



Humanities Sciences
ISSN: 1308 7320 (NWSAHS)
ID: 2016.11.1.4C0199

Status : Original Study
Received: May 2015
Accepted: January 2016

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.12739/NWSA.2016.11.1.4C0199>

**THE USE OF MARKETING RESEARCH IN LOCAL MARKETS AS A COMMUNICATION
PROCESS FOR COMPETITIVE COMMUNICATION POWER: A SAMPLE FOR SIVAS
ORGANIZED INDUSTRIAL ZONE**

ABSTRACT

The most important contribution has been in the field of information systems and the marketing research when the transition from traditional marketing methods to marketing communications which has an integrated structure. The scientific and technological changes which the new world order brought created different instruments about access to information and information dissemination, so this condition has contributed to occur a strategic structure for both producers and consumers. The importance of marketing researchs which provide competitive power under the increasing importance of local markets and new methods applied to reach the information in the globalized world were analyzed in the study. In order to emphasize the importance a field study has been applied to producers company in Sivas city for their approaches have been identified about the topic of marketing research.

Keywords: Marketing, Communication, Research,
Integrated Marketing Communications, Marketing Research

**YEREL PAZARLARDA REKABETÇİ BİR İLETİŞİM GÜCÜ OLARAK PAZAR
ARAŞTIRMASININ KULLANIMI: SIVAS İLİ ORGANİZE SANAYİ BÖLGESİ ÖRNEĞİ**

ÖZ

Geleneksel pazarlama yöntemlerinden bütünleşik bir yapı olan pazarlama iletişimine geçişte yaşanan en önemli katkı pazar araştırması ve bilgi sistemleri alanında olmuştur. Yenidünya düzeninin getirdiği bilimsel ve teknolojik değişimler bilgiye ulaşmada ve bilgiyi yaymada farklı enstrümanlar oluşturarak, hem üreticiler hem de tüketiciler için stratejik bir yapı meydana gelmesine katkıda bulunmuştur. Globalleşen dünyada yerel pazarların artan önemi ve bilgiye ulaşmada uygulanan yeni yöntemler çerçevesinde önemli bir rekabet gücü sağlayan Pazar araştırmalarının önemi çalışma kapsamında incelenmiştir. Bu öneme vurgu yapmak amacıyla da Sivas ilinde üretim yapan firmalar ile yapılan bir saha çalışmasıyla pazar araştırması konusundaki yaklaşımları tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Pazarlama, İletişim, Araştırma,
Bütünleşik Pazarlama İletişimi, Pazar Araştırma



1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

As a result of the digitization of the world we live in the experienced big change and transformation are located in people's life as a way that makes you feel itself in all areas. This change and development which is felt by people about human in all areas of social and community from human relations, education, cultural structure to economy are evaluated as mandatory processes which must be kept pace and be considered by organizations for organizations. Basically, the organizations which produce products and services to make an output commercially (profit) are affected from the exchange standards which are required by this age when they use the traditional marketing methods to reach the consumer structure which is aimed by the organizations. Now, the organizations must use the new methods which transformed into integrated marketing communications in all processes.

Some reforms about social and socially experienced have become imperative as a requirement of the changing World. Mainly Technology and media many changes into our lives are among the basic dynamics of these reforms. The globalized world shows the effectiveness at all economic structures and markets as with every issue, it has got a necessity about scientific perspectives must avoid from sided/objective attitudes to cover large areas becoming. The movement of change which is a requirement of the modern era, begins as an individual and the entire community is spread out. If the processes in which all these social changes happen are taken into consideration, we will confront the result of local markets' keeping up with the global structures and their requirement to improve the research oriented approaches inevitably.

The most important contribution about transition to integrated marketing communications from traditional marketing methods was lived in the field of market research and information systems. The increasing importance of the local markets in the globalizing world and the importance of marketing research which provides a significant competitive power under the new methods which applied to obtain information were analyzed in the study. A research have been done with the producers in Sivas city to identify their approach about marketing research to emphasize this importance in this study.

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

The changes in scientific and technological areas which were delivered by the new world order have contributed for a strategic structure for both manufacturers and consumers as access to information and knowledge dissemination by creating different instruments. The importance of the subject was displayed by being analysed the information and the usage level about the marketing research of the firms in the questionnaire which was prepared. At the end of this research it was specified that the firms don't use their theoretical information in the subject of marketing research in practice. The reason of this is the subject of another research. As the results of this study; so as to raise the competitive power in local markets based on the research which was made specific to Sivas, even if the importance of the market research is a proven fact, its implementation cannot be performed. A research was made by being implemented the technique of face to face interview with the chosen firms through sampling method from the firms that make productions in the Organized Industrial Zone in Sivas.



3. TRANSITION TO INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS FROM TRADITIONAL MARKETING (GELENEKSEL PAZARLAMADAN BÜTÜNLEŞİK PAZARLAMA İLETİŞİMİNE GEÇİŞ)

Significant alterations show up in the behaviours of customers and in the marketing structures in our age, in which the transition has been made to the information society and the understanding of industrial society has ended. Traditional polity which the industrial society requires has turned into modern polities in the managements now. The increment and innovation in the knowledge level which the technology has brought in individual terms have made continuous change and innovation obligatory in the sense of managements. While marketing in classical terms is related to the production and sale of goods and services, modern marketing appears as a more complicated process. All studies or works which have been modernized in the way of integrated marketing communication have enlarged including classical marketing studies or works and it has become a process which involves the continuous dialogue with the customer.

As knowledge has been an indispensable element in both social and economic terms with the industrial revolution, it has also made different studies or works beyond the sales of productions/services essential. The definition of traditional marketing basically means the proceeding of interchange aimed at meeting peoples' request and needs (Mucuk, 1994;3). Yet, the transition to integrated marketing communication is felt transparently in the new definition which American Marketing Association has made. Marketing in the form that the association has defined is the implementation and planning process related to improvement, pricing, promotion and delivery of ideas, goods and services by implementing exchanges which shall provide to achieve individual and organizational goals (Mucuk, 1994). On the grounds that the new definition has been modernized so as to include the whole marketing mix, it means that marketing is evaluated as a communication process.

Marketing as a communication process is a structure focused on concordantly organizing all elements which shall serve a management for achieving determined goals and directing, integrating management activities in a similar way. An effective and true communication process in the management is necessary for working all management together and systematically and having maximum increase in the productivity level. Being established an effective communication between management workers and administrators and being made this process continuous through some means appear as important elements which increase productivity. Marketing which is built as a communication process aims at several changes not only in internal structure but also in external structure. Integrated marketing communication in the feature of a wide upper roof that involves all stakeholders like customers, suppliers, seller, retailer is also a structure which aims at an activity at an international. Marketing research may also be described as the systematic and objective identification, collection, analysis, and dissemination of information for the purpose of assisting management in decision making related to the identification and solution of problems and opportunities in marketing (Malhotra, 2002:18).

Globalization process in the world revises all economic structures and it has obligated that all managements keep up with the changing knowledge era. Surprising developments in science, technology and organization fields in the 21st century and implementation of these developments on industries have caused serious changes in world, country and region economies. The results of big changes which have



occurred in production, delivery and consumption structures may be summarized by this means:

- Globalization which is substantially the main factor of economic changes in the world and in Turkey exposes all economic structures to a fierce competition environment.
- It also causes revolutionary changes in labor structure by force of changing and renewed economic structuring and service economies and processes tend to be in demand now.
- Production in knowledge society which has been updated with industrial revolution by a force of modern society has become knowledge based, design and planning-oriented. Hereunder, intensive technology use has made more strategic information and planning more important.
- Know-how and professional viewpoint in all economic infrastructures from health to education, from scientific activities to production processes make progress day by day.

Marketing research is about collecting information. While it applies to a wide range of situations, marketing research gives decision-makers the information they need to find solutions to business problems, such as the following (Smith & Albaum, 2012:5);

How satisfied are customers with your product and service offering?

How will customers react to a decision to change a price or product?

What are service representatives hearing from customers?

What responses to competition will bring you success in a given market?

Knowledge era and knowledge society which underline the transition from classic marketing to modern marketing that is a communication process are evaluated as a significant competitive capacity from the point of managements. Concepts which are production-focused in the form of products, price, delivery and promotion have become customer -focused which are indicated as 4C. Customer who is considered as focus and managements which have information about marketing structures are also described as having the power. Request, demand and behaviours of customer in company with changing economic structures are motivating elements on the point of fast data collection in respect of the market in terms of management administrators. Management administrators must realise the needs of the market in no time and respond them because marketing is an activity which is made in the field of market (Erem, 1975:42). All market informations including all of the company's functions (production, finance etc.) like the others, too is used by the marketing managers.

For this reason, in developed countries in which scientific method has entered into business management, while production administrators and financial administrators widely take advantages of research methods while making a decision, marketing administrators make a decision considerably based upon good sense, experience and discernment (Haksever, 1974:433). With the research that is the only way of providing the essential data in order that a firm which produces goods or service can manage all marketing activities effectively, it is possible to make a general analysis related to the condition of the firm and the things that the firm owns. The results which were obtained by being brought both possessed capital and all skills together, the comparison of these results to the rivals and gaining leverage by being determined the priority or weaknesses is also possible with the marketing research. Within the scope of this

study, it was analysed whether the firms use the marketing research in order to gain the competitive leverage in a city which has an industry which is developing from the point of the production. It is hoped that the usage of the research process becomes widespread and becomes a study which will inspire in the way of increasement of the investment in this subject by being drawn attention the importance of the subject with the findings which were obtained at the end of the study.

4. CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC MARKETING AND MARKET RESEARCH (STRATEJİK PAZARLAMA VE PAZAR ARAŞTIRMASI KAVRAMI)

Data of market research which is based for strategic marketing creates a significant competitive capacity which is used from production to sale processes in terms of managements. Concept of marketing suggests customer's estimation as the center focus of the firm. Management administrator can control a range of factors in estimation attempts of customer's demands. These factors labelled marketing mix can be categorized through different ways. Most known classification is production, price, delivery and promotion which are 4P of marketing. Essential duty of the management administrator is to transform these values into a profitable and an effective marketing program (Churchill, 1991:5). It is an in incontrovertible fact that s/he needs knowledge a lot it the performing stage of this task. The most basic method and techniques used for that the marketing program becomes an essential strategic plan by being equipped with the knowledge create marketing knowledge system i.e. marketing research processes. As seen in the diagram (Churchill, 1991:6) which summarizes the tasks of marketing management and has been prepared by American Marketing Association, there are several controllable and non controllable environmental conditions around the basic marketing mix. Marketing research for the non controllable conditions in the form of cultural- social, political, international sources, technological and economical environment sheds light on the management. Marketing research is an substantial mechanism of information exchange between the customer and managements.

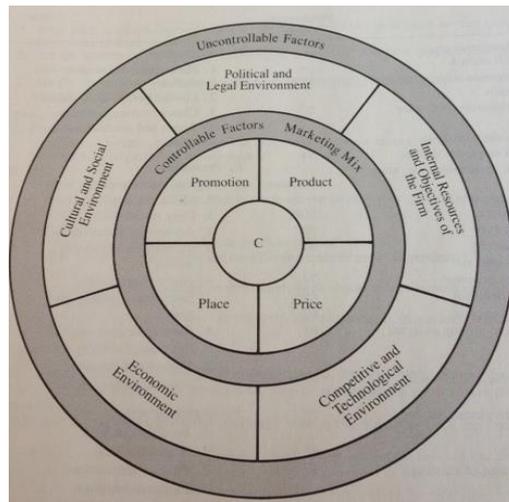


Figure 1. Tasks of the marketing management
(Şekil 1. Pazarlama yöneticisinin görevleri)

The researches which were made with the methods classified in the qualitative and quantitative way draw a road map as a guide in the creation of the strategic marketing plan by presenting information about both customers and the sectoral structure to the establishments.

The way of implementation of the research which was built in paralel with the determination of the strategic targets and purposes within the scope of the created marketing plan is important. The classification of the ways of the generally accepted research design and their usage areas are as below;

	Uses	Types
Exploratory Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate problems more precisely • Develop hypotheses • Establish priorities for research • Eliminate impractical ideas • Clarify concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Search • Experience Survey • Focus Groups • Analysis of selected cases
Descriptive Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe characteristics of certain groups • Estimate proportion of people in a population who behave in a certain way • Make specific predictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longitudinal study *True panel *Omnibus panel • Sample Survey
Causal Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evidence Regarding the casual relationship between variables of means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Concomitant variation *Time order in which variables occur *Elimination of other possible explanations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory experiment • Field experiment

Figure 2. Types of Research Designs
(Şekil 2. Araştırma Dizaynı Biçimleri) (Churchill, 1991:162)

One important change that has been occurring in marketing research in recent years is the transition from specific problem perspective to a total marketing intelligence perspective. This perspective is usually called a marketing information system (MIS) or decision support system (DSS) (Churchill, 1991:14). This process called as Marketing information systems or decision support system which consist of marketing researches is the basis of creating a strategic marketing plan for business terms. Marketing research is a pervasive activity so these departments in the company exist in most larger firms and among most types of companies.

4. METHODOLOGY (METODOLOJİ)

A research have been done with the producers in Sivas Organized Industrial Production by face to face survey technique to identify their approach about marketing research. The survey technique was used by being chosen 50 companies from different sectors which are in the area as a data collection tool. The companies which are relatively in advance in terms of the magnitude of indorsement in the way of representing each sector were assessed within the scope of the research. 50 firms were chosen as sample in Sivas that was specified to make investigation on approximately number of the firms that make active production. The datas which were obtained from Sivas Chamber of



Commerce and Industry shows that there are nearly 450 firms that make active production in this city. Instead of pursuing a complete counting method that is both costly and time consuming, 50 firms were determined by being selected almost 10% from this universe with the simple random sampling method. If the data is obtained from the entire volume of the interest, this data collection method is named as full inventory. It is possible to determine the real values from the data which was obtained through the complete counting. The complete counting is a data gathering method which isn't implemented very often in the situations when the time is inadequate, the cost is high and it is inconvenient to reach or not to reach the mass units (to all firms) (Semiz, 2007:6).

The sampling method which provides more convenience was used within the scope of this study instead of this method since it is not possible to reach all firms which make production in Sivas from the points of cost, time and technique. The data gathering process on a group unit which is thought that it represents the mass from the mass units is named as simple random sampling method (Semiz, 2007:7). A random choice was made by being used the simple random sampling method in the production firms. The chance and possibility of being an example of all units is obvious in the simple random sampling method. The sample units are chosen in the frame of this possibility and the random choice is made by being used the chart of numbers or computer (Yüselen, 2003:62). The research was made by being implemented the questionnaire which was prepared for the determined firms as face to face. Since the subject of the research is suitable for gathering the quantitative data, a questionnaire was designed and the subject was clarified with the more understandable charts and data by being made a quantitative inference. Since the production firms in Sivas is in the structure which avoids the serious investments in the subject of the marketing research. So it wasn't possible to go over the chosen sample numbers in the subject of data gathering. Besides, one of the reasons which make inevitable to be used the questionnaire within the scope of the study is that the authorities who were interviewed have limited time in the subject of information sharing. The understanding level of the questions was reached maximum by being tested with the pilot study before the questionnaire was implemented to the concerned sample group. Finally, the data which was obtained was analysed with the program of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). The information which were obtained with the questionnaire form used in the survey was analysed in the part of findings by being adapted as tables.

5. FINDINGS (BULGULAR)

Inconsequence of this research, participants' thoughts about using of the marketing researchs are identified. While the half of the companies which were assessed within the scope of the research identify their target customers mostly as companies or organizations, the other half of them identify their target customers as individuals. The general average of the substances of sixth question which is used on survey form was calculated as 3.486 and changes in the range of averages was calculated as 0.421 (Max = 3.804- Min= 3.002. The other tests are; Hotelling T2 = 29,314, F = 3,036 and P = 0,002. The item-total correlations of this question gets quite strong level values between 0.53 and 0.94. Although there are different methods for reliability analysis, in this study Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. According to Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis, the results of the inventory value is determined as $\alpha = 0.745$. Because of its



proximity to 1, the reliability of the scale is high. The research distributions which have been used often within the companies so far according to the target customer's definitions are as below;

Table 1. The distribution of the research types which the companies use often according to the target customer

(Tablo 1. Hedef müşterisine göre firmaların en sık kullandığı araştırma türleri dağılımı)

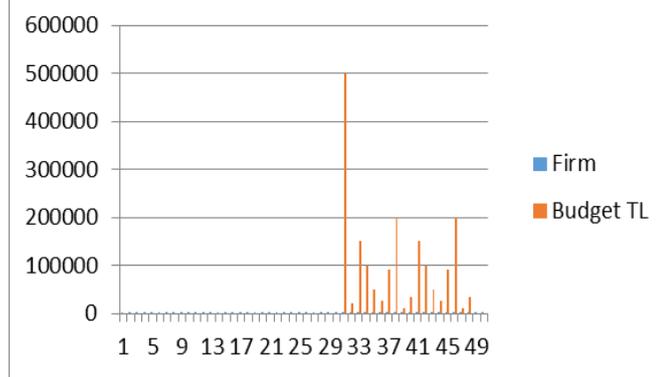
	Target customer: Companies or organizations		Targetcustomer: Individuals	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Market Potential Research	4	%16	5	%20
Market Share Research	3	%12	4	%16
Image Research	5	%20	3	%12
Market Characteristics Survey	0	%0	2	%8
Forecast Research	0	%0	0	%0
New Trends Survey	1	%4	3	%12
Market Segmentation Research	4	%16	2	%8
Product Research	3	%12	4	%16
Pricing Survey	3	%12	2	%8
Distribution Survey	2	%8	0	%0
Total	25	%100	25	%100

As it's seen in the table, it is clear that the companies which were assessed within the scope of the research didn't make a big investment about making a market research. When considering the knowledge levels of the company executives who were interviewed within the scope of the research about the market researches, it is seen that the results show a tendency as "I know" It is observed that they have enough knowledge about the implementation ways of the research types which need to be made in different terms for different aims. When considering the knowledge levels of the company executives who were interviewed within the scope of the research about the market researches, it is seen that the results show a tendency as "I know" It is observed that they have enough knowledge about the implementation ways of the research types which need to be made in different terms for different aims.

Table 2. The level of dealing with the methods and techniques of the research by the companies

(Tablo 2. Firmaların araştırma yöntem ve teknikleriyle ilgilenme düzeyi)

	I know	I have no idea
Market Potential Survey	5	2
Market Share Survey	4	0
Image Research	2	2
Survey of Market Characteristics	3	4
Forecast Survey	4	0
New Trends Survey	5	2
Market Segmentation Research	2	3
Product Research	6	0
Pricing Research	4	0
Distribution Survey	2	0
Total	37	13



Graph 1. The chart of the market research budgets in the participated companies in the survey

(Grafik 1. Araştırmaya katılan firmaların Pazar araştırmasının ayırdıkları bütçe grafiği)

Table 3. The table of distribution of the companies' approaches about the research needs

(Tablo 3. Firmaların araştırma gereksinimleri konusundaki yaklaşımları dağılımı tablosu)

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is a large share of marketing research about the development of the economy in operating	50	1,00	5,00	4,6000	,88063
Information about competitors' sales are shaping our knowledge of oursales.	50	2,00	5,00	4,2800	,90441
I think we should be innovative to achieve competitiveness in the market.	50	1,00	5,00	4,2600	1,24228
The budget allocated to research is never wasted.	50	2,00	5,00	4,2600	,72309
Research is essential for the development of new markets.	50	2,00	5,00	4,1400	,98995
Marketing plans can not be done without next period's sales forecasts.	50	1,00	5,00	1,9200	1,10361
Develop a successful business strategy requires extensively understanding of business, markets and customers.	50	1,00	5,00	4,0200	,93656
I believe that the information from your customers is important.	50	1,00	5,00	3,6400	1,19112
Knowing the demands and expectations of customers ensures the development of our market potential.	50	1,00	5,00	4,1800	,80026
Market research in the domestic market and foreign market as well as provides competitive.	50	1,00	5,00	3,4200	1,24687
There is an information system where all employees with in the enterprise network access is available in our company.	50	1,00	5,00	4,0600	1,01840



As it is seen in the graph, the outcomes of market research of the companies which were assessed within the scope of the research are extremely low and inadequate. This situation is an important evidence that a research wasn't made in the implementation. The company executives who answered the question with the scope of the research made a situation assessment about the importance of the marketing research in a scale-of-five which changes between "I totally agree(5) and "I don't totally agree (1)". They show a high level of participation for all expressions which were presented to them except the expressions "Marketing plans can not be done without next period's sales forecasts" and "Market research in the domestic market and foreign market as well as provides competitive" This show that company managers who has decision -making-authority have a wide level of knowledge and consciousness.

6. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION (BULGULAR VE TARTIŞMA)

It is an inevitable fact that the companies and firms which seek profit use scientific research method and techniques in order to have competitive power in market constructs which has changed while globalization influences the whole world in every subject and culture. The changes and improvements about the subjects such as consumer, technology, market structure and competitive power make the research subject indispensable for all organizations with the globalization of money and capital, removal of the borders and international trade becoming widespread require the marketing research for all companies and firms. So as to raise the competitive power in local markets based on the research which was made specific to Sivas, even if the importance of the market research is a proven fact, its implementation cannot be performed. The lowness in the research budgets of the firms and organizations which were chosen in the samples of local market and the deficiency of implementation about the subject is an important proof for this. Although brain power which is in local establishments has a high consciousness level, the deficiencies of implementation attract the attention. One of the main duties of the marketing research is to provide the up-to-date information which is suitable for the plan and goal, true, reliable and based on valid foundations to the managers who has the right to decide in firms and organizations. The marketing research has a structure which the data is transposable to the information mostly in order to provide support for marketing activities. Usable data and information which were obtained are used to evaluate the marketing environment of the firm by decision mechanism, to collect new information from the establishments which supply input and to evaluate this. In this context, it is an inevitable implementation in order that competitive power is obtained in local markets and a consistent competition is managed.

Marketing research covers a wide range of topics from product sales to distribution, from the amount of production to reaching the consumer and helps to produce information about these topics. Especially, to make new and right investments, market research is an essential requirement to collect information on relevant regional. So, the companies must buy professional support (consultation etc) add to their own researches. Because it is not possible to decide without accurate data and informations. Because of all these requirements and the results from the data obtained in this study; One of the most important ways to ensure a competitive advantage in the local market is "marketing research", we can say.



7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS (SONUÇ VE ÖNERİLER)

One important change that has been occurring in marketing research in recent years is the transition from specific problem perspective to a total marketing intelligence perspective. This was said at this study before. Inconsequence of this research, participants' thoughts about using of the marketing researchs are identified. One of the main duties of the marketing research is to provide the up-to-date information which is suitable for the plan and goal, true, reliable and based on valid foundations to the managers who has the right to decide in firms and organizations. The marketing research has a structure which the data is transposable to the information mostly in order to provide support for marketing activities.

Usable data and information which were obtained are used to evaluate the marketing environment of the firm by decision mechanism, to collect new information from the establishments which supply input and to evaluate this. In this context, it is an inevitable implementation in order that competitive power is obtained in local markets and a consistent competition is managed. Marketing research covers a wide range of topics from product sales to distribution, from the amount of production to reaching the consumer and helps to produce information about these topics. Especially, to make new and right investments, market research is an essential requirement to collect information on relevant regional. So, the companies must buy professional support (consultation etc) add to their own researches. Because it is not possible to decide without accurate data and informations. Because of all these requirements and the results from the data obtained in this study; One of the most important ways to ensure a competitive advantage in the local market is "marketing research", we can say.

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SURVEY FORM (ANKET FORMU)

- Trade name : Contact person :
 His/Her task : Address :
 Internet page : Foundation year :
 Number of employees : Endorsement of 2013 :
 Industry of the firm : Expected endorsement of 2014 :
1. How would you describe your target customers?
 () Individuals () Companies or organizations () Both
2. How would you define your target market competition?
 () Highly competitive () Very competitive () Midcompetitive
 () a little competitive () not competitive ever
3. So far, Which of the following research was implemented within your company?
 () Market Potential Research () Market Share Research
 () Image Research () Market Characteristics Survey
 () Forecast Research () New Trends Survey
 () Market Segmentation Research () Product Research
 () Pricing Survey () Distribution Survey
 () Other (Your Text).....
4. The following research methods and techniques related to please express your situation.

	I know	I have no idea
Market Potential Survey		
Market Share Survey		
Image Research		
Survey of Market Characteristics		
Forecast Survey		
New Trends Survey		
Market Segmentation Research		
Product Research		
Pricing Research		
Distribution Survey		
Other.....		

5. So far, how much is the budget allocated to market research within your company?

6. To what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements, please indicate	Completely Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Completely Disagree
There is a large share of marketing research about the development of the economy in operating					
Information about competitors' sales are shaping our knowledge of our sales.					
I think we should be innovative to achieve competitiveness in the market.					
The budget allocated to research is never wasted.					
Research is essential for the development of new markets.					
Marketing plans can not be done without next period's sales forecasts.					
Develop a successful business strategy requires extensively understanding of business, markets and customers.					
I believe that the information from your customers is important.					
Knowing the demands and expectations of customers ensures the development of our market potential.					
Market research in the domestic market and foreign market as well as provides competitive.					
There is an information system where all employees within the enterprise network access is available in our company.					