

Guidelines to write a market research brief

Why write a market research brief?

- Writing a market research brief helps clarify your research needs and makes sure your colleagues are on-board. In turn this helps an agency write a research proposal, conduct more useful research *and* achieve your desired business outcomes! Here are some questions to consider and headings to help write your brief.

Background to brief

- First describe the problem you wish to solve i.e. what has happened to make this brief necessary? Include any relevant context, for example, work to date, what information you have, why you wish to conduct research now, and how the issue or challenge fits with any initiatives within your organisation.

Business objectives

- Then describe your business objectives. These could include increasing sales, attracting lapsed customers. Be as specific as you can.

Project objectives

- Next explain the purpose of research, or expected research outcomes. Consider what decisions you wish to make? Such as to improve a product, create an advert or strengthen your brand.

Market research objectives

- Market research objectives should follow from business and project objectives. Make clear your research aims and information needs. Here it is helpful to list the questions that require answering.

Stakeholders

- Now consider who needs to sign-off and act on the research outcomes. Clarifying the audience will help an agency anticipate your needs and help get everyone on-board with a plan.

Envisaged method, scope of work, sample and guidelines

- Including guidance on the nature of work required helps make best use of your budget.
- So what are any dos, don'ts or priorities?
- What countries, areas, markets, customer groups to include? Which should get most attention?
- For quantitative research, include the sample size, and length of survey. These are key cost determinants.
- Also describe any stimuli or inputs. Stimuli is useful to probe and develop ideas.
- What timing and budget constraints? Providing a budget makes sure the scale of work proposed is affordable.
- Lastly mention any other decision-making criteria?

Research deliverables

- Finally, define what should the project deliver, and if possible what success will feel like?
- Do you prefer a particular reporting format (e.g. face-to-face debrief, report, short film, infographic)?
- Throughout try to write using plain language and explain any unusual or in-company terms.

To ask for help or request a research proposal

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