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Working with Secondary Data: Syndicated and Big Data

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Fulfilling the core market research educational needs of individuals and companies worldwide.

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MRII MARKET RESEARCH INSTITUTE INTERNATIONAL

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Working with Secondary Data: Syndicated and Big Data will introduce the various secondary data sources available to you, the value and challenges you might encounter when linking primary and secondary data, and how to think about the increasing "big data" world in which businesses currently operate. Driven by the growth of big data, secondary data is getting increasing attention from the market research industry, and this course will give you a perspective on how to stay at the forefront of that growth.

Over the last 20 years or so we have seen a digital revolution—dramatic increases in the ability to collect, store, and process information, the global Internet, social media, mobile technology—that provide an unprecedented amount of behavioral and attitudinal data about the way people live and work, often referred to using the somewhat nebulous term, "big data."

As a result, the research and insight function is extending beyond data collection and analysis to managing and synthesizing data from a diverse range of sources, from focus groups and sample surveys to social media and large databases.

Students and trainers of market research who see the future of big data might find that most of their professional lives still consists of more traditional market research work. Consequently, this course will cover both traditional uses of secondary data and the evolving application of digital big data in research. We will cover many different kinds of secondary data and research and its application to business challenges. We will start with the vast landscape of data and information obtainable from government and commercial sources and finish with an introduction to the frontier of big data and market research evolving in the market today.

Course Note: There is an immeasurable amount of secondary data available, and it is increasing exponentially. Working with this data sometimes requires resources and techniques that are outside the standard market research toolkit. Some are described in this course. A more thorough overview of some of these techniques can be found in our other course, *Advanced Analytic Techniques.*

Traditionally, data that is collected for any purpose other than to meet the needs of your particular study is called "secondary" data. However, the definition of secondary data is evolving. We'll see that advances in technology are giving researchers access to vast potential sources of data and information that push the boundary of that definition. As such, this course will define secondary data as "data collected for another purpose and subsequently used in research."

This course looks at three types of secondary data in some detail:

• Data collected for any purpose other than to meet the needs of your particular study.
• Data collected for non-specific research purposes, called "syndicated" or multi-client data.
• Data collected for another purpose and subsequently used in research.

This expanded scope allows us to properly address the secondary use of existing data regardless of its original source purpose or intent. We note also that the lines among these definition types is growing increasingly blurred, particularly the differences between traditional syndicated data and the data originally produced for purposes other than market research.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course you should be able to:

1. Describe the process of creating an analysis plan, and give examples of alternative analytic purposes (e.g., explanatory versus confirmatory).

2. Describe the key data sources.

3. Name and define the key data types (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio, etc.).

4. Explain the process of matching analytic techniques to different situations and needs, and give examples.

5. Summarize descriptive and visual approaches used to familiarize oneself with the data and to identify problems with the data.

6. Explain how to assess the impact of missing responses, and select and apply appropriate remedies.

7. State the reasons for and methods of statistically adjusting data; e.g., weighting, variable re-specification, and scale transformation.

8. Assess the characteristics of the distribution of the data and explain the implications of normality, non-normality, skewness, and multimodal data.

9. Illustrate the process for creating and testing hypotheses.

10. Compare and contrast the differences between type I and type II errors, and their potential impact on business decisions.

11. Describe the difference between statistical and business significance in the context of group comparisons, and explain the factors that have an impact on statistical significance.

12. Describe the difference between association and causality, and the potential impact on business decisions and outcomes.

13. Identify the major computer programs in current use in market research for the analysis of data.

14. Explain how to turn findings into market research conclusions, link findings to business decisions, and create actionable recommendations.

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For more information about the
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