

Market Research & Statistics

Market research provides vital information about a product's place in the public mind or the prevailing mood of the society. Gathering and interpreting this kind of information is a relatively fast growing profession in Hong Kong as more and more companies and organisations recognise the need to have up-to-date, accurate databases for making their decisions.

POSITIONS

Research involves two primary types of service, namely, business information and market research. Business information service firms provide information about certain companies in response to enquiries from clients who are usually other companies or government institutions.

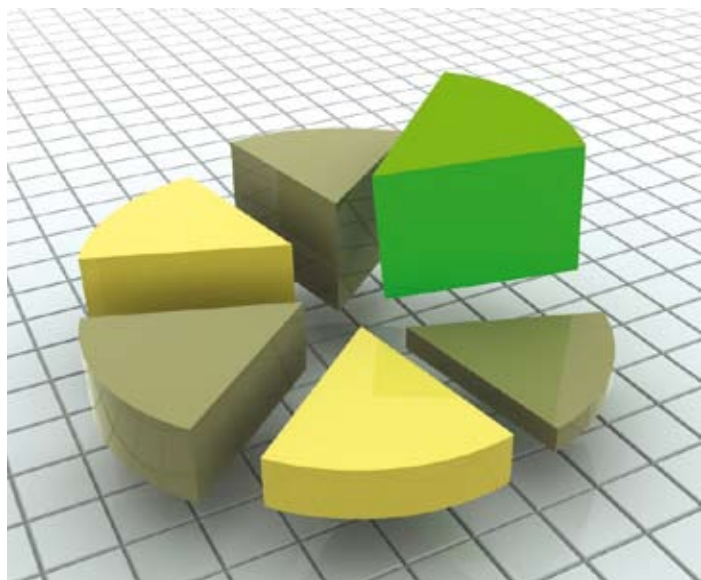
Market research, on the other hand, involves investigating certain issues such as consumer opinion on products or services, and is conducted by specialised agencies or departments of large corporations.

Business information service companies supply clients with information concerning the target company, which includes its history, year of incorporation, number of employees, capital, management structure, directors' names and history, shareholders, operations, financial information, banking relations, legal information, and so on.

Their corporate clients range from banks, financial institutions, insurance companies and import and export firms to government institutions. All of them need impartial and reliable information about their debtors or trading companies in order to make decisions which are essential for survival and success in today's business environment.

An example of a well-known business information service provider is Dun & Bradstreet (HK) Ltd. Graduates are usually hired for the position of credit investigator or business analyst trainee.

Market research involves obtaining, collating and analysing statistical data, thus providing the basis for the



formulation of marketing policies or for decision-making which affects consumer interests. Market research companies also conduct public opinion polls on a variety of issues.

This is usually conducted by asking the opinion of ordinary people on the street or by telephone. Examples of well-known market research agencies are Forrester Research, Inc and the Nielsen Company (Hong Kong) Limited.

Market research agencies often recruit graduates to be research assistants or research executives. Market research executives can also find employment in advertising agencies, consultancy firms and many companies which have their own marketing department.

Statistics work is mostly conducted by the Census and Statistics Department, which coordinates and supports the statistical needs of government departments. It plans, organises and conducts censuses and surveys; designs, implements and maintains statistical systems; and analyses, interprets and presents statistical data.

It also compiles social and economic statistics covering areas like population, trade, national accounts, prices, employment, industry, transport, business services, and more, which are useful to the public and private sectors.

The basic position for a graduate is statistician, which involves collecting, preparing and analysing economic and social statistics in various fields, and conducting sample surveys and research as directed in any department within the Civil Service.

EDUCATION & REQUIREMENTS

Graduates having a degree in any discipline can apply for research positions. However, those with degrees in psychology, marketing, economics, statistics, management studies, sociology and computer science are sometimes preferred. Good communication skills are also required.

The major qualification for the position of a statistician is a first- or second-class honours degree in economics, mathematics, social sciences or a related field, with statistics as one of the subjects taken. Also acceptable is a first- or second-class honours degree in any subject with statistics taken in a postgraduate course organised by an approved institute.

SALARY & BENEFITS

The basic salary for a graduate in this field is about \$10,000-\$15,000 plus a number of fringe benefits.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Most positions in this field are advertised in the newspapers, however, if you have a keen interest, contact the human resources or personnel section of individual companies.