DOCUMENT #16

The Blueprint System™ – Market Intelligence Series

Competitive Intelligence Gathering

Know everything about competitors before they know you exist

What This Intel is Worth:

- Know their exact revenue (±10%)
- Identify their biggest customers
- Spot their weak points
- Predict when they'll sell
- Steal their best practices

Phase 1: Digital Reconnaissance

The Google Dorking Method

Advanced search operators to find hidden data:

```
site:competitorname.com filetype:pdf site:competitorname.com
"confidential" OR "internal" site:linkedin.com "works at
CompetitorName" "sales" "CompetitorName" AND ("revenue" OR "annual
sales") inurl:competitorname -site:competitorname.com
```

What you'll find:

- Old proposals with pricing
- Employee manuals
- Customer lists in PDFs
- Internal documents

Website Intelligence Mining

Tool	What It Reveals	Cost
Wayback Machine	Historical pricing, old team pages	Free
BuiltWith	Tech stack, monthly spend	$295/mo
SimilarWeb	Traffic, sources, engagement	$199/mo
SpyFu	Ad spend, keywords, history	$39/mo
Wappalyzer	Technologies used	Free

Phase 2: Financial Intelligence

Revenue Estimation Formula

Method 1: Employee Count

- Service business: # employees × $125-150k = revenue
- Construction: # employees × $200-250k = revenue
- Manufacturing: # employees × $175-225k = revenue

Method 2: Vehicle/Equipment Count

- HVAC: # trucks × $400-600k = revenue
- Plumbing: # trucks × $350-500k = revenue
- Landscaping: # crews × $300-400k = revenue

Method 3: Job Postings Analysis

Growing companies hire at predictable ratios:

- 1 admin per $1-1.5M revenue
- 1 sales per $2-3M revenue
- 1 manager per $3-5M revenue

Phase 3: Human Intelligence (HUMINT)

The "Mystery Shopper" Approach

1. **Call for Quote:** Learn pricing, process, capacity
2. **Facility Tour:** Count employees, equipment, activity
3. **Vendor Conversations:** "Who else uses you in this industry?"
4. **Employee LinkedIn:** Recent hires reveal growth/struggles

Script for calling:

> "Hi, I'm looking for [service] for my properties. I've heard good things about you from [make up a name]. Can you tell me about your services and rough pricing?"

Phase 4: Regulatory & Public Records

Source	What You'll Find	How to Access

State Licensing	Owner names, violations, insurance	State contractor board website
BBB Profile	Complaints, years in business	BBB.org (free)
OSHA Records	Safety violations, employee count	OSHA.gov database
Property Records	Real estate owned, mortgages	County assessor website
Court Records	Lawsuits, liens, judgments	County clerk website
UCC Filings	Equipment financing, debt	Secretary of State

Phase 5: Customer Intelligence

Review Mining Strategy

What to extract from reviews:

- Pricing mentions: "paid $X for Y"
- Service area: where customers are located
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Employee names mentioned
- Response time and capacity

Automated scraping setup:

```
1. Use Phantom Buster or Octoparse 2. Scrape Google, Yelp, Facebook
reviews 3. Export to spreadsheet 4. Search for keywords: "$",
"price", "cost", "charged" 5. Map customer locations 6. Identify
patterns in complaints
```

Phase 6: Vendor & Partner Intelligence

The "Supplier Backdoor" Method

Call their known suppliers as a "potential customer":

Script:

"I'm looking at working with [Competitor]. I know you supply them – are they good to work with? Do they pay on time? How much volume do they do with you?"

What suppliers reveal:

- Payment terms (cash flow health)
- Order volumes (revenue proxy)
- Growth or decline patterns
- Other customers in industry

Phase 7: Employee Intelligence

LinkedIn Deep Dive

Sales Navigator searches:

- Current employees: Team size, roles, tenure
- Former employees: Why they left, where they went
- Job postings: Growth areas, problems
- Company updates: Wins, changes, struggles

The "Recruit to Learn" Tactic:

Post a job similar to theirs. Their employees who apply will tell you everything:

- Current pay scales
- Company problems
- Customer base
- Future plans

Phase 8: Competitive Positioning Map

Build Your Intel Dashboard

Competitor	Est. Revenue	Employees	Key Customers	Weaknesses	Acquisition Potential
ABC Plumbing	$3.2M	18	City contracts, hotels	Old owner, no succession	HIGH - approach in 6mo
XYZ Services	$5.1M	28	Residential only	High debt, price wars	MEDIUM - distressed

Advanced Intelligence Tactics

The "False RFP" Method

Send request for proposals to gather:

- Detailed pricing structures
- Service capabilities
- References (customer list)
- Insurance and bonding info

- Team bios and experience

Turning Intel into Action

Strategic Applications:

1. For Acquisitions:

- Identify distressed competitors
- Know their real revenue before offering
- Understand their customer concentration

2. For Negotiation:

- "I know you're struggling with X..."
- "Your main customer just did Y..."
- "The market is shifting away from Z..."

3. For Competition:

- Steal their best practices
- Target their unhappy customers

- Exploit their weaknesses

Monthly Intelligence Routine

Set Up Automated Monitoring:

1. **Google Alerts:** Competitor names, key employees
2. **LinkedIn Sales Nav:** Save leads on all competitors
3. **Review Monitoring:** BirdEye or Grade.us
4. **Website Changes:** Visualping or ChangeTower
5. **Social Media:** Mention or Hootsuite

Monthly investment: 2 hours to review, $200 in tools

ROI: One insight can save/make $100k+ on a deal