Market Research Proposal

For the Client of Nespresso

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Module : **Statistical Methods for Market Research (ST3188)**

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this research proposals is to help Nespresso identify its business objectives and achieve its research aims, which are to accurately understand customer preferences, pain points and sustainability initiatives and identify opportunities for improvement. The following research takes an exploratory and a conclusive research design approach and approximately 21260 participants will be taken as the initial sample size (14172 for Nespresso customers and 7088 for Non-Nespresso customers) using a stratified sampling method. The required data will be collected via a separate online questionnaire for each segment to cater to the global market. The results will then be analyzed using ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) and Cross-Tabulations (Checking for correlations between categorical variables) and results will be presented to the Client. Factors such as time and budget have also been taken into account and other suggested further research ideas have been presented.

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Introduction

Nestlé Nespresso S.A., trading as Nespresso, is an operating unit of the Nestlé Group, based in Lausanne, Switzerland. The products produced by Nespresso include coffees, espressos and the machines required to produce them. The market share of Nespresso can be shown in the diagram below.
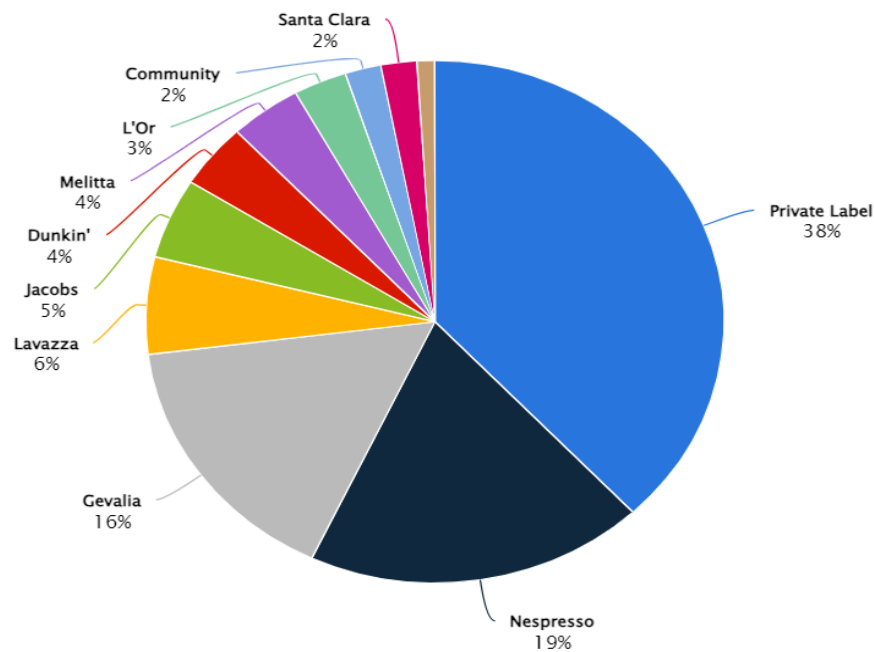
(Statista Market Insights, 2023)

The history of Nespresso originates from the employee of Nestle, **Eric Favre** who got to know about this recipe from a coffee bar in Rome and recreated it back in 1975. Nespresso's target market tends to be coffee drinkers aged between 25-60 mostly, who consume several capsules weekly. As active workers, they seek quality, easy coffees for home/office use and value coffee for consumption.

Nespresso's purpose is claimed to be **'CULTIVATING COFFEE AS AN ART TO GROW THE BEST IN EACH OF US'**, they say that they are known to be a brand that align their values with the consumers and can help to address societies greatest challenges. Nespresso also claims to be committed to providing sustainability in everything they do. They believe by delivering **long term positive impact for everybody that they can continue producing their exceptional quality coffee in the years to come**. Nespresso certified by B Corp which is an international movement with high standards of social and environmental responsibility, transparency and accountability.

Business objectives

1. To maintain its position as a market leader in the coffee industry by means of innovation and developing new coffee blends.
2. To maintain customer satisfaction with their products by improving the overall customer experience.
3. To ensure positive perceptions and to raise awareness of sustainability initiatives for their products through the continued adherence to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) standards.

Research aims

1. To understand the target market's preferences for new coffee blends and technologies.
2. To understand the specific challenges that customers experience in the market such as the product quality, packaging and customer service.
3. To aim to assess how well its sustainability efforts are working and pinpoint areas where they can enhance their initiatives.

The Business Context

In the Coffee market, volume is expected to amount to 6.8billion kg by 2028. The market for Coffee is expected to show a volume growth of 2.4% in 2024 (statista, 2024).
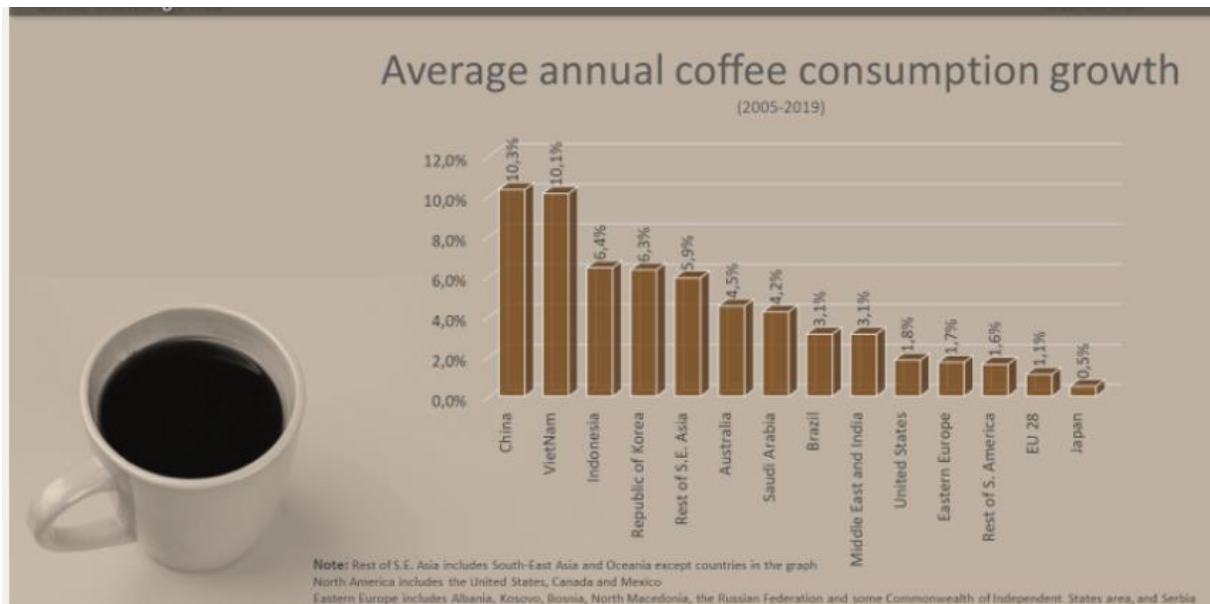
(International Trade Centre, 2021)

Based on this evidence, it is possible to conclude that the demographic income and cultural aspects increase coffee demand. But growth opportunities in the coffee market can also come from the peoples' beliefs of the importance of coffee in their life. (Giuli, 2022)

Micro-economic factors

Nespresso manufactures both the machines and capsules they use and maintains their inventory by having stores in every continent as an insurance against uncertainty and unexpected fluctuations in supply and demand (bartelby research, 2023).

Age is one of the major factors which contribute to the demand of coffee in the industry, the share of coffee drinkers by age group in the United States can be showed as follows.
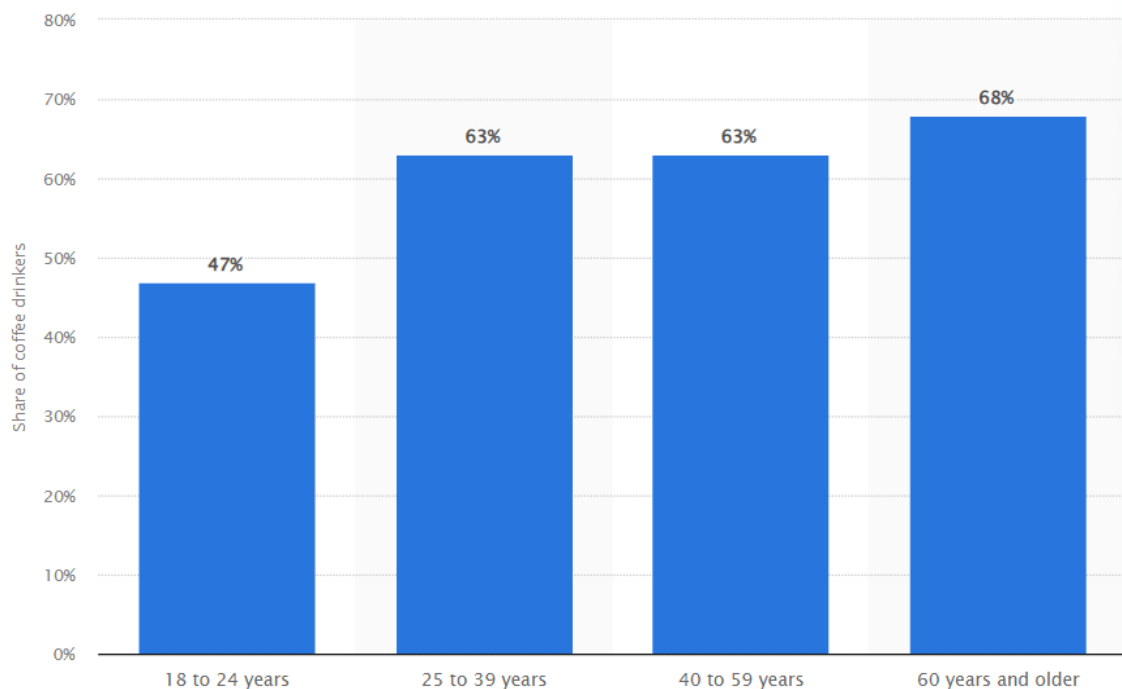
(Statista, 2020)

In 2020, about 50 percent of the 18 to 24-year-olds drank coffee and almost 70 percent of seniors did as well. Not only are seniors more likely to be coffee drinkers than the younger coffee drinkers , but they drink about three times as many cups a day as well. (M.Ridder, 2022)

Nespresso pricings are known to be more expensive than most other coffee pod brands mainly because Nespresso relies on quality coffee beans for their pods (Jeffrey, 2024).

Research has shown that coffee consumption correlates with higher education and income levels. For example, a study published in the Journal of Nutrition found that coffee consumption was higher among college-educated individuals and those with higher incomes in the United States. (AGAYA, 2023)

When taking gender into account, it is proven that 50% of men drink coffee when compared to 32% consumption by women. This was mainly because more women tend to dislike the taste of coffee in comparison to men (coffeebeansdelivered, 2023).

Macro-economic factors

The total economic impact of the coffee industry in the United States in 2022 was $343.2 billion, a 52.4% increase from 2015. Consumers spent nearly $110 billion on coffee in 2022. The coffee industry is responsible for more than 2.2 million U.S. jobs and generates more than $100 billion in wages. (National Coffee Association USA, 2023)

Nespresso developed the *Nespresso* AAA Sustainable Quality™ Program which implemented a unique coffee sourcing system focused on the positive environmental and social impact for the coffee farmers.

Source : (Nespresso, 2023)

However it states that less than 30% of Nespresso pods are recycled resulting in about 70% of them being dumped into global landfills (Repodder, 2022).

Since Nespresso has implemented its policies taking into account the effects to the environment and society, the legal bodies do not interfere with its production processes as much in comparison to other unethical Coffee competitors. However, with the increasing consciousness to the environment, governments around the world may impose stricter regulations on single-use products such as Nespresso coffee pods. This could force Nespresso to change its product design or materials, potentially increasing costs (The Strategy Story, 2023).

Nespresso Chief , Guillaume Le Cunff stated that even in periods when customers have to tighten their belts, they tend to stick with their "everyday" small pleasures such as having a coffee (Zawya, 2022).

Supply Chain factors such as fuel prices may impact the cost of transporting the coffee beans to Nespresso factories specially since Nespresso beans are extracted from different areas around the world.

Context of the business objectives

The Nespresso machine redefined the way people thought about coffee consumption. It introduced the concept of single-serve coffee, catering to the modern need for convenience and efficiency. This approach also minimized waste, as the capsules were pre-portioned and required no additional packaging. This sustainability aspect, combined with the machine's sleek design, appealed to a wide range of consumers who valued both quality and environmental consciousness (ninjarefinery, 2023).

Unlike the other existing coffees in the market, Nespresso had much neater packaging. It also was able to retain its freshness for six months after production due to the nature of its packaging. This was completely new innovation from Nespresso (Business Essay, 2023).

They ensure the experience remains interesting by releasing new flavors so that customers keep wanting to come back (LEE, 2020). These new flavors are usually of limited edition and run in seasonal batches.

Nespresso focused on the globalization of its tastes. That approach worked initially. But, as people around the world started disliking the global tastes for local/regional tastes and personalized coffee concoctions, Nespresso's homogeneity became a drawback. Today, "luxury" or small batch, craft coffees are highly localized. Starbuck's made coffee personalization accessible. Nespresso decided kept its general standard of tastes for all regions (Light, 2022).

The quality of the coffee might be the main reason we all go to Nespresso but the beauty and elegance that comes with owning a Nespresso machine and the value they add to any home is a big plus point to customers that they feel proud of owning their products (Giuli, 2022).

With their coffee capsules with more than 30 different variations to suit a majority of customer preferences , a personal shopper is provided for you to assist you in your shopping experience (Celis, 2020).

However, there is a lot of machines on the market which can use original or compatible Nespresso pods (CoffeeCapsulesDirect, 2017).

Nespresso reached a global recycling rate of 32% at the end of 2020, up by 17% since 2014. 90% of Nespresso consumers worldwide have access to a convenient used capsule recycling solution (Nespresso, 2023).

Problem Definition

Marketing Decision Problem

1. What would increase the need to invest in new coffee blends?
2. What factors do customers expect that would uplift their experience?
3. How do customers feel of the sustainability efforts put into their products?

Marketing Research Problem

1. By identifying the consumer's preferences for purchasing a premium coffee brand.
2. By understanding how customers perceive product quality, packaging and customer service.
3. By analyzing how coffee consumers value the CSR initiatives put into their products.

Research Approach

Literature Review

A survey carried out by the food institute showed that about half of the 25 to 39-year-olds drink at least one cup of specialty coffee daily. They identified specialty as a broad category that includes both espresso and non-espresso-based beverages that are brewed from premium coffee beans or grounds (BonstonBean Coffee Company, 2023).

Nespresso isn't particular a cheap brand, compared to its competitors, but they do offer their customers coffee that will last long and contain good quality (coursehero, 2023). A visualization of a Nespresso coffee machine ownership by age in the UK in 2017 can be shown as below.
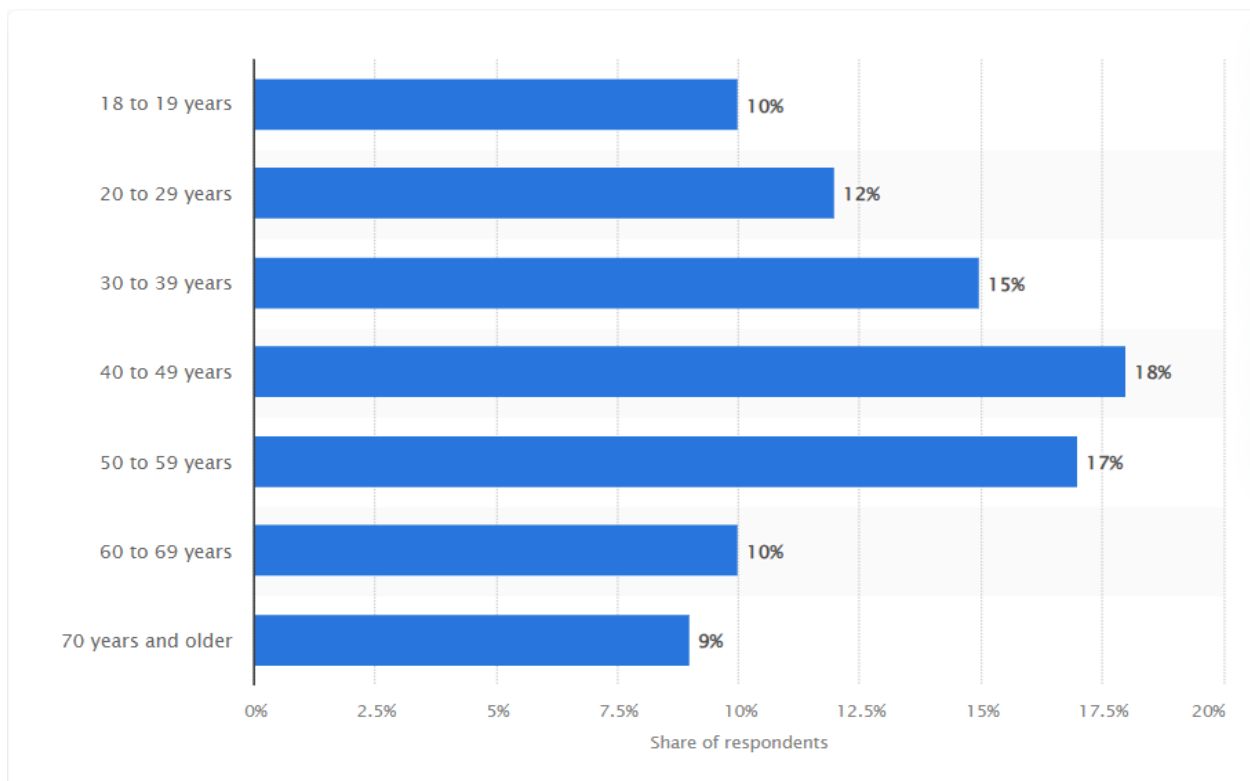
Source: (statista, 2024)

From the above visualization it is evident that Nespresso machines are owned more by the more middle aged population mainly due them having more income to afford them.

However, on an article on Nespresso's Business model by Daniel Pereira it states that Nespresso's product variety is more limited compared to that of its competitors such as Keurig and Starbucks which may sway away potential coffee enthusiasts.

After three years of research, Nespresso is now releasing a collection of paper-based home-compostable pods first available in France and Switzerland as a pilot to gather customer feedback (Ludmir, 2023).

It has been stated on Nespresso's Website that it has created a unique and innovative way to capture coffee freshness and pass it onto customers. It also guarantees that the coffee will be fresh up to **one year after purchase.**

With regards to aluminum being used for the material of its coffee pods , According to an article on Mining Technology , aluminum has the highest emissions per dollar of any metal. Nespresso uses 80% recycled aluminum for its pods but, when you're selling 14bn pods a year, that's still a lot of non-recycled aluminum (Beeson, 2022).

It is stated by Nespresso that their coffee pods can be recycled, and that is true , but capsules have to be dropped at one of their designated drop spots or give them to a mail person or bring them to a Nespresso store. They say it can be recyclable but it seems rather misleading and I believe many people will either throw them into the trash. Just because something is technically recyclable doesn't mean it will get recycled (Rodriguez, 2023).

Research commissioned by Nespresso to mark Recycle Week demonstrates just how important it is for recycling to be simple and convenient: despite 91% of Brits claiming they often recycle, many said they find recycling confusing (42%), and difficult (32%)* (Nestle, 2023).

Research Questions

1. Does age have a significant impact on the consumer preferences for Nespresso machines?
2. Does gender have an effect on the consumer preferences for different coffee blends?
3. Does income influence the consumer preferences of Nespresso?
4. Does education level influence the consumer preferences of Nespresso?
5. Are customers satisfied with the Customer service procedures carried out by Nespresso?
6. Is Nespresso keeping its uniformity of tastes the most viable decision?
7. Are Nespresso customers actually aware of the sustainability initiatives carried out by Nespresso?
8. Are the recycling facilities for Nespresso pods made aware to Nespresso customers?
9. Is aluminum actually the ideal material for Nespresso to make their coffee pods from?

Analytical Model

Age Group —H1→ Consumer preferences

Gender —H2→ Consumer preferences

Income and Education —H3→ Consumer preferences

Consumer preferences → Maintain or Increase Market Share

Customer Service Procedures —H4→ Customer Satisfaction

Uniformity of Tastes —H5→ Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction → Maintain or Increase Market Share

Sustainability Initiatives Carried out —H6→ Sustainability efforts Awareness

Recycling Facilities Available —H7→ Sustainability efforts Awareness

Aluminum for Coffee pods —H8→ Sustainability efforts Awareness

Sustainability efforts Awareness → Maintain or Increase Market Share

Hypothesis

H1 : Age has an impact on the consumer preferences on Nespresso products.

H2 : Gender has an impact on the different consumer preferences on Nespresso products.

H3 : Income and educations have an impact on consumer preferences of Nespresso products.

H4 : Better customer service procedures will improve customer satisfaction.

H5 : More diversification of product taste will improve customer satisfaction.

H6 : Sustainability initiatives carried out are made aware to the customer base.

H7 : Recycling facilities for coffee pods are made aware to the Nespresso consumers.

H8 : Aluminum is the most ideal material for Nespresso to make it coffee pods from.

Research Design

Both Exploratory and Conclusive Market Research designs would have to be made use of for conducting an effective market research project for Nespresso.

Exploratory Research can be used for the Market researcher to get a 'feel' of the problems. The research process is more flexible and unstructured which can be used to gain insights of data which is not easily quantifiable such as consumer preferences.

For better understanding and to get accurate measurements of what should be done, Conclusive research in the forms of Descriptive and Causal must be carried out on Nespresso individual and corporate customers for examining the relationships of the variables mentioned in the Analytical model.

Data collection Techniques

An **Online Focus group** maybe suitable for the collection of the data which is not easily quantifiable such as what Nespresso customers feel about customer services and uniformity of tastes. Since Nespresso operates in about 81 countries, an online mode of communication would be an ideal set up so that Nespresso can get a bigger scope of what people from different regions think about their product quality.

However due to the lack of interaction present in an online environment, participants may be intimidated or shy to voice out their true opinions and may show less interest to join the focus group.

To understand how aware and how Nespresso customers may value sustainability in Nespresso products a **Word or Completion Projective Technique** maybe used. An example to test this would be, 'The reason I buy my coffee from Nespresso is mainly because of its _____'.

For the collection of quantitative data, **Online surveys** either via Internet or Email can be used to gain insights of Gender, Income, Product variety and etc. These types of surveys would usually of lower cost and can be made to be visually appealing. Since Nespresso wants to collect data from customers across the globe, online techniques would be more suitable.However Response rates for online surveys maybe low when compared to Traditional surveys. Thus methods to improve response rates such as Prior Notifications, Incentives and Follow ups are vital to be used in order for more accurate data collection.

Sampling Design

Target Population

The Target population would be Nespresso Customers of both Corporate and individual sectors as well as customers of its competitors. Both male and female customers of all age groups and income levels globally will be sampled within a time frame of 6 months starting from October 2023 ending March 2024.

Sampling frame

A database of Nespresso customers who have previously ordered items online has been provided by the client and can be used to collect data of the **online** Nespresso customers. An **access panel** can be used to collect data from the Nespresso customers who buy from the boutiques.

A database can be requested from the competitor firms to gather insights on the competitor customers or an access panel can be used for that as well.

Sampling Technique

Due to the consumers being of all types of demographics (age,location), there is high variability in the population (heterogeneity) therefore a **probability sampling technique** maybe used. The stratified sampling technique maybe the best fit. This is where the population is divided into sub population known as strata which are homogenous within its group and heterogeneous outside. This method is a more precise method of sampling however maybe costly to initiate therefore budget must be taken into account.

Use of probability over non-probability sampling techniques such as quota sampling is also vital for inferences and projections about the target population from which the sample was drawn from.

Sampling size

The client requires 5000 Nespresso customers to be sampled. Since this a problem identification research, We can take the recommended maximum size of 2500 Competitor customers. Since Nespresso is having a large budget, a larger sample size wouldn't be a big issue.

It has been stated that the average online survey response rate is 44.1% (Wu, 2022). Assuming an incidence rate of 80%, the initial sample size for customers and competitor customers can be found as follows,

Nespresso Customers =   5000/44.1%*80% = 14172   participants

Competitor Customers = 2500/44.1%*80% = 7086   participants

A total initial sample size of 21258 participants is recommended.

Data Analysis

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) maybe a suitable multivariate technique used to identify how Age, Income and education levels may have an impact on the level of sales which in turn help them to know which category to prioritize to increase their market share.

Cross Tabulations may also be used to describe the association between the categorical variables. Thus we can be able to identify things like whether increased customer service facilities and increased variety of goods actually have an impact on customer satisfaction.

Constraints and Limitations

Nespresso has a large budget but requires this research done within a 6 Month window therefore the time maybe a limitation as effective data collection tends to take more time to be computed and more time will be required for analysis to provide the client with proper findings.

Proposed Further Research

The research can be extended to provide insights on different methods for Nespresso to increase their market share, maybe by increasing and widening their advertising campaigns on social media and their websites. Nespresso can also see for possibilities to provide non-caffeine drinks to cater for non- coffee drinker in order to increase their market scope and share.

Questionnaire

Nespresso customers' questionnaire

Dear Customer,

We at Nespresso strive to identify measures to improve our services provided to you and the wider society. In order to do so, your valuable feedback on the following questions will be greatly beneficial to us in order to achieve our intended aims.

On top of that, a complementary $25 Nespresso voucher will be provided to each of you that successfully complete this questionnaire.

Q1. How frequently do you purchase coffee pods from Nespresso?

    I.   Once a week

   II.   Once a month

  III.   Once every 3 months

  IV.   Other (please specify) _____

Q2. How enthusiastic are you on trying different coffee blends rather than your same old? (please select on the scale)

Not at all|--|--| Very enthusiastic

Q3. Do you have a Nespresso Machine at your home or workspace?

    I.   Yes

   II.   No

Q4. If the answer to Q3 was no, then please specify why.

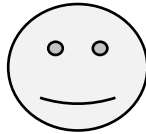Q5. If you have a Nespresso machine, how satisfied are you with it?
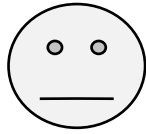
| Unsatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Very Satisfied |

Q6. If unsatisfied,Please select the problems you have with the Nespresso machine and/or specify it down below.

I. Machine is making only half a cup

II. Machine is making watery coffee

III. Machine is clogged and pouring slowly

IV. Machine is making bitter coffee

V. Other (please specify)

Q7. In the table below, please indicate your preference by ticking one of the 5 pointer scale below

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am satisfied with the quality of the coffee pods provided by Nespresso					
I am satisfied with the product variety provided by Nespresso					
I am satisfied with Nespresso's packaging					
I am satisfied with the customer service provided by Nespresso					
I believe Nespresso coffee tastes match my local coffee tastes					
I am willing to pay a higher price for a more sustainably friendly product.					

Q8. Are you aware of the sustainability initiatives carried out by Nespresso?

I.   Yes

II.   No

Q9. Do you recycle your Nespresso coffee pods after use?

I.   Yes

II.   No

III.   Sometimes

Q10. If your answer to Q10 was no, then what is the reason you did not recycle your coffee pods?

    I.   I didn't know about the procedure to recycle

    II.   I find the recycling process difficult to understand

    III.   I was not too bothered to send them for recycling

    IV.   Other (please mention) _____

Q11. If an easier, less complex procedure to recycle your coffee pods was implemented would you recycle your coffee pods?

    I.   Yes

    II.   No

Q12. Which category best describes your age

    I.   Below 18

    II.   18-24

    III.   24-39

    IV.   40-59

    V.   60 and above

Q13. What is your average household income level per annum?

|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|

Under $25000 $75000 $125000   Above $175000

Q14. What is your occupation?

    I.   Student

    II.   Work at a company

    III.   Work from home

    IV.   Other

Q15. What is your gender?

    I.   Male

    II.   Female

    III.   Prefer not to say

Competitor Customers' Questionnaire

Dear participant,

Thank you for devoting your valuable time for us in order for us to achieve our intended aims here at Nespresso. This questionnaire will provide us with insights about your coffee preferences in order for us to provide a better service for you and the society as a whole. Your responses will be kept completely anonymous and honest answers are highly appreciated.

Q1. How often do you drink coffee?

    I.   Once or more than once a day

    II.   Once a week

    III.   Once a month

    IV.   Not at all

Q2. Have you ever purchased an item from Nespresso?

    I.   Yes

    II.   No

Q3. If your answer to Q2 was no then, why haven't you purchased items from Nespresso? (You may select one or more)

    I.   Too expensive

    II.   Lack of variety in coffee blends and pods

    III.   Dislike the taste of the Nespresso coffee

    IV.   Haven't heard of Nespresso before

    V.   Found a better alternative

VI.   Other (please specify) _____

Q4. When you think of Nespresso, what is the first word that comes to your mind? (please mention it below)

Q5. How enthusiastic are you on trying different coffee blends rather than your same old? (please select on the scale)

Not at all|---|---| Very enthusiastic

Q6. Please rank the following major coffee producing brands according to your preference (With 1 being the most preferable and 5 being the least preferable)

1. Keurig
2. Tassimo by Kraft
3. Maison Du Café (L'Or) By Sara Lee
4. Nespresso
5. Ethical bean coffee

Q7. Please select the 3 most important factors you will consider when purchasing your coffee from a specific brand

   I.   Price
  II.   Taste
 III.   Variety of the products
 IV.   How economically friendly they are
  V.   Packaging
 VI.   Availability
 VII.   Customer service
VIII.   Brand recognition
 IX.   Other _____

Q8. How important are the sustainability procedures implemented on a product to you? (please select your preference on the thermometer scale below)

Very important
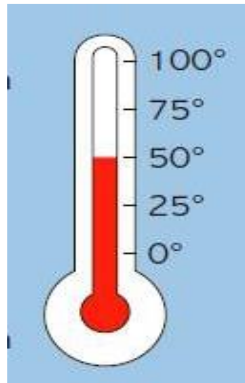
Not important at all

Q9. What further suggestions for improvement in a coffee consumed would you give us in order for us to improve our services provided to you? (Optional)

_____

Q10. Which category best describes your age

    I.   Below 18

    II.   18-24

    III.   24-39

    IV.   40-59

    V.   60 and above

Q11. What is your average household income level per annum?

|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|

   Under $25000 $75000 $125000   Above $175000
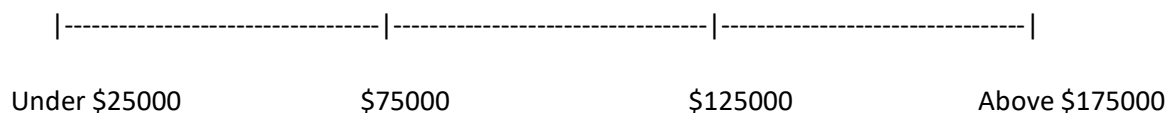
Q12. What is your occupation?

    I.   Student

    II.   Work at a company

    III.   Work from home

    IV.   Other

Q13. What is your gender?

    I.   Male

    II.   Female

    III.   Prefer not to say

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