
Competitor Analysis Training Course: Profiling, Benchmarking and Early Warning for Executives

18 – 22 January 2027
Amsterdam





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Programme Summary

This one-week competitor analysis training course for heads of marketing, strategy and commercial directors ends in a competitor analysis and early warning brief for one market. Leaders must judge rivals on evidence, not rumour, and decisions on pricing, positioning and investment depend on it. The programme moves from principles, through diagnosis of rivals and signals, to the design of a monitoring routine, and then to application on a live market. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this competitor analysis programme for senior commercial and strategy leaders.

The Business Case

Organisations often learn of a rival's move after customers have already reacted. A disciplined approach to competitor analysis gives leaders a shared view of who competes, how they behave and what they are likely to do next, so that responses are planned instead of improvised.

- Decision Speed: Improves as rival moves are tracked against agreed triggers and escalated early.
- Win Rate: Rises as lost and won opportunities are analysed for the reasons behind each outcome.
- Strategic Surprise: Falls as weak signals from customers, suppliers and markets are logged and reviewed.

Principles and Evidence Base

- The intelligence cycle taught in competitive intelligence practice: it frames planning, collection, analysis and dissemination, and structures Sessions 1 and 2.
- Porter's Five Forces: it is used to read industry rivalry, entry threats and buyer power when profiling competitors in Session 2.
- SWOT analysis: it organises findings on each rival into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the profiles built in Session 3.
- Win-loss analysis: it turns sales outcomes into evidence on why customers chose a rival, applied in Sessions 2 and 4.

Intended Participants

- Marketing leaders who set positioning and need dependable evidence on rival offers.
- Strategy directors who prepare options for the executive team and the board.
- Commercial directors who own pricing, key accounts and bid decisions.
- Business development leaders who assess new markets and partners.
- Heads of insight who direct analysts and report to senior management.



The programme serves manufacturing, financial services, telecommunications, healthcare and public enterprise, and suits mixed groups.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to construct a collection plan that links intelligence questions to lawful sources.
2. Participants will be able to evaluate the reliability of competitor information using source and confidence grading.
3. Participants will be able to diagnose competitive pressure in a market with Porter's Five Forces and win-loss evidence.
4. Participants will be able to design competitor profiles that compare strengths, weaknesses and likely moves.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise early warning signals and set triggers for escalation.
6. Participants will be able to justify a response option to an executive committee using an evidence-based brief.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Competitor Analysis Principles and the Intelligence Cycle

Which questions should competitor analysis answer, and by what lawful means?

- Intelligence Cycle Stages
- Key Intelligence Topics Register
- Ethical and Legal Boundaries of Collection
- Source Map of Open Information
- Intelligence Request Template

Day 2: Diagnosing Rivals, Markets and Buyer Behaviour

Who competes for the same customers, and why do customers choose them?

- Porter's Five Forces Industry Scan
- Competitor Landscape Grid
- Win-Loss Interview Guide
- Customer and Supplier Signal Log
- Source Reliability and Confidence Grading

Day 3: Designing Competitor Profiles and Benchmarks

How are rivals compared on a fair and repeatable basis?



- Competitor Profile Sheet
- SWOT Matrix per Rival
- Offer and Pricing Comparison Table
- Capability Benchmark Scorecard
- Scenario Sketch of Rival Moves

Day 4: Designing Early Warning and Monitoring Routines

Which signals matter, and who acts when one appears?

- Early Warning Indicator Set
- Trigger and Escalation Matrix
- Monitoring Calendar and Ownership Chart
- Intelligence Briefing Format
- Response Option Assessment

Day 5: Applying Competitor Analysis to One Live Market

Is the brief ready for the executive committee?

- Applying the Session 2 Landscape Grid to the Chosen Market
- Completing Profiles from the Session 3 Sheet
- Testing the Session 4 Triggers on Recent Rival Moves
- Rehearsing the Committee Briefing
- Completing the Competitor Analysis and Early Warning Brief

Methodology

The programme uses a data workshop method built on anonymised market data, rival offer sheets and sales outcome records. Participants work in small groups to grade sources, compare rivals and draft triggers, and receive peer and facilitator feedback on each work product before it is added to the brief.

- Suggested activity: Grading a set of mixed sources for reliability and recording the confidence level.
- Suggested activity: Building a profile sheet for a sample rival and comparing it with the group's view.
- Suggested activity: Reviewing a rival price change against a trigger matrix and agreeing the response owner.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a competitor analysis and early warning brief for one market. It holds an intelligence question list, a source plan, a landscape grid, rival profiles, a trigger matrix and a response option summary. The brief is used at work to guide the executive team, agree monitoring owners and prepare pricing and positioning decisions.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is competitor analysis suitable for leaders without an intelligence background?

Yes. This competitor analysis programme starts from first principles and assumes responsibility for marketing, strategy or commercial decisions, not prior experience of intelligence work.

Which models does competitor analysis rest on in this programme?

Competitor analysis here rests on the intelligence cycle, Porter's Five Forces, SWOT analysis and win-loss analysis, each applied to rival evidence.

How is the competitor analysis brief used at work?

You use the competitor analysis brief to guide your executive team, agree who monitors which rivals and prepare pricing, positioning and investment choices.

How does competitor analysis differ from general market research?

Competitor analysis centres on named rivals, their behaviour and likely moves, while general market research centres on customer needs and market size.