

# Market Research At-a-Glance

## Common kinds of research

<b>Quantitative</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measurable results that can be generalized to larger population</li><li>• Ex: IU image and perception study to test attributes amongst competitors</li></ul>	<b>Qualitative</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emotive, in-depth results that cannot be generalized to larger population</li><li>• Ex: In-depth interviews with legislators on the life sciences</li></ul>
<b>Primary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information collected by and for your organization</li><li>• Ex: IU Auditorium survey to identify show preferences for the upcoming season</li></ul>	<b>Secondary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information that has already been collected for another purpose</li><li>• Not necessarily indicative of your target audience</li><li>• Ex: StudentPoll collects data on access to and use of technology</li></ul>

## More about surveys

- Broad topics, but narrow feedback
- Conducted by phone, Web, mail, or intercept
- Typically used for...
  - Perceptions
  - Customer service
  - Predicting behaviors
  - Benchmarking and evaluating success
- Be especially careful of...
  - Timing (too long or bad time of year that skews responses)
  - Question wording, structure, and length
  - Big words and broad scales (1-10)
  - Sensitive questions placed too early
  - Too many open-ended questions
  - Response rate
  - Appropriate use of stats
  - Sample size and representation

## More about focus groups

- Narrow topic, but deep feedback
- Typically used for...
  - Informing quantitative research
  - Testing the effectiveness of creative
  - Identifying trends amongst a broad range of opinions
  - Refining messages
  - Product development
- Typical mechanics...
  - Participants in a group of 6 (online) to 12 (in person)
  - Usually a few groups per project
  - 60 (online) to 90 (in person) minutes in length
  - Limited background noise
  - Audio or video recorded
  - Incentives for participants
  - Moderator and note taker facilitate discussion
- Be especially careful of...
  - Giving too much weight to bold, individual comments (look for broad trends/themes)
  - Assuming that if 1/3 of your participants think a certain way, then 1/3 of the population thinks that way
  - Being too rigid (the process is evolutionary, so use the first group as a guinea pig to test format)
  - Participants asking for the moon when you ask for their preferences (be prepared to challenge them to work with your constraints)
  - Who is invited and how the groups are structured (homogeneity tends to work best)

## General advice about research

- Informs decision-making, but still requires other metrics and strong instincts to fill in gaps
- No magic bullets: use qualitative, quantitative, primary, and secondary research, depending on what you want to know
- Can be helpful at the back-end too, even after a product delivers
- Don't tap your audiences so much that you annoy them (segment audiences and rack up info over time)
- Don't do-it-yourself just because you can: get professional training or seek help from internal or external marketing/research professionals to ensure best practices
- Build research into your marketing plan and budget, especially in tough economic times when you need to prove return on investment
- Planning before conducting research is EVERYTHING