

Better connections: **Attitudes towards** **product sampling**

September 2015



Contents

p2	Methodology
p3	Audience segments
p4-5	Executive summary
p6	People love receiving product samples!
p7	How often do Australians receive samples?
p8	How often do Australians want to receive product samples?
p9	People want to be able to request more samples
p10-11	Something old or something new?
p12-13	How are Australians currently receiving product samples?
p14	Product sampling drives product purchase

Methodology

Attitudes towards product sampling is part of Australia Post's *Better connections* research series.

These reports are developed using data from various sources, including the Australia Post Consumer Survey. This survey, conducted each quarter, measures attitudes and behaviour of Australians towards different communications and marketing channels. Australia Post uses Quality Online Research (QOR) to compose a panel of respondents that best represents the Australian population in terms of age, gender and geographic location.

In September 2015, the Australia Post Consumer Survey asked Australians how they felt about receiving product samples, including how often they would like to receive samples and what channels they prefer. Respondents were also asked what sample types were their favourites and whether they would welcome samples from new brands or only brands they already use.



Audience segments

Apart from analysing results according to age, gender, location and employment status, the following audience segments were identified within the total sample group:

	Youth	Under 25 years old.	Many university students or part-time workers.
	Home duties	Most likely to have young children.	Household income: under \$50,000.
	Younger professionals	No children.	Household income: \$50,000–\$150,000.
	Older professionals	Over 40 years old.	Household income: \$150,000+.
	Younger families	Dual-income household, with children under 10 years old.	Household income: \$50,000–\$150,000.
	Older families	Dual-income household, with children over 10 years old.	Household income: \$50,000–\$150,000.
	Retirees	Over 65 years old.	Household income: under \$50,000.

Executive summary

1

Australians love receiving product samples. An overwhelming 86% of people (including 91% of females and 90% of younger families) like receiving product samples.



3

Around half of Australians (48%) would like to receive product samples at least weekly. Younger families (57%) and household duties (57%) are the segments most likely to want to receive products at least weekly. Only 11% of Australians do not want to receive samples at all.

2

While people like receiving product samples, they are not receiving them very often. Only 19% of Australians had received a sample within the last month. One in three hadn't received samples in over six months and one in five had never received samples.



4

Three quarters of people want to be able to request more samples. 85% of Australians think visiting a company website and completing an online form is the best way to do this.



5

Australians aren't concerned whether samples are from brands they already use or new brands. In fact, 84% would be happy to receive products from a known or unknown brand.

6

Food or drink product samples (79%) and cleaning product samples (69%) are the most sought-after samples.

7

72% of Australians received their last product sample in the mail.

8

Mail is clearly the preferred channel for receiving product samples – 93% of people prefer samples to be sent in the mail.

9

One in four Australians who sampled a product went on to purchase it. Younger families (39%) and full-time employees (29%) are more likely to purchase a product once they have tried the sample. 68% of Australians would be more likely to purchase a product if they had tried it first.

10

64% of Australians believe that including an incentive offer with the product sample increases the likelihood of product purchase. Youth is most likely to agree with this (75%).

11

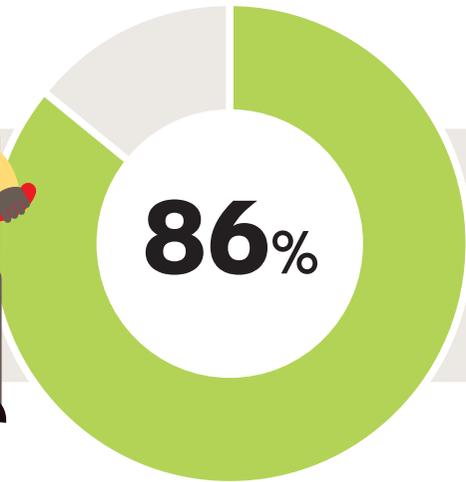
Sampling is a great way to generate feedback for brands. 85% of Australians say they're willing to provide feedback about the sample if requested.

12

Product recall among Australians who receive a product sample is good, with half being able to recall the brand of sample product they received. Females are particularly likely to remember the product brand (54%), while 60% of younger families are also able to recall the brand.



People love receiving product samples!



of Australians like receiving product samples.

The two segments most likely to enjoy receiving product samples are:



91%

Females



90%

Those aged 40–59 years

A closer look at who enjoys receiving product samples

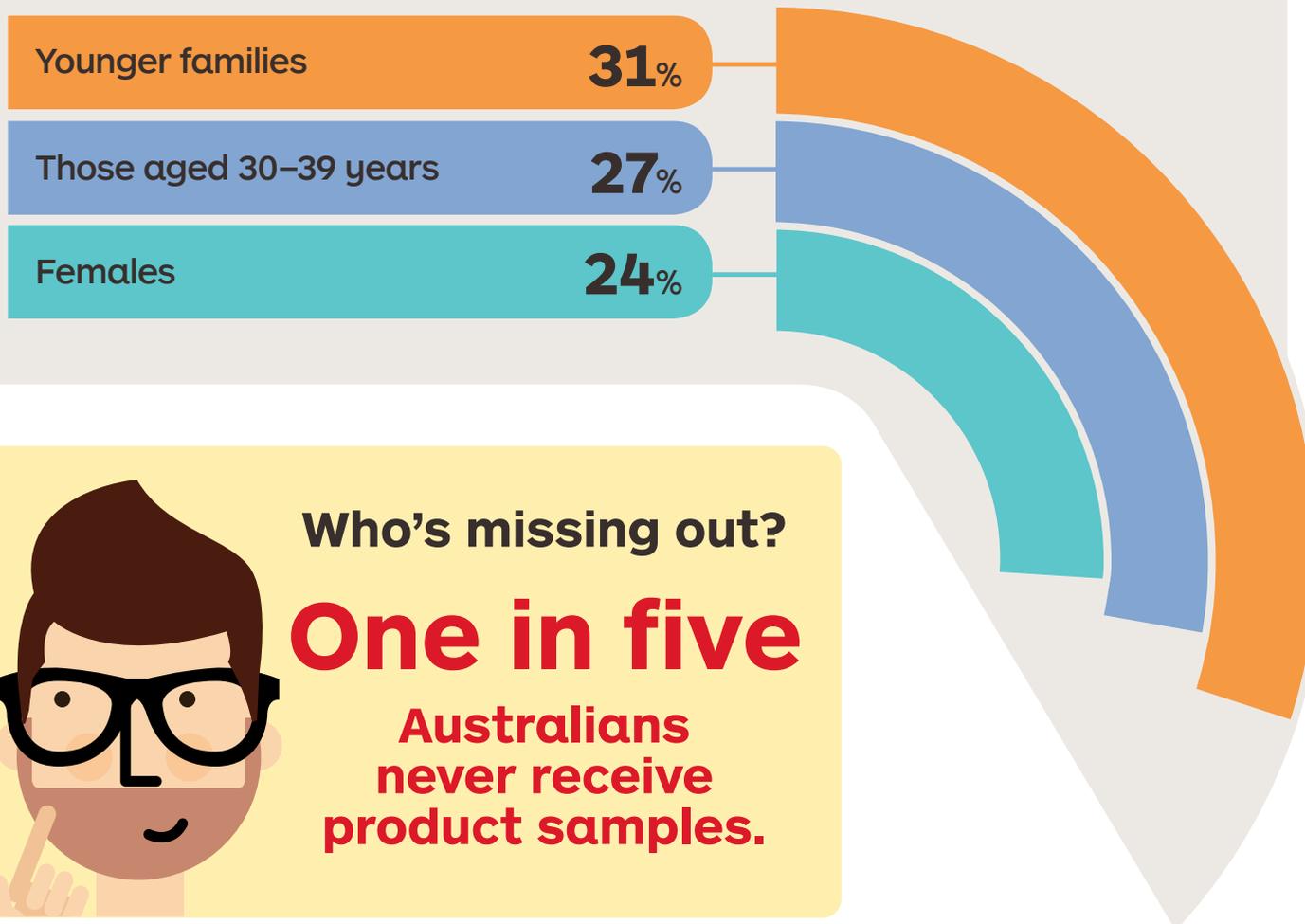
- **GENDER** Women are significantly more likely to enjoy receiving product samples (91%) compared with men (80%). This perhaps supports other research findings that, in general, women enjoy the shopping process (gathering information and options) more than men do.
- **AUDIENCES** Younger families are the segment most likely to enjoy receiving product samples (90%). Even in the lowest-scoring segment, 71% of youth are likely to enjoy receiving samples.
- **INCOME** It also appears that the more money you earn, the more you enjoy receiving product samples. 88% of high income earners (household income of \$150,000 or more) enjoy receiving product samples, compared with 79% of those with a household income of less than \$20,000. This may be because high income earners have the disposable income to purchase more products, or they may value the fact that a sample is delivered to them, rather than them actively seeking out new products to try.

How often do Australians receive samples?

Despite enjoying receiving product samples, Australians are not receiving them very often. Just one in five Australians received product samples in the last month (19%), while one in three last received a product sample more than six months ago (35%).

Who receives product samples most often?

Australians who received product samples within the last month include:

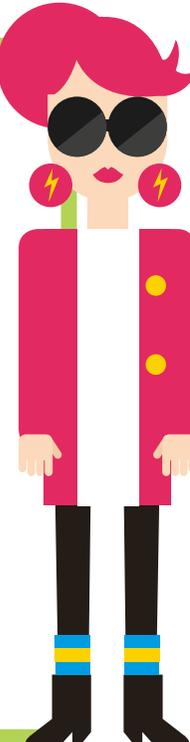


Groups that are more likely to have received product samples in the last week (compared with the average population) are:

- Those aged 30-39 years (13%)
- Females (12%)



Who's missing out?
One in five
Australians never receive product samples.



People most likely to never have received a product sample include:

- Youth (39%)
- Lower income earners (household income of less than \$20,000) (30%)
- Males (24%)
- WA residents (23%)
- People living in a regional area (23%)

How often do Australians want to receive product samples?



89% of Australians would like to receive products samples, with

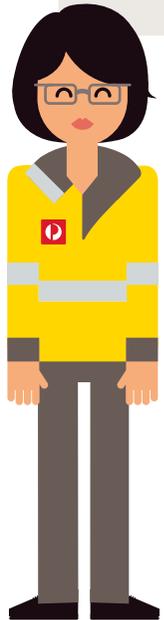
48% wishing to receive product samples at least weekly.

Comparison of current sample frequency versus preferred frequency

Current frequency (n=2220)



Preferred frequency (n=2220)



Those most likely to want to receive product samples at least weekly include:

- **Younger families** (57%)
- **Household duties** (57%)
- **Those aged 40–49 years** (56%)
- **Those aged 30–39 years** (55%)
- **Females** (53%)

Older Australians (aged 60+ years) would like to receive product samples on a monthly basis (35%).

Australians want more samples

The survey results indicate that Australians would like to receive product samples more often than they currently do. For instance, while only 9% of Australians received product samples in the last week, almost half (48%) would like to receive products at least on a weekly basis, if not daily.

A similar gap can be observed for those who would like to receive products monthly (28%), compared with those who had actually received an item within the last month (10%).



People want to be able to request more samples

75%

of Australians would like the opportunity to request more product samples from companies.



People most likely to want to request more samples from companies include:

- Younger families (83%)
- Those aged 40–49 years (83%)
- Those aged 30–39 years (82%)
- Females (81%)
- Household duties (81%)
- People with a household income between \$100,000 and \$149,999 (80%)

How would people like to request samples?

82%

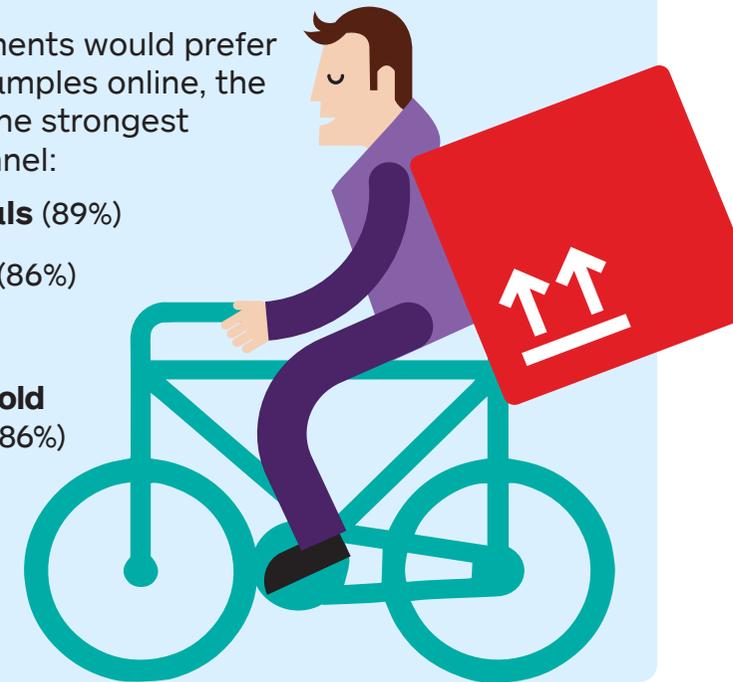
of Australians would prefer to request product samples by completing a form on the company's website.

Less popular methods of requesting samples include:

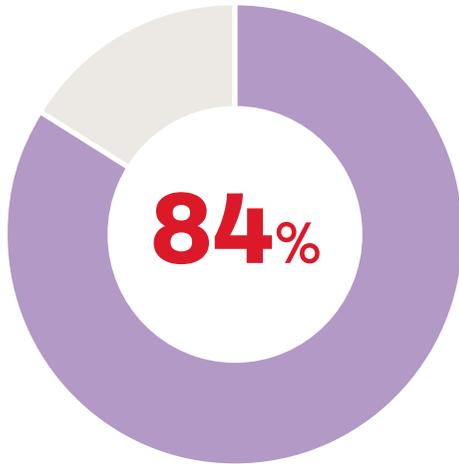
- Pressing a button on the TV remote (5%)
- SMSing the company (4%)
- Calling the company (3%)

While all audience segments would prefer to request additional samples online, the following groups have the strongest preference for this channel:

- Younger professionals (89%)
- Older professionals (86%)
- Females (85%)
- People with a household income of \$100,000+ (86%)



Something old or something new?



of Australians are open to receiving samples from both new brands and brands they already use. So, not only would people like to receive more samples, they are open to samples from multiple sources.

Most popular samples

Over half of Australians want to receive the following product samples:



Most Australians are open to receiving samples from new and familiar brands. Only 8% of Australians would prefer samples of new products from brands they already use. Groups that demonstrate a slightly stronger preference for existing brands include the youth segment (20%), younger professionals (13%) and full-time employees (11%).

Limited spending power may explain why younger Australians show a slightly increased preference for samples from known brands – these may be the brands they can currently afford.



Younger families (14%) and people aged 30–39 years (13%) are the groups slightly more likely to prefer to receive samples from brands they don't currently use.

Pet care samples (36%) and baby products (14%) are less popular, most likely because these samples would only be of interest if you have a particular type of pet or are currently caring for a young infant.



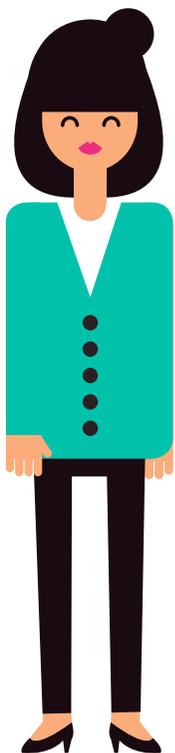
Males and females

Women are more likely to prefer to receive cleaning product samples (73%), personal hygiene product samples (67%) and cosmetics (74%), compared with males (63%, 61% and 31% respectively).

Age groups

Younger Australians would prefer to receive cosmetics (63% for those aged 18–29 years), while those aged 50–59 years would prefer to receive cleaning product samples (74%).

Cleaning product samples are also preferred by older families (73%) and the household duties segment (73%), while cosmetics are preferred by younger families (67%).



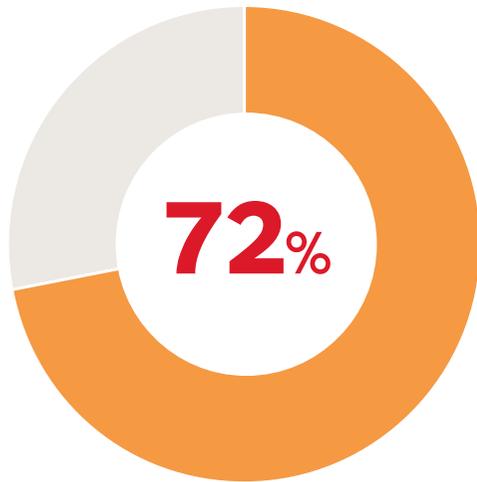
Preferred sample type by segments

Base: Would like to receive sample products (n=1971)

	Food or drinks	Cleaning products	Personal hygiene	Cosmetics
Total	79%	69%	64%	54%
Male	82%	63%	61%	31%
Female	77%	73%	67%	74%
18 to 29 years	74%	49%	70%	63%
30 to 39 years	82%	72%	69%	62%
40 to 49 years	87%	74%	71%	58%
50 to 59 years	82%	74%	55%	48%
60 years and over	74%	71%	58%	45%
Youth	76%	39%	70%	63%
Younger professionals	81%	65%	70%	61%
Younger families	79%	72%	68%	67%
Older families	81%	73%	63%	50%
Household duties	81%	75%	66%	54%
Older professionals	81%	67%	62%	54%
Retirees	76%	70%	57%	49%

Note: Green text denotes result significantly higher than average. Red text denotes result significantly lower than average.

How are Australians currently receiving product samples?



of Australians received their last product sample in the mail.

Sample channel preferences are shown below:

1	In the mail	93%
2	In store (e.g. supermarket)	37%
3	At an event (such as a fun run)	15%
4	In a magazine	15%
5	While travelling (i.e. train station or bus stop)	13%
6	Other	1%

People most likely to have received samples in the mail are:

- **Retirees** (81%)
- **Those living in regional areas** (78%)
- **Females** (76%)

People also received samples:

- **In store** (12%)
- **In a magazine** (6%)
- **At an event, such as a fun run** (3%)
- **While travelling (at a train station or bus stop)** (2%)
- **Another way** (5%)



How do Australians want to receive samples?

93%

of Australians would prefer to receive product samples via mail.

Preferences for receiving samples by audience segment

Base: Would like to receive samples (n=1,917)

	TOTAL	Youth	Younger professionals	Younger families	Older families	Household duties	Older professionals	Retirees
In the mail	93%	86%	91%	91%	94%	95%	91%	94%
In store, eg. supermarket	37%	36%	42%	47%	35%	35%	43%	33%
At an event, eg. fun run	15%	26%	25%	23%	12%	14%	24%	5%
In a magazine	15%	22%	21%	17%	14%	12%	16%	12%
While travelling, ie. train station or bus stop	13%	18%	23%	20%	10%	14%	17%	4%
Other (please state)	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%

Note: Green text denotes result significantly higher than average. Red text denotes result significantly lower than average.

Men and women

Women are more likely to prefer to receive product samples in the mail (94%) or in a magazine (19%),

compared with males (in the mail: 91%; in a magazine: 9%).

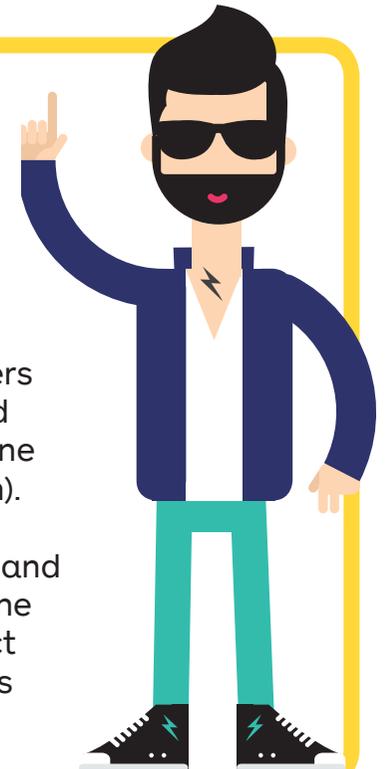
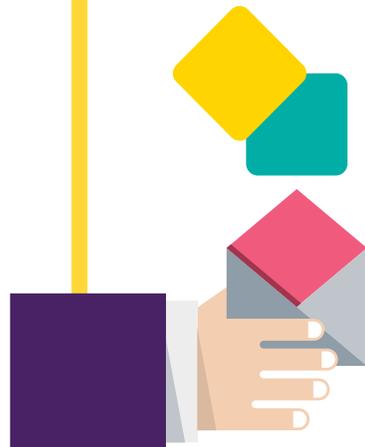


Audience segments

The preference for receiving product samples in the mail is fairly consistent across all groups, with the exception of youth. Younger Australians are less likely to prefer mail (86%), although it is still by far their top preferred channel.

Compared with the average population, youth prefers to receive their products at an event (26% compared with 15% for the average population) or in a magazine (22% compared with 15% for the average population).

Younger professionals (25%), younger families (23%) and older professionals (24%) are also more likely than the average population to prefer to receive their product samples at an event. Almost half of younger families (47%) prefer to receive products in store.



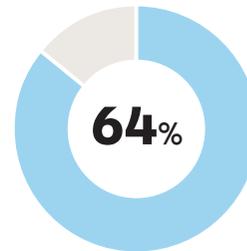
Product sampling drives product purchase

25% of Australians that sampled a product ended up purchasing that product.

- 64% did not make a purchase, and a further 12% could not remember whether they had or not.
- Younger families (39%) and full-time employees (29%) are more likely to purchase the product once they try the sample.

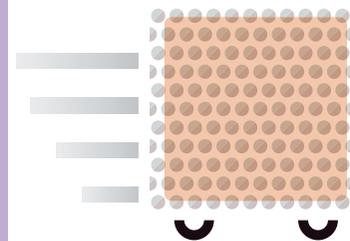
68% of Australians would be more likely to purchase a product if they had tried it first. Just 6% say trying a product first would not make them more likely to purchase it.

Additional ways to drive a post-sample purchase



of Australians say including an incentive offer with the product sample – such as “buy one, get one free” or “20% off your purchase” – increases the likelihood of product purchase. 75% of youth agree with this.

Does product sampling increase brand awareness?



50% of Australians are able to recall the brand of the sample product they received.

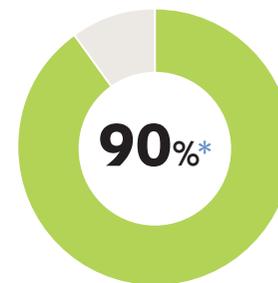
Although marketers might assume that brand recall would be better if a sample was received recently, it is interesting to note that 34% of Australians who received a product sample more than six months ago are able to recall the brand. Clearly, a sample makes a lasting impression.

Sampling is a great way to generate feedback for brands

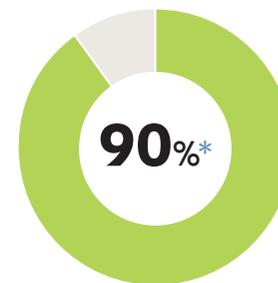
85% of Australians would be willing to provide feedback about the product sample if the company or brand requests it.

Only 7% would not be willing to provide feedback and 8% were unsure.

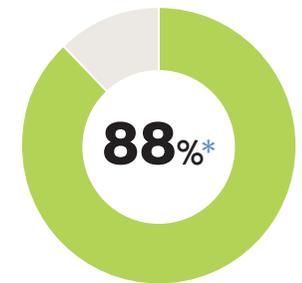
Groups most willing to provide feedback are:



Females



Aged 50–59 years



In a regional area

Attitudes towards product sampling is part of Australia Post's *Better connections* series. These reports are released on a quarterly basis and are available to download at: **auspost.com.au/betterconnections**.

The Association for Data-driven Marketing (ADMA) and Australia Post have also conducted additional research on advertising channel preferences in different industries. To find out more about the advertising channels Australians consider most useful **download your free copies of these industry-specific reports at: auspost.com.au/creatingconnections**.

