

Effects of a Bristol Windows Advertisement with an “Up To”
Savings Claim on Consumer Take-Away and Beliefs

Report submitted to Federal Trade Commission

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Introduction

A research study was designed to investigate consumer take-away (i.e., ad communication) and beliefs/opinions upon exposure to a print advertisement for Bristol Windows with an “up to” savings claim. The specific claim of interest was “PROVEN TO

more) of individuals who install Bristol Windows can expect to save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills?

(6) Is the effect on beliefs listed under (5) influenced by the inclusion of an “up to” qualifier in the ad? In particular, would the effect listed under (5) be stronger if the “up to” qualifier were eliminated?

(7) Is the effect on beliefs listed under (5) influenced by the inclusion of a disclosure indicating that the average Bristol Windows owner saves considerably less than the 47% savings mentioned in the ad?

(8) Do a significant number of people believe that the Bristol Company has done tests to support the claim of “up to 47%” savings in heating and cooling bills?

The data were collected for the FTC by Synovate.¹ Detailed tabulations of responses to all questions are available in the report submitted by Synovate to the FTC.

Method

The study used a mall-intercept design. Three hundred and sixty (360) computer-assisted personal interviews were conducted in five geographically diverse markets located in different census divisions across all four regions: White Plains, NY; Chicago Ridge, IL; Charlotte, NC; Muskogee, OK; and Puyallup, WA. Respondents saw one of three versions of an advertisement for Bristol Windows (see next section) and then responded to a series of open-ended and closed-ended questions about the advertised product. Neither the interviewers nor the respondents were aware of the identity of the client or the purpose of the study. Respondents were paid \$5 for their participation in the study.

Advertisements

¹Synovate was recently acquired by Ipsos.

Three versions were created from an original advertisement for Bristol Windows for the study (see Appendix A):

- (1) Version (1) (“up to” version) was an existing Bristol Windows ad with some text removed to reduce clutter. The lower half of this ad displayed the following claim in large, uppercase letters: “PROVEN SAVE UP TO 47% ON YOUR HEATING AND COOLING BILLS!” (emphasis in the original).
- (2) Version (2) (“non-up to” version) was identical to version (1) except that the words “UP TO” were removed from the claim displayed in the lower half of the ad.
- (3) Version (3) (“disclosure” version) was identical to version (1) except that the following sentence was presented in a box at the bottom of the ad: “The average Bristol Windows owner saves about 25% on heating and cooling bills.”

Screening Procedure

A series of screening questions was used to ensure that the respondents were in the target market for the product and the test advertisements (see Questions A through I in the interview protocol provided in Appendix B). To participate in the survey, respondents had to (a) be age 21 or older, (b) own a house or apartment, and (c) participate in making decisions regarding purchasing home improvement products or services. Respondents were excluded if they had participated in a market research survey other than a political poll in the last three months. They were also excluded if they or anyone in their household worked in marketing research, advertising or public relations, for a store in the mall where the data were collected, or for a store or company that made or sold home improvement products or services. Finally, respondents were excluded if they wore eyeglasses or contact lenses for reading but did not have their

corrective eye wear with them at the time of the interview, or if they were not comfortable completing a survey in English.

Age and gender quotas were established to ensure reasonable diversity in the respondent sample. Specifically, between 40% and 60% of respondents for each ad version were required to be in the 21-49 and 50 and older age groups. Additionally, between 40% and 60% of the respondents for each ad version were required to be male and female.

Main Study Procedure

The study questionnaire is included in Appendix B. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of three versions of the Bristol Windows ad (the “up to” version, “non-up to” version, or “disclosure” version). They were asked to look at the ad as they normally would and return it to the interviewer when they were done. The advertisement was then removed from sight. Next, respondents were asked a series of open-ended and closed-ended questions pertaining to ad communication and beliefs/opinions. These questions are explained in the results section. Before asking any questions, respondents were told: “If you don't know the answer to any of my questions, please say so rather than guess.”

Pretest

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TABLE 1²
 Select Responses to Q2
 (Q2: What did the ad say or suggest about Bristol Windows?)

	“Up To” Version (n=114) (a)	“Non-Up To” Version (n=115) (b)	“Disclosure” Version (n=115) (c)
-- 47% off/ save 47%/ save 47% on bills	36.0%	47.8% (c)	27.0% (b)
-- save up to 47% on bills	21.9% (b)	3.5% (a, c)	24.3% (b)
-- average saving is 25%/ save 25% on bills	0% (c)	0% (c)	15.7% (a, b)

These results can be summarized as follows:

- (1) Over a third (36%) of respondents exposed to the “up to” version said that the ad stated or implied savings of 47% without mentioning the “up to” qualifier. Interestingly, fewer respondents (21.9%) said that the ad indicated savings of up to 47%, i.e., mentioned the qualifier.
- (2) While a somewhat larger proportion of respondents exposed to the “non-up to” version said that the ad stated or implied savings of 47% compared to respondents exposed to the “up to” version (47.8% versus 36.0%), this difference is not significant at $p < .05$ (two-tailed).
- (3) While a somewhat smaller proportion of respondents exposed to the “disclosure” version said that the ad stated or implied savings of 47% (without mentioning the qualifier) compared to respondents exposed to the “up to” version (27% versus 36%), this difference is not statistically significant at $p < .05$ (two-tailed).
- (4) Less than one in five (15.7%) respondents exposed to the “disclosure” version said that

² In this table as well as in subsequent tables, a letter in parenthesis within a cell indicates that that cell percentage was significantly different (at $p < .05$, two-tailed test) from the corresponding cell percentage in the column designated by the letter.

the ad stated or implied savings of 25% might be expected, none of the respondents exposed to the “up to” or “non-up to” versions mentioned 25% savings.

Next, respondents were asked questions to ensure that the ads communicated a quantitative savings claim:

Q3: Did or didn't the ad say or suggest that Bristol Windows will save you money on your heating and cooling bills?

Respondents were shown a card with three options: “yes, it did,” “no, it did not,” and “don't know or not sure.” Note that all three versions of the ad made an express claim about savings on heating and cooling bills. Thus, Q3 “filter” question designed to eliminate respondents who missed this prominent claim due to inattention or for other (unknown) reasons. Respondents who replied “no, it did not” or “don't know/not sure” were eliminated from the study. Results are presented in the table below:

TABLE 2
Responses to Q3
(Q3: Did or didn't the ad say or suggest that Bristol Windows will save you money on your

Again, respondents were shown a card with the options: “yes, it did,” “no, it did not” and “don’t know or not sure.” Since all three versions of the ads made an express claim about the magnitude of savings on heating and cooling bills, is also a “filter” question. Results are shown in the table below:

TABLE 3
Responses to Q4
(Q4: Did or didn’t the ad say or suggest anything about how much you would save on your heating and cooling bills with Bristol Windows?)

	“Up To” Version (n=114) (a)	“Non-Up To” Version (n=115) (b)	“Disclosure” Version (n=115) (c)
% saying “yes, it did”	80.7%	74.8%	84.3%

These results show that a majority of respondents took a magnitude “savings” claim after seeing one of the ads. Also, there was no significant difference in the percentage of respondents taking this claim in response to the three ad versions.

Respondents who replied “no” or “don’t know/not sure” to Q4 were skipped out of answering Q4a, Q4b, and Q5 since these questions focused on further probing respondent take away of a quantitative savings claim. Respondents who answered “yes” to Q4 were asked the following open-ended question:

Q4a: What did the ad say or suggest about how much you would save on your heating and cooling bills with Bristol Windows?

Although respondents provided open-ended responses to this question, the interviewer coded these responses into several pre-determined categories.

responded in more than one category.

table below:

TABLE 4
 Responses to Q4a
 (Q4a: What did the ad say or suggest about how much you would save on your heating and cooling bills with Bristol Windows?)

	“Up To” Version (n=114) (a)	“Non-Up To” Version (n=115) (b)	“Disclosure” Version (n=115) (c)
-- 47%	45.6%	58.3% (c)	36.5% (b)
-- up to 47%	26.3% (b)	8.7% (a, c)	29.6% (b)
-- 25% / average 25%	0.9% (c)	0.9% (c)	26.1% (a, b)

(4) About one in four respondents (26.1%) exposed to the “disclosure” version said that the ad stated or implied savings of 25%. As might be expected, virtually none of the respondents exposed to the “up to” or “non-up to” versions mentioned 25% savings (less than 1% mentions in each group).

Next, respondents who said either “47%” or “up to 47%” in response to Q4a were asked Q4b, while the remaining respondents were skipped to Q6a. Q4b asked:

Q4b: Based on what the ad said or suggested, how many users of Bristol Windows can expect to save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills. Is it none, very few, some, about half, most, almost all, all, or don’t know or not sure?

Respondents were shown a card with the following response options. Key responses are presented in Table 5:

TABLE 5
Select Responses to Q4b
(Q4b: Based on what the ad said or suggested, how many users of Bristol Windows can expect to save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills. Is it none, very few, some, about half, most, almost all, all, or don’t know or not sure?)

	“Up To” Version (n=114) (a)	“Non-Up To” Version (n=115) (b)	“Disclosure” Version (n=115) (c)
-- All/ Almost all/ Most/ About half	48.2%	40.9%	46.1%
-- All/ Almost all/ Most	42.1%	38.3%	36.5%
-- All/ Almost all	28.1%	27.0%	21.7%

The table shows that:

- (1) Almost half (48.2%) of all respondents exposed to the “up to” version of the ad indicated that half or more of Bristol Windows users could expect to save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills based on what the ad said or suggested.
- (2) The results were similar for respondents exposed to the “non-up to” version and the

“disclosure” version of the ad (40.9% and 46.1% respectively). There were no statistically significant differences between the groups.

(3) A similar pattern of results across the three groups was obtained for responses in the all/almost all/most categories (combined) and for responses in the all/almost all categories (combined). In each case, there were no statistically significant differences between the groups.

Beliefs/Opinions

Next, respondents who had been asked Q4b were told:

So far, I have asked you some questions about what the ad said or suggested. Now I'd like to ask you some questions concerning your personal opinion about Bristol Windows.

Then, they were asked Q5:

Q5: In your personal opinion, how many users of Bristol Windows can expect to save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills? Is it none, very few, some, about half, most, almost all, all, or don't know or not sure?

Note that Q4b and Q5 are identical except that Q4b opens with “Based on what the ad said or suggested...” whereas Q5 opens with “In your personal opinion...” In other words, Q4b assesses whether respondents see the ad as suggesting anything about the typical experience of Bristol Windows users whereas Q5 assesses respondent's personal beliefs or opinions about the typical experience of users. Responses to Q5 are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6
 Select Responses to Q5

(Q5: In your personal opinion, how many users of Bristol Windows can expect to save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills? Is it ~~very~~ very few, some, about half, most, almost all, all, or don't know or not sure?)

	"Up To" Version (n=114) (a)	"Non-Up To" Version (n=115) (b)	"Disclosure" Version (n=115) (c)
-- All/ Almost all/ Most/ About half	43.0%	45.2%	42.6%
-- All/ Almost all/ Most	36.0%	37.4%	26.1%
-- All/ Almost all	26.3% (c)	23.5% (c)	13.0% (a, b)

- 7a. The “Buy 2 Get 1 Free” offer for Bristol Windows is only valid for a limited time.
- 7b. The Bristol company has done tests to support their claim that you will save on your heating and cooling bills.
- 7c. Bristol windows come with free installation.
- 7d. Bristol windows are burglar proof.

Responses to Q7b are of focal interest in this study. Q7a is a decoy statement introduced to help mask the purpose of the study. Q7c and 7d are control statements designed to capture “yea saying.”

Table 8 shows the percentage of “yes” responses to each of these statements for all respondents as well as separately for respondents in each of the three treatment conditions:

TABLE 8
Responses to Q7
(% saying “yes”)

	All Respondents (n=344)	“Up To” Version (n=114) (a)	“Non-Up To” Version (n=115) (b)	“Disclosure” Version (n=115) (c)
7a. The “Buy 2 Get 1 Free” offer				

virtually no differences among the three groups on this measure (range: 60.0% to 61.7%).

- (2) To control for “yea” saying, the responses to Q7b were adjusted by subtracting the average response for the two control questions (Q7c and Q7d). These adjusted responses indicate that after controlling for “yea” saying, over two-fifths of all respondents (45.8%) believed the Bristol company had done tests to support their savings claim. There were virtually no differences among the three groups on this adjusted measure (range: 43.9% to 46.9%).

Conclusion

The study results support the following conclusions in relation to the eight research questions that were presented earlier:

Ad Communication

- (1) In two open-ended questions (Q2 – the open question and Q4a – a more focused follow-up question), between 36% and 45.6% of respondents exposed to the “up to” version of the ad said that the ad stated implied savings of 47% on heating and cooling bills without mentioning the “up to” qualifier. (See Tables 1 and 4).
- (2) Almost half (48.2%) of respondents exposed to the “up to” version of the ad indicated that half or more of Bristol Windows users could expect to save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills based on what the ad said or suggested. (See Table 5).
- (3) Similar results as outlined in (1) and (2) were obtained for the group of respondents who were exposed to a “non-up to” version of the same ad. Furthermore, statistical comparisons failed to reject the null hypothesis that results were the same for the two

exposed to the “up to” version of the ad indicated that in their personal opinion users of Bristol Windows would save 45%-50% on average on their heating and cooling bills.

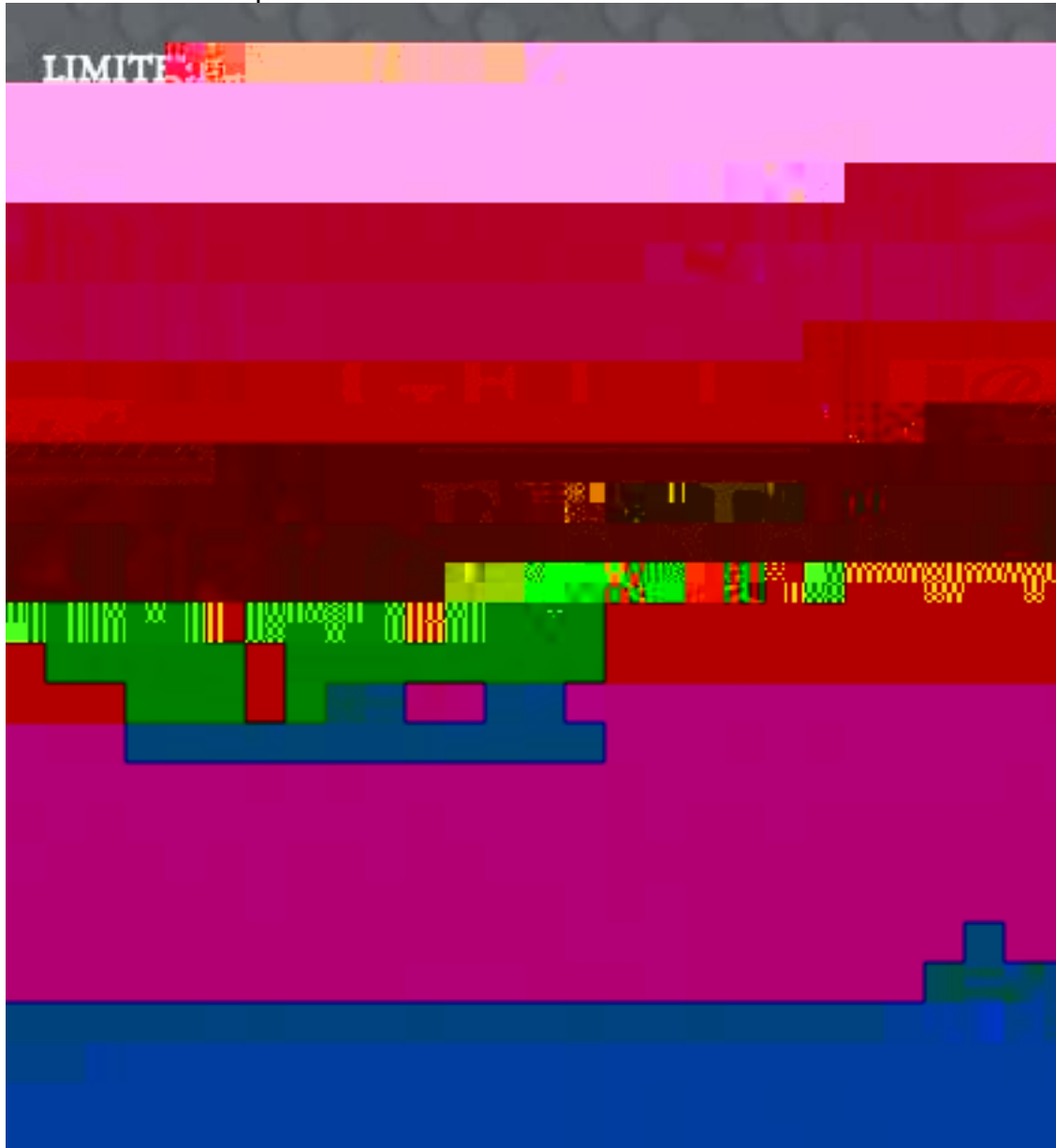
- (6) Similar results as outlined in (5) were obtained for the group of respondents who were exposed to a “non-up to” version of the same ad (43% vs. 45.2% for Q5, 40.4% vs. 39.1% for Q6/Q6a -- Tables 6 and 7). Furthermore, statistical comparisons failed to reject the null hypothesis that results were the same for the two groups. In other words, these data do not support the hypothesis that the inclusion of an “up to” qualifier would weaken the ad effects on bills outlined in (5).
- (7) For Q5, similar results as outlined in (5) were obtained for the group of respondents who were exposed to a “disclosure” version of the same ad (43% vs. 42.6% – see Tables 6). In contrast, for Q6/Q6a, significantly fewer respondents exposed to the “disclosure” version versus those exposed to the “up to” version of the ad indicated that in their personal opinion users of Bristol Windows would save 45%-50% on average on their heating and cooling bills (26.1% versus 40.4%, $p < .05$ two-tail). Note, however, that mean values for reported savings in response to Q6/Q6a were virtually identical across the three ad versions (range 36.2% - 38.2%).

When considered together, the results summarized in (5), (6), and (7) above indicate that a significant proportion of people in all of the ad treatment conditions, and particularly those exposed to the “up to” and “non up to” versions of the ad, believed that Bristol Windows users would typically realize savings of about 47% on their heating and

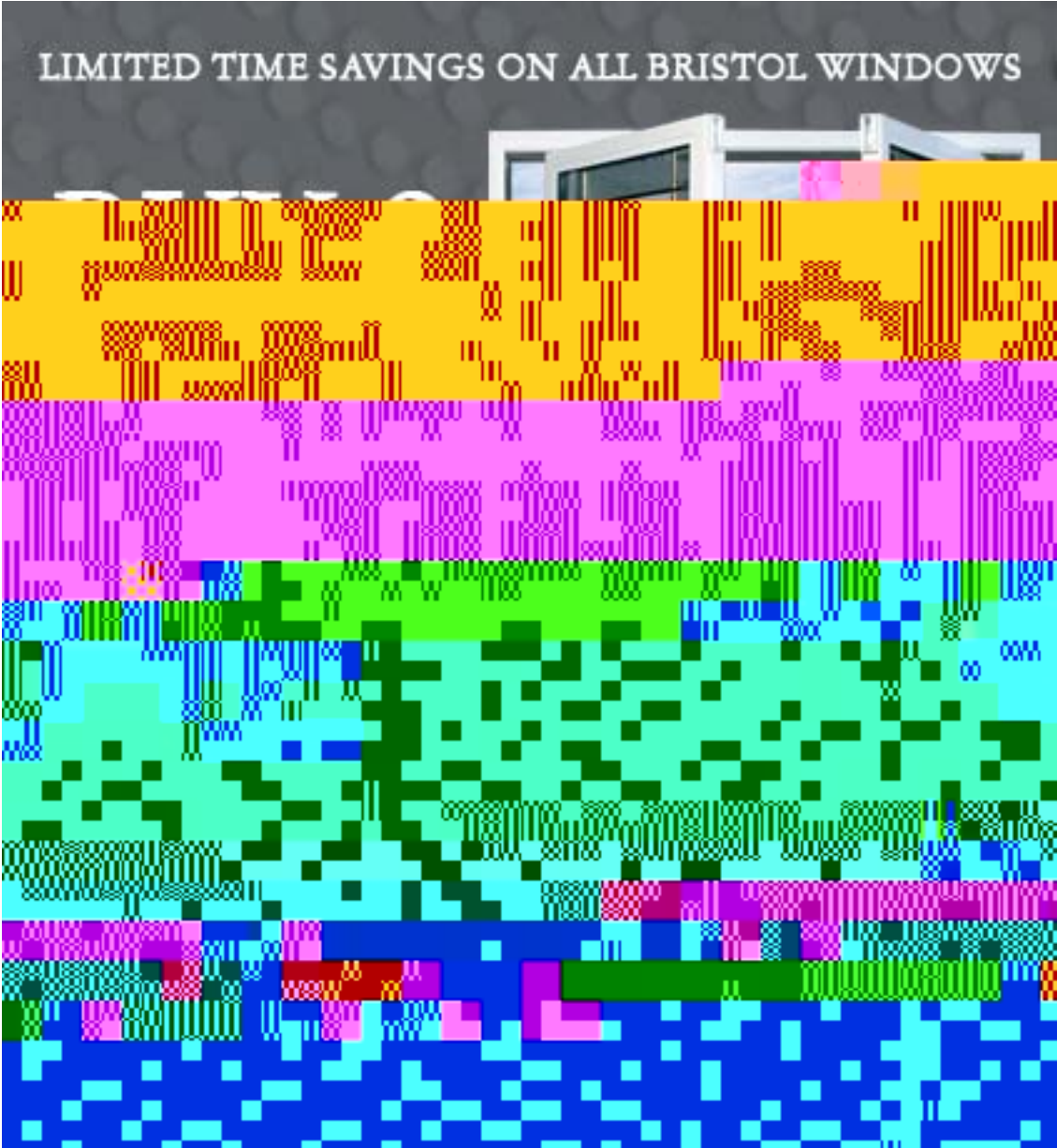
(8) After controlling for “yea” saying, over two fifths of all respondents (45.8%) believed that the Bristol Company had done ~~tests~~ support their ~~sales~~ claim.

APPENDIX A
STUDY ADVERTISEMENTS

Version 1: Save Up To 47%



Version 2: Save 47%



Version 3: Save Up To 47% (average owner saves 25%)



APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Synovate
360 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10010

October 2010

Respondent I.D. # _____

42C6 “Window” Study
Mall Screener

RESPONDENT'S NAME: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

INTERVIEWER: _____ DATE: _____

TIME STARTED

	<input type="checkbox"/>
#2 – Chicago Ridge, IL	<input type="checkbox"/>
#3 – Independence, MO	<input type="checkbox"/>
#4 – Charlotte, NC	<input type="checkbox"/>
#5 – Muskogee, OK	<input type="checkbox"/>
#6 – Puyallup, WA	<input type="checkbox"/>

SIGHT SCREEN FOR MALES AND FEMALES AGE 21 AND OLDER

Hello, I am _____ from _____. I assure you we are not selling anything. All we want are your honest opinions. Could you spare us a few minutes to answer some brief questions?

INITIAL REFUSALS
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

A. RECORD GENDER OF RESPONDENT

Male

Female

Q.A OVER QUOTA MALE
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Q.A OVER QUOTA FEMALE
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

HAND RESPONDENT CARD S

B. What is your age?

D. Which of the following best describes your role in purchasing home improvement products or services for your home or apartment?

I am the main decision maker 1

I participate in the decisions2

I am not in

G. Do you usually wear glasses or contact lenses for reading or watching television?

Yes 1
No.....2 **SKIP TO Q.F**

H. Do you have your glasses or contact lenses with you today?

Yes 1
No.....2 **TERMINATE AND "X" NEXT NUMBER IN BOX BELOW. ERASE AND RE-USE SCREENER.**

QG/H Vision Correction
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

I. You will need to read some materials in English and respond to questions in English. Do you feel comfortable doing this?

Yes 1
No.....2 **TERMINATE AND "X" NEXT NUMBER IN BOX BELOW. ERASE AND RE-USE SCREENER.**

QI English
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

J. I'd like you to accompany me to the interviewing area where we will show you some advertising material and then ask you some questions about it. We will be giving you \$5 to thank you for participating. It will only take a few minutes and I think you will find it interesting.

Yes..... → **ESCORT RESPONDENT TO FACILITY**

No → **TERMINATE AND "X" NEXT NUMBER IN BOX BELOW. ERASE AND RE-USE SCREENER.**

TERMINATE Q.J QUALIFIED REFUSAL
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40

Windows Study Questionnaire

Now I'd like to ask you some questions. If you don't know the answer to any of my questions, please say so rather than guess.

1. What product was advertised?

++INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ THE CODES TO RESPONDENTS++

[PROG Q1: SINGLE RESPONSE]

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1) WINDOWS | (CONTINUE) |
| 2) BRISTOL | (SKIP TO Q1c) |
| 3) BRISTOL WINDOWS | (SKIP TO Q2) |
| 4) OTHER | (SKIP TO Q1d) |
| 9) DON'T KNOW/ NOT SURE | (SKIP TO Q1d) |

1a. What was the brand name of the product that was advertised?

++INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ THE CODES TO RESPONDENTS++

[PROG Q1a: SINGLE RESPONSE]

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1) BRISTOL | (SKIP TO Q2) |
| 2) OTHER | (CONTINUE) |
| 9) DON'T KNOW/ NOT SURE | (CONTINUE) |

1b. Was the name of the product:

**([PROG Q1c: SINGLE RESPONSE; RANDOMIZE ORDER FOR RESPONSE
OPTIONS 1, 2, AND 3])**

++INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWER CHOICES++

- 1) Bristol Windows **(SKIP TO Q2)**
- 2) Bristol Doors **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**
- 3) Bristol Blinds **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**

- 9) DON'T KNOW/ NOT SURE **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**

1d. Was the name of the product:

**([PROG Q1d: SINGLE RESPONSE; RANDOMIZE ORDER FOR RESPONSE
OPTIONS 1, 2, AND 3])**

++INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWER CHOICES++

- 1) Bristol Windows **(CONTINUE)**
- 2) Anderson Doors **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**
- 3) Johnson Blinds **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**

- 9) DON'T KNOW/ NOT SURE **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**

2. What did the ad say or suggest about Bristol Windows?

**(RECORD VERBATIM, THEN PROBE) Anything else?
(PROBE UNTIL UNPRODUCTIVE. RECORD VERBATIM).**

OPEN END

[PROG: INTRO SCREEN] I am going to ask you some questions that may or may not cover things that you already mentioned.

[INTERVIEWER: SHOW CARD A]

Please select one of the answers shown on this card.

3. Did or didn't the ad say or suggest that Bristol Windows will save you money on your heating and cooling bills?

- 1) YES, IT DID **(CONTINUE)**
- 2) NO, IT DID NOT **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**
- 9) DON'T KNOW OR NOT SURE **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT
AFTER Q8a)**

4. Did or didn't the ad say or suggest anything about how much you would save on your heating and cooling bills with Bristol Windows?

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1) YES, IT DID | (CONTINUE) |
| 2) NO, IT DID NOT | (SKIP TO Q6a) |
| 9) DON'T KNOW OR NOT SURE | (SKIP TO Q6a) |

Now I'd like to ask you some questions concerning your personal opinion about Bristol Windows.

[INTERVIEWER: MAKE SURE YOU ARE STILL SHOWING CARD B]

For the following question, please select one of the answers shown on this card.

In your personal opinion, how many users of Bristol Windows do you think would save about 47% on their heating and cooling bills? Would you say none, very few, some, about half, most, almost all, all, or

Bristol Windows would see on their heating and cooling bills? Please give me your best estimate. **(RECORD VERBATIM)**

(IF RESPONDENT DOES NOT

9) DON'T KNOW OR NOT SURE

INTERVIEWER: REMOVE CARD C

INTERVIEWER: SHOW CARD A

For the following question, please select one of the answers shown on this card.

8. Did or didn't the Bristol Windows ad contain a disclosure or statement in a box at the bottom of the ad?

1) YES, IT DID **(CONTINUE)**
2) NO, IT DID NOT **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**

9) DON'T KNOW OR NOT SURE **(TERMINATE and GO TO TEXT AFTER Q8a)**

8a. What did the disclosure or statement say?

(RECORD VERBATIM)