

Job Description

Job Title:	Market Research Specialist
Department:	WatSPEED
Reports To:	Associate Director, Marketing and Digital Sales
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 9
Effective Date:	December 2021

Primary Purpose

The market research specialist is responsible for the investigation, identification, direction, implementation, management, and monitoring of the market research that forms the foundation of lead generation, digital sales, and marketing initiatives for WatSPEED. This research governs and supports decision-making, strategy development, messaging, and budget. The incumbent plays a vitally critical role in obtaining the market intelligence and data that underlie and inform the evidence-based planning of marketing and digital sales strategies directed at the achievement of WatSPEED's strategic business goals and key performance indicators.

The specialist will also utilize enrolment and client retention data to compare and contrast against marketing campaign engagement, conversion, and other benchmarks to map unique prospective learner journeys and understand and interpret key prospective learner decision drivers across digital channels. The specialist will evaluate the success of initiatives and will predict how to influence future prospective learner engagement.

Key Accountabilities

Develops, implements, and manages a strategic research plan that supports lead generation, digital sales, and marketing activities to meet programming goals for WatSPEED through the recruitment of new clients and the retention of existing clients.

- Responsible for developing and writing a multi-year strategic research plan to deepen WatSPEED's insights into high-potential markets.
- Proactively manages and executes the timely operationalization and delivery of all aspects of the overall plan, including the development of survey questions, the administration of surveys, and the plan for analyzing the results and formulating recommendations.
- Proactively ascertains the need for and instigates strategic research opportunities involving direct contact with target audiences, and then organizes and directs their tactical implementation.
- Plans and implement outreach activities to engage employers to gain market intelligence about specific industry sectors, and areas of potential growth.
- Plans and develops ongoing staff education and communications plan to share market research findings and implications for WatSPEED's strategic goals.
- Determines, manages, and conducts ongoing, timely research to ascertain the effectiveness of marketing, lead generation, and digital sales strategies.
- Determines and recommends specific, measurable, actionable, and realistic metrics that can be employed as indicators of the success of WatSPEED's strategic marketing and digital sales plans.

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- Analyzes the results of all research studies and writing clear, comprehensible, timely, documented reports that include appropriate recommendations for strategy enhancements and improved tactical solutions based on the results; meets with key stakeholders to ensure accurate interpretation and appropriate next steps.

Analyzes and reports the competitive landscape in continuing education and the areas of market growth that correspond to priority areas of lead generation and program development.

- Prepares and delivers any required presentations of research results.
- Investigates and conducts market research to support program feasibility studies.
- Following a structured, systematic, and consistent approach, manages and conducts ongoing strategic market research that investigates and analyzes how WatSPEED's competitors position themselves domestically and internationally.
- Plays a key role in decisions related to purchasing and implementing any future customer relationship management system, and in determining its optimal use as a strategic tool for supporting client development and retention.
- Manages all aspects of participation in large-scale surveys facilitated by the University or external groups.
- Maintains a detailed understanding of the information needs of WatSPEED, including the specific requirements of the marketing and digital sales, program management, business development, and other units within the department.
- Proofreads and copy edits and survey instruments produced by or associated with WatSPEED to ensure accuracy, consistency, and grammatical correctness.
- Maintains awareness of, analyzes, and understands all types of recorded data, including but not limited to key performance indicators, learner satisfaction surveys, and government reporting data related to continuing education and lifelong learning.
- Trains and supports team members with respect to the use of any data analysis tools.

Collaborates, advises, and consults

- Works closely with team members across WatSPEED to ensure the cohesiveness, consistency, and integration of research goals and plans with current strategies and messaging.
- Supports and advises team members and the manager, marketing and digital sales, in particular, with respect to any new or evolving research strategies, opportunities, and results as well as any analyses that may assist with decisions about priorities and long-range planning.
- Provides market research and expertise to a variety of partners across campus.
- Provides information and market research to the WatSPEED leadership team to ensure that market research is included in overall WatSPEED targets, goal-setting, and plans.
- Collaborates closely with campus partners to provide input and expertise and to obtain advice with respect to WatSPEED research requirements and initiatives, including but not limited to survey management and interpretation, market analysis, client analysis and information, regulations and policy development, forecasting, return on investment information, retention definition and analyses, and participation in large-scale surveys such as national reputation surveys.
- Shares research analysis, detailed reports, and clear explanations with all interested and affected campus stakeholders.
- Proactively shares information so that all WatSPEED staff can incorporate new information and techniques into their initiatives.
- Embraces supportive mentorship, professional quality, respectful communication, creativity, positive energy, and synergy in their work.

Understands and applies current, relevant research methods and trends, audience and market factors, and institutional knowledge and shares best practices and processes.

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- Keeps fully informed and knowledgeable about all aspects of program-related industry markets, industry shifts and trends, new and existing programs, visual identity and branding, client/learner satisfaction, and other issues related to clients, including all relevant research, marketing, digital sales initiatives, and how any changes impact the strategies for which they are responsible.
- Maintains awareness of any significant external and environmental marketing factors, such as reputational rankings and demographics that can have an impact on existing or prospective clients.
- Maintains a clear understanding of the characteristics and the needs of WatSPEED's clients, including their preferences with respect to completing surveys, questionnaires, and other research instruments, so that this information can be translated into effective tactics for enhancing research strategies.
- Keeps current with respect to best practices in research methodologies, as well as trends in communicating with WatSPEED's target audiences.
- Keeps current with best practices in continuing education and lifelong learning and shares knowledge within WatSPEED to strengthen the department's overall management approach.

Manages work flow and business practices

- Assumes management responsibilities for all research studies, including personnel, interdisciplinary project teams, resources, time, and budget, ensuring proper control of expenditures for the strategies for which they are responsible.
- Develops, writes, and follows strategic project briefs that accurately document all components of each particular research strategy for which they are responsible, and contributes appropriate updates to the overall marketing and digital sales tactics.

**All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- Bachelor's degree, preferably with a specialization in market research or a data-analysis-related-field, or equivalent experience.

Experience

- Experience in research, data analytics, marketing operations. Previous experience in reporting and dashboard development is an asset.
- Skilled at translating research findings and insights into effective marketing, digital sales strategies, and compelling stories. Demonstrated success in developing and evaluating evidence-based strategic plans.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Strong ability to understand, maintain, and address data quality.
- Proven ability to deliver timely, accurate, comprehensive, professional-quality data analysis reports.
- Demonstrated leadership and guidance in using descriptive and inferential statistics in order to understand trends, patterns, and dependencies with respect to a variety of strategic issues.
- Knowledge of industry markets, employment markets, and client satisfaction and retention issues.
- Superior oral and written communication skills as demonstrated by success in engaging, understanding, and supporting data users, including proven presentation abilities.
- Aptitude for presenting data analytics in an efficient, effective, and easily understandable way to a wide variety of audiences and users and with the use of numerous reporting formats and web technologies.

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- Ability to build consensus, foster teamwork among a variety of stakeholders, and lead integrated project teams.
- Strong organizational skills coupled with the ability to handle multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and excel in a fast-paced environment.
- Demonstrated ability to thrive in and contribute to an integrated and collaborative team environment and to apply a positive team approach to working with colleagues.
- Essential: flexibility, diplomacy, sound judgment, and relationship-management skills, coupled with the ability to influence and motivate others.
- MS Word – advanced.
- MS Excel – advanced.
- MS PowerPoint – intermediate.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, communicates with a wide variety of university departments and groups at all levels to the successful execution and integration of a variety of marketing initiatives in support of the overall goals of WatSPEED. Externally, provides clear written information for a variety of partners, and project management with external vendors.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Project-manages university-wide function or process; responsible for ensuring the availability of reliable research data relevant to the planning and reporting needs of WatSPEED staff and partners across the university, and for communicating easily comprehensible results that enable the development of grounded, integrated, evidence-based strategies to support the university's objectives; has a potential impact on how the university is viewed externally, with implications for reputational rankings.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Continually makes decisions about the most effective methods of investigating pertinent market factors and of obtaining and communicating research results that meet the needs of strategic decision makers, including the development and execution of all research instruments, the reporting of results in an easily accessible format, personal interactions and collaboration, work flow, consultation, and other key accountabilities; determines the optimum course of action to solve problems and to exert a positive influence on other stakeholders.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment; periods of extensive sitting and concentrated use of visual senses.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with project-management-level responsibilities, intermittent work outside the normal operating hours of the institution and occasional travel