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Marketing electronic products is a very intensive process which demands the need for extensive research. In this essay, I seek to discuss the reasons as to why qualitative research methods are the best when it comes to marketing an electronic gadget such as the I-Pad. In this regard, a brief definition of the term qualitative research shall be provided as well as an outline of the primary methods for conducting this type of market research. Later, I shall provide a comprehensive discussion of the laid down methods in relation to marketing of the I-Pad.

Qualitative market research is a marketing strategy whereby a number of investigative techniques are used to collect information from a relatively small group of individuals with the aim of providing an understanding of why consumers of particular products act the way they do. There are four primary methods that can be used in this type of research. These are: Depth interviews, Focus groups, Projective techniques and Random probability sampling.

Depth interviews

In this type of market research, interviews are conducted on a one-on-one basis and it provides the opportunity to get as much personal detail as possible. In this type of interview, there is no particular structure and all the participants are asked questions depending on their situation and in line with the answers provided for previous questions. This type of interview would be very appropriate in conducting market research for the I-Pad because it will provide a general view of how individuals in different social set-ups and careers perceive the application of this technology in their lives.

Aside from this, depth interviews have the added advantage of getting the interviewees to give their honest opinion regarding the weaknesses of the I-Pad because there is no external pressure as would be the case in group interviews.

Focus groups

This type of research works by assembling a group of individuals who fit the profile of the target consumers and involving them in a moderated discussion. For the case of the I-Pad, the focus group should comprise approximately ten persons between the age of 18 and 35. The moderator will then ask questions related to the I-Pad and let the members of the group share their individual views. The individuals can be allowed to offer counter-arguments to the other members whenever a disagreement occurs.

Since the I-Pad is a young-generation technology, the focus group can be assembled online using the various conferencing options available.

Projective techniques

Projective techniques are basically unstructured incitements that encourage the participant in a question-answer session to give their sincere opinions regarding a particular item. For instance, when conducting a market assessment for the I-Pad, the respondents could be given words from the basic functionalities of the gadget and then asked to relay what comes to their mind on hearing the words. This will serve to provide information regarding the consumer's prior knowledge regarding the technology being used and how they can effectively integrate this information into the usage of the I-Pad.

Random probability sampling

In this method of market research, random interviews are conducted within a particular area without necessarily focusing on differential variables such as age and gender.

This type of sampling will work well for the I-Pad in order to establish whether the product will do well in the general market. This is because, like for any other product out there, the I-Pad is bound to generate interest from a number of individuals that fall outside the target market.