

Generic vs. name brand

Business, Company



You Get What You Pay For When you shop for groceries where do you stand in choosing either a generic vs. brand name product? Do you reach for the brand name box of Kraft macaroni and cheese, or would you rather pick up a generic box of macaroni and cheese to save that extra 10 cents? Is your decision based off a difference in taste or is it simply a matter of paying for quality of the product? What does spending more money on a brand name food product have to say about who we are in our culture today?

Today there is an idea that by buying a brand name product a person is buying something of more quality, which can strangely in turn determine our importance in society. My mother stood firm by the phrase “ you get what you pay for”. Meaning name brand foods taste better and are higher quality, and that the no name “ generic” brands are cheap and don’t taste as good. I even remember years ago on a routine trip to the grocery store, my mother asked me to get spaghetti sauce. When I returned my mother remarked, “ Lauren you got the wrong sauce.

Please run and get me the good sauce, the name brand spaghetti sauce, not this cheap gross sauce”. Afterwards she was even given a taste test between the two sauces, and struggled to make a choice and give me the right answer to support her belief. Considering most generic brand foods and the name brand foods taste almost identical to one another, wouldn’t one think that the less expensive, no name brand would be the obvious one to buy? Yet society still is drawn to choose the name brand items.

Shoppers are quite leery of some categories. Although they’ll snap up store brand paper goods and plastics, consumers almost never buy store-brand wine, pet food, soda, or soup. That may be especially true when the category

includes a name brand such as Coca-Cola or Campbell's. Most grocery store shoppers know that buying generic store brand products instead of the brand name products can save a lot of money. In fact, by filling a shopping cart with generic brands could save an average of 30 percent on your purchase.

If you spend \$100 a week on groceries, those savings add up to more than \$1, 400 a year. Yet some shoppers are insistent to go for the name brands for the reason that they have a name to protect with their product. Meaning satisfaction of the product is guaranteed. However, if they taste the same why is there a price difference at all? Several reasons for the discounted price on the no name generic brands is that companies don't spend a lot of time or money on product development or on advertising or promotion costs.

You definitely pay a little bit more money for the label that is researched, designed and marketed to be more appealing to the targeted buyer. The generic brand companies keep cost low by taking the extra costs of research, marketing and graphic art frills away and presenting you with a less flashy, less quality version of packaging for a lower amount of money. People buy generic products to save money, however, it may also have an effect on the buyer's own sense of self-worth. Buying generic products lower self-esteem. Indulging on top quality items makes us feel better about ourselves.

For the most part, buying nice things makes us happy. Although, there are those who find joy in buying generic as well. Some may feel genuinely smart when using generics instead of brand names. This may be a result of the feeling that they received an equal product for less money. Yet that

unconscious link between the products we buy and how they make us feel about ourselves suggest that if holding a box of generic corn flakes in the supermarket makes you feel like “ a loser,” than you might want to put it down and reach for the Kellogg’s.

To support that brand name foods are better it’s been argued that cost also has to do with the quality of products that are put into the item. You should compare the ingredients of the generic and the name brand before buying. Make sure that they have the same ingredients and that the generic does not have more unhealthy ingredients than the generic. Also, a brand name tends to have a little bit higher quality of products than the generic version. While the generic may list the exact same ingredients, it may not be as good of quality which “ could” affect the taste.

The individuals that usually buy brand name products have a tendency to believe they must buy them in order to get good quality. Meaning of course better quality is overall “ better” in taste and health. Although, the qualities of ingredients between products are almost always identical to one another, making this argument nearly useless. The idea of better quality in name brand versus generic moves on still into a more psychological aspect rather than just economic.

Society continues to buy into the belief that if it costs more it must be better. Why is that a fancy picture and a higher cost for a product give a person the impression that owning this item makes them feel better about themselves? Pride of ownership comes to play, and something about buying better quality makes a person feel better about a their own status in society. Perhaps a

person may feel they work hard and deserve the best or that if they buy the name brand, they will experience better health, happiness, or appearance.

This is supported with the fact that even though the spaghetti sauce taste test proved to my mother that there was little or no difference between sauces, she still buys and insists the name brand sauce is better. To this day you will rarely find a generic brand food box or label in my mother's pantry. Do you really get what you pay for? Well, if you want to help pay the salaries of the advertising, development and research teams that go into the name brand products then you do! However, if you want to save money and still experience a quality product with a comparable taste, generic no name brands would be the obvious answer.