



WRITING A MARKET RESEARCH BRIEF

Writing a brief can often be a very challenging and time consuming process – especially for first timers. However it is essential in order to get the best possible solution for your research needs. Below are some guidelines to help clients put together a great brief.

A Great Brief:

- Possesses clarity
- Displays depth of thought
- Provides direction

The bigger the scope of the project and the greater the importance of the outcome, the more time and energy you should invest in developing the brief. Remember, it is not about carrying out some research, but about achieving an outcome.

A brief should contain some, and ideally all, of the following information.

1. Market and Strategic Overview

This helps researchers understand where this project fits in the overall strategy, vision and values, and business objectives:

- Define the market and explain its dynamics
- Major players and key competitors
- Past and current activity
- Target markets
- Factors such as regulations, seasonality, distribution, pricing, communication, etc

2. Background and Role of the Research

This is the most important part of the brief, as it specifies where the research fits in your marketing activity, and more specifically, the types of decisions and plans that will be made on the basis of the research:

- Reasons for the research
- Where does it fit into marketing programme development?

- Which business units does the research impact and who is involved?
- Make sure you identify any constraints on the action you can take as a result of the research

3. Objectives

There are usually two types of objectives that need to be explained:

- Business objective - this is the objective of the marketing project the research is for, it is the overall strategic objective
- Research objective - detailed objectives of what you need to know e.g. attitudes, behaviour, usage expectations, perceptions. Is it to understand, evaluate or explore (more qualitative objectives) or is it to measure, record, or ascertain (more quantitative objectives)

4. Suggested Approach & Research Target(s)

Identify any preferences you might have:

Are there any specific groups or subgroups you are interested in researching?

5. Reporting Requirements

Identify any requirements you might have

- Topline or final report only
- Word report and/or PowerPoint
- Presentations and/or Workshops

6. Timing

Specify any real constraints that exist. However, please be realistic about whether your objectives can be met within that timeframe.

7. Budget

Any indication of budget is helpful, as it helps define the scale of the project, providing some financial guidelines to work within. It also helps researchers to work on providing the best solution within your means.

8. Existing research or other information

Share any other relevant research or information. Often this helps refine how the research is done. It also means that covering old ground can be avoided, and this research builds on what is already known