**Marketing Research**

Marketing Research is the process of collecting and using information for marketing decision making. The underlying purpose of research is to find out more about consumers. In the 1900’s, most early research gathered little more than written testimonials from purchases of a firms product. Research methods became more sophisticated during the 1930’s as the development of statistical techniques led to refinement in sampling procedures and greater accuracy in research findings. In recent years, advances in computer technology have significantly changed the complexion of marketing research. Media technologies such as the internet have opened up various channels through which researchers can tap into consumer information.

*Who Conducts Market Research*

The size and organizational form of the marketing research function are usually tied to the structure of the company. Some firms organize research units to support different product lines, brands or geographical areas. Others also use research functions according to the type research they need to perform tasks such as sales analysis, new product development, advertising evaluation or sales forecasting. Marketers usually decided to conduct a study internally or through an outside organization based on cost. Market research compare range in size from sole proprietorship, to national and international firms such as AC Nielsen, Information Resources Inc.

Types of Research Companies

1. Syndicated Services- An organization that regularly provides a standardized set of data to all customers.
2. Full-Service Research Suppliers- This is an organization that contracts with clients to conduct complete marketing research projects. They specialize in brand strategies and in building customer loyalty.
3. Limited Service Research Suppliers- A marketing research firm that specializes in a limited number of activities such as conducting field interviews or performing data processing