



THE BOSTON
BEER COMPANY

Testing 87 new beer flavors in 24 hours

BOSTON BEER USES FAST, ITERATIVE RESEARCH TO REMAIN INNOVATIVE

With a lofty goal of launching four new flavors of beer into an unknown market in just a few months, Boston Beer's small but mighty insights team needed to conduct some serious research without breaking the bank—and fast. To narrow down their list of 87 potential new flavors, they turned to aytm's research automation platform and team of research experts to guide their efforts and maximize the insights gained. Through this blossoming partnership, Boston Beer's researchers were able to impress internal stakeholders with iterative results and budgets, opening doors to more strategic and dynamic conversations.



Challenge

Boston Beer needed to pick four new flavors to release into a new space.

With 87 flavor ideas to be tested, the insights team of two needed to narrow down the field based on consumer feedback.

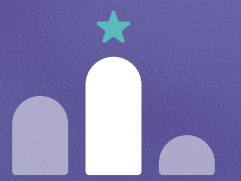
Traditional market research wouldn't be fast enough to meet a fast approaching deadline to launch.



Solution

Using aytm's research automation platform, they conducted a MaxDiff study with TURF analysis.

Faced with challenges, the team felt confident that they could lean on aytm for support and expertise.



Results

Accessing results of the study in under 24 hours and presenting those findings to stakeholders was a huge win for the insights team.

The research was used to identify the top four flavors offering the best opportunity for success.



Boston Beer was founded in the mid 1980's and quickly became a catalyst for the American craft beer revolution.

It's now one of the largest breweries in the United States, with more than \$1 billion in annual revenue.

Jim Koch started Boston Beer with a deep belief that when you implement a gated process, you create roadblocks to innovation. If you get stuck in step one, step two, step three, you're going to miss the next big idea or big shift in the market because you're trying to tread the path. This agile mindset is baked into the culture of the Boston Beer company.

Much of Boston Beer's product success is supported by a team of two research experts who embrace the idea of agile and continuous innovation.



THE CHALLENGE

Launching a new product in an unknown market with limited time and resources

Boston Beer's immediate challenge was to conduct research on a new product launch that would enter the company into a space they hadn't played in before.

It was the summer of 2019, and the company wanted to launch early the following year, requiring enough time to produce and package the new offerings. To begin the process of rapidly developing these new products, the team at Boston Beer first had to decide what assortment they were going to offer on the shelf, from a flavor perspective.

But traditional market research didn't allow for learning on the fly. And this project would be much too important to the success of the business to simply pick a flavor and move forward based on gut instinct or guesses.

Adding fuel to the fire, once the team began brainstorming flavor ideas, the list of flavor ideas to test grew from 24 to a whopping 87 SKUs—changing the scope of the required testing midway through the project.

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In our new product launch, we went from 24 flavors to 87 flavor options. Going into a room and asking for three months and \$10 million to run a huge test of 87 flavors would be challenging.

Lauren Marshall, Manager of Strategy and Consumer Insights

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We have a team of two. We work across a lot of different brands, but we're also strapped. Having the right partners and the right tools is vital. It's not just about a do-it-yourself tool or an agile tool; it's about having somebody that can help and support you on the back end as well. That mix really allows you to be the most effective insights partner that you can be.

Lauren Marshall, Manager of Strategy and Consumer Insights

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Using fast, iterative research to answer questions with insights

After hearing aytm speak at an industry conference, Lauren reached out to us. “I thought about the automation tools we could integrate into our quick-turn rapid process,” she said, “...how they could provide us with better strategic thinking from a MaxDiff and TURF analysis standpoint—rather than a sheer ranking and, ‘let's just get this out the door and see what sticks’ mindset.”

From there, aytm helped the brewing company's insights team create a MaxDiff study with TURF analysis to identify the top four flavors that would offer the best opportunity for success in the target market.

Lauren remembers the panic she felt the moment they learned that the list of flavors to test had grown from 24 to 87. “I was on a boat in the Atlantic Ocean and called our account manager at aytm and said, ‘I have a Word document of 87 flavors. This was not the plan. How do we pivot? I'm in the ocean. I can't get to my computer. I don't know what to do.’”

With the need to move things forward and a fast approaching deadline, they put their trust in aytm to deliver the results they needed, stress-testing the new partnership for the first time under extreme pressure.

Leveraging strategic partnerships with tech suppliers to earn a seat at the table with stakeholders

But Lauren was in good hands and in less than 24 hours she was able to access the results of the MaxDiff test. This quick turnaround was made possible by leveraging aytm's powerful capabilities, but also the breadth and depth of our research expertise. These support offerings ensured that the team at Boston Beer had everything they needed to make an informed decision, even when things didn't go according to plan. The quality insights uncovered resulted in a big win for the insights team who were able to confidently deliver those key insights to stakeholders.

"Using automation, we were able to pop in, and pop out of stakeholder conversations with iterative results and budgets along the way. This visibility creates a comfort level for stakeholders and allows for more dynamic and strategic conversations. Technology makes it possible."

With the help of agile research, the consumer becomes part of the project team, which makes the work you do as an insights professional that much stronger and builds stronger alliances with stakeholders.





Now, aytm's automation tools provide the company with dynamic, easy to use, quick turn access to insights. They leverage technology to create a more robust understanding of the data and have the ability to break apart extensive studies and iterate along the way to optimize learning. And they leverage aytm's support services to supplement any lack of resources which empowers their small team to focus their attention on data and strategy.

"I've also gotten stuck on something, and picked up the phone, called them, and said, 'Hey, I think I screwed something up here. Can you help me out?' and there's immediate help on the other end."

Are you thirsty for the same stellar client support and faster time to insight?

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