

MARKET RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR NESTLÉ NESPRESSO S.A.

by

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Statistical Methods for Market Research (ST3188)

1 March 2024

Word Count: 2,845 words

Executive Summary

The executive summary provides a comprehensive overview of the market research proposal aimed at enhancing Nespresso's position in the premium coffee market through product innovation, improved customer satisfaction and fostering positive perceptions of pod sustainability.

The proposal addresses key issues facing Nespresso, including the need to innovate its product offerings to maintain competitiveness, enhance overall customer satisfaction and promote sustainability initiatives. To achieve these objectives, the research adopts a multi-faceted approach encompassing data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Through a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative research methods, the proposal aims to investigate consumer preferences for new coffee blends and brewing systems, identify customer pain points and understand perceptions of pod sustainability initiatives. Statistical techniques such as cross-tabulation, linear regression, and cluster analysis will be employed to analyse the data and derive meaningful insights.

Expected results include insights into consumer preferences for coffee blends, identification of key drivers of overall customer satisfaction and an understanding of consumer perceptions of pod sustainability. These findings will enable Nespresso to tailor its product offerings, customer service strategies and sustainability initiatives to better meet consumer needs and preferences.

By addressing these research questions and hypotheses, the proposal aims to provide actionable recommendations to Nespresso, empowering the company to make informed decisions that drive brand loyalty, enhance customer satisfaction and maintain its leadership position in the premium coffee market. Overall, this research proposal offers a strategic roadmap for Nespresso to navigate the evolving landscape of the coffee industry and achieve long-term success.

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Background

The global premium coffee industry offers a diverse range of products to meet varied consumer preferences, including a variety of high-quality beans, specialty blends, unique flavors, and artisanal brewing methods. Nestlé Nespresso S.A. ("Nespresso"), a subsidiary of the Swiss multinational food and beverage corporation Nestlé Group, specialises in espresso-style coffee machines and capsules for home or commercial use, providing both convenience and quality (Nespresso, n.d.). Despite facing stiff competition from industry giants like Starbucks, renowned for its extensive coffeehouse experience and global reach (Preuss, 2023), Nespresso maintains its position through innovation and sustainability efforts.

Keurig Dr Pepper dominates the single-serve coffee market in the United States with its convenient brewing systems, while Lavazza, known for its high-quality blends and strong presence in Europe, presents another significant competitor (O'Connor, 2023). Nespresso's capsules, containing pre-measured grounds, ensure quick and quality coffee, reinforcing the company's commitment to excellence (Nespresso, n.d.). With a wide array of flavors and machine models, Nespresso emphasises both quality and convenience, solidifying its status as a premium coffee brand. Sustainability initiatives, such as sustainable sourcing, precision coffee consumption and capsule recycling (Nespresso, n.d.), further enhance Nespresso's global market position, reflecting its dedication to responsible practices.

Problem Definition and Research Objectives

This market research endeavors to steer Nespresso in maintaining its dominance in the premium coffee market through strategic initiatives focused on product innovation, customer satisfaction enhancement and sustainable practices, aligning

with its corporate objectives to gain competitive advantage in the industry (Porter, 1990). The research objectives are delineated to meet Nespresso's goals:

Client Brief Summary

Nespresso's overarching objectives encompass product innovation, customer satisfaction enhancement and sustainability initiatives. Methodologically, the research will target Nespresso and competitor customers primarily online, leveraging a database of Nespresso customers. Proposed statistical techniques include variance analysis, regression, factor analysis, and cluster analysis. Nespresso proposes a sample size of 5,000 globally, with specific attention to competitor samples. The research timeline spans six months, with adequate funding allocated.

Developing New Coffee Blends and Brewing Systems

Understanding consumer preferences for new coffee blends and brewing systems is pivotal for Nespresso's product innovation strategy. Consumer-driven innovation enhances brand loyalty and repeat purchases (Sharma et al., 2020). Firstly, research will explore consumer preferences for balanced flavor profiles and moderate acidity in coffee blends. Secondly, seasonal preferences for coffee blends and brewing systems will be investigated, considering regional variations globally.

Literature Review

Previous research suggests that consumer preferences for coffee blends and brewing systems vary significantly based on factors such as geographical location, cultural influences and seasonal trends (Fanarioti, 2023; Shibata et al., 2022). For instance, during colder seasons, consumers prefer rich, bold blends like medium to dark roast Mocha, often brewed using the French press, for warmth and comfort (Larry's Coffee, n.d.). Conversely, during warmer seasons, they opt for lighter, fruitier or floral blends via cold brew such as cold brew latte with elderberry syrup, providing a refreshing escape (Espro, n.d.). Next, in North America, consumers tend to favor medium to dark roasts and commonly use drip coffee makers and single-serve pod systems (Allen, 2023). Conversely, in Asia, there is diversity in coffee preferences,

with countries like Japan and South Korea embracing specialty coffee and lighter roasts (Fanarioti, 2023).

Upon conducting literature review, we have formulated our research hypothesis for the two research questions. Firstly, we hypothesise that the new coffee features desired are balanced flavour profile, moderate acidity and have distinct single-origin traits (Espresso Air, n.d.), directly supporting Nespresso's objective of developing new coffee blends and brewing methods. By understanding these preferences, Nespresso can create products that align with consumer desires, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and maintaining its competitive edge in the market.

Secondly, we predict that there are 9 clusters of new preferences:

1. "Rich, bold french-pressed coffee" – Cluster 1;
2. "Light, fruity cold brew coffee" – Cluster 2;
3. "Medium-roast coffee brewed by espresso machine" – Cluster 3;
4. "Light-roast coffee filtered coffee" – Cluster 4;
5. "Dark-roast coffee brewed by espresso machine" – Cluster 5;
6. "Light-roast specialty coffee" – Cluster 6;
7. "Dark-roast siphon coffee" – Cluster 7;
8. "Medium-dark roast single-origin coffee" – Cluster 8;
9. "Strong, bold specialty coffee" – Cluster 9

We further posit that these are the general categorical profiles of coffee drinkers based on the 9 clusters above:

Cluster 1: Preference during colder seasons

Cluster 2: Preference during warmer seasons

Cluster 3: Reside in North America (Allen, 2023)

Cluster 4: Reside in North Europe (Brommer et al., 2011)

Cluster 5: Reside in South Europe (CBI, 2022)

Cluster 6: Reside in East Asia (Fanarioti, 2023)

Cluster 7: Reside in Southeast Asia (Shibata et al., 2022; Ueshima, 2023)

Cluster 8: Reside in Latin America (Perk, 2019; Stellar, 2020)

Cluster 9: Reside in Africa (Ndeda, 2023)

In essence, the research hypotheses outline expectations about the preferences and profiles of coffee drinkers, directly aligning with Nespresso's main objective of developing new coffee blends and brewing systems.

The prediction that there are nine clusters of new preferences corresponds directly to Nespresso's aim of creating innovative coffee blends and brewing methods. Each cluster represents a distinct set of preferences, providing valuable insights for product development.

Additionally, positing that these clusters represent general categorical profiles of coffee drinkers further strengthens the connection to Nespresso's objective. By understanding the demographic and behavioral characteristics associated with each cluster, Nespresso can tailor its products to specific consumer segments, maximising appeal and market penetration.

In summary, the research hypotheses provide a roadmap for exploring consumer preferences and behaviors, offering strategic guidance to Nespresso as it seeks to innovate and differentiate itself in the competitive coffee market.

Improving Overall Customer Satisfaction

Enhancing overall customer satisfaction involves identifying and addressing pain points in product quality, packaging, and customer service (Kamburov-Niepewna, 2023). Firstly, research will define product quality, packaging satisfaction, and customer service based on existing literature. Secondly, overall customer satisfaction scores will be analysed to gauge Nespresso's performance. Thirdly, differences in satisfaction levels between corporate and individual customers will be examined. Lastly, factors contributing to customer satisfaction, such as coffee and pod quality, ease of ordering and delivery satisfaction, will be explored.

Literature Review

Existing literature emphasises the importance of product quality, packaging satisfaction and customer service in driving overall customer satisfaction in the coffee industry (Lone et. al., 2023; Speece, 2023). We have also found common issues faced by customers regarding Nespresso products and services (Maletic, 2023). Moreover, studies highlight the correlation between overall satisfaction scores and customer loyalty, with higher satisfaction levels leading to increased retention and repeat purchases (Lei, 2022; Sharma et. al, 2021).

Building Positive Perceptions of Pod Sustainability

Nespresso's commitment to sustainability initiatives aligns with consumer demand for eco-friendly products (McKinsey, 2023). Firstly, the sustainability attributes of Nespresso pods will be identified. Secondly, perceptions of pod sustainability initiatives will be categorised into major components based on consumer feedback. Thirdly, variations in perception scores between customers and non-customers and across geographic zones will be analysed to inform targeted sustainability strategies.

Literature Review

Previous research underscores the increasing demand for eco-friendly products and consumers' willingness to pay a premium for brands demonstrating commitment to sustainability (McKinsey, 2023; Forbes, 2022). Studies also highlight the critical role of sustainability attributes, such as recyclability and material sourcing, in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences (Jacobs, 2020).

By addressing these research objectives, Nespresso aims to strengthen its market position, foster customer loyalty and uphold its commitment to innovation and sustainability. The proposed research methods and analysis techniques will provide actionable insights to guide Nespresso's strategic decision-making and ensure continued success in the premium coffee market.

Research Design

This section presents a comprehensive research design tailored to align with Nespresso's strategic objectives. Our approach integrates exploratory, descriptive, and causal components, strategically designed to yield actionable insights into consumer preferences, satisfaction levels, and perceptions of pod sustainability initiatives.

Objectives and Information Collection

Our primary objective is to inform Nespresso's product innovation, customer satisfaction enhancement and sustainability initiatives. To achieve this, we will collect a diverse range of data encompassing consumer preferences, satisfaction levels and perceptions. This data will be instrumental in addressing our research hypothesis, which posits that consumer preferences for balanced coffee blends correlate with satisfaction levels and perceptions of sustainability initiatives.

Research Design and Methods

Our approach uses a combination of exploratory, descriptive and causal research components, drawing from both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data will be gathered through online surveys administered to a global sample of 5,000 respondents, ensuring representation across diverse demographics. Additionally, qualitative insights will be derived from focus group discussions, offering nuanced perspectives and contextual understanding.

Selection of Methods

We have chosen online surveys and focus group discussions based on their alignment with our research objectives and feasibility considerations. While alternative methods such as observational studies or experimental designs were deliberated, they were deemed less suitable due to logistical constraints and the complexity of our research questions.

Variables and Scaling Technique

Key variables include consumer preferences for coffee blends, satisfaction levels with Nespresso products and services, and perceptions of pod sustainability initiatives. These constructs will be measured using Likert scale items, allowing for nuanced assessments of respondents' attitudes and perceptions.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire is meticulously crafted to capture a comprehensive array of insights while ensuring clarity and brevity. Each question is strategically formulated to address specific aspects of consumer behavior, preferences, and perceptions, enabling us to unravel the underlying drivers of Nespresso's market performance.

In summary, our research design represents a harmonious blend of creativity and professionalism, tailored to deliver actionable insights that resonate with Nespresso's strategic imperatives. By integrating exploratory, descriptive, and causal research elements, coupled with innovative data collection methods, we aim to unlock a treasure trove of insights that will propel Nespresso to new heights of success in the competitive coffee market landscape.

Fieldwork/Data Collection

In this section, we outline the logistics of collecting primary data for our research, including sampling method, sample size determination, utilisation of supplied customer data and conduct of fieldwork.

Sampling Method and Sample Size

Our primary data collection will commence with a systematic sampling approach, meticulously tailored to reflect the diverse landscape of coffee consumers globally. With a specified precision level, we aim to construct confidence intervals around survey estimates that accurately represent the target population. Our proposed

sample size, adjusted for both incidence rate and completion rate considerations, is set at 5,000 respondents. This sample size will enable us to achieve statistically significant results while minimising sampling errors.

The sampling method employed will leverage both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Specifically, we will utilise stratified random sampling to ensure representation across key demographic variables such as age, gender, geographic location and coffee consumption habits. This approach allows us to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives while mitigating potential biases inherent in simple random sampling.

Our sampling frame will encompass a diverse array of sources, including online panels, social media platforms and customer databases provided by Nespresso. These sources collectively form a comprehensive repository of potential respondents, ensuring adequate coverage across various customer segments.

Rejection of Other Sampling Methods

While alternative sampling methods such as convenience sampling and quota sampling offer convenience and expediency, they are prone to selection bias and may yield results that are not representative of the target population. Therefore, these methods were deemed unsuitable for our research objectives, as they could compromise the validity and generalisability of our findings.

Utilisation of Customer and Operational Data

Any customer or operational data supplied by Nespresso will be leveraged to enrich our analysis and contextualise survey findings. By integrating these data sources, we aim to uncover deeper insights into customer behaviors, preferences, and patterns, thus providing Nespresso with actionable recommendations grounded in empirical evidence.

Conducting Fieldwork

Fieldwork will be conducted through a multi-pronged approach, encompassing online surveys, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. This hybrid methodology enables us to capture both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of consumer sentiments and preferences. Online surveys will be administered through secure platforms, ensuring data integrity and confidentiality, while focus group discussions will provide a forum for nuanced exploration of key themes and topics.

Overall, our fieldwork approach aims to facilitate comprehensive data collection, minimise biases and generate robust insights to inform our research objectives effectively.

Data Analysis

To effectively address the research objectives outlined in the previous sections, a comprehensive data analysis plan is essential. This section outlines the types of statistical analysis to be conducted, proposes multivariate analysis techniques and elucidates the methodologies, measures and expected results for each technique.

Statistical Analysis Types

The data analysis will primarily employ descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and multivariate analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics will be utilised to summarise the characteristics of the dataset, while inferential statistics will be employed to make inferences about the population based on sample data. Multivariate analysis techniques such as cross-tabulation, linear regression and cluster analysis will be deployed to uncover patterns, relationships and segments within the dataset.

Multivariate Analysis Techniques

Cross-Tabulation: This technique will be used to explore relationships between categorical variables. For instance, cross-tabulation will help examine the association between customer demographics (e.g., age, gender) and satisfaction levels with Nespresso products.

Linear Regression: Linear regression analysis will be conducted to assess the relationship between independent variables (e.g., coffee quality, pod quality) and the dependent variable (overall customer satisfaction). This analysis will provide insights into the impact of various factors on customer satisfaction levels.

Cluster Analysis: Cluster analysis will be employed to segment customers based on their preferences, behaviors and perceptions. By identifying distinct customer segments, Nespresso can tailor its marketing strategies and product offerings to better meet the needs of different consumer groups.

Methodologies and Expected Results

For cross-tabulation, Chi-square tests will be conducted to determine the statistical significance of relationships between categorical variables. The expected result is to identify demographic factors that significantly influence customer satisfaction levels.

Linear regression analysis will involve fitting a regression model to the data and examining the coefficients and significance levels of independent variables. The expected result is to identify which factors (e.g., coffee quality, pod quality) have a significant impact on overall customer satisfaction.

Cluster analysis will entail grouping customers into distinct segments based on similarities in their preferences and behaviors. The expected result is to identify homogeneous customer segments with unique characteristics and preferences.

Hence, the proposed data analysis plan aims to uncover valuable insights into customer preferences, behaviours and perceptions, enabling Nespresso to make data-driven decisions to enhance customer satisfaction and drive business growth. By leveraging various statistical techniques, Nespresso can gain a deeper understanding of its customer base and develop targeted strategies to meet their evolving needs and preferences.

Further Research

To bolster Nespresso's market standing and its business objectives, several avenues for future research can be explored:

Impact of Sustainability Messaging on Consumer Behavior

Research could delve into the various sustainability messaging strategies employed by Nespresso and their effects on consumer perceptions (O'Rourke et al., 2016). By understanding how different messaging approaches influence consumer attitudes and behaviors, Nespresso can tailor its sustainability communication efforts more effectively. Additionally, exploring demographic variations in responses to sustainability messaging can provide insights into target audience segments and guide targeted marketing efforts.

Emerging Trends in Coffee Consumption

Future research may focus on investigating the drivers behind the increasing demand for specialty coffee and plant-based alternatives among consumers (Maciejewski et al., 2020). Understanding the motivations behind these trends and their implications for Nespresso's product development and marketing strategies can help the company stay ahead of evolving consumer preferences. Furthermore, examining regional differences in coffee consumption patterns can inform Nespresso's regional marketing strategies and product offerings.

Qualitative Research on Consumer Motivations and Preferences

Qualitative studies could explore the underlying motivations driving consumers to choose Nespresso over competitors and identify areas for product and service improvement (Cleland, 2017). By conducting in-depth interviews or focus groups, Nespresso can gain insights into customer pain points and preferences, allowing for more tailored product offerings and customer service strategies. Additionally, investigating cultural influences on consumer preferences can inform Nespresso's global marketing approach and product localization strategies.

By embracing these avenues for further research, Nespresso can deepen its understanding of consumer behavior, preferences and market trends, ultimately strengthening its competitive position in the premium coffee industry.

Conclusion

In summary, this market research proposal is designed to support Nespresso's business objective of maintaining its leadership position in the premium coffee market. By investigating consumer preferences for new coffee blends, identifying customer pain points and assessing perceptions of sustainability initiatives, Nespresso aims to refine its offerings and marketing strategies to align with evolving consumer needs.

The research is expected to yield valuable insights into consumer preferences for coffee blends and brewing systems, key drivers of overall customer satisfaction and perceptions of pod sustainability initiatives. Anticipated findings include detailed profiles of consumer preferences, identification of areas for product and service improvement and an understanding of consumer attitudes towards sustainability.

We urge stakeholders to endorse this research initiative, as the insights gained will be instrumental in informing Nespresso's strategic decision-making processes. By

aligning its offerings with consumer preferences and enhancing sustainability efforts, Nespresso can strengthen brand loyalty and maintain its competitive edge in the premium coffee market.

Annex

| NESPRESSO MARKET RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE | |
|--|---|
| <p>Dear Respondent,</p> <p>We extend our gratitude for your participation in this survey. Your input is greatly appreciated as it aids our research endeavors, which seek to assist Nespresso in sustaining its position as a leader in the premium coffee sector through innovative and customer-focused approaches.</p> <p><u>Research Aims</u></p> <p>1. Developing New Coffee Blends and Brewing Systems: Our research aims to understand consumers' preferences for new coffee blends and brewing systems. By gathering insights into your coffee preferences, we can help Nespresso tailor its product offerings to better meet your needs and preferences.</p> <p>2. Improving Overall Customer Satisfaction: We are committed to enhancing customer satisfaction by identifying areas for improvement in product quality, packaging, and customer service. Your feedback will help us pinpoint pain points and areas of excellence, enabling Nespresso to elevate the customer experience.</p> <p>3. Building Positive Perceptions of Pod Sustainability: Nespresso is dedicated to promoting sustainability initiatives related to its coffee pods. Your perceptions of these initiatives are crucial in shaping Nespresso's sustainability efforts and fostering a positive impact on the environment.</p> <p><u>Confidentiality and Data Usage</u></p> <p>Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and any information gathered will be exclusively utilised for research objectives. Your involvement in this survey is voluntary and you have the option to withdraw at any point without facing any consequences.</p> <p>Your participation in this survey is invaluable to our research endeavors and will contribute to Nespresso's continued success in delivering exceptional coffee experiences. Thank you for your time and valuable insights.</p> | |
| | |
| Question | Answer Options |
| Section 1: Developing New Coffee Blends and Brewing Systems | |
| 1. Which type of coffee blends do you usually prefer? | (1) light roast; (2) medium roast; (3) dark roast; (4) flavored |

| | |
|---|--|
| 2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is flavor balance to you when selecting a coffee blend? | 1 being not important and 5 being extremely important |
| 3. Do you prefer espresso-based drinks or other brewing methods? | (1) Espresso; (2) French press; (3) pour-over; (4) cold brew; (5) others |
| 4. During which seasons do you find yourself preferring different coffee blends or brewing methods? | (1) winter; (2) summer; (3) spring; (4) fall |
| 5. Which continent do you currently reside in? | (1) north america; (2) north europe; (3) south europe; (4) east asia; (5) southeast asia; (6) latin america; (7) africa; (8) others |
| Section 2: Improving Overall Customer Satisfaction | |
| 6. On a scale of 1 to 5, how satisfied are you with the overall quality of Nespresso products? | (1) very satisfied; (2) slightly satisfied; (3) neutral; (4) slightly dissatisfied; (5) very dissatisfied |
| 7. What aspects of Nespresso's products and services influence your overall satisfaction the most? | (1) coffee quality; (2) pod quality; (3) packaging; (4) ease of ordering; (5) delivery satisfaction |
| 8. Have you experienced any specific issues or challenges with Nespresso products or services? | (1) yes; (2) no |
| 9. What are the issues or challenges you faced? | (1) pod incompatibility; (2) pod jamming; (3) inconsistent coffee quality; (4) machine malfunction; (5) poor customer service; (6) packaging issues |
| Section 3: Building Positive Perceptions of Pod Sustainability | |
| 10. On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is sustainability to you when choosing coffee products? | (1) very important; (2) slightly important; (3) neutral; (4) slightly unimportant; (5) very unimportant |
| 11. Are you aware of Nespresso's sustainability initiatives related to coffee pods? | (1) yes; (2) no |
| 12. Based on your perception, do you believe Nespresso's sustainability initiatives effectively address recycling, reusing, and reducing waste? | <p>Addresses recycling: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neutral; (4) disagree; (5) strongly disagree</p> <p>Addresses reusing: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neutral; (4) disagree; (5) strongly disagree</p> <p>Addresses reducing waste: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neutral; (4) disagree; (5) strongly disagree</p> |
| 13. Do you think Nespresso's sustainability efforts vary across different geographic regions? | (1) yes; (2) no; (3) not sure |
| Section 4: Socio-demographic Information | |
| 14. What is your gender? | (1) female; (2) male |

| | |
|--|---|
| 15. What is your age range? | (1) under 18 years old; (2) 18-24 years old; (3) 25-34 years old; (4) 35-44 years old; (5) 45-54 years old; (6) 55-64 years old; (7) 65 years old and older |
| 16. What is your highest educational qualification attained? | (1) primary school; (2) high school or equivalent; (3) degree |
| 17. What is your annual household Income in USD? | (1) under \$25,000; (2) \$25,000 - \$50,000; (3) \$50,001 - \$75,000; (4) \$75,001 - \$100,000; (5) Over \$100,000 |
| 18. What is your current employment status? | (1) working full-time; (2) working part-time; (3) self-employed; (4) unemployed; (5) student; (6) retired |

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