UNLOCKING WHAT DRIVES CONSUMER BEHAVIOR:

Breaking the Demographic Mold

Cheryl Auger
Senior Director

WHAT TO EXPECT

01 Learn why traditional demographic-based personas fall short and how relying only on surface traits risks oversimplifying consumers, missing key opportunities, and reinforcing stereotypes.

02 Discover how anthropological insight can help to create belief-based personas that unlock deeper insights, revealing consumers' true motivations, cultural influences, and the emotional and social dimensions of Jobs to Be Done.

03 Understand how richer, belief-based personas fuel better targeting, product innovation, and messaging, driving deeper emotional connections and paving the way for more sustainable growth.

WHAT DO KING CHARLES AND GENE SIMMONS HAVE IN COMMON?

SURPRISINGLY ALIKE?

Photo sources: King Charles Photograph By Millie Pilkington 2024. Gene Simmons Photograph @genesimmons

Demographics alone do not define consumers

WHAT'S AHEAD?

WHY TARGETING MATTERS

CLARITY STARTS WITH YOUR CONSUMER

Without a target consumer, you're just guessing

Know who you're building for so you can be authentic, intentional, and effective.

- Audience clarity helps build brands that connect on all levels
- A defined consumer aligns teams around a shared vision of who they're serving

Photo source: Microsoft Stock Photos
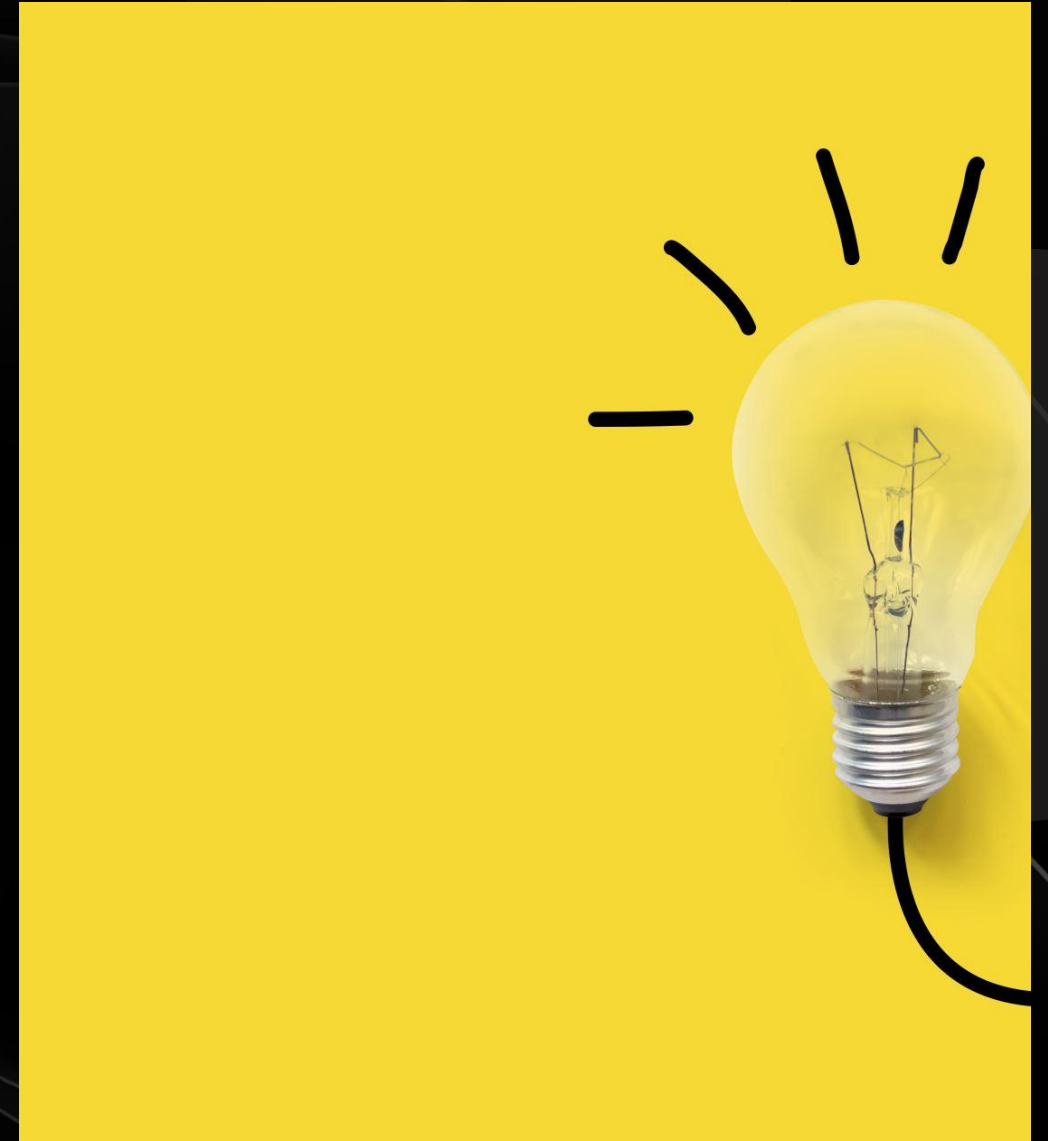
DEMOGRAPHICS AND ITS LIMITS

WHY USE DEMOGRAPHICS IN PERSONAS?

Demographics helps brands target consumers based on observable factors like age and income for the following reasons:

- It offers simplicity and is relatively easy to collect, measure, and analyze.

- Demographics scales easily, so media often sell audiences on demographic factors.

- For decades, demographics has been the foundation of marketing and product planning.

> **"**

Demographics provide discrete boxes to put people into and helps us make the world neat...demographics, while factual, don't accurately describe who people are.

Marcus Collins, For the Culture

LIMITATIONS

Demographics are the skeleton — but not the soul

It shows the who, not the why or what's next. Demographics cannot:

- Reveal motivations, aspirations, or cultural values

- Capture shifting identities (e.g., gender fluidity, multigenerational households)
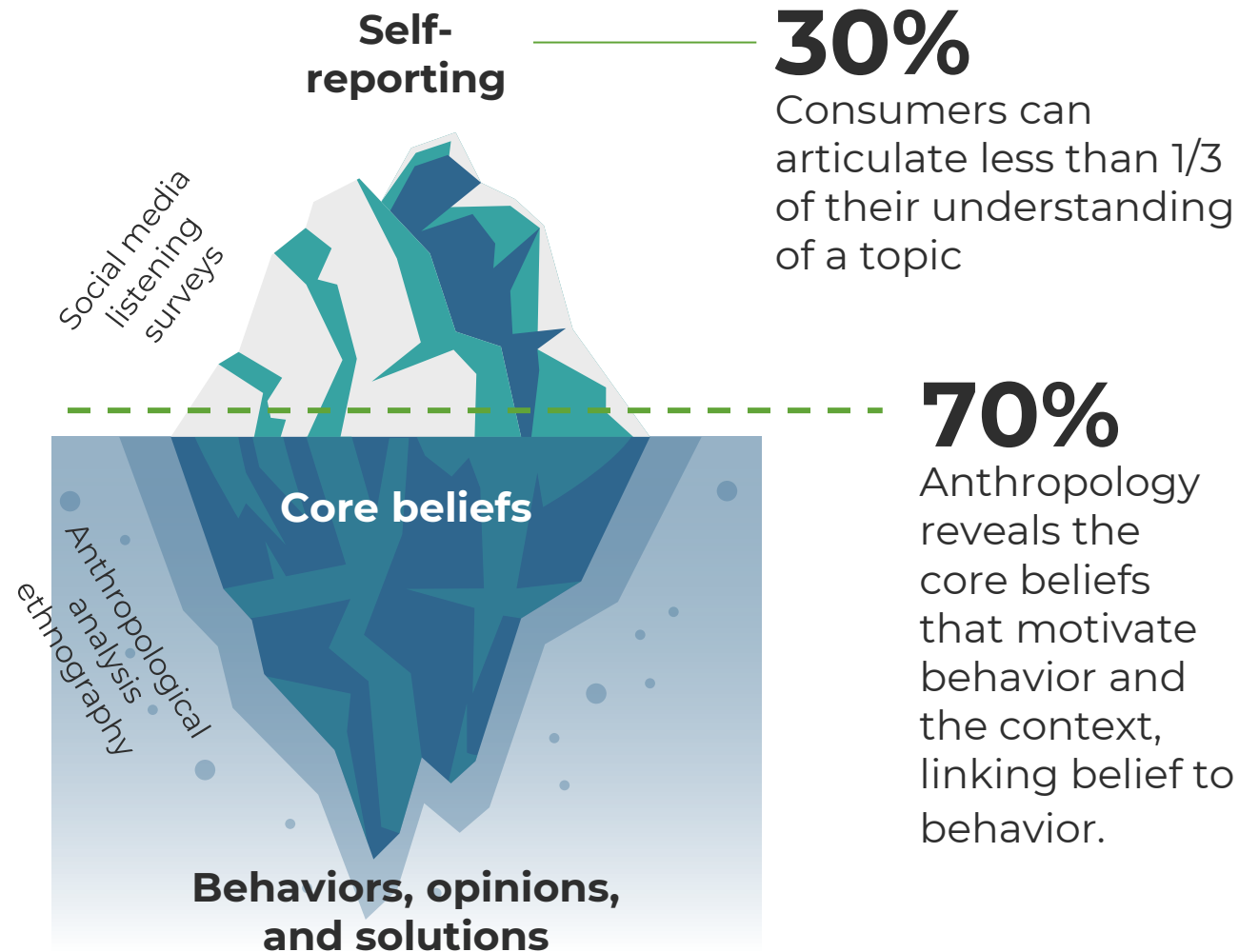
- Predict emotional triggers

ANTHROPOLOGY FOR A HUMAN-CENTERED APPROACH

DECODING BELIEFS

Cultural anthropology helps us understand consumers' core beliefs for better targeting:

- It reveals the invisible cultural forces that drive behavior.

- It uncovers the "why" behind behavior through shared values, beliefs, and rituals.

Self-reporting

Social media listening surveys

Core beliefs

Anthropological analysis ethnography

Behaviors, opinions, and solutions

30%
Consumers can articulate less than 1/3 of their understanding of a topic

70%
Anthropology reveals the core beliefs that motivate behavior and the context, linking belief to behavior.

Photo Source: Microsoft Stock Photos

HUMAN-CENTERED PERSONAS

Modern targeting looks beyond demographics to embrace:

- Motivations, values, attitudes, and interests

- Cultural drivers (community influence, identity expression)

- Jobs to be done (functional/emotional tasks consumers are trying to solve)

THE POWER OF CULTURAL INSIGHT

Traditional Approach	Ethnographic Approach
Age, gender, income, etc.	Beliefs, values, cultural context
Observed behaviors	Underlying motivations
Static segments	Evolving mindsets
Self-reported data (surveys, interviews)	Natural language analysis
Generalized messaging	Context-rich narratives
Individual in isolation	Individual in culture

CASE STUDY: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

TRADITIONAL APPROACH

Gen Z Leads the AI charge: Young, urban, and hyper-personalized

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Leading consumers of AI:

- Skew toward younger males with higher income and education levels

- Are working professionals living in urban areas

- Are open to innovation, tech-savvy, and have a preference for personalized experiences

ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

AI enthusiasts seek progress with purpose

Leading consumers of AI:

- Are motivated by the prospect AI offers for personal and societal progress

- Approach AI with a sense of cautious enthusiasm, aware of both its promise and pitfalls

- Desire AI products and services that emphasize ethical design, transparency, and the enhancement of human skills

CASE STUDY: CLEAN EATING

TRADITIONAL APPROACH

The clean plate club: Young, wealthy, and ingredient-savvy

Leading consumers of clean eating:

- Skew toward younger people with higher income and education levels

- Live in urban areas

- Prioritize healthy eating to enhance their longevity and demonstrate commitment to a healthy lifestyle

ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

Clean eating is a marker of health, status and prestige

Leading consumers of clean eating:

- Are motivated to feel in control of their health

- Want the symbolic capital associated with purity and authenticity, reflecting their desire for a more natural lifestyle.

- Want to take a holistic approach to health that includes psychological well-being.

TAKEAWAYS

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

Traditional personas rely on demographic information.

- While these demographics are helpful, they are not sufficient.
- There's a risk of over-simplifying and stereotyping consumers.
- There's also a risk of missed opportunities.

2

Anthropology helps create more holistic personas.

- Anthropology allows a deeper understanding of consumers' motivations.
- It helps us better understand cultural requirements.
- It allows us to identify the social and emotional elements of JTBD.

3

Better personas means better targeting leading to more sustainable growth.

- This helps develop products and messaging that foster deeper emotional connection.

LUX CLIENT ACTION ITEMS

1 | **Segment consumers by value systems, not just demographics.**

Leverage Lux's ethnographic tools to identify emerging, culturally rooted motivations.

2 | **Further integrate consumer motivations into your innovation funnel.**

Use consumer motivations to fuel early stage innovation, validate concepts, and prioritize product features that align with emotional and cultural drivers.

3 | **Use cultural signals to inform communication and design strategies.**

Use Lux's tools to uncover the specific expectations, words, visuals, and claims that resonate within relevant cultural spaces.

4 | **Stay ahead of cultural trends using our virtual anthropologist.**

Invest in innovation areas where cultural relevance is growing and avoid trends that are peaking or becoming diluted.

THANK YOU

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www.luxresearchinc.com

EMAIL
questions@luxresearchinc.com

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