

Marketing

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Course & Class Inform

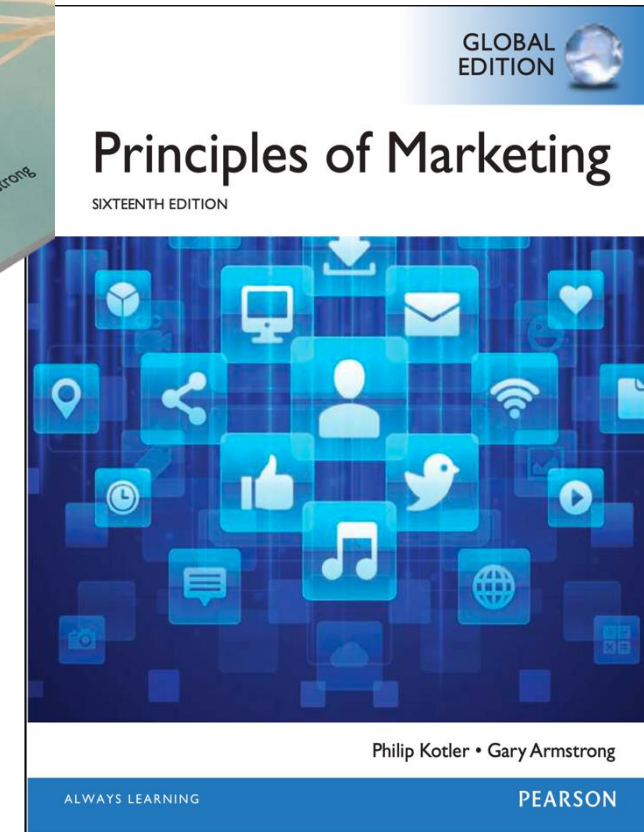
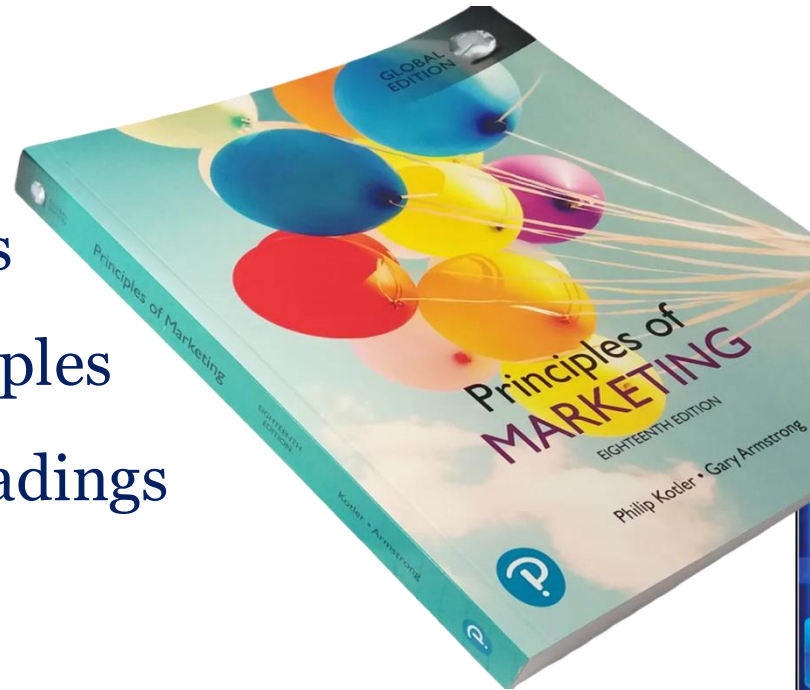
- **Course:** Marketing
- **Program:** Bachelor's in Business Administration and Management
- **Credits:** 6 ECTS
- **Mode:** Onsite / Blended
- **Class 3:** Marketing Research & Data for Decision-Making
- **Instructor:** Dr. Leul Girma

Main Teaching & Learning Materials

- Core textbook
- Instructor lecture slides and notes
- Case studies and real-world examples
- Academic articles and selected readings

Digital resources:

- Company websites and annual reports
- Online marketing platforms and tools
(e.g., Google Analytics demos, social media dashboards)



Objective and Learning Outcomes

Objective:

- To introduce students to the **fundamentals of marketing research and the role of data** in supporting effective marketing decisions.

By the end of this class, YOU will be able to:

- Understand marketing research in market analysis and decision-making
- Describe the **key steps** in the marketing research process
- Distinguish between **primary and secondary** research
- Differentiate **qualitative and quantitative** research methods
- **Interpret** basic marketing data
- Evaluate the **relevance and reliability** of marketing information

Foundations of Marketing Research

What is Marketing Research?

“Marketing research is **the systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information to support marketing decision-making.**” (*Kotler et al., 2021*)

Key Ideas:

- Marketing research is a **structured and objective process**
- It **reduces uncertainty** in managerial decisions
- It **helps identify** market opportunities and risks
- It supports **understanding customers, competitors, and market trends**
- Effective research **leads to more informed strategies**



How Research Supports Managerial Decision-Making

Marketing research provides managers with relevant, accurate, and timely information that improves the effectiveness of marketing decisions (Kotler et al., 2021).

Research enables managers to:

- Reduce **uncertainty** and decision-making risk
- Understand **customer needs** and purchasing behavior
- Identify **new market opportunities**
- Evaluate **alternative** strategies before implementation
- Allocate budgets and resources **more efficiently**
- Monitor outcomes and support continuous improvement

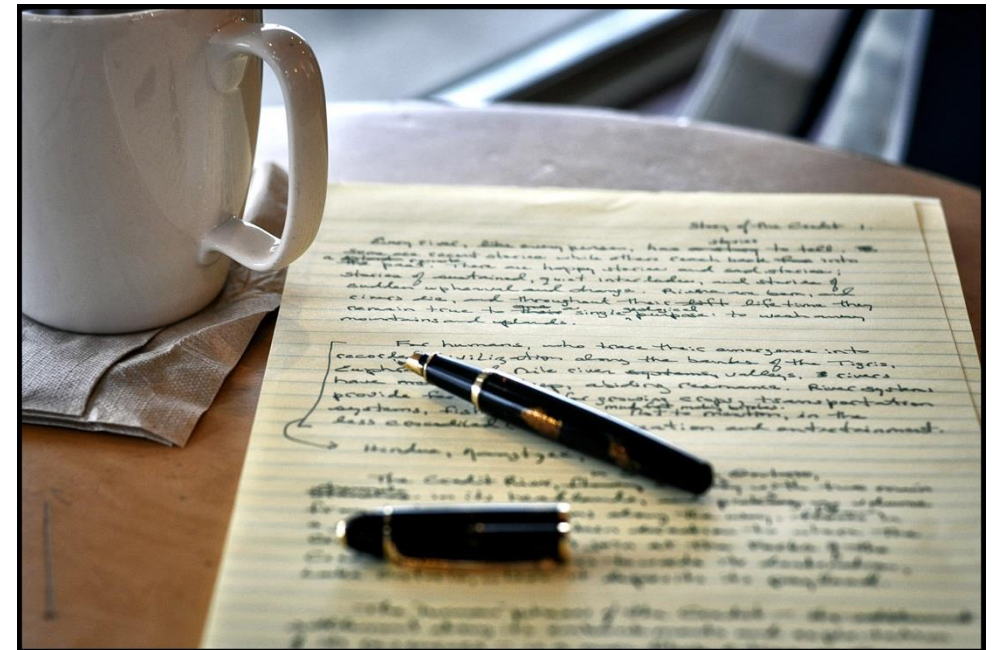


The Marketing Research Process

The marketing research process is a structured framework that guides organizations in gathering and using information effectively for decision-making (Kotler *et al.*, 2021).

The process typically includes:

- Defining the **research problem**
- Setting clear research **objectives**
- Designing the **research plan**
- Collecting relevant **data**
- Analyzing** and interpreting the data
- **Communicating insights** to support managerial action



Step 1: Defining the Research Problem

Defining the research problem is the most critical step in the marketing research process, as it establishes the direction and focus of the entire study (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

A well-defined research problem helps organizations to:

- Identify the **key issue requiring investigation**
- Avoid collecting unnecessary or irrelevant data



Example 1 — Fewer Hotel Bookings

- **Unclear problem:** “Why are fewer guests booking rooms?”
- **Well-defined problem:** “Are fewer guests booking because new hotels opened nearby or because fewer people are traveling for work?”

Step 2: Setting Research Objectives

Research objectives translate the defined problem into clear and measurable goals that guide the research process (Kotler et al., 2021).

Effective research objectives should:

- Specify what information is needed
- Be clear, focused, and achievable
- Ensure the results are relevant and actionable



Example 2: objectives

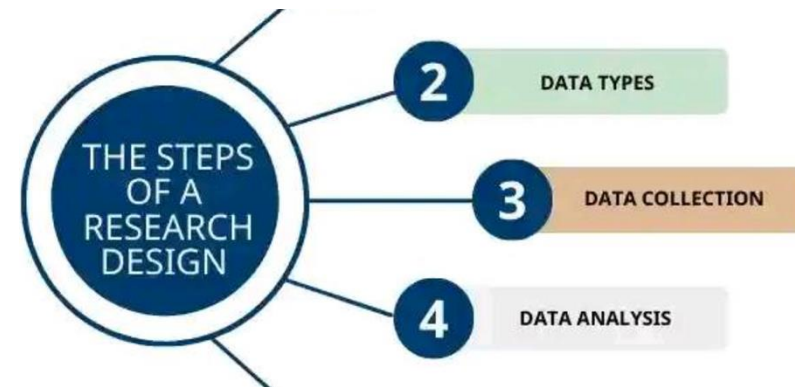
- Understand what type of packages (e.g., spa, breakfast, late checkout) guests prefer
- Identify which customer groups are most likely to book weekend stays

Steps 3–5: Research Design, Data Collection, and Analysis

After establishing research objectives, organizations design the study, gather relevant data, and analyze the findings to support informed decisions (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

Key Activities:

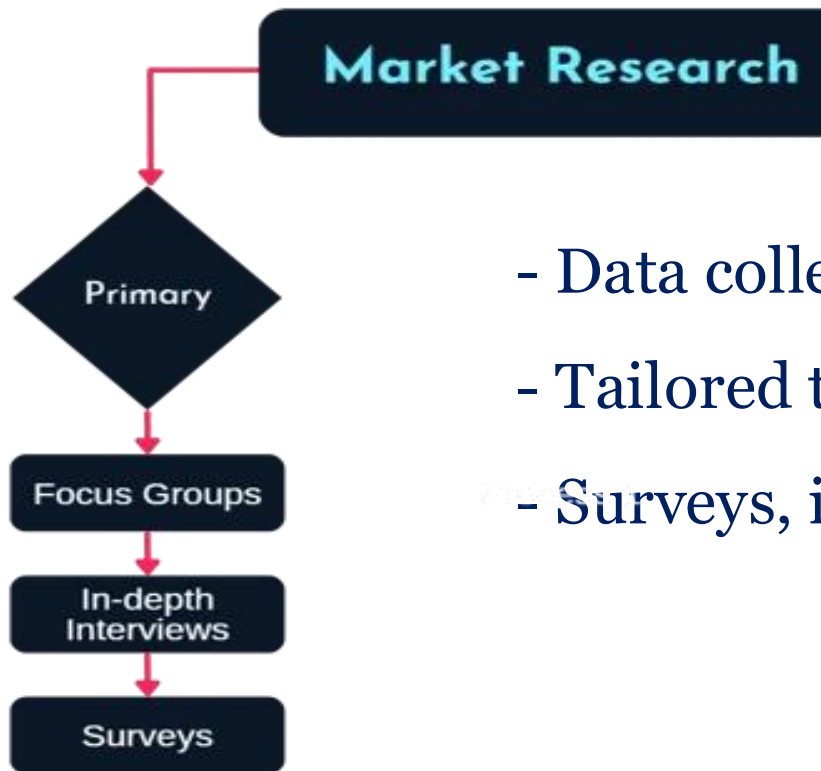
- **Research Design:** Selecting methods, data sources, and sampling approaches
- **Data Collection:** Gathering information through primary or secondary sources
- **Data Analysis:** Organizing, examining, and interpreting data to identify meaningful patterns and insights



Primary vs. Secondary Research

Understanding Primary Data and Secondary Data

Marketing researchers use two main types of data to support decision-making: primary data and secondary data (*Kotler et al., 2021*).



- Data collected firsthand for a specific research purpose
- Tailored to the organization's current problem
- Surveys, interviews, observations, and experiments

Primary Data

Primary data involves collecting original data **directly from sources** to address a **specific** marketing problem (*Kotler et al., 2021*)

Main Methods:

- **Interviews:** Provide detailed insights into customer attitudes and experiences
 - **Focus Groups:** Encourage discussion to explore perceptions and motivations
 - **Surveys:** Gather structured information from many respondents
 - **Observation:** Examine actual consumer behavior in real settings
 - **Experiments:** Test cause-and-effect relationships between variables
- Primary research offers greater relevance and control but typically requires more time and resources.

Secondary Data

- Data that **already exists** and was **collected for another purpose**
- Often **faster and less costly** to obtain
- Sources: **industry reports, government publications, company records, and online databases**

Limitations:

- May not **fully match the research problem**
- Can be **outdated**
- **Quality and reliability** may vary
- **Limited control** over how the data was collected



Choosing the Appropriate Research Approach

Selecting the right research approach is essential for obtaining relevant and reliable information that supports effective decision-making (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

When choosing a research approach, organizations should consider:

- The research **objectives and decision context**
- The type of information required (**exploratory vs. measurable**)
- Available **time and budget**
- Access to data sources** and participants
- The **desired level of accuracy** and **reliability**
- The most effective studies often combine multiple methods to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

Two Approaches to Marketing Research

Marketing research generally follows two main approaches: qualitative and quantitative research (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

Qualitative Research:

- Explores ideas, perceptions, and motivations
- Provides in-depth understanding of consumer behavior
- Typically uses smaller, non-numerical samples

Quantitative Research:

- Measures variables using numerical data
- Enables statistical analysis and comparison
- Often involves larger, structured samples
- Both approaches play a complementary role in generating meaningful marketing insights.



Principles of Effective Survey Design

Effective survey design is essential for collecting accurate and reliable data that supports meaningful marketing decisions (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

Key Principles:

- Clearly define the research objectives before writing questions
- Keep questions simple, specific, and easy to understand
- Use neutral wording to avoid influencing responses
- Ensure questions are logically ordered
- Avoid ambiguity and technical jargon
- Keep concise to maintain respondent engagement



Sample Survey questioner

Based on your recent stay at our hotel, please rate your satisfaction with:

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall stay experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Room cleanliness & hygiene	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Check-in experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff behavior	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facilities and amenities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Sample Interview questioner

1. What factors are most important to you when choosing a hotel?
2. Can you describe your ideal hotel experience?
3. What would make you choose one hotel over another with a similar price?
4. How do online reviews or ratings influence your booking decision?
5. What services or amenities add the most value to your stay?
6. Can you describe a memorable hotel experience you have had? What made it special?
7. What could cause you to not return to a hotel after your stay?

Common Survey Mistakes to Avoid

Avoiding common survey errors helps improve data quality and ensures more reliable research outcomes (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

Frequent Mistakes:

- Using **vague or ambiguous** questions
- Asking **leading or biased** questions
- Including **double-barreled** questions (two issues in one)
- Designing overly **long surveys** that reduce response rates
- Ignoring **logical question** flow
- Failing to **pilot test** the survey before distribution



Activity: Design a Simple Marketing Survey

Objective:

Apply survey design principles to create a short questionnaire that can generate useful marketing insights.

Task:

- Form small groups
- Choose a product, service, or campus-related offering
- Develop **5–7 survey questions**
- Include a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions
- Select appropriate measurement scales
- Ensure questions are clear, neutral, and relevant

Be prepared to briefly explain how your survey supports a marketing decision.

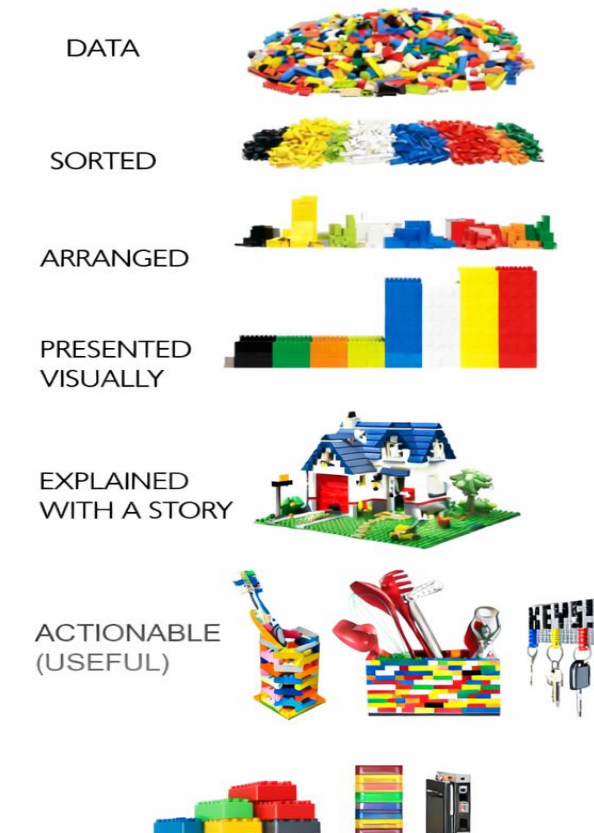
Basic Data Interpretation

From Data to Actionable Insight

Collecting data is valuable only when it is transformed into insights that guide managerial action and improve marketing performance (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

Actionable insights useful to:

- Make informed **strategic decisions**
- Better **understand customer** behavior
- Identify **opportunities for growth**
- **Solve marketing problems** effectively
- Enhance **competitive positioning**

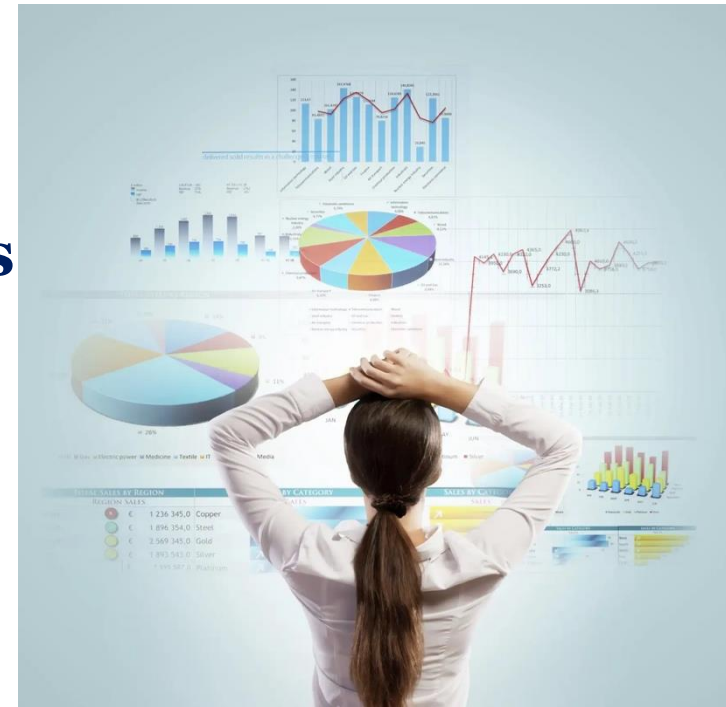


Turning Data into Managerial Insight

Data becomes valuable only when it is analyzed and interpreted to support effective marketing decisions (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

To transform data into insight, managers should:

- Organize data for **clarity** and **accessibility**
- Identify **patterns** and meaningful **relationships**
- Focus on **findings that address the research objectives**
- Translate **results** into **practical implications**
- Use insights **to guide strategic and tactical actions**



Reading Tables, Percentages, and Trends

Understanding basic data presentation helps managers interpret findings accurately and make informed marketing decisions (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

Key Interpretation Skills:

- **Reading tables:** Focus on key figures, comparisons, and distributions
- **Understanding percentages:** Evaluate proportions to identify majority and minority patterns
- **Analyzing trends:** Observe changes over time to detect growth, decline, or stability
- **Comparing segments:** Identify differences across customer groups
- **Looking beyond numbers:** Consider the managerial implications of the results

Correlation vs. Causation

Understanding the difference between correlation and causation is essential for avoiding incorrect conclusions in marketing research (*Kotler et al., 2021*).

Correlation:

- Indicates a relationship between two variables
- Variables may change together
- Does **not** prove that one variable causes the other

Causation:

- Demonstrates that one variable directly influences another requires stronger research design and evidence
- Often tested through controlled experiments
- Managers should avoid assuming cause-and-effect relationships based solely on correlational data.

Key Criteria for Data Quality:

- **Reliability:** Data should be **consistent and dependable**
- **Validity:** Data must **measure** what it is intended to measure
- **Relevance:** Information should **directly support the research objectives**
- **Timeliness:** Data must be **current enough** to inform decisions
- **Objectivity:** Data should be **free from significant bias**



Key Takeaways:

- Marketing research supports informed decision-making
- Both primary and secondary data are valuable
- Qualitative and quantitative methods provide complementary insights
- Effective survey design improves data accuracy
- Proper interpretation transforms data into actionable insight

Thank you



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