Competitive Intelligence Analysis Guide

Know what your competitors are up to before you read it in the news.
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Chapter One: Staffing

Know what your competitors are up to before you read it in the news.
CHAPTER ONE: STAFFING

Key Questions to Answer

Are your competitors hiring? If so, which departments are hiring? Are they having trouble filling certain positions? Are they hiring in areas that gives insight into their product or market strategy? Did they recently fill certain positions?

Insights Covered in this Section

- **EMPLOYEE REVIEWS**: Employee reviews on third party sites.
- **TEAM CHANGES**: Key additions or removals from the company’s employee list.
- **NEW POSITIONS**: New positions the company is hiring for.
- **POSITIONS NO LONGER LISTED**: Job openings that the company was hiring for before, but is no longer hiring for.
Employee Reviews

One of the simplest ways to get a lens into what’s happening inside an organization is to listen to what the employees have to say. The popular site Glassdoor, a review site where employees give feedback on employers, is a great place to start.

Try doing a Google search for your competitor’s name along with “glassdoor”, and click through to their profile. You will want to check back on their profile a couple times a week to make sure you see the latest information as it gets posted. Here’s an example of what you might find for Salesforce.com.

Want to track employee reviews at scale?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
When there’s trouble brewing amongst an executive team in your industry, it can often be a signal that there’s a larger problem beneath the surface. Being aware of these changes can serve as a competitive advantage if you pay attention. For instance, if a competitors’ head of customer service leaves, it may be a sign that customer retention rates are low or that customers aren’t happy with the current level of support. Knowing those details could influence a marketing campaign in which you focus on how great your customer support is and how happy your existing customers are with your service.

Keep track of management pages, about pages, and team pages to find staffing competitive insights when they occur. You’ll want to check back on key team pages across your competitive set multiple times per week.

Want to track team changes at scale?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
New Positions

What if you could predict when and how a specific competitor was growing its staff, would that be useful information to you? One of the best ways to understand how companies are staffing up is to monitor and track their hiring page, like Wayfair’s featured below. Understanding hiring trends can help provide insight into where competitors are staffing up and placing their own bets for future growth. Are they developing for mobile? Are they going international? Are they hiring in Sales or Channel?

Check the careers/jobs pages for each competitor on a regular basis, and keep notes in Excel about which jobs were there before so you can spot the new ones being added. The new jobs being added is a rich source of competitive intelligence.

<table>
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<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Director of Research</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2B Acquisition Marketing Analyst</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2B Senior Business Analyst</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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<td>Brand Designer</td>
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<td>Brand Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Analyst – Social Marketing</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager, Registry Marketing</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>PR Manager</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Analyst – Display Advertising</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior B2B E-mail Marketing Associate</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Business Analyst</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Business Analyst- New Channels</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager – Display Advertising</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager, AilModern</td>
<td>Boston, MA, United States</td>
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Want to track competitor staffing needs at scale?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Positions no Longer Listed

Just as important as the new positions your competitors are hiring for is the positions that they are no longer hiring for. If you read between the lines, you can guess if they hired that position successfully or perhaps gave up on the search. Tracking this on an ongoing basis, again using Excel or some tool to keep track of the positions that are disappearing from the careers page, will give you insight into which positions are being filled, which departments are growing and how fast.

Want to track competitor staffing needs at scale?

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Chapter Two: News, Events, Awards & PR

Know what your competitors are up to before you read it in the news.
CHAPTER TWO: NEWS, EVENTS, AWARDS & PR

Key Questions to Answer

What are your competitors saying about themselves? What is the industry saying about your competitors? Are your competitors being recognized for outstanding performance? Which events are they attending, and which are they skipping? How is your brand impacted and actively participating against competitors?

Insights Covered in this Section

PRESS RELEASES
Corporate approved strategic announcements.

NEWS MENTIONS
Press features across all publication types and mediums.

AWARD UPDATES
Industry recognition for outstanding accomplishments, growth and culture.

EVENT UPDATES
Global event attendance and participation.
Press Releases

Monitoring press releases is one of the easiest ways to keep a close eye on strategic initiatives within your industry. The interesting thing about press releases is that your competitors want you to read them; they’re sending you a message.

Check the “press” or “news” page for each of your competitors on a regular basis, and pull the new press releases into a file so you can review the PR they’ve done over the last week, month, quarter or year. Google Alerts can also be a good way to find information.

Want to track press releases & news mentions at scale?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
News Mentions

Tracking news mentions is a critical component to your marketing strategy, as generating consistent and strategic press is one of the most effective ways to build your brand and stay top-of-mind within your industry. In addition, evaluating industry press will show you what others are saying about your company and how they’re positioning themselves against you. Arming your sales team with appropriate responses can make the difference on sales calls.

To track news mentions, you can set up Google Alerts for each of your competitors. You can also track the “news” page on their website on a regular basis to find the articles they deem most important to share with their audience.

Want to track press releases & news mentions at scale?
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Award Updates

Winning awards used to be a prestigious honor and an important part to growing a successful company. Then they started giving away awards for everything and they lost their luster for a while. We’re starting to see a resurgence in the value of awards though, especially for select categories.

Track the awards page of your competitors each week so that you know right away when they win a new award.

Awards & Recognition

- **2015 Collaboration Software of the Year**
  Viewpoint For Projects

- **Mobile Technology of 2015**
  Field View

- **Portland Business Journal 2015**
  Fastest Growing Private 100 companies, #57

- **2015 Contractor’s Choice Awards**
  Accounting Software
  Vista by Viewpoint

- **2015 Contractor’s Choice Awards**
  Project Management Software
  Vista by Viewpoint

Want to track competitor awards at scale?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Event Updates

Deciding which events to sponsor or participate in can be an agonizing conversation with your team. The reason is that events are hard, time consuming and often risky. Considering the pressure of a costly event sponsorship, it can be helpful to know if your competitors are participating in certain events or not participating. If a competitor isn’t sponsoring an event, there may be an opportunity for you to take advantage of, or it might mean the event isn’t worth an investment.

Tracking events is HARD. For instance, if you work in marketing there are thousands of events to keep track of globally. Without an automated tracking software at your disposal, the best thing you can do is to visit competitor websites and browse their speaking section and events pages. Since there are so many events each year, be sure to check these pages weekly so you catch new events they’re attending, and which events they aren’t.

Never miss an event update again.

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Chapter Three: Product, Services & Pricing

Know what your competitors are up to before you read it in the news.
CHAPTER THREE: PRODUCT, SERVICES & PRICING

Key Questions to Answer

Is your Sales team updated on competitive offerings? Is your product more expensive than the competition? If so, why? Do you have better customer service or product features than your competitors? How does your roadmap compare against the rest of the industry?

Insights Covered in this Section

- **Product Updates**: Product roadmap, features and new releases.
- **Services & Support**: Customer support, training and certification.
- **Pricing and Packaging**: Pricing tiers and product/services features included in each tier.
Product Updates

If you don’t know about all the new features your competitors are offering, how will you be prepared to proactively manage competitive sales situations and stay ahead from a product marketing standpoint?

To stay on top of product updates, you should check each competitor each week to find new help articles on their support site that talk about new platform features, new forum threads on their forums, and especially new items on their “ideas” site (if they have one). You’ll also want to track the product data sheets, detail pages and feature grids to note any changes. It can be a lot of work to stay on top of these areas for all your competitors, but it pays dividends to understand the moves your competitors are making.

Interested in tracking competitor product updates at scale?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Services & Support

Service and support can be key differentiators relative to competitors and is one of the best ways to ensure a low customer churn rate.

Check your competitors’ pages regularly looking for changes in how their services are packaged and delivered. Services changes don’t usually make press headlines, so visiting each page and comparing old versions of services pages vs. new is the most accurate way for you to monitor over time.

Want to track competitor services updates at scale?
See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Pricing & Packaging

When it comes to pricing & packaging, you need to equip your sales team with all the information you can in a concise way so that they can convey value to prospects. Keeping track of numbers isn’t enough though, you need to evaluate all of the features and inclusions of a given pricing tier or software package. It’s important to monitor consistently because price is always top of mind for customers/prospects. You’ll want to track “packaging” as well, including trial durations, setup costs, and other components of the offerings.

Let us track competitor pricing & packaging changes for you.

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Chapter Four: Customers & Partners

Know what your competitors are up to before you read it in the news.
CHAPTER FOUR: CUSTOMERS & PARTNERS

Key Questions to Answer

Who are your competitors signing as customers? What are those customers saying about them? Who are your customer partnering with? Do your partners have more useful integrations and partnerships than you do?

Insights Covered in this Section

CUSTOMER INSIGHTS

New customers, case studies and testimonials.

PARTNER INSIGHTS

New partner announcements, integrations and collaborative activity.
Customer Insights

Are your competitors featuring new customer logos or quotes on key pages? Are they adding new customer testimonials, case studies, or videos on YouTube?

Your company is no longer what you say it is, it’s what your customers say it is …With social reviews dominating the internet these days thanks to companies like Amazon and Yelp, getting your customers to publicly endorse you is the most effective way to build brand strength across your industry.

To stay on top of how your competitors are winning (or losing) customers, you’ll want to track their case studies pages, testimonials pages, YouTube channel, and key pages where they feature quotes & logos to look for signals about new customer wins (or losses).

Customer Success

In the highly-competitive construction industry we know that even a minor set-back can have an effect on completing a complex project under budget and on time. That’s why we’ve created a configurable, contemporary software solution to address the problems that prevent our clients from succeeding — because if our clients don’t succeed, neither do we. But don’t let us do all the talking. Hear what Viewpoint clients have to say.

In Their Words

Want to track customer changes at scale across your competitors?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Partner Insights

If you want to understand your competitors so you can stay ahead of them, partner insights are critical. Did they add a key partner? Did they lose a partner?

Check your competitors’ partner pages on a regular basis, and store the partners in Excel or another system. Then identify the changes (additions and subtractions) each week so you can get a good lens into how their partnership strategies and successes (or failures) are evolving.

Want partner insights without the Excel headaches?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Chapter Five: Content

Know what your competitors are up to before you read it in the news.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONTENT

Key Questions to Answer

What topics are competitors using to engage their prospects? What types of arguments should your sales team be prepared to sell against? How much content do your competitors produce each week? What type of content do they focus on? How does the quality compare to your content? Are there gaps in your content strategy? Are there opportunities to create differentiated content?

Insights Covered in this Section

RESOURCES
Infographics, white papers, briefs, guides, eBooks, and more content for download.

WEBINARS
Podcasts and interviews that can be educational, product based or just interesting stories.

BLOG ARTICLES
The new standard for all marketing departments, often published multiple times per week on a variety of subjects.

Competitive Intelligence Analysis Guide
Resources

Ebooks, research reports, infographics, YouTube videos, oh my! These resources are effective for gaining credibility and attention within your industry. If your competitors are outperforming you in both frequency and quality, eventually your customers and prospects will start to notice and pay attention to them instead of you.

Tracking reports pages can be tricky because they often live on landing pages that are disconnected from the central website, as seen in the Salesforce example below. The reports that brands do post on their website will most often live in the “resources” section of the website, and featured on the marketing blog and social media.

Want to track competitor resources at scale?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Webinars

Look for webinars in the resource section of a competitor website as well as on the blog and across social media. Check the pages frequently to find new webinars your competitors are planning – these are certainly going to be used to nurture their leads.

Since there’s too much written content on the web these days, companies are quickly shifting to audio and visual marketing in the form of webinars. Webinars can help generate new leads for your sales team, offer product information to new customers or review company growth and culture. It’s critical to know how you stack up relative to the competition in terms of webinar content.
Blog Posts

Every company in the world is blogging in 2016. Ok, that might be a stretch, but all the industry leading companies are actively blogging and we bet you are too. So how do you measure yourself against the rest of the competitors in your industry? Monitor competitor blogs and keep track of how often they post, what topics are being covered, the quality of the content and how each competitor is positioning themselves within the industry via their blog. Just looking at the titles of all the blog posts published by your competitors each week can give you quick insights into what your industry is talking about.

Want to track competitor blog posts at scale?

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Chapter Six: Positioning

Know what your competitors are up to before you read it in the news.
CHAPTER SIX: POSITIONING

**Key Questions to Answer**

Are your competitors changing their stance on key issues facing your industry? Are they changing the way the present or describe their products & services?

**Insights Covered in this Section**

**Key Positioning Change**

Any notable positioning change that could impact branding, messaging, or value proposition
Positioning

Positioning changes can come from any page on a website, not just the home page. Keep a close eye on all of your competitor website pages from staffing to pricing pages in order to stay informed and keep your brand one step ahead.

In the example below, 99 designs shifted from the tagline on the left to the one on the right, which emphasizes a more B2B focus. What key copywriting and positioning changes have occurred across your competitors website lately? What can you learn from how competitors are changing positioning that might help you be more strategic in your marketing?

How can you stay ahead of the competition if you don’t know where they’re going?

See how we’ve automated marketing competitive intelligence at scale: request a demo of Crayon Intel by emailing us at team@crayon.co.
Interested in Crayon Intel?

Let us show you how you can keep on top of the competition in 5 min. a week with our automated dashboard

Request a demo: team@crayon.co