## **How Market Research Gathers Information**

Market research consists of a combination of primary information, or what has been gathered by the company or by a person hired by the company, and secondary information, or what has been gathered by an [outside source](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/o/outsourcing.asp).

### **Primary Information**

Primary information is the data that the company has collected directly or that has been collected by a person or business hired to conduct the research. This type of information generally falls into two categories: exploratory and specific research.

Exploratory research is a less structured option and functions via more open-ended questions, and it results in questions or issues being presented that the company may need to address. Specific research finds answers to previously identified issues that are often brought to attention through exploratory research.

### **Secondary Information**

Secondary information is data that an outside entity has already gathered. This can include population information from government census data, trade association research reports, or presented research from another business operating within the same market sector.

