

Research Aim

The aim of our market research is to determine whether there is sufficient demand/interest for Subway to add a gluten-free bread option among their current varieties of bread in their New Zealand stores.

Secondary Research

We used gluten-free statistics of current fast food competitors supplying gluten-free bread. This information came from Subway's current test of gluten-free bread in America. This helped us carry out our secondary research.

Other secondary research that we used was: fast food competitors who stock gluten-free products (bun/bread/bases), and current 2014 nutritional information. We found that Hells Pizzas offer gluten-free pizza bases; Dominos NZ offers gluten-free pizza bases, toppings and sauces; Mexacali Fresh NZ offer corn tortilla tacos.

We also conducted other secondary research which allowed us to gain a wide range of statistics and information.

Primary Research

Primary research was carried out by the whole group who chose different shopping centres. We decided that this would give us more insight as to how different locations affected the results. Primary data was gathered using a questionnaire that contained seven yes/no, multiple-choice, and closed and open ended questions that allows the possible consumer to show us their interest or doubts towards Subway gluten-free bread. We issued the survey to 102 people; 17 questionnaires were assigned to each member of the group. We collated results at the end. The questionnaire was designed by me with the group giving it the final approval.

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Survey responses were provided. Research findings were presented in a range of appropriate charts and graphs.

Conclusion

Although Subway is a popular fast food business we were still surprised with the fact that of the 102 people we surveyed, 75% were already customers. Even though 25% of those surveyed were not currently Subway customers, they were still interested in trying the gluten-free bread. It was good that we had a sample of people who didn't currently buy at Subway as this gave us a chance, through open ended questions, to see if they would be attracted to Subway if there were more options.

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We had thought that many people would not be satisfied or not like gluten-free bread and would be reluctant to try it. A variety of reasons for interest in trying the product would indicate the reasons that Subway could market the bread, as the sample did indicate in our open ended questions what attracted/interested them to try the product. The most popular reason was for its health benefits, followed by the fact that it was new. This also shows that even though people may not be gluten-free they felt they would benefit from it in other ways. Subway's marketing could emphasise these points, hopefully attracting lots of interest within the market.

94% of gluten-free people we surveyed would try the gluten-free bread variety if Subway offered it. This convincingly shows interest in launching the gluten-free option. If they did so, Subway would most likely gain a larger gluten-free customer base. Also, non-current but potential Subway customers would start to support Subway because of the gluten-free range.

Evaluation of Research

A strength of our research was our large sample number of 102 questionnaires, all of which were personally administered in order to engage and clarify anything, required a huge amount of effort from each member. Each group member carried out 17 surveys. This required a lot of organising, planning and most of all time and effort. While we could have minimised the workload by having a smaller sample, this would have resulted in possibly weak/weaker results that wouldn't be enough to base a conclusion on.

A weakness of our market research was question 2 of our survey, "what area do you currently live in?". This was originally designed to find out what Subway location we would hypothetically bring the gluten-free bread to. But as we personally administered the questionnaire in set locations, data from question 2 became irrelevant. If we had conducted the questionnaire by phone we could have gotten a larger variation of location and this would have impacted on our results (who was gluten-free and wanted to try the product).

Another weakness was question 6b; if the interviewee answered yes to question 5, they were not necessarily gluten-free themselves but could have known friends or family who were. The Yes answer would automatically refer them to question 6b. But there was confusion due to the wording saying, "if you are gluten-free would you be interested in purchasing a gluten-free bread option from Subway?"