



EVALUATING RESEARCH OPTIONS

TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

PRIMARY RESEARCH

Focus Groups

The main purpose of a focus group is to draw upon participants' **attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences, and reactions** in a way that is not feasible using other methods

- Typically used to hone quantitative surveys; often used to observe product usage or test product design
- Can recruit participants through a firm or through Craigslist/social media, depending on target market
- Can be biased by aggressive or dominant participants

One-on-One Interviews

One-on-one interviews allow you to gather **qualitative feedback**. A key advantage is that you can explore responses more deeply than in an online survey, and without the potential bias of a focus group

- Are a great way to explore unexpected results from a quantitative survey
- Can often be done cost effectively using a \$10-20 gift card for participation plus the cost of a target list; downside is there is no guarantee of responses

Online Surveys

Online surveys can provide you with **quantitative feedback** fairly quickly

- **Survey Monkey** – Cost-effective survey tool; can purchase list with guaranteed responses, or provide your own
- **Social media surveys** – Enable feedback from younger, mobile audiences

Other Types

- **Sponsored surveys** – Conducted with a trade publication or analyst group; typically expensive and outlet may want to publish results
- **Onsite with pilot user / beta tester** – Observation can provide insight as to how customer will use product; **great for product design**

SECONDARY RESEARCH

Competitor Research

A review of a competitor's website can provide you significant information

- **Homepage design** - Is the design attractive? Is the copyright updated? Are the logo and tagline effective?
- **Homepage message** - How is the company/product being positioned? What are the key messages? Are there customer testimonials/case studies?
- **Product** - How is the product described? Is the description crisp or convoluted? Does the product seem easy to use, or difficult?
- **News room** - Does the company demonstrate momentum through press releases and media coverage?
- **Press releases** - What are the topics of the press releases: customer wins, awards, milestones, partners, funding, etc? Is there analyst coverage? If so, what does it say? What does the boilerplate say? Are all messages in alignment with the website?

- **Social media** - What channels are being used? How active are they? Do they have a blog?
- **Marketing materials** - What is available? Is it well done? Do they have gated materials, such as white papers or research? Do they have videos?
- **CTA** - What are the Calls-to-Action? Can I buy from the site? What is their pricing? How do they package the product?

Online Research

Online research can provide you with a plethora of information on market size, competitors, financials and overall visibility. Simple searches can provide insight as to SEO, AdWords, and industry momentum. Sources include Google News, Crunchbase, Google Reviews, analyst sites, and top trade publications.