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International Marketing plan for Sorvi Team Oy Limited: A case study of Garage Countdown

Bachelor's Thesis 2011

ABSTRACT

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Gautam, Milan	International Marketing plan for Sorvi Oy: A case Study of Garage countdown
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The aim of the thesis was to compose a marketing plan for Sorvi Team OY Ltd, Kotka. The case company's objective is to enter into European market and expand its market. This thesis will help the Case Company to enter European market and promote them by using efficient marketing mixes. From different perspectives and experiences, this thesis has summarized strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the business analyzing the business environment, markets and organizational buying behaviour from case company's point-of-view.

The theoretical part consists of business analysis, market analysis and other key factors related with the case company by utilising various sources from articles, books and from professional web sites. A qualitative method was chosen for the empirical study. All conclusions have been explained in depth; the research results support the theoretical base and are linked in every chapter from case company's point-of-view.

Overall the thesis functions as foundation for Sorvi Oy which performs most of the case company's marketing in Europe. The study suggests further research in the target market to investigate the markets, customers and other factors affecting the case company's business in Europe.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to create an international marketing plan for Sorvi Team Oy Ltd. This marketing plan deals with the Garage Countdown Project. The Company responsible for the project is Sorvi Team Oy Ltd. Dakar Media Tehdas is the cooperating company for this project. While the project is the brain child of Sorvi Team Oy, Dakar is collaborating with the company to produce advertising materials, designing and maintaining the project website and various other design aspects of the project.

Garage Countdown was opened in 36 European countries February 9, 2009. The list of the countries, the world map and the links to the individual country sites is attached in the appendix 2.

The main objective of the project is to market Garage Countdown to bands, music companies, media schools and other kinds of music organizations. Any band, preferably unsigned band or garage band can send or upload their music videos to Garage Countdown website. The target is to provide a forum for garage bands where they will be able to get more visibility, access to TV, international fans and possibly some record deals.

1.1. Purpose of the study and research objectives

The purpose of the thesis is to create an international marketing plan for Garage Countdown (Abbreviation GC) for International market.

The main objective of the study is to provide an ample tool to facilitate GC's market niche in International market. The emphasis of this study is on marketing communication and traditional factors of marketing; price, place and product. In

study and research, it includes analyzing company's micro and macro environment, formulating a target market analysis, business to consumer buying behaviour and generating a market strategy along with marketing communication plan. This study will provide a useful and beneficial international marketing plan for company to meet its goal.

1.2. Research topic and research problem

With the growing businesses, development of technology, and inevitable competition. Every business needs to do research before entering any market. This research is will give an overview of the European market for GC. The research topic is: Developing a successful marketing plan for GC. The topic is vast and it requires analysing every detail related to market. The outcome of the research will be very handy for GC as research will focus on every detail, which is essential before entering in new market or even after. Analysing various factors helps to identify potential opportunities and threats in market. The European market is big and challenge for GC. This research therefore will look at the important aspects of European market and helps to formulate marketing plan. Although GC had quite bit of success in Finland not as much as expected but still the venture was profitable. Now the main target is European markets and there is still one question. The question is:

How GC can be more visible in European market?

This research will help GC to find solution for above question. However, there are sub-questions according to the research topic, which are related to the main topic. The sub-questions are:

- A. How to identify the potential market?
- B. What is the market analysis and business environment analysis?
- C. How to build up the company reputation and increase customer awareness?
- D. How GC processes with the financial plan?
- E. What are the suitable media communication channels for the company to take?

F. What are suggestions for the current and the coming future marketing plan of GC?

1.3. Research focus and limitations

The focus of this research is to come with successful marketing plan for case company. The research focuses on various factors, which plays important role in formulating marketing plan. It does not concentrate on the importance of having marketing plan neither on “what is marketing plan” although in one chapter it discusses about the marketing plan and process. It focuses on the important factors, which any business needs to analyse knowing the market, and especially from the viewpoint of case company. The focus of the study is to find, analyse and explain various factors correctly related to the research topic. This study does not include how to draft a successful marketing plan or steps in creating marketing plan.

Marketing plan is something important which every company or business requires. Nevertheless, here the focus is on to create one. This study focuses to all the factors related with target market and potential customer of the case company. There are various factors needed to analyse before creating marketing plan. This study conducted within a lengthy period. Due to the lack of information of market and business prospects, the research carried for 5-6 months in order to collect all necessary information. The information gathered in this research is accurate. It was collected to give the company theoretical understanding of each factors and is gathered from different sources. To create the useful marketing plan for the company, each factor is analyzed in depth, comparing to the nature of the business and available marketing budget. The theories that are chosen are relevant. Therefore, the outcome of research is very significant for the case company. In this thesis, the theory and chosen techniques are generalised.

The focus of the research is to come with tactical marketing plan. It cannot serve as strategic marketing plan even though the theory part is based on stable information. However, the various things might change and some information gathered are

unstable they changes time to time. For e.g.: social factor and economic factor. However, at present scenario the gathered information will help the case company.

The limited resources and new business concept were the limiting factors of this study. The idea of GC is new and has never explored before so it is very hard to estimate the total market size. Although there are few competitors but neither of them, has same business idea or functions as GC. While conducting this research the main obstacle was to estimate the market as it has never been done before. The research focus was on finding the marketing plan for GC as how it is going to approach the European market but lack of previous studies and unclear overview of the target market made the research broad.

1.4. Research Design

The research is design in a way that it gives clear view to the reader. The research design of this study is shown in Figure 1.

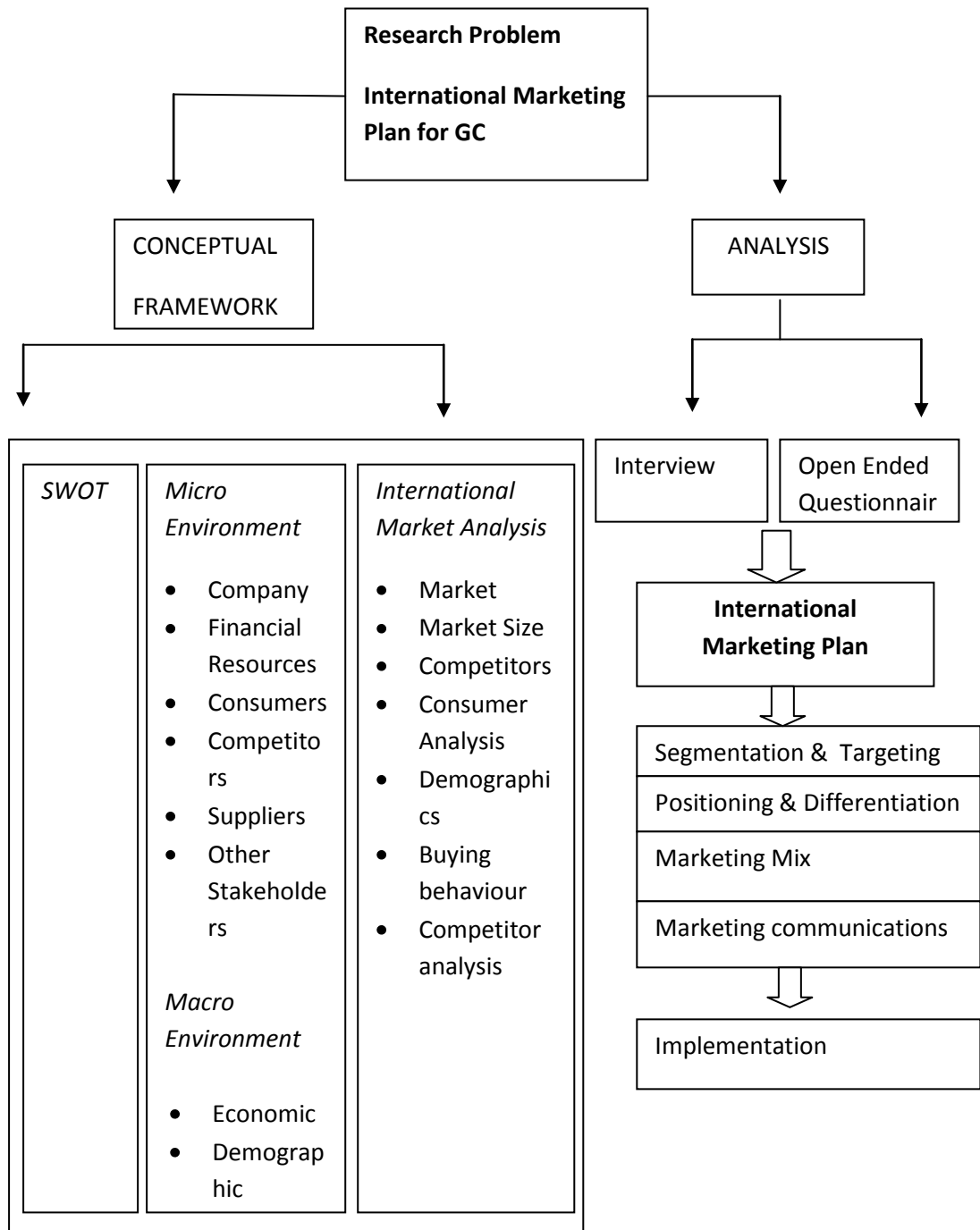


Figure 1: Research Design

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Sorvi Oy.

Sorvi began in 2007 to create a worldwide Internet entertainment site and associated reality TV show under the brand name of *Garage Countdown*. By focusing on garage bands, Garage Countdown will attract an audience from age group 14 to 34 the prime target for most advertisers and consumer-focused businesses. Bands will upload their videos to the Garage Countdown site, fans and site visitors will vote on their favourite music videos on the Garage countdown site.

The winners will appear on a reality TV show where the voting will continue via text messaging. Bands and their fans will compete for prizes giving fans incentives to vote again and again. Unlike other reality TV shows that use judges to screen the content and are pop-music focused, Garage Countdown will focus on bands and not use judges to screen the talent because this process is labour intensive and costly. Bands will upload their own videos, and fans will vote. There may be judges on the TV show, but they will not determine the winners. The fans that vote the most will also win prizes giving them incentive to vote more via their mobile phones — creating one of the revenue streams for Sorvi. Garage Countdown provides lesser-known bands and their fans a worldwide audience. This will attract TV networks that are continually looking for better-focused content to attract advertisers, record companies and concert promoters who are looking for new talent, and Internet companies that are looking to sell music and more “eyeballs” for their advertising-based revenue models. The figure 2 shows the outlook of the garage countdown homepage.



1
WATCH
MUSIC
VIDEOS
IN ANY
COUNTRY

2
SIGN UP TO
VOTE

3
COUNTRY'S
TOP 10
VIDEOS IN
WORLD
WEEKLY
FINALS

4
YOU
SELECT
THE WINNER



GC VIDEO PICKS



- ★ **GC WORLD IS NOW OPEN FOR UPLOAD**
Choose your country - Upload your music video. GC World competitions start when we have some more videos. So keep them coming.
- ★ **CHECK OUT GARAGE COUNTDOWN IN ACTION**
Garage Countdown in Finland started last year. Check out [GC Finland](#) for the great Garage Countdown videos.
- ★ **FANS**
Check out open sites from the GC World map. Soon you can watch any music video in any country. Vote and attend competitions. Meet band members at a virtual backstage and so much more.
- ★ **THE COMPETITIONS**
Only the Top 10 videos from each country make it to the GC World Site. Click What is GC? for more info on competitions.

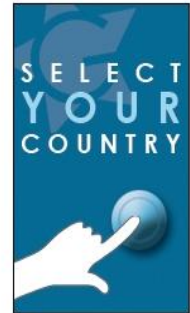


Figure 2: Homepage of Garage Countdown

2.2. Mission

Sorvi has created a Web site and TV Show, called Garage Countdown, to provide a place where bands and their fans can compete for worldwide exposure and prizes and advertisers can reach a coveted target demographic. Garage Countdown is unique in many ways including the following: Unlike American Idol, (1) it is global providing competitions in numerous countries with an eventual worldwide band “Olympics”, (2) talent is screened by Internet voters rather than professional judges and finalists appear on a reality TV show where winners are selected by voters via text messaging, and (3) revenue can be generated in many 2 ways on three main platforms — the Internet, Mobile devices and TV shows.

2.3. Current Situation

The company currently has 10 owners – 8 in Finland and 2 in the US. All of the owners bring complimentary talents to the company. Currently, the pilot competition has started in Finland with over 100 music videos uploaded to the Garage Countdown site. The reality TV component is in process and will be aired from September through December 2010 on the Voice network — the largest music TV network in Finland. Based on what is learned from the Finland experience, refinements will be made and Sorvi will take this concept to other countries in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. Discussions have already taken place in Sweden, Germany, Australia, Thailand, and the United States.

2.4. Marketplace

The Marketplace is Europe and includes the European Internet population and the TV viewing audiences in most countries. Sorvi will be giving priority to those countries where there are no governmental or extremist religious prohibitions to showing rock bands on TV. The internet penetration in Europe is shown in figure 3.

Internet Penetration in Europe June 2010

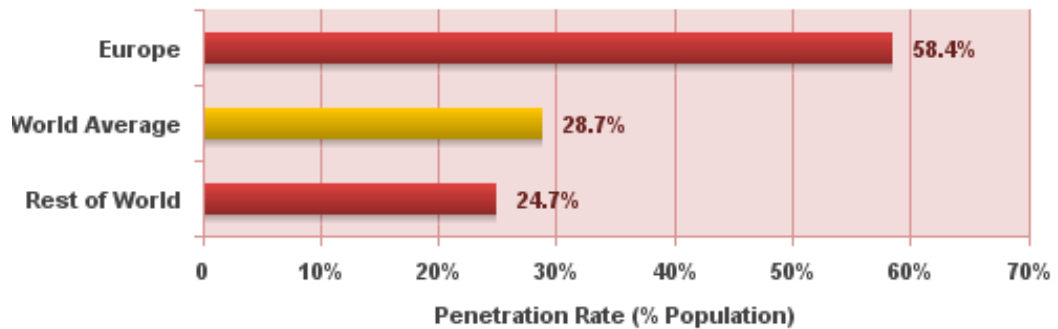


Figure 3: Internet Penetration in Europe (Internet World Stats, 2010)

At the time of writing this plan, it was difficult to get a breakdown of TV viewing worldwide. It is estimated that 4 billion people watched the recent Olympics in Beijing, and it is estimated that 1.5 billion people watched the World Cup in football (soccer). In addition, there are more than three billion mobile phone subscribers worldwide. (China Daily, 2008; BBC, 2010)

2.5. Competition and limiting factors

Competition is most likely to come from YouTube and other related entertainment sites. Bands also are listed on MySpace, Facebook, and other places. However, many who frequent these sites also visit other sites on the Internet and are likely to be attracted to Garage Countdown because our unique combination of the following factors.

- Global reach.
- Excitement generated by Competition.
- Focus on Garage Bands.
- Multiplatform combination of Internet and Reality TV show.

- Focus on a coveted demographic sought by advertisers and global consumer companies.

In addition to competition, the other limiting factor that limits all companies are resources, capital and human. Sorvi has limited the human resources required by having bands and fans upload their own videos and information. Regarding capital, the company expects to generate cash from operations and start-up capital from Tekes and other sources.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework has been created to explain the content of the research on the basis of all theoretical concepts included in this study. It shows the theoretical background of the research. It also highlights those theoretical parts from the case company's point of view. The conceptual framework of this research is shown in Figure 4.

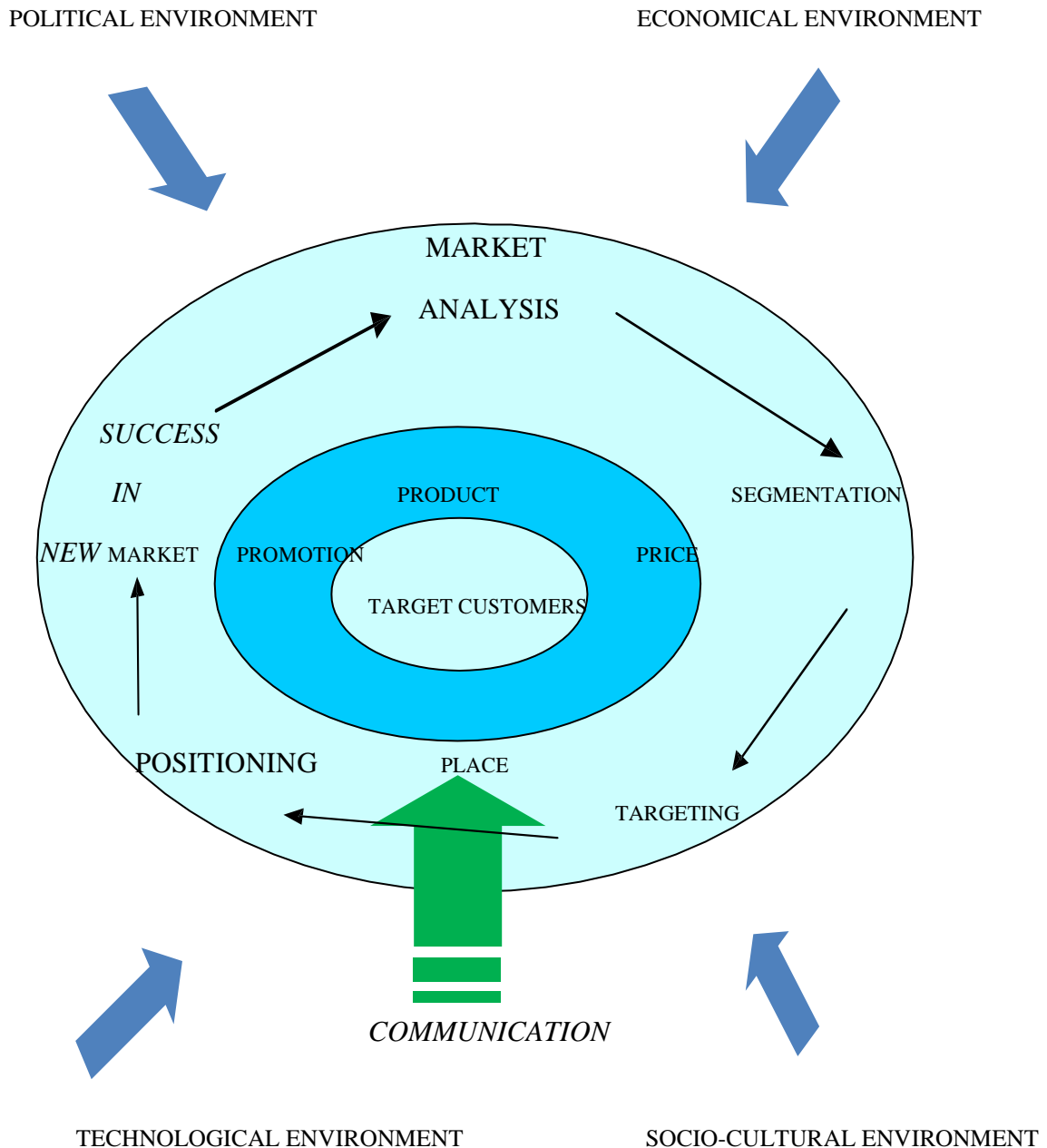


Figure 4: Conceptual Framework (Based on Kotler, 2002)

The consumer is always in the centre of the components, as all marketing activities should focus on the consumer. In this study, communication with the customers and market analysis is discussed in details. The consumers are the important aspect so this study has focused more on consumers; their characteristics, behaviour and consuming habits. The marketing communication is important part so this study will focus on that as well briefly. The other parts of the framework are also discussed in this study but main focus was on previously mentioned parts. The traditional factors

of marketing are almost fixed in the case company's situation but this study will discuss on certain aspects of it.

3.2. Qualitative research and case study

This research is based on qualitative research method. The quantitative method is not suitable for this research as it is conducted with data gathered from large amount of questionnaires and the research method uses statistical techniques and mathematical measure. Whereas qualitative research studies normally fairly small number of samples or situations and preserve the individuality of each of these in analysis. The qualitative method is based on a small sample size, and with an open-ended questionnaire. The collected information is not in numeric value and study is not based on statistics. The nature of this research and for its chosen topics the suitable method was to conduct unstructured interviews and open questionnaire. Hence, the qualitative research is most suitable for this research. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003, 327-409; Ghauri & Gronhaug 2005, 108-114)

The qualitative research is most suitable for studies in which the aim is to understand the meaning of the things involved in it; participants, events, situations and actions they are involved with. The objective of qualitative research is to understand the research cases from their point of views. Case study is a study of a product, a single situation, group, or a specific case in their real life context. The concept of case study is very wide but it should always contain a specific case. It is a comprehensive investigation aimed for specific purpose that focuses on features and complexity of the case. The aim of case study is to produce intensive and detailed information about the research object. (Dul & Hak, 2008, 3-7; Silverman 1993, 33-56)

This study will look into the implementation on marketing activities for the case company in European market. Case study is the optimal research method for case company as the investigation will be very accurate and detailed.

3.3. Data gathering and analysis

The research was adopted with qualitative method; the data for this study was generated from various sources. The theoretical information relevant to the study was collected from various books of several well-known authors. This study uses several internet resources as well for data gathering from the reliable sources to ensure the freshness of the data.

Interview was the other main tool used for data gathering. The interviews for this study were carried out personally, utilizing unstructured interviewing method. Unstructured interviews are the most open-ended approaches of interviewing. The advantage of using unstructured interviews, it is without any set format, spontaneity, and flexibility. The unstructured interviewing method was the best possible way of doing the interviews as interviewees were comfortable and more talkative. Hence the interview went smoothly and needed information was gathered. The interview took place thrice on 10th March, 15th July, and 28th November 2010 at Sorvi Oy Ltd in Kotka. The interview was conducted with CEO, Project Manager and Head Of web construction.

The interviews were conducted in English as all three people mentioned above could communicate in English. The interviews weren't recorded as interviewer had a note-taker with him so he can concentrate on interview and note-taker could gather all important notes. The note-taker was fluent in English so there weren't any problems during interviews which ensured the maximum accuracy of notes.

The open-ended questionnaires were also used for data gathering. The online survey was placed on GC's homepage. The information was gathered from over 100 respondents over 2 month's period. The online survey was difficult as not many users want to take part in survey. It was optional for GC's site visitor so not many took part in. The survey process was about less than 5 minutes and there were 10 questions.

3.4. Questionnaire Design

This research study uses open-end questionnaires. The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out attitudes, behaviors, expectations, beliefs and values of the target group. The questionnaire was available in the Garage Countdown webpage and there were 10 questions. It takes about 3-5 minutes in average to complete the questionnaire. About 350 respondents took part in the questionnaire survey between July and August 2010. The data collected using questionnaire was very important as it helped to give the views of customers and solve the questions of what are the most effective forms of communication tools in the target market.

3.5. Objectivity

The objectivity of this study is to collect reliable and relevant data accurately during the data gathering process. It is very essential to stay objective and neutral during the research process. The researcher cannot be bias neither can impose self beliefs or comments during the research process. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003, 135). The researcher stayed objective throughout the research and haven't impose own subjective or emotional values. In this research all the gathered data were from various sources and all the sources are mentioned.

3.6. Reliability & Validity

The reliability and validity is key issue in every research. It ensures the proficiency of the study and the outcome. Reliability of a research contains characteristics credibility, consistency, neutrality, conformability, dependability, transferability and trustworthiness. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007, 148-149; Ghauri & Gronhaug 2005, 80-85).

The reliability of study can be study can be increased by describing accurately the research process in each and every phase. The empirical part of this study is based on interviews, theory and open-ended questionnaires. While the theory part came from books and reliable internet sources. The marketing plan and business

background information came from interviews and case company's archives. In this study only relevant sources were selected, double checked and information was always up-to date.

Validity means the value of the analysis of the findings. It means the ability to measure relevant issues that were originally intended in the research. Validity measures the relationship between circumstances, case scenarios, research methods, and the results alone the study. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003, 100-102)

All the information was collected from reliable sources. The interviews were conducted with the CEO and other important persons in the case company, as they have true insight and knowledge of the past and current situation. The background and experiences of the interviewees made the gathered information valid. The theory parts were gathered from reliable sources and relevant. So it is possible to argue that the research has comprehensive reasons to prove its reliability and validity.

4. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT ANALYSES

4.1. Analysis of microenvironment

Business environment consists of micro and macro environment, which are also known as internal and external forces. It is very essential to know the business environment before entering any market. The microenvironment of business consists of those forces that are related to company. It includes the company, suppliers, competitors, publics and all other stakeholders. The company should analyse those factors in order to sustain in the market and should plan accordingly. The figure 5 shows the microenvironment of a company. (Kotler et. al. 2002, 146)

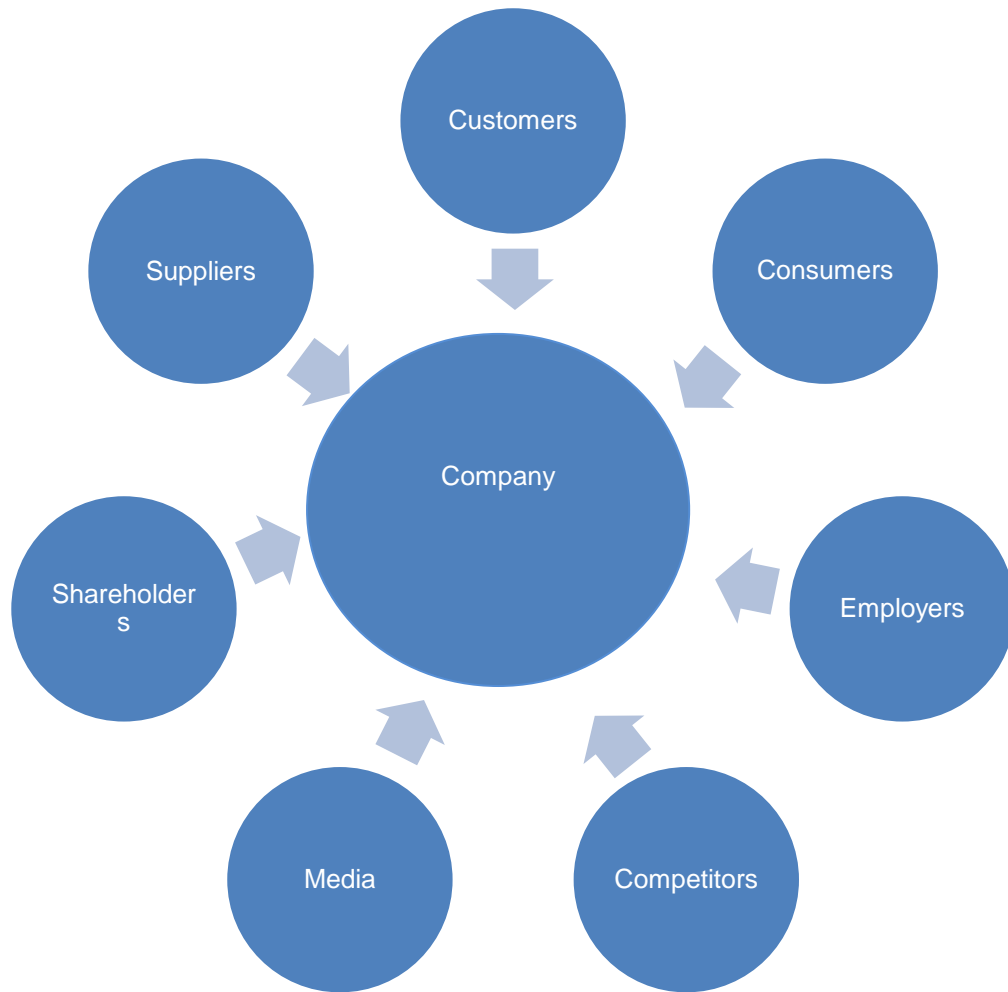


Figure 5: Microenvironment of a company (Kotler et. al. 2002, 146)

4.1.1. Company

When the company is trying to break in foreign market it affects the whole organisation and its functionality depending upon the size and area or its extensity. In the case of GC the market is quite huge and there should be balance in company's functionality regarding personnel, marketing, financing and other things related to it. In Europe the language varies and so does the cultures as well and functionality becomes complex as the message from centre can't be easily passed to the right parties and vice-versa. The information flow might be in jeopardy.

4.1.2. Financial Resources

Whenever a company is going to operate in foreign territory all the costs should be calculated before cash in-Flow. The company should have adequate funds in order to operate in foreign market as many unexpected things might happen such as additional research, hiring more personnel or even additional marketing and promotions. The company should know that revenues from sales will be received not right after business operation but after few months.

GC has limited resources so it cannot spend heavily on every single country but it has spent wisely. The owners have provided initial capital. The GC has evaluated direct or indirect costs related to foreign market entry.

4.1.3. Consumers and competitors

GC is operating like a music label company as it helps unknown artists to promote by providing the platform. The GC has identified its target consumers in target market. The marketing objective of GC states to provide more opportunities and satisfaction in regards of consumer service and provide better consumer value than its competitors.

There are different types of customer market but GC will operate in business to consumer markets. GC is aware of its competitors and their marketing strategies.

4.1.4. Suppliers and other stakeholders

Suppliers and stakeholders plays important role in the business. They bring different value to the company and if the suppliers and stakeholders are in good relation then it can cause delays, shortages, and other events which might harm sales in the short run. The case company requires very efficient and trustable suppliers and stakeholders as the market is huge and the company alone can't function alone. (Kotler et.al. 2002, 159)

4.2. Analysis of macro environment

Microenvironment refers to six factors: demographical, social-cultural, economical, natural, political-legal, and technological forces. Company's macro environment refers to these factors that influence company's performance on foreign market. Marketers must pay attention to their interactions, because these will lead to new opportunities and threats. Companies must take an outside-inside view of their business to be successful. (Kotler et. al. 2002, 158-175). In the following chapter, only couple of macro environmental factors related highly with the case company will discussed.

4.2.1. Demographic factor

The first marcoenvironmental force that marketers monitor is population, because people make up markets. Marketers are keenly interested in the size and growth rate of population distribution, age distribution, and educational levels. (Kotler et al. 2002, 163-164). According to populationdata.net, the population of European Union is about 500 millions. (Polulationdata.net, 2010)The potential market is huge for the case company.

4.2.2. Economic Factor

Markets require purchasing power as well as people. The available purchasing power in an economy depends on current income, prices, saving, debt, and credit availability. Marketers must pay close attention to major trends in income and consumer-spending patterns. Economic conditions are influenced by political and legal factors and government policies. The government policies around the Europe are better than in any other parts of the world. The closely related economic conditions and government policies can influence various environmental forces that can affect organizations. (kotler et al. 2002, 168-69). Most of the European countries where GC will open it sites are in European Union.

The GDP of European union is \$15.95 trillion and the annual growth rate for 2011 is estimated 1.7%. The unemployment rate is below 9.5% and inflation rate is 1.8%.

Currently few countries in European are still in recession and few had huge budget deficits. The European commission had suggested those countries to cut down budget deficits and recovery is on the process. After the Greece economic collapse incident, the European Union is more organised and strong than before. Hence, the stability of euro as the common currency has maintained. The GDP of European union is also amongst the highest in the world. (Europa, 2010). The figure 6 shows the GDP of European union.

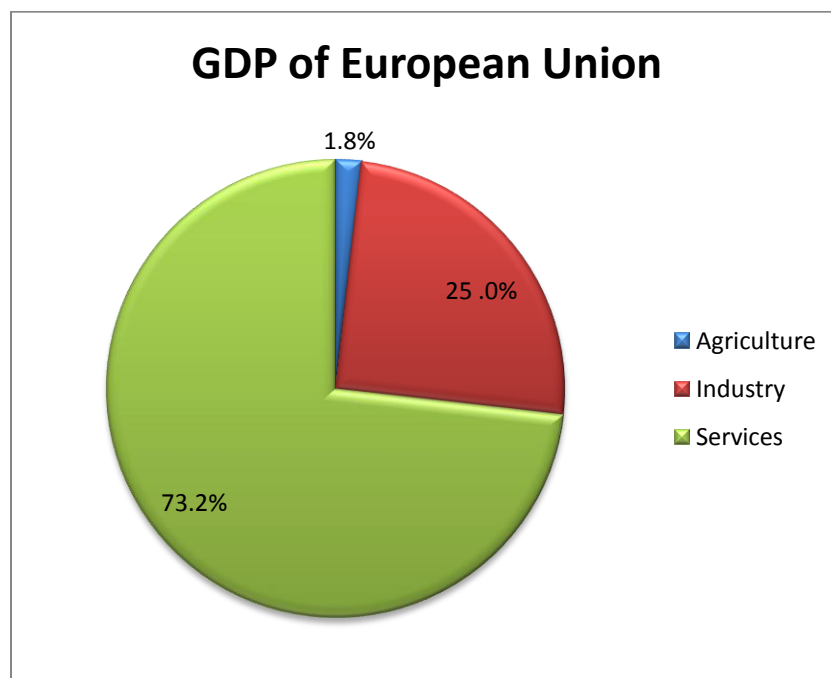


Figure 6: GDP of European Union (CIA, 2010)

Although the situation is getting better in some European country overall situation is quite good. The economy of the area is good and people's purchasing power is also high. The political and other factors are also in the favour of GC. (Europa, 2010)

5. INTERNATIONAL MARKET ANALYSIS

Market analysis is very important while formulating the marketing plan. It provides the clear picture of the market in which it is operating or planning to enter. The

purpose of international market analysis is to formulate an understanding of customers and competitors, view their behaviour and generally understand the dynamics of the market. (Proctor, 2000, 82-86)

5.1. Market

The market consists of 36 European Countries. The detailed lists of the countries are listed in the appendix 1 of the appendix section. This is the target market at the moment. In future, company has planned to expand the list of participating countries further and include other countries from the rest of the world. The plan is to focus in a different geographical region in different phases. As it is focusing now in European Countries, consequently it will focus in the next phase in a different geographical region such as the Americas, South-East Asia region etc. However, it is to be understood that this is only a long- term marketing plan. We have not been able to meet the deadline even in a small segment of 36 European Countries. We started the Garage Countdown Competition within these Countries by the end of April, 2009 but the responses are weak and case company have not been able to get as many music videos as assumed before outlining this marketing plan. (GC, 2009)

5.2. Market size

It is very difficult to estimate the market size as the whole set of business is new concept. According to Australian Music office, the recorded music worth approximately €15.5 billion and potential 450 million listeners all over Europe (Australian Music office, 2010).

5.3. Competitors

So far, we do not have exactly any competitors in our segment. We have carved our own niche for our marketing purposes and we are first ones to start this kind of

project in such a large scale, to the best of our knowledge. However, we cannot discard the relevant competitors who operate on similar substitute services. Some of them, in the order of importance are:

5.3.1. YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing website where users can upload, view and share video clips. It is now operated as a subsidiary of Google. The company is based in San Bruno, California, and uses Adobe Flash Video technology to display a wide variety of user-generated video content, including movie clips, TV clips, and music videos, as well as amateur content such as video blogging and short original videos. Individuals have uploaded most of the content on YouTube, although media corporations including CBS and the BBC and other organizations offer some of their material via the site. (Youtube, 2010)

5.3.2. Unsigned Band Web

The Unsigned Band Web is an online music community for unsigned bands to display their songs and develop a following. Bands can sign up by creating an artist page and uploading songs, videos, images, and band news.

Unsigned Band Web hosts 5000 unsigned bands and over 8000 songs. Visitors can listen to bands, rate and comment on songs, and chat in the music forums. The Unsigned Band Web offers large range of song charts for all genres of music. Each time a visitor plays a song, the play is tracked and counts towards increasing the status of the song in the charts. An active group of moderators pick songs from several genres each month to feature on the home page. (Unsigned Band web, 2010)

5.3.3. Unsigned.com

Unsigned.com is owned by First Beat Media Inc., an online entertainment media company that is committed to being the best source of information to discover unsigned artists. It is headquartered in South Florida. Unsigned.com is dedicated to providing independent Artists from solo, trio to bands, the best outlet possible to be heard globally on the Internet. The organization claims that its goal to provide the artists, with a new revenue and distribution model for your music. Unsigned band web could be considered as our main competitor because the business idea in comparison to our project is very similar. YouTube is already an established brand and we cannot compete head-on with it, as far as the video hosting services are accounted, but we differ from YouTube in our business proposition. (Unsigned.com, 2010)

5.4. Competitors' strengths and weaknesses

The potential competitors those mentioned above have already some history behind them but their operations varies from Garage countdown , so it is bit hard to analyse their strengths and weaknesses according to their operation. The table 1 shows the competitors' strengths and weaknesses.

Table 1. Competitor's weakness and strengths

Strengths	Weakness
In market before GC, so they have more experience in the market.	Yet not able to dominate the market.
Some of the competitors are already	Low following which means they have not created own niche in European

renowned brand for e.g. YouTube	market as it is mostly targeted to English speaking countries.
More access to media and other events where they can promote	Low global awareness of artists, people do not easily recognize the unsigned artists.
Well developed video hosting application and user friendly navigable interface	Still unpopular among people and have low following

From this what we can conclude is that the whole idea although those potential competitors are already there but they have not stamp their foothold in the market as the whole idea is still the new concept which is in early phase.

5.5. Consumer Analysis

5.5.1. Consumers

Our consumers are those who visit our site and vote for their choices of artists and buy our Merchandise. Our target consumers are those music lovers from 36 European countries which are about nearly over 450 million (statistics Australian Music office). Although our objective is to provide the forum for aspiring artists but other thing apart from that is to bring those artists in touch with their potential fans as well. In our website they can interact with their fans and get their feedbacks about their music and future gigs. The figure 7 shows the consumer analysis of GC.

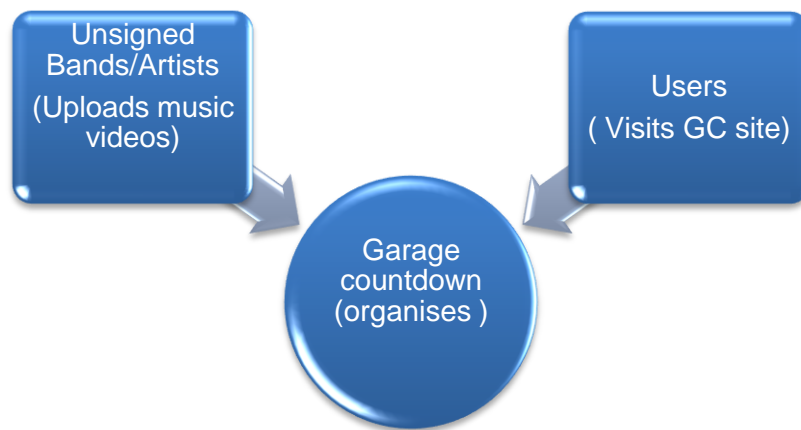


Figure 7: Consumer Analysis for Garage Countdown (GC, 2010)

As shown in figure above the process is simple our partners who are unsigned bands/artists upload their product in our website and we manage them and finally the users who are the ultimate consumers will visit GC site. It is very hard for unsigned bands to directly communicate with their potential listeners so through GC they can do it with ease.

5.6. Buying decision

It comes through a lengthy process normally whether to purchase or not to purchase merchandise or vote their favourite artists is most likely a result of a longer decision making process but not usually but Sometimes consumer just like the product so they go for it. So there are many things that affect the consumer's buying decision. It is a complex system. (Kotler et al. 2005, 257-270; KnowThis.com, 2010)The figure 8 shows the factors influencing consumer behaviour

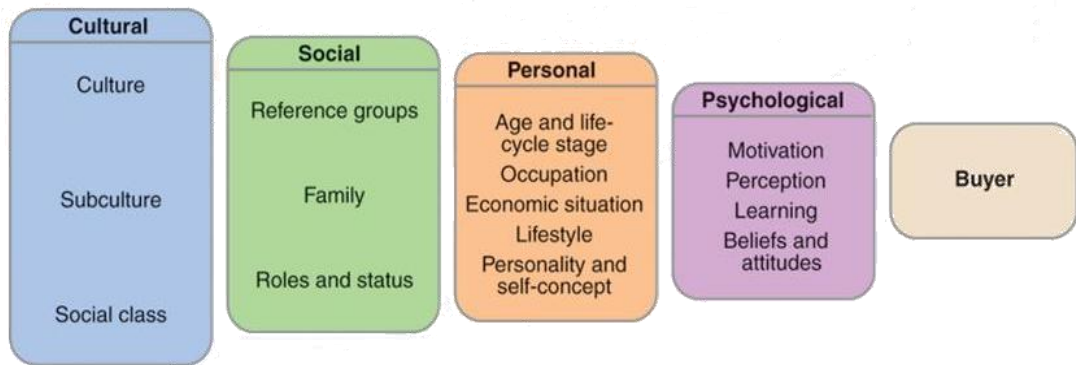


Figure 8. Factors influencing consumer behaviour (Kotler et al.2005, 262)

5.7. Demographics

Music can be enjoyed by all age so it is hard to define and exact demographics for Garage countdown (GC) but as we are operating on web so our potential customers are those who visit our site. Internet users in Europe alone comprise 24.2% of whole world internet using population. (Internet world stats, 2010) The figure 9 shows the internet users in Europe.

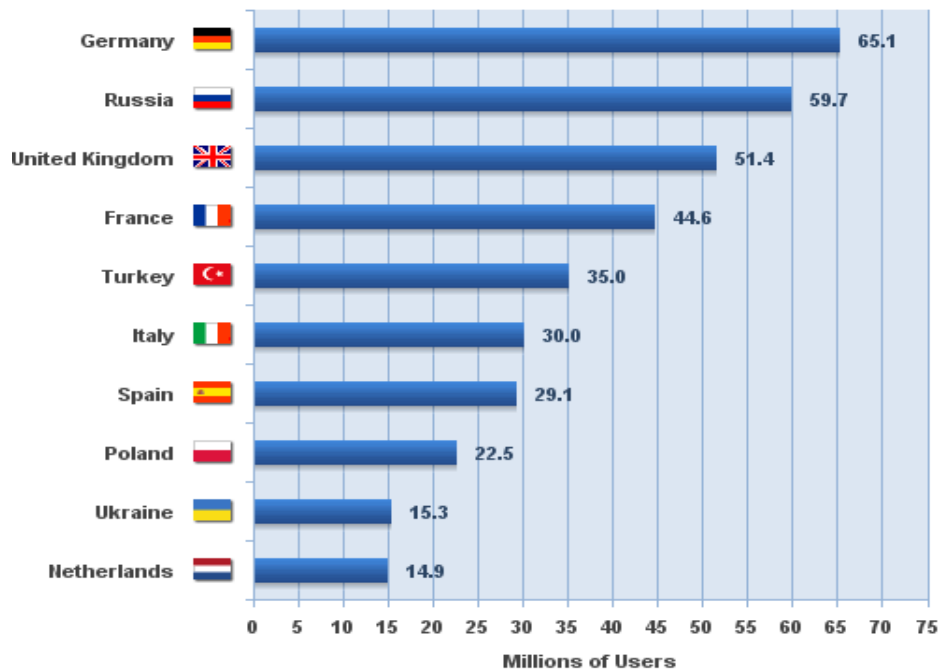


Figure 9: Internet Users in Europe (Internet world stats, 2010)

5.8. SWOT Analysis

5.8.1. Strengths and Weaknesses

Our weaknesses in comparison with our competitors are manifold. Firstly, Sorvi Team Oy Lmtd, the company behind this project is a start-up company. We have a very limited budget for the project and a large portion of the budget is spent on developing web hosting content and servers for the upcoming videos. Secondly, being a garage company ourselves, we do not have our own office facilities at the moment, and have to host meetings in our cooperative company Dakar's facilities. This hinders our timetable, and the ability to develop creative strategies freely. In comparison to unsigned band web, for example, who have employees all over the world; we have only few employees (3 full-time) and few work interns. This seriously limits our ability to spot new garage artists all over the world as all the full time employees are Finnish. Thirdly, as we deal with a multilingual customer segment, garage artists in 36 European Countries, often language barriers prove to be a serious challenge. Fourth, in comparison to YouTube and unsigned band web that have already established following and a visibly identifiable logo and other design elements, we have a long way to go before we can have similar following and a well-known brand (Garage Countdown).

Despite all these weaknesses, we still do have a lot of strengths to motivate us. Firstly, we have our own niche customer segment. Although we also focus on garage artists, we focus on garage artist's videos. As opposed to YouTube, which focuses on user uploaded videos of signed and popular music bands; we deal with videos for underground garage artists. As opposed to unsigned band web which have web hosting services for audio files we encourage garage artists to upload their videos. Secondly, we are really committed to provide a forum for visibility (for the garage artists). We have connections with TV networks such as Voice TV in Finland, which broadcasts our Finnish Garage Countdown in a weekly basis, due to which the garage artists can sense quickly advantages on uploading their music videos to our website and possibly be drawn to our services. Thirdly, unlike any other similar

services, we have easily navigable display of country wise unsigned band videos, a better mix of both YouTube and unsigned band web. The table 2 shows the strengths and weaknesses of GC

Table 2. Strengths and Weaknesses of Garage Countdown

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strong focus on niche customer segment	Limited budget
Unique service: music videos of garage bands	Limited facilities
Access to advertising networks (TV eg)	Low global awareness of artists
Well developed video hosting application	Language barriers
Easily navigable interface	Low following
Unique country wise selection of videos	Not a recognizable brand

5.8.2. Opportunities and Threats

Our long-term strategy is to broaden the services to all over the world as a part of the Garage World Countdown project. As a result, we could benefit from the first mover advantage of this kind of service in many different nations. Dealing with different customer segments, with different cultural backgrounds and language might be an opportunity to start the service in local languages and with local settings on design element for our application. Since, we will have a large collection of unsigned videos from previously unrecognized bands, with good selection criteria in hand; we could start our own label or diverge into web broadcasting media and sales outlet for popular artists. The recent trend suggests that many established bands also channel their music sales through their personal website. Once our brand name Garage Countdown is established and there is a large following of loyal customers of our services, we can generate extensive revenues from advertising banners in our website for other different organizations. We are already having advertising banners

for Blue 1 Airlines and strings.com (online retail shop for utility products). In the future, along with our recognizable brands, we aim to sell Garage Countdown products. We have already Garage Countdown T-Shirt with a Garage Countdown logo on sale. We aim to expand the product range in a short time.

We are of course, faced with a number of threats. First of all, any other competitors can easily move into our target segment by increasing functionality and navigability of their already existing video hosting services to include country wise search buttons. Though, we might be the first ones to enter into many foreign nations as a first provider of this kind of services, due to our language ability deficiency, we can be seriously competing with local start-ups. There is also a threat of being acquired by a sizable company with budget as soon as our Garage Countdown brand starts to get a bit recognized.

Overall, to conclude I would say, we have much more opportunities existing than the possible threats we would have to face. The table 3 shows opportunities and threats are summarized of GC.

Table 3. Opportunities and Threats of Garage Countdown

Opportunities	Threats
First mover advantage in different nations	Niche position cannot be sustained
Diverge services into different localized versions	Competition with local start-ups
Possibility to start our own record label	Deficiency in language skills
Possibility to start own broadcasting network	Threat of acquisition
Function as Retail Outlet for popular artists	
Generate Revenues from advertising banners	
Sell own brand products	

6. INTERNATIONAL MARKETING PLAN FOR SORVI OY

6.1. Marketing strategy for European market

Marketing strategy is the key weapon in business it determines how to go about whole marketing process it includes marketing mix tools supported by customer service and internal marketing strategies. The core idea of marketing strategy is to compete effectively and to meet set marketing objectives and achieve goals. It is marketing logic, which helps the business unit to achieve its marketing objectives. The importance of marketing strategy is that it demonstrates how strategies for target markets and positioning build upon the firm's differential advantages. It helps the business to focus on market segments. There Marketing strategy should function as a foundation and guideline for all marketing program decisions. It identifies segments of the market, which needs to be targeted to achieve the marketing objectives and it, selects the appropriate and determines the best to satisfy the needs of the segmented group. (Kotler & Armstrong 2001, 71; Hatton 2000, 45, 140)

Marketing strategy is very essential for businesses. Without proper marketing strategy even effective marketing plan might not be successful. Marketing strategy contains of detailed strategies for target markets, the marketing mix and marketing expenditure levels, distribution channels and possible research and development. It is a very critical process, which needs to be handling carefully; it determines the future of the business. It is about finding the balance between many factors, which act on the organization, and turning these into long-term profits. (Fifield, P. 2007, 8-17; Mullins et. al. 2007, 214)

The whole marketing campaign in European market will be handled by sorvi oy. The marketing strategy for Europe is designed in co-operation with other various media partners. The case company possesses competences and market knowledge required for successful marketing in Europe.

6.2. Market segmentation

Market segmentation is very important as the basis of all marketing activities based upon it. Marketing segmentation means dividing the market into distinct groups of buyers with different needs, characteristics or behaviours that marketing can address. The reason to create market segmentation is to find and choose the segments that meet company's criteria and provide the best possible financial outcome. Properly conducted market segmentation can eliminate inappropriate markets and identifies appropriate market segments. It gives company better chance to understand customers in potential segments and helps for further marketing research (Wood 2000, 95-96; Doyle & Stern 2006, 63-81). Table 5 shows the advantages of market segmentation.

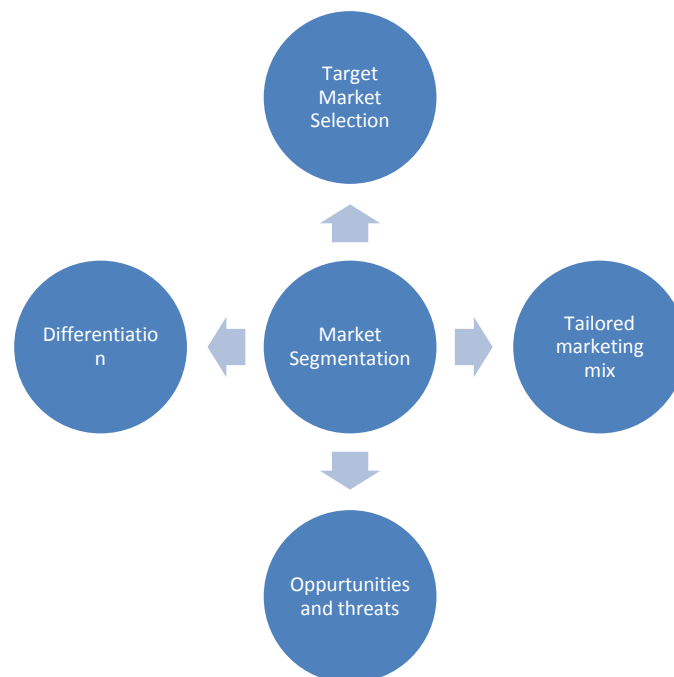


Figure 10: The advantages of market segmentation (Jobber 2009, 260)

Market segmentation makes the marketing effort more efficient and economic. The market segment should be Identifiable, Accessible and profitable. It should be durable and measurable as well but more important should be profitable than sizeable. Variable factors plays important role in market segmentation. The major segmentation variables are geographic, demographic, psychographic, and

behavioural segmentation. (Kotler et al. 2005, 398-407; Weinstein 2004, 7-15). Segmentation is done on consumer market and industrial market. The case company is operating on consumer market. The table 4 shows the consumer segmentation methods.

Table 4. Consumer segmentation methods (Jobber 2009, 264)

Variable	Examples
Behavioural	
Benefits sought	Convenience, status, performance, price
Purchase occasion	Self-buy, gift, special occasions, eating occasion
Purchase behaviour	Souls buying, brand switching, innovations
Usage	Heavy, light
Perceptions, beliefs and values	Favourable, unfavourable
Physiographic	
Lifestyle	Trendsetter, conservatives, sophisticates
Personality	Extroverts, introverts, aggressive, submissive
Profile	
Age	Under 12, 12-18, 19-25, 26-35, 36-49, 50-64, 65+
Gender	Female, male
Life cycle	Young single, young couples, young parents, middle aged empty nesters, retired
Social class	Upper middle, middle, skilled working, unwaged
Terminal education age	16, 18, 21 years
Income	Income breakdown according to study objectives and income levels per country

Geographic	North vs. south, urban vs. rural, country
Geo-demographic	Upwardly mobile young families living in larger owner-occupied houses, older people living in small houses; European regions based on language, income, age profile and location

Consumer market is basically segmented on behavioural, psychographic and profile variables. The behavioural bases for segmenting consumer markets are benefit sought, purchase behaviour, purchase occasion and usage. It provides the information on consumer's buying decision and shows how different consumer groups expect different benefits from same product and different reasons and motives for buying it. (Jobber 2009, 259-75; Net MBA, 2010)The psychographic segmentation involves targeting people's lifestyle and personality. People's interest, attitude and opinions are major factor in this segmentation. The profile segmentation is very important as it involves demographic, socio-economic and geographic variables. The important factors in profile segmentation are age, gender, social class, education, Income, family size and location. (Jobber 2009, 260-89)

The age plays very important part in music market and so does in internet marketing. The case company is targeting internet users mostly as they are ones who will visit GC website. Segmentation is necessary age, gender, location and various other reasons significantly influences buyer behaviour. Segmentation will help GC to focus on more target consumer. The characteristics of the product and benefits it provides to consumers helps to choose the consumer segmentation.

Consumer Segmentation plays important role for GC. The market can be divided into segments based on the consumer's geographic location, age, life cycle, personality, lifestyle and usage. Internet users in Europe are in huge numbers and it varies from one country to another. Life styles of Europeans are also different from one country to another and the usage of internet. Therefore, this all factors will help

the GC to crackdown the market and come with effective plan to cover all markets. Due to the limited resources case company cannot come with different plan for each country so segmentation will help to analyse all the factors and helps to understand the market and consumer.

6.3. Targeting

Segmentation divulges the firm's market segment opportunities. Targeting comes after segmentation and is based on proficient market segmentation. Market targeting involves evaluating various market segments and deciding how many and which segments to target. Targeting means selecting the one's target market. Firms must evaluate all segments carefully and decide which segment would be the best to target in terms of firm's interests. Targeting helps to make promotion, pricing and distribution on products or services easier and cost-effective. There are three market-coverage strategies: undifferentiated marketing differentiated marketing and concentrated marketing. (Kotler et al. 2005, 391-424).

Undifferentiated marketing is a mass-marketing approach; it targets the whole market with one offer and ignores market segments differences. In this method, the company chooses whole market rather than one or two segments. The undifferentiated marketing focuses the whole market hence it keeps down production, inventory, transportation, advertising costs. It focuses on what is common in the needs of consumer than what is different. (Kotler et al. 2005, 418-19; Wood 2004, 107-109)

Differentiated marketing is different than undifferentiated marketing as it targets several market segments or niches and designs separate offers for each. In this method, the company chooses a segment or couple of it and tailors different marketing mix for each segment's features and behaviours. It leads to consumer satisfaction as different marketing mix addresses each targeted segments. It is more costly than undifferentiated marketing as it has to create different marketing mix for

each segment. Concentrated marketing is cost effective and suitable for small company with limited resources. In this method a company goes after a large share of one or few segments. It helps to reach out several related segments with same offer. (Kotler et al. 2005, 418-19; Wood 2004, 107-121; Blythe, 2005, 83)The figure 11 shows three alternative market-coverage strategies.

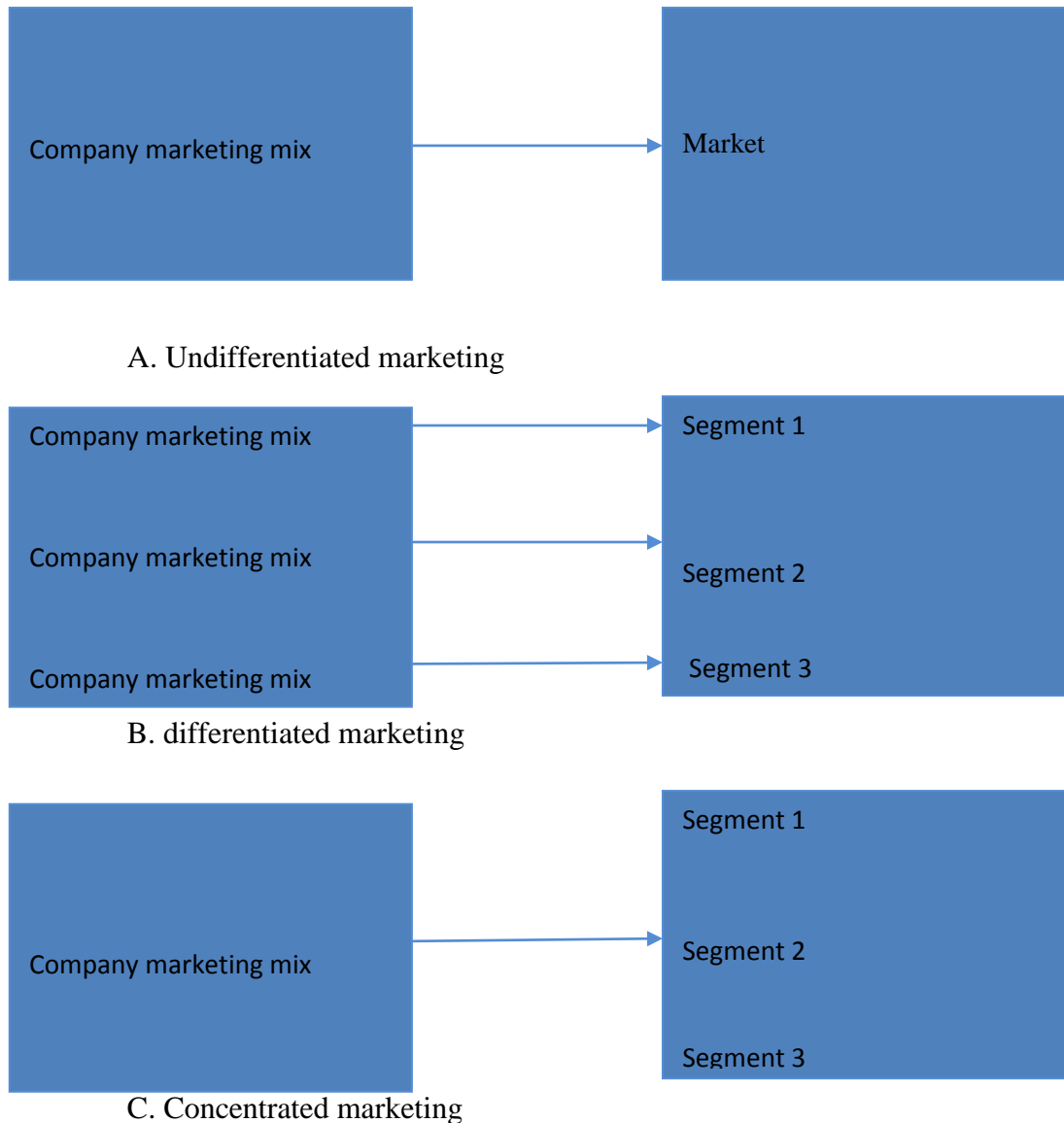


Figure 11: Three alternative market-coverage strategies (Kotler et al. 2005, 418)

GC's marketing strategy will utilize concentrated method of targeting. GC will choose couple of segments, to which it centralize its marketing activities. The case company cannot take undifferentiated marketing or differentiated marketing as

market is huge and it takes more time and resources while concentrated marketing is economic and effective. The concentrated marketing is more risky than other so company should acquire sufficient knowledge on segment's needs, trends, changes, growth in order to gain success in the market. Proficient centralization may help the company to get strong position and success in the market.

6.4. Differentiation and positioning

Consumers are very picky they choose products and services that give them maximum value. The key for any firm is to understand consumer's needs and buying process better than competitor do, and to offer more value. Differentiation means making product or services different from competitors to make it more attractive to the target market. Differentiation of product or service can be mainly in terms of quality, features, sales promotion, availability, price, and design. Differentiation gives the company competitive advantage. (Kotler et. al. 2005, 315-28)

Positioning involves the process by which company tries to implant an image or identity in customer's mind by offering product's unique benefits through differentiation. According to Blythe (2005, p.87), *positioning means to allocate the place a product occupies in a given market, as perceived by the relevant group of customers; that group of customers is known as the target segment of the market.* Positioning is the technique in which firms try to create an image or identity for a product in the mind of the target market. It refers to the value or image the product has in consumers' perceptual map of the market: For example, as a luxury product, as a quality product or inexpensive product. Consumers have a tendency to use fairly few factors determining the position of product such as service, reliability, brand name or image, value for money, top-of-the-range, and country of origin. The positioning is about creating the appealing image of product in consumers' perception than of the competitor. In order to do that company should checklist its competitive advantages. Company can gain competitive advantage either by offering greater value, either by charging lower prices, offering better service, or by providing more benefits to justify higher prices. (Blythe, 2005, 87–88; Kotler et. al.

2005, 421-442). Once company has chosen a desired position; it must take steps to deliver and communicate that position to target consumers. The company's entire marketing programme should support the chosen positioning strategy. The successful launch is very important in order to achieve the desired position.

The case company's emphasis is on quality, easy access, and friendly interface. The case company has competitive advantage over its competitors but it is essential to find out competitors' positions in the market in order to differentiate and positioning successfully. The case company should know that in the beginning it cannot achieve its desired position in the market as it will be seen as new and unknown company. The positioning graph below shows the actual and desired position of case company in the markets and competitors to demonstrate the differentiation. The figure 12 shows the positioning of the GC.

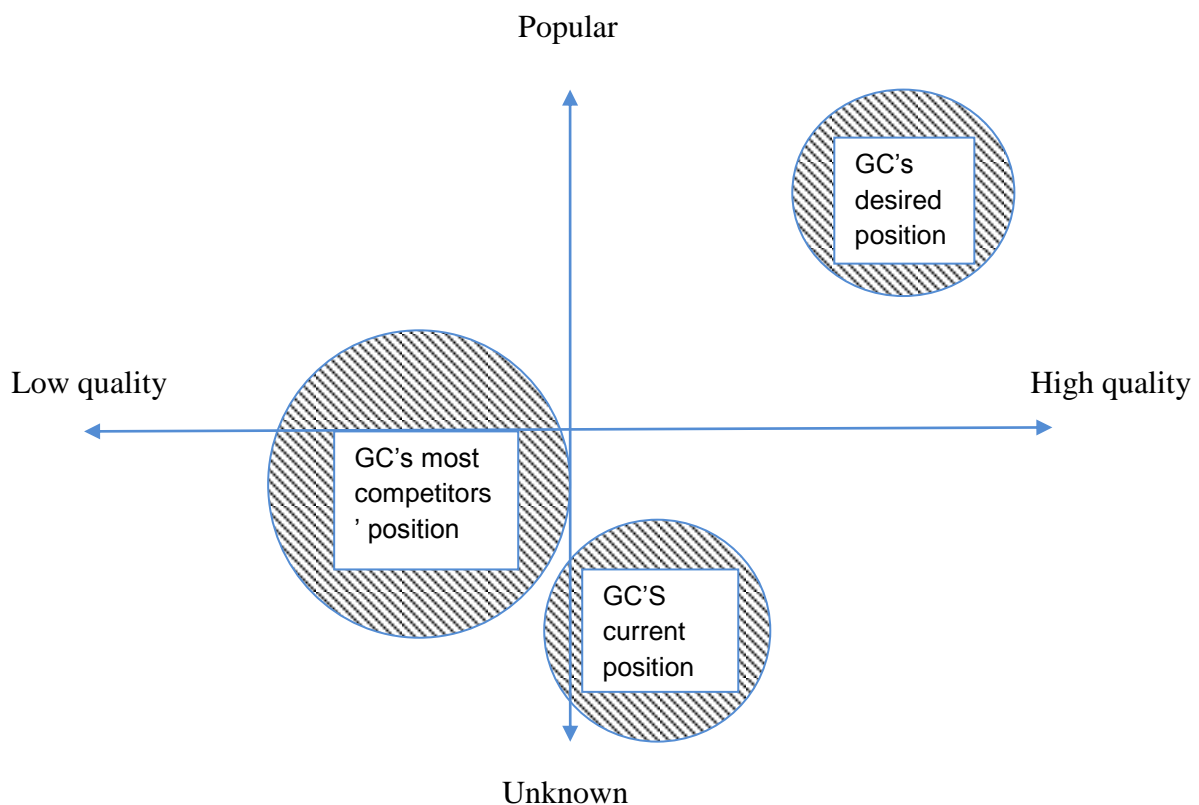


Figure 12: Positioning of the company (GC's business plan 2009)

The above graph shows the GC's current position and desired position in the markets. The graph also shows the position of GC's competitors in the markets. The

X-axis is quality of product and service expectations while Y-axis is popularity in the market. The quality of the product is the main factor, which includes various things such as user interface, quality of the music videos, bands, and fans interaction. In music business, it is very essential to have name and global reach. The more people know about the company it is easier to create own niche and to sustain and expand business. It is very important for any business to reach to its customer. The quality product or service might get unnoticed if it doesn't reach out to customers. Quality product and global reach enhances the company's image and reputation resulting in business growth.

The position of GC's in market is unknown now even though the quality is up to the mark. The competitors like YouTube or MySpace already have name in the market. The customer's in the markets doesn't know what to expect from GC as it is completely new and without any reference. However, the case company has competitive advantage over its competitors and it aspires to achieve a desired position in the market. It is not easy to achieve desired position in the market but GC believes to achieve it through concrete planning and proper strategy.

6.5. Marketing Mix

Marketing mix is a tool for an organization to control its customer's satisfaction and communication. The set of controllable marketing elements firms blends to produce the response it wants in the target market. Marketing mix refers to traditional four P's: product, price, place and promotion. It consists of everything the firm needs to influence and increase the demand for its product. The right combination and balance of marketing mix can create strong competitive advantage and enhances company's market position (Kotler et al. 2005, 33-36). This study will focus more on Promotion and communication as the case company had more or less service concept and place concept. The Figure below shows the marketing tools under each P.

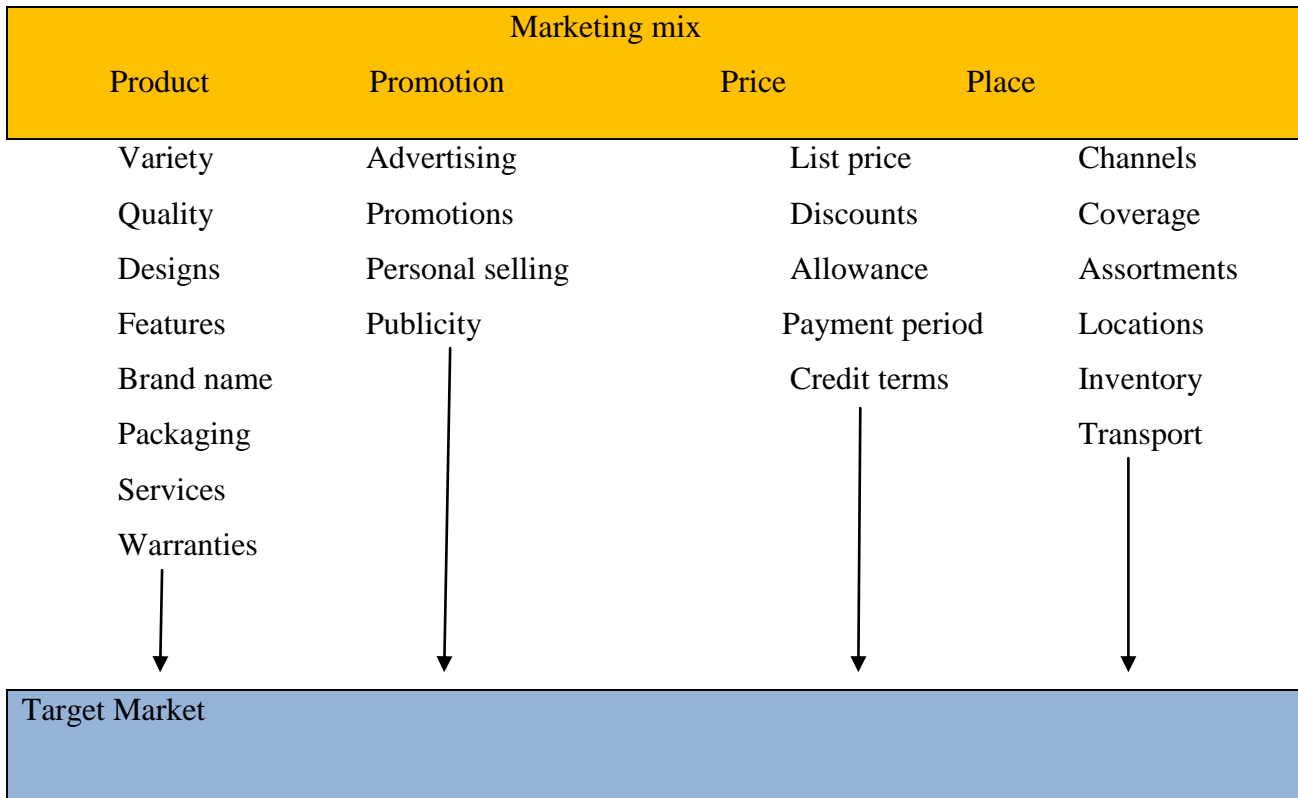


Figure 13: Marketing tools under each P (Kotler et al.2005, 34).

6.6. Product

Product means the totality of ‘goods and services’ that offered in the market to satisfy the buyer’s want or need through use, consumption or acquisition. Product can be physical object, services, persons, places, organizations, ideas or mix of those identities, which can satisfy the needs of buyer. The product is the main thing for any organisations or companies. The centre of any business is a product, which they offer in the market. In marketing mix product is one of the important element because it influences on other elements: place, promotion, price etc. Without better product, even better planned marketing strategy will fail. (Kotler 1999, 97-99)

It is very important to design the product carefully because it improves customer value and hence reduce costs and produce stronger competitive advantage. Now days businesses know that customers are buying much more than just products and

services. Customers' decisions are generally, influenced by the range, style and presentation of the product in the market. The businesses should focus on intangible values that can increase customer's experience rather only on tangible values that benefits customer. There are three levels of product and generally, augmented product wins customer loyalty. (Hatton 2000, 177-179) The figure 14 shows the three levels of product.

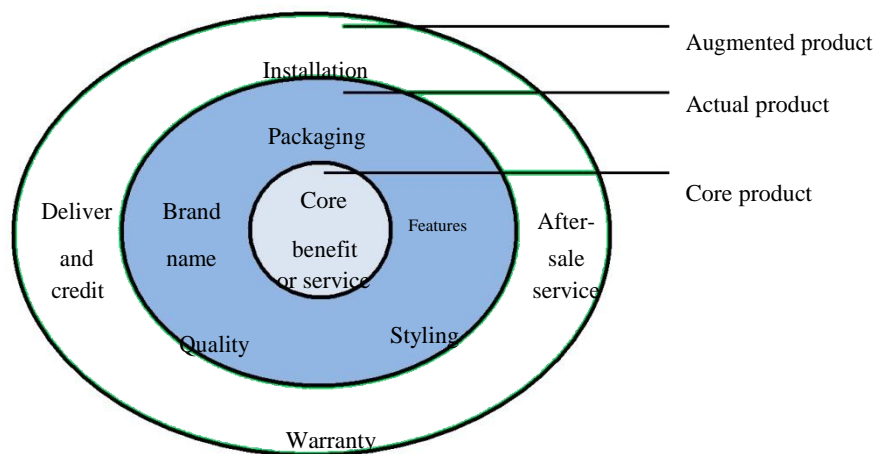


Figure 14: Three levels of product (Kotler et al.2008, 501)

Products and services offered by GC are Global Web site competition, TV Show competition in each country, Concert Platform or Stage, Band merchandise platform, and Advertising platform. The products and services offered by GC are new in the market and can be considered as concrete objects, and they gives more benefits than any other existing product or services of the competitors. The wide range of products and services offered will give the GC competitive advantage. The new idea and high quality product and services offered will function as an important product characteristic in the business concept of GC. Providing high quality products and services is an essential part of GC's marketing strategy, which will help to achieve competitive advantage, which is important for GC as its strategy requires high quality to support the new business idea, and to establish itself in the market as well.

6.7. Price

Price is one of the important aspects of marketing mix. Price is what customers pay to get the product or service. It is very important to find out the price determination or setting price. Price plays a pivotal role in the marketing mix of a product or service because pricing factor helps to bring the revenues to the business. Setting price is taking consideration of produce profits as well as produce demand. The price of a product or service has five functions. It measures the value of the product; it adjusts the image of the product; it affects on company's position; it is one of the important factors affecting the competition and ultimately, it affects on company's profitability. The selling price should be adjusted according to company's own positional objectives and viable to the market. The price plays important role in the success or failure of the product so it is necessary to plan all programmes cost before setting prices. (Kotler et al. 1996, 96; Hatton 2000, 172-180)The figure 15 shows the setting pricing policy.



Figure 15: Steps in setting pricing policy (Kotler et al. 2005, 645)

The pricing of GC's product and services are placed very carefully, considering all the factors. SMS text messaging will be priced in each country based on negotiations

with local mobile phone services. Sorvi will take a agency commission (half the industry standard number to share with bands and their agents), some percent of publishing revenue (the standard publishers cut), and transaction fee for merchandise sold on the site, and also of band revenue generated by concerts emanating from the site. The costs of the GC are composed of site maintenance, promotion, and overhead costs which all are included in the pricing strategy.

6.8. Promotion

Promotion means activities that company uses in order to create the awareness of the product in the market and persuade the target customers to buy it. If the customer is not aware of the product then existence of the company can be questioned. Promotion or in other words marketing communications mix various communication methods to reach target customers. Promotion must be developed in a way that it can give clear message to the customer, using the right promotional method and the appropriate choice of media. The figure below shows the kotler's concept of five separated marketing tools, which are appropriate to deliver a consistent and positive message. (kotler et al. 1996, 96-98)

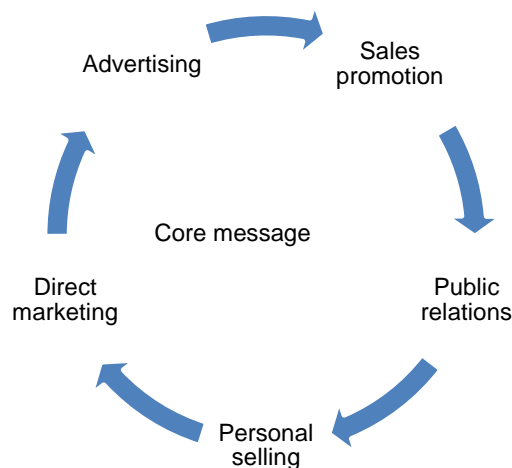


Figure 16. Integrated marketing Communications (Kotler et al. 2008, 697)

Garage Countdown will be promoted via the TV Shows, word-of-mouth on social networking sites, personal visits to known garage bands and their fans, Garage Countdown merchandise (such as T-shirts, school back-backs, etc.), search engines,

and traded listings on other relevant sites. GC is a new in international markets and unknown company, the promotional goals of GC is to reach to the target customers and give GC a fair chance to compete in the international markets.

6.9. Place

Place in marketing means availability of the product, in other words distribution channel (also called marketing channel) which includes company's all activities that make the product or service available to target consumers. (Kotler et al. 1996, 96-100)

In the case of GC, distribution will be via the Internet, TV Shows in each country, and over social networking sites site as MySpace, Facebook, and others.

6.10. Marketing communication

Communication is very important for business marketing success. Communication with potential customer and existing customers is very essential, as they are source of revenue. Without proper marketing communication, even the most refined products can be unsold in the market. In order to communicate effectively, marketers need to understand the basics of communication, and how it works. The conventional communication tasks of marketers are generally confined to the communications mix. (Hutt & Seph, 1998, 468-469; Caemmerer, B 2009, 524-538) The marketing communications mix consists of the following communications tools:

- Sales force (personal selling)
- Advertising
- Sales promotions
- Direct marketing (sometimes called database marketing);
- Public relations
- Sponsorship
- Exhibitions
- Corporate identity

- Packaging
- Point-of-sale promotions and merchandising
- Word of mouth
- Internet and new media

The marketer needs to take account of the particular communication tools appropriateness for the target market, the rate at which each tool will generate sale or awareness, and the rate of the sales response when the tools are combined into the mix. (Berry, Pulford & Smith, 1999.4-12)

From the above-mentioned communications tools only few will be appropriate in the case of GC. The main thing of any marketer is make sure that target customer knows about its existence in the market and about its products and services. GC is new on market and with limited resources; therefore in the context of GC internet and new media communication tools will be appropriate.

6.10.1. Why Internet?

Traditional marketing or online marketing has its own weaknesses. However, depending on the purpose and the situation of the GC the ideal way is internet or E-marketing. The platform of GC is on internet, it is mostly a web-based business idea. Traditional marketing is effective but their costs are relatively high compare to E-marketing. GC is a small company and has limited resources and the job can be done through E-marketing with limited resources. The advantage of using E-marketing is more beneficial than disadvantages for GC (Ezine articles ,2010). The advantages of using E-marketing for GC are following:

- Cost effectiveness
- Worldwide reach and access
- Time saving (24*7 access, auto responders, email, and frequently asked question (FAQ)
- Space (can store as much information as company wants)
- Interactivity (more interactivity between company and customers)
- Value added and competition

There are various internet-advertising tools and in this chapter, only the potential ones will be discussed. The table 5 shows the recommended potential internet advertising tools that can be use in the context of GC.

Table 5. Potential advertising tools for GC

Advertising tools	How?
Affiliate Programs	Through the services that run off-site offered by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Click bank www.clickbank.com • Commission Junction www.cj.com • Pay dotcom www.paydotcom.com
Article Marketing	Article submitted by using Brad callen's Article submitter
Blogs	www.thegaragecountdown.blogs.fi
Blog comments	Blog free for all ad posting site
Google Ad words	Cost per-pay click

MySpace	GC's page
Face book	GC's Group page
Twitter	www.twitter.com
Podcasting	www.podcast.com
RSS	ww.syndic8.com
Video marketing	GC's channel in www.youtube.com
Viral Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email prompt • Web prompt in GC homepage
Yahoo! groups &	http://groups.yahoo.com
Yahoo! answers	http://answers.Yahoo.com

6.10.2. Facebook

Facebook is one of most used social network around the world. It has over 500 million members as of July 2010. Popularity of Facebook compared to other social networking site is huge hence, business can utilise the popularity of facebook simply

using it in their favour. While it is free, company can create the page for itself on Facebook which gives the news and links to the company website as a way to promote its services to customers. In the case of GC, its target customer around the Europe are music listeners and internet users and in Europe there are 326 millions facebook users, so utilising the facebook will help GC to reach out to its target customers. (Facebook, 2010)

6.10.3. Google Ad words

Google is the leading search engine on the internet and provides many other services on the internet. Google offers Google Adwords and Google Ad sense, which are internet-based advertising tools. Both programmes are based on paid per click (PPC) idea. Google Adwords is very effective and it is widely used by many big or small companies. Companies use Goodle Adwords to attract web surfers to their homepage and increase their visibility over the internet. The other plus point about Google Adword is that companies can evaluate the campaign and fix the budget on it. It will be very handy for the GC as it can attract target customers and the cost for Google Adwords are cheap compared to other advertising tools and effective as well. The minimum cost per click is 1 cent and advertisers can choose in which location their ads will be seen. (Google, 2010)

Some more Recommendations

Above mentioned advertising tools have more potential as it is widely used and more visible to target customers but there are few which might come handy and can be very useful for case company as mentioned below:

Sponsorship

GC is promoting local and concealed talents. The best way to find those talents and reach to hard-core music lovers is to make GC visible to them. In many European countries there are underground band competitions and concerts, GC can contact the organiser of those events and co-sponsor the event partially in many parts. The price factor in co-sponsoring the underground band competition is low and affordable.

Other possible communication tools are following:

- Widget marketing
- Ads in 3rd party e-newsletters
- Link building
- Discussion forum
- Online PR

7. IMPLEMENTATION

As the purpose of the thesis is to create marketing plan and without mentioning its implementation, it would be shortfall of this study. This chapter will discuss methods that could be used in order to implement the various options and ideas mentioned and recommended in marketing communications. As mentioned in previous chapter the financial resources is limited so company can't have extensive marketing and evermore seeing the size of the target market it is not possible to go with traditional ways of marketing. In this chapter the implementation is a clear example how the case company can implement the marketing plan. The implementation itself is divided in three phase.

7.1. First Phase

The first phase of implementation can be done by using Google ad words. The reason to choose Google ad words is very simple as it is mostly seen on the internet and can attract many potential customers to the garage countdown. The main drawback of the garage countdown at present is it is unknown in target market, so the Google ad words will be very effective way to get some attention in target market. When people will know more about GC it can work as a word of mouth marketing as well. The cost of the Google ad words is less compared to other advertising methods and the case company can decide how long it want to continue with it. The benefit of using Google ad words is that GC can monitor how many visitors visited GC through Google ad words.(Google, 2010)It gives maximum

exposure to GC on target market as it provides geographical location targeting which becomes easy for GC to choose its target market only.

7.2. Second phase

The second phase of the implementation is facebook advertising. The reason is that after the Google ad words which is more visible on the internet, facebook comes second because of its popularity. The GC is new and unknown so after the ad word campaign it will attract new visitors to its homepage and create more traffic than before so to capitalisze on that it is necessary to be visible regularly on target market otherwise it will be only for a short period and GC will remain unknown which will be very dangerous for it. What facebook advert will do is that, it will re-appear on target market but to certain group in more visible than Google ad word because it will only appear on facebook and anyone who uses facebook will see GC's advert on facebook. There are 152 million members on facebook alone in Europe (Facebook, 2010) The facebook advert campaign will give GC more exposure by the time it has been on facebook it will create curiosity among the users and attract them to the GC's homepage. The important thing in both Google ad words and facebook advert is the advertisement itself and how it looks.

7.3. Final phase

The final phase of the implementation is by using viral marketing, twitter and sponsorship. After the Google ad words and facebook advert the GC will get more exposure in target market and to ensure the visibility the GC should use viral marketing and other one is twitter. The sponsorship is very serious matter as it gives the much needed exposure to the right kind of target market. The sponsorship in various underground band competitions in Europe will help GC. The cost of sponsoring the underground band competitions aren't that much compared to main stream concert or gigs. The twitter is another popular social networking site and it adds the GC's visibility in target market. The viral marketing can be implemented in many ways most useful ones are already mentioned above but there are still some

which are pretty handy to GC such as blogs, Customer participation & polling services, Search engine optimization (SEO) etc.

The GC should closely monitor the campaign and see the results and opt for the more successful one. There are other suggestions which might not be as popular as mentioned in implementation but nevertheless they can be very useful in long run as well.

8. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to create an international marketing plan for the case company, Sorvi Oy Ltd. The research was carried out in forms of open-end questionnaire and unstructured interviews. The empirical part consisted of business environment analyses, market analyses and other theoretical parts linking with the case company.

The business of GC is new and there was not enough information regarding market and other important information. Regardless of the complication of the subject, the marketing plan was presented as a whole with some recommendations. The competitor analysis was conducted through GC's research and different preferences from the respondents. Nevertheless, the SWOT analysis had generally identified the external strengths and weaknesses as well as internal opportunities and threats. It was a result of many comments on GC's homepage, blogs and acknowledgement from the respondents. The marketing plan was expected to present the overview of the European market and marketing communication choices, which is briefly discussed in the thesis. Hence, I may consider this thesis has met its expectation. The most challenging part in the thesis was the macro environment analysis and market analysis. There are many countries in the Europe, each country has different macro environment, and on the other hand, it was difficult to find the market size and information regarding the market because of the new business idea of GC. It was difficult to find relevant and up-to-date information as well.

In general, this thesis functions as an excellent foundation for GC'S marketing activities in Europe considering the business idea and unknown market. This thesis gives the overview of European market and recommends marketing communication tools. The GC is launching in Europe so the further re-search is needed to investigate the markets, customers and other factors affecting the GC's business in Europe.

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Appendices

Questionnaire Survey to analyze the market

1. Please choose your gender.

Male

Female

2. What is your age?

Below 15

16-25

26-35

36-45

46-55

55 over

3. Occupation

Student

Pensioner

Working

Unemployed

4. How did you know about Garagecountdown?

- Friends
- YouTube
- Google Adwords
- Facebook
- Other, what?

5. What do you think about Garagecountdown?

- I don't know
- Don't like
- It's ok
- I like

6. What did you like about Garagecountdown?

- Bands
- User interface
- Merchandise
- Music videos
- Other, what?

7. How often do you visit Gargecountdown site?

- Once a day
- 2-3 times a week

4-5 times a week

More than 5 times a week

8. What do you think of music videos quality in Garecountdown?

Very Bad

Bad

Ok

Good

Very Good

9. Which is the best advertising tool for Garagecountdown?

Facebook

Newspapers

Billboards

E-magazines

Google Adwords

Youtube

Myspace

Other

10. Do you have any suggestions for Garagecountdown?

Localized sites of Garage Countdown Competition

Localized sites of GC					
Countries	Localized sites	Population (2009)	Internet (2009)	Users	% Population Penetration
Albania	http://al.garagecountdown.com	3,639,453	750,000		20.6 %
Austria	http://au.garagecountdown.com	8,210,281	5,936,700		72.3 %
Belarus	http://by.garagecountdown.com	9,648,533	3,106,900		32.2 %

Belgium	http://be.garagecountdown.com	10,414,336	7,292,300		70.0 %
Bosnia - Herzegovina	http://ba.garagecountdown.com	4,613,414	1,441,000		31.2 %
Bulgaria	http://bg.garagecountdown.com	7,204,687	2,647,100		36.7 %

ia				
Croa ti a	http://cr.garagecountdown.com	4,489,409	2,244,400	50.0%
Czec h Repu blic ic	http://cz.garagecountdown.com	10,211,904	6,027,700	59.0 %
Den ma rk	http://dk.garagecountdown.com	5,500,510	4,629,600	84.2 %
Esto ni a	http://ee.garagecountdown.com	1,299,371	888,100	68.3 %
Finla n d	http://fi.garagecountdown.com/	5,250,275	4,382,700	83.5 %
Fran ce	http://fr.garagecountdown.com/	62,150,775	43,100,134	69.3 %
Ger ma ny	http://de.garagecountdown.com	82,329,758	54,229,325	65.9 %
Gree ce	http://gr.garagecountdown.com	10,737,428	4,932,495	45.9 %

Hungary	http://hu.garagecountdown.com	9,905,596	5,873,100	59.3 %
Iceland	http://is.garagecountdown.com	306,694	285,7	93.2 %
Ireland	http://ie.garagecountdown.com	4,203,200	2,830,100	67.3 %
Italy	http://it.garagecountdown.com	58,126,212	30,026,400	51.7 %
Latvia	http://lv.garagecountdown.com	2,231,503	1,369,600	61.4 %
Lithuania	http://lt.garagecountdown.com	3,555,179	2,103,471	59.2 %
Macedonia	http://mk.garagecountdown.com	2,066,718	906,979	43.9 %
Moldova	http://md.garagecountdown.com	4,320,748	850,000	19.7 %
Netherlands	http://nl.garagecountdown.com	16,715,999	14,304,600	85.6 %
Norway	http://no.garagecountdown.com	4,660,539	4,235,800	90.9 %

Poland	http://pl.garagecountdown.com	38,482,919	20,020,362	52.0 %
Portugal	http://pt.garagecountdown.com	10,707,924	4,475,700	41.8 %
Romania	http://ro.garagecountdown.com	22,215,421	7,430,000	33.4 %
Serbia	http://rs.garagecountdown.com	7,379,339	3,300,000	44.7 %
Slovakia	http://sk.garagecountdown.com	5,463,046	3,566,500	65.3 %
Slovenia	http://si.garagecountdown.com	2,005,692	1,300,000	64.8 %
Spain	http://es.garagecountdown.com	40,525,002	29,093,984	71.8 %
Sweden	http://se.garagecountdown.com	9,059,651	8,085,500	89.2 %
Switzerland	http://ch.garagecountdown.com	7,604,467	5,739,300	75.5 %
Turkey	http://tr.garagecountdown.com	76,805,524	26,500,000	34.5 %

Map of Localized European countries of Garage countdown



1
WATCH
MUSIC
VIDEOS
IN ANY
COUNTRY

2
SIGN UP TO
VOTE

3
COUNTRY'S
TOP 10
VIDEOS IN
WORLD
WEEKLY
FINALS

4
YOU
SELECT
THE WINNER

