

Review

Market Research: The Process, Data, and Methods Using Stata, by Erik Mooi, Marko Sarstedt and Irma Mooi-Reci (Springer, Singapore, 2018), pp. 416.

Market research enables firms to identify customer needs and preferences using data. Since firms have performed market research for decades, several excellent textbooks sufficiently cover its basics. So why would anyone publish yet another book about market research?

Traditionally the focus of textbooks about market research is on the detailing of the market research process and the foundations of analysis methods. Increasing data availability, however, makes the application of analysis methods more appealing and more urgent than ever, which means that more marketers have to work with data and apply the concepts and methods that are part of market research. Overcoming the gap between the foundations of market research and its application using a range of statistical methods requires textbooks that are more tailored to the statistical software packages the market researcher wishes to adopt. This book contributes to filling this gap with a focus on Stata applications.

The book is roughly structured in four parts. Chapters 1 and 2 cover the basics of market research. It is clarified what market research is, when it makes sense, and who is responsible for conducting it. Research design, approaches to market research (exploratory, descriptive, normative), and the market research process are described as well. In Chapters 3–5 the reader learns about types of data and variables, data collection, and data descriptions, as well as the preparation of data for further analysis. Chapters 6–9 detail standard analysis methods in market research. In particular, the authors explain ANOVA, regression analysis, principal component analysis, factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and cluster analysis. Following the explanation of each analysis method, a section is provided where concrete steps for performing the analysis in Stata are exemplified. Finally, Chapter 10 offers recommendations on how to effectively

and ethically communicate the results to different audiences in written reports and oral presentations.

There is much to like about the book. The authors nicely combine the foundations of the market research process and the most important methods with hands-on examples of their application in the real world using Stata. The text provides sufficient background information about the methods and their application, but avoids overly technical language. Readers will also appreciate that the authors stick to the same case study to exemplify the different Stata analyses, which makes for time saving when working through the book. For those who want more, however, additional cases are provided as well.

The text further accounts for the fact that producing meaningful results and communicating them to different audiences are two different pairs of shoes. Many market researchers struggle to communicate their findings in a way that appeals to their audience. The final chapter on the communication of results should prove helpful in that regard.

The package is rounded off by supporting materials. Mobile tags, scattered across the book, allow the interested reader to browse further information about specific topics. The book is accompanied by a well-maintained web page where data sets and Stata codes can be accessed. Course instructors can also request further teaching materials on the same web page.

Writing a market research book that ticks so many boxes is a challenge that the authors have successfully tackled. However, illuminating the market research process, empirical foundations, methods, their application in Stata, and the communication of results also requires compromise. Arguably the biggest compromises made are a narrow range of long-established methods and a somewhat superficial description of some of them. One could counter, though, that additional methods and in-depth descriptions are covered in advanced market research texts anyway. Another small disturbance is that some of the mobile tags did not work when the author of this review tested them. Other mobile tags could have been better

embedded in the text for a better overall experience.

Overall, the book is a one-stop shop for market researchers. Sufficient background information about the market research process, basic empirical methods, and their application using Stata add up to a good choice for entering the world of applied market research. Hence, the book can be recommended to students (and practitioners) making their first steps in applied market

research, particularly when they work with Stata. Likewise, course instructors who deliver introductory market research and introductory marketing analytics courses will like the text and the resources that come with it.

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