The History of Marketing Research

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The idea of marketing research was developed in the late 1920â€™s by a man named Daniel Starch. This is about the same time that advertising was introduced in the United States. At that time, copywriters would write what they thought an ad should be, publish the ad, and then hope that readers would act upon the information provided.

During the early 1930â€™s Daniel Starch developed the theory that effective advertising must be seen, read, believed, remembered, and then acted upon. Soon after, he developed a research company that would interview people in the streets, asking them if they read certain publications. If they did, his researchers would show them the magazines and ask if they recognized or remembered any of the ads found in them. After collecting the data, he then compared the number of people he interviewed with the circulation of the magazine to figure out how effective those ads were in reaching their readers. Thus surveying or marketing research was born.

As time went on, many marketing research companies began to emerge and began following Starchâ€™s example and worked to improve his techniques. A man by the name of George Gallup developed a rival system that was known as the â€œaided recallâ€• which prompted people interviewed to recall the ads seen in a publication, without actually showing them the ads. This rival system was later used to measure the effectiveness of radio and television advertising.

In the late 1980â€™s a man named Ronald Lindorf founded what would be the largest marketing research companies in the United States, Western Wats. The focus of Western Wats was to leverage the current technology of W.A.T.S. telephone lines to conduct survey research. There was no longer a need to interview people on the streets or to organize and conduct focus groups. A representative in a call center could collect all of the data desired. This greatly increased the number of surveys collected each year and again, improved the marketing research model ten fold.

Over the last 5 to 10 years marketing research has taken another great leap in terms of how it is collected. Yes, it is still collected via survey research; however, it is mostly collected via surveys over an internet connection. Western Wats (recently renamed as Opinionology) is still the largest marketing research company in the US and collects the majority of their research via their online panel called Opinion Outpost. Instead of cold calling an individual to collect the data, anyone interested in participating in these studies can sign up to receive surveys and freely share their opinion. It is much less intrusive and the quality of data is often times much higher since people can participate on their own schedule, instead of being rushed when they receive a phone call from a call center.

It will be very interesting to see where marketing research goes in the next 10 or so years. Whatever the case may be, Iâ€™m sure it will evolve and become even better and easier to get than ever before.

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http://www.surveyinferno.comÂ , http://www.surveyinferno.com/usa-paid-surveys/ directory of marketing research companies looking for individuals to take surveys online.

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