



MARKET RESEARCHER

JOB DESCRIPTION

Market researchers gather information to help organizations understand the needs and preferences of customers, and to assist with developing new products. They carry out surveys by telephone, mail, online, or in person, and analyze the results to produce reports of people's opinions about a product, brand, or a political or social issue.



SALARY

Market researcher ★★☆☆☆
Market research director ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Marketing agencies are largest employers • Industry in decline in Middle East and Europe, but growing in most other parts of the world

CAREER PATHS

A degree is usually required to enter the market research sector, which includes marketing agencies, businesses, government departments, or nonprofits. Early in their career, market researchers collect and analyze information. With experience, they may choose to conduct research for clients, give presentations, or manage teams on projects.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE You can find work as a market research assistant if you have good literacy and numerical skills; experience in customer service is also beneficial. You can combine working as an assistant with studying part-time for a degree in a related subject.

COLLEGE GRADUATE You need a degree, preferably in psychology, sociology, mathematics, or statistics, to enter the profession as a graduate. You may be expected to study for accreditation to improve your career prospects.



DATA ANALYST Specializes in using statistical and mathematical methods to analyze market research data. Data analysts interpret the results and present their findings to clients.



MARKET RESEARCHER You can stay in touch with advances in research methods by taking professional courses. You may specialize in areas such as ethnographic research—observing people at home or work to understand their needs better—or move into management or sales roles.

SKILLS GUIDE



Strong interpersonal skills to put people at ease while conducting market research interviews.



Good writing skills for scripting questionnaires and preparing reports and presentations.



Perseverance and self-motivation for completing research tasks in order to meet projected targets.



Flexibility to work irregular hours, and to adapt to different research methods and interview styles.



Excellent attention to detail when completing market research surveys and collating the results.



Good numerical and analytical skills to interpret data using statistical methods.



RESEARCH MANAGER Oversees the planning, execution, and analysis of market research projects, from setting goals with the client to choosing a survey method and preparing reports.



ACCOUNT DIRECTOR Manages client accounts for a marketing agency, ensuring that market research is carried out in the best way and among the right customer group to suit the client's goals.

Market research was developed in the 1930s by US advertising pioneer Daniel Starch.

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Psychology • Sociology • Anthropology • Statistics • Mathematics • Information Technology (IT) • Business studies • Economics



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS A degree-level qualification is usually required. Prior marketing experience or working in a customer-facing job is useful.



LIFESTYLE Most researchers keep regular office hours, but conducting face-to-face surveys may require working on evenings and weekends.



LOCATION Most of the work is office-based. Researchers may need to travel to conduct surveys or to run consumer focus groups.



THE REALITIES Researchers often manage several studies at once. This is an appealing job for those who enjoy dealing with people.

▼ RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **MARKETING EXECUTIVE** *see pp. 68–69*
- ▶ **INVESTMENT ANALYST** *see pp. 100–101*
- ▶ **CONSUMER SCIENTIST** Researches the tastes, needs, and preferences of existing and potential customers, and advises commercial clients on improvements to products and services.
- ▶ **INFORMATION SCIENTIST** Acquires, manages, and utilizes electronically stored information—such as online databases—for commercial, public-sector, or charitable uses.
- ▶ **STATISTICIAN** Collects, analyzes, and interprets complex quantitative data, then presents it in a comprehensible form using graphs and charts.