

Riger

R E P R I N T

Please pass this article along to all who might find it of value:



Reprinted from the *Riger Update* newsletter. To receive future newsletters, subscribe using the "request info" page at www.riger.com.

For more free articles on advertising and marketing, visit the "knowledge base" at www.riger.com.

But I Can't Afford Research!

What to do if you can't customize your own research project

To get ahead and stay ahead, quality, up-to-date information is vital. Knowledge is power, and if you don't continuously know your market, your competitors have the edge. Luckily, a lot of the information is already gathered, and the key lies in finding exactly what you need at the lowest cost possible.

That's where secondary research, or data that has already been collected by someone else for their own purposes, comes in. In many cases the information is readily available and relatively inexpensive.

Online databases on the Internet are one source of data. These services carry hordes of information in all conceivable areas that can be accessed by simply paying a monthly fee (or hourly fee, depending on the service). Proceed with caution however, for the information highway can be a maze of confusion—and if not used efficiently, can become quite costly.

For those who do not have ready access to computers, university libraries, and occasionally public libraries, can provide your business with secondary data through computer databases and published records.

Trade associations, representing practically every business sector, frequently have their own libraries of data that they make available to members.

In addition, journals and publications, like trade associations, routinely conduct ongoing research in specific areas of interest. Generalized publications, such as American Demographics, Consumer Demographics, the Statistical Abstract of the United States and the Wall Street Journal Index, provide constant research on various topics that can be useful.

Another source is independent research services, such as A.C. Nielsen and Donnelley Marketing. For a fee, these companies can provide you with pertinent information, along with conducting primary research as needed.

Finally, the United States Government (and other governments, for international data) publish valuable data in a host of areas. The Census is loaded with demographic statistics, but again, it may be hard to sort through and find exactly what you need. The Statistical Abstract may be your best guide through the canyon of numbers.

Before investing in primary research or hiring your own staff to reinvent the wheel at higher cost, know what's already being published through secondary sources.

Fred Riger
Advertising
Agency, Inc.

Fred Riger Advertising Agency, Inc.

53 Chenango Street • PO Box 1623 • Binghamton, NY 13902-1623 • Phone 607.723.7441 • Fax 607.723.7623 • E-Mail agency@riger.com • Web site www.riger.com