



Cookie Market Researcher

Market research can help you discover ideas and get feedback about your Girl Scout Cookie™ business. As a cookie entrepreneur, you explore your customers' experience to help you reach even more people. Think of yourself as a customer detective! Investigate what sets your product apart. Why do customers love buying Girl Scout Cookies? Become a market researcher and develop a marketing plan to expand your business.

Steps

1. Know your product and resources
2. Set goals and a budget
3. Explore the Girl Scout Cookie brand
4. Develop your marketing plan
5. Create your marketing campaign

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I will know how to use market research to grow my cookie business and connect with customers.



Before you explore,

review the “Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing” and “Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families” at [girlscouts.org](https://www.girlscouts.org).

Earn your Cadette Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin!

Go to [girlscouts.org/cadettecookiepin](https://www.girlscouts.org/cadettecookiepin) to find the requirements.



Step 1: Know your product and resources

A market researcher understands the values of their product. They know how to use resources related to their product. Before you do any of the choices, learn what’s new this cookie season. What are the costs, cookie types, rewards, and troop proceeds for this year? What marketing tools are available to you? Then go online to learn all you can about marketing and selling on the Digital Cookie®/ Smart Cookies® site.

Choices—do one:

Explore digital marketing. Find out how you can sell cookies using social media, emails, and more. Search “#girlscoutcookie” and “#gscookieboss” on social media for more inspiration. What do you hear customers saying? How are other Girl Scouts promoting their business? How can you use what you learn to make your sales pitch stand out? With your team, come up with a list of your own ideas to reach customers and promote your business.

Do a cookie taste test. With a friend, lay out each type of cookie on a tray. (Check for food allergies or dietary restrictions first!) Put on an eye covering, then taste and guess the cookie’s variety. Describe everything you can about the cookie’s flavor and “personality.” Make a list of some of the descriptions to use in your sales pitch to customers.

Research your market. Interview current and potential customers about their cookie-buying habits. Make a list of questions you’re curious about. Some examples: Why do they buy or not buy? Do they buy cookies to keep or give as a gift? What types of cookies do they prefer? Do they buy new flavors? Why or why not? Do they eat their cookies right away or put them in the freezer for later? Use what you learn to come up with ideas to market your product.

Safety First

Find out how to keep your cookie business safe. Go to [girlscouts.org](https://www.girlscouts.org) to find safety guidelines for selling digitally, door-to-door, or at a cookie booth.

Words to Know

Brand: The name, symbol, mark, or logo a company uses to identify their product. It's also the way other people, especially your customers, think about and experience your product.

Brand identity: The image your business projects, including everything from your logo to how people perceive your business.

Cookie entrepreneur: When you sell Girl Scout Cookies, you set goals, talk to customers, make decisions, make mistakes, and try again. This is all part of being an entrepreneur!

Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies: A way for customers to buy cookies online. Depending on where you live, you will either use Digital Cookie (for Little Brownie Bakers councils) or Smart Cookies (for ABC Bakers councils) to manage digital sales.

Digital marketing: Using technology, such as computers, smartphones, and social media, to reach your customers.

Entrepreneur: Someone who creates something or finds a way to help people and solve problems. Entrepreneurs often use their ideas to create a business.

Feedback: What someone thinks about your ideas or how you run your business.

Iterate: Repeatedly changing something to end up with a result you want. Entrepreneurs go through the entrepreneurial process, a cycle that creates changes and makes improvements. You iterate your cookie business each year as you grow new skills!

Marketing campaign: What you do to promote your product based on your customer research.

Market research: Gathering information about customer needs, preferences, and habits.

Order card: Where you'll find the names of the cookies, what they cost, your customer's information, and the number of packages you sell.

Package goal: How many packages of cookies you and your troop plan to sell.

Pitch: What you tell your customers to get them excited about buying cookies from you.

Philanthropic: the act of giving money, time, or resources for a purpose or a cause to help others.

Social responsibility: Acting in the best interests of society and the environment.

Troop goal: What you plan to do with the money your troop earns selling cookies.

Troop proceeds: How much your troop will get for each package sold, based on your council and budget.

Step 2: Set goals and a budget

Before you continue to learn about your customers, it's important to set a goal based on what you want to do with your troop proceeds. You can support troop activities, go on field trips and adventures, do Take Action projects, or earn your Girl Scout Silver Award. Do you need supplies to help market your cookie business? Make sure to factor that into your budget. Then set an individual sales goal that will support your troop goal.

Choices—do one:

Create a vision board. On paper or online, create a vision board with images showing ways to use your cookie money. Under the images, write how much the ideas would cost. Together with your troop, vote on the ideas you like best. Use these ideas to create your budget. Then figure out how many packages of cookies your troop needs to sell to reach your goal. Does your goal seem reasonable? If not, you may need to make adjustments.

Reflect on the past, then go online to get ideas. If you've sold cookies before, think about your experiences. What did you do with your cookie money? Were you happy with your choices? What changes would you have made? Then go online to find out what other Girl Scouts have done with their cookie money. Make a list of ways your troop will use its money. Vote on your choices, determine the cost, and then set a budget. Next, calculate your package goal based on the troop proceeds set by your council and your budget. Is your package goal higher than last year? Determine if your plan is realistic, then get started on your plan!

Get feedback. Make a goal list with your team. Vote on your choices, determine the cost, and set a budget. Calculate your package goal based on the troop proceeds set by your council and your budget. Now show your goal plan to an older Girl Scout or a troop leader. Make changes to your plan based on their feedback.





Goal and Budget Steps

1. Make a list of the ways your troop will use its cookie money.
2. Vote on your choices.
3. Determine the cost of each choice.
4. Create a budget.
5. Calculate your package goal based on the troop proceeds set by your council and your budget.
6. Set your individual sales goal to support your troop goal.
7. Adjust your plan as needed. Being willing to adapt is a key skill!

Think Like a Cookie Entrepreneur

Getting feedback can help improve your ideas and the decisions you make as a cookie entrepreneur.

1. Get feedback ▶ 2. Analyze feedback ▶ 3. Select changes to make ▶ 4. Make changes ▶ 5. Test again ▶





Step 3: Explore the Girl Scout Cookie brand

The Girl Scout Cookie brand is powerful. When you sell Girl Scout Cookies, you're also selling a commitment to help girls. It's part of the Girl Scout Cookie business brand identity. Do one of these choices to explore how to market the power behind Girl Scout Cookies to customers. Then share your message—through a poster, a video, or some other creative method.

Choices—do one:

Research food products with a philanthropic angle. Go online to find socially responsible companies that focus on change and use their products, money, or resources to help others. Some companies donate products or proceeds; others raise awareness about important issues. See how these businesses use social media and digital marketing to promote their cause and tell their story. With your team, discuss their practices. How do these companies attract customers who want to make a difference? Get ideas for ways to share the skills you're learning through the cookie program and how you'll use your proceeds. Then share your message—through a poster, a video, or some other creative method.

Talk to a socially responsible business expert. Interview someone with experience working for a socially conscious company. This means a business that benefits society, such as giving some of their profits to charity, being environmentally safe (selling local, cruelty-free, or organic products and using recyclable packaging), or encouraging employee volunteerism. Some companies donate a product or proceeds; others raise awareness about important issues. Find out how their company came up with their socially conscious platform. How does it impact their sales and customers? Discuss the values and social responsibility in the Girl Scout Cookie business. Use what you've learned to create messages about the power and promise of Girl Scout Cookies for your customers.

Come up with a Girl Scout Cookie social responsibility platform. Check out the “Social Responsibility” section of the “Girl Scout Cookie Program FAQs” at [girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs](https://www.girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs). How can buying Girl Scout Cookies help others or support a cause? How does selling cookies give girls valuable skills? With your team, come up with different messages that show the socially responsible practices of the Girl Scout Cookie business. Make a poster or video, or find some other way to deliver your messages to customers.



Step 4: Develop your marketing plan

The main goal of your plan is to get customers to buy your cookies. With your team, develop ideas for a marketing plan that includes how you will carry out the four principles—the 4Ps—of marketing (see the box).

4Ps

Product: How would you describe your cookies and how are they different from others?

Price: Are your cookies a good value?

Place: Where are you selling your cookies and what is the ordering process like?

Promotion: What are your marketing plans to let customers know about your cookie business?

Choices—do one:

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Brainstorm with your team. List the possibilities for your marketing plan. What kind of creative promotion can you do? For example, try wearing cookie costumes at a cookie booth and handing out flyers telling customers where to buy Girl Scout Cookies. Will you give out free samples? Put a marketing plan together and reach out to local news websites and newspapers to write stories about you. Find creative ways to use customer testimonials. Make a plan for how you'll draw attention to your in-person or digital sales.
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Check out other cookie brands. Research and compare Girl Scout Cookies with another food brand that has a philanthropic angle. Find out how other companies sell cookies online. Compare websites, packaging, prices, and ingredients with Girl Scout Cookies. How will their strategies impact your marketing plan? What makes your cookies stand out? Find quick answers and product information in the “Girl Scout Cookie Program FAQs” at [girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs](https://www.girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs). Create a marketing plan based on what you learn.
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Talk to a marketing expert. Get help from someone with experience in sales and marketing to help you develop a plan. Then create your plan, get feedback on it, and make changes based on what you learn. Be sure to thank the expert for their time and help!





Step 5: Create your marketing campaign

Now that you have ideas and understand your customers, create your marketing campaign. Your marketing plan says what you will do; your marketing campaign will get into the details. The campaign should include what you will say, how you will say it, and who you will say it to. Develop your pitch and use it to create videos, ads, booth signs, and email messages for your customers. Include information about the cookies and how customers help girls when they buy them. Use the marketing ideas you came up with in Step 4 to create and schedule your campaign.

Choices—do one:

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Research powerful marketing campaigns. Some companies create memorable slogans, or visuals that can make you laugh, cry, or feel hungry. What is the secret to their success? Take a look at some memorable campaigns and get inspired. Make a list of ideas and share them with your team to help create your campaign.
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Talk to a marketing expert. Ask someone with experience in sales and marketing to help you with your pitch and campaign. Ask them to share examples of their marketing campaigns. Then share your marketing ideas and use their feedback to improve your campaign.
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Come up with an online plan for your campaign. What online marketing tools can you use to deliver your message? Think about the social media platforms, emails, and other tools you plan to use and who might see your campaign. Tailor your campaign for different audiences to get the best results. Document your campaign plan. Then create a video to help launch your campaign and ask your customers to share it with five friends.



Earning your **Business Creator** badge will give you even more tools to write a business plan and make your ideas better.

Pitch Pointers

Your pitch is what you tell customers to get them to buy cookies.

- Tell people who you are by sharing your first name and troop number.
- Describe the different cookies and explain how much they cost.
- Share how your troop plans to use its cookie money.
- Tell customers how they can donate cookies.
- End by asking customers to buy your cookies and telling them how.

Safety tip: Never share personal contact information (like your address, school, or last name).





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First published in 2021 by Girl Scouts of the United States of America
420 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018-2798
www.girlscouts.org





Volunteer's Guide to the Cookie Market Researcher Badge*

Find tips and ideas to help you guide your troop through this badge.

Step 1: Know your product and resources • 30–40 minutes

Ask: What tools are available to help you market your cookie business? **Share:** A market researcher understands the values of their product and knows how to gather and use information to market it. First, make sure you know the cookie types and costs, what's new this year, and what the troop proceeds are. Then learn all you can about marketing and selling on the Digital Cookie®/Smart Cookies® site.

Choices—do one:

- **Explore digital marketing.** Direct girls to search “#girlscoutcookie” and “#gscookieboss” to see how other Girl Scouts are using social media and other avenues to promote their business online. Have Cadettes come up with a list of their own ideas to reach customers and promote their cookie business.

Materials: order forms or computers, smartphones, or tablets

- **Do a cookie taste test.** Have Cadettes team up for cookie taste testing. With eyes covered, they take turns tasting and exploring the cookie flavors and “personalities.” (Check for food allergies or dietary restrictions first!) Ask these cookie researchers how they can spin this information into a fun new way to promote Girl Scout Cookies.

Materials: trays or plates, Girl Scout Cookies, eye covering, order cards or computers, smartphones, or tablets

- **Research your market.** Have Cadettes create a short questionnaire (or online survey) to interview customers about their cookie-buying habits. Researchers can use questions in the badge booklet as a starting point. They can discuss their feedback with the troop and use what they learn to come up with ideas to market their product.

Materials: order cards, paper and pencils or computers, smartphones, or tablets

Step 2: Set goals and a budget • 30–40 minutes

Ask: What are your troop goals for this year? Earning your Silver Award? Funding a field trip? **Share:** Before you continue to learn about your customers, set a goal based on what you want to do with your troop proceeds. Make sure to factor any marketing supplies into your budget. Before you begin, review the “Goal and Budget Steps” in the badge booklet.

Choices—do one:

- **Create a vision board.** Instruct Cadettes to follow the directions in the badge booklet to create a vision board and set the troop budget. **Bonus tip:** If the vision board is created online, ask them how it can be used or reworked for their marketing plan.

Materials: computers, smartphones, or tablets

- **Reflect on the past, then go online to get ideas.** In small groups, have Cadettes discuss the reflection questions in the badge booklet. Then direct them to research what other Girl Scouts have done with their cookie money. Have Cadettes put together a list of ideas and vote on their favorites. They'll decide on the cost for each goal, set a budget, and determine package goals.

Materials: computers, smartphones, or tablets

- **Get feedback.** Reach out to your council or network of Cadette families to connect the troop with an older Girl Scout or another troop leader. Have Cadettes generate a goal list and vote on their favorites. Then have them determine the costs, set a budget, and calculate package goals. Cadettes will share their plan and make changes based on their guest's feedback.

Materials: paper, pencils

Step 3: Explore the Girl Scout Cookie brand • 20–30 minutes

Materials for all choices: computers, smartphones, or tablets; poster-making supplies

*Detailed choice activities, meeting tools, and additional resources and materials can be found within the Volunteer Toolkit on my.girlscouts.org.

Ask: What makes the Girl Scout Cookie brand stand out?
Share: The Girl Scout Cookie brand is powerful. When you sell cookies, you're also selling a commitment to help girls. Explore how to market the power behind Girl Scout Cookies to customers, and then share your message.

Choices—do one:

- **Research food products with a philanthropic angle.** Direct Cadettes to research socially responsible companies that are committed to a good cause. Ask “How do these companies use digital marketing to tell their story? How do they attract customers who want to make a difference?” Have Cadettes find a creative way to share their message about skills they are learning and what they will do with their proceeds.
- **Talk to a socially responsible business expert.** Use your community connections or network of families to connect the troop with someone who can share their experience working for a socially-conscious company. Suggest to Cadettes that they prepare questions for their guest. As a group, discuss the values and social responsibility in the Girl Scout Cookie business. Have them create and share a message about the power and promise of Girl Scout Cookies.
- **Come up with a Girl Scout Cookie social responsibility platform.** Direct Cadettes to the “Social Responsibility” section of the “Girl Scout Cookie Program FAQs” at [girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs](https://www.girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs). Suggest to Cadettes that they form six teams to each read about one of the social responsibility FAQs and come up with a creative message to share with their customers. **Try this:** Suggest that teams decide on a unifying element to tie their messages together!

Step 4: Develop your marketing plan • 20–30 minutes

Ask: What is the main goal of your marketing plan? **Share:** The main goal of your plan is to get customers to buy your cookies. With your team, develop ideas for a marketing plan that includes how you will carry out the four principles of marketing: product, price, place, and promotion.

Choices—do one:

- **Brainstorm with your team.** Have Cadettes brainstorm a list of ideas for their marketing plan, starting with the examples in the badge booklet. From there, they can talk about the details of each and decide which to pursue.
Materials: *paper, pencils*
- **Check out other cookie brands.** Have Cadettes research and compare Girl Scout Cookies with other

cookie brands that are also committed to a good cause. Direct them to “Girl Scout Cookie Program FAQs” at [girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs](https://www.girlscouts.org/cookieprogramfaqs) to find out how Girl Scout Cookies stand out. Have Cadettes create a marketing plan based on what they learn. Suggest that they start with a list of ideas, discuss the details of each, and then decide which to include in their plan.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets*

- **Talk to a marketing expert.** Reach out to your community or network of families to connect the troop with someone who has sales and marketing experience. Suggest that Cadettes start with a list of ideas for their marketing plan and ask for feedback from the marketing expert. They can talk about the details of each and decide which ideas to pursue.

Materials: *paper, pencils*

Step 5: Create your marketing campaign • 20–30 minutes

Ask: What should be included in your marketing campaign? **Share:** Use the marketing ideas you came up with in Step 4 to create and schedule your marketing campaign. Consider what you will say, how you will say it, and who you will say it to as you develop your pitch. Create videos, ads, signs, and email messages for your customers.

Choices—do one:

- **Research powerful marketing campaigns.** Have Cadettes search memorable campaigns and slogans for inspiration first, and then make a list of ideas for their marketing campaign. Then they can decide which ideas they like best. Suggest that they plan out the details and create a schedule for better results.
Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets*
- **Talk to a marketing expert.** Reach out to your council or network of families to connect the troop with a marketing expert. Suggest that Cadettes start with some ideas for their pitch and ask for feedback. With the expert's guidance, they can plan out details and create a schedule for their marketing campaign.
Materials: *paper, pencils*
- **Come up with an online plan for your campaign.** Suggest that Cadettes first identify the different online marketing tools they want to use, then discuss the audience and approach for each. From there, they can better tailor their campaign for each platform and plan out the details to launch their campaign.
Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets*

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