

# TRONE

ADVERTISING INC.

## MEMO

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FROM: Melissa Trone *MTA*

DATE: March 28, 1991

RE: Dakota Segmentation Study  
March 11-15, 1991-Houston

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### BACKGROUND:

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. management is interested in distinguishing the Dakota prime prospect from the Camel prime prospect using Mindset Analysis. For this reason, Qualitative research was conducted to develop the smoker profile of Dakota and Camel.

### OBJECTIVES:

This qualitative research, which focused on one-on-one interviews and mini-groups, explored consumer reactions and perceptions of both Camel and Dakota advertising. This research enables management to gain a clearer understanding of the mindset of each brand smoker and how they relate to one other.

### METHODOLOGY:

Nine one-on-one interviews conducted in Houston, TX March 11-12 consisted of four male and five female respondents ranging in age from 18-34. Current Usual Brand among these smokers included four Camel smokers and five Dakota smokers. Mini-groups were also held in Houston during this time. One female and two male mini-groups were conducted with respondents ranging in age from 18-44. These were primarily Dakota smokers with 7 respondents claiming Dakota as their CUB, 4 claiming Camel and 1 Marlboro.

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Participants were first asked general attitude/lifestyle and self-perception/aspirational questions. Next, respondents were asked awareness and trial of Dakota and what the name meant to them. Then, the interviewees were exposed to the Dakota and Camel Advertising Campaigns and asked their opinions regarding the two brands and the type of person who would smoke each of the brands. Finally, the participants were asked which campaign they could better relate to and why.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:**

### ***GENERAL ATTITUDES/LIFESTYLE***

The respondents who claimed Dakota as their CUB were found to be very independent, self-confident people, whereas those who claimed Camel as their CUB were less so and therefore needed the security of a big brand to feel acceptance. Both brands seemed to attract younger adult smokers who enjoy the outdoors and like to party, however, the Dakota smoker feels more comfortable in a close-knit group with close friends at "do-drop-in" parties, whereas the Camel smoker would rather be in a large crowd at a big fraternity party. The Camel respondents were less likely to accept the changing roles of women stating that they felt threatened by the "super woman" of today. On the other hand, the Dakota participants were very receptive to women's changing roles and felt like their independence and choices in society today were more important than being caught up in traditional beliefs. As for the male roles, most respondents felt that they had not changed very much in the past 10 years. When questioned whether they usually "followed the rules," the Dakota smokers responded that it depended on the situation--they were more often "rule benders." In contrast, the Camel smoker claimed that rules were made for a reason--to protect themselves and society.

### ***AWARENESS/TRIAL OF DAKOTA***

When asked how they became aware of Dakota, most respondents said they had seen the ads in magazines or on billboards, received coupons through the mail or had purchased Dakota with the premium offers. The premiums seemed to attract the majority of the participants, giving them a reason to try Dakota, yet several respondents said that they would continue to purchase Dakota even if premiums were not offered. Some of the "hot" premium items mentioned were the leather lighter holders, logo t-shirts and piezo lighters. Since several respondents were recruited from a catalog mailing list, it was not surprising that many respondents had ordered catalog items such as leather gloves, wallets, bandanas, earrings and distressed t-shirts. Once the participants tried Dakota, they claimed they liked it because it was smooth and tasted like a Marlboro. It was encouraging that there were no negative comments about the product.

Most participants claimed that they thought the name Dakota was interesting and that it gave them the same feeling as the name Marlboro. When questioned about who they see smoke Dakota most often, the respondents said "I see men smoking Dakota but it can be for both" and "I think it's a woman's cigarette but men could see it's for men," "It's up to the viewer" and "It's for both." Although the respondents from the mini-groups described the Dakota smoker as male, seven out of nine of our one-on-one interviewees said that Dakota was for both sexes.

Dakota CUB participants had great unaided recall of the Dakota advertising campaign. They described the male hero talent as the "Dakota Dude," "the cool guy with long hair on the motorcycle" and "...that cool Dakota guy, everyone is talking about him--especially the girls." One respondent even said, "A few of my friends smoke Dakota. Whether they smoke it or not they love him." The female hero talent also got extremely favorable comments from the interviewees: "she's not afraid to be different," "she stands up for what she believes," "eye-catcher for men," "she's self confident and independent" and "she's not just another pretty model."

The Dakota smokers felt like the campaign was real life. We heard from the respondents phrases like: "she lights his cigarette," "they're always touching," "they are everyday, modern people," "I dress like 'em...I have long hair and I like leather," "lots of neon and lights at night," and "I can really relate to these people."

Unaided recall of the tag line, on the other hand, was not as favorable. Although the participants thought the tag line was good, we did not hear the smooth taste playback that we wished to hear. Getting the consumers to recognize the taste message will give them a reason to smoke Dakota rather than relying on the premiums and brand image.

### *DAKOTA / CAMEL ADVERTISING PERCEPTIONS*

A major discovery from this research which separates the mindsets of the two brands is that of literal versus fantasy. The reaction of the Dakota CUB to the Dakota campaign was that these were real life people in real life situations. The Dakota smokers felt that the Dakota campaign was realistic and reflected the modern, contemporary person in everyday situations. When shown the visuals, the Dakota CUB smoker would tell a story as to what was happening in the visual--where the person had been or where he/she was going. The Dakota CUB reaction to the Camel campaign on the other hand was that the Camel was "cute, but he's just a drawing." The Dakota CUB smokers have inborn "bullshit" detectors and they just do not relate to the Camel cartoon character. The Camel was seen as "just a cartoon" because "Camel's don't wear tuxedos and play the piano!" said the Dakota smokers. In contrast, the Camel CUB smoker saw the Camel as a real person; he's a fun-loving, partying guy to these people. Additionally, the Camel CUB respondents saw the Dakota smoker as an irresponsible, carefree, rebellious person who does not care what other people think. In comparison, the Camel CUB smoker sees himself as a responsible person who supports his family and cares what others think.

The research also suggested that the Dakota campaign has two distinctive sides, namely Dakota "hard" and Dakota "soft." When shown Dakota "soft" visuals such as Campfire Couple, Dirtbikes and Ferris Friends, the Dakota CUB respondents related Campfire Couple and Dirtbikes to the overall campaign by saying that they were just one facet of the Dakota person's life. Campfire Couple was seen as romantic; an evening scene showing lovers as best friends where neither person dominates. Most respondents, when exposed to the Dirtbikes visual, said that it showed the woman's independence by putting her on the front of the dirtbike, yet the couple is touching which gives her a softer side also. In comparison, Ferris Friends was not as well received by the Dakota CUB smokers because the visual was seen as silly and as typical cigarette advertising; some even said it looked like Newport.

When exposed to the Dakota "hard" visuals (Neon Couple Cycle, 30 Something and Logo Jacket), the Dakota CUB respondents claimed that these visuals had an edge to them that the "soft" visuals did not. The Dakota CUB smokers commented that 30 Something was a group of very close friends or even a rock band just hanging out. They said of the visual, "Connecting with a group...no other cigarette company has tapped into that," "they're in a group but all coupled off," "they are individuals--between the rugged cowboy men and Virginia Slims elite look--80% of all people fall into this category, I do" and "they are dressed casually, day-to-day not dressy but not slobbed out." When asked about the visual Logo Jacket, the Dakota CUB smokers said that the Dakota woman is unique and independent and they can relate to her because of her attitude, "she is not bothered by what people think." Neon Couple Cycle was well received also. The participants liked the night life scene with her lighting "her man's" cigarette and the confidence and close intimate relationship the visual portrays.

The Camel CUB smokers on the other hand were more sensitive to the Dakota "hard" visuals because their first impression was that the male hero talent was less approachable or not as friendly and outgoing. They said that he keeps to himself and is a private person unlike the Camel character who is always surrounded by a big crowd and is the life of the party. Camel respondents said they would like to have his independence but they were not sure they wanted to be "alone" like that. A few of the Camel CUB participants said that 30 Something looked like a biker convention and that the people were too rough looking.

The Camel CUB smoker sees the Camel character as the guy he wants to grow up to be. He is the opposite of the "hard edge" part of the Dakota male because the Camel guy is seen as more approachable and friendly. Due to the heritage behind the Camel brand, the Camel interviewees described the smoker as a responsible family man who is hard working and supports his family. Yet, with the repositioning of Camel, the new campaign adds the fun-loving, partying side of Old Joe to the brand.

**NEXT STEPS:**

The Agency sees clear differences between the Camel and Dakota mindsets as stated in this report. However, we are left with the question of how far the Dakota campaign can broaden its appeal to reach the prospects who relate more to the Dakota "soft" visuals without losing those who relate to the Dakota "hard" visuals. Further research held March 26-27 may give us more insight into this question.

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