

University of New Hampshire

University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

Faculty Publications

2022

Setting the Scene with Surveys: Using Polling Software to Demonstrate Primary and Secondary Data

Wendy G. Pothier

University of New Hampshire, Durham, wendy.pothier@unh.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.unh.edu/faculty_pubs

Recommended Citation

Pothier, Wendy G., "Setting the Scene with Surveys: Using Polling Software to Demonstrate Primary and Secondary Data" (2022). *The Data Literacy Cookbook*. 1525.

https://scholars.unh.edu/faculty_pubs/1525

This Book Chapter is brought to you for free and open access by University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact Scholarly.Communication@unh.edu.

Setting the Scene with Surveys

Using Polling Software to Demonstrate Primary and Secondary Data

Wendy G. Pothier, MSLS, MS, Associate Professor and Business & Economics Librarian, Dimond Library, University of New Hampshire, wendy.pothier@unh.edu

NUTRITION INFORMATION

This recipe bakes up an icebreaker activity that provides students with an introduction to the differences between primary and secondary data and how both serve a purpose in telling a research story. Through active learning, this short activity is done at the start of an instruction session to demonstrate the definitions of primary and secondary data and how both are used in research. Though this recipe is available in many flavors and packages, this chef usually serves it in the cuisine of business market research.

TARGET AUDIENCE AND NUMBER SERVED

This recipe serves a wide range of audiences, but the chef has served it to undergraduate business students doing market research in class sizes of 10 or more.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This icebreaker activity helps set the stage for the rest of the library research session on using secondary data resources.

Students will

- utilize secondary data in their marketing research project

- discern the different roles that primary and secondary data play in telling the research story

COOKING TIME

This recipe usually takes between 5 and 7 minutes at the start of an hour-long instruction session.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

This recipe references the frame Information Has Value from ACRL's *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. It demonstrates how secondary data add context and benchmarking to the primary data students collect for their marketing plans. It also introduces the concept that data have a fiscal value, as students learn how businesses acquire data to make decisions.

INGREDIENTS

- Students
- Polling software (This chef uses Menti-meter—<https://www.mentimeter.com>.)
- A related chart or data graphic from a secondary research resource (This chef uses graphs from Statista.)

PREPARATION

Create a polling slide or survey question in advance of the session. This question should relate to students. In this case, the librarian asks about student preferences for local pizza restaurants.

Find a statistic that relates to the student polling or survey question. For example, the librarian asks students about their pizza restaurant preferences and then later shares a statistic relating to national trends in pizza restaurant preferences. The instructor frequently uses the Statista database for finding topical data.

INSTRUCTIONS

To start the session, the librarian uses polling software to engage students with a hands-on activity. This will serve as the introduction to a session on finding secondary data sources. The librarian asks the students a question (see figure 1) regarding which pizza restaurant they prefer. Once students respond to the poll, which captures the data and displays them in real time to the class, the class discusses what we can learn from the results.



FIGURE 1
Example of primary data collection using polling software (conducted live in class session).



FIGURE 2
Example of primary data collection with another audience (previous class session).

Next, the librarian shares data from other classes' responses to this question and together the class discusses how the data compare (see figure 2).

Finally, the librarian shares screenshots of data from a library database (see figure 3) that looks at the pizza restaurant industry and provides additional context for how we might interpret the local data versus the industry or business trends. Does the industry data survey a demographic sample that is different from the class demographics?

The librarian asks students how location/ geography or respondent demographics, survey method, and sample size affect the survey results. This leads to a brief discussion of which factors (also called variables) might make secondary data relevant to their research story and how it will inform their collecting of primary data.

This demonstration helps students think about how survey questions vary between primary data collection and using secondary data sources. It encourages students to think about what is already known while developing their primary research study. The activity demonstrates the definitions of primary and secondary data through active learning. This activity also introduces students to the value of utilizing both primary and secondary data to create their narrative, as well as what secondary data can show about a topic to help businesses make data-driven decisions. It serves as an introduction to a full session on secondary research data resources related to their market research projects.

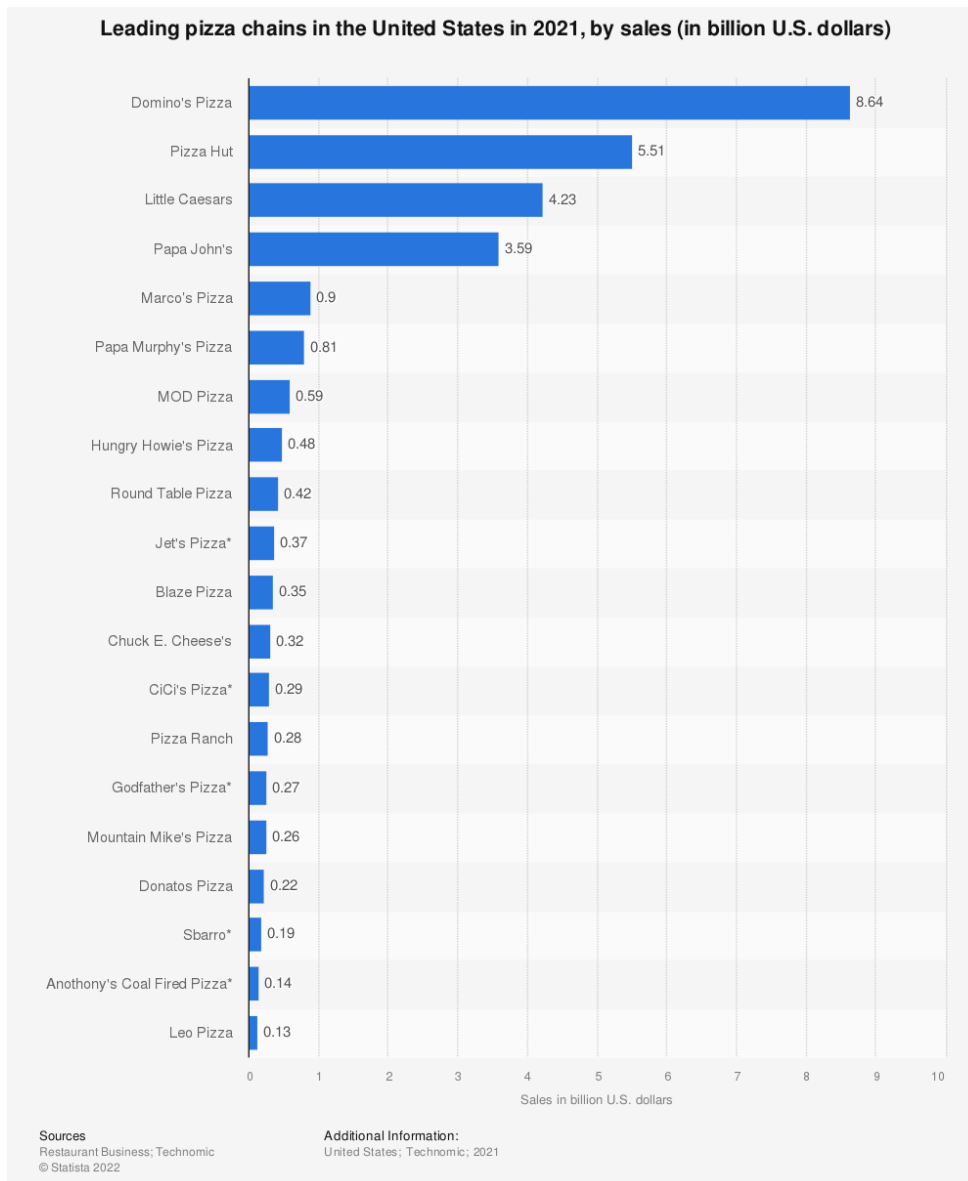


FIGURE 3
Restaurant Business. (August 3, 2022). Leading pizza chains in the United States in 2021, by sales (in billion U.S. dollars) [Graph]. In Statista. Retrieved September 04, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/261888/ranking-of-pizza-chains-based-on-us-sales/>.

REVIEWS/ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

For assessment, the librarian uses the polling software for a follow-up quiz question at the end of the session to make sure the icebreaker concepts were understood by the class.

ALLERGY WARNING

Students will need to have a laptop or other device to participate in using the polling software.

CHEF'S NOTES

The chef has conducted the icebreaker in a variety of settings—in person, virtual, and hybrid. The live polling software enables participation in all three scenarios with a real-time display of results.