

## 10.3: Discussion Questions and Activities

### Discussion Questions

1. Are small business owners at a disadvantage if they lack the marketing research resources large companies have? Why or why not?
2. Online marketing research seems to be the wave of the future. What drawbacks do you see associated with conducting surveys online? Are privacy issues greater with online surveys than with other forms of administering surveys, such as phone, face-to-face, or mail?
3. Why do you think so many marketing research companies are conglomerating—that is, merging with or acquiring one another? Is it solely to conduct global marketing research?
4. You need to conduct research on consumer acceptance for a new product. Describe the process you would use. How would your project change if the product solved an embarrassing problem? What would your challenges be in that situation?
5. Given the way people tweet about customer service, why do companies still use mystery shoppers? Why not simply follow tweet volume and content to see if service is good?
6. You are working for an organization that provides clean water technology to communities in Africa. They've never worked in Malawi but want to and need to understand how consumers source water, how they prepare it (sterilize or clean it), and how they use it. You know that a study was done on water sources, water preparation, and water uses in Kenya. What type of research would the Kenya study be considered and how would you go about validating its findings for Malawi (a different country in Africa)? How would your answer change if your organization was considering a community in a remote area of Nicaragua? (By the way, this question is based on a real situation involving Living Water International, a student project at Baylor University and funded by 3M that examined Somotillo, Nicaragua, and a study done in Kenya by Boston University's School of Public Health).
7. Your CEO is personally involved in developing a new product that is really cool, but you have your doubts about whether it really delivers any additional benefits over what is already available. When you pitch the idea of marketing research study to test consumer response, she says, "Are you kidding? Why waste the money and time, as well as let our competitors know what we've got? Let's get this to market!" But the market launch will cost \$3 million and your company's profits last year were only \$5 million. How would you respond? How would your answer differ if the launch only cost \$300,000?
8. The chapter mentions using salespeople and channel partners as sources of information. Describe how you would go about this and if or why salesperson/channel partner input is important when trying to make the following decisions:
  1. When trying to design the booth for use at trade shows
  2. When trying to decide which features to add or subtract from a product
  3. Making pricing decisions
9. Describe how you would use projective techniques to help your university understand how prospective students make schooling decisions. Be specific when describing how you would use the technique, providing examples of questions.
10. In *Freakonomics*, Steven Leavitt describes a study of public housing residents that began with the question, "How does it feel to be poor and black?" He says that's a bad question to start a survey with. Why? (There are multiple reasons.)
11. You sell manufacturing equipment for a Chinese company that imports the equipment into your country. You want to do a research project on potential brand names for a new product line, and have to choose among the following sampling ideas or projects. For each one, identify what type of study and sample you have, discuss the pros and cons, and then at the end, make a decision.
  1. Stopping 200 people at a trade show and showing potential brand names to them to get their reaction.
  2. Hosting a breakfast or lunch at a trade show to get 3 groups of 10 to provide feedback to the names and logos.
  3. Send an email to your customers with a link to a URL that has the various names and let them vote.

### Activities

1. In this activity, you will conduct a survey using either Zoomerang.com or SurveyMonkey.com. Divide into groups of four people. Each group should do the following:
  1. Choose a food-service establishment on or near your campus. Then create a ten-question survey designed to gauge how satisfied customers are with the establishment's food and service.
  2. Decide how you will deliver the questionnaire you've created. Choose a sampling frame, or list of people from which you will draw your sample.

3. Administer the survey. After you have collected the results, analyze them and write a research report with the sections outlined in the chapter.
  4. Contact the owner or manager of the establishment, and present him or her with the findings. If your research is helpful to the manager, who knows? It might earn you a free meal or at least some money-off coupons.
2. Would you like to own an all-electric car? Do you think there is a viable market for such a product? Team up into small groups of three or four people. As a team, use secondary data to research the viability of selling electric cars profitably. Utilize some of the sources mentioned in the chapter. Try to determine the population of electric-car buyers. Lastly, write a research report based on your findings. Each group should present its findings to the class. Do the findings differ from group to group? If so, why?

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