



Continued Education.

This is designed to be a temporary, walkthrough guide to completing your Market Research project, while we prepare something fuller and richer. Everyone on the team should read this, so it's written to all team members. Read through it once, and then follow it along throughout your project.

Each project is unique, so the information in this guide will apply different to your company than anyone else's. If you have any questions at all, contact [Justin](#). He, the Consulting Committee, and the Consulting Program Director, Maya, are here to help.

Overview:

- Forecasting and Analysis are super important, but when push comes to shove, you only want to create a product and business that you feel confident, with real evidence, people want and need.
- To benchmark – \$31B [is spent](#) yearly worldwide on Market Research.
- Market Research can answer [questions](#) like:
 - What problem does your company's product or service solve?
 - Who will buy your company's product or service?
 - Why will they buy it?
 - Where will they buy it – specialty shops, department stores, online, smartphones?
 - What products or services will your company's be competing with?
- Seem important? It is. Market Research is the process of taking your hunches and grounding them in real, quantifiable data.

- Like Business Development, there's a perception that this kind of consulting project is boring or tedious – that couldn't be farther from the truth.
- A TAMID Market Research project talks to the connection between the business and the world: you are the conduit that connects your company's perception of reality with, well, reality. Sometimes, they align, and sometimes they don't.
 - Your project will help your company find the answers to one or more of the above questions, which can and will seriously impact the direction and the product of the company.
- Unlike you might have experienced in the past, this project won't just be your CEO giving you a finished survey and asking you to administer to students; this will be your team creating a survey from the ground up, figuring the right demographic to target, and what the best way to target them is.
 - You'll also pick up some great behavioral psychology along the way.
- There are quite literally people who do this for a living – one of them helped put this program together.
- You'll walk away with a clear understanding of how to create comprehensive, targeted Market Research: a marketable skill that's hugely valuable to future employers.

How to Do Market Research

- Big thanks to Professor [Adam Alter](#) for use of his class [slides](#), and [Beth Haber](#) from Hulu for general insight.

Relevant terminology

- *Primary Research* – information that comes directly from (potential) customers.
- *Secondary Research* – information that comes from gathering statistics, reports, etc. from other organizations like the Census Bureau.
- *The 5 Step Process* –
 - 1) Define the problem: set research objectives, or a question you want to answer.
 - 2) Develop the research plan: figure out who to target, and how to do so.
 - 3) Collect information: execute on the plan. Give the surveys.
 - 4) Develop findings: look at what you collected, and present it.
 - 5) Take actions: figure out what to do based on your analysis.
- *Major Providers* – the big players in institutional market research are Nielsen, Ipsos, Burke, and others.

Secondary Research

- A lot of what your company wants to know might have already been researched and indexed.
- Check [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) for where to look and how to find it.
- If your company has conducted any research so far or purchased any, they'll indicate it in their application.
- Most likely, your company is going to want you to conduct primary research – actually going out there and figuring out what people think.

The Right Type of Primary Research

- The first step is to decide which research method you're going to use – or in other words, how you're going to answer the question the company asked.
- First, we'll go through the major types of research, and then how to decide which to use, and what method to go about it.

- *1) Exploratory*
 - Small samples, and not structured.
 - Provides initial insights into a problem, but not a full answer.
 - Should never be used to decide a course of action – only as a segue to more in-depth research.
 - Three relevant techniques for your team: Focus Groups, Interviews, and Observation. More on these later.

- *2) Descriptive*
 - One word: surveys. These will get the more rich, detailed data that you need to fully answer your company's questions and think about potential courses of action to take.
 - Can be done in virtually any setting: telephone, web, in-person, etc.
 - Huge variety of data – you can essentially ask for anything, like attitudes, interests, and behaviors.
 - The big issue is implementation: it's very difficult to make unbiased clear questions, and choose the right method to execute the survey. More on this later.

- *So how do you decide which type of research to pursue?*

- You should conduct **exploratory research** if:
 - Your company explicitly asks for it.
 - Your company is at the idea stage (no product), and is trying to probe if there's interest in their (potential) product.
 - The question / goal your company wrote on the application is:
 - Very vague.
 - E.x. are people unhappy with their lives?
 - Very basic.
 - E.x. how do people feel about their home light bulbs?
 - Very deep / subconscious (something you would need a personal interview to figure out).

- You should conduct **descriptive research** if:
 - Your company explicitly asks for it (e.x. survey).
 - Your company is already somewhat developed (existing product, pilot customers, etc.).

- The question / goal your company wrote on the application is:
 - Very specific.
 - E.x. do people care about the color of the lights in their houses?
 - Very clear.
 - E.x. would people be interested in certain features of my product, or are they not important?
 - Very simple.
 - Something that can effectively be communicated on a survey or over the phone.
 - E.x. how much do different types of people dislike their health care providers, vs. *how do you feel* about your health care providers (harder to ask).
- The lines between these two are often tough to discern, and sometimes it's best to even do both together.
- If you've read through all of this and are still unsure, feel free to reach out to [Justin](#).

How to Conduct Exploratory Research

- There are **3 main methods of exploratory research**:
 - 1) Focus Groups
 - 2) In-Depth Interviews
 - 3) Observation

Focus Groups

- Watch a good focus group [here](#).
- Watch a not-so-good focus group [here](#).
- Watch one in between [here](#).
- A focus group is essentially a group discussion, moderated by one person (you!) and often videotaped stealthily (like one-way mirrors).

- The moderator encourages group members to express their ideas on the topic, or elaborate on and react to the views of other group members.
- 98% of consumer goods companies use focus groups, and they're also referred to as "qualitative research".
- Focus groups can be very revealing, and are a cool thing for you to organize and run.
- For a total, walkthrough guide on how to design and implement a focus group, check out [this PDE](#). It's thorough and will help a lot.
 - It's not made for students, so you'll have to work around some issues, like paying people to join the group, etc.

In-Depth Interviews

- These are pretty simple: they're face-to-face interviews with a respondent where you go in depth about the relevant topic.
- Here's an [article](#) about the benefits of one-on-one interviews.
- Here's a [slideshow](#) about tips for how to conduct them.
- While one-on-ones might be easier to arrange and can go deeper than focus groups, you end up losing the collaboration and ability for participants to build on other's ideas. So choose wisely.

Observation

- This is the easiest to organize – you just watch people's behavior!
- In general, the observer (you!) doesn't interact with who you're observing.
- The classic example is shopping patterns: researchers spend time in supermarkets with pen and paper, observing how you and I walk around and decide what to buy.
- A relevant example for TAMID: your company might want to understand how students use their phones, or a certain app.
- Your team can sit down with students and just ask them to use their phones, and observe how they do so in a way relevant to what your company wants.
- Observation is useful for understanding behavior that's often subconscious – people often don't know or aren't aware of how they do things, like interact with their smartphones.

How to Conduct Descriptive Research

- Descriptive research, or mostly surveys, are *anything but* simple to create and administer.
- Most surveys you'll see that try to gauge what people are thinking about a topic are unreliable and incorrectly written – or in other words, the results are totally tainted.
- We'll deal with two key elements of writing a proper survey:
 - 1) Survey method – the right way to administer it.
 - 2) Writing questions – the right way to create it.

Survey Method

- While there are many ways to actually administer surveys, the one that's most relevant to students is internet surveys, or forms.
- We'll go through some of the common and popular ways for you to create your surveys and send them out to the right people.
- There are essentially **3 ways for you to create your survey**: normal forms, paid survey services, and free survey services.
- *1) Normal Forms*
 - We've all spent enough time doing these.
 - TAMID normally uses Google Forms, but we're starting to shift into using [Typeform](#), which is prettier and more professional.
 - These are easy to use and set up, but the downside is that they aren't optimized for the type of market research that you're doing.
- *2) Paid Survey Services*
 - There are a number of services that help you make and distribute your surveys for a fee, like [Survata](#), [Google Consumer Insights](#), [ZappiStore](#), [Proved](#), and [Wizer](#).
 - If you think that it's going to be hard to reach the audience you want without help, consider asking your company for a small budget to use one of these services.
- *3) Free Survey Services*

- The best one here is [QuestionPro](#) – this is your best bet to get a platform that’s built for market research.
- Another free option is [SurveyMonkey](#).

Some High-Level Tips

- You’re going to have to answer a question with a bunch of other questions – it’s not easy. Here are some general tips to consider before a deep dive into how to write questions.
- *1) General Approach.*
 - The right general strategy to start out with is to take a step back.
 - If your company wants to know “Is there demand for my product,” step back and think about what they’re *really* interested in.
 - In other words, what *decision* is the company going to make based on your answer? Will they change the product, features, target market, etc.?
 - If you think you can discern what business decision / action they’re looking to take, try to think about the information you’d want at your disposal to make that decision. And that’s your survey.
- *2) Initial Questions.*
 - Another important best practice is to get some initial data about who’s taking your survey, like:
 - What’s your race?
 - Are you married?
 - Do you have kids?
 - What’s your annual income?
 - Are you interested in purchasing a WiFi router in the next 12 months?
 - The idea is to make the data actionable: you want to know who is taking your survey when you’re looking at the results.
 - That last question there is specific to what you’re asking: if your company sells an exciting new WiFi router that’s super secure, people who *aren’t* interested in buying one right now aren’t relevant respondents.
 - Questions like this (about whatever your company does) will weed out people who aren’t relevant, so you’ll know to disregard their answers.
- *3) Length.*
 - Close your eyes, and imagine you were filling out your own survey...you’d probably want it to be as short as possible.
 - Figure out exactly what you want to know, and work on creating the questions (see below) that get you there – but no more.

- We try to use this strategy at TAMID Consulting too for surveys (we aren't always successful) – never ask a question unless you know exactly how you're going to use the answer.
 - Your survey should be no longer than 15 minutes, max. Especially because you're asking people to fill it out for free.
 - Your surveys can get a little longer if you offer some incentives, like raffling off a giftcard (standard practice).
 - Consider asking your chapter / company for the budget to buy a \$100 giftcard, to make your survey more attractive.
- 4) *Language.*
 - You like when people talk to you like a person and they're excited, not when people are professional, stiff, and use big words for no reason.
 - The same should apply to your surveys!
 - Try to be casual, cool, simple, excited, down to earth – everything you like.
- 5) *Engagement.*
 - Try to make your surveys as interesting and exciting as possible – more than just boring text.
 - Try including relevant and fun images.
 - If you ask your respondents to rate something on a scale, make it a scale of stars (or any other icon) instead of just numbers.

Writing Bad Questions

- Writing questions correctly is both a science and an art, and bad questions can totally ruin the reliability of a survey.
- The best way to figure out *how to* write good questions, is to focus first on *how not to* write good questions.
- To start, here's a chart of the common mistakes that can ruin a survey:

Problem	Sample Question	Why it's Wrong
<i>Leading Question</i>	Why do you like Wendy's hamburgers better than those of competitors?	You're leading the respondent to make a statement that by default favors your product.
<i>Ambiguous Question</i>	Do you eat at fast food restaurants regularly?	Well what does <i>regularly</i> mean? Once a week? Month?
<i>Unanswerable Question</i>	When did you eat your first hamburger?	IDK LOL...

<i>Two Questions in One</i>	Do you eat Wendy's hamburgers and drink soda?	How do you answer this if you only eat / drink one of these?
<i>Nonexhaustive Question</i>	Where do you live, an apartment or a dorm?	What if you live at home?
<i>Non-mutually Exclusive Answers</i>	How old are you, 10-20 or 20-30?	What do you pick if you're 20?

- The examples are about hamburgers, but these mistakes are *so, so* relevant to your company, which probably works around technology.
- Here are some other frequent issues / effects to watch out for when you're making your survey, which are also fun exercises in behavioral psychology:
 - 1) *Response Scale Effect* – the ability of the scale you choose to impact people's responses.
 - Psychologically, when we're presented with a scale, we tend to think that the middle is the average, and anything at the low end or high end is *extreme*.
 - Here's a study that was done to demonstrate this effect, where respondents were asked how many hours of television they watch per week:

Section 1		Section 2	
<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Selected</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Selected</i>
Up to ½ an hour	31%	Up to 2+½ hours	63%
½ to 1 hour	14%	2+½ to 3 hours	15%
1 to 1+½ hours	23%	3 to 3+½ hours	10%
1+½ to 2 hours	18%	3+½ to 4 hours	2%
2 to 2+½ hours	4%	4 to 4+½ hours	4%
More than 2+½ hours	10%	More than 4+½ hours	6%

- Essentially, if 2+½ hours is the high end of the scale, 10% of people choose it. But if it's the low end of the scale, 37% of people choose values higher than it.
 - If you're using a scale in one of your surveys, be sure to set the limits as reasonable and avoid this problem.
 - 2) *Unaided & Aided Questions* – the simple difference between multiple choice and free response.
 - E.x. what do you consider to be the most important thing to prepare children for life?
 - If left open ended, 5% of respondents answer “to think for themselves.”

- If you give 5 choices, one of them being “to think for themselves”, 62% of respondents choose it.
 - When making your survey, be aware of this issue and take your results with an accordingly sized grain of salt.
- 3) *Framing Effects* – statements in the question seriously impact answers.
 - E.x. President Clinton said that the 1975 Public Affairs Act should be repealed. Do you agree or disagree?
 - 16% of republicans agree, 36% of democrats agree.
 - The republicans in congress said that the 1975 Public Affairs Act should be repealed. Do you agree or disagree?
 - 36% of republicans agree, 19% of democrats agree.
 - If you put a statement of fact in your survey, make sure to be cognizant of the framing effects it has.
- 4) *Preceding Questions* – the order of your questions impacts the answers.
 - If you ask first how a respondent’s marital life is, and then how happy they are in general, the correlation is high (a factor of .67).
 - If you ask first how happy a respondent is in general, and then how their marital life is, the correlation is low (a factor of .32).
 - If you’re asking two related questions in your survey, like “how happy are you with your smartphone” and then “how happy are you with your messaging app,” be aware of how these answers will impact each other.

Writing Good Questions

- The kinds of questions you’ll want to ask and how to ask them will obviously depend heavily on what your company needs. Here are some great articles that help walk you through:
 - [Hubspot](#).
 - If you want to get *really* deep, here’s Hubspot’s [complete guide](#) to creating surveys. This thing is freakin’ serious.
 - A more [holistic view](#) from SurveyMonkey which touches on a lot of concepts covered in the TAMID Marketing area.

Reaching Your Target Audience

- Even once you've created your thoughtful, professionally formatted survey (you got this!), or you've put together your complete plan for exploratory research, *you need to get these surveys and methods in front of the right group of people.*
- Your company should detail the target market for the research in the application – but how do find those people?
- E.x. your company is [Israel Framed](#) and your target market is religious individuals above the age of 40. How in the world can you get specifically these people to answer your surveys? Or to join your focus groups?
- The honest answer is – it's really difficult. The answer is generally money (using the paid survey services above, or paying people to join a focus group), but that's obviously not something relevant to us.
- That being said, here are some ways for your team to get creative:
 - 1) [HeyCrowd](#) – a site that lets you [ask questions](#) to targeted audiences.
 - 2) *Blogs* – there are tons of these that are specifically relevant to your company's target market. You can get in contact with the authors and ask them for help with your survey.
 - For example, with Israel Framed, there might be a weekly Bible verse blog that has the same target audience we want. You can contact the blogger and ask for help with your project, and maybe they'll post your survey on the blog.
 - Some industries with strong blogging communities are Fashion, Venture Capital, and Fitness.
 - You can also try posting your survey on Reddit, in a group that's relevant to your survey's target market.
 - 3) *Facebook Audience Insights* – can often be helpful. Here's a [walkthrough guide](#) for how to use them.
- If you think you're going to have a really tough time getting to the target market you're after (likely), then you might need to pitch your company on allocating a lil' budget to pay for a targeting service (“survey method” above).
- It's not easy, especially with startups who have a tight budget (=all of them). But try presenting two options:
 - 1) We can do this survey without a targeting service, and get you results that might not be fully accurate or representative.
 - 2) You can pay a reasonable amount, and get higher quality stuff.
- Before you ask for a budget, make sure to look at all of the targeting services we outlined and try to figure out how much they would cost for a survey like yours.

The Finished Product

- What you end up with should either be a Powerpoint Presentation or Word Document, but we recommend Powerpoint for this kind of project.
- You should make sure that you've answered the following questions:
 - A recap of the question(s) you tried to answer
 - The method of research you decided to use, and your reasoning for the choice
 - How you put together your survey / focus group / etc. –
 - The questions you asked, and how you avoided bad questions
 - The service you used to put together the survey
 - Your target market for the survey, and how you reached them
 - The results of the survey, and what it means for your company
 - Any challenges you encountered, and how you tried to overcome them
- Use the TAMID template slides on the education website, and follow the presentation guidelines there too.
- Remember, half of your company's satisfaction will depend on how well you present what you've done.