Selection of the product category was based on usage frequency. Pain relievers were selected as the product category to be featured in the ads, with 100% of respondents using pain relievers often, 87% reporting that they use pain relievers anywhere from once a week to at least once a month. Replication to a less familiar product category and brands is expected to strengthen the case for the hypothesized effects. Thus, a second product category, antacids, was selected as a replicate. This second product category was chosen since respondents reported using antacids less frequently than the principal category. Only 52% percent reported using antacids often, of those only 44% use antacids more than once a week or at least once per month.

The brands with the lowest market share were featured as the sponsors in the ads, since it is usually those brands that pursue a comparative strategy. While Aleve’s market share data was identical to that of Advil, Aleve was chosen as the sponsor given that a lower percentage of respondents had purchased or considered purchasing that brand. The antacid market share data suggested Zantac 75 as the sponsor (see Table 5).

The criteria for selection of attributes were that the attribute be important in choosing between brands and that the importance ratings did not differ greatly between the chosen product categories. A second survey was conducted to verify the importance of those attributes reported most often by respondents in the first survey. Fifty-one respondents rated a series of attributes on a five-point Likert scale, with higher numbers denoting more importance.

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36 This was intended to simulate the manner in which the universe of respondents is selected in copy tests for litigation. The relevant universe of respondents is usually defined as those likely to purchase the product at some time in the near future (e.g., 3 or 6 months).