

Assignment 2: Phase Two - Market Research

By completing this assignment, you will generate critical evidence for your Portfolio of Evidence (PoE), demonstrating your ability to conduct an in-depth export market analysis. The tasks are structured to directly address the specific outcomes and assessment criteria of **Unit Standard 243218**: Conduct an in-depth export market analysis (NQF Level 5, 6 Credits).

Focus of this Assignment: This assignment is strictly focused on Secondary Market Research. You are required to select one target country within the African continent and apply secondary research techniques to gather and analyse existing data and insights. This builds upon the foundational principles discussed in your training and the SWOT analysis completed in Assignment 1.

Assignment Tasks

This assignment is divided into four parts. You must complete all parts and submit the required evidence for each. Use the provided templates to structure your work.

1. Part 1: Research Preparation & Planning

Rationale: As stated in the Learner Guide: Planning for Exports, "Before you commit yourself and your company to the complexities and costs inherent in exporting, it is absolutely essential that you undertake some degree of research. The most user-friendly approach to Market Research is to break the project into scalable and orderly parts." This first part of the assignment establishes the foundation for your entire secondary research project, ensuring your efforts are focused, strategic, and measurable.

Task 1.1: Select and Justify a Target African Market

Based on your company's strategic objectives and initial analysis, select **one (1) African country** that you will focus on for this secondary research assignment.

Action: Complete the "Target Market Selection" section in the Research Plan Template below. You must provide a clear justification for your choice, referencing factors such as:

- Potential market size or growth trends (from existing reports). Existing trade agreements (e.g., SADC, AfCFTA).
- Geographic proximity or logistical advantages.
- Cultural or linguistic similarities.
- Perceived gap in the market for your product/service.

Task 1.2: Define Secondary Research Objectives

With your market selected, you must now define what you specifically need to find out through secondary research. Your objectives must be **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).

Action: Complete the "Research Objectives" section in the Research Plan Template. Develop at least three **(3) distinct research objectives**. For example:

- *"To determine the average retail price point for competing [your product type] in Lusaka, Zambia, by analyzing online retailer data and trade publications by October 30, 2025."*

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- *"To identify the top three potential distributors of [your product] in Accra, Ghana, by reviewing industry directories and chamber of commerce listings by November 2025."*
- *"To assess the import regulations and tariffs for [your product category] in Botswana by consulting government trade portals and customs websites by December 15, 2025."*

Task 1.3: Develop a Secondary Research Plan

This is your roadmap. You must detail the data sources, timeline, and resources required to achieve your objectives. As your Learner Guide notes, secondary research involves gathering data from existing sources like government reports, trade journals, industry databases, and company websites. You must choose the most appropriate sources for your context.

Action: Complete the "Methodology," "Timeline," and "Resources & Budget" sections of the Research Plan Template. Specify:

- **Methodology (Data Sources):** Which secondary data sources will you use? (e.g., Trade statistics databases like ITC Trade Map, government trade portals, industry-specific reports, competitor websites, online news articles). Justify why each source is suitable for your objectives.
- **Timeline:** Create a week-by-week schedule for your 60 hours of work.
- **Budget:** Estimate any costs involved (e.g., subscription fees for market research reports, printing costs).

2. Part 2: Competitor Analysis through Secondary Research

Rationale: Your Learner Guide states, ";When evaluating a foreign market... you need to have some good understanding of the competitive conditions on the market. If the competition is too hard there might not be enough room for new entry. Without this information, you risk entering the market at a disadvantage." This part of the assignment requires you to use desk-based secondary research to gain actionable intelligence on your competitors.

Task 2.1: Identify and Profile Key Competitors

Using your secondary research, identify **two (2) to three (3) key competitors** for your product/service in your chosen African market. These can be local producers or other international companies already active there.

Action: For each competitor, provide a brief profile in the Competitor Analysis Report Template below.

Task 2.2: Conduct Secondary Research on Competitors

Your goal is to gather information by analysing publicly available data. You must use at least **two** of the following secondary research methods:

- **Analyse Competitor Websites:** Systematically review their websites to understand their product range, branding, and stated value proposition.
- **Review Online Retailer/Distributor Sites:** Look for your competitors' products on e-commerce or distributor websites in the target country to find information on pricing, product descriptions, and customer reviews.
- **Search for News Articles and Press Releases:** Use search engines to find recent news, articles, or press releases about your competitors' activities in the target market.

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- **Consult Trade Publications:** Find industry-specific magazines or websites that may have articles or reports mentioning your competitors.

Action: Document your process. For each piece of information, cite the source (e.g., provide the URL and date accessed).

3. Part 3: Infrastructure & Logistics Investigation

Task 3.1: Identify and Contact a Logistics Professional

You must identify and make contact with at least **one** logistics professional who has experience with your chosen target country. This could be:

- A South African-based freight forwarder specializing in African trade routes.
- A clearing agent based in the target country.
- A logistics manager at a potential distribution company.

Action: Prepare an introductory email or call script. Your goal is to request a brief (20-30 minute) informational interview to understand the logistics landscape.

Task 3.2: Conduct a Structured Interview

Using the "Interview Guide Template" below, conduct a structured interview via telephone or video call. You must seek answers that will help you assess the country's infrastructure.

Action: Conduct the interview and record the responses. You must submit a detailed summary or a full transcript of the interview as evidence.

4. Part 4: Product/Service Viability Testing

Task 4.1: Plan and Execute a Product Test

You must design and carry out a small-scale test to gauge market acceptance of your product. Choose one of the following methods:

- **Product Sampling:** Send a physical sample of your product to a potential partner (e.g., a distributor identified in Part 3) or a small group of target consumers in the country. You must follow up with a structured feedback survey.
- **Virtual Demonstration & Survey:** Create a high-quality video or detailed presentation of your product/service. Share this with a targeted group of at least 10-15 potential buyers/users in the target country and ask them to complete a feedback survey.
- **Concept Test:** If a physical product or full demo is not feasible, create a detailed "product concept" document with images, features, proposed pricing, and branding. Share this with industry experts or potential buyers and gather their feedback through interviews or a survey.

Action: Describe the method you chose and document its execution (e.g., proof of shipment for samples, list of survey participants, copy of the video link sent).

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Task 4.2: Analyze Feedback and Recommend Adaptations

Once you have collected the feedback, you must analyse it to draw meaningful conclusions.

Action: Complete the "Product Viability Test Report" template below. Your analysis should be thorough, using direct quotes or data from your feedback to support your points. The most critical section is your recommendations for adaptation.

Submission Requirements

Upon completion, you must compile all evidence from this assignment and place it in Section 5: Workplace Assessment of your Portfolio of Evidence (PoE). The assessor will evaluate your submission against the criteria for Unit Standard 243218. Your submission for Assignment 2 must include the following completed documents:

- Completed Secondary Research Plan (from Part 1).
- Completed Competitor Analysis Report for 2-3 competitors, with cited sources (from Part 2).
- Completed Infrastructure & Logistics Report, with cited sources (from Part 3).
- Completed Product Viability Analysis Report, with cited sources (from Part 4).

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