The Marketing Mix: Products and Branding Strategies - SLP02 Assignment

Reminder: The Session-Long Project (SLP) assignments are designed so that you can apply the information from the Module materials to an organization that you are analyzing throughout this session

Note that since SLP02 is based on SLP01, excluding your title page, include your revised SLP01 adding your SLP02 section to those revisions, and submit the combined SLP01 & SLP02 paper.  Your SLP01 document is attached **(20100405+305669+Strategic+paper)**

**SLP02**

In SLP02 for your chosen organization **(Walmart)**, discuss its product mix and support services.  Using the sections highlighted below as subtitles in your paper, please address the following issues:

6) List what you believe are TWO **PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES** on which your business competes (such as quality and availability), and create a **positioning map** showing where you place your organization relative to its primary competitors on these TWO criteria.

You should NOT use quality and price. Many textbooks follow this approach but this usually results in a linear arrangement of the products on a diagonal, with two empty cells! Either the products are of high quality with a commensurate high price or of low quality with a commensurate low price.  It is hard to imagine finding products with high quality and a low price or low quality and a high price, i.e. Price and Quality are highly correlated and this invalidates a fundamental assumption of positioning maps, namely that the dimensions used  are independent.

Therefore, choose more interesting and useful dimensions. For example, look at the underlying dimensions or attributes on which quality might be based. This approach is not easy but it is far more useful. For example, if you are describing the market for colas, you might choose TWO of the following: carbonation, sweetness, and type of sweetener.  Or if you are describing the market for ice cream, you might choose TWO of the following: creaminess, sweetness, and type of sweetener.  Though meaningful positioning is multi-dimensional (that is it requires more than two dimensions, for this exercise, so that you get a feeling for the process, you are being asked to use only two dimensions.  In terms of the above examples, you might even want to think in terms of presenting descriptions of customers in terms of their motivations to choose one product vs. another.  For example, who wants a really sweet cola vs. one that is not very sweet (could the difference be based on the age of the buyer?)?  And who wants sugar vs. sugar substitute (could the difference be based on the desired weight of the buyer?)?

The following resources are provided to help you prepare your Position Map (also known as a "Perceptual Map")

Boardman A. E. and Vining, A. R. (1996, February) Defining your business using product-customer matrices.  *Long Range Planning*, 29(1).  38-48. Available in ScienceDirect on February 4, 2010.
**Attached (Defining Your Business...pdf)**

 Fassnacht, Michael (2009, April 13). **The Death of Consumer Segmentation**:  Rethinking a Traditional Marketing Tool.  *Advertising Age*. (**http://adage.com/cmostrategy/article?article\_id=135961**) Copy link and paste into web browser.

Author Unknown (2008) QuickMBA.com.  Available on 28 October 2009 at
[**http://www.quickmba.com/marketing/**](http://www.quickmba.com/marketing/)  Copy link and paste into web browser.

Research the following:
**Marketing Warfare -** A summary of Al Ries and Jack Trout's marketing bestseller viewing marketing from a military perspective. Principles of offensive, defensive, flanking, and guerrilla marketing strategies are presented.
**Market Share -** Calculating market share, reasons to increase market share, drivers of market share, and why a firm might not want to increase market share.
**Marketing Strategy -** Overview of marketing strategy issues, strategic decision making using marketing research results, multi-product resource allocation, product diffusion, and product management strategies.
**Positioning -** Al Ries and Jack Trout popularized the concept of product positioning. This is a summary of the ideas put forth in their marketing classic, Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind.

Author Unknown (2008). *Positioning*. Marketingteacher.com. Available on 28 October 2009 at
**(http://marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson\_positioning.htm)**Copy link and paste into web browser.

**Search Engines**

Go to [**http://www.mama.com**](http://www.mama.com/)  and/or [**http://scholar.google.com**](http://scholar.google.com/). These are meta-search engine sites and scholar search engines. Type in ' Product Positioning Maps ' and visit various sites to see examples. The search will reveal more information on product positioning maps than you can possibly access in a lifetime.  These sites will never fail you....learn to meta-search --my side lesson for today.

7) List your **PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS** (TM?s) and name and define them. This is an expansion of Q3 in SLP01.

For example:

TM 1 "Yuppies"         Professional, fashion-forward, upwardly mobile. ..

8) List your primary **PRODUCT CATEGORIES** and name and define them.  This is an expansion of Q3 in SLP01.

For example:

Paper Products                Innovative greeting cards, stationary, and gift-wrap

9) Then, create a **PRODUCT-MARKET GRID** with each market segment listed down the side, and each product category across the top that illustrates which markets and products are served by your selected organization.

Below is an example of a 3x3 matrix (3 products and 3 markets).  Substitute your own titles for ?markets? and ?products? in the table you create, and use as many columns and rows as you need.  This is an expansion of Q3 in SLP01.

Since SLP2 asks you develop product/market matrices, when you start doing this part of the assignment refer to Boardman and Vining (1999), provided in the Background Info section

You will use a Product-Market grid throughout the SLP so try very hard to refine it to reflect your business in the best way possible.

Example:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Product1 | Product2 | Product3 |
| Target Market 1 |   (Cell 1) |   |   |
| Target Market 2 |   |   |   |
| Target Market 3 |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |

In the model above, "Cell 1" has been identified.  In other words, each of the blank spaces is the table is called a "cell".

In terms of an illustration, the following matrix was prepared for a store that sells ice-cream.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | **Ice Cream Cones** | **Ice Cream Cakes** | **Soft Serve Frozen Yogurt** | **Fresh Baked Items** | **Gourmet Coffees** |
| **Middle Class** | 1 |   |   | **3** | **2** |
| **Upper Class** | 1 |   |   |   | **2** |
| **DINKS (Dual Income/No Kids)** | 1 |   | **3** |   |  **3** |
| **Yuppies** | 1 |   | **3** |   | **3** |
| **Families** | 1 | **3** |   |   | **2** |
| **Children****Age 4-13** | 1 **& 3** |   | **2** |   |   |
| **Adult Singles****Age 18-35** | 1 |   | **3** |   |   |

**Key for interpreting the numbers in the table:**

**1**Core products Marble Slab's an expert in making super premium ice cream which is the best seller across all of the target market

**2**Rarely sold to these individuals.  Product is included to offer more variety

**3**Biggest purchaser of items in this category

Now, look at your table and answer the following questions for the important cells.

Does the target market described on the left buy in the product category described on the top?  Remember that if target markets do not buy products in a particular category, those cells will be blank.  For example, people classified as middle class might buy their gardening implements at Wal-mart but may not buy their clothing at that store.

Why or why not?

How important is this cell to my overall business?

Do I have competitive advantage in this market with this product?

How is this competitive advantage manifested? (e.g. In the examples above, perhaps that my paper products serve yuppies very well because they are more innovative and of a higher quality than my competitors? products are.)

EXTRA, but not required: If you want to depict information more deeply, you could "position" the product for each segment (how you want that product to be perceived by that market),  Explain how you compete, or you could enter the % of revenues attributable to that cell.

10)  What **STRATEGY** opportunities does your company have for Product Development or Market Development, or both?  A "Market Development" strategy means that the firms pursue new markets that should be interested in products already carried by your company.  A "Product Development" strategy means that new products are offered to existing target markets.

11) Does your organization have a **COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE** relative to its **PRODUCT MIX**?  Your answer should be a "yes" or "no" followed by your defense of why you chose "yes" or "no".  You should also include references to background materials to help support your discussion.  Remember to discuss competitive advantage as it relates to EACH of the major competitors that you listed in SLP01.

Submit your 4 page SLP1 and 4 page SLP2 (excluding title page) as one paper.

**Expectations**

Note that this assignment does NOT require you to prepare a detailed essay.  Instead use section headings for each of the topics you address in your paper followed by a discussion of that topic.  In addressing the questions, use the **CAPITALIZED** and **BOLD** words in the sections above as headings.  Note that you are only graded on the information added to this ever growing paper.

Here is the format that should be used for your SLPs.  Note that each of the centered sections listed in this outline for SLP1-5 of your paper correspond to the modules in which you are to address the outlined aspects of your paper.

**INTRODUCTION (centered, bold, all caps)**

NAME OF ORGANIZATION (subheadings at left margin)

MISSION STATEMENT

PRODUCTS, GOODS OR SERVICES

COMPETITORS

POSITION IN THE MARKET

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

**TARGET MARKET AND PROD STRATEGY (centered, bold, all caps)**

TARGET MARKET

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES OF TARGET MARKET

PRODUCT CATEGORIES

PRODUCT-MARKET GRID

STRATEGY

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE/PRODUCT MIX

**DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY (centered, bold, all caps)**

DISTRIBUTION

LOGISTICS

PHYSICAL FACILITY

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE/DISTRIBUTION

**PROMOTION STRATEGY (centered, bold, all caps)**

PROMOTIONAL MIX

INTEGRATION OF THE MARKETING MIX

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN PROMOTION

**PRICING STRATEGY (centered, bold, all caps)**

PRICING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

INTEGRATION OF THE MARKETING MIX

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE/PRICING

**References**

As an academically-oriented paper, you are expected to use references and to properly cite those references.  If in your SLP you refer to information obtained from talking with an owner/manager, you should cite what that manager told you.

Part 2: Customer Loyalty to a Product/Brand

After completing the solutions for the Case02 and SLP02 assignments, please provide a solution to the below problem. This solution should be 125 - 150 words without references and I will assign three additional credits. The problem follows:

Will Nigel Travis be able to make Dunkin Donuts into a National Brand?

<http://www.qsrweb.com/article.php?id=17309&na=1>

CEO: Brand loyalty is key to Dunkin' expansion plans
As he celebrates a year at the helm of Dunkin' Brands, CEO Nigel Travis talks about expansion plans and strategy for building Dunkin' Donuts' regional brand loyalty into national recognition. Since joining the company, the former president and CEO of Papa John's International has focused on growth through improving operations and franchisee relations. QSRWeb.com (2/15)

If you are one of the first five to post, your post should be your response to TD2 Think about and identify specific product/market categories in responding to this question and provide some original examples not taken from the course materials or case studies to support your response. Do not select a product which is included or referred to in the course materials or case studies.

A second post should be a reply to at least one other student. In other words, you are to respond and critique the response of at least one other classmate. If you are not one of the first five to post, your two posts should be responses to your classmates.