

Life Events – The Implications for Marketing.

Life events, both positive and negative, have a profound effect on our behavior and attitudes.

Who is not affected by things like a promotion, a house move, the birth of a child, bereavement illness or the need to look after an elderly relative?

The British Population Survey (BPS) has been asked to look at the occurrence of a range of events and understand:

- how many people are affected
- does one event lead to another
- what is the overlap of events, to one person, to a family or neighbourhood
- how events affect a range of behaviors
- How life events contribute to what we normally describe as demographic differences

The intention is to track who is affected by each event (see below for details of the events investigated) and how each event or combination of events affects behavior in a number of areas.

Understanding the way in which Life Events impact on marketing:

Each life event will be looked at in the context of how it's occurrence effects:

- Intentions to Purchase (from 23 sectors)
- Reactions to Marketing Communications (21 marketing communication channels)
- What Influences Purchase Decisions (22 different influences in choice of brand or retailer)
- Confidence in Future Financial Prospects

The data shows how each event affects different types of people in different ways. This allows marketers, for the first time, to identify these effects and tailor their activity accordingly.

For example; using data from the recently completed test we have established that: people who have become carers for elderly relatives are twice as likely to purchase/give to charity as the population as a whole and that this is the most likely event to stimulate charitable activity. The most likely thing for people who have won a lottery prize of over 1,000 to buy is clothes. In terms

of communication channels events can have a significant impact on peoples receptiveness to different channels. For example;

- People who have just become home owners for the first time are twice as likely to find emails from companies they have no relationship with acceptable than the general population but no more likely to accept leaflets in the street;
- Those who have recently been promoted are twice as likely to be accepting of marketing about phones and TV services but far less likely to buy insurance.
- People who recently got married (or started a new long term relationship) are twice as likely to be interested in buying healthcare products but less interested in savings and investments

Not just events that happen to an individual:

The events will be looked at in three ways:

- Events that happen to the individual
- Events that happen to an individuals close family
- Events that happen to an individual's friends or neighbours

By looking not just the effect of an event on an individual but also events in that individuals circle of family, friends and neighbours a far greater insight into the overall impact.

In addition by having data in these three ways we can quantify the size of an individual's circle of family and friends. This has particular significance in terms of identifying the 'neighbourhood' effect and influencers.

Events and Marketing in perspective:

The British Population Survey also contains a wide range of demographic which has been run through our 'Segment Intelligence' process and coded with a range of segmentation models (Acorn, Cameo, Mosaic, Personix, P² and OAC.

This means that Life Events can be understood across the population as a whole and by very specific groups of people. For example if you wanted to know how many people over 50 yrs old separated from their spouse/long term partner in the last year and their parental status is the data can tell you. It can also tell you what newspaper they read, what supermarket the shop at and if they buy groceries or non-groceries on line. It can also be cross referenced with other Life Events such as whether they have started a new long term relationship or had a County Court Judgement or the link between getting divorced and re-entering education.

It is often events which govern behavior which is attributed to demographics. A simple example being that many of the things which are attributed to an age group, say 18 to 34 year

olds are actually due to the events that are more common in that age group, getting married, for example.

Linking Life Events to segments:

In addition, by utilising the technique developed for the BPS Segment Intelligence it is possible to deliver results coded with an organisation's own segment codes. This technique provides:

- Life Events insight directly linked to an organisation's own segments
- Significant additional data on the up to date composition of each segment
- Purchase intentions by segment
- Communication channel preferences by segment
- Influences to purchase by segment
- Receipt and acceptance of marketing by segment
- Financial confidence by segment

The Life Events:

- Got Promoted
- Took Out A Secured Loan Other Than A Mortgage
- Becoming A Carer For Elderly Parents / Relatives
- Won A Lottery Prize Over £1000
- First Time House Buyer
- Had A Mental Illness That Prevented Work For Over A Month
- Started A New Job
- Entered Full Time Education
- Got Divorced
- Received An Inheritance Over £5000
- Took Out A Mortgage/Re-Mortgaged
- Re-Entered Full Time Education
- Carried Over A Credit Card Bill Over £1000 To The Next Month
- Separated From A Long Term Partner
- Had A New Child / Adopted Child
- Moved House

- Made Unemployed
- Got Married/Started A New Long Term Relationship/Partnership
- Close Friend/Relative Required Support Due To A Debilitating Illness
- Experienced A Period, Over Two Months, Of Depression
- Had An Physical Illness/Accident That Prevented Work For Over A Month
- Took Out An Unsecured Loan Over £5000
- Received A County Court Judgment
- Was Bereaved By The Death Of A Spouse Or Long Term Partner
- Declared Bankrupt
- Was Bereaved By The Death Of A Close Friend/Relative
- Took Out A Short-Term/Pay-Day Loan
- Moved Country
- Took Out A Debt Management Agreement

All data will be collected monthly by face to face in home interviews from a representative sub sample (1,000) of The British Population Survey.

Full details of all data collected are available in the data catalogue which can be downloaded [HERE](#).

Availability:

Availability will be by subscription only.

Price:

Price will be dependent on the number of variables selected and delivery method.

Contact: Steve Abbott for details;

E. stevea@thebps.co.uk

T. 0203 286 1981