

Marketing Plan for a Footwear Company – Part 2

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this paper was to conduct a marketing plan of a Footwear Company in Durban, South Africa. The marketing plan strategies for growth was determined using the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) matrix. The marketing mix was discussed using the 4Ps. Communications and marketing tactics was described using the integrated marketing communications process and promotional tools. The implementation and evaluation were set out against the objectives, timescales, key performance indicators and budget. Successful implementation and evaluation of the plan will ensure the Footwear Company sustains and improves its success and meets the expectations of its stakeholders.*

KEYWORDS: marketing, plan, footwear, company

INTRODUCTION

This second paper is a continuation of the marketing analysis paper published in an earlier edition. The significant findings from the marketing analysis revealed that the Footwear Company is susceptible to threats from larger international brands. The company's market share is dependent mainly on the population of South Africa. There are plans to expand its online shopping presence which creates an opportunity to increase its customer base, however this will require investment and implementation of high-end technology (Chetty, 2024). Therefore, there are three critical marketing objectives the Footwear Company must plan for to sustain and improve its success and to meet the expectations of its stakeholders, namely:

Objective 1: To establish a strong and highly differentiated position for the Footwear Company brand (short term);

Objective 2: To increase the Footwear Company's market share by using innovative marketing strategies (medium term); and

Objective 3: To implement the use of high-end technology so that the Footwear Company can expand its online presence and increase its online shopping sales (long term).

This paper will focus on developing a marketing plan that will contribute towards achieving these three critical marketing objectives for the Footwear Company.

METHODOLOGY

A marketing plan using strategies for growth was determined using the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) matrix. The marketing mix was discussed using the 4Ps. Communications and marketing tactics was described using the integrated marketing communications process and promotional tools. The implementation and evaluation were set out against the objectives, timescales, key performance indicators and budget.

Strategies for growth

The BCG matrix provides a two-dimensional analysis on industry growth rate and relative market share (Mohajan, 2017). It is a tool that is commonly used within the marketing field because organisations that use it report success in its business procedures (Ansoff and McDonnell, 1990). To better understand the Footwear Company market position and to analyse whether it can capitalise on its products, a BCG matrix has been selected. The BCG matrix divides the company's products into four categories, namely: cash cows, stars, question marks and dogs.

Cash cows – Low growth, High market share

This refers to the products that are considered as the leaders within the market because they generate the most income for a company compared to the costs associated with producing them (Collins and Montgomery, 2005). These products have a significant market share when compared to the growth in the market (Collins and Montgomery, 2005). The Footwear Company Mpahla is a shoe that was initially made and designed for running in the warmer climate of Durban and is a retro-looking shoe and is the cash cow for the company. In 2022, the market growth rate of the Footwear Company Mpahla was estimated at 0.93% and its market share was estimated at 2.67% (South Africa Footwear Market Report, 2022).

Stars – High growth, High market share

This refers to the products that generate the most amount of income and have the highest growth in the market for the company (McDonald, 2003). Furthermore, McDonald (2003) highlighted the danger that these products quickly turning into cash cows of the company if the strategies for market growth are not properly sustained. The Footwear Company Mama Kea is a shoe that has a casual look and is considered as the star of the company because of its high volumes of sales and market share. In 2022, the market growth rate of the Footwear Company Mama Kea was estimated at 7.07% and its market share was estimated at 3.97% (South Africa Footwear Market Report, 2022).

Question marks – High growth, Low market share

This refers to the products that are often problematic for a company and have an increased market growth compared to its market share (Morrison and Wensley, 1991). The dubious future

of these products means that the company must use marketing strategies that are effective and efficient otherwise these products will turn into cash cows (Morrison and Wensley, 1991). The Footwear Company Koena is a shoe that is recognised for its attention to detail and sophisticated fabric and is the question mark for the company. This is a shoe that the Footwear Company assures its comfort for whoever uses it and with effective marketing strategies it has the potential to maintain sustained growth in market share and sales.

Dogs – Low growth, Low market share

This refers to products that do not generate sufficient profit for the company nor do they consume much cash from it (Temmerman, 2011). These products are usually at a breakeven point for the company. The Footwear Company Drip is a shoe that is aimed at a younger customer base because of its intricately styled stitching and light weight and is in the dog quadrant for the company. The Footwear Company does not consider it as a core product within the local community because it does not get much support from housewives who are the biggest consumers of the Footwear Company's products.

The marketing mix

The marketing mix is a set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market (Kotler, 2001). For a product or service to be successfully marketed, the 4Ps must be considered thoughtfully and implemented wisely (Blythe, 2009). The 4Ps stands for product, price, place, and promotion.

Product

The Footwear Company offers a men's collection, a women's collection, and a kid's collection of footwear. Its products are branded and styled for the local market with a focus on quality. It is one of the leaders in manufacturing footwear for the working professional in Durban, South Africa, however most of its revenue is generated from selling its casual footwear to housewives. The Footwear Company has uniquely designed shoes in its varied catalogue. As the company begins to market itself and expands its customer base then consequentially its product catalogue will also begin to increase. With closer inspection it is clear to notice which footwear products are the most popular within its current customer base. The Footwear Company has products that are available in different and vibrant colours within its kids, men, and women catalogues. Examples of the most recognisable shoes from the Footwear Company are as follows:

- Mpahla: It was initially made and designed for running in the warmer climate of Durban and is a retro-looking shoe.
- Drip: This shoe is aimed at a younger customer base with its intricately styled stitching and light weight.
- Mama Kea: This shoe has a casual look and is considered as the jewel of the Footwear Company because of its high volumes of sales amongst housewives.
- Koena: It is recognised for its attention to detail and sophisticated fabric. The Footwear Company assures its comfort for whoever uses it.

Price

The Footwear Company bases its pricing strategy on value and premium quality for all its products. The value pricing strategy of a company is derived by considering the price within the current market in relation to setting the prices for its products (Hinterhuber and Liozu, 2012). Prior to setting the prices for its products, the Footwear Company evaluates how customers will respond overall to the implemented prices and if they will be willing to pay these prices for their products. This form of pricing strategy ensures that the Footwear Company can increase sales and profit over the longer term. The premium pricing strategy of the company is when a company prices products that are deemed of higher quality at a higher rate despite the value of a product that it is competing with (Nyaga and Muema, 2017). The idea behind this type of pricing strategy is that over time the increased costs of the high-quality premium brand of products will generate more sales and higher income for the company (Nyaga and Muema, 2017). In addition, the marketing mix of the Footwear Company involves the recruitment of local celebrities to promote their premium branded products and enhance sales. Furthermore, the Footwear Company also takes advantage of marketing promotions and discounts on occasions such as Easter and Christmas using its website and through its onsite store. This is aimed at not only attracting new customers through discounted sales but also to retain its existing customers who often wait for promotional offers. Through investments of the Footwear Company in high technology can assist the company to market its premium branded products effectively and more widely.

Place

The Footwear Company is located within the city of Durban and currently has only one store. There are plans in place to expand its physical presence to other cities in South Africa and within the African continent. Most of the Footwear Company's products are sold and available in its physical store in Durban because its customer base prefers to try on the footwear physically before choosing the most suitable and comfortable one. Despite only one physical store, the Footwear Company has positioned this store in a busy high street and so its location ensures that it is accessible for its customers to find and purchase its products. The store in Durban occupies three floors within a shopping complex offering customers a unique local experience and products. Within this huge shopping complex are other stores and customers and the Footwear Company store is centrally located so that customers of other stores can browse and have access to its products. The Footwear Company provides its customers with a unique local experience and has a customer zone where representatives are available to answer any questions about its products and local designs. Having a friendly customer zone ensures that the customers feel valued (Parasuraman et al., 2020). Customer service is important because as the footwear industry becomes more competitive, the Footwear Company needs to step up to the challenge. The advantage of having a physical store is that customers who prefer to try the product before purchasing can do so (Parasuraman et al., 2020). However, there is a growing need amongst younger customers to buy products online because of the convenience and not wanting to stand in long queues in the store (Parasuraman et al., 2020). Therefore, plans are in place to ensure a larger online presence of the Footwear Company so that customers that wish to purchase products from the comfort of their workplaces or homes can do so online.

Promotion

The Footwear Company primarily promotes its products through advertisements and sponsorships. Advertisements are usually done with local celebrities and athletes. The Footwear Company also provides sponsorship to local sporting events like the Comrades Marathon held in Durban annually. However, the promotional strategy of the Footwear Company goes beyond tradition promotions and advertisements. The company does direct marketing by communicating personally with different organisations, colleges, and local sports clubs. The company also makes donations to the community non-government organisations (NGOs). NGOs provide urgent support to those who need assistance the most and are vital for the sustainability of poor communities (Choto et al., 2020). The brand of the company is also promoted through these community initiatives. The sales strategy of the Footwear Company includes providing discounts and promotional deals for its customer. The Footwear Company promotional strategy is mainly local, however plans are in place to diversify its target market from housewives to a younger generation, fitness enthusiasts and elite sports teams. A key feature of the company's promotional strategy is its commitment to invest in high-end technology. This is important because the younger generation have higher engagement with social media platforms and prefer online shopping (Parasuraman et al., 2020). The position slogan of the Footwear Company is "Putting Your Feet First" which was launched in 2001. This trademark slogan is used on social media platforms using hashtag #PuttingYourFeetFirst which draws different social media platforms back to the central promotional campaign of the Footwear Company.

Communications and marketing tactics

Integrated marketing communications (IMC) is the process of unifying a brand's messaging to make it consistent across all media that the brand uses to reach its target audience (Broderick and Pickton, 2005). The promotional tools used to communicate with the customers or potential customers is a combination of advertising, personal selling, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations, and social media/digital marketing elements (Nour and Almahirah, 2014).

Advertising

The Footwear Company's aim is to reach the highest number of customers with its advertising campaigns because these advertising campaigns are very expensive. However, the Footwear Company can use its strong local market branding to promote the image of its products to increase sales. The company recruits several local celebrities to promote their premium branded products. This advertising strategy ensures that it targets a younger customer base who can see their favourite celebrities using the company's products which creates a higher demand.

Personal selling

The Footwear Company has personal sales representatives. These representatives are based in a customer zone where representatives are available to answer any questions about its products and local designs and on how to purchase these products. These sales representatives assist customers to locate products that are right for them which promote the company through a

personalised service. The company ensures that all sales representatives are trained to ensure customers have a good experience and are developed to persuade and help sales.

Direct marketing

The Footwear Company promotes new products using direct marketing to its target market. Although these products are heavily advertised, to have a more significant impact the company uses sales representatives to target specific organisations and individuals within segments of the target market. The Footwear Company also approaches local organisations directly so that strong relationships can be established with its targeted customers and to directly market new products. In some instances, The Footwear Company will approach a particular person that has influence within an organisation directly to market a particular product.

Sales promotions

The Footwear Company takes advantage of sales promotions and discounts on occasions such as Easter and Christmas sales using its website and through its onsite store. This is aimed at not only attracting new customers through sales promotions but also to retain its existing customers who often wait for promotional offers. To drive sales of new products the Footwear Company highlights the perceived benefits of these products through seasonal discounts so that customers are more motivated to take a chance and buy new products even as a gift for someone else.

Public relations

The Footwear Company provides sponsorship to local sporting events like the Comrades Marathon held in Durban annually. In some circumstances, the Footwear Company may act as a sponsor to charity events to improve its public relations within the community. This allows the Footwear Company to market its products to both existing and potential customers to promote brand perception and even how the products can be used to solve local problems which in turn promotes public relations.

Social media/Digital marketing

The Footwear Company is a respected local brand in South Africa and has a reasonable following on social media platforms. The company uses social media to promote its products and customers can take advantage of any marketing campaign by sharing photos of themselves with the products on the social media sites. This is highly popular with younger customers which is the Footwear Company's target demographic.

CONCLUSION

The budget set for the implementation and evaluation of the marketing plan for the next financial year is ZAR 2 million (USD 200 thousand). Table 1 below sets out this plan by objectives, timescales, key performance indicators and budget.

Table 1: Implementation and evaluation plan of the Footwear Company

Objective 1: To establish a strong and highly differentiated position for the Footwear Company brand

Secure full approval of funding for the materials required for marketing by April 21, 2025

Create a logo with graphics using local artists by May 1, 2025

Ensure QR code is built for materials that are required for marketing by May 5, 2025

Design and research materials required for marketing, such as social media posts, signs, and mailbox flyers by June 15, 2025

Complete signs and print flyers by June 30, 2025

Key performance indicator: Survey to measure brand recognition and advertising recall data.

Budget: ZAR 250 thousand (USD 25 thousand)

Objective 2: To increase the Footwear Company's market share by using innovative marketing strategies

Set employee expectations and deliver training by July 31, 2025

Ensure staff are educated on all pricing materials and discounts by August 5, 2025

Ensure flyers are distributed by August 8, 2025, and repeat within 1st week of October 2025

Signs must be hung in strategic locations by August 12, 2025, and ongoing monitoring for replacements

Launch new social media accounts tagging local celebrities by August 30, 2025

Key performance indicators: Number of talented employees hired, number of new customers.

Budget: ZAR 750 thousand (USD 75 thousand)

Objective 3: To implement the use of high-end technology so that the Footwear Company can expand its online presence and increase its online shopping sales

Gain full funding for new software system by September 1, 2025

Set-up and implement online payment system by September 10, 2025

Monitor online sales at the end of each month

Formulate, check then send promotional/seasonal deals ‘thank you’ emails to customers and include satisfaction survey by November 30, 2025

Manage customer complaints at the end of each month

Review final customer survey data by January 15, 2026

Formulate projections for the next financial year considering sales data and customer survey responses by February 29, 2026

Key performance indicators: Number of online sales, in-time deliveries, order fulfilments, in-stock availability, number of complaints.

Budget: ZAR 1 million (USD 100 thousand)

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