

Marketing plan



Company logo

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Executive Summary

Our marketing plan can be divided in two main parts. The first one being an analysis, divided itself in an internal analysis of the current situation of our client BetterWorldBooks and an external analysis of the European book market. The second important part is the description of the marketing strategy we recommend to implement in Europe.

We began with an internal analysis of BetterWorldBooks to understand the way it works and the reasons of its success.

In order to do so, we first looked at its website to gather information about the company and its current vision and strategy. We learned that BetterWorldBooks is an online for-profit bookseller of used and new books based in the US. It is a member of B-Corporations since it has a triple-bottom-line which means for them to give equal prominence to all stakeholders : employees, customers, literacy partners, investors and the environment. To understand its successful way of operating we decided to use Osterwalder's nine building blocks. From our analysis we concluded that BetterWorldBooks' main strength is that it is more than a cheap bookseller, it also acts for the good of all stakeholders including the environment. It can claim to satisfy both rational and emotional aspects of its customers. However, the high competition in both the supply chain and the distribution of books, the high number of partners, the disappearance of illiteracy and its quite complex system of pricing can be considered as weak points.

The second part of our report consists in an external analysis of the European market divided in three parts: market analysis, competition analysis and business environment analysis. At the end of these three analyses we conducted a Blue Ocean analysis in order to be able to define any possible uncontested market space. We then summarized this external analysis with a SWOT to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the company's strategy in order to adapt this strategy to the European market, while being aware of the opportunities and threats it will face in Europe.

Concerning our market analysis, we decided to focus on four European countries, namely Germany, Italy, France and the UK because they account together for 60% of the European

book market. We firstly gave a few figures about these markets before analysing consumers' preferences and potential suppliers of books in each country.

Our competition analysis described the biggest bricks-and-mortar, online and hybrid competitors BetterWorldBooks would face in each of these four countries. One should note that Amazon would pose a great threat to BWB in all these countries.

We conducted the business environment analysis using the PESTEL model which concluded the main differences between Europe and the US are the following: the fixed book price agreement that is applied in Germany, France and Italy but not in the US nor the UK, the great power of publishers in continental Europe, the higher prices paid by Europeans for both printed books and e-books, the great cultural importance Europeans tend to give to printed books and bricks-and-mortar bookstores and the less flexible European labour market.

We decided to do Blue Ocean analyses since the books market is highly competitive. The first analysis compared the offline and the online book selling market and concluded that « Time for purchasing » and « Advices provided » are two gaps that can be filled. Our other analysis compared Amazon and BetterWorldBooks and concluded these were gaps that could be filled: Ecological & ethical impact, Advices provided, Product range and Technical support.

The conclusion of this external analysis in the form of a SWOT saying the strengths BWB would benefit from in Europe are its low prices, ecological and ethical impact, partnerships, automated services and advices and personal assistance. On the other hand, its weaknesses would be its not so specific targeted consumers, the inexistence of physical stores, its reputation that remains to be done and its potentially high delivery costs.

The last part of our marketing plan focuses on strategy, particularly on how the company should respond to the consumers' needs.

We began by segmenting the European market with criteria described in our customers' preferences analysis. We decided to do first a geographic segmentation, then a distribution segmentation (online/offline), followed by a demographic segmentation (by age categories) and lastly a psychographic one (with reading frequencies and tendency to buy ecological products).

From our segmentation tree and the characteristics of BetterWorldBooks, we gathered information about the segments that should be targeted by the company. One of our

recommendations is that Italy is currently not an attractive segment for the company because the percentage of online buyers is very low in Italy and Italian are not eager to buy ecological products. In addition, this is a relatively small market comparing to the other countries analysed.

We also recommend BWB not to target offline buyers and small readers mainly because the costs of targeting these segments would exceed the benefits.

Therefore, we recommend BWB to target German, French and British online buyers who are average or heavy readers and are eager to buy ecological products.

In order to provide sound advices regarding the positioning strategy, we decided to base our reflection on the S.A.V.E. framework and on the Blue Ocean conducted in the market analysis. Our positioning strategy aims at targeting specific segments. Among others, we believe that emphasis should be put on the ecological aspect of the product with the help of a monthly newsletter on the progress of BetterWorldBooks' ecological and ethical projects. In addition, a subscription system should be implemented in order to target heavy (and average) readers. Also, involvement of customers in the promotion and development of services should be encouraged. The access to the company's products and services will be possible through the Internet. Also, an online community should be set up and word-of-mouth encouraged. Finally, students will be specifically targeted with the help of special discounts on textbooks.

In conclusion, even though the European markets is highly competitive, we strongly believe that BetterWorldBooks has all the keys to become a successful ecological bookseller on the old continent with the help of our top quality advices.