

Play to win!

**MARKETING®
DEPARTMENT**

RESEARCH DRIVES STRATEGY

Otherwise, you're guessing.

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You can't argue with data – right?

Companies that use data to drive marketing have stronger ROI's, better results and – most important – better long-term outcomes than companies that essentially guess at their marketing and branding. And that's nothing more than drawing strategy straws and hoping you pick the right one. When marketing teams leverage research to define the direction of a brand, marketing plan or a campaign – they win! A great research program can literally give you the answers and direction you need to develop strategy, or at least get you going in the right direction.

With so many easy-to-use tools on the market, like SurveyMonkey, Google, SpyFu, GrowthBar and Qualtrics, companies can collect their own data. But where to start? What is the right form of research to answer your specific questions? What do you with the data?

We hope that this outlined guide helps your team make better decisions as you go down the research journey.

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START WITH OBJECTIVES

1. Define what the problem or opportunity might be.
 - What are we really trying to accomplish?
 - What assumptions do we need eliminate?
 - What do we need to verify?
 - What are the opportunities?
2. Outline the sections of the information that is needed. For example, if you're launching a new software product, you're going to want to identify where people would learn about it or buy it. What problems are you solving? What other brands do the users access now? How would they benefit from your product? How much is the user willing to spend?

DETERMINING THE TYPE OF RESEARCH

Emailed surveys are not the answer to everything. There are over 50 methods of capturing information, data and opinions. Determining which one is right for your objectives is very important. To help get you started, below is a short list of survey types and what questions they can help answer. If no one on your team is experienced at market research, consulting with a firm with market research capabilities can at least help you to determine the best method and plan of attack on your survey.

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Method	What it answers
Customer Satisfaction Survey	A customer's satisfaction with a brand.
Brand Loyalty	What motivates a customer to buy.
Brand Equity Survey	How consumers view the brand.
Employee Happiness	How to attract and retain employees.
Competitive Analysis	Defines what makes you different from your competitors or finds market gaps.
Secret Shoppers	Provides direction for areas of improvement or how your competitors deliver products and services.
Brand Audit	Identify opportunities to improve specific or general areas of marketing and the customer experience.
Focus Group, Street Surveys	Develop an understanding of a customer's satisfaction with a brand, transaction, product, etc.
Situational Observations	Observe customer behaviors and reactions.
Buyer's Journey Mapping	Determine what motivates people to buy and what decision-making processes they use.
Customer Touchpoint Mapping	Inventory of the customer experience
Competitive Analysis	Define competitive differences position and promotion.

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DESIGN & PREPARE YOUR SURVEY

There are hundreds of variables and scenarios to designing survey questions. The design you choose depends on your objectives and research type. Whichever direction your research has taken, it is critical to beta-test your questions and review the results prior to launching into the full research. This will give you an opportunity to test your questions and methods so you can make final adjustments.

While you're testing your research method and questions, it is also a good idea to check your distribution channels and lists to make sure you can reach the RIGHT audience needed. For instance, if you're conducting some kind of electronic survey, this might mean purchasing targeted lists, making sure your customer contact lists are up to date, ensuring you're connected with your audience on social media, etc....

COLLECTING, ANALYZING & PRESENTING DATA

Presenting data is an art much more than a science. It is very easy for a presenter to add their opinions and emotions to a data presentation. An audience will pick up on this quickly and the data will lose all credibility. So, please stick with the facts.

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Here at Marketing Department, Inc. we use data to drive decisions about strategy. The data also gives us the credibility and confidence we need to make the right decisions for our clients. The same can happen for you.

Good luck with your project!



Call us direct to understand how we can help you design your research and drive your strategy to win!

(906) 483 - 2000