

**LOOK
INSIDE!**

Take a look at the
first few pages of
the full report.

Kitchen Stories:

Frustrations & Delights in the Kitchen

Research Institute for Cooking & Kitchen Intelligence:
*Helping kitchen-related businesses make smarter decisions
and better products by delivering actionable insights.*



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Background & Objective



It's been said that the kitchen is the 'heart of the home,' where we start each day with fresh brewed coffee, catch up with friends over deli sandwiches and iced tea, and help the kids with homework in the evenings. It's where memories of childhood emerge when cookies are baking in the oven. It's where everyone gravitates during parties.

Well, in some homes. In other homes, the kitchen is simply a functional place to eat – when not eating out.

Regardless, observation of activities that take place in the kitchen and insights that individuals volunteer lead to instructional learnings for those in the business of providing kitchen solutions. The following pages tell the stories of a diverse cross-section of families in homes across the country. Daily activities that take place in the kitchen. Their frustrations with products in their kitchens. Suggestions to address problems they have encountered in the kitchen when a manufacturer hasn't provided a suitable one. And more.

The **primary objective** of *Kitchen Stories: An Immersion Study* is to give manufacturers a new perspective on opportunities for innovation and product development around customers' needs, functional and emotional, articulated and unarticulated.

Methodology

- Recruited 12 households (26 adults) consisting of a diverse group of people based on the following criteria: geographic location, marital status, family composition, and ethnicity.
- Phase 1 of the project involved participants completing a 5-minute **online survey** the week of May 7th to obtain overall household characteristics (e.g., home value and square footage).
- Phase 2 was conducted over a period of 5 consecutive days (Thursday, May 17th – Monday, May 21st) to get a range of behaviors, both weekday and weekend, and allow for a time-extended process that focused participants, sensitizing them to the subject to reveal emotions and needs related to the home kitchen. Confidentiality agreements were exchanged to ensure participant anonymity.
 - Respondents were sent **diaries** with tabs designated for days 1 through 5 to record their thoughts, behaviors, routines and observations related to how they interact with their kitchens.
 - Participants took a series of **photos** (video in a few cases) of their kitchens (given instructional guidelines to ensure specific areas of the kitchen were included).
 - Participants were asked to respond to short written **exercises** each day which asked them to relay 'stories' about various topics, including some regarding specific product categories (e.g., likes and dislikes about their dishwasher).
- Analysis, once all materials were received, was approached by RICKI staff using a 'if you just arrived from Mars' mindset looking for consumer *pain points* to reveal possible unmet needs and solutions.

General Information: Participants/Home

Ages of Adults in Household (average no. of Adults in HH: 2)

Characteristic	# of Participants
Younger than 25	1
25 to 34	7
35 to 44	7
45 to 54	10
55 or Older	1
# of Households	
Married	8
Single	1
Divorced or Separated	2
Living with Partner	1
# of Households	
Lived in Home Less than 2 Years	2
Lived in Home 3 to 5 Years	3
Lived in Home 6 to 9 Years	4
Lived in Home 10 or More Years	3
Average Home Value	\$430,000
Average Square Footage	2225

Marital Status (No. of HHs with children: 7; average no. of children in HH: 2.6)

Data on Residence (No. in single-family dwelling: 11; no. multi-family dwelling: 1)

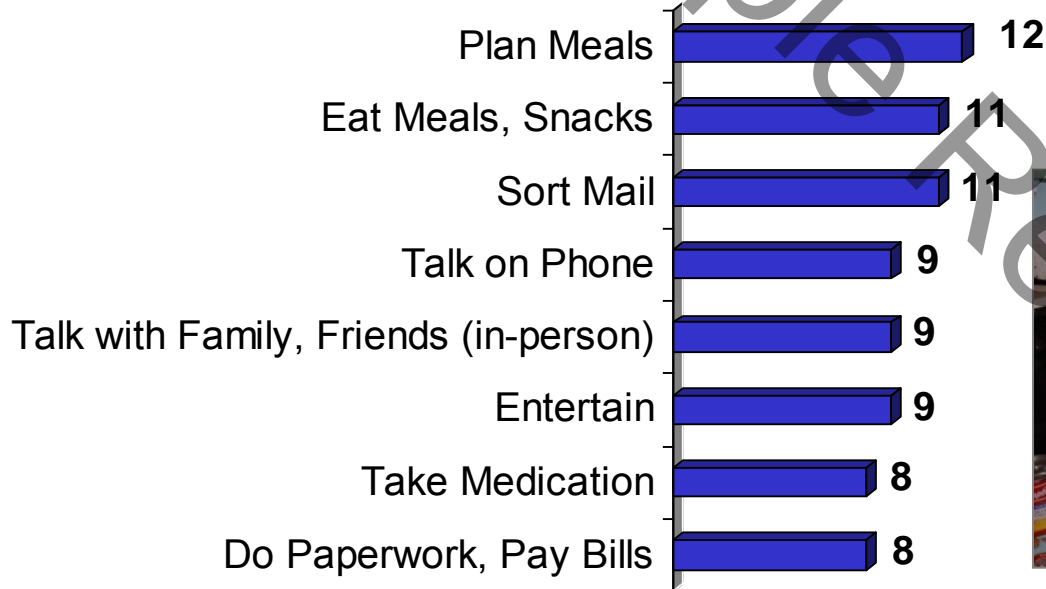
Sample Report

Jobs Performed

Activities Volunteered: Online Survey

- The kitchen is mainly used for meal planning, eating, sorting mail, and communicating with friends and family.
- All project participants plan their meals in the kitchen.

Do Regularly in Kitchen
(No. of Participants out of 12)



Sample Report

The Good & Bad

'Makes Me Happy'

At the beginning of the project, participants were asked to tell a story about something in their kitchen that 'makes them happy' or that makes them 'feel particularly good': Here are their stories:

- I really love my travertine marble tile **countertops** which incidentally came with my house but were a key selling point. I love one thing in my kitchen, my new **stove/oven**. It's a GE Profile with warming tray and is the single best appliance purchase we've ever made. That darned thing cooks so incredibly well! I had no idea how bad my other stove was until I got this new one. It cooks evenly, quickly, accurately and even looks handsome doing it! If asked, I would highly recommend this stove/oven to anyone. In addition, it has a fifth burner on the stove that is located exactly in the middle. It's designed for use as a griddle or grill and even comes with its own uniquely shaped pan that you can trade out with the standard open design. Very cool. My husband uses this feature to make pancakes on Sunday mornings. I'm a great cook but this contraption makes me look even better! The stove also includes a power boil burner that can boil a huge pan of water in just a few minutes. GE has a big winner in this appliance. Love, love, love it.
- What makes me particularly happy about my kitchen is the **lighting**. Our kitchen is not very big but to me it has a big kitchen feel partly because of the light. When I was in the building process with my house 5 years ago, my top wishes were for track lighting, high ceilings and a bay window. Well I got them all. The bay window is very cute and provides lots of light and cool breezes when the windows are open. A future plan is to add a window seat there. The track lights and the high ceiling have a large feel to them which I like. There is an air of openness which provides connectedness throughout the front area of the house. There are certainly things that I wish I could change about our kitchen like a larger one and a more colorful one. But I would not change the track lights, high ceiling or bay window. They help me to feel good about my space.

"I'm a great cook but this contraption makes me look even better!"

"...an air of openness which provides connectedness throughout the front area of the house."

Annoyances in the Kitchen

When asked about a particular aspect of their kitchen that annoys or makes them mad, some participants' lists were lengthy and responses varied greatly:

- “Small storage space, old refrigerator, not enough counter space, white walls, clutter in the drawers, clutter in the cabinets, did I mention clutter?”
- “One of the things that used to bug me about this kitchen was the lack of counter space next to the sink. The island we added solved that issue. Many of my drawers and cabinets are very cluttered. Probably somewhat a function of the user, but dividers in the drawers might be helpful.”

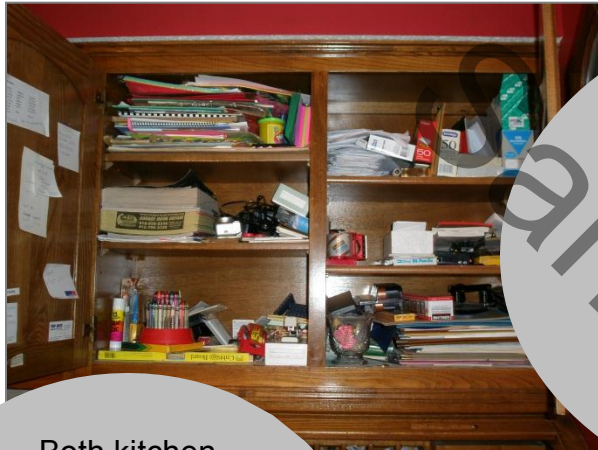


- “That things fall out of the cabinets when you open them is irritating. I don't like the depth of the drawers. Drawers in older cabinets are deep and the new ones are shallow and don't hold enough utensils.”
- “Mostly the cabinet space and the lack of outlets.”

Sample Report

Common Themes

Organization



Both kitchen drawers are dumping drawers for things on the counter. Like take out menus, clothes pins, pens, pencils, wire, matches. The place for all of it is in the trash.

If everything had a place, especially if I had built ins for my appliances and you didn't have to take up counter space with things and create visual clutter even though I attempt to keep these things to a minimum it still can get too loaded up.

I want a space for wrapping paper, ribbon, stationary, stock pots, all that plastic stuff that I feel compelled to keep (old Cool Whip containers, etc.), a place for medicines so I don't have to go upstairs, utensil drawers very cluttered, and small rarely used appliances (crepe maker, waffle iron).

We try to keep the counter pretty free from clutter and generally do a good job of that, but we could use more counter space which would mean a larger kitchen.

I think I could use a desk and computer space in the kitchen and a better family organizing calendar tool... I keep looking at buying one but am never convinced that what I see will solve all of my problems.

Most of what's there, even if the sorting is kind of idiosyncratic, seems to have settled in where it is. The "junk drawer" quotient is fairly high, with a lot of non-kitchen stuff (hardware, tools, undisplayed heirlooms, etc.), but at least I know where everything is (most of the time).

The pantry does get disorganized easily and I would be happier if it always stayed organized. The snacks always end up being tossed on the floor by the kids, along with any cereal boxes they have used.

A small room off of the kitchen to store wrapping paper, stationary and my sewing machine would be great. It would be nice to have lots of cabinets, counter-tops and most important of all a door that could be pulled closed so we could make our home look like we don't live here when guests arrive.

About RICKI



- America's leading authority for kitchen research and intelligence.
- The research conducted by RICKI goes beyond traditional research methodologies to help companies gain a better understanding of the mindset of today's consumers by delving deeper into motivations and emotional drivers to pinpoint trends that will impact companies into the future.
- RICKI was founded by a group of professional market researchers. The Executive Director of RICKI spent 18 years in the home improvement industry and was a former president and board member of one of the leading associations for the overall home improvement sector, the Home Improvement Research Institute (HIRI).

To find out more about RICKI, visit: www.kitchenintelligence.org

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