

Study Tip

The data from focus groups and personal interviews are more subjective than the data from surveys.

Sampling and Market Research

The following are five types of sampling used by market research departments.

- 1. Surveys:** The wording of the questions is critical. Surveys can be in person, or via telephone, mail, or Internet.
- 2. Focus groups:** Focus groups involve a moderator and questions that lead to a discussion among participants.
- 3. Personal interviews:** Personal interviews are similar to focus groups and involve open-ended questions.
- 4. Observations:** Observations include purchasing habits and product usage of consumers.
- 5. Field trials:** Field trials involve selling a product at selected locations to get an idea of how it will perform in the market.

EXAMPLE 5 Determining a Sample Size

You work for the market research department of a cosmetics company. You want to identify characteristics of men who are likely to buy men's personal care products. You send a free sample of two of the products to men and ask them to respond to an online survey. How many samples should you send to obtain reliable results?

**SOLUTION**

Suppose you want a confidence level of 90% and a margin of error of 5%. Using the *Sample Size Calculator* at *Math.andYou.com*, you can determine that you need 271 completed surveys.

Suppose you think that 10% of the men who receive the sample will take the time to use it and respond to the online survey. This means that you should send the sample products to about 3000 men. (You still have to decide how to randomly choose 3000 men to obtain a representative sample.)

✓ Checkpoint

Help at Math.andYOU.com

How would you conduct market research on the men's personal care products?