

Market and Survey Researchers

(All information, except UB degree program information, is from the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2004-2005 Occupational Outlook Handbook.)

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- **UB Graduate Programs:**
 - [MSW](#)
 - [MBA](#)
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- **UB Undergraduate Programs:**
 - [BS Business Administration \(Concentration-Marketing\)](#)
 - [BS/MBA](#)
 - [BA Economics](#)
 - [BA/MA Economics](#)
 - [BA/MBA Economics](#)
 - [BA Political Science](#)
 - [BA, BS Psychology](#)
 - [BA Sociology](#)
 - [BA/MBA Sociology](#)

Significant Points

- Strong demand is expected for market and survey researchers.
- A master's degree is the minimum requirement for many private sector jobs.
- Quantitative skills are critical.

Employment

Market and survey researchers held about a total of 155,000 jobs in 2002. Most of these jobs were held by market research analysts, who held 135,000 jobs. Private industry provided about 97 percent of salaried market research analyst jobs. Because of the applicability of market research to many industries, market research analysts are employed in most industries. The industries which employ the largest number of market research analysts are management, scientific, and technical consulting firms, insurance carriers, computer systems design and related firms, software publishers, securities and commodities brokers, and advertising and related firms.

Survey researchers held about 20,000 jobs in 2002. Survey researchers were mainly employed by professional, scientific, and technical services firms, including management, scientific and technical consulting firms, and scientific research and development firms; employment services, State government, and internet service providers and web search portals. A number of market and survey researchers combine a

full-time job in government, academia, or business with part-time or consulting work in another setting. About 8 percent of market and survey researchers are self-employed.

Besides the jobs described above, many market and survey researchers held faculty positions in colleges and universities. Marketing faculties have flexible work schedules and may divide their time among teaching, research, consulting, and administration.

Job Outlook

Employment of market and survey researchers is expected to [grow faster than the average](#) for all occupations through 2012. Many job openings are likely to result from the need to replace experienced workers who transfer to other occupations or who retire or leave the labor force for other reasons. Opportunities should be best for those with a master's or Ph.D. degree in marketing or a related field and strong quantitative skills.

Demand for market research analysts should be strong because of an increasingly competitive economy. Marketing research provides organizations valuable feedback from purchasers, allowing companies to evaluate consumer satisfaction and more effectively plan for the future. As companies seek to expand their market and as consumers become better informed, the need for marketing professionals will increase. As globalization of the marketplace continues, market researchers will also be increasingly utilized to analyze foreign markets and competition for goods and services.

Market research analysts should have opportunities in a wide range of employment settings, particularly in marketing research firms, as companies find it more profitable to contract for marketing research services rather than support their own marketing department. Increasingly, marketing research analysts are not only collecting and analyzing information, but are also helping the client implement their ideas and recommendations. Other organizations, including computer systems design companies, financial services organizations, healthcare institutions, advertising firms, manufacturing firms producing consumer goods, and insurance companies may offer job opportunities for market research analysts. Survey researchers will be needed to meet the growing demand for market and opinion research, as an increasingly competitive economy requires businesses to more effectively and efficiently allocate advertising funds.

Bachelor's degree holders may face competition for the limited number of market and survey research jobs for which they are eligible. However, they will qualify for a number of other positions, however, in which they can take advantage of their knowledge in conducting research, developing surveys, or analyzing data. Some graduates with bachelor's degrees will find jobs in industry and business as management or sales trainees or as administrative assistants. Bachelor's degree holders with good quantitative skills, including a strong background in mathematics, statistics, survey design, and computer science, may be hired by private firms as research assistants or interviewers.

Ph.D. degree holders in marketing and related fields should have a range of opportunities in industry and consulting firms. As in many other disciplines, however, Ph.D. holders are likely to face keen competition for tenured teaching positions in colleges and universities.

Earnings

Median annual earnings of market research analysts in 2002 were \$53,810. The middle 50 percent earned between \$38,760 and \$76,310. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$29,390, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$100,160. Median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of market research analysts in 2002 were as follows:

Management of companies and enterprises	\$56,750
Insurance carriers	46,700
Other professional, scientific, and technical services	46,380
Management, scientific, and technical consulting services	44,580

Median annual earnings of survey researchers in 2002 were \$22,200. The middle 50 percent earned between \$17,250 and \$38,530. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$15,140, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$57,080. Median annual earnings of survey researchers in 2002 in other professional, scientific, and technical services were \$19,610.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

A master's degree is the minimum requirement for many private sector market and survey research jobs, and for advancement to more responsible positions. Market and survey researchers may earn advanced degrees in business administration, marketing, statistics, communications, or some closely related discipline. Some schools help graduate students find internships or part-time employment in government agencies, consulting firms, financial institutions, or marketing research firms prior to graduation.

In addition to courses in business, marketing, and consumer behavior, prospective market and survey researchers should take other liberal arts and social science courses, including economics, psychology, English, and sociology. Because of the importance of quantitative skills to market and survey researchers, courses in mathematics, statistics, sampling theory and survey design, and computer science are extremely helpful.

Bachelor's degree holders who majored in marketing and related fields may qualify for many entry-level positions that might or might not be related to market and survey research. These positions include research assistant, administrative or management

trainee, marketing interviewer, and salesperson, among others. Many businesses, research and consulting firms, and government agencies seek individuals who have strong computer and quantitative skills and can perform complex research. Many corporation and government executives have a strong background in marketing.

In addition to being required for most market and survey research jobs in business and industry, a master's degree is usually the minimum requirement for a job as an instructor in junior and community colleges. In most colleges and universities, however, a Ph.D. is necessary for appointment as an instructor. A Ph.D. and extensive publications in academic journals are required for a professorship, tenure, and promotion.

Aspiring market and survey researchers should gain experience gathering and analyzing data, conducting interviews or surveys, and writing reports on their findings while in college. This experience can prove invaluable later in obtaining a full-time position in the field, because much of the work, in the beginning, may center on these duties. With experience, market and survey researchers eventually are assigned their own research projects.

Those considering careers as market and survey researchers should be able to pay attention to details because much time is spent on precise data analysis. Patience and persistence are necessary qualities because market and survey researchers must spend long hours on independent study and problem solving. At the same time, they must work well with others, because they often oversee interviews of a wide variety of individuals. Communication skills are very important because market and survey researchers must be able to present their findings both orally and in writing, in a clear, concise manner.