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# Insights

## What to Look for When Choosing a Data Source



While decision-makers at many businesses have realized the power and potential of external data, many are still struggling to figure out how to source their data. As businesses use more and more data to inform decision-making, they're increasingly leveraging a new kind of specialist – a data hunter who can seek out and identify valid sources of external data. However, building that type of capability is challenging and it can be hard to keep pace as data source lists

grow. Additionally, finding good data sources in-house can be a time-consuming and costly endeavor for a business to take on. As a result, many organizations are looking to outsource their data sources. In fact, according to a [Forrester report](#), 66% of decision-makers surveyed said they're using or planning to use external service providers for data, analytics, and insights.

So how can a business be sure that they're using quality sources for their external data? Keep reading as we dive into a few of the characteristics to look for when sourcing external data.

## **High-Quality**

One of the first things to look for in an external data source is the quality of the data as this will directly affect multiple outcomes across your business, from informing decision making to influencing marketing strategies. Businesses will want to make sure that the data they're collecting has comprehensive and high-value text descriptions to make processes like machine learning and natural language processing easier and more accurate. Consider working with a vendor who can help you confirm your data source selections with industry subject matter experts and identify any missing data types or parameters.

## **Continuously updated**

No matter how reliable a data source is, it's vital that the data is updated regularly, and most importantly, that your business is able to access those updates. Most data sources are regularly updated as parameters, data types, business processes, and more, change. For example, any data pertaining to customer behaviors for a specific type of product are going to be subject to frequent changes as buying patterns fluctuate. Leveraging a full stack platform like Gemini can not only help your business make sense of disparate data sources and their changes, we can also help you move to the next – and more complicated – part of data analysis: connecting the dots and contextualizing the data.

## Relevant information

It may seem obvious, but it's critical that the data source you use is relevant to your business and industry. Gathering and using data that is not germane to your business could throw off your data analysis and lead you down the wrong path. For instance, collecting too much data from a niche brand could introduce bias into your data sets. When reviewing a data source, you want to make sure you're gathering information from across a spread of markets where there is relevant data. Comprehensive data sources such as Amazon or Walmart often hold vast amounts of data across a range of industries that could be relevant for your business.

## Strong online presence

It's important to make sure that your data sources have a robust presence online to help you make connections among your data. For example, product reviews and online discussions can be critical to making connections between a product and what customers think about it. Sourcing reviews and online forums can provide you with product details, customer sentiment, publication dates, and more, to help you identify exactly how consumers view a product.

## Conclusion

The use of external data in decision-making, improving business processes, and more, can help your company improve its performance and achieve its goals, especially if the data is high in quality, updated regularly, relevant to your business, and has a strong online presence. By looking for these characteristics in a data source, you can ensure that you are using the best possible data to get more reliable and effective decision-making results.

At Gemini Data, we've simplified the data analysis process, from gathering data from different sources to contextualizing insights to tell a compelling story, Gemini can be your partner in connecting the dots. [Reach out to us today](#) to see how we can help your business get from data to insights faster.

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