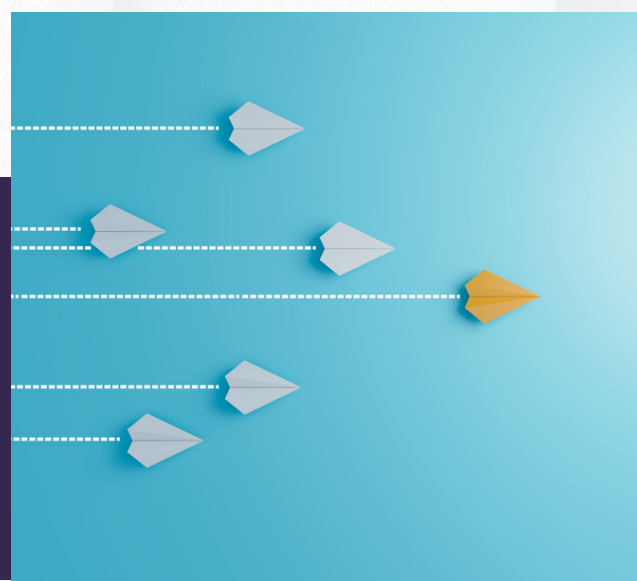




GUIDE TO COMPETITIVE BENCHMARKING

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Benchmarking is a proven method for improving your company's performance by identifying and implementing the industry's best practices. By analyzing the competition's business practices and product performance, managers can identify those areas where the competition is clearly superior, and more importantly, understand "how" and "why." Benchmarking is most effective when it includes cooperation among the competitors and direct interviews with the client's own management.

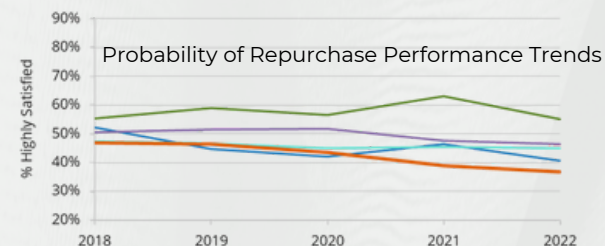
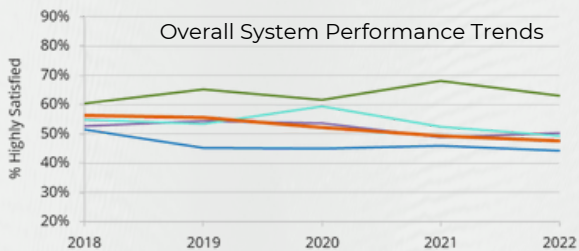
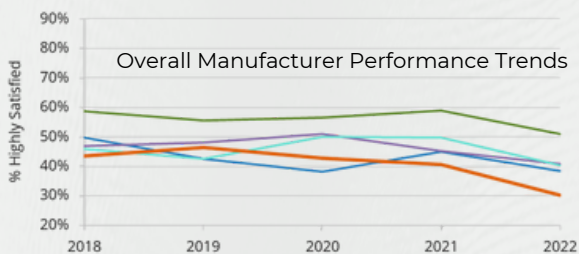
COMPETITIVE BENCHMARKING IS USED TO:

- Identify methods for improving specific product design characteristics.
- Understand relative cost position among competing products.
- Identify areas of weakness.

COMPETITIVE BENCHMARKING PROVIDES:

- An understanding of the long term potential of the market.
- Data to identify and evaluate new and existing market segments.
- Opportunities for establishing strategic partnerships and alliances.

COMPARE YOURSELF TO COMPETITORS ACROSS KEY AREAS



TYPICAL OBJECTIVES OF A STUDY INCLUDE:

Product Features

- Determine each competitor's share of the customer's budget for specified products.
- Identify percentage of off-the-shelf purchases versus custom applications.
- Assess of which companies are on the leading edge of technology and processes in this area of research.

Service Issues

- Identify substantial differences in the level of service among the major competitors.
- Determine competitor's typical response times.
- The opportunity cost of lower level of service in return for lower cost, or a higher cost for greater service.

Competitive Dynamics

- Determine if the competition offers any valued steps that significantly aid in the customer's research.
- Identify any substantial difference in quality among the major competitors in this market.
- Identify, and describe, competitor marketing/promotional campaigns that have been received favorably.

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