MARKETING PLAN FOR RETAIL GROCERY STORE
Solu Afro Asian Food Market

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<td>This thesis aimed to create a marketing plan for Solu Afro Asian Food Market and present a company review based on the customer’s data collected from the online survey. The primary objective of developing this marketing plan was to enhance sales, attract new customers, and seek effective marketing methods in a competitive market. Since the company is novel and small, it has not focused on marketing and thus lacks a structured marketing plan. The objectives for the marketing plan were developed utilising information provided by the company and self-conducted research.</td>
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| The theoretical framework consisted of the basic theories of marketing and marketing plan. Ideas were gathered from various written sources, including books and articles. The research method used in the thesis was formal research, by a questionnaire to the current customers. Marketing tools for the marketing plan were selected to be within the abilities of the specific company. The tools were designed to increase and improve the company's marketing and visibility. The research utilized marketing tools in-depth to determine the most reasonable efforts to gain visibility. |

| The overall marketing plan places a strong emphasis on social media marketing and other forms of online marketing. These marketing strategies prove ideal for the company since it intends to bring the marketing budget to the minimum. All the facts stated in the marketing plan were developed for the company's present situation and are liable to change. It is up to the company to decide whether to use the suggested marketing actions in the future. |

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1 INTRODUCTION

The main idea of this thesis project was to create a strategic marketing plan for a newly opened retail grocery store. The theory goes through the most significant aspects of the marketing strategy thinking along to what to consider when marketing a new business. A marketing plan is a beneficial for a company as it creates the opportunity of a win-win scenario with the result of increased numbers of sales and customers (Stevens et al. 2011, XV). Every business, either small business or larger, one should develop a strategic marketing plan to maximize the number of sales with the increasing customers. In the field of business every day is a change because of which it cannot be guaranteed that same thing which had worked well in the past could contribute to the similar outcome in the present and future as well. On a constant and frequent basis, emerging technology, new goods and services, new distribution systems and new competition are changing the playing field. Any or a combination of these external and internal forces is an indication that maybe it is now the time to time to rethink the business.

1.1 The company

The retail companies are last contributor in the whole buying and selling process in a whole business province. In the final stage of the purchasing process, the retail company plays a crucial role to connect brands with consumers. The activities that are involved in selling services or goods directly to the final consumers for their personal as well as non-commercial use are included in retailing. The retail companies constantly seek for an innovative marketing strategies and approaches on maintaining the correlation between existing customers and attract new customers to boost sales (Kotler & Armstrong 2018, 417).

The commissioner company that the author is doing the research about is named as Solu Afro Asian Food Market. Solu Afro Asian Food Market is a newly opened retail grocery store which is also a branch of a company named Subija service Oy. Subija service Oy is a company which was founded in 2012 with the intention of serving as an ethic market focusing a particular group especially Asian people. The company has first opened their shop in
Hakaniemi named as Indian Market with the group of five Partners. The company had opened a branch in Herttoniemi near metro station in October 2020 which is named as Solu Afro Asian food market. The main target of the shop is to meet the everyday requirements of the people daily.

As the Geographic point of view the company is in the center of Herttoniemi which is easily accessible for the costumers to purchase the stuffs. The business area of the company is the retail sales of food, beverages, vegetables, meat, Indian cosmetics, religious festive items, and utensils as well. Along with the time and phase the popularity of the Asian food has been expanding. In this age of globalization, Finland is being surrounded with the flow of multicultural people and ideas all over the globe. As a result, it some sort of leaves influence of one’s food culture to another cultural people as well. The demand of Asian foods has been increased in the recent years. The European society is also being fascinated time and again towards the Asian foods so as the competition is which directly or indirectly could affect the sales. So, to increase the maximum sales and attract more and more customers the company really needs a proper strategy and marketing plan.

1.2 Objectives, Research Questions

The main objective of this thesis was to create a strategic marketing plan, which can be implemented by the case company. For this quantitative questionnaire survey will be conducted for the customers of the commissioner company. By conducting the survey, the company gets relevant information about their customer’s opinion and further needs. With the help of questionnaire survey company will get to know which area needs to be improvised and with a good marketing strategy, the company will be able to get more visibility, and which will help to increase their sales at the end of the day. In terms of the company itself, the strategic marketing plan will provide a clear outlook for planning, organizing, and coordinating different activities along with helping the company keep in track with their strategies and business goals and objectives. The marketing strategy, on the other hand, will be based on basic and traditional marketing tactics customer’s opinion and further needs. With the help of questionnaire survey company will get to know which area needs to be improvised and with a good marketing strategy, the
company will be able to get more visibility, and which will help to increase their sales at the end of the day. In terms of the company itself, the strategic marketing plan will provide a clear outlook for planning, organizing, and coordinating different activities along with helping the company keep in track with their strategies and business goals and objectives. The marketing strategy, on the other hand, will be based on basic and traditional marketing been several times by various companies as well with the experience of being effective. The main research question is: **How to create an effective marketing plan for the retail grocery store to increase sales?**
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of theoretical framework is to ensure readers on understanding the chosen theories and informing them the core concept of marketing plan. The author will introduce primary theories that will serve as a foundation on marketing plan in this section. Credible marketing sources has been used to help support the usage of these specific theories in real marketing plan. The marketing concept is familiar with an importance that companies can effectively continue serving their objectives by helping to understand, recognize, and represent the needs of customers (Stone et al. 2007, 419). Planning is a practical perception for any kind of work which helps to perform the work to be done in an organized manner to walk through the path of success. It is more important in the field of business. To run the business successfully in a specified business territory, planning must be focused on the basis ideology or conceptual framework for analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Being a part of marketing involves being a part of planning, implementation, and regulation of the operations. (Stevens et al. 2013.)

2.1 Marketing

The definition of marketing may differ from each person’s view and can be understood in different ways. The most fascinating definition from an author’s point of view has been given by Kotler in his book Principles of Marketing: “Marketing is mostly about establishing a profitable customer relationship by generating value to the customers and retaining value from customers” (Kotler 2010, 26).

Marketing has been described in various ways by various authors. Whatever the description has been determined, the common characteristic is that every author prioritizes the customers. One of the most essential factors in deciding the company’s performance is marketing. Marketing is basically a mutual beneficial exchange engagement between a company and its customers. The ability to perceive the need of a customer is the most important aspect of this collaboration. As a result, marketing is all about coordinating or drawing together the company’s resources and the needs of the customers. According to Dibb et al. (1994, 19) concept of marketing has come up with a clear and
practical approach to running a business. The businessperson may not always believe it but the best way to increase the sales is by satisfying the customers. Since the mid-1920s business have considered sales as the primary means to increase the profit.

2.2 Marketing mix

One of the most significant concepts in modern marketing is the marketing mix, which describes the role of marketing within a company. Marketing mix can be taken as a collection of diplomatic marketing tools which a company uses to generate the desired response from its target market (Kotler et al., 2017, 51). The concept of marketing mix makes the marketing easy to handle. According to Borden (1984) in his article, "The marketing mix concept has proven to be a useful tool for solving commercial problems and for thinking regarding marketing in general". First and foremost, it provides an answer to the frequently asked question, "What is marketing?" The better strategy of using the marketing mix is to approach for achieving of placing the right product in the right place to obtain the beneficial outcome.

![The 4ps of Marketing Mix](Mishra, 2020)

**Product.** The items, goods, or services offered or sold by a company to the customers are referred to as the product. Generally, a product should fulfill the demand of an existing customer and be compelling that consumers believe they need to have the product, which creates new demand for the company. The product should be able to provide at least minimum level of performance that it was said to provide. Every product needs to have a life cycle that should be understood by marketers and have a plan to deal with the products at every cycle to be successful. (Twin, 2021).
**Price.** Price is the product’s cost that a customer pays to buy the product. Factors, such as costs of production, costs of supply, segment targeted and other direct and indirect costs are used to determine the actual price of a product (The Economic Times, 2021). Depending on overall business plan, various pricing strategies are used to enhance the image of the product in consumers’ minds. Sometimes, seasonal discounts, festivities discounts are used to lower the price of the product so other potential consumers can try the product which ultimately increases the market of the product. However, discounting strategy should be planned and executed appropriately so that it wouldn’t give the negative impression of product being less exclusive. (Twin, 2021). Pricing is one of the most important components of the marketing mix because it influences profit, flow rate, and share price, as well as consumer perceptions. (Stone et al. 2007, 266).

**Promotion.** All the activities and actions that are taken to make the product known to the user is referred as promotion. Advertising, public relations, press reports, consumer schemes, contests and prizes, and direct marketing are included in promotion (The Economic Times, 2021). Revealing a product’s need to a consumer and why the consumer should pay a certain price for that product is the main aim of promoting a product. Promotion and placement of the product go together to reach the main audience for the product as well as to make a successful marketing strategy. (Twin, 2021.)

**Place.** Every product should be placed properly so that it can reach the consumers that are most likely to buy the product. Products can be placed in certain stores or be placed on a specific store’s display. (Placing a product can also be virtual, such as on television shows, on web pages or in movies to draw more attention to the product. (Twin, 2021).

### 2.3 Internet marketing

Internet these days had become essential part of everyone’s life without which people’s life gets stuck without the access of internet. Internet has revolutionized the field of marketing and business since the very first website (http://info.cern.ch) went live in 1991 (Chaffey et al. 2009, 3). Internet marketing has broadened the terms of marketing through offering customers a
far greater range for the choice of products and services. Consumer behavior and the choice of product and the way companies promote to both businesses and consumers have changed tremendously as more than one billion people across the world use the internet to locate products and services. On the one side the customers will be benefi
dected with the own wider range of choices and on the other hand internet marketing makes the pathway for the company to acquire new technical skills and boost the company’s competitiveness.

**Search Engine Optimization.** Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a strategy to increase the visibility, quality, and quantity of the website within the page as well as outside of the page to improve the ranking in search engines, such as Google and Yahoo. SEO is about understanding the words people are using to search for online, the results they want to see when searching for specific words. Knowing audience’s intent and delivering the keywords and content in a way that search engine crawlers can find and understand are the two sides of a coin. Search engines go through contents and depending on thousands of factors it shows the result in search engine result pages (SERPs). The process for discovering and cataloguing all the available content on the internet, such as PDFs, videos, web pages, and images is referred as crawling and indexing. The process of ordering the discovered content based on the matching of the query is referred as ranking. Most of the online traffic is driven by search engines, even though paid advertising and social media platforms can also generate traffic to websites. (Muller 2021.)

**Websites.** A good website is always trustworthy in the eyes and heart of customers. It not only provides range of information to the target customers, but it can also be used for a variety of marketing methods to help for the company’s growth. If you own a company and don’t have a website, it could be a drawback of missing out on business chances. A website can be used for a variety of marketing methods to help your company grow. The website could come up as a more useful technique for the small retail companies as it is accessible for 24 hours as a result the customers get the opportunities to visit the websites and learn about their interest and other possible interest products.
2.4 Social media marketing

Social media is something that we use every single day. Social media or social networks used to market the products and services of the company; this term is referred to be social media marketing. For most of us, social media seems to be something we use it on a regular basis. We possibly spend much time on some form of social platform, regardless of whether we are more of a Facebook superfan or enjoy scrolling through content on Instagram or Twitter (Bannerflow, 2021). Social media is effective as well as powerful tool for marketing nowadays. Every existing customer and new potential customer can be reached for product or service marketing through social media. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are widely used social media platform, among many other platforms, for marketing. The main idea behind the social media marketing is to gain more and more followers and subscribers who are interested in purchasing the products.

![Social Media Marketing](image)

Figure 2: Social media marketing (Popli 2021)

Above shown figure 2 is an image of the list of social media marketing. Among which Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are explained below:

**Facebook.** Facebook is a platform used for connecting with friends and family as well as for business purposes. Facebook pages are free marketing tool which lets the customer identify the business and brand. These pages not only list product’s prices and offerings but also allow the business to share the posts, links, videos, and images on a page that can be customized to make it connected to the business. Facebook also has the functionality of Facebook Insights that can be used to see what the audience would enjoy. Facebook
ads referred as Marketplace ads is an own form of advertising that is offered by Facebook. (Marrs 2020.)

**Twitter.** Twitter is another social media platform after Facebook, that can be used by companies and businesses as a platform for marketing their brand and products. Twitter mostly influences brand attitudes because of its transparency, occurrence of brand mentions in public, and interaction of companies with customers. Companies or Businesses that has strong Twitter strategy can keep their old as well as new customers engaged and lead the customers to the company’s website that can increase sales or be the referral for other potential customers. The most used marketing option while using Twitter is its ability to track mentions of the brands. These mentions can provide the brand with customer sentiment for the company; customer’s feedback regarding the product, service, or the usage of the brand and provides the company with suggestions and a place for improvement of the company. (Hausman 2016.)

**Instagram.** Instagram has over a billion active users. Companies are thinking how to reach out to more potential customers while ignoring the fact that a reasonably large portion of the population is active on social media (Durante 2021). Instagram is one of the fastest growing and widely use social media platform for marketing. Through Instagram’s visual story, the companies can showcase what they are about. The main reasons to use Instagram for marketing is because it is less cluttered, puts visual content first, and doesn’t have character limits.

**Social media advertising.** Social media advertising is a supplement to a comprehensive marketing strategy. Advertising will be produced on industry-relevant social media sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter). These are generally used to promote products and services or to add a larger advertising. (Bannerflow, 2021.) It helps to reach mass consumers and gain a better understanding of how people interact with the created content. There’s no denying that the retail and business worlds are quickly shifting, and it’s up to each firm to keep on top of modern marketing trends. If the company wants to keep sales head above water and ensure long-term sustainability of the business, it really should continue to implement social media ads as the
part of its marketing efforts. Social media advertising is pivotal since it enables the business to target specific users, build a viewing public database, and directly track financial return (Durante 2021).

2.5 Consumer Market Segmentation

The process of partitioning potential consumers into segments of consumers based on their different characteristics, needs, or behaviors is known as market segmentation. Segmentation is a technique of identifying the characteristics and structure of a market to identify groups of potential buyers who have similar requirements or characteristics, or even who behave similarly. (Stone et al. 2007, 174). Market segmentation helps the company to know their customer and focus on their want and need and apply variety of marketing strategies or mixes. In market segmentation, demographic, psychographic, geographic, and behavioral factors are the basis of grouping the consumers. (Kotler et al. 2017, 74-75.)

- **Demographic segmentation**: Demographic characteristics include a wide range of specific milestones associated with consumer sex and gender identity, such as age, income, race, socioeconomic status, and family dynamics. (Stone et al. 2007, 176).

- **Psychographic segmentation**: Consumers are divided into different groups depending on social category, way of life, or personal characteristics in psychographic segmentation. (iEduNote.com, 2020).

- **Behavioral segmentation**: Consumers are divided into groups based on their knowledge of, mindset toward the use, or response to a product. (iEduNote.com, 2020).

- **Geographic segmentation**: This method aims to classify customers based on their location. Geographical factors can have a significant influence on segmentation. (Stone et al. 2007, 175).
2.6 Customer Engagement Marketing

Customer engagement marketing evolves around attracting the new customers through the positive influence of existing customers. It is all about the social circle of good influence of the company attracting new customers along with increasing repeated sales from the existing customers. Customers are likely to be familiar to a small retail business. Chances to recognize the customers by their faces and names also tend to be high. Thus, if a regular customer could get good experience from the company, then it might help to encourage the customer to promote the company to their friends and families in person. The company receives two advantages by engaging customers. They may turn their customers into members of their marketing team, and this visible engagement, as well as positive recommendations will bring in more customers in the future. More prospects, repeating sales, and referrals are all aided by engagement marketing. (Goodman 2012, 6.)

Truly engaged customers are expected to boost brand equity, sales, and profits for marketers. According to a survey by Rosetta Consulting (2014), highly engaged customers spend 60% more on each transaction, purchase ninety percent more frequently, and are four times more likely to recommend the company (Alvarez-Milan et al. 2018).

All the activities that are associated with purchasing, consuming, and exchanging information about brands, products, and services are included in consumer behavior. In contemporary society, the function of customer demands a major fraction of most people’s choices, time, and effort. Consumer’s behavior could often be unclear, uncertain, and difficult to predict. In this scenario to understand the behavior of consumer is very essential. For a company to set a key decision that influences the company’s performance in the competitive marketplace it had become important to understand the consumer behavior. (Rajagopal 2018.)

2.7 Consumer Buying Behavior

The buying behavior and buying decision of a costumer often fluctuates. The buying behavior varies from time to time by the influence of the needs and situation as well. The customers who purchase the necessary products not for
any kind of business purpose but for their personal and household purpose can be taken as the consumer buying behavior (Dibb et al. 1994, 148).

According to Armstrong et al. (2017, p. 199–209) the consumer’s buying behavior is influenced by the culture factor, social factor, Personal factor, psychological factor. A successful marketing plan always depends on the reaction of buyers, so it becomes necessary for a company to analyze the buying behavior of consumers.

2.8 Customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention

The more the customers are satisfied the more they wish to purchase. To maintain the customer value and satisfaction, the company should be committed to create high quality products and selling them at a price which provides the customer with high value and satisfaction. Successful companies act in accordance with the idea of building their entire company to serve and stay close to their customers (Peter & Olson 2010, 4).

It is always important to set expectations of customers in the right level, not too high not too low. Customers with high expectations are likely get disappointed and with low expectations could fail to attract new customers. (Kotler & Armstrong 2018, 31). Happy and satisfied customers are the loyal ones. Keeping customers loyal helps to make a good business and help to retain more customers. According to research, maintaining an existing customer is five times less expensive than acquiring a new one. (Kotler & Armstrong 2018, 44) Happy ones are the loyal ones, and they help in face-to-face marketing which is one of the strong factors of customer loyalty and retention. It is necessary to create and maintain faith with customers so they will be a medium to recommend business and help on acquiring new customers.
3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The phrase "Research methodology" describes the processes or strategies used by researchers to obtain data for any topic. This chapter clearly presents the research process and methods used. All methods used to collect data from the ground are explained, along with an evaluation of the research's validity and reliability. Some limitations will be addressed as well.

3.1 Research process

The research has been carried out after getting approval from the case company. The commissioner company granted the author to conduct the research in which the author made a set of questionnaires and distributed to current customers of the company. The survey questions response will be based on the experiences of customers who have previously make a purchase with the company. The questions were clear and direct, making it much easier for customers to reply. Based on their responses, it will be possible to determine which marketing strategy will indeed actually help the company increase sales and customers. It was necessary to review some previous literature to comprehend the concepts of a marketing plan. All the information gathered from the questionnaires and the authors personal experience throughout the time there's been analyzed in drawing conclusions and offer suggestions to the case company.

3.2 Research methods and data collection

The strategies or techniques used to collect data or used as evidence for analysis to reveal more information or help to understand better about the topic are said to be research methods. Qualitative research, quantitative research, and mixed methods research are the types of research methods which uses different techniques and tools to collect the data. (University of Newcastle Library, 2019.) The research utilizes the use of quantitative research technique to collect the data by creating a questionnaire.
3.3 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is a collection of written or printed questions with the option to choose or write an answer. It is used to conduct a survey or statistical study. (University of Newcastle Library, 2019.) In questionnaire, same questions are asked to multiple participants and based on the answers given by the participants a statistical data is formed to use in the research. The research has been carried out with the use of quantitative questionnaire survey for the customers of the commissioner company. In marketing research, some type of survey is included in quantitative research method, in other words it can be said that the systematic way of collection, analysis, and interpretation of information about a certain factor of research is done in quantitative research (Stone et al. 2007, 134). A questionnaire consists of a set of questions, which were presented to participants. The form question sequence and wording can influence the responses, so it is important to design the questionnaire and content carefully. According to stone et al. (2007, 147) questionnaires can be close-ended or open-ended. Close-ended questions are those with a limited number of possible answers. On the questionnaire, the participant can choose between a list of possible answers, which include a catch-all 'other' category to make sure that all options are offered.

The author will not be seeking to confirm any hypothesis in the research process. The study will be based on primary data. The primary data will be gathered through the questionnaires, electronically with the help of Webropol. The purpose of this research is to develop a marketing plan for a new business; therefore, the research questions will be generated from the marketing plan. The main idea of this research is to develop a marketing plan for the commissioner company and more particularly looking out to different marketing tools which would help the company to increase their sales.

3.4 Reliability and validity of the research

The degree to which a measurement produces reliable result is regarded to as its reliability. The questionnaire consists of twenty-one questions all together. All the questions are mandatory to trace the response and correctly evaluate them. This questionnaire was created as a Webropol form and was sent to the current customers of the store. A valid questionnaire would then allow precise
data to be gathered, and a reliable questionnaire will focus on ensuring that all this information is collected consistently (Saunders et al. 2009, 371).

To ensure the highest level of reliability in the research, relevant questions in the questionnaire were designed so that survey participants would not fail to grasp or be misled by the questionnaire. The different types of questions were taken into consideration to obtain answers to all the most significant areas of the research to achieve reliable outcomes of the study. Altogether seventy-three people opened the survey and out of seventy-three people, fifty-one people responded to the questionnaire which consequently is enough data to draw out the result. This amount should be nearly identical if it was sent by another person, making the research reliable. Questionnaires were well-structured and tested before being distributed to customers for responses, which increased the research’s validity. The author observes questionnaire to make sure of the validity of thesis. The author also discussed the questionnaire contents with the company before creating final version of the questionnaire to the customers.

3.5 Limitation of the research

It is essential to set a limitation while conducting the research. With the lack of limitations there may occur a possibility to incorporate the elements that are beyond researcher control. Research cannot be managed fully to be accomplished without trying to make some assumptions. The marketing plan is being made for Solu Afro Asian Food Market thus, this marketing plan may not be suitable upcoming new branches of the main company as the research is geographically limited to the company’s commercial location. The issue of communication language is a major one. During the survey author faced some problems in terms of not being able to speak and understand Finnish language. The questionnaire was prepared in English language and all the answers received were from the respondents who understand and speaks English. And when it comes up to the demographics, there have been no age, gender, and nationality limitations.
4 DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, result of the collected data and information will be described and analyzed. This is made possible by quantitative analysis techniques such as graphs, charts, and statistics, which allow us to explore, display, define, and evaluate relationships that exist in our data (Saunders et al. 2009, 414). The author has collected answers of the survey firstly by forwarding survey link to her friends who has been a customers of the company and secondly by visiting the company and asking customers to answer questionnaires survey. In this research, all the questions were compulsory, and no participant skipped questions. This survey provided not only answers, but also suggestions for the company to use in their activities and tasks. To make results easier to understand, questions’ answers were converted to percentages and then to pie charts and bars.

As shown in the figures, each of review's questions is presented and evaluated separately. Based on the information from questionnaires, the figures in the following charts and bars were created in Webropol and Microsoft Excel.

Figure 3 illustrates the nationality of the participants. The format of this specific question was done on open ended format. The participants were free to write their nationality. After all the answers were received from all the participants, an excel chart was created based on the responses. The results suggest that the majority of respondents are from Nepal, with India coming in
second or can be said that vast majority customers are from Asia. Since the company sells Asian products, many of the respondents are Asian, although there are also respondents from other nations too.

2. Gender

As seen in figure 4 representing the gender of the participants in which the male customers data is little higher than the female customers. The graph shows that fifty-five percent of the participants were male, whereas forty-five percent of the participants were females. And there were not any participants belonging to others category.

3. Which age group do you belong to?

Figure 5 represents the age group of the participants in the survey. The age was divided into five categories. The highest number to be active in grocery shopping seems to be the age group 36-45 which is thirty-three percent and the age group of 26-35 seems to be slightly lower with twenty-seven percent. Customers between 15-25 are smallest age group in the survey with a result
of eighteen percent. The age group 46-55 is sixteen percent and the least six percent are the customers of 56 and above age group. The survey was conducted to see their target groups in future and what their necessity is in terms of grocery purchase.

Figure 6: Frequency on visiting the grocery shop

Figure 6 depicts how frequently people visit the grocery shop to purchase essential groceries. The above pie chart shows that thirty-seven percent of participants visit the store once a week, which is the largest amount, and two percent of participants visit the store every day, which is the lowest figure. This graph displays the frequency with which they visit the store. This enables the organization to better understand the need of their customers, the buying behavior about the behavioral segmentation.
Figure 7: Opinion on product prices

Figure 7 displays the participants' opinions on the price of the products available at the grocery shop. Most participants forty-five percent agree with the company's pricing policy to a degree. While thirty-nine percent of participants remain neutral, eight percent of participants strongly agreed, whereas the same percentage of individuals slightly disagreed. Furthermore, there is no answer of strongly disagreeing participants. Thus, this data shows that maximum numbers of customer are satisfied with the price. Pricing strategy plays an important role on determining the price point by which helps the company to maximize the profit and sales.

Figure 8: Opinion on Product variety
Figure 8 demonstrates the date of the products variety that could be found in the store. Most of the participants with thirty-nine percent have slightly agreed for the varieties of products. Twenty-six percent of the participants strongly agreed. Thirty-three percent are neutral and the least two percent seems to slightly disagree. As data tells that the variety of products can fulfill the demand of customers and now focus on more effectively to fill gaps in the marketing mix.

![Pie chart](image)

**Figure 9: Accessibility of products**

Figure 9 above shows how easy or difficult it is to locate the appropriate aisle for specific products. The percent of participants who find the aisle slightly easy are somewhere in between forty-seven percent in both cases, whereas two percent of people find it very easy and four percent find it slightly difficult. The proper placement of the product in the aisle helps the company to increase in sales volume of the product and somehow it can also influence the buying behavior of the customers.
Figure 10: Customer's preferred features

Figure 10 depicts the data of the participants choosing the feature they like most about the company. This question format was designed as select one or multiple, so the participant has chosen their preferable answers from the options. The highest number of participants, sixty-three percent has chosen the variety of products and preferable location. Secondly fifty-five percent have chosen the good customer service. Thirdly, twenty-two percent have chosen the feature, promotional offers and lastly the least number sixteen percent of the participants have chosen the price of the product. This data clearly shows that most of the participants were local, and they visit the store because the location is quite preferable, and they find different variety of products. So, now the company can analyze the feature and work to improve in other features as well to grow the sales and increase customer.
Figure 11 represents how do participants prefer to do grocery shopping. The highest number sixty-five percent of the participants prefer to physically visit the store and shop. On the other hand, thirty-five percent of participants have chosen the option which says it depends on the items and situation. And the remaining six percent prefer to shop online. It clearly shows that the thirty-five percent of the participants who chose the option depends on the items and situations are likely to shop even through online if the proper facility is available. So, the company can improve their online service such as home delivery services or some discounts through online purchase and increase the performance. And for the customers who prefer to visit the store, the company can improvise the spotlight.

![Pie chart showing the preferences of participants for grocery shopping](image)

**Figure 12: Customer gathering information on Asian grocery products**

Figure 12 reflects the medium of the information gathered about the Asian grocery products by the participants. Most of the participants, seventy-eight percent have chosen referrals from friends and families. Thirty-five percent of the participants have gathered the information through search engines. Twenty-nine percent of the participants prefer to go through company’s websites for information. Twenty-five percent of the participants have chosen social media and twenty percent the option “others”. From this answer company can design an appropriate medium effective source in a more fascinating way or can improve its work on social media marketing and website. On the other side the company can also work more on customer engagement marketing and some loyalty schemes as the highest number of
participants have chosen of getting the info about Asian grocery through referral.

Figure 13: Customers’ likelihood of buying product online

Figure 13 displays about the data of how likely the participants are influenced to buy the grocery items which are recommended online. The highest number is forty-three percent that the participants are likely to purchase. Twenty-nine percent seems to be somewhere between. Sixteen percent of the participants have chosen unlikely. 8% have chosen very likely and four percent of the participants have chosen unlikely. The company could work on promotion through online networks.

Figure 14: Survey of products on social media by customers
Figure 14 demonstrates the data of the participants who inspect the social media platform before purchasing from the store. Thirty-nine percent of the participants say that they never visit the store’s social media platform. Thirty-five percent prefer to checkup sometimes. Twelve percent rarely visit the company’s social media platform. Eight percent seem to visit always and remaining six percent visit often. With the help of this data the company can find out which content to be created and presented in social media content to know the buying behavior of customers.

![Pie chart showing data](image)

**Figure 15: Information in website customers prefer**

Figure 15 reflects the data of the participants expect to know about when they enter the company’s website. The author has included five options for the questions and the participants have selected one or more options. The highest number forty-five participants have selected to know the information about the product and forty participants have selected to know about the price information. Twenty-eight of the participants have selected to know about the company’s information. Another twenty-four participants prefer to know about the customer service information and remaining four participants choose that they want to make purchase. The company can work on improving the detail information, content and features on the website.
Figure 16 shows the different social media platform the participant use. Amongst the participants the Facebook users are the highest. Twenty-one participants are active in Instagram. Five participants are using twitter as well and the remaining option the author has created the open-ended option where the participants would mention the social media platform name. The options that the nine participants have mentioned is shown in figure 17.

With this information the company can decide which social media platform would be best to use as an effective marketing tool. As company already have their Facebook page with one thousand four hundred followers and forty-six followers on Instagram, they can enhance the quality information and content. The company can decide which social media platform would be best for the marketing purpose for the company.
Figure 18: Effectiveness of marketing ads on social media

Figure 18 show that the participants have been influenced by the advertisement showed in social media platform. The highest number of participants, forty-three percent has slightly agreed with the statement. Nineteen percent have slightly disagreed. Eighteen percent seem to be neutral. Sixteen percent have strongly agreed and remaining four percent choose to strongly disagree. So, this data shows that most of the participants are somehow influenced by the ads on social media platform. The company can use this opportunity in marketing.

Figure 19: Customers opinion on services provided by the company

Figure 19 shows the data of customer satisfaction. Amongst the fifty-one participants thirty-seven percent have chosen slightly agree and same number have chosen strongly agree. Twenty-two percent are neutral, and four percent have slightly disagreed. And there are not any participants answer for strongly disagree option. This data clearly shows that most of the customers are
currently satisfied. So, to maintain and also increase the number of satisfied customers in future the company needs to work on maintaining the customer satisfaction they are applying and, they can focus on improvement as well.

Figure 20: Factors influencing on grocery shopping

Figure 20 reflects the factor that affects the consumer buying behavior. The format of the question was that the participants could choose one or more options as per their factors of influence for grocery shopping. The highest number of thirty-nine participants have chosen the cultural factors. Twenty-seven participants have chosen personal factor. Seventeen participants have selected social factor. Ten participants have chosen psychological and four have chosen none of the above. By this data company can include more products targeting the segmentation of the customers. The data also reflects the buying behavior of the customers.

Figure 21: Customers opinion on opening hour convenience
Figure 21 shows the data of finding whether the opening hour of the store is convenient or not. Forty-seven percent of the total participants strongly agree for the statement whereas forty-five percent have slightly agreed and the least num eight percent have the neutral opinion. And there is no data for other two options. The company can work little bit on the weekends opening hours and could extend the evening opening hour which will automatically help on retaining the extra customers.

![Pie chart showing customer satisfaction ratings](image)

*Figure 22: Customers rating on their latest visit*

Figure 22 reflects the number of the respondents who have experienced the shopping in the store. Most of the respondents’ forty-three percent are very satisfied with their last shopping experience. Twenty-seven percent of respondent remain neutral. Twenty-four percent are slightly satisfied, and six percent are slightly dissatisfied. Whereas no one respond to the option very dissatisfied. The data of very satisfied and slightly satisfied are pretty much positive feedback for the company and the company needs to work out more on why the customers have neutral opinion and need to find out why the customers are not satisfied and work on its improvement.
Figure 23: Customers likelihood on continuing shopping in future

Figure 23 reflects the data of showing the interest in grocery shopping in the store in future. The result shows that thirty-five percent of the participants are very likely to continue shopping, and same number thirty-five percent are somewhere between. This could be probability that they could continue in the future as well. And thirty percent of the participants are likely to continue. Whereas there is not any data for next two option. This data shows how loyal are the customers towards the company. This can be taken as an advantage for the company on future sales.

Figure 24: Customers likelihood on referring to others

Figure 24 shows the result of the final question. The customers who believe in likely to recommend the store to their friends and family are thirty-seven percent. Other participants who are very likely to recommend are thirty-two percent and last thirty-one percent of the participants are not sure whether to recommend or not. Final two options have no data.
5 MARKETING PLAN

A marketing plan is a road map about any type of small or large business that works to help generate income. A strategic marketing plan serves as the foundation for a win-win situation for any size or type of business. (Nykiel, 2003.) Every company seeks to attract more customers and enlarge their business to the next level, and the commissioner company is no exception. A proper marketing plan is required for the company to increase its business in the long run and generate more multicultural customers.

The goal of this marketing plan is to create a strategic marketing plan for the company Solu Afro Asian Food Market, which is a retail grocery store. The goal is to increase the number of customers and sales for the company. This marketing plan emphasizes the changes that the organization should think about right now, rather than on longer-term modifications. This is indeed a preliminary plan over which the long-term marketing plan will be centered. This is a strategic marketing plan, that also indicates that the marketing will then be evaluated strategically. This plan can also be adjusted to happen for a long time; nevertheless, for the period being, the author will focus solely mostly on changes that must be implemented as early as possible. The entire plan has been made with the information collected based on the questionnaire survey.

5.1 Consumer market segmentation

According to the customer data analyzed earlier in the research paper, vast majority of the participants are from Nepal and India as shown in figure 3. Company needs to work on attracting the customers from other Nationality as well by including more varieties of products. Food is something which connects people sharing culture from different background. As presented in the figure 5 about the age group of the participants, the company can target the age group with their purchasing necessity. Focusing solely on a particular target market enables a company to customize existing products and services to meet the specific needs of those customers. Segmentation furthermore enables the company to plan future products and services to meet the specific needs of the target market.
5.2 Internet Marketing

Company currently does not really have a website, and because most people these days look for information regarding companies online. In this scenario having a website can be essential to company's performance. Figure 12 shows the medium of gathering the information about the store in which twenty-nine percent have chosen websites and thirty-five percent have chosen search engine. So, the author's recommendation is to contribute some of the company's resources and time to designing and developing a properly functioning and informative website. The target customers will be able to find the company extra easily, along with all the necessary information would be readily available. Although a Facebook page might very well appear to be sufficient, numerous people trust an actual website much more because it creates a more professional image of the company and customers will also be benefited with the wider range of choice.

Figure 11 presents the data of the customers' preference on the which medium do they prefer to shop. Thirty-five percent have selected the option depends on the items and situation and six percent have chosen online. Now, what company can do is to create a good website and improve their online services such as making accessible of home delivery of some certain items or some discounts through online purchase which will definitely help in rise the six percent to more percentage.

Another data shown in figure 13 also shows that more numbers of customers are likely to buy the online recommended products. So, with the data of figure 11, 12 and 13 the author recommends getting a company's website.

Search engine optimization should also be considered by the company, as it can be one of the most important way of improving visibility and gaining more customers via the internet. Everybody may not know the website address, so it is important to work on optimizing search engine as well which helps to find the websites.
5.3 Social media marketing

As mentioned in chapter 2.4 social media is a tool that we use every single day or even many times a day. Using of social media as a marketing tool has gone through the roof, and so has the number of available social media platforms. Being active on social media allows a company to get closer to the customers and target market as well as being quite approachable, that also creates a trusting bond between both the customer and the company and enhances the company's overview. We will concentrate on Facebook and Instagram in this section because they are the most relevant to the case company.

Company already has a Facebook page with almost one thousand four hundred followers which is pretty good number of followers being a small new retail grocery story. But the problem here is that the Facebook page is being updated rarely and if updated it is updated with repetitive information because of which the followers usually skip the posts. The data in figure 14 has shown thirty-nine percent of the participants never visit company’s social media profile before purchase, twelve percent rarely visit, thirty-five percent sometimes visit, six percent visit often and eight percent always visit. The maximum num chose not to visit company’s social media profile could be because of poor maintenance and almost no update of the information. Another figure, figure 16 shows that eighty percent of the customers are using Facebook. The main suggestion is to use the platform in a proper way with frequent updates using pictures and information making the customers not to skip the contents and posts. Company can also post the content by tagging the loyal customers or the active followers can increase in customer loyalty as well. If used in a better way, it will really help in marketing the company

Instagram is a photo sharing platform. Through Instagram’s visual story, the companies can showcase what they are about. Company has very least numbers of followers in Instagram with almost no updates on the content. Figure 16 reflects that forty-one percent of the participants are using Instagram. The company should give some more time and attention to improve this field as well.
Data result of figure 18 which depicts the result of influence of marketing ads on social media. Most of the participants are influenced by the ads on social media platform but the problem is it is not free of cost. So, the author suggests not to take an account for this tool but instead focus more on the free tools such as improving their own Facebook and Instagram account. It will take some effort and time only, but it is free of cost.

5.4 Customer engagement marketing, customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention

As the author has mentioned in chapter 2.6 customer engagement marketing is all about attracting the new customers with the help of existing customers. Result of figure 12 shows that seventy-eight percent of the customers have reached to the store through the referrals from their friends and family. Being a small Asian grocery store, customers engagement strategy assists in the development of trust and the establishment of better interacting with customers. It helps in customer retention as well. The result of figure 24 shows that thirty-two percent of the participants are very likely to recommend the store to their friends and family whereas thirty-seven percent are likely to recommend, and thirty-one percent seem to be not sure. The result of this data is quite positive and beneficial for company in a way that most of the participant are very likely and likely to recommend the grocery store which probably will help on engagement marketing.

The result shown in figure 19 reflects the data of the customers’ satisfaction data on the customer service provided by the company. Thirty-seven percent of the participants have chosen strongly agree and same percentage have chosen slightly agree about being satisfied by the customer service. Also, figure 22 reflects the data of the customers’ last visit experience in the store. Twenty-seven percent seem to be neutral and 6% were slightly dissatisfied. Being a small grocery store this data is not quite so appreciable. The author suggests the company to work more on getting more satisfied customers by working in improving the customer services. As mentioned in chapter 2.8 happy and satisfied customers are the loyal one so the more company would try to satisfy the customer the more it would help in retaining more customers.
The result shown in figure 23 shows the data of continuing shopping in grocery store in future. The commissioner company, being a small grocery store and getting the feedback with such data where thirty-five percent choose to very likely in continuing shopping, thirty percent choose likely to continuing shopping and thirty-five percent choose somewhere between is not a satisfactory achievement for the company to be able to get this data. As a small company customer who want to continue shopping in future should have been in a larger percentage. The company needs to work in this area. We understand that money isn't always easy to come by for small businesses. There still are major choices to be made regarding where to direct one's asset. Should the emphasis be on attracting new customers? Or on ensuring that existing ones return – time and time again? Retention is often a more effective way of growing a business. And a big part of that is customer loyalty. The author recommends applying some loyalty schemes for those who frequently purchase from the store.
6 CONCLUSION

This bachelor's thesis includes the marketing plan for the Solu Afro Asian Food Market, background information, and the different approaches used in its formation. The objective of the present research was to develop a marketing plan for a new organization that had never had one of these before. As a result, the author initiated the process by researching the theoretical framework of marketing and assessing the customer responses from the questionnaire survey.

There have been no budget suggestions or financial information in the marketing plan. The steps suggested in the plan are primarily focused on implementing the various marketing tools that the author generally considered most appropriate for the company, as the company had no previous marketing plan and had not previously executed any marketing actions. The company wanted to determine its target market and then the tools that would be most effective in reaching those markets.

The thesis began by taking into consideration various factors needed to design a marketing plan. Which included keeping in mind the required measures for developing a marketing plan, marketing tools, segments, and marketing with a digital approach. The marketing plan was developed with the company’s current standpoint in mind. Which marketing proposals are worth pursuing, will be determined by the company. The aim is to keep the plan as simplistic and concise as possible so that it would be simple to understand and increase chances of the company implementing it further. If the present situation is maintained, the core concept of the marketing plan will most likely be reusable year after year with little to do modification. It is also up to company representatives to decide whether to implement the marketing strategies outlined in the plan or not. The collection of the research data was successful. The result of the research is same as the objective of the thesis. Overall, the research and writing of this thesis was a great learning experience for the author.

6.1 Suggestion for further studies

This research was mainly focused on making a marketing plan. In this
study, majority of customers had positive attitude and responses towards
the company. Although, this research was able to answer the major
research questions concerning the marketing of the case company, the
sample size of customers was low because it is a newly established
company. Hence, it is suggested that further research should be
conducted with the help of large sample size because the results are not
generalizable.

The only method used to gather in this study was a quantitative survey.
Further research can use other methods like observation and interview
with customers in the field. As mentioned before in another chapter the
author also suggests the company to provide some promotional offers in
some festive seasons as it is an Asian grocery and most of the
customers are from Nepal and India and there occurs lots of festivals
which genuinely helps in sales.

It is also suggested to the company to conduct a customer survey
regularly, and at least once or twice a year. If possible, the company
could use similar statements and track the changes in the level of
customer expectation and perceptions over time. Company could also
use Facebook poll to conduct small scale survey for those customers
who are active in company’s Facebook page in an interval of every 4
months. Currently, there are 1453 followers in the company Facebook
page and 46 followers on Instagram. But for this, first the company’s
Facebook and Instagram page should be active and update time and
again then only it will be more visible to the followers. The only method
used to gather in this study was a quantitative survey. Further research
can use other methods like observation and interview with customers in
the field. The author suggests the Company to focus more on social
media marketing as it requires almost no budget as well as create a good
website with varieties of information.
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