

Student Tips to Finding Data Handout

Example product: We've decided to market a shoe that can generate electricity (to charge phones, iPods, etc.) as you walk.

Questions to investigate

- Does a similar product already exist? (such as blinking children's shoes)
If so, what are the costs of production and product sales for this item?
- What age group / income level / education level is the target group?

Factors that may be relevant to product sales:

- Average cost of shoes
- Expendable income
- Average number of steps taken per day
- Average battery life of phone / iPod
- Profit from shoe sales

Compare each of the above by demographics:

- By age group (age 15-20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-up)
- By gender
- By annual income level (\$18 to 30K/year, \$31-60K/year, \$61-120K/year, >\$120K/year)
- By region (East Coast, Midwest, Northwest, West Coast, etc.)

Finding relevant data tips:

- Start with general searches, then make them more specific
- Look at the available data and see if it fits your research

Databases and alternate search engines:

- Data.gov: <https://www.data.gov> — datasets organized by a variety of topics
- Konect <http://konect.uni-koblenz.de/> — graphs of datasets on a variety of topics
- Reddit <https://www.reddit.com> — user-generated links to data on the web
- Refdesk <http://www.refdesk.com/> — a collection of facts and resources
- Internet public library: www.ipl.org — a search engine / reference desk
- iTools <http://itools.com/> — search and reference tools
- Encyclopedia.com <http://www.encyclopedia.com/> — topic, category, directory search
- Reference.com <https://www.reference.com/> — information and search
- Lifewire <https://www.lifewire.com/> — tips and advice
- Datahub.io <https://datahub.io/dataset> — searchable data sets on a variety of topics
- Wolfram Alpha <https://www.wolframalpha.com/> — computational knowledge engine (requires paid subscription to download)
- Knoema Add-in for Excel <https://knoema.com/datafinder> — access to many databases and visualization tools

Guiding Questions for Your Research

- What are your personal interest(s)? List 3 to 5 below.
(*Examples: volleyball, alternative music, chatting with friends.*)
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- Name some products you would be interested in marketing for this project. They may relate to your interests. Be creative—you want a product that is unique and interesting. Be specific—describe the type, style, functions, appearance, use, etc., of your product.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- What are some factors that may be relevant to your product(s)?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.

- Where might you go to search for your data, besides just typing in a search engine? As you search for data and factors related to your data, list the sources you use (such as Knoema).