

Market Research at the Hill

Market research encompasses many topics, all of which help researchers understand and define the market for their products or services. These topics can include sources of statistical data on income, consumption and demographics. There is no one database resource for market data and no guarantee a product or service will have tailored, distinct information available. Many companies offer highly specific market research reports at a very high cost. The quality of these reports varies significantly and for that reason, along with cost considerations, they are not indexed by the James J. Hill Center or any other publicly accessible library.

Market research reports contain information like the size of an existing market, product and service trends, and market segmentation. Market research can be divided into two collection types: primary and secondary.

Primary data is based on research conducted through surveys, polls, focus groups and interviews. This type of research is often used to address a specific problem or analyze a particular product or service offered by a business. As this research is so specialized and costly, primary data is almost never made available for non-company consumption.

Secondary data is based on research done by other organizations including government bodies (e.g. the U.S. Census), market research firms or trade associations. These reports may be more generalized or higher level, but this data is more readily accessible through databases like those offered at the Hill.

One type of market research is demographics data. This includes survey information that can be filtered by age, gender, income, education and other factors to build a consumer behavior profile. This survey data is weighted and geographically distributed to provide an estimated average of preference and behavior for individuals in a certain area.

The following databases can be used to do company research at the Hill Center. Access them via the Databases or Login pages.

- SimplyAnalytics
- Business Source Premier
- IBISWorld