

Marketing Information System (MIS) & Marketing Research

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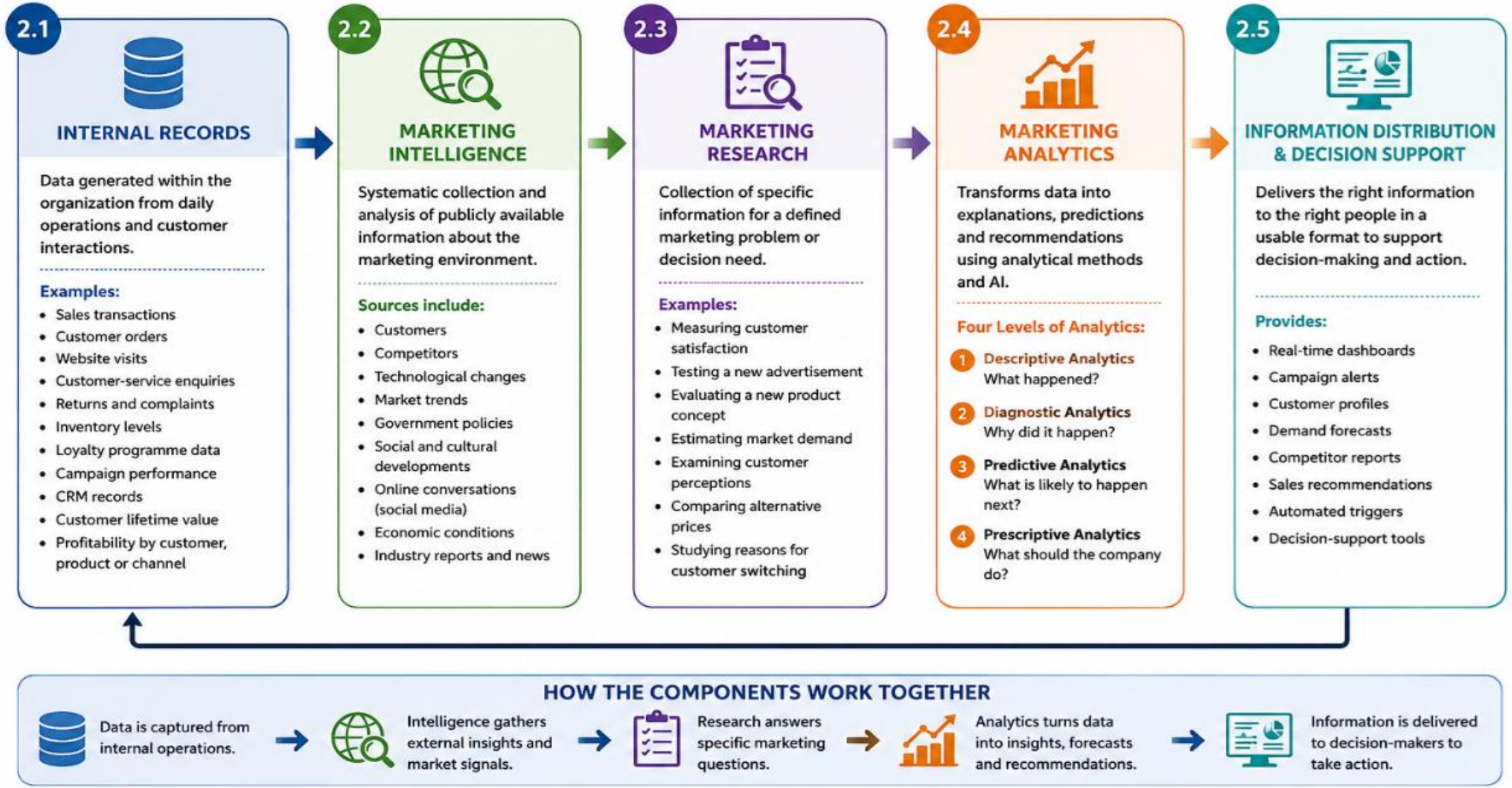
The MIS



What is Mkt Information System (MIS)?

- MIS is not simply about software or database.
- MIS is an organized system of:
  - people,
  - technologies,
  - data sources,
  - analytical methods,
  - procedures,
  - Reports
  - Dashboards
- MIS is used to **collect, integrate, analyse and distribute marketing information** to decision-makers
- Raw data → meaningful information → customer insights → marketing decisions → market actions → performance feedback

Main components



Marketing Information System (MIS) – Components Flow Chart

(2.1 to 2.5)



HOW THE COMPONENTS WORK TOGETHER

Data is captured from internal operations. → Intelligence gathers external insights and market signals. → Research answers specific marketing questions. → Analytics turns data into insights, forecasts and recommendations. → Information is delivered to decision-makers to take action.

Continuous feedback from decisions and results flows back into Internal Records (2.1) to improve the entire Marketing Information System.

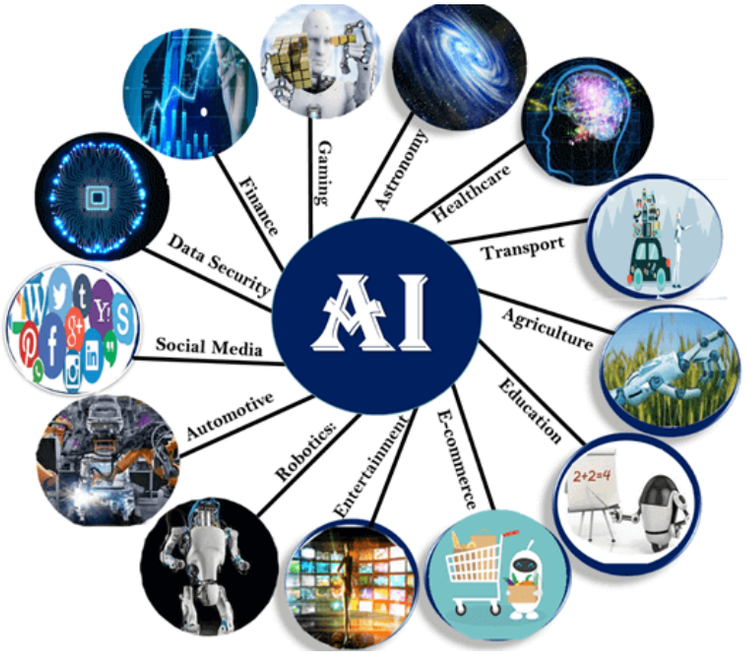
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The digital age: Big Data and AI era

- **Online, mobile and social media marketing:** The consumer love affair with digital and mobile technology makes it fertile ground for marketers trying to engage customers.
- **Digital and social media marketing**
  - involves using digital marketing tools, such as websites, social media, mobile ads and apps, online video, email, blogs and other digital platforms
  - engage consumers anywhere, anytime via their computers, smartphones, tablets, Smart TVs and other digital devices.
- **Social media marketing: Big Data and AI platforms**
- Most brand websites, and even traditional media ads, feature links to the brand's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snapchat or other social media sites.
- Online social media offer an **ideal platform** for real-time marketing by which marketers can **engage consumers** in the moment by linking brands to
  - important trending topics
  - real-world events, causes, personal occasions
  - other important happenings in consumers' lives
- Marketers can understand the customer journey rather than evaluating each channel separately: what the customer searched for; what content they viewed; how long they stayed; what they clicked; where they abandoned the process; what they purchased; what they reviewed; what they shared.

Big data and artificial intelligence (AI) – AI Marketing

- The explosion in digital technologies means we now have **ready access** to more data than ever before.
- Companies can use this big data to **gain deep consumer insights**, personalise marketing offers, and improve communication, engagement and service with consumers.
- To make sense of big data and to be able to use it effectively, marketers are turning to even more-advanced **marketing analytics**.
- Artificial intelligence (AI) involves machines thinking and learning in a way that looks and feels human, but with **much greater analytical capacity.**
- Marketers use AI to **analyse data at lightning spee**d and **apply marketing insights** to engage customers in real time and help them through the buying process.



THE ROLE OF AI IN MIS

How AI Enhances Marketing Information Systems

AI CAPABILITY IN MIS	WHAT AI DOES	EXAMPLES IN MARKETING	KEY BENEFITS	KEY CONSIDERATIONS / RISKS
AI-supported Customer Insight	• Analyses large and complex datasets to uncover patterns and deeper customer understanding.	• Analysing purchase history, browsing patterns, search queries • Analysing social media comments, reviews, images, videos • Analysing call-centre conversations and feedback • Identifying customer preferences and motivations	✓ Deeper and richer customer understanding ✓ Detects needs, trends and pain points ✓ Supports more relevant messaging and offers	⚠ Data quality determines insight quality ⚠ Risk of bias in data and algorithms ⚠ Privacy and ethical use of personal data
Predictive Marketing	• Uses machine learning to predict future customer behaviour and outcomes.	• Predicting purchase likelihood • Predicting churn (customers likely to leave) • Lead scoring • Predicting demand and product interest • Predicting campaign performance	✓ Early warning and opportunity detection ✓ Better targeting and resource allocation ✓ Improves conversion and retention rates	⚠ Predictions are not 100% accurate ⚠ Over-reliance on models ⚠ Correlation does not always mean causation
Personalisation	• Tailors content, offers and experiences to individual customers in real time.	• Product recommendations • Personalised emails and app messages • Dynamic website and app content • Tailored promotions and offers • Next-best-action recommendations	✓ More relevant and helpful experiences ✓ Higher engagement and satisfaction ✓ Improved conversion and customer loyalty	⚠ Can feel intrusive if overdone ⚠ Risk of "creepy" personalisation ⚠ Requires transparency and customer choice
Content Creation (Generative AI)	• Generates or assists in creating marketing content at scale and speed.	• Ad copy, headlines, product descriptions • Email content and subject lines • Social media posts and scripts • Video scripts and storyboard ideas • Landing page variations	✓ Faster content production ✓ Many variations for testing ✓ Supports creativity and productivity	⚠ Needs human review for accuracy and brand fit ⚠ Copyright and originality issues ⚠ Risk of generic and repetitive content
Marketing Automation	• Automates repetitive marketing tasks and optimises campaign execution.	• Automated email journeys • Budget allocation and bidding for ads • Audience selection • A/B testing and optimisation • Lead nurturing and scoring	✓ Greater efficiency and scalability ✓ Continuous optimisation ✓ Reduces manual work and errors	⚠ Automation without strategy can amplify mistakes ⚠ Loss of human touch if over-automated ⚠ Algorithmic decisions need monitoring
Customer Service (AI Assistants)	• Uses AI chatbots and virtual assistants to support and engage customers.	• Answering FAQs • Product recommendations • Order tracking and updates • Handling routine enquiries 24/7 • Escalating complex issues to humans	✓ Faster response time ✓ 24/7 availability ✓ Consistent service quality ✓ Lower service cost	⚠ Limited empathy in complex situations ⚠ Misunderstanding of customer intent ⚠ Data privacy and security concerns

AI + MIS = Smarter Marketing

AI helps MIS process more data, faster, to deliver deeper insights, predict outcomes and support real-time, data-driven marketing actions.

Remember:

AI is a powerful assistant, but human judgement, ethics and creativity remain essential for meaningful and responsible marketing.

How AI change MIS and Mkt jobs?

- Product: from periodic development to continuous adaptation
- Price: from standard pricing to algorithmic pricing
- Promotion: from campaign delivery to continuous optimization
- Place: Place: from channel selection to journey orchestration
- Customer behaviour: discover a product on TikTok → read reviews on Google → compare it on a marketplace → inspect it in a store → order through an app → contact customer service through messaging → post a review afterwards.

→ MIS must connect these touchpoints.

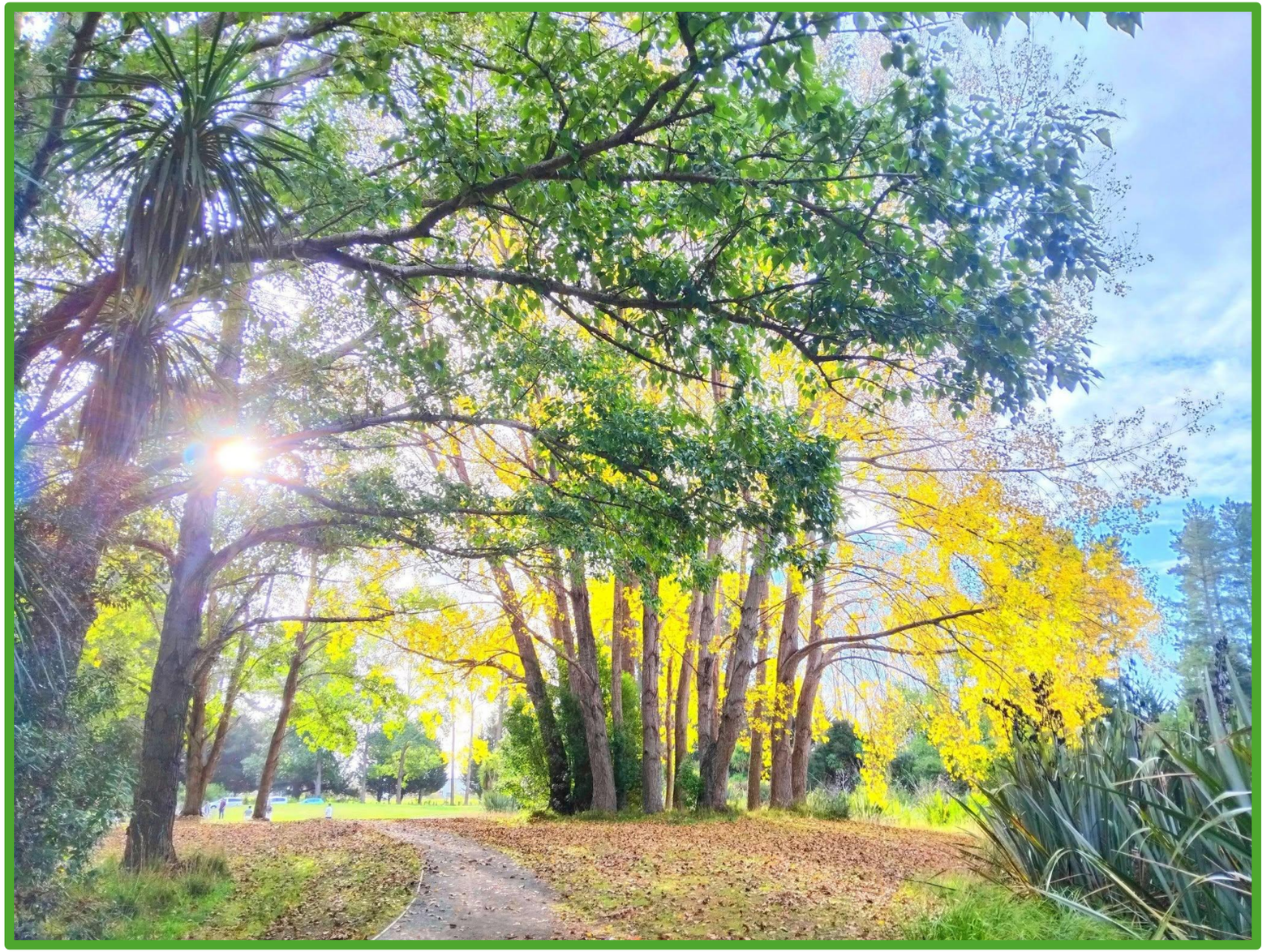
Mkt Strategies

- Start with the marketing problem, not the technology:

→ Business objective → customer problem → information requirement → data → analysis or AI → action → evaluation

  - Which customer problem are we trying to solve?
  - Which decision needs better information?
  - Which process is inefficient?
  - Which outcome should improve?
  - How will success be measured?
- Combine AI with human judgement
  - AI: recognising patterns; processing large datasets; automating repetitive activities; generating alternatives; predicting likely outcomes
  - Human: strategic direction; ethical judgement; cultural interpretation; empathy; brand leadership; creativity; accountability

Marketing Research



What Is Marketing Research?

- defining a marketing problem or opportunity;
- collecting relevant information;
- analysing and interpreting the information;
- reporting findings;
- using the findings to support marketing decisions under uncertainty.
  - customer needs and preferences;
  - market size and demand;
  - competitors;
  - brand perceptions;
  - product ideas;
  - pricing decisions;
  - advertising effectiveness;
  - customer satisfaction;
  - distribution channels;
  - changing market trends.

Mkt research provides evidence that improves the decision

- A restaurant studies why customers do not return.
- A university investigates how students choose degree programmes.
- A hotel measures guest satisfaction.
- A retailer tests two advertising messages.
- A technology company explores customer reactions to a new app feature.

The Marketing Research Process – From Problem to Better Decision

A 6-Step Process to Turn Marketing Problems into Actionable Decisions



Running Example: Coffee Shop Chain

A coffee shop chain has noticed a 15% drop in customer visits over the last 6 months.
Management wants to understand the reasons and decide how to attract more customers.

1 Define the Problem



What we do

- Clarify the management problem
- Identify key questions
- Determine what information is missing

Example

- Visits to the coffee shop chain have fallen by 15%.
- Possible reasons: competition, prices, product range, service or changing customer preferences?

2 Develop Research Objectives



What we do

- State what the research aims to achieve
- Make objectives clear and specific
- Guide the design, data collection and analysis

Example

- Measure current customer satisfaction.
- Identify the main reasons for reduced visits.
- Compare the café with key competitors.
- Examine which improvements would attract more customers.

3 Design the Research Plan



What we do

- Decide the type of research (descriptive and exploratory)
- Choose data sources and methods
- Plan sampling and questionnaire/interview design
- Prepare budget and timetable

Example

- Use a mix of methods:
  - Online survey of current and former customers
  - Focus groups with target customers
  - Analysis of online reviews
- Survey target: 500 customers in 3 cities.

4 Collect the Data



What we do

- Gather secondary and primary data
- Implement the data collection plan
- Ensure data quality and confidentiality

Example

- Collect: 500 completed online surveys
- 8 focus groups with shoppers and students
- Download 2,000 recent online review comments
- Review internal sales data and competitor information

5 Analyse and Interpret the Findings



What we do

- Summarise and analyse the data
- Look for patterns and key insights
- Interpret what the results mean
- Link findings to the research objectives

Example

Findings show:

- Customers rate price and waiting time as the top reasons for visiting less often.
- Younger customers want more non-coffee drinks and a more comfortable study space.

6 Present the Findings and Recommendations



What we do

- Report the main findings clearly
- Provide practical recommendations
- Explain limitations
- Support managers' decision-making

Example

Recommended actions:

- Introduce more affordable drink bundles.
- Reduce waiting time at peak hours.
- Create a comfortable "study corner" with Wi-Fi and power outlets.
- Run a social media campaign to promote the new offer.



Marketing Decision

Management uses the research results to improve the customer experience and reverse the decline in visits, aiming for sustainable growth.



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Define the Research Problem

- A **management problem: Eg: Sales are declining.**
- A **marketing research problem: Eg: Investigate the factors influencing booking cancellation.**
- Defining the right problem helps: save time, money and efforts, good decision, productivity improvement.
- **Management problem:** Applications to a university programme have declined.
  - Weak RQ: Why do students dislike our programme? (The marketer already assumes that students dislike the programme.
  - Better RQ: What are the factors influencing prospective students' awareness, evaluation and choice of the programme?
- What is the research problem for the case of your group?
  - **The Hanoi 5 Gates Train**
  - **Under the canopy**
  - **Marou Chocolate**
  - **TH True milk**
  - **Cocoon cosmetic**
  - **Hanhsilk**

Developing Research Objectives

- Research Objectives: clearly state what the study aims to discover, describe, compare or test.
  - Research design
  - Data collection
  - Questionnaire development
  - Data analysis
  - Final conclusions/ report
- Research Objectives:
  - clear;
  - specific;
  - realistic;
  - relevant to the management decision;
  - measurable or answerable;
  - neutral rather than biased.

Management decision: Decide which aspects of a hotel service should be improved first.

Research objectives:

1. To measure guest satisfaction with room quality, cleanliness, staff responsiveness, check-in, and food services.
2. To identify the service attributes with the strongest relationship to overall satisfaction.
3. To compare satisfaction levels between first-time and repeat guests.
4. To examine the main reasons for customer complaints.
5. To determine which service improvements guests consider most important.

Research Design:

- Which type of Mkt Research best answers the research questions?
- How much is the cost?
- How long we need the research done?
- Who will conduct the research?
- What is the time plan to execute the research?
- How we will analyse the data? By which software?
- Who will write the report?

Types of Marketing Research

- Exploratory research is used when the problem is unclear or insufficiently understood
- Eg: The Hanoi 5 gates notices that younger customers visit once but rarely return

→ Exploratory research may investigate:

  - perceptions of the atmosphere;
  - service experiences;
  - pricing concerns;
  - product variety;
  - competitor preferences;
  - social media comments.

- Common exploratory methods include: analysis of existing reports; expert interviews; customer interviews; focus groups; observation; social media analysis; case studies.

Types of Marketing Research

- Descriptive research describes characteristics, behaviours or market conditions.
- Help answer:
  - Who buys the product? What do customers buy? How often do they purchase? Where do they purchase? How satisfied are they? Which brand do they prefer?
- Eg:
  - Estimating market size.
  - Describing the demographic profile of buyers.
  - Measuring brand awareness.
  - Comparing preferences across age groups.

Table 5.1. Demographic statistics

		Total participants (n=910)		Local-born people (n=306)		Domestic migrants (n=314)		Domestic tourists (n=290)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender	Female	511	56.2	151	49.3	202	64.3	158	54.48
	Male	388	42.6	151	49.3	109	34.7	128	44.14
	Others	11	1.2	4	1.3	3	1.0	4	1.38
Age (years)		Min = 18; Max = 80; Mean = 29.39							
Generation	Born before 1975	73	8.02	45	14.71	13	4.14	15	5.17
	Born from 1975 to 1986	108	11.87	37	12.09	37	11.78	34	11.72
	Born from 1987 to 1996	227	24.95	60	19.61	96	30.58	71	24.48
	Born from 1997 onwards (Gen Z)	502	55.16	164	53.59	168	53.50	170	58.62
Income (monthly)	< 10m VND	465	51.1	173	56.5	134	42.7	158	54.48
	10 – 20m VND	290	31.9	85	27.8	121	38.5	84	28.97
	20 – 50m VND	124	13.6	39	12.7	48	15.3	37	12.76
	>50m VND	31	3.4	9	2.9	11	3.5	11	3.79
Religious	None	827	90.9	281	91.8	299	95.2	247	85.17
	Religious	83	9.1	25	8.2	15	4.8	43	14.83
Ethnicity	Vietnamese	890	97.8	325	100.0	306	97.5	278	95.86
	Minority	20	2.2	0	0.00	8	2.5	12	4.14

Types of Marketing Research

- Causal research examines whether one variable causes a change in another variable.
- Eg: If the company increase the price, will the sales reduce?
- Does faster delivery improve customer satisfaction?

Types of Marketing Research

- Experiments normally involve:
  - changing one factor;
  - controlling other factors where possible;
  - comparing outcomes;
  - using treatment and control groups.
- Eg:
  - Group A sees Advertisement A.
  - Group B sees Advertisement B.
  - Researchers compare purchase intention or brand recall.

Sources of Data

Secondary Data

- Secondary data are information that already exists and was originally collected for another purpose.
- Eg: How was the sales record of this company over the late 3 years?
- Tools: company sales records; government statistics; academic articles; industry reports; websites; market databases; trade associations; social media platforms; competitor publications.

Primary Data

- Primary data are collected specifically for the current research problem.
- Eg: If we launch a new promotion, will sales increase in the next 3 months?
- Tools: surveys; interviews; focus groups; observations; experiments; customer diaries; content analysis.

Advantages and Limitations

Secondary Data

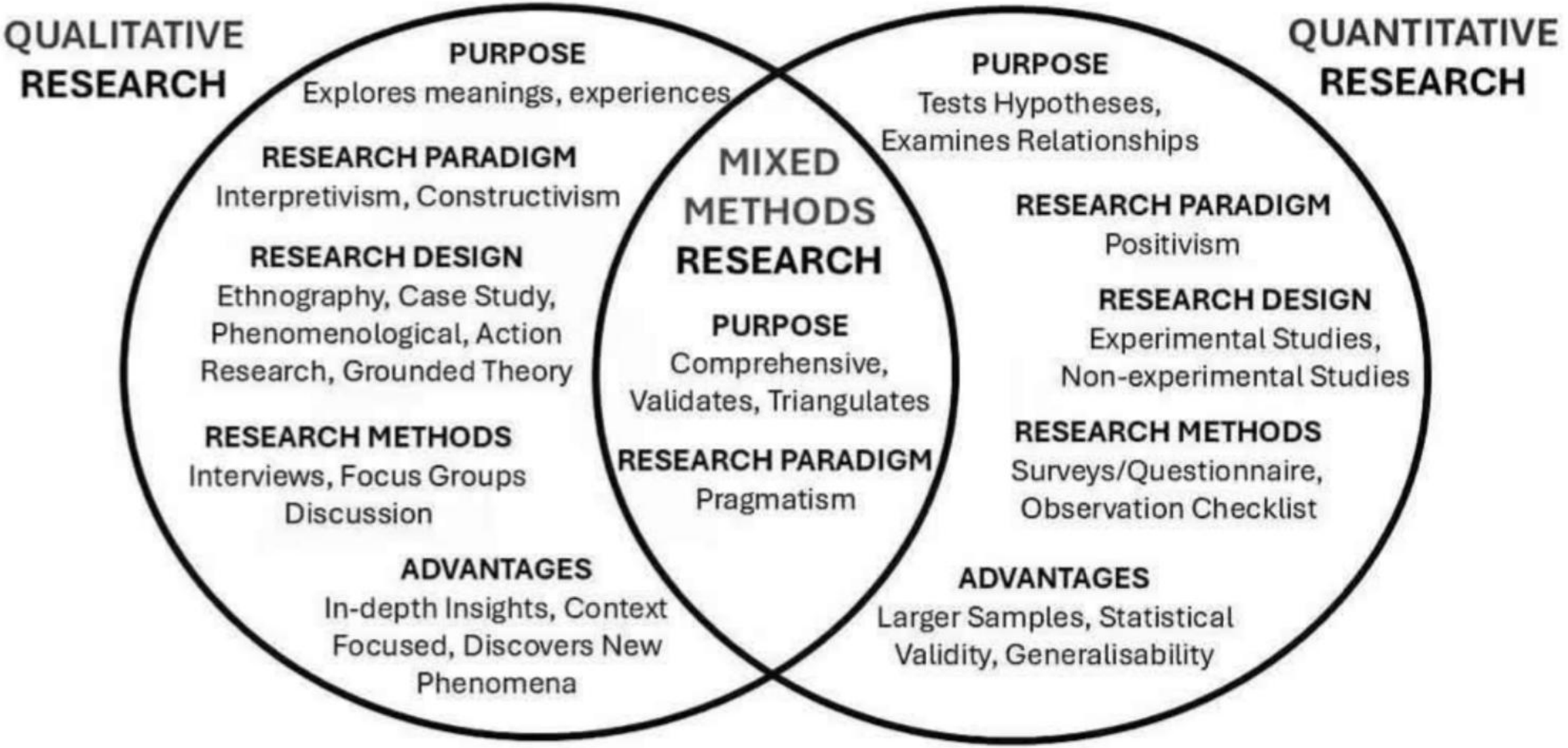
- **Advantage:**
  - less expensive;
  - useful for understanding the market;
  - helpful for defining the problem;
  - valuable for comparing trends over time.
- **Limitations:**
  - outdated;
  - incomplete;
  - collected for a different purpose;
  - based on unsuitable definitions;
  - Unreliable & biased;
  - too general;
  - unavailable for the specific target market.

Primary Data

- **Advantages**
  - directly relevant;
  - current;
  - designed for the research objectives;
  - greater control over measurement.
- **Limitations**
  - can be expensive;
  - may take considerable time;
  - requires research expertise;
  - may face low response rates;
  - can contain sampling and measurement errors.

Q: Researchers should usually begin with secondary data. Why?

Qualitative vs Quantitative Research



Aspect	Qualitative data	Quantitative data
Meaning	Non-numerical data: meanings, experiences, opinions, and motivations	Numerical data measure quantities, frequencies, differences, or relationships
Main purpose	To explore and understand	To measure, compare, and test
Typical questions	Why? How? What does it mean?	How many? How often? How much? Is there a relationship?
Data format	Words, images, videos, observations, narratives	Numbers, scores, percentages, frequencies
Sample size	Usually smaller	Usually larger
Sampling approach	Often purposive or judgement-based	Often probability sampling
Research design	Flexible and exploratory	Structured and standardised
Analysis	Coding, categorising, identifying themes and meanings	Statistical analysis, tables, graphs, comparisons, hypothesis testing
Typical output	Themes, explanations, quotations, customer stories	Averages, percentages, correlations, differences, predictions
Strengths	Provides depth, context, and detailed understanding	Supports measurement, comparison, and generalisation

Primary Research Methods



Surveys

Observation

- Observation involves watching and recording actual behaviour.
- Researchers may observe:
  - movement through a store;
  - product selection;
  - website navigation;
  - waiting times;
  - service interactions;
  - product use;
  - customer reactions.

Focus Groups

- A focus group is a guided discussion involving a small group of participants.
- A moderator encourages discussion about:
  - products;
  - brands;
  - advertisements;
  - customer experiences;
  - new ideas;
  - market trends.



In-depth interviews

- Interviews involve direct conversations between a researcher and a participant
- Interviews can be
  - **Structured interview:** Uses the same predetermined questions, in the same order, for every participant. It supports consistency and easy comparison.
  - **Semi-structured interview:** Uses a prepared interview guide but allows the interviewer to ask follow-up questions and explore unexpected issues.
  - **Unstructured interview:** Uses few or no fixed questions. The conversation is flexible and led largely by the participant's experiences and responses.

Content analysis

- Content analysis is a systematic method for examining communication materials.
- Quantitative content analysis: Measures the frequency of specific words, themes, images or categories.
- Eg: How often homestay reviews mention green products?
- **Qualitative content analysis:** Interprets the deeper meaning, context and patterns in the material.
- Eg: How do guests describe feeling “at home” in homestay services?
- Researchers may analyse:
  - advertisements;
  - websites;
  - customer reviews;
  - social media posts;
  - videos;
  - interview transcripts;
  - news articles;
  - competitor messages;
  - customer complaints.
- Content analysis may examine: frequently discussed topics; positive and negative sentiment; brand associations; emotional language; product complaints; recurring service problems; visual themes; competitor positioning; representations of social groups.

Content analysis

- Process: Define the research question→Select the content to analyse → Decide the unit of analysis → Develop categories or codes → Code the material → Check coding consistency → Identify patterns → Interpret the findings.
- Eg: Marou Chocolate Reviews:
- The marketer team of Marou analyses 1,000 online reviews
- Possible coding categories: products quality; tastes; staff friendliness; price; colour; shapes; location; intention to repurchase.

→ The findings may show that customers like the chocolate tastes but repeatedly complain about the staff.

Experiments

- Experiments test causal relationships by changing one factor and measuring its effect.
- Possible marketing experiments include:
  - different prices;
  - alternative website designs;
  - different advertisements;
  - promotional messages;
  - product packaging;
  - store layouts;
  - delivery options.
- Eg: Divide the sample into 2 group, A and B
  - Group A tried the old version of a drink
  - Group B tried the new version of that drink
  - The company learns how the 2 groups react to what they try to figure out which one should be launch to the market.

Surveys:

- Surveys collect structured responses from a sample of people, through:
  - online questionnaires;
  - mobile apps;
  - email;
  - telephone;
  - face-to-face interviews;
  - paper questionnaires.

Method	Observation	Content Analysis	In-depth Interview	Experiments	Surveys	Focus Groups
Typical time required	Medium to long	Medium to long	Long per participant (30–90 min) + analysis	Medium to long	Short to medium	Medium (60–120 min per group) + analysis
Typical sample size	Small to medium (20–200 observations)	From dozens to thousands of content units	Small (10–30 participants, until saturation)	Medium to large (50–500+, depending on design)	Medium to very large (100–1,000+ or more)	Small (6–10 participants per group; 2–6 groups)
Relative cost	Medium	Low to medium	Medium to high	Medium to high	Low (online) to high (face-to-face)	Medium to high
Ease of conducting	Moderate to difficult	Moderate	Difficult	Difficult	Easy to moderate (easy to distribute, difficult to design well and get good responses)	Moderate to difficult
Delivery mode	Face-to-face / in-field; also online (digital tracking, screen recording)	Mainly online or document-based	Face-to-face, telephone, or online video call	Lab, field, face-to-face, website, app, email, or other online platforms	Online, mobile, email, telephone, postal, or face-to-face	Face-to-face or online video meeting
Research type	Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed	Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed	Mainly qualitative	Mainly quantitative	Mainly quantitative (qualitative open-ended questions possible)	Mainly qualitative
Common sampling methods	• Convenience • Purposive • Systematic • Time-location • Event sampling	• Purposive • Systematic • Random • Stratified • Time-period • Platform-based	• Purposive • Judgement • Snowball • Theoretical • Maximum-variation	• Random sampling (where possible) • Random assignment to treatment & control groups • Convenience (common)	• Simple random • Systematic • Stratified • Cluster • Quota • Convenience • Panel	• Purposive • Judgement • Quota • Convenience • Segment-based
Best suited for	Studying actual behaviour in real settings	Examining messages, reviews, posts, images, videos, or documents	Understanding individual experiences and motivations deeply	Testing cause-and-effect relationships and impact of changes	Measuring opinions, attitudes, behaviours and characteristics of a large population	Exploring group perceptions, reactions and new ideas

Notes: 1) Sample size depends on research objectives, population, budget and design. 2) Content analysis samples are content units, not people.
3) For experiments, sampling selects who enters the study; random assignment decides who goes into each group.
4) Qualitative research prioritises depth and relevance; quantitative research prioritises measurement and comparison.

Sampling

Sampling

- **Population:** The complete group relevant to the research.
- **Sample:** A smaller group selected from the population.
- **Census:** Data collected from every member of the population.
- Example:
  - Population: All students at a university.
  - Sample: 500 selected students.
- Sampling is normally used because studying the entire population may be:
  - too expensive;
  - too slow;
  - impractical;
  - unnecessary.
- A well-selected sample can provide useful estimates of the wider population.

Sampling

Probability Sampling

- In probability sampling, each member of the population has a known chance of selection.
- Examples:
  - simple random sampling;
  - systematic sampling;
  - stratified sampling;
  - cluster sampling.

Non-Probability Sampling

- In non-probability sampling, the chance of selection is unknown.
- Examples:
  - convenience sampling;
  - judgement sampling;
  - quota sampling;
  - snowball sampling.
- These methods are often faster and cheaper but may produce greater bias.

Sampling Error and Bias

- **Sampling error** occurs because only part of the population is studied.
- **Sampling bias** occurs when the sample systematically excludes or overrepresents particular groups.
- Example:
- A university satisfaction survey distributed only to the students at the library may underrepresent students who do not use the library.

Sample size

- Sample size depends on:
  - research objectives;
  - population size;
  - expected variation;
  - sampling method;
  - required precision;
  - planned analysis;
  - available time and budget.
- A larger sample does not automatically produce better research. Why?

Probability Sampling Methods

1 Simple Random Sampling



Every member has an equal chance of selection.

2 Systematic Sampling



Select every *nth* member from an ordered list.

3 Stratified Sampling



Divide into strata, then sample from each group.

4 Cluster Sampling



Divide into clusters, then randomly choose clusters.

Method	Brief definition	Marketing research example
Convenience sampling	Selects participants who are easiest and most readily available to the researcher.	A researcher surveys students who are sitting in the university cafeteria because they are easy to approach.
Judgement sampling	The researcher deliberately selects participants believed to have relevant knowledge, experience, or characteristics. It is also called purposive sampling.	A company interviews experienced luxury-car owners to understand expectations of premium after-sales service.
Quota sampling	The researcher sets target numbers for important groups and selects available participants until each quota is filled. Selection within each group is not random.	A retailer surveys 200 customers, including 100 men and 100 women, to reflect its desired gender proportions.
Snowball sampling	Initial participants recommend or recruit other people who meet the study criteria. The sample grows through participant networks.	A researcher studying users of an invitation-only luxury resale platform asks each interviewee to refer other users.

Questionnaire

Questionnaire Design

- A questionnaire translates research objectives into questions respondents can answer.
- A good questionnaire should be:
  - clear;
  - relevant;
  - concise;
  - logically organised;
  - easy to complete;
  - neutral;
  - suitable for the target respondents.

Avoid

- Avoid Leading Questions:

Eg: How much did you enjoy our excellent customer service?

→How would you rate the customer service you received?

- **Avoid Double-Barrelled Questions**

Eg: How satisfied are you with our product quality and price?

- A respondent may like the quality but dislike the price.

→How satisfied are you with the product quality?

How satisfied are you with the price?

- **Avoid Ambiguous Questions**

Eg: Do you regularly buy coffee?

- "Regularly" may mean different things to different people.

→ During the past seven days, how many times did you purchase coffee outside your home?

Structure

1. Brief introduction.
2. Screening questions.
3. Simple and interesting questions.
4. Main research questions.
5. Sensitive or difficult questions.
6. Demographic questions.
7. Thank-you message.

Open and Closed Questions

- **Open question**

Eg: What do you like most about this product?

→ Respondents answer in their own words.

- **Closed question**

Eg: Are you satisfied with this product?

  - Yes
  - No

Multiple-choice questions

- Single-answer: Which factor is most important when you choose a coffee shop?
  - Price
  - Product quality
  - Location
  - Service
  - Atmosphere
- Multiple-answer: Which features would you like the coffee shop to improve? Select all that apply.
  - Product variety
  - Service speed
  - Seating
  - Wi-Fi
  - Prices
  - Opening hours

Likert-scale questions: measures agreement with a statement

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
The staff are friendly.	1	2	3	4	5
The service is fast.	1	2	3	4	5
The prices are reasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
I intend to visit again.	1	2	3	4	5

100-point rating-scale questions

On a scale from 0 to 100, how likely are you to recommend this restaurant to a friend?

- **0:** Not at all likely
- **100:** Extremely likely
- Note: respondents may find it difficult to distinguish precisely between close scores such as 72 and 73.

Group work



Group 1: The Hanoi 5 Gates Train

- Launched in September 2025, **The Hanoi Train – Five Gates** is a cultural-tourism railway product connecting Hanoi Station with Từ Sơn in Bắc Ninh. It is operated by BHL Tourism Service Trading Joint Stock Company in collaboration with Vietnam Railways. Rather than selling transportation alone, the business transforms a short railway journey into an experience built around the history, culture and visual identity of Hanoi and the Red River Delta.
- The train's passenger carriages are named after five historic gates of Thăng Long–Hanoi: **Ô Cầu Dền, Ô Quan Chưởng, Ô Cầu Giấy, Ô Chợ Dừa and Ô Đống Mác**. Its double-decker carriages use different historical and cultural themes, while additional spaces are designed for photography and social-media "check-ins."
- The Hanoi Train does not compete primarily with ordinary trains. Its competitors include city tours, museums, cultural performances, day trips and other leisure activities.
- During the journey, passengers may experience traditional forms of performance such as **quan họ, ca trù, chèo and xẩm**, together with regional food, lotus tea, storytelling and craft-related activities. The visit to Từ Sơn can also connect the journey with Đô Temple and the heritage of the Lý dynasty



- Many customers may travel once to experience the new train, take photographs, and share them online, but they won't come back.
- Customers may not clearly understand whether the product is a sightseeing train, a cultural performance, a heritage tour, a family excursion, or a premium tourist experience.
- Information about schedules, packages, prices, activities, and booking channels may appear across several websites, agents, and social-media pages, but inconsistent, and with limited accessibility for international tourists.
- The total experience depends on railway operations, performers, tour guides, food providers, booking agents, and local attractions. One weak part of the service can damage the entire customer experience.

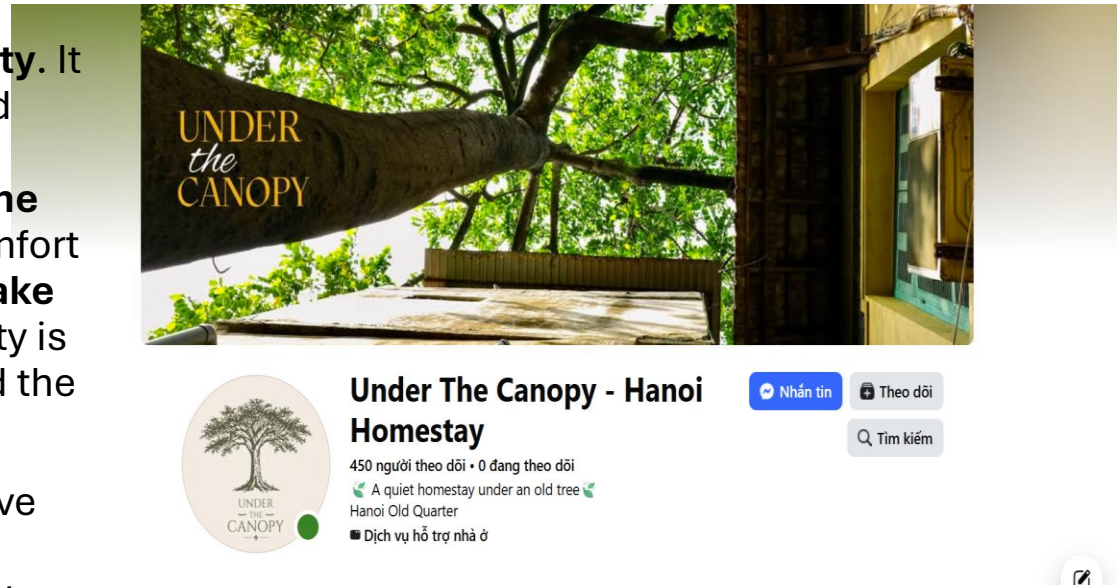
Group 2: Under the Canopy Homestay

A small Airbnb in Hanoi is located inside **an old villa in the heart of the city**. It offers only two private rooms. The walls are old, some paint is peeling, and many traces of time are still visible. The owner has deliberately kept these imperfections. The aim is not to create a polished hotel, but to **preserve the spirit and memories of an old Hanoi home** while adding just enough comfort for modern guests. Visitors can wake up to **green views and birdsong, make tea, read, listen to music, and enjoy a slower rhythm of life**. The property is also within **walking distance of cafés, the train street**, Tống Duy Tân, and the Hanoi Flag Tower.

However, this special experience is not easy to market. Many travellers have **never heard** of the property, and its charm is **difficult to communicate** through a simple list of facilities. At the same time, people who are already searching online for a unique stay in central Hanoi may **never find** it.

However, the business faces a **marketing problem**. Its Facebook page has some attractive photos and stories, but only a small number of people see the posts (https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61589432002124). Many potential guests have never heard of the property. At the same time, the owner believes that there are travellers actively searching online for **unusual, authentic, or centrally located** accommodation in Hanoi, but the property is difficult to find through search.

The owner has a **limited advertising budget** and **wants to increase bookings** without losing the distinctive identity of the property.





Group 3: Marou Chocolate: Turning Vietnamese Cacao into a Premium Cultural Product

Vietnam was traditionally better known for coffee and rice than for premium chocolate. Marou changed this perception by producing high-quality bean-to-bar chocolate from cacao grown in Vietnamese provinces such as Đắk Lắk, Lâm Đồng, Bến Tre and Tiền Giang.

Marou buys cacao directly from small farmers and fermenters rather than relying only on large international commodity suppliers. The company states that it pays premium prices and provides financial and technical support to more than 500 small-scale farmers and around 30 fermenters across Vietnam. It also encourages cacao agroforestry, in which cacao is grown alongside other trees and crops to support biodiversity.

In Đắk Lắk, cacao offers farmers an opportunity to diversify beyond familiar crops such as coffee, pepper and rubber. Marou's Dak Lak single-origin chocolate connects the name of the farming region directly with the final premium product. Rather than selling anonymous cacao beans at a low commodity price, farmers become part of the story and value chain behind an internationally marketed Vietnamese chocolate brand.

This relationship can create value for several stakeholders:

- Farmers may receive better prices, technical knowledge and a more reliable market.
- Marou gains access to higher-quality and traceable cacao beans.
- Consumers receive distinctive chocolate with a clear geographical origin.
- Local communities benefit when more of the product's value is created and retained in Vietnam.

However, Marou must ensure that its social-impact claims are transparent. Paying a premium price does not automatically prove that all farmers receive stable incomes or that every farming relationship is equitable. The company should therefore communicate measurable information about farmer income, purchasing volumes, training, long-term contracts and environmental outcomes.



Group 4: TH True Milk and the fight for “Good milk”

For many years, Vinamilk was the dominant and most familiar dairy brand in Vietnam. Its wide distribution, long history, broad product portfolio and strong association with children’s nutrition made it a trusted household name.

When TH true MILK entered the market in 2010, it did not try to compete only through lower prices or a larger product range. Instead, it focused on a changing concern among Vietnamese consumers: growing interest in food safety, product origin, natural ingredients and healthier lifestyles.

TH positioned its products around the ideas of “true,” “fresh,” “clean” and “from nature.” Its communication emphasised fresh milk from its own farms, modern technology, traceability and internationally managed dairy herds. TH also developed the TH true mart retail chain, allowing it to present its products in a controlled environment associated with freshness, safety and healthy living.

This positioning helped redefine competition in Vietnam’s dairy market. Consumers were encouraged to think not only about whether milk was nutritious, but also where it came from, how the cows were raised, how the milk was processed and whether the product was “natural” or “clean.”

Vinamilk remained the larger and more established competitor, but it increasingly highlighted its farms, product quality, clean-label credentials, sustainable production and Green Farm fresh-milk range.

The two companies therefore competed not simply by selling milk, but by offering different meanings of “good milk”.

However, the word “clean” also creates a marketing challenge. By describing one brand as “clean milk,” consumers may infer that competing products are less clean, even when they meet legal safety and quality standards. Marketers must therefore distinguish strong positioning from claims that may confuse or unfairly influence consumers.

Group 5: Cocoon Vietnam: When Beauty Reflects Changing Social Values

Vietnam's cosmetics market was traditionally dominated by international brands, while locally made products were sometimes perceived as less sophisticated or less trustworthy. However, younger Vietnamese consumers have gradually become more interested in ethical consumption, animal welfare, environmental responsibility, transparent ingredients and pride in local products.

Cocoon entered this changing market with a distinctive proposition: cosmetics that are made in Vietnam, use familiar Vietnamese plant-based ingredients and are positioned as 100% vegan and cruelty-free.

Instead of relying only on globally fashionable ingredients, Cocoon built product stories around local materials such as Đắk Lắk coffee, Hậu Giang lotus, Bến Tre coconut, turmeric, grapefruit and winter melon. This helped the brand connect skincare with Vietnamese places, agriculture and cultural identity. Cocoon states that it does not use animal-derived ingredients such as honey, beeswax, lanolin or snail secretion.

To make its ethical claims more credible, Cocoon joined international certification programmes. It became the first Vietnamese cosmetics brand accepted into Cruelty Free International's Leaping Bunny programme, and its cruelty-free status is also listed by PETA. Its products are registered as vegan with The Vegan Society.

The company extended this positioning through social and environmental initiatives. These included packaging-collection points, refill packaging and partnerships supporting animal welfare, such as campaigns against elephant riding and projects to protect moon bears.

Cocoon therefore sells more than functional skincare. It offers consumers a way to express several values at once:

- concern for animals;
- interest in environmentally responsible consumption;
- preference for plant-based ingredients;
- and pride in a modern Vietnamese brand.

However, this positioning also creates challenges. Ethical consumers may closely examine whether Cocoon's packaging, sourcing and environmental activities are consistent with its brand promises. The company must also convince customers that vegan and locally sourced products are not only morally attractive, but also safe and effective.



HanhSilk: Weaving Tradition into a Modern Brand

HanhSilk was founded in 2012 by Lương Thanh Hạnh after she discovered the traditional silk-making skills of Nam Cao village in northern Vietnam. She saw that local artisans, many of them women, produced high-quality silk but had limited access to wider markets.

The company works with the Nam Cao silk community across several stages of production, including silkworm farming, silk reeling, weaving, dyeing and embroidery. This helps create rural employment, preserve traditional knowledge and provide craftswomen with income closer to home.

HanhSilk sells fabrics, scarves, dresses, ties, pillowcases, towels, socks, beauty accessories and gift products. Some items are handmade, hand-painted or embroidered, while others are machine-woven. Prices range from affordable accessories to premium fashion products.

The brand sells through its Hanoi showroom, website, social media, Shopee, Etsy, trade fairs and international orders. Its products have reached customers in Vietnam and several overseas markets.

HanhSilk's main strengths are its natural silk, cultural heritage and connection with local artisans. However, its wide product range and price levels may make its brand position unclear. Customers may also struggle to distinguish genuine silk from synthetic alternatives, especially when shopping online.

After more than a decade of development, HanhSilk must continue growing while protecting product authenticity, strengthening customer trust and maintaining meaningful benefits for the silk-making community.

Classroom activity

Identify the mkt research problems