

# Chapter 2

## Case Studies in Competitive Intelligence: Real-World Applications in Global Industries

**Mustafa Kayyali**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3300-262X>

*Maaref University of Applied Sciences, Idlib, Syria*

### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter explores the practical landscape of competitive intelligence (CI) through a series of global industry case studies that illustrate how data, strategy, and decision-making intersect in real-world scenarios. As businesses face increasing volatility and digital acceleration, CI has evolved from a peripheral analytical tool into a central pillar of strategic foresight. Drawing from sectors including manufacturing, finance, health-care, and emerging tech, the chapter dissects how firms collect, process, and act on intelligence to secure market advantage. It also examines the fine line between ethical intelligence gathering and invasive surveillance in a data-saturated world. Beyond tools and frameworks, the focus is on lived practice—what actually works, where it fails, and why context*

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*matters. This work invites both scholars and practitioners to rethink how intelligence is conceptualized and operationalized in an age where information is abundant, but actionable insight remains scarce.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In today's volatile and data-saturated world, the rules of competition have fundamentally changed. No longer is market leadership determined solely by internal capacity or product superiority—it is now shaped, perhaps even dictated, by the quality of a firm's insights into its competitors, customers, industry shifts, and emerging risks. Competitive intelligence (CI) has emerged as both a compass and a radar—helping organizations navigate uncertain terrain while simultaneously detecting opportunities and threats before they surface in mainstream discourse (Kanellopoulos & Ioannidis, 2024). And yet, despite its growing centrality to strategic decision-making, competitive intelligence remains a misunderstood and unevenly applied discipline, often obscured by jargon or diluted into simplistic tools and software dashboards. This chapter begins with a conviction: that competitive intelligence must be reclaimed as a deeply human process—rooted not just in data, but in context, judgment, and disciplined curiosity. The tools of CI—yes, they matter—but tools are only as powerful as the minds that wield them and the questions they are tasked with answering. In that spirit, this chapter is not an abstract treatise on CI theory, nor a rehash of familiar frameworks. Instead, it is an inquiry into how CI actually plays out on the ground, in diverse industries, across cultural and regulatory landscapes, and under varying levels of technological sophistication.

What happens, for instance, when a healthcare firm in Singapore uses competitive intelligence to anticipate a regulatory shift before its rivals? Or when a legacy manufacturing company in Germany leverages CI to successfully pivot into a niche green market? Or when a North American tech startup uses CI not to copy competitors, but to better understand customer pain points that its rivals are missing? These are not hypotheticals—they are real-world examples of how intelligence, when gathered ethically and applied strategically, can become a force multiplier. In the digital age,

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