Enhancing Student Learning through Online Secondary Data Research – Illustrated by a Case on a Global Expansion Decision Process

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Purpose of the Study: To offer marketing educators a research guideline by which online secondary data research can be used as a means to enhance students' analytic capabilities for solving real marketing problems.

Method/Design and Sample: Based on a literature review, we develop a classification scheme for online secondary data formats, use selected formats to create a 2*2 matrix, and apply a step-wise process to a Scandinavian SME that produces a plastic-free chewing gum and aims for global expansion.

Results: The case application reveals the insights an online secondary data student researcher can experience when examining a specific industry through a step-wise process. The results also suggest online secondary data sources.

Value to Marketing Educators: The study provides marketing educators with a how-to guide for students to practice informed market analyses through online secondary data research. By requiring students to apply specific steps, data formats, and sources, marketing educators can enhance the quality of students' learning efforts. The suggested research guideline is scalable for use with small or large student groups.

Keywords: market research, online data, secondary data, global expansion, decision process, plastic-free chewing gum

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INTRODUCTION

Market research is in transition because of long-term technological trends (Cummins & Johnson, 2021), which include increased use of "analytics" - a broad term for using data and technology to answer marketing-related questions. More marketing research skills are needed for marketing generalist jobs that transform marketing data into transparent marketing decisions about a company's future products and markets (Reavey et al., 2021). Students with good analytic capabilities must be practice-informed to solve real marketing problems; collecting relevant marketing data is fundamental to marketing decision-making (Kurtzke & Setkute, 2021). In line with Reavey et al. (2021), our study connects traditional specialized global marketing research (including market data collection) to a marketing generalist role. We show how market researchers consciously can collect and analyze online secondary data to solve global marketing problems.

Drawing on Dale's (1954) and Bandura's (1977) classical works, Crittenden, Biel, and Lovely (2019) show that individuals "... retain approximately 70% of material when engaged in activities (e.g., practicing…)" and "... remember and learn 90% or more when they teach others" (p. 7). Given this, marketing educators can best enhance students' learning by having them practice online secondary data research and afterwards teach co-students their findings.

Unfortunately, online sources facilitate many "ready-made" analyses; therefore, ensuring that students conduct data collection and analyses themselves, rather than relying on existing analyses or Wikipedia information, presents a challenge. This article examines how marketing educators can use online secondary data research to engage students and enhance their practice-informed analytic skills to solve real marketing problems. In this context, we approach a key challenge that companies with a desire for global expansion must manage (Hollensen, 2020; Papadopoulos & Martin, 2011).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

Online Secondary Data

The secondary data concept is not new; several classical research methodology texts (Bryman, 1989; Dale et al., 1988; Hakim, 1982) offer secondary data

classifications. However, although it is commonly acknowledged that secondary data are defined as data collected for purposes other than the research at hand, no consensus exists on how to classify secondary data (Saunders et al., 2019). This hinders communication regarding secondary data's quality. Based on Dehkhoda et al. (2020), Hollensen (2020), Ninan (2020), Rosenwasser and Stephen (2019), Saunders et al. (2019), Singh et al. (2021), and others, we construct an online secondary data format classification scheme that differentiates eight format categories: time, numericity, modality, aggregation, scoping, formality, survey nature, and source variety. These categories can be used as a guide on which data types to search for as well as an evaluation tool for assessing the quality and appropriateness of a given data set. They can also be used by educators to formulate minimum requirements for any given data collection assignment.

The time format (format #1) concerns whether the data are longitudinal (meaning that they relate to consecutive comparable time periods, such as days, months, or years) or cross-sectional (meaning that they relate to a certain time point (also sometimes called snapshot), such as a specific day, month, or year). Either type can be time-stamped or not. The numerical format (format #2) concerns the data's quantitative and/or qualitative nature (do they for example comprise numbers only, including specific numbers, ranges or rates? - and/or do they include non-quantitative forms, such as text, video, audio, or images?). The modality format (format #3) details the numerical format's qualitative form concerning whether it is text or non-text (for example a video, podcast, emoji, photo, or pictogram). The aggregation format (format #4) concerns whether the data are raw and unprocessed (like revenues, interview quotes, and country GDPs), or compiled, aggregated, and interpreted (as in a consultant's report). The scoping format (format #5) differentiates between organizational internal and external data, whether the organization is a project, a company, an NGO, or a group. The formality format (format #6) concerns whether the data source is official and formal (like the company itself, the government, or a database provider) or informal (like a customer's review or an influencer's social media post). The survey nature format (format #7) concerns whether the data set includes census data (like systematic population data), regular surveys (like customer satisfaction reviews), or ad-hoc surveys (such as employee sentiment regarding a change initiative). The survey nature format is not relevant to all research topics, and may therefore be infrequently used. The source variety format (format #8) concerns whether the data are from one or more sources. See Table 1.

#	Data Format Category	Format	Explanation/Examples
1	Time format	Cross-sectional	Data related to a certain time point (also called a snapshot), such as a specific day, month, or year, whether time-stamped or not
		Longitudinal	Data related to consecutive (and typically time-stamped) time periods, such as a range of days, months, or years
2	Numerical format	Quantitative	Numerical data (whether specific, ranges, or rates), like number of employees, customers, markets, age ranges, or growth rates
		Qualitative	Non-numerical data, like a product description, an interview, a photo, or a drawing
3	Modality format	Text	Types of text, whether company reports, minutes, etc.
		Non-text	For example video, audio, photo, or emoji
4	Aggregation format	Raw	Unprocessed data, such as number of product lines, revenues, interview quotes, or a country's GDP
		Processed	Compiled, aggregated, or interpreted data, such as a consultant report
5	Scoping format	Internal	Within an organization, for example a project, company, or group
		External	Outside an organization, for example a project, company, or group
6	Formality format	Formal	Official data, for example from a company, government, or database provider
		Informal	Informal data, for example a customer's review or influencer's social media post
7	Survey nature format	Census	Systematic population data, typically on a nation's population
		Regular	Systematic data that are continuously collected, like customer satisfaction
		Ad-hoc	Data collected for a specific occasion, like employee sentiment regarding a change initiative
8	Source variety format	Single	Data from a single source
		Multiple	Data from several different sources

Note: Sources include Dehkhoda et al. (2020), Hollensen (2020), Ninan (2020), Rosenwasser & Stephen (2019), Saunders et al. (2019), Singh et al. (2021), and others.

Table 1. Online Secondary Data Format Classification Scheme

Global Expansion Decision Process

Previous research shows that SMEs often do not conduct global market research before entering a new product segment at the global level (Papadopoulos & Martin, 2011). This may be because relevant market data are lacking. However, today, better opportunities exist to collect relevant global market data. Figure 1 summarizes two key internal and external data requirements needed to solve the key challenge: *Should a company enter the global market with a given product?*

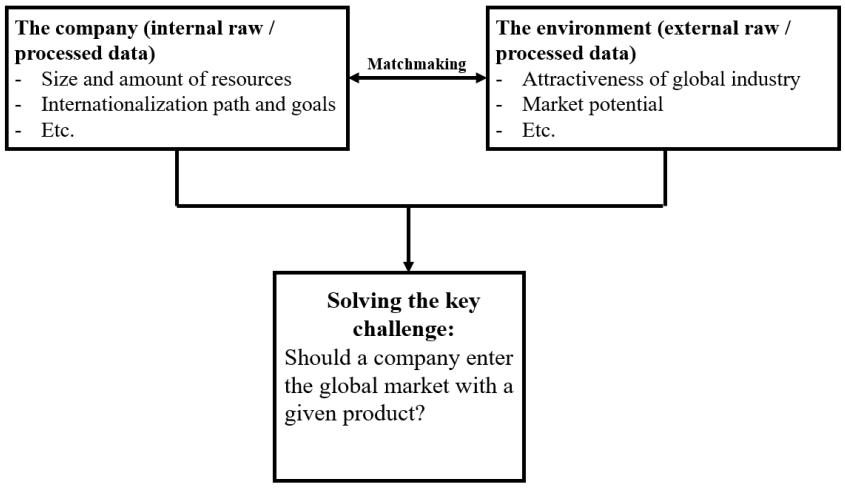

Figure 1. The Global Expansion Decision Process

Hollensen (2020) regards the global expansion decision process as a matchmaking process in which internal company data are compared with external environment data. Most companies conduct global expansion by entering nearby markets (countries) that are geographically and culturally close as this poses the lowest risk. Even if US markets are very attractive to European SMEs, the SMEs are unlikely to have sufficient internal resources to manage huge and complex US markets.

As shown in Figure 2, we make use of the scoping (internal versus external data) and aggregation (raw versus processed data) formats, resulting in a 2x2 matrix, where the two formats applied as the dimensions in Figure 2 are combined with research decisions on data collection related to the other formats, such as time (cross-sectional or longitudinal), numerical (quantitative and/or qualitative), modality (text and/or non-text), formality (formal and/or informal), survey nature (if relevant), or source variety (single or multiple), to assess both global and local market attractiveness. No rules exist on precisely which data formats should be applied or which data items to collect. However, the formats summarized in Table 1 can help researchers identify specific data items, establish appropriate data collection requirements, or assess the data collection.

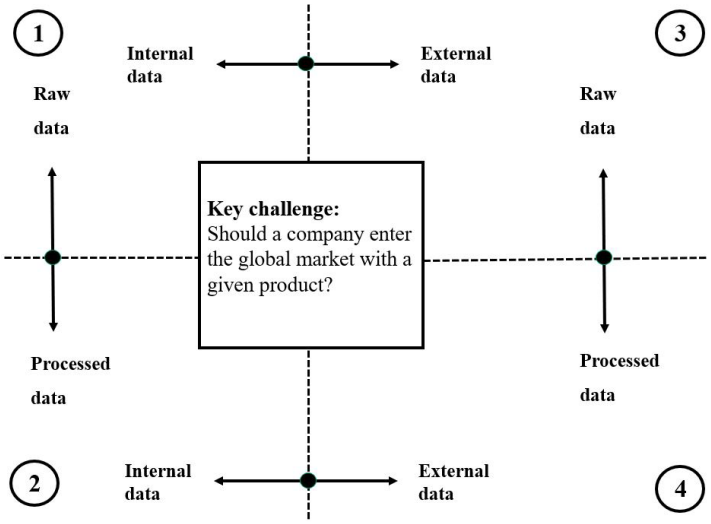

Figure 2. Online Secondary Data 2x2 Matrix for the Global Expansion Decision Process

As can be seen from Figure 2, solving the key challenge in the middle box involves data from four quadrants. Combining internal/external data and raw/processed data produces four data categories that can be covered by secondary online data. When evaluating the attractiveness of a given market to

determine whether your company should enter the global market, it is important to consider data within all four quadrants around the middle box. Appendix 1 lists relevant databases for sourcing data in the various quadrants.

CASE STUDY APPLICATION

For the case study application, we chose a Scandinavian SME, True Gum, which produces a plastic-free chewing gum and aim for global expansion. Using Table 1 formats, we provide data examples for the Figure 2 quadrants to demonstrate a process to solve the key challenge: *Should True Gum enter the global chewing gum market?*

Quadrant 1: True Gum Internal and Raw Data

Figure 3 shows True Gum internal and raw data items.

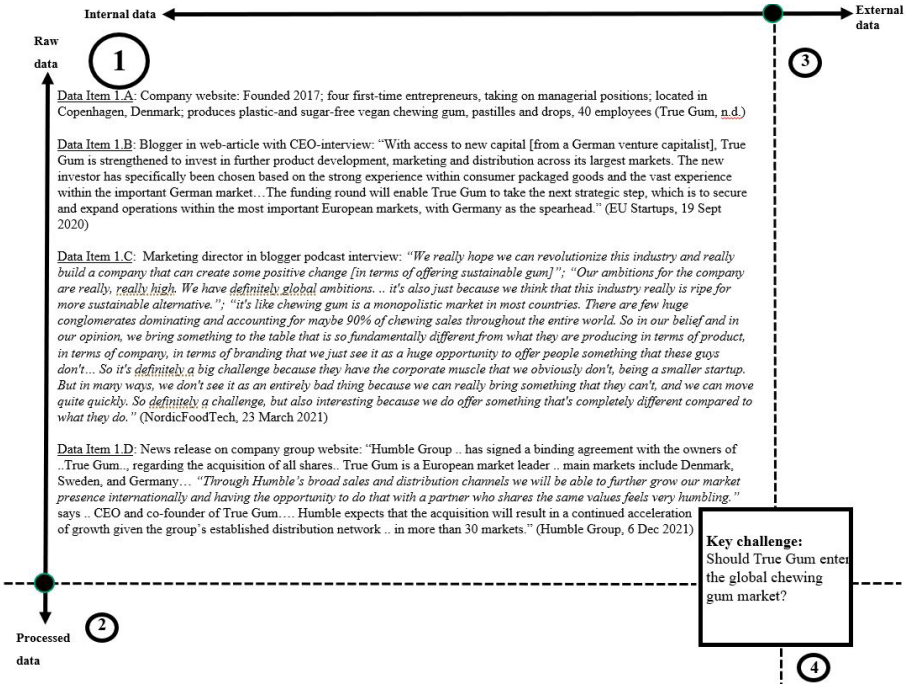

Figure 3. Internal & Raw Data Items Relevant for True Gum

As the data items in Figure 3 show this quadrant typically draws data from the company's own website. However, company representatives may also provide internal and raw data through other sources (such as YouTube videos, podcasts, newspapers, trade magazines, and other websites). Data item 1.D shows relevant internal raw data on the group's website (i.e. the website of the parent company). All examples are snapshots (meaning cross-sectional rather than longitudinal), and three are time-stamped. Further on, they are in text format.

True Gum's website (https://truegum.com/) offers many raw data, including quantitative and qualitative, and both text and non-text. The company was founded in 2017 by four young friends, first-time entrepreneurs, and university graduates, with no experience in the food industry. They had a strong vision for global industry disruption involving a product they developed themselves as well as they established a factory in Denmark.

We collected data items in text format for a qualitative content analysis by transcribing a podcast interview (Winther & Regnersgaard, 2021) and some YouTube videos, and by translating a Danish newspaper article (Maltesen, 2021) into English. This allowed us to cite a True Gum representative, the marketing director, without conducting an interview. By quoting his own words (and citing the sources), we minimized the risk of incorrectly interpreting True Gum's perceptions and strategies (e.g., their growth strategy).

In 2021, True Gum generated approximately eight million EUR in revenues and 0.5 million EUR in net profits (Cision, 2021). In December 2021, Humble Group AB (n.d.) - a Sweden-based food-tech and FMCG company, formerly Bayn Group AB - acquired True Gum for 23 million EUR. Humble Group is the parent of companies that refine, develop, and distribute consumer products globally. Acquiring True Gum was consistent with Humble Group's aggressive growth and acquisition strategy (Introduce, 2021). In 2021, Humble Group had revenues of approximately 318 million EUR, net profit (EBITDA) of 42 million EUR, and market capitalization (market cap) of 650 million EUR (by the end of 2021). The company is committed to enabling products and brand potential within functional food products, such as eco-friendly, sustainable, and vegan. Humble Group's technology solutions facilitate new formulations and recipes that improve the taste and texture of sugar-reduced, sustainable, and vegan products (Humble Group, n.d.).

True Gum is regarded as an 'independent' subsidiary (Newsy Today, 2021) under Humble Group

AB. As a member of a bigger organization (Humble Group) with around 20 companies in the consumer goods sector, True Gum gains access to more internal resources and a broader global distribution network. Humble Group also sells through online channels such as Amazon, providing new opportunities for True Gum to increase its internationalization by selecting attractive new international markets.

Humble's 2022 outlook indicates that they expect True Gum to generate approximately 13 million EUR in revenues and 2 million EUR in net profits (Cision, 2021; Just Foods, 2021; see also Data Item 2.B in Figure 3).

Conclusions and Implications of Quadrant 1 for True Gum

The data show that True Gum has the following core competences that may be relevant for the global expansion decision:

- Is an 'early mover' in the plastic-free chewing gum industry.
- Has a niche product developed on its own secret chewing gum recipe.
- Has knowledge about both the Scandinavian and nearby markets, such as Germany.

Quadrant 2: True Gum Internal and Processed Data

Figure 4 shows identified internal and processed True Gum data. Data Item 2.D in this quadrant shows that processed data may be interpretations done by an external source, i.e. it concerns internal data but a company external communicates about the data. Before Humble Group acquired it, True Gum distributed in nearby markets via shops in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the UK. Regular supermarket chains were also a True Gum priority (True Gum, n.d.).

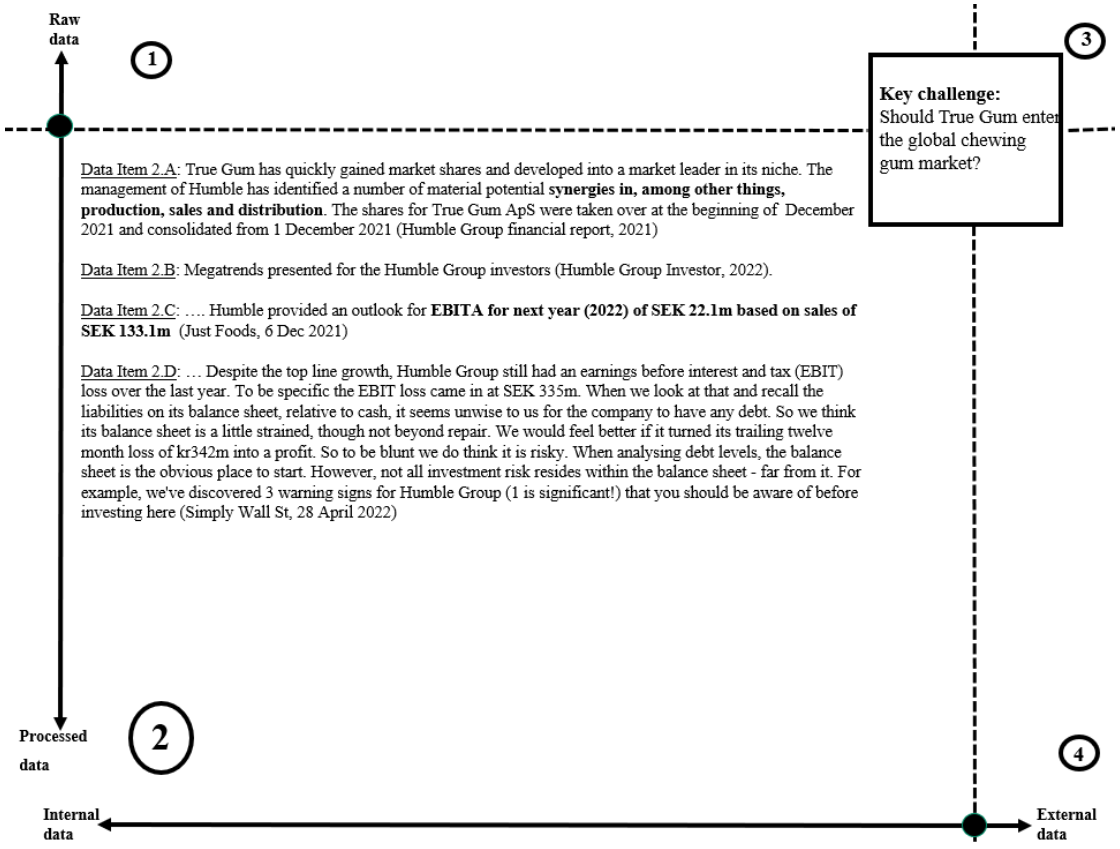

Figure 4. Internal & Processed Data Items Relevant for True Gum

The data show that several growth opportunities and synergistic effects opened for True Gum following the Humble Group acquisition. For example, Humble sales reps could sell the whole organic food product line (including True Gum products) through Humble's distribution network, including markets outside Europe. Humble could also expand its current True Gum distribution from around 3,000 shops to more than 100,000 shops worldwide (Cision, 2021). However, Humble's EBIT loss and relatively high debt level may slow down True Gun's expected internationalization speed (Simply Wall St., 2022).

Conclusions and Implications of Quadrant 2 for True Gum

Considering True Gum's core competencies (identified in Quadrant 1), the company could further develop (within Humble Group) via the following:

- Launch additional flavor variants and sustainable packaging within their core product line: plastic-free chewing gum.
- Expand the True Gum international distribution to cover the whole Humble international market network.

Quadrant 3: External and Raw Data Relevant for True Gum

Figure 5 shows identified external and raw data items relevant for True Gum. The examples in this quadrant are primarily quantitative; however, example 3.E shows that competitors' websites are also relevant.

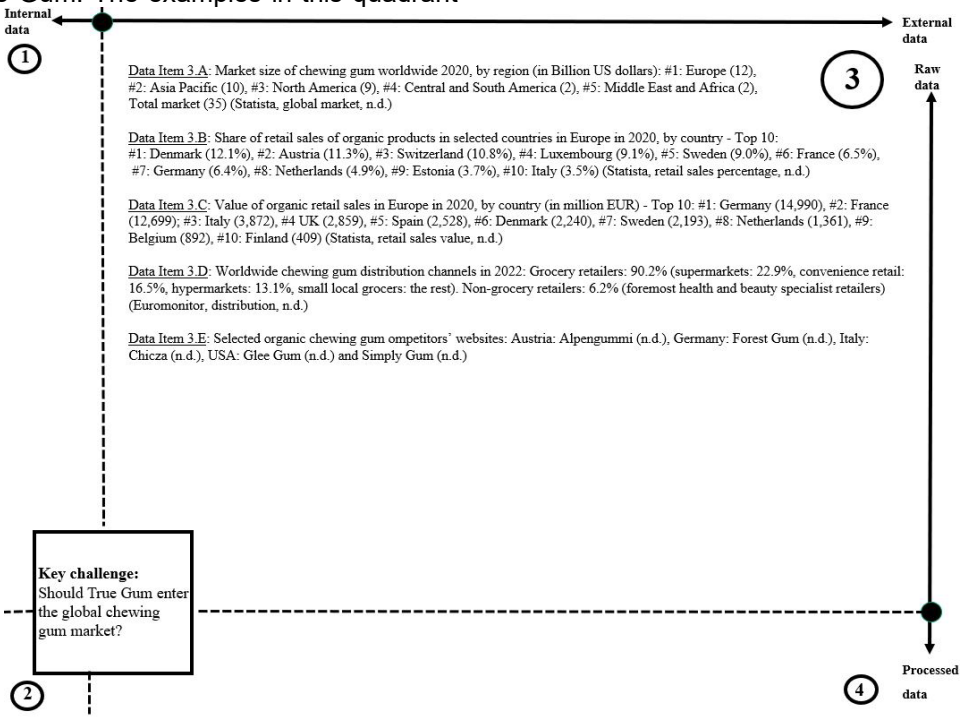

Figure 5. External & Raw Data Items Relevant for True Gum

The internal raw data revealed that True Gum is currently interested in expanding on nearby markets. For Quadrant 3, it was challenging to determine and describe the chewing gum industry for this quadrant because neither the product category nor the industry are clearly defined or named. Our research uncovered these product labels: plastic-free gum, plastic-free chewing gum, organic chewing gum, natural chewing gum, all-natural chewing gum, plant-based chewing gum, chicle gum, and more. Traditional chewing gum is also called conventional chewing gum and regular gum. These findings illustrate that researchers must engage in significant interpretation when searching for online secondary data.

Several international market selection criteria need to be considered when selecting True Gum's most attractive international markets (see also, Hollensen, 2020). Figure 5 (Quadrant 3) shows the following relevant screening criteria:

A. Size of international chewing gum markets (the entire category).
B. Share of organic product retail sales in different European countries.
C. Value of organic retail sales in different European countries.
D. Selected organic chewing gum competitors' strategies.

Criterion A indicates that Europe is the biggest chewing gum region (market size: 12 billion USD); therefore, the rest of the screening criteria must concentrate on the European market. Criteria B and C should be used in combination, such that criterion B indicates the European country with the highest sales concentration of organic products. Consequently, we expected the highest per capita consumption of organic, plastic-free chewing gum in **Denmark**, from which True Gum previously benefited with Denmark as their first market, where they launched their chewing gum in 2017. Criterion C indicates which market (country) represents the largest total market for organic (plastic-free) chewing gum. **Germany** is expected to be the largest total market for True Gum. Data item 3.E (see also Appendix 2) indicates the toughest competition; the US, the UK, Germany, Italy, and Austria have their own organic (plastic-free) chewing gum producers, so we expect more intensive competition there.

Data item 3.D (Figure 5) shows how general chewing gum is distributed worldwide through different distribution channels. Mainstream chewing gum is primarily distributed through traditional grocery retailing (90%), with supermarkets representing the highest chewing gum sales volume.

Conclusions and Implications of Quadrant 3 for True Gum

True Gum should focus on the Danish market to test new products within the existing product portfolio. For wider international expansion, Germany is recommended for future market focus because of the expected high sales volume of organic chewing gum.

Quadrant 4: External & Processed Data Relevant for True Gum

Figure 6 shows external and processed data items relevant to True Gum.

End-Customers

An increased environmentally-friendly agenda in all countries suggests a megatrend toward future market growth for plastic-free chewing gum. Sustainable, natural, and eco-friendly products are in focus (Data Item 4.A). Plastic is an important pollution factor (Data Item 4.B), and mainstream plastic-based chewing gum is a major contributor to plastic pollution. After cigarette butts, plastic-based chewing gum is the second most littered item worldwide. Seventy-five percent of people are unaware that conventional chewing gum contains a non-biodegradable plastic (Data Item 4.C).

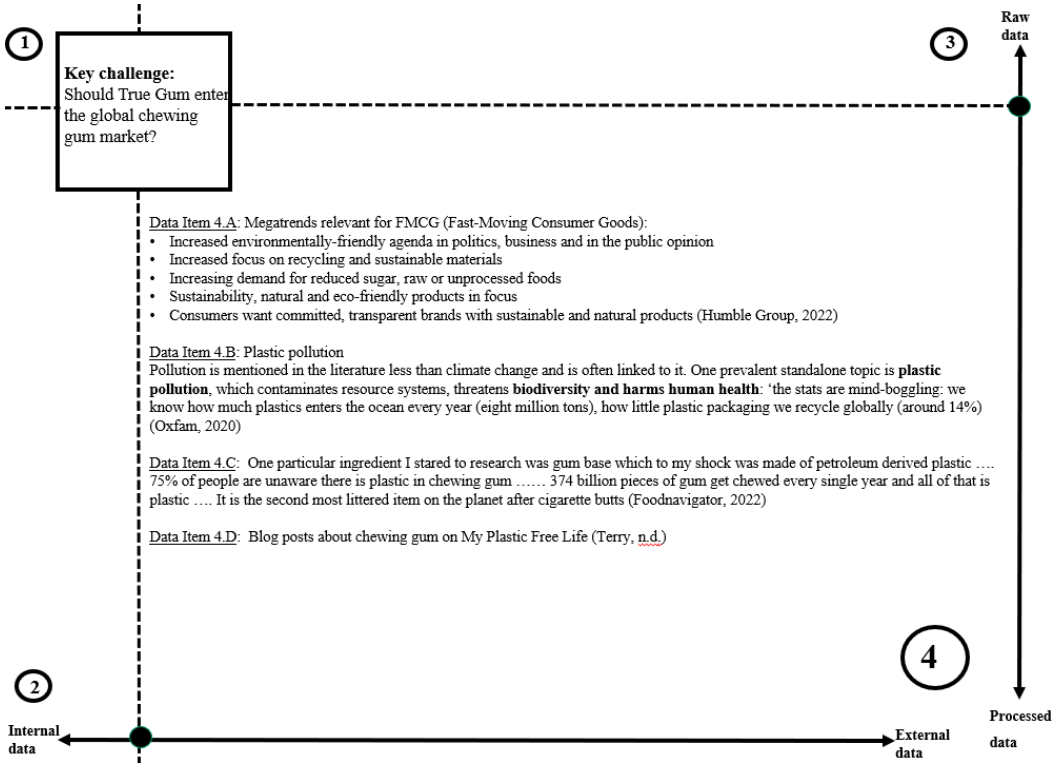

Figure 6. External & Processed Data Items Relevant for True Gum

True Gum's distributor data indicate that it targets consumers of regular gum in all its markets. This differs from some of their plastic-free competitors that address end-customers (through web shops on plastic-free websites or organic food stores) that are already pursuing a plastic-free lifestyle.

Distribution

As mentioned above, our distributor data analysis reveals that the various plastic-free companies differ in their choice of distribution channels. One has chosen to enter the international market through a web shop on a plastic-free site, whereas another has chosen to offer the product to an international audience through Amazon. However, True Gum has prioritized regular supermarket chains; conversely, other plastic-free gum producers have chosen organic retail stores and chains, or restaurants, cafés, and hotels. True Gum representatives mention festivals (e.g., music festivals) and fairs as product outlets. They are also working with a German investor to address specific German market distribution channels. Another source mentions their current entrance into the UK market (True Gum, n.d.).

Competitors

In analyzing True Gum's competitors, we had to choose between a narrow focus on plastic-free chewing gum manufacturers or a broad focus on the entire chewing gum industry. As True Gum representatives state that they aim to disrupt the chewing gum market, we chose to conduct a broad industry analysis. However, as some plastic-free gum competitors have successfully chosen distribution channels, we also conducted a narrow competitor analysis.

We identified Statista.com and Euromonitor.com (see Appendix 1) as excellent broad industry analysis sources (see Table 2). The 2021 global chewing gum market was worth 35 billion USD and was projected to grow at a 4% rate between 2021 and 2026 (Statista, n.d.). Although the chewing gum market is highly competitive, it is dominated by multinational players, including Mars Wrigley Confectionery, Mondelez International (including Cadbury), Perfetti Van Melle, and Lotte (with high market shares in the Far East). The remaining 28% market share is divided among more than 200 small chewing gum manufacturers. Cadbury, formerly Cadbury's and Cadbury Schweppes, was a British multinational confectionery company that also manufactured chewing gum (e.g., the Stimorol brand), but it is now fully owned by Mondelez International (originally Kraft Foods) (Euromonitor, n.d.; Statista, n.d.).

Company	HQ country	Global market share (in %)	Brands (most well-known)
Mars (Wrigley)	USA	34	Extra, Orbit
Mondelez International (former Cadbury Schweppes)	USA & UK	22	Trident, Dentyne, Dirol, Clorets
Perfetti Van Melle	Italy	9	Mentos, Vivident
Lotte	South Korea	4	Xylitol, Black
Hershey Co.	USA	3	Ice Breakers, '5'
Others (200+ manufacturers)		28	
Total market		**100 (USD 35 billion)**	

Note: Estimated by the authors, based on Statista.com and Euromonitor.com, especially Euromonitor, distribution (2022).

Table 2. The Global Chewing Gum Industry (2021) with the Major Multinational Players

For the narrow focus (i.e., specific to plastic-free chewing gum manufacturers), it was difficult to find processed data because established databases did not offer any analyses specific to plastic-free chewing gum. However, we found a website established by a plastic-free living advocate (Terry, n.d.), which is continuously updated by the author and followers. The fact that many plastic-free companies are closing down shortly after their appearance on the market, quickly outdates the narrow industry analysis, which is a challenge to the researcher (see Appendix 2: True Gum's Competitors on Plastic-Free Chewing Gum).

In the US organic chewing gum market, Simply Gum (n.d.), which offers a product range similar to True Gum's, is regarded as the number one, and the older Glee Gum (n.d.) is number two. In addition to the companies listed in Appendix 2, many more organic chewing gum companies have started and closed, such as Green Tree Gum Co, an American company founded in 2014–15 and closed in 2016 (Terry, n.d.), and Train Gum, an American company founded in 2012 (Terry, n.d.). Other organic brands focus on a niche market in the form of dental care, such as Zellie's (n.d.) and Spry (n.d.).

Conclusions and Implications of Quadrant 4 for True Gum

As a European market leader in the plastic-free chewing gum niche, True Gum should consider (in key target markets, like Germany) how to increase general awareness of environmental pollution involving the non-biodegradable plastic in conventional chewing gum. This can be done through social media marketing campaigns using a network of influencers that publish documented stories about:

- The environmental damage caused by plastic-based chewing gum.
- The potential damage to the human body from chewing plastic-based gum.

As plastic-free chewing gum represents a narrow segment, it requires a narrower distribution strategy that focuses more on organic and health-care-oriented distribution channels, such as organic retail shop chains in target markets, including more focus on retail customers, such as Alnatura (a 'Bio-Lebensmittel' retail chain in Germany).

Answers to the Case Study Key Challenge

The case study aimed to use online secondary data research to answer the key challenge: *Should True Gum enter the global chewing gum market?*

By applying the online secondary data 2x2 matrix as a process tool to guide a global expansion decision (Figure 2), moving from Quadrant 1 to Quadrant 4 provides more specific implications for the potential global expansion. Whereas Quadrant 1 only provides general indications for True Gum's core competencies and competitive advantage, moving toward Quadrant 4 results in more specific implications for the decision about True Gum's future global expansion.

Consumers are becoming increasingly health- and environment-conscious; opting for products with natural (organic) ingredients (Statista Retail Sales Value, n.d.). Consequently, more players are launching gums that are free from synthetic polymers (plastic) and are healthier for people and the environment (Statista, n.d.).

We estimate based on data from Statista.com and Euromonitor.com that this fast-growing, but very fragmented, chewing gum segment is worth roughly 175 million USD, or approximately 0.5% of the total global chewing gum market (see Table 2). Although it is a relatively small segment, it is showing high growth as consumers become more interested in climate change, sustainability, and plastic waste. Conscious consumers are choosing products with biodegradable properties that do not include plastic. There are also broader concerns regarding higher costs that city councils and other government entities must bear to clean gum litter from the streets. The millions of dollars spent annually for this clean-up creates financial pressure, prompting government councils to suggest that gum manufacturers should bear a portion of the clean-up costs.

The key challenge conclusions are:

- There is an attractive global market for True Gum's product. No big chewing gum manufacturers have focused on this organic part of the market; hence, there is room for True Gum to expand its global market share via Humble Group's wide international distribution network.
- Regarding international market selection, Humble Group's acquisition of True Gum provides increased internationalization

opportunities. True Gum could also consider the huge and attractive US market. However, we still consider that there is not a good match between the True Gum product (including the organization behind it, Humble Group) and the external variables for entering the US market. Currently, the competitive situation in US organic chewing gum is tough, and too many company resources would be needed to penetrate the US market. Instead, we recommend that True Gum (together with Humble Group) concentrates on the nearby Northern European markets, such as Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, and Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark), where the cultural distance to True Gum's home country is relatively low. Here the 'match' between True Gum (including Humble Group) and the international markets variables would also be better.

- When considering the number one ranked market (Germany), True Gum should increase general awareness of environmental pollution from non-biodegradable plastic in conventional chewing gum by developing a social media marketing campaign that uses a network of market influencers. Furthermore, True Gum should develop a narrower distribution channel strategy with more focus on organic and health-care-oriented distribution channels, like organic offline retail shops, combined with some related online web shops.

The above conclusions are consistent with Marreiros et al.'s (2021) study, which concluded that countries differ in their attitudes toward organic food products. Organic food product knowledge also differs across countries, which is an important segmentation factor; it may explain why Northern Europe is more attractive to True Gum than Southern Europe. In addition, consumers with a sustainable and health-conscious lifestyle are likely more willing to pay a premium price for organic and plastic-free chewing gum, such as True Gum (Gazdecki et al., 2021; Van Huy et al., 2019).

SUMMARY

Our case study application shows that company websites and company financial reports provide basic raw, internal company data, such as headquarters location, number of employees, product lines, revenues, net profits, and worldwide subsidiaries. However, external sources offer numerous raw bits and pieces as well, such as direct quotes from company representatives through interviews in podcasts, newspapers, and trade magazines. In addition, both internal and external processed data are important ingredients to high-quality, detailed analyses.

Conducting a data collection and analysis process that involves moving from Quadrant 1 to 4 in the suggested 2x2 Matrix (Figure 2) for the global expansion decision provides stepwise more and more specific input for global marketing strategy development. Whereas Quadrant 1 only provides general indications for a company's core competencies and competitive advantage, the closer we get to the Quadrant 4, the more specific implications we can generate regarding the decision about the company's future global expansion.

By practicing structured and guided analyses on real cases using online secondary data and (ideally) presenting results to other students in a teaching mode, marketing educators can enhance student learning. We find that students are especially motivated to work with SMEs in dynamic and new industries.

It is our hope that this guide also will help educators enhance student learning in other fields through online secondary data research.

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Appendix 1. Suggestions for Online Secondary Databases

Source	**Description / Website**	Quadrant 1 Internal & Raw	Quadrant 2 Internal & Processed	Quadrant 3 External & Raw	Quadrant 4 External & Processed
Orbis - Bureau van Dijk - A Moody's Analytics company	Company financial figures https://www.bvdinfo.com/en-gb/	x			
Euromonitor International / Passport	Industry, country & company reports https://www.euromonitor.com/our-expertise/	x	x	x	x
Marketline	Company & market intelligence reports https://www.marketline.com	x	x	x	x
Statista	Company & industry reports https://www.statista.com/markets/	x	x	x	x
Eurostat	EU statistics (countries) https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/main https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database			x	
IMF	Economic outlook & data maps https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/SPROLLs/world-economic-outlook-databases#sort=%40imfdate%20descending			x	
OECD database	Country trade data https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/trade/data/international-trade-by-commodity-statistics_itcs-data-en			x	
UN database	UN member info & trade data http://data.un.org/Default.aspx https://comtrade.un.org/data/			x	

World Bank Database	Global statistics & info on GDP total / GDP per cap. in all countries https://data.worldbank.org/ https://databank.worldbank.org/home.aspx https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD?cid=DEC_SS_WBGDataDelicious_EXT		x	
CIA - The World Factbook	Global facts & country reports https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/		x	x
Dun & Bradstreet	Consumer intelligence data https://www.dnb.com/en-gb/products-and-services/consumer-intelligence/		x	x
ARC Market Analysis Workbooks and Studies	Market & distribution studies https://www.arcweb.com/market-studies?matchtype=b&device=c&gclid=Cj0KCQiAy4eNBhCaARIsAFDVtI2MaKJ2PYTtE0tctctr2WO_DD1zrC0HooOEAoxoS05yp4VMdbN0iUIaAuy5EALw_wc			x

Appendix 2. True Gum's Core Competitors on Plastic-Free Chewing Gum

Year Founded	Company	HQ Country	Description
1995	Glee Gum www.gleegum.com	USA	The natural chewing gum product, Glee Gum, is made without plastic, and without preservatives, artificial flavorings, colorings, or sweeteners. According to its website, it is the only Non-GMO Project Verified gum on the market, with six classic flavors that are also non-GMO gums. Plus, Glee Gum is distinctive in its use of natural chicle in its gum base, which helps sustain the rainforest. Glee Gum was earlier owned by Verve Inc., but in October 2021 the brand was acquired by Mazee Foods LLC, based in New Jersey, USA, an affiliate of Morgan Williams International, based in Toronto Canada. Glee Gum is currently the #2 natural gum in the USA.
2009	Chicza www.chicza.com/en/	Italy	This chewing gum is made in Mexico by *chicleros*, farmers who harvest the gum from Chicozapote trees in the Mayan rainforest; these living trees can produce gum continuously for up to 300 years. The gum contains only five ingredients. Shortly after Chicza Organic chewing gum was launched in Italy, Portugal, the UK, and other European countries. Chicza gum is biodegradable and dissolves to dust within a week or so after chewing.

2014	Simply Gum www.simplygum.com	USA	One of the most innovative companies in organic chewing gum. The New York-based company offers a range of organic chewing gum taste variants. Today the company has 26 employees and generated a revenue of approx. $5 million in 2020. The company was founded by Caron Proschan, an MBA graduate from Harvard Business School. She is also CEO of Simply Gum, which is now found in over 10,000 stores across the US market, including Whole Foods, Kroger, GNC, Vitamin Shoppe, Urban Outfitters, Cost Plus World Market, and more. Simply Gum has also launched a product line of breath mints.
2018	Chewsy www.chewsygum.com	UK	Founded by Sunitt Halai. Chewsy gum is sold in 17 countries, with exports accounting for 40% of its turnover.
2019	Forest Gum www.forestgum.de	Germany	Founded by Thomas Krämer, who has a good track record with alternative food products through work with two successful German brands, ChariTea and Viva Con Aqua. Forest Gum contains no sugar, artificial aromas, synthetic additives, or plastic. It is already available for purchase in several major German supermarket chains.
2019	Alpengummi www.alpengummi.at/en	Austria	Founded by Claudia Bergero and Sandra Falkner. Sourced from trees in Austria. The company sells primarily to the Austrian and German markets.

Note: Sources from various websites, August 2022