

## External sources and storage

External

### Government and National Statistics

In most countries these are to cover many aspects such as:

- ❑ Market size,
- ❑ Imports and exports,
- ❑ Capital investment,
- ❑ Power consumption,
- ❑ Employment,
- ❑ Per capita income,
- ❑ Value of production,
- ❑ Commodity price levels,
- ❑ Money spent on advertising,
- ❑ Analyses of turnover in most industries, etc.

### Customers

Regular contact and discussion with customers can provide additional information in the area of competitor activity, new products and pricing practices. This can also add information regarding competitors' service policies and even the question of market size. This raises the necessity for regular

information to be obtained from customers. This information should be recorded with the cross-reference of its source and its probable accuracy. In the hotel and catering industry it is common for such surveys to be conducted, not only by the marketing department, but also by those who are in constant contact with the customers.

Questionnaires are often used in such areas as rooms, restaurants, reception, etc.

### Trade Suppliers

Suppliers of basic raw materials, or industry associations in this field, will often have information on trends which may have value in the support of forecasting decisions.

### Advertising and Competitor Activity

The regular observation of advertising media and competitor activity can provide much valuable information on products, new designs, pricing policies, etc.

It is obvious that many channels exist from which to build up a reliable information bank. However, the process must inevitably be long and continuous. Once a start in building the bank has been made, it is essential to maintain a consistent collection and record of data.

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