

# The Emotional Signature Scorecard: Companion Guide

The four dimensions of a defensible Emotional Signature

# Welcome

You've just scored your Brand across four dimensions.

Here's what each one means, what good looks like, and where most Brands fall short.

- 1. Existence** Does the signature exist?
- 2. Specificity** Is it specific enough to be defensible?
- 3. Delivery** Is it built into the product?
- 4. Business Alignment** Does your business support it?

# The Emotional Signature framework

A Brand's **Emotional Signature** is the complex set of emotions that come together to make the Brand experience unique, an emotional fingerprint. These need to be identified and understood to create resonance between the brand promise and experience.

**For that signature to be defensible, four things have to be true:**

- + **Existence** Does the signature exist?
- + **Specificity** Is it specific enough to be defensible?
- + **Delivery** Is it built into the product?
- + **Business Alignment** Does your business support it?

# 1. Existence: Does the signature exist?

**Existence.** The signature isn't one specific emotion, it's your product's emotional fingerprint, distinctly yours.

Most Brands assume they have one because consumers say nice things in research. But warmth, satisfaction, and trust are category-level emotions. They don't belong to your Brand. They belong to the category.

**Weak looks like:** category-standard emotional benefits, traded on functional credentials. The moment a cheaper alternative closes the functional gap, nothing emotional holds consumers in place.

**Strong looks like:** a distinct emotional response consumers couldn't get from a private label or a competitor with a similar functional offer.



## 2. Specificity: Is it specific enough to be defensible?

**Specificity.** Precise enough to recognise, narrow enough to protect.

“Indulgence” is not a signature. It’s a category. “The particular kind of slow, private indulgence that happens when no one is watching” might be. The more specific the emotional territory, the harder it is for a competitor to occupy the same ground.

**Weak looks like:** an emotional space so broad three or four other Brands could legitimately claim it.

**Strong looks like:** an emotional territory specific enough that competitors can’t replicate it by accident. Specificity is what turns an emotional benefit into an asset.



### 3. Delivery: Is it built into the product?

**Delivery. Encoded in the sensory and functional experience itself, not just the communication.**

This is where most Brands quietly fail. The emotion lives in the advertising, the packaging, the brand book. But the moment of use, the moment that decides loyalty, doesn't deliver it. Consumers experience a small disappointment they often can't articulate, and over time that gap erodes belief.

**Weak looks like:** a marketing shell around a product that doesn't back it up.

**Strong looks like:** texture, aroma, sound, and pacing that deliver what the communication promised. Belief compounds with every use.



## 4. Business Alignment: Does your business support it?

**Business Alignment.** One the whole business knows about, agrees on, and actively protects.

A signature can exist, be specific, and be built into the product, and still be quietly dismantled by the business itself. R&D reformulates without understanding which sensory cues carry the emotional load. Procurement swaps an ingredient to save margin. Marketing briefs an agency on a campaign that contradicts the territory the product actually occupies.

**Weak looks like:** one renovation, one reformulation, or one agency change away from losing what makes the Brand distinct.

**Strong looks like:** R&D, marketing, innovation, and renovation decisions actively protecting the signature, not eroding it.



# How the dimensions work together

## + All four matter

When all four are in place, the signature compounds over time and becomes one of the hardest things for a competitor to copy.

## + Weakness in one undermines the others

A specific signature that's not built into the product is just advertising. A delivered signature the business doesn't protect is one renovation from gone.

# Our methodology: the SensoryEQ 4 R's

## 1. Regression

We surface the unconscious drivers and hidden emotional needs in your category through regression interviews.

## 2. Recognition

We analyse the rational and emotional language consumers use to build a category-specific emotional and rational lexicon.

## 3. Reconnection

We connect specific product features to the emotional outcomes they trigger, mapping the sensory and emotional journey.

## 4. Results

A SensoryEQ framework and roadmap connecting consumer needs directly to winning product features and messaging strategies.

# SensoryEQ: The 4R's Framework

Connecting Product features to users *emotional needs*



## Current Problems

- Losing market share
- Competitors have disrupted the market
- Market is becoming commoditised
- Generic positioning isn't creating preference
- Lack clear differentiation
- Innovation feels like incremental improvements

## Regression

We identify key unconscious drivers and hidden emotional needs via regression interviews which unlock unconscious motivators

## Recognition

Then we analyse the rational and emotional language and build emotional and rational lexicons so we can build a consumer experience profile.

## Reconnection

Connecting specific product features to emotional outcomes so we can connect to our sensory and emotional journeys.

## Results

A SensoryEQ Framework for breakthrough product and communications.

An illustrated roadmap connecting consumer needs directly to winning product features and messaging strategies

## Outcomes & actions

- Brand differentiation that competitors can't copy.
- Innovation that lands
- Improved Consumer loyalty through emotional targeting
- Products designed to meet emotional responses
- Unique emotional brand identity

Don't let competitors crack the emotional code first

[www.marketingclinic.com](http://www.marketingclinic.com)

# About The Marketing Clinic

For more than twenty years, The Marketing Clinic has helped the world's most demanding Brands find, build, and protect what makes them emotionally distinct.

Our work includes **Pepsi, Nestlé, Unilever, and Mars**, across food, beverages, and personal care categories.

Our SensoryEQ methodology is the result of decades of practical Brand work and is set out in detail in ***The Shape of Taste***, the book by our founder Chris Lukehurst.

The Emotional Signature Scorecard distills that thinking into four diagnostic dimensions you can apply to any Brand.



# Book your 30-minute scorecard results call.

30 minutes with Chris Lukehurst, walking through your scorecard, where your Brand is exposed, and what to do about it.

[Book a call →](#)



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# FAQs

## **How is this different from traditional research or testing?**

We uncover emotional responses standard research misses, using psychology and sensory analysis to map what consumers feel, not just what they say.

## **Will this work in our category?**

Yes. We've applied this successfully across food, beverage, healthcare, hygiene and beyond - anywhere consumers experience your product.

## **What kind of team involvement is required?**

We handle the heavy lifting. You'll be involved in workshops, alignment sessions and reviews - no extensive time needed from your team.

## **What if our product already performs well?**

Great - we help you understand why it performs emotionally, so you can protect, replicate and strengthen that advantage.

## **Is this suitable for global brands or local teams?**

Both. We support global brand strategy and help local teams adapt insights for cultural relevance.

## **What if we've already done sensory or usage testing?**

This complements it perfectly - revealing the emotional why behind the results and unlocking what rational data often misses.

## **How long does the process take?**

Typically 6–8 weeks from kickoff to delivery, depending on your markets and decision timelines.

## **What do we get at the end?**

A clear emotional map of your product experience, strategic guidance, and an actionable blueprint for brand, comms and innovation.

## **Can we test innovation or NPD ideas through this?**

Absolutely. We help shape and emotionally profile NPD concepts to ensure they resonate before launch.