Title
“The Diet Culture Phenomenon and its Effect on the United States Juice Industry”

Research Problem
Generally speaking, fruit and fruit juices have been accepted by the public and nutritionists as excellent nutrient sources and important additions to a healthy diet. Culturally, juice and orange juice in particular have a direct association with breakfast meals. In the United States, these preferences have come under attack by low-carbohydrate diet nutritionists and adherents.

In September 2002, a book entitled “Dr. Atkins’ New Diet Revolution,” was re-published (originally published in 1972). This diet book supported a diet low in carbohydrates and high in protein, spurring public interest in the Low Carbohydrate Diet, including mainstream media. Dr. Atkins and other doctors who have created diets that follow the low carbohydrate philosophy (such as Dr. Agatston for the South Beach Diet and Dr. Sears for The Zone Diet), specifically encourage diet adherents to decrease or completely eliminate consumption of fresh fruit and fruit juices while following low carbohydrate diet guidelines.

Florida orange juice growers hold these low-carbohydrate diets responsible for decreases in per capita orange juice consumption in the United States. According to Florida Citrus Mutual, Americans last year drank about 4.7 gallons of orange juice on a per capita basis. In 1997, per capita consumption was 5.8 gallons, representing a decline of 18.9 percent from 1997 to 2003. Additionally, the percentage of households purchasing orange juice has decreased from 81 percent to 80 percent over the past two years, a decrease that is especially noticeable among those consumers in the “heavy user” category. According to research by AC Nielsen, of the 2,600 households randomly surveyed, 26 percent of people knowingly reduced their orange juice consumption over the past year. Of that 26 percent, 35 percent reported that they did so due to low-carbohydrate dieting.

Given these decreases in orange juice consumption and the blitz of diet and health-related information regarding low-carbohydrate diets in a variety of media outlets, it is important to determine if a causal relationship exists between increased interest in low-carbohydrate diets and orange juice consumption.

Researchable Question
How has the cultural history of dieting in the United States over the past 20 years affected the United States Orange Juice Industry?

Hypotheses

H1: Dieting trends occur in cycles and based upon attention in the media, follow a cyclical pattern similar to the product life-cycle theory.

H2: Diet culture effects upon the marketplace product offerings are directly correlated with media output regarding obesity, health risks, and specific diet information.
Methodology

- To establish “Diet Culture and Phenomenon”
  - Collect literature and qualitative information regarding historical and present dieting trends in the United States. (These trends include a list of possible inclusions)
    1. Low Carbohydrate
    2. Low Fat
    3. Low Calorie
    4. Low Sugar
    5. Low Cholesterol
    6. High Fiber
  - Use the Product Lifecycle Theory as a basis, extend the existing theory to define and illustrate the lifecycle of dieting trends. (Basic information about PLC taken from www.marketingteacher.com)
    1. **Introduction:** The demand for previous diet trend is waning. Immediate demand for new diet concept is not apparent. Diet is promoted to create awareness. Limited numbers of product based upon diet characteristics are available in few channels of distribution. Media attention with regards to diet is minimal, but increasing rapidly.
    2. **Growth:** Demand/Interest in diet increases rapidly. Substitute diet trends are attracted into the market with very similar offerings. Increasing number of products defined by diet become available to consumer and more profitable. Companies form alliances, joint ventures and partnerships to create market share within niche. Advertising expenditures are high and focus upon attracting diet followers. Media interest stabilizes.
    3. **Maturity:** Those diet programs that survive the earliest stages of the life-cycle theory will spend a majority of the life-cycle within this phase. Sales of diet-related products grow at a decreasing rate and eventually stabilize. Producers attempt to differentiate products and brands. Price wars and intense competition occur. At this point the market reaches saturation. Producers begin to leave the market due to poor margins. Promotion of diet and related products becomes more widespread and uses a greater variety of media outlets.
    4. **Decline:** At this point there is a downturn in the demand for diet-related products. Also decrease in number of diet participants/vocal proponents. For example nutritional research proves diet is unhealthy, new diet trend emerges, or consumer tastes have changed. There is intense price-cutting and many more diet-related products are withdrawn from the market. Profits can be improved by reducing marketing spend and cost cutting. Media attention decreases at an increasing rate.

*One of the following or combination thereof will occur:*

5a. **Market Shift:** Consumers originally participating in diet no longer adhere to principals of diet or become lackadaisical. Some participants may not follow diet closely and instead develop eating habits framed by diet principals. Mass withdrawal of diet-related products does not occur quickly, but over time. Media attention continues to decrease.

5b. **Withdrawal:** Diet is completely removed from marketplace. Little or no products are offered for purchase stating diet-related nutritional claims. Media interest is minimal or non-existent. Companies involved or captains of diet trend evolve into other diets or close.

- To establish change in consumer demand for orange juice
  - Collect national price and purchase data
    1. FDOC/AC Nielsen data available since 1995, spliced data available since 1988 (data spliced by researchers at Texas A&M to determine affect of advertising on orange juice consumption)
To establish influence from media with regards to diet trends
  
  News Content Analysis
  1. Using Lexis Nexis, collect data on number of news articles containing key words relating to each of the diets (low-carbohydrate, low-fat, high-fiber, and food pyramid). (See Key Words, page 5)
  2. Search through only those articles appearing in a US news source.
  3. Search for only those articles where the key words appear in the headline, lead paragraph, or terms.
  4. Collect data on a weekly basis from June 1980-September 2004
  5. Organize data between four US geographical regions: Midwest, Northeast, Southeast, Western Regions and compare to the aggregate total.

  Other information sources: Because both the South Beach and Atkins Low-Carbohydrate diets trends have been fueled by information from sources other than the news media, there is a need to quantify the penetration provided by other information sources such as published books and official websites.
  1. Web Site Activity: Contact company driving diet trend (South Beach and Atkins) and try to determine the number of “web hits” on a weekly basis for each website since January 2000.
  2. Book Sales: Contact respective publishers or some other firm that collects data regarding book sales on a weekly basis.

Key Words

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<th>Low-Carbohydrate Terms</th>
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