture / Quality	Non-greasy / Not greasy / Brightens without greasiness	5
Texture / Quality	Luscious / Rich / Rich feeling / Creamy	5
Scent	Nice light fragrance / Smells Great / Smells nice / Good smell / Smells good	5

Texture / Functionality	Soothing	3
	Reduces Redness / Soothing	
	Soothes Sensitive Skin	
Texture / Quality	Ultra-moisturizing / softening	3
	softens	
Product Efficacy	Effective / “It works” / “None of the above”	3
Texture / Quality	Heavy	3
Texture / Quality	Drying / A bit drying	3
Texture / Functionality	Smooths Skin / Smooth	2
Texture / Quality	Not sticky / Not heavy and sticky	2
Skin Conditions / Types	Best treatment for my dry skin / Great for combination skin	2
Ingredients / Functionality	Paraben free	1
Multi-functional Product	All-in-one product / Makes great eye cream	2
Biological Functionality	Great protection for skin barrier	1
Biological Functionality	Perfects melanin production	1
Product Routine	Use morning and night	1
Descriptor	Perfect	1
Descriptor	Fresh	1

Note: Occurrences commence on a scale from highest to lowest values

Noncomedogenic refers to “does not clog pores”

Source: Data collected by author, 2014. Created by author.

Appendix 3. “Note-style” Guidelines in Interpretive Research For Anonymous Products A-G

- **Product Results / Efficacy / Expectations / Claims:** Refers to consumer’s level of satisfaction in terms of: product delivery over a period of time / in comparison with past product utilized / product performance / its intended impact / effect / expectations / a notice of change or addressing of consumer needs / wants. Key terms / phrases: “Improvement,” / “Change,” / “Noticeable difference,” / “Effectiveness,” / “Ineffective,” / “Gets the job done,” “Working,” / “Does the trick,” / “Clear difference” / “Huge difference” / “Don’t see a huge difference” / “I could just copy and paste the description! That’s just what it does” / “Perform all declared functions” / “Significant reduction” / “Glad to know there are products that really deliver their promises”
- **Product Texture / Quality / Functionality:** Depicts perceived product feel (i.e. greasy, rich, lightweight, etc.) / how product quality contributes (i.e. smooth skin, absorbs, etc.) to perceived texture / its interaction with other products (i.e. generally, make up)
- **Other Products:** Refers to products utilized internally and externally of brand / in conjunction with product / referencing another product / numerous products tried. Key phrase: “Tried everything”
- **Multi-functional / Multiple Product Use / Application:** Indicative to use of product itself / functional uses for product (i.e. utilized as night cream, eye cream) / preference to how consumer utilizes product (i.e. wash off, leave on) / its application (i.e. applied on face, neck, etc.)
- **Consumer Aware of Product / Personal Needs / Wants:** Coincides with perceived skin concern / product qualities needed / desired, to name a few. Key phrase: “Was looking for a moisturizer that wasn’t heavy but would keep my aging skin from sagging”

- **Lifestyle:** Refers to daily lifestyle / perceived active lifestyle Key phrase: “Great when you have to get out the door fast”
- **External Triggers:** Refers to causes (i.e. stress, environment, changes in personal budget)
- **Sensation / Emotion:** Refers to perceived emotional feel / influence. Key expressions: hesitant / skeptical / confidence / patience for product effect / surprise of effect as to perceived expectation / expression of strong feeling about product / compliments received. Key phrases: “I really wanted to like this product...” “I wanted to make this work...”
- **Product Returns:** Consumer return of product / comment wishing to have returned
- **Informed Consumer:** Consumer exhibiting special knowledge of / performed research
- **Price:** Comment indicative of product cost / any comment related to cost thereof
- **Product Trial / Sample / First Purchase:** Refers to receiving / sampling / use of product tester / first purchase of product / wishing to try new product / brand / not having tried product before / first time use of product / trying improved version of product
- **Skin Conditions / Allergies / Reactions:** Refers to skin (types) conditions (i.e. oily, dry, combination, etc.) / biological influences (i.e. acne breakouts, etc.)
- **Loyalty / Repurchase / Continued Use:** Refers to numerical frequency of purchase / intention to repurchase / considering purchase / periodic purchases / pleased with product and wish to try others. Key phrase: “It’s a keeper” was perceived to indicate loyalty
- **Gender:** Indicates identification of gender (one such consumer identified himself as a man) / gender relation to product. Key phrases: “Ladies, you got to try it” / “Made me feel like a woman”

- **Product Categories:** Indicative of industry categories (i.e. anti-aging, certified organic, natural)
- **Family / Friends / Coworkers / Professionals:** Refers to any indication of
- **Analogies:** Product comparison to an object / Key phrases: “The scent reminds me of a spa in a jar” / “...This made my complexion look like I stepped out of a week long spa trip”
- **Recommendation / Non-recommendation / Advisement:** Refers to suggested (not suggested) product trial / usage to other consumers / if was suggested to consumer / also on contextual basis in form of advising (not advising) product trial / usage (due to perceived product qualities, skin conditions, scent, etc.)
- **Distribution Channels:** Refers to outlet / source (i.e. store, online order, other type). Perceived that word “order” likely to refer to consumer purchase
- **Consumption Patterns:** Refers to comments regarding product consumption habits. Key phrase: “A little goes a long way”
- **Product Impression:** Refers to perception / observation of product. Consumer perceived that product upon receipt was half-full and appeared used in that sense.
- **Beauty Rituals / Services:** Refers to comment in utilizing beauty treatments (i.e. waxing)
- **Biological Processes:** Refers to biological functions (i.e. sweating, hormones, healing)
- **Product Routine / Time Span of Use:** Refers to routine patterns in utilizing product (i.e. morning and night) / length of time utilized
- **Other Influences:** Refers to factors encouraging product interest
- **Life Stages:** Reference of life phase (i.e. teenager)

- **Cleanliness / Sanitation:** Refers to a consumer expression to packaging delivery in terms of more perceived sanitary measure
- **Consumer Identity:** Indicates consumer identification. Key terms: “Moisturizer Junky” / “Mature Woman”
- **Scent:** Refers to comments of product scent
- **Ingredients:** Indication of ingredients (i.e. parabens, natural ingredients, SPF) internally and externally of brand / product
- **Climate / Seasons / Geographic Location:** Refers to weather / seasons / climate surrounding consumer product experience
- **Age:** Direct reference to age
- **Packaging:** Refers to comments indicative of product packaging
- **Product Size:** Refers to comments indicating product size
- **Intent Not to Purchase / Repurchase:** Indicates comments regarding plan not to purchase / repurchase
- **Animal Testing:** Refers to comment praising compliance to animal testing
- **Repeat Review:** Refers to indication of updated review by same reviewer

Appendix 4. Presentation of Interpretive Data of Anonymous Products A-G

Figure 1. The Consumer Callouts For N&O (Natural and Organic) Cosmetic Products A-G



Figure 2. The Consumer Values Formulation For N&O (Natural and Organic) Cosmetic Products A-G

CONSUMER VALUES: PRODUCT TEXTURE / QUALITY / FUNCTIONALITY, PRODUCT RESULTS / EFFICACY / EXPECTATIONS / CLAIMS, SKIN CONDITIONS / ALLERGIES / REACTIONS, PRODUCT ROUTINE / TIME SPAN OF USE, OTHER PRODUCTS, SCENT, MULTI-FUNCTIONAL / MULTIPLE PRODUCT USE / APPLICATION, PRICE, LOYALTY / REPURCHASE / CONTINUED USE, RECOMMENDATION / NON-RECOMMENDATION / ADVISEMENT, PRODUCT TRIAL / SAMPLE / FIRST PURCHASE, CONSUMPTION PATTERNS, SENSATION / EMOTION, INGREDIENTS, CONSUMER AWARE OF PRODUCT / PERSONAL NEEDS / WANTS, CLIMATE / SEASONS / GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, PRODUCT CATEGORIES, FAMILY / FRIENDS / COWORKERS / PROFESSIONALS, AGE, DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS, ANALOGIES, PRODUCT RETURNS, GENDER, INFORMED CONSUMER, BIOLOGICAL PROCESSES, EXTERNAL TRIGGERS, LIFESTYLE, PRODUCT IMPRESSION, PACKAGING, OTHER INFLUENCES, PRODUCT SIZE, CONSUMER IDENTITY, INTENT NOT TO PURCHASE / REPURCHASE, ANIMAL TESTING, REPEAT REVIEW, LIFE STAGES, CLEANLINESS / SANITATION, BEAUTY RITUALS / SERVICES.

SUMMARY / RIASSUNTO

Gli obiettivi e lo scopo di questa Tesi di Master sono di analizzare le percezioni del consumatore per cosmetici naturali e prodotti biologici. Il primo capitolo esamina un contesto teorico supportato da un'analisi delle qualità uniche del consumatore, il valore del cliente / fedeltà alla marca e dati di consumo. Il secondo capitolo prosegue con un'analisi dello sviluppo di cosmetici naturali e prodotti biologici. L'ultimo capitolo include il contributo di ricerca dell'autore, il quale cerca di esplorare le percezioni dei consumatori a un livello pratico.

Il titolo di questa Tesi di Master è: *Analyzing Consumer Perceptions (Analizzare la Percezione dei Consumatori: The Case of the Natural and Organic Category of Cosmetic Products (il Caso della Categoria Cosmetici Naturali e Prodotti Biologici))*.

Il contributo di ricerca di questo lavoro inizia con l'ipotesi, che cerca di esplorare la percezione di un gruppo campione di consumatori della popolazione per quanto riguarda l'uso e la richiesta di cosmetici naturali e prodotti biologici, come mostrato nel modo di vita rispetto al comportamento e le abitudini relative a questo consumatore.

Il capitolo di ricerca contiene obiettivi che per prima cercano di analizzare e classificare i dati dei consumatori in temi e terminologia in una indagine di ricerca secondo i risultati dei prodotti di consumo. L'altro obiettivo si propone di presentare dati visivi che contraddistinguono i valori e i termini significativi per il processo di acquisto del consumatore. L'obiettivo finale cerca di proporre raccomandazioni ai professionisti del settore, sulla base di questa ricerca.

Questa ricerca esplora i modelli di acquisto dei consumatori e scopre le correlazioni e le comunanze di termini e temi. E' stata condotta una ricerca qualitativa, utilizzando diverse metodologie di osservazione, analisi dei contenuti e netnografia. Le opinioni dei

consumatori sono state raccolte, catalogate e interpretate in base al contesto di termini e frasi suggerite. Molti temi e termini comuni sono coerenti tra le opinioni dei consumatori, quali la consistenza del prodotto, l'efficacia, le condizioni della pelle, consumo del prodotto, lealtà e il profumo in un certo numero di altri consumatori. Secondo la ricerca dell'autore, la consistenza e l'efficacia del prodotto sono percepiti come valori significativi tra terminologia e temi simili. Ulteriori analisi dimostrano l'esistenza di una relazione tra i temi relativi all'efficacia del prodotto e il gruppo di termini che suggeriscono qualità relative a seconda all'età.

Raccomandazioni e probabili soluzioni sono suggerite per i ricercatori del prodotto, marketing e professionisti spa per migliorare l'esperienza del consumatore e il processo di acquisto tramite la percezione dei consumatori. Questi sono legati ai valori percepiti dal consumatore alla funzionalità del prodotto nel migliorare lo sviluppo del prodotto, guadagnare marketing tramite il processo decisionale, il modello di acquisto e valori di comportamento, suggerendo decisioni di marketing più informative per i professionisti spa di ricercare una gamma di cosmetici naturali e prodotti biologici per promuovere i valori e costruire relazioni tra gli ospiti dello spa.

La categoria di cosmetici naturali e prodotti biologici è correntemente attualità, in quanto commercializza un tipo di prodotto che fornisce caratteristiche favorevoli per i consumatori che utilizzano prodotti che contengono ingredienti naturali. La consapevolezza dei consumatori di cosmetici naturali e prodotti biologici esiste allo stesso modo tra i consumatori maschili e femminili, in quanto questi prodotti suggeriscono anche vantaggi legati all'età, tra molte altre qualità uniche per il consumatore. A livello globale, molte industrie contribuiscono all'attuazione di pratiche alternative, incoraggiando i consumatori a lottare per i valori salutari e sostenibili.

Questa Tesi di Master è stata scritta in Estonia, sulla base del programma del corso di laurea Master dell'autore di Spa and Wellness Service Design and Management (Gestione e Progettazione Servizio Spa) l'autore desidera parlare della presenza dell'Estonia nel

mercato naturale e biologico. Anche se non è discusso in questo lavoro, l'autore vuole dare un riconoscimento a Harmoonikum OÜ, che si trova in periferia della capitale Tallinn e offre, tra altri servizi una SPA biologica fornendo una gamma di eco-trattamenti che utilizzano ingredienti biologici e offre cosmetici nuovi, non scaduti. (Harmoonikum, n.d.).

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Pärnu, **21.05.2014**