



Marketing Plan for Kenya Tourist Board in China



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2009 Leppävaara

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Degree Programme in
Business Management
Thesis
September, 2009

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Year	2009	Pages	69
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Marketing plans help companies and organizations employ marketing strategies that will help them realize both their long-term and short-term objectives. The main objective of this thesis was to develop a marketing plan for the Kenya Tourist Board which is mandated with promoting Kenyan tourism worldwide because there is a need for a marketing plan since China has developed as a strategic market and the board did not previously have a marketing plan to serve this part of the world.

Over the last 10 years China has emerged as a strong growing economy and more Chinese people are now in a position to travel the world due to their higher incomes. Major tourist countries across the world are focusing on attracting Chinese tourists and it is only countries with the best marketing plans and strategies that will be able to acquire a good market share in China.

The target market has been discussed in this research and strategies for satisfying this target market have been suggested, competition in these segments has been identified and ways to overcome this competition have been suggested in order to help the Kenya Tourist Board achieve its objectives. Research methods used were interviews with Chinese tourists who have already visited Kenya and partner tourist agency employees. The theoretical section discusses various marketing concepts as written in books by different competent scholars. Finally the research gives suggestions on the recommendations that the Kenya Tourist Board can use in order to have a successful marketing plan in China and establish itself there ahead better than its competitors.

Key words: Marketing plan, Strategy, Competition, Communication, Kenya, China and Differentiation.

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1 Introduction

Tourism is an important form of trade across the world because it encompasses several areas of the economy, transportation, catering, accommodation, recreation, and services for tourists it is the world's largest generator of employment. (www.sandiego.org 2008)

With the economy of China developing steadily over the last decade it has become essential for many countries to start targeting China and a few Asian countries which will be leading economies in the 21st century. By tradition the Kenyan tourist industry has depended on the European market for tourists mainly from Britain, Germany and Italy and since they have exploited this market fully there is no much scope for growth in this market, arising the need to look at new targets so that Kenyan tourism can continue thriving.

In Kenya tourism is organised by the Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) which is entrusted with, Strategic Planning to align its programs towards the achievement of tourism goals and to coordinate tourist activities in the country. There are several tourism companies in the country owned both by locals and foreigners which act as tourist agencies and help the Kenya Tourist Board in its local and foreign activities. However the board is encountering major obstacles in its plans mainly because other countries are also targeting China hence there is hence the need for a competitive and viable marketing plan so that KTB can achieve their objectives.

One of the key advantages KTB have is that Kenya is a naturally gifted country especially in wildlife, coastal beaches, mountains and beautiful plain lands, this is recognized internationally. However this is not enough in the current international market due to competition KTB must convince potential target customers they are offering something different from the competition. This can be achieved by offering a different price, offering better service, or offering a different type of service for the customer. The listed factors easily ensure that KTB have an advantage over their competitors hence a chance to make more profit and ensure KTB gain more customers. In this report we will build a strategic marketing plan for the Kenya Tourist Board for the Chinese market.

1.1 Scope of the study

A marketing strategy is a major contributor in the performance of a company and it helps a company do business in accordance with its objectives and it helps many companies achieve their targets or realign their objectives. When a company does not have a clear strategy it becomes hard for them to reorganise operations in case the company encounters unexpected problems or the industry becomes more competitive. With a marketing strategy there is

always a point of reference, in case of problems or something needs to be improved somewhere. The Kenya Tourist Board doesn't have a clear strategic marketing plan for China and since this is a new market it is important to have one since the needs of Chinese tourists are different from the ones of their other existing markets. Lack of a clear strategy hampers the board from maximising its potential and does not help them exploit all the opportunities they may be having giving competitors an unnecessary competitive advantage.

Linden and Malcolm (1994, 2) Strategic planning is the process of formulating longer-term objectives and strategies for the entire business unit by matching its resources with its opportunities. Its purpose is to help business to reach realistic objectives and achieve a desired competitive position within a defined time to reduce risk of error. The strategy will help the board maximise its potential in China, and help attract new customers it is usually five times harder to gain a new customer but with a clear strategy it becomes easier whereas lack of is disastrous and could discourage the board.

1.2 Purpose of the research

As stated Kenya's focus has mainly been in the European market but with the market in Europe almost saturated and competition so high there is need to start focusing on new markets. The emergence of China as an economic power has given the board a new target area which they should exploit to keep the tourism industry in Kenya thriving.

The purpose is to create a competitive strategic marketing plan so that the Kenya Tourist Board can attract new customers from China and hence benefit from new investment in China. Historically Kenya is traditionally believed to be a leading international tourist attraction this has been achieved without much attention to the Chinese market which other countries have fully exploited hence, the need for this research paper to create a strategic marketing plan for the Kenya Tourist Board operations in China. The research will at the end present proposals for the strategic marketing plan which if implemented will give Kenya Tourist Board a competitive advantage over other African countries in the Chinese tourist market. This research will highlight new ideas which will help the board know where to position itself in the Chinese market.

1.3 Limitations of the study

This research has limitations in that it only offers proposals for a marketing plan and does not have an actual budget which would be beneficial for its proper implementation. It also does not have a proper detailed schedule that gives timeline when all these activities should occur giving only a proposal.

Figure 1 below shows the structured guideline used for this report.

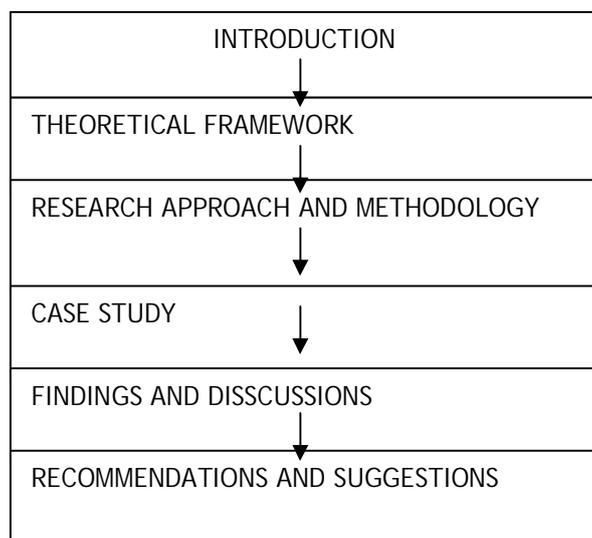


Figure 1: Structure of the thesis

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Marketing

Marketing is important in business as it helps convince potential customers buy a company's product it is more important due to many company's offering similar products a marketer must take his time to persuade and convince potential buyers buy their products. Michael J. Baker (1998, 5) states that marketing as a concept school began to emerge in the 1930s when the experience of the 1930 great depression made it clear producers could not continue to expect the growth in demand to absorb all their output when competing mainly on price and sale of undifferentiated products. From the above statement it's clear that marketing as a concept has existed for many years. However it has been developing with the changing of times and with new developments emerging.

As Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 5) outline marketing must be understood not in the old sense of making a sale (telling and selling) but in the new sense of satisfying customer needs the marketer should be efficient and understand the consumers need, develop a product, and produce superior value and price, promote and distribute these products and services.

Marketing is nowadays seen as long-term relationship building process instead of a one off sale as it was in the past. A customer is seen as a long-term investment and his long-term purchasing power put into perspective because a firm assumes it is profitable when they interact with a customer and exploit his purchasing potential over the long-term. As

Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 6) explains core concepts that cause marketing include needs, wants and demands, while marketing offers products, services, experiences, value, satisfaction, exchanges relationships and markets.

According to Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 6) the basic concept underlying marketing is human needs, they include basic physical needs food, social need for belonging, and individual needs. The authors go on to outline that these needs were not created by the marketers but they have always been there. These needs can be grouped according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs namely, psychological, safety, love, esteem, self actualisation. It is in this order that the human brain works to satisfy these needs to help better lives.

Firms aid customers by creating a product/service that can accordingly satisfy the customer's needs. This new product should give some value to the customers and a value that satisfies the consumers need. After the creation of the product the firm should create a promotional campaign to inform the customer about the new commodities benefit and why to buy the particular product the promotional campaign should capture the new customer's attention and stimulate his interest towards the particular good. This can be done by raising the customers' expectations of what they will achieve from the product. However there should be a balance in the expectations created in the promotional campaign because too much expectation might leave a customer disappointed after his experience with the product while too little expectations might not raise interest in the market leading to low sales.

2.2 Marketing Process

In marketing data is needed to enable the company, have enough information about potential customers and involves various steps. Marketing is a process that takes various steps as discussed by various scholars namely, analysis, planning, implementation, and control. These steps are essential in the creation of a marketing plan strategy. Analysis can be done through carrying out a market research to help show clearly how a market is and what changes need to be done in the market. This analysis helps a company make a set of prevailing market conditions and it is here that the company can highlight opportunities that it can exploit and obtain more customers. The company examines what is being offered in the market and what the customers actually need. It is through this that a company can identify what steps it will take to measure up to the customers' expectations.

Planning as Czinkota and Ronkainen (1998, 20) explains, planning refers to the blueprint generated to react and exploit the opportunities in the marketplace. Collecting the analysis and data is not enough. A company needs to take action and formulate a plan how to satisfy the opportunities that exist. The plan should produce a set of objectives of what the company

wants to achieve in the market and how the company will achieve this, this should include the value created for the customer and the tactics the company will employ to achieve these objectives. In the planning stage the company should select the particular target market segment, selecting the right segment in the market is important wrong segmentation can lead to less interest in the product, rendering the analysis created useless.

Implementation and control after the 2nd stage of planning the company needs formulate a good implementation campaign to help turn theory into practice. Czinkota and Ronkainen (1998, 20) explains that plans must also consider unforeseeable changes in the environment and also within the company. With ever changing market world and the environmental challenges a company cannot afford to take it easy after launching the product they need to monitor what going on in the market and adjust accordingly since the customer's needs are always changing and the competition is always improving. Initially the changes may be minimal which just requires small adjustments of the products, for example packaging. However when the difference between the product and markets becomes very wide it is important that the product be overhauled altogether and a new product be developed for the market according to the prevailing market conditions.

2.3 Marketing plan

According to Westwood (2006, 11) a marketing plan is a document that formulates a plan for marketing products or services a company marketing plan sets out the company's marketing objectives and suggests strategies to achieve them. As Malcolm Macdonald (2003, 27) expounds marketing planning is the planned application of marketing resources to achieve marketing objectives. Also according to Malcolm MacDonald (2008, 8) the purpose of market planning is to identify and create a competitive advantage, it is the planned application of marketing resources to achieve marketing objectives. With the business world changing mainly due to technology and competition there is needs for operations to be in a systematic way has never been higher, businesses in both goods and service industry are now forced to either operate in a systematic way or be bankrupt. Unlike in the past when only the directors decided what would be in the marketing plan the marketing environment has changed and it now requires all levels of management to be involved in the planning rather than a few people with the basis of planning intelligence being the customer.

As discussed above a marketing plan is crucial and central in business world to an organisation achieving its desired objectives as it gives a combination of events that will lead us to the organisation objectives. Nowadays a company cannot succeed without a marketing plan.

2.3.1 Marketing planning

The marketing environment nowadays is very competitive and every organisation needs to address this by supporting daily operations in the work place and marketing planning is crucial in this. Wood (2003, 3) defines marketing planning as the structured process of researching and analyzing the marketing situation; developing and documenting marketing objectives, strategies and programs; and implementing, evaluating, and controlling activities to achieve the objectives. Marketing planning is not always a simple task to execute basically because it involves bringing all the aspects of marketing together which is not in any way a simple feat due to conflicting interests across the departments, also merging all the business objectives is not an easy tasks it requires a strategic plan and clear long-term planning. Some companies base their performance on forecasting and budgeting systems which leads to no improvement at all.

Market planning is essential and an important exercise but the answer is how well it will be implemented lack of proper implementation will only ensure the company stagnates so it's not only about the planning it's about proper implementation.

According to Malcolm Macdonald (2008, 10) lack of proper implementation leads to the following problems: lost opportunities for profits, meaningless numbers in long-term plans, unrealistic objectives, lack of actionable market information, interventional strife, management frustration, proliferation of markets and products, wasted promotional expenditure, confusion, overpricing, growing vulnerability to changes in the business environment and loss of control over the business. Market planning involves objectives and the plan on how to achieve these objectives and a timeframe. Measurement can be in the following values, amount of sales, sales value, company's market share, profits, or market penetration. Marketing strategies is how a company plan to achieve these objectives that is the action plan that you are going to employ to ensure the company achieves its goals.

According to Malcolm MacDonald (2008 11) marketing objectives are about one or more of the following, existing products in existing markets, new products in existing markets, existing products for new markets, new products for new markets. To achieve these objectives it is essential to employ the 4 P's of the marketing mix, product, price, promotion and place.

2.3.2 Marketing mix

As mentioned above the marketing mix is crucial in marketing activities as it is a combination of tasks that gives a formula to help an organisation work towards its objectives, without the correct mix the marketing plan process would not be effective. According to Kotler and

Armstrong (2006, 50) the marketing mix is a set of controllable, tactical marketing tools that the company blends to produce response in the target market, it consists of everything the company can do to influence the demand for its product.

2.3.3 Product (Customer solution)

According to Kotler (2004, 56) product means the goods and services combined company offers to the target market. When developing a product/service strategy when developing goods and services companies must analyse the customer to see how well the product is suited to the customer's needs. It is essential to package and present a product to the customer in the best way possible, to gain competitive advantage; to help convince the customers that you are best placed to cater for their needs and be able to fulfil their expectations. Market research enables the company interact with the consumers in such a way that they can measure how to improve products and add value so that as to meet and exceed the customer's expectations.

2.3.4 Place strategy (Customer cost)

Place strategy includes company activities that make the good available to target consumers Kotler (2004, 56). It is essential for a product to be at the customers' disposal when they need them that is why companies should ensure use of right distribution channels when dealing with customers the choice of the channel differs from product to product. Selection of a wrong channel can be disastrous in that it will not be easy for your customers to access the good and hence they may buy from your competitors.

Place strategy should help ensure that there is entire coverage of the entire target market this can be achieved by selecting the right transportation channel and ensuring there is enough inventory at all times in designated target market to avoid lack of supply if enquiries are high and there is an increase in demand. Having a good logistics strategy is the important to help get the place strategy right.

2.3.5 Pricing strategy (Customer cost)

Pricing strategy is the amount of money customers have to pay to obtain a product or service and it is important when making a marketing plan, some customers will care more about the price than the quality of a product or service. With competition being high it is essential for a company to make price decisions critically. Analysing what competitors are offering for a similar product is essential to ensure uniformity, conducting a customer research to check if customers are happy with the prices offered helps influence pricing decisions,

Some of the steps that a company can take to ensure that their pricing strategy pleases the customer include giving discounts from time to time; this would help attract more customers at that particular time. Offering cheaper packages especially to loyal customers is a good way to keep customers loyal and to avoid competition. At times also offering good payment terms to customers, for example giving an extended payment period is a good way to ease, burden on the customers and help find a good pricing strategy.

2.3.6 Promotion strategy (Communication)

As Paul Fifield (1998, 245) outlines, promotion is defined as a whole array of methods and procedures by which an organization communicates with its target market. Promotion strategy centres on communication. The communication channels used by a company to explain the advantages of a product/service that helps convince a customer where buy a product. Advertising is crucial in the promotion strategy can be in various media, and with developing technology the internet has been the major contributor in the 21st century. A good advertisement should focus on the merits of what a company is offering and should be able to convince a target customer.

Personal selling is also a good aid in the promotion strategy because the seller has time to interact with a customer and convince him face to face where needed, also it is a good forum to obtain feedback concerning the customers' expectations and view the various aspects of the product that is on offer the data gathered in these interactions can help a company improve its policies and match the customers' expectations. This helps improve the public relations between the seller and the customer.

A successful promotion should be able to build awareness and interest in a product; this can be achieved by stimulating a customer's expectation higher. Due to competition it is essential to differentiate a product from competitors otherwise it is impossible to convince the customer portraying a product/service high value is crucial.

To have an effective and workable marketing program a company should blend the above 4 P's in a way that it will control all its activities, coordinated to help offer good value to the customer and to help a company achieve its set objectives. As a company develops its marketing mix it is essential to also focus on building strong relationships with customers because times have changed and it is a time for building relationships and not only what a company is offering.

2.4 Market planning process

A company does not just write a marketing plan there are several guidelines that a company should follow to establish a satisfactory and workable marketing plan. Malcolm Macdonald (2002, 39) describes a marketing planning process as a series of managerial steps and the output of this process is the actual marketing plan itself, he lists the steps involved as shown on figure 2 below.

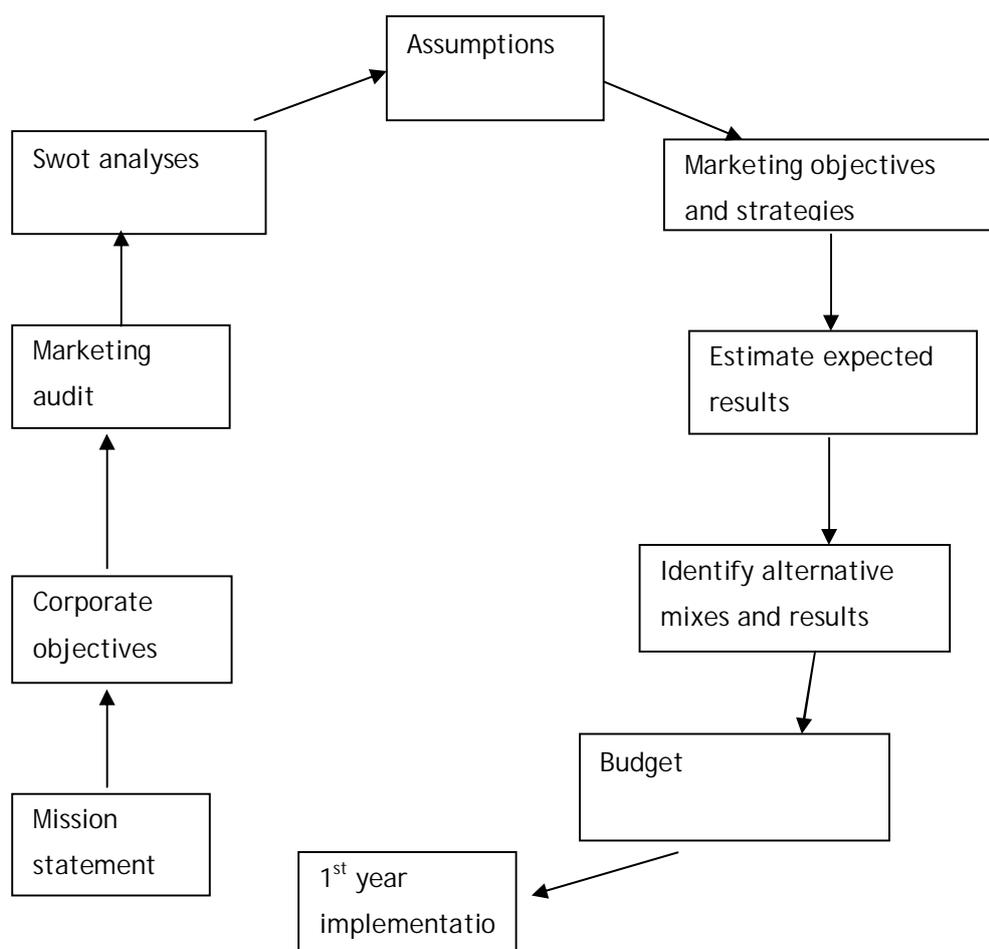


Figure 2: The Marketing Planning Process

Mission statement, corporate objectives, marketing audit, swot analyses, assumptions, marketing objectives and strategies, estimate expected results, identify alternative mixes and results, budget, first year detailed implementation programme. This marketing process is well laid out

2.4.1 Mission statement

A mission statement can also be referred to as a purpose statement. It is usually, brief detailing why a company is in operation should be carefully drafted to ensure that it is clear to all the departments so that, there is a similar objective for all lack of which may lead to a conflict of interest within the same company. It should clearly state how the company hopes to undertake its activities and what values it holds highest and it wants to promote in its marketing activities Malcolm McDonalds (2002, 39).

A mission statement should clearly define what the business does and how it does it, this should include informing the customers the benefits and experiences they can derive from the company's product. It should clearly inform the customers how its products will help satisfy their needs and the competitive values they have over their competitors. It can also conclude that it is from the mission statement that customers create their image of the company hence creating a good mission statement is essential for any company Malcolm McDonalds (2002, 39).

2.4.2 Corporate objectives

These are the set objectives that the company plans to achieve within a certain period of time. These objectives should usually be measurable to ensure the company is aware of how well it is progressing. When setting corporate objectives it is important for the company to ensure that the objectives are specific and very clear. This is because there will be many activities conducted across departments to achieve the objective. Hence if not clear one can easily interpret the objectives differently and this will lead to departments aiming for different objectives Malcolm McDonalds (2002, 27).

Ensuring that an objective is measurable is also critical in ensuring that the company will be able to assess their progress and from time to time check what needs to be improved. Lack of a clear measure could lead to the company not knowing in which direction they are progressing and how close their objectives are. Since the employees are the ones mainly involved in implementing all plans it is important also that the company checks with employees in the setting of their objectives or else the objectives will not be well implemented, involving the employees helps them understand the objective more Malcolm McDonalds (2002, 27).

2.4.3 Marketing audit

Malcolm Macdonald (2002, 42) defines an audit as a systematic, critical and unbiased review and appraisal of the environment and of the company's operations, he further states that a marketing audit is part of the larger management audit and is concerned with the marketing environment and marketing operations.

The major importance of the audit is to help a company have mechanisms to correct its operations once it starts experiencing problems. In some cases a company take measures in its operations but this is only after they start incurring losses or business is low conducting an audit will help businesses know what measures to take during bad times. Making an audit will enable a company know what to do when lack of this has led to many companies panicking when business is low they end up making poor decisions Malcolm McDonalds (2002, 42).

Like in the analysis stage also in the audit a company will have to make both the internal audit and external audit. The internal audit will involve looking at what the company has, including cash, products, and manpower. While the external audit will include climatic change, season, inflation fashion changes, and political climate. A company is free to choose what time to undertake its audit but the beginning of a financial year is the best time so that the company can start on all over Malcolm McDonalds (2002, 43).

2.4.4 Assumptions

The plan itself is based on a clearly understood set of assumptions. These relate to external economic factors as well as technological and competitive factors, Westwood (2006, 9) in the assumption process everything is standardised to reflect a similar vision among those making the marketing plan. People with divergent views try to find some common understanding. Malcolm Macdonald (2003, 49) explains that assumptions really is a question of standardizing the planning environment, for example it would be bad receiving plans from two managers, one of whom believed the market was going to increase by 10 percent, while the other believed the market was going to decline by 10 percent.

2.4.5 Marketing objectives and strategies

Malcolm Macdonald (2003, 49) describes marketing objectives and strategies as the key step in the whole market planning process it highlights the objectives that the company wants to achieve and covers the strategies they will employ to achieve these objectives. The methods they will employ to achieve these objectives. In every level of a company there are objectives and strategies for example we can have distribution objectives and strategies or

pricing objectives and strategies because there objectives in all business levels but as Malcolm Macdonald (2003, 49) explains marketing objectives and strategies includes products and markets only. It is only by selling a company's products to the market that a company can achieve its objectives because the main aim is making a profit that's why businesses exist. Malcolm Macdonald (2003, 50) goes further to divide marketing objectives into the following sub-groups existing products for existing markets, new products for existing markets, existing products for new markets, new product for new markets.

For each of the four levels above a company must employ, different suitable strategy to achieve the particular objective and the objectives should be measurable as this will enable the company, know whether it has realised an objective or whether the investment was viable, it is only through marketing strategies that a company can achieve its objectives and here company usually tend to employ the 4ps to enable them achieve their targets.

2.4.6 Budget

Every activity has a cost and it is important for an organisation to have a budget for the various steps involved in the marketing process. For a marketing plan to be operational it requires funds to be allocated from the operations budget. These funds will be used to cover advertising promotional any other expenses that are related to marketing field. These funds will be considered, the mode of media to be used and the cost to be used for collecting research data.

2.4.7 Implementation programme and controls

After obtaining all the customer data and setting up the budget the implementation is crucial as it gives the whole process meaning converting theory into practice. Here the timing and responsibilities for marketing activities, calculate breakeven point, describe the roles and functions within marketing organization and explain contingency plans for coping with unexpected challenges and opportunities, Wood (2003, 159) From the statement above the implementation programme is tailored with the changes that may come in the market and aligned in a way that the company can best work to achieve its objectives. Control also helps harmonize the employees and the activities they are undertaking to ensure that they are working towards the objectives written in the marketing plan. According to Wood (2003, 122) the four major types of controls are annual plan control, profitability control, productivity control, strategic control.

Annual plan control is a form of yearly control plan that checks the progress made in the plan for the current year. This is done by studying what emerged in last year's annual plan to help

the organisation predict what might happen in the current year, because sometimes business trends tend to have patterns. Here companies look at both the goals generally and specifically, for example by checking the entire industry results or checking the results of a particular marketing mix. Wood (2003, 122) explains that marketers generally formulate a new marketing plan every year they need to assess progress of the current year marketing plan.

Profitability control: The first step is writing down the financial objectives of a company in order to see the target it is usually easier to achieve this with old brands well known in the market as opposed to new products penetrating a new market.

Stapleton and Thomas (1998, 88) states, that every business must plan to improve its profitability by increased productivity. The authors further explains that there are numerous changes that increase profitability and this can be achieved by maximising the strengths and opportunities a company realises in its SWOT analysis and trying to mitigate its weaknesses and threats.

Wood (2003, 123) tells us that productivity control usually cover the efficiency of the sales force, promotions, channels, logistics and product management. The author further explains how important productivity control has become. The purpose of productivity control is to make much use of the marketing activities and benefit the company as much as possible without decreasing the customer satisfaction levels.

Productivity control tries maximising money used in sales promotion and ensures the company spends less on its promotions but gets high returns more in some cases, it has compromised the level of customer satisfaction but it is otherwise an effective mode of boosting benefits from expenditure on sales activities in a company Wood (2003,124).

It manages the marketing function towards its effect on the outside world, assesses the organization's effectiveness in managing the marketing function in managing customer relationships, and in managing social responsibility and ethics issues Wood (2003, 124). A company's image in the outside world is very important and while productivity and profitability control aims at looking out for the company's interests strategic control aims at looking out for the company's standing in the social circles and how its customers view it.

A company should have an annual strategic control to keep reinforcing its social stand and to help it make sure it is taking good care of its social responsibilities this is beneficial in that it will strengthen the way the customers view it as a brand.

2.5 Positioning

Positioning involves understanding customers and creating an image for the organisation in the customer's mind in relation with organisations competitors, the first image that a customer forms when he thinks of the organisation summarises the organisations position it is crucial in that it helps the customer decide how he will engage with the organisation. Armstrong and Kotler (2001, 269) states, that a products position is the way the product is defined by consumers on important attributes, the place the product occupies in the customer's minds in relation to competing products. When making a purchase it is impossible for the consumer to look at the merits of every brand each time they are planning a purchase, so the consumers opt to arrange the products in their minds in preferential order according to how best they rank these products.

Usually it is the duty of a company's marketing department to create a message that will differentiate own brand from competitors, through this they can occupy the place they planned earlier in the customer's mind. However this is not always an easy task because many company's might decide to use the same mix in the same segment so it is up to the company's marketing department to choose different competitive advantages to set it apart from competitors Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 218).

The positioning task consists of three steps, identifying a set of possible competitive advantages upon which to build a position, choosing the right competitive advantages, and selecting an overall positioning strategy. Therefore the main criteria in selecting a product's position lies in the selection of the right set of competitive advantages. For example Volvo revolves its competitive advantage around safety hence when making a car purchase someone thinking of safety first will buy a Volvo Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 221).

2.5.1 Competitive advantage strategy

Marketing primarily evolves around an organisation's competitors, developing competitive advantage is crucial in helping a business have an advantage over its immediate competitors how well an organisation creates and sustains its competitive advantage is crucial in persuading customer's buy a certain product. Michael. F. Porter (1998, 1) states that competitive strategy is the search for a favourable competitive position in an industry the fundamental area in which competition occurs, competitive strategy targets to establish a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine industry competition. Armstrong and Kotler (2001, 270) further states, that the key to attracting and keeping customers is to understand their needs and buying processes better than competitors do and

to deliver more value. While it is difficult to achieve an advantage while offering similar products it is achievable only through differentiation.

2.5.2 Differentiation

Differentiation is one of the major ways a company can gain a competitive advantage over its competitors it basically focuses on attributes which could be through; physical features, branding, performance, after sale service and so on. Armstrong and Kotler (2004, 259) states, that to discover points of differentiation companies must understand the customer's entire experience with the company's product or service. Differentiation is a special way of building a competitive advantage because it focuses on a certain segment of the market and finds ways to satisfy this segment it's an important theme in marketing planning because each market segment is different and needs different attributes to satisfy it.

The best way to discover differentiation attributes is by following the customer's experience from the point of contact to after they use and dispose the product by checking what the customers think and how they felt when using the product enabling a company to have a different offer from competitors. Other than the physical differentiation of a product a company can choose other means to do this for example, through distribution channels where it can ensure that it has service to more parts in its sales activities. A good example is where a company will ensure it is serving small towns and villages across the world while bigger companies may ignore such areas while distributing their products usually companies which focus on such places tend to grow more Armstrong and Kotler (2004, 261).

Staff differentiation is also a major area where a company can capitalize especially in the service industry. It's the employees that come in contact with the customers so a company that chooses the best employees and gives them correct professional training will have an advantage over competitors. In the airline industry for example it's important for a company to hire employees who are smart, friendly and focused. People tend to appreciate better service and airlines with better staff tend to enjoy higher market share.

Brand differentiation a company's brand image should convey the product's distinctive benefits and positioning, developing a strong and distinctive image requires creativity and hard work. A company cannot create an image in the customer's minds overnight using a few advertisements, Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 261). It can be argued that brand differentiation is a gradual process which a company can use to set its position in the market and the company must deliver the chosen position so that it can gain the customer's trust.

Differentiation is expensive and companies must ensure that their cost of operation does not exceed profit. They must be in a position to benefit from their differentiation process; hence it is important they choose the benefits they promote wisely. Some companies select one distinctive advantage and centralize their image on it but it is better to choose many attributes in today's markets and focus on them. Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 262) explains that not all brand differences are meaningful or worthwhile. Not all differences make a good differentiator, each difference has the potential to create customer costs as well as customer benefits, the authors advise on the following criteria when selecting a difference, it is important that the difference delivers a highly valued benefit to target buyers.

Competitors do not offer the difference, or the company can offer it in a more distinctive way, superior the difference is superior to other ways that customers might offer the same benefit, communicable the difference is communicable and visible to buyers, pre-emptive competitors cannot easily copy the difference, affordable buyers afford to pay for the difference profitable the Company can introduce the difference profitably. From that criterion it can be concluded that differentiation is a challenging process but it is the only way a company can carry on in a competitive market. It is the only way a company can sustain itself in an industry with many similar products. Customers tend to go for the products with most benefits to them and it is by differentiation that companies can tailor their products to offer these values desired by the customers.

2.5.3 Position delivery/communication

Although planning and analysing in a company is important communication is the centre of all operations it involves communicating the position to the target segment in the best way possible. Communication is the exchange of information between two or several people making sure that all the people understand this information uniformly with no misconceptions that may make the two people translate similar information differently. Fombrun and Riel (2007, 17) states that marketing communication consists primarily of those forms of communication that support sales of products, services and brands, in marketing communication. Distinction is made between promotional mix and public relations mix. Armstrong and Kotler (2006, 267) explains that once it has chosen a position the company must take initiative to communicate chosen position to its consumers.

According to the above statement it can be concluded that marketing communication is the link between the company, chosen position and customers, it can further be argued that while choosing the right position is essential the wrong delivery/communication can render it unworkable that is why much emphasis must be put on how to approach the consumers. Communication involves giving the information and receiving the information it is an

interactive process where the seller gives an offer to the customers and also listens to what the customers have to say about the products they are using. According to Kotler (2000, 550) any customer contact can strengthen or weaken the way the customer perceives the selling company, the whole marketing mix must be integrated to deliver a consistent message and strategic positioning.

Although promotion was traditionally a monologue initiated by the organization nowadays marketers are encouraging dialogue through messages and media that encourage interaction however it is not always easy to establish communication channels that are effective hence a company's target may not be accomplished. According to Kotler (2000, 550-551) the three reasons leading to ineffective communication include. Selective attention people are given so many commercial messages a day hence the need to decipher and react to certain messages and it is not possible to react to all these messages that is why only a few will capture a customer's attention. Selective distortion receivers will hear what fits their belief system, this is where receivers add their own imagination's to the message, and as a result the message changes to avoid these marketers should keep repeating the message so that they can fully transmit their message. Selective retention whereby people tend to retain certain parts of the message and not others affects communication; this is due to attitude towards the message that is why their attitude towards a message is important for them to remember it positively.

2.6 Developing communication

Communication is a process that should be carefully developed over time Kotler (2000, 552) lists the key eight steps to developing marketing communication as, identifying the target audience, determine the communication objectives, design the message, select the communication channels, establish total communication budget, decide on the communication mix, measure the communication results, manage the integrated marketing communication process

2.6.1 Target audience

Having a clearly defined target audience is vital in the decisions a company may make in its marketing communication decisions. The target should include current customers, potential buyers, and the general public. Having a target audience will help define what to say, how to say, where to say it, whom to say it, and where to say it, Kotler (2000, 552)

According to Kotler (2000, 552-553) it is important to check the image the company has from the target audience so that the company can compare it with the desired image because

image is key in the market. This is mainly because once people have a certain image of a product it takes them long to adjust it, usually it is a very gradual process.

2.6.2 Communication objective

After determining the target audience and identifying how the audience distinguish the product the company is in a position to determine what its objectives will be according to the target group's opinion or change with the target audience. The objectives usually include giving information to the target, changing product perceptions in the target audience, and obtaining consumers reaction. This can be conducted through research so that the company can determine their position Kotler (2000, 554).

The objectives differ if a product is not popular the company targets to let as many people as possible become aware about the product Kotler (2000, 555). This can be done by telling them the product name repeatedly. Once this is done the target audience may be able to identify the product but may lack enough information about the product hence, may not be able to explain or convince themselves. Here the company is tasked with informing the audience on the attributes and features of the product, after this the company can innovate ways to convince the target to have a preference for the products over competitors and finally make a purchase.

2.6.3 The message

Having defined the desired response the communicator develops an effective message, ideally the message should gain attention, hold interest, arouse desire and elicit action Kotler (2000, 556) from the statement it can be argued that its mostly about capturing the buyers attention and making a lasting impression to ensure that they will make a purchase. Kotler (2000, 556) further states that formulating the message requires solving four problems, message content, message structure, message format, message source.

From the above statement it can be said that having the right message is key in ensuring objectives in the communication process are accomplished, the wrong message can be detrimental in that the whole process will be ineffective, the wrong message can also lead to a big loss in market share instead of the company recording gains in the market and achieving objectives. The communication channel should be carefully selected according to the target audience, objectives, and the product there has to be a correlation in the three.

The two communication channels are personal and non personal Kotler (2000, 560). Personal communication is where two or more people talk face to face, via telephone, or email it is an effective channel and has the advantage that the campaign can be individualized to cater for

a customer's need, and the communicator can obtain feedback from the target. This enables them to make changes when they needed to, and to bank the information received here.

Non personal communication is mainly through the media, atmosphere, and events (Kotler 2000, 561). Hence it can be argued that it has more probability of reaching out to many people and maybe more effective than personal communication though in personal communication there is a higher possibility of convincing and persuading the target more.

2.6.4 Communications marketing budget

Most companies have done research and discovered that half or more of their communication funds go to misuse but they cannot explain exactly where the money is lost so it's tough to decide how much to spend on the marketing commitments. Kotler (2000, 563) the four common methods for helping decide how much the promotion budget will be as follows. Affordable method here the company decides its budget in relation to its budget and what is available in its treasury, there is no consideration of what the promotional needs are they just go for what is available.

Percentage sales method is where a company sets a part of total sales percentage to be used in its promotional activities, it usually varies from time to time and it is safe for a company because it is what they can afford and it helps balance the company's budget. However this method has many weaknesses in that for example sales should be a result of the promotion campaign and not the determiner of how much will be used in advertising. Also having a fixed amount hinders the company's growth and they can't have long term planning Kotler (2000, 562).

Competitive parity method is where a company assumes that it can maintain their market share by matching the competitor's promotion expenditure, this can be an effective way to stop promotional rivalry but finally it will not achieve objectives set because the companies promotional objectives are different and a company can lose out if the competitors drastically change their promotional patterns for example midyear Kotler (2000, 562).

Kotler (2000, 562-563) States that the objective and task method calls upon marketers to develop promotion budgets by defining specific objectives, determining the tasks that must be performed, to achieve these objectives and estimating the costs of performing these tasks Kotler (2000, 562-563). From the above statement it can be argued that the company's destiny depends on its ability to make assumptions and make forecasts in the direction the company is taking and desired position in a few years time.

2.7 Marketing communications mix

The communication mix aids an organisation in deciding the modes of communication it will employ to help attract potential customers. The mix depends on the message and target group. Kotler (2000, 563) States that companies must allocate the promotion budget over the five promotional tools - advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and publicity, sales force and marketing. Study has shown that competing companies will lay different emphasis on the different marketing communications mix hence a company selling cars may tend to rely on personal sales while a competitor may rely on direct marketing. With each communication mix comes, costs and different targets.

Advertising is the most common of promotional tools and it is convenient because it can reach enormous geographical areas Kotler (2000, 564) and hence more people and they can enormously increase the sales. However for example advertising on television especially in primetime can be very expensive. A good personal observation is how politicians in the United States and Africa are use advertising on the television to such enormous effect, companies can also embark on other forms of advertizing for example via, internet which has become a strong communication tool in this millennium. Advertising plays the following important roles informing customers about a product, explaining about a product, reminding customers about a product; reassuring customers once more about what they are buying. Customers need to be reassured from time to time.

Kotler (2000, 566) explains that companies must consider several factors in developing their promotion mix, type of product market, whether to use, push or pull strategy, consumer readiness to make a purchase, stage in the product lifecycle and the company's market rank. Companies which have a massive reputation and are well known all over the world have an advantage over less known companies and their advertising message will reach out to more people and be considered more seriously than a message from a lesser known company, but still the smaller companies have a probability to succeed. If they package their message well they can still compete with the well established firms.

The strategy to employ is a crucial factor when a company chooses to use the push strategy it focuses mainly on its, products distributors and middlemen to market their products and persuade the consumers to make a purchase. It can be argued that in the push strategy it is a beneficial situation for both the producers and distributors because they both want to make a sale Kotler (2000, 567). In the pull strategy it is the producer who advertises and promotes the product so that the end users can ask the distributors to sell the product. This is mainly applicable in well known brands which the customers understand well and know what they are getting.

Products vary in their lifecycle and at such instances the customers desire to make a purchase differs. Promotional tools also vary in cost effectiveness at different stages of the product life cycle Kotler (2000, 567) When the product is new the introduction stage its advertising and publicity is cost effective because it will reach many people and raise their awareness of the product.

At the growth stage is where sales are increasing steadily and more people are becoming aware of the product and its benefits. Here not much advertising is needed because there is momentum and people are learning about the product through word of mouth from their colleagues. However most companies opt not to rely on this and instead advertise the product Kotler (2000, 568).

At the maturity stage sales promotion, advertising and personal selling continue and the product has reached its peak whereby later the decline process starts and sales start declining and the company reduces the advertising, and publicity of the product. According to Kotler (2000, 568) market leaders derive more benefit from advertising than sales promotion, conversely smaller companies gain more by using sales promotion in their marketing communications mix.

2.7.1 Measuring communication results

After putting the communication plan into action a company must conduct a study to measure how effective the message was by checking, how many people heard the message, how frequently, and their feelings towards the message. This helps the company to know if the campaign was successful and if it has helped the product popularity. It further tests if the campaign helped the company attract the targets it set when commencing the campaign. From that the company can know how to conduct its future campaigns boldly and know what to change in future campaigns. The results of the communication mix helps, the company know if to carry on using same media or if it needs to change approach in communication.

2.7.2 Managing integrated marketing communication

The era of a company relying on one or two communication tools is gone Kotler (2000, 568). This is because markets have divided into many small fragmented markets so it is not possible to use a single communication tool to reach all these markets. With the marketplace changing dynamically it is crucial for the companies to change how they approach marketing communication to ensure it is effective and enables them achieve their target, integrating these media aids and makes it easier for the organisation to achieve its objectives. Kotler

(2000, 569) defines managing integrated marketing communication as a concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communications disciplines for example general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relation and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communications impact through the seamless integration of discrete messages Kotler (2000, 568-569).

From the above statement it can be argued that integrated marketing communication brings uniformity and helps coordinate the marketing message and levels to ensure that it gets to the right target and at the right time and that a well managed integrated marketing plan will lead to a bigger impact on sales and afford the company a better standing.

2.8 Theoretical framework

The study framework helps a reader understand better how a case study has been developed. The framework is the major steps involved in developing a marketing plan for the organisation. It basically summarises the main steps in the marketing plan process. Wood (2003) states that theoretical framework includes the main steps in the process of developing a marketing plan. The major objective of this case study is employing various marketing strategies to help establish a marketing plan for the case company.



Figure 3: Marketing plan in the context of organisational resources, competencies, mission, strategy, goals (Wood 2003, 4)

Figure 3 illustrates the major sections in the development of a marketing plan giving information how the process starts by gathering data for initial analysis and how it is coordinated from start to finish in order for the organisation to establish a competitive market plan to help a company achieve its objectives. The main sections of a marketing plan include: executive summary, reviews, the plans, highlights and objectives.

3 Research approach and methodology

3.1 Research approach

This section will help explain how the research was conducted, giving details, methods used as well as evaluating the validity and reliability of the methods. In this research a qualitative research was used and respondents were given the freedom to give their own views uninterrupted hence opening new areas for the researcher to learn. According to Silverman (1993, 8-9) there are four major methods used by qualitative researchers, observation, analysing texts and documents, interviews, recording and transcribing

These methods can also be combined and used in a single case and they apply to both qualitative and quantitative research. For this research to qualify as qualitative the following groups of people were interviewed:

Chinese tourists (who have previously visited Kenya)

Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours and travel employees.

3.2 Data collection

In this research data was collected via scheduled telephone interviews with the key industry players, the process involved preparing the respondents via brief emails to familiarise them on the information needed and the topics to be discussed. The telephone calls were made via the intervoip programme since it is cheaper. Shorthand notes were taken during the interviews to avoid loss of information by over reliance on memory on the interviewer's part. This information was later recorded in full using word document immediately after the interview to ensure no information loss.

Further interviews were made by email a list of questions was sent to the respondents where they were sent questions on email written in a word document and to which they replied on their own time.

The interviews were conducted via email correspondence as well as via phone calls using computer software's intervoip and internet calls because it is cheap the reason was to obtain inside information on how operations are organised and why these tourists visited Kenya in the first place. From this the researcher established valuable information that has been used to write this marketing plan.

3.2.1 Interviewing

Qualitative interviewing is interesting an interview brings new information and reveals into the experiences of the people you interview (H. Rubin & S.Rubin (1995, 1). One of the advantages of qualitative interviews is that an interviewer can understand events that he did not take part in after this he can reconstruct those events according to his understanding and this will help him improve on his knowledge of events that happened a long time ago. These interviews have guidelines and the researcher can analyze the knowledge and share it with the public via books, journals and magazines.

3.2.2 Secondary data

Secondary data was gathered especially in magazines and related documents, these are scheduled periodicals published on a uniform regular basis and discusses various topics. They are usually for commercial purposes and they tend to advertise the topic they are discussing these magazines are made available as hard copies and at times on the internet or also in both internet and hard copy. In this research online magazines were used for information and reference.

3.2.3 Internet

The internet was used in this research to obtain latest valuable information. According to Grover and Vriens (2006, 111) the professed advantages of online research are varied but many compared to traditional methods.

The advantages involved in this form of data collection include: it is faster, cheaper, versatile and better. However, online research has the risk of finding difficulty to validate that the real respondent is in this research. Web addresses were vetted to help avoid information overload and inaccurate information. Only official websites from known newsgroups and companies were used to collect data.

3.2.4 Validity and reliability

The author assumes personal responsibility for the validity and authenticity of the data collected. Primary data was collected from experts with long standing experience of working in Kenyan tourism and from tourists who had already been in the country, which made their contribution valid and reliable for this research.

4 Case study

4.1 Kenya Tourist Board

The case was selected to help produce a final marketing plan for the Kenya Tourist Board in China. The plan was to help KTB achieve their objectives in the Chinese market. Also the market in China has not been a priority for KTB in the past but due to the financial gains by Chinese middle class families it has become essential for them produce a strategic plan for that part of the world and put more focus on China.

The Kenya Tourist Board is a government board working in cooperation with tourist agencies in Kenya and the Kenyan government to help market and bring as many international tourists to Kenya as possible as well as helping promote domestic tourism within Kenya. The board was formed in 1995 and is headed by a chairman appointed by the president. The board is mandated with projecting Kenya's image abroad and maintaining Kenya's standing as a major tourist destination in Africa. The board is responsible for marketing Kenya as an attractive tourist destination, giving tourists as much information about Kenya as possible, establishing an organisational structure for Kenyan tourism, coordinating and supervising tourism activities in Kenya, licensing tourist operators in Kenya. Kenya Tourist Board is the chief policy makers in Kenyan tourism activities and has representatives in all Kenyan missions abroad. This is with reference to its website- magical Kenya. (www.magicalkenya.com 2009)

4.1.1 Analysis

According to Kenya's Ministry of Tourism, tourism has been Kenya's second foreign exchange earner and the top revenue earner over the last 5 years. Majority of these tourists coming from United States and Europe, the number of tourists has been increasing steadily at a rate of 10% per year since the year 2003. However this growth rate is expected to slow due to recession affecting Europe and United States and has necessitated the exploration of other markets where Kenya Tourist Board can focus their efforts so that they can recover the decreasing numbers and continue the steady growth and this is where more investment and focus on the Chinese market will be required (www.tourism.go.ke 2009). Competition also

from southern African countries has led to pressure on the Kenya tourism board to explore other options and make sure they out rival the emerging markets and this is what has led to the Chinese market being put in focus in this research.

The Chinese tourists who have so far visited Kenya are mainly interested in safari adventure that is 40%, while 20% were interested in leisure travel, 10% business travel, 10% in sceneries like the Fort Jesus built in the 14th century, and 20% in coastal beaches (www.tourism.go.ke 2009). This gives the author suggestions on the core areas the marketing plan should concentrate on developing to help growth in this region. Figure 4 below shows the tourist packages that interested the Chinese tourists in percentages.

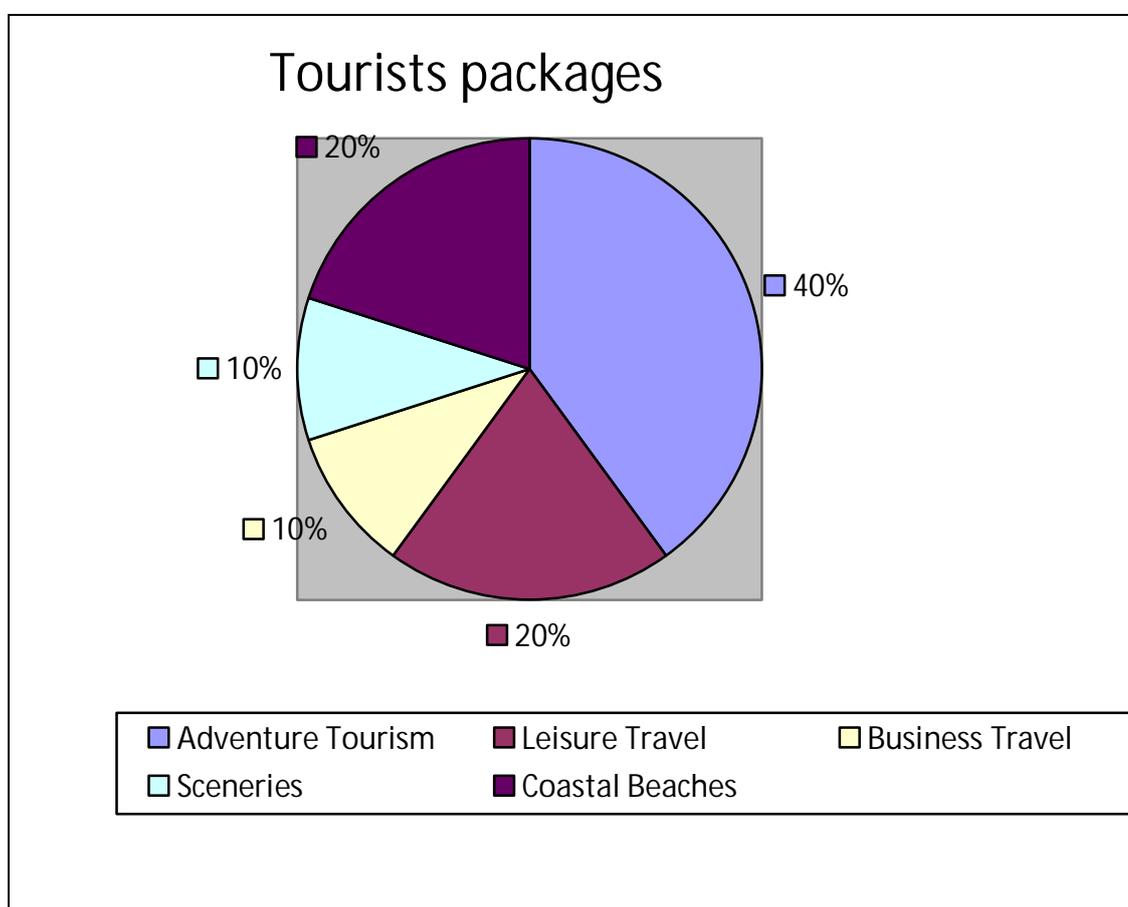


Figure 4: Percentages of tourist packages according to how they interested the Chinese tourists.

The research also revealed that most of the tourists were family people who came together with their children because they reasoned that since it was their first time in an African country it was important they travel with their families and this was a clear indicator that

developing comprehensive packages that offered activities for both adults and children was essential in satisfying this market sector.

4.1.2 Kenya Tourist Board worldwide marketing background

The internet is the major form of advertising adopted by the case company its various websites- Magical Kenya (www.magicalkenya.com 2009) being their major official website. Many countries are focusing on the Chinese middle class boom so there is increase in competition for tourists. However with China being a new and emerging market the case company does not have a marketing plan for the new market. And if Kenya Tourist Board continues operating without a marketing plan it risks being defeated by its rivals leading to the board leaving the market altogether or making poor strategic decisions which will lead to enormous losses or the board halting its operations in China altogether.

The board started serious operations and targeting tourists from China in mid 2005 (www.eastandard.net 2009) and discussed the benefits to be derived from visiting Kenya and why Kenya in particular. Kenya Tourist Board has discussed Kenya's unique sceneries, wildlife and the vast coastline. They case company has also participated in trade fairs and exhibitions whereby they sell Kenya's unique tourist heritage they have marketing plans for Europe United States and a few other tourist targets, however with China being a new and emerging market Kenya Tourist Board does not have a marketing plan for the new market entrant. Chinese tourists visiting Kenya have been steadily growing, hence the need for a plan.

4.2 Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours

Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours is a private Kenyan tourist agency established in Kenya in the year 1997 and provides safari tour packages for tourists interested in visiting Kenya for leisure holidays. When it began its operations Europe and the United States was the main target but since the new millennium it has ventured more and more to the profitable Chinese market and it have intensified it is marketing in this region. In this research the author interviewed the tourist employees via email interviews on the agency undertakings in the Chinese market and how the progress is. The employees were professional and passionate about their work, Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours was chosen as a partner due to it is vast experience and past interests in the Chinese market. (www.asiliadventuresafaris.com 2009)

Twenty employees connected closely with the agency operations in China were interviewed and the questions focused on how they operate in China and what role they play in the implementation of the agency's agenda in China. Important issues discussed included if they

have a core group of customers in China and if they deal with requests for special services uncommon among Kenyan tour companies. Also the researcher discussed how they deal with customer complaints from Chinese tourists and how often they keep in touch after customers have gone back to China. This gave an insight into how well their customer relationship management is, an important aspect in today's business operates. Finally the researcher asked the employees what they think about competition from neighbouring countries like South Africa. This was important to help this research know how to cope with competition when formulating the marketing plan.

Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours and has been participating in the annual China International Tourism Fair, for the last 5 years and has a stand where it presents and offers its tour package proposals to potential Chinese tourists. The first participation was in 2002 and since then interest in their services from China improved at an annual rate of 10-15 % annually. The number of Chinese tourists arranging their Kenyan holidays has also increased at the same rate and this has led to the agency coming up with tour packages tailored for the Chinese market. (www.asiliadventuresafaris.com 2009) Creating an attractive tour package requires both good understanding of the Kenya tourist attraction sites and the potential tourist's interest's. The Agency has tailored its package proposals in line with information gathered after interaction with Chinese people during the trade fair, finding areas where the local tourists are interested in and tailoring a package accordingly.

4.3 China

The republic of China is the world's most populous country with a population of 1.3 billion and with the world population being at 6.7 billion, 1 in every 5 people in the world is Chinese. This primarily ensures that China has the largest ready primary market. This marketing plan has targeted China due to first its high population which ensures a ready target market for the Kenya Tourist Board.

In the past the Kenya Tourist Board focused on the American and European market but in the 21st millennium China's economy has been growing rapidly and many tourist countries and economies are slowly changing their focus to China with the hope of exploiting the new purchasing power of the Chinese middle and high income earners. In 2006-2010 the Chinese economy is expected to grow at an annual rate of 8% (www2.Chinadaily.com 2008) According to China daily.com although this growth may decline in years to come China will still be in a position to achieve its objective of quadrupling its GDP by the year 2020 before schedule. For the Kenya Tourist Board combining these two factors, the high population and high economic growth are a major incentive to target China as a major market to ensure growth of market share due to higher purchasing power in the Chinese population.

The recession which severely affected the United States and Europe in 2008 has ensured that European and American middle class income earners has less money for leisure travel and since the board's two major traditional targets are ailing economically it has left the board with no option but to diversify its operations and this is where China fits the bill as a populous growing economy. For Kenya to maintain its high rating as a leading African tourist attraction it has to tap the potential presented by the Chinese market fully and attract as much tourists from China as possible. For the reasons discussed above that this researcher chose China for the research of this thesis.

More Chinese families have higher incomes and this gives them possibilities to be able to afford more luxury goods and puts them in a position to travel the world for leisure and have high spending power in these places because of this new emergence of China as an economic power, this plan is being made so that a strategic plan for China can be put in place to enable the Kenya Tourist Board enhance its business opportunities in China.

In the research tourists who had visited Kenya over the last 3 years were interviewed via email and telephone with the help of Asili Adventure Safari's management the telephone interview lasted an average of 20-25 minutes the information was recorded, stored and analysed. The questionnaire was based on the Kenyan visit.

Questions were based on the places visited and hotels they had stayed during their stay. This was essential to ensure that they really had visited Kenya to enable the researcher have accurate information and help clarify the authenticity of the respondent. Questions helped clarify why the respondent had indeed visited Kenya considering there are many other places they could have visited and still enjoyed excellent facilities, sceneries and hospitality. Also discussed was the personal experiences that the tourist had, what they liked and what they thought was good and what they thought should be improved. The information collected formed the basis of what areas would be focused for the marketing plan and what would be established or improved in the marketing plan. This information offered the author with a reference point when writing the plan.

In the interview 20% of the tourists stated that they had stayed in various hotels in Nairobi 30% in Mombasa. During their visit it shows that about half of the total tourists were accommodated in these cities while 20% had spent their time on safari lodges situated around the game parks. Another 10% had spent time in Kisumu, while the remaining 20% spent their time in other cities around Kenya.

Sixty percent of the tourists had visited Kenya because it offered something different and exotic, 20% were also seeking adventure while another 20% had been genuinely interested after having had contact with Kenya in the past.

Tourists were mainly concerned about the roads and infrastructure they thought that even though they had the pleasure of seeing the country the state of roads was poor with potholes and this led to most of them being tired during and after their holidays. To avoid this most proposed air travel over longer distances and an improved road network to cover the whole country. A lack of many Chinese restaurants except in Nairobi was also a cause of concern for the tourists. They recommended the setting up of Chinese restaurants at the major tourist attractions as this would offer them a place to have foods that they are familiar with. Figure 5 below shows Kenya cities according to how popular they are with the Chinese tourist with Nairobi the capital city being the most popular.

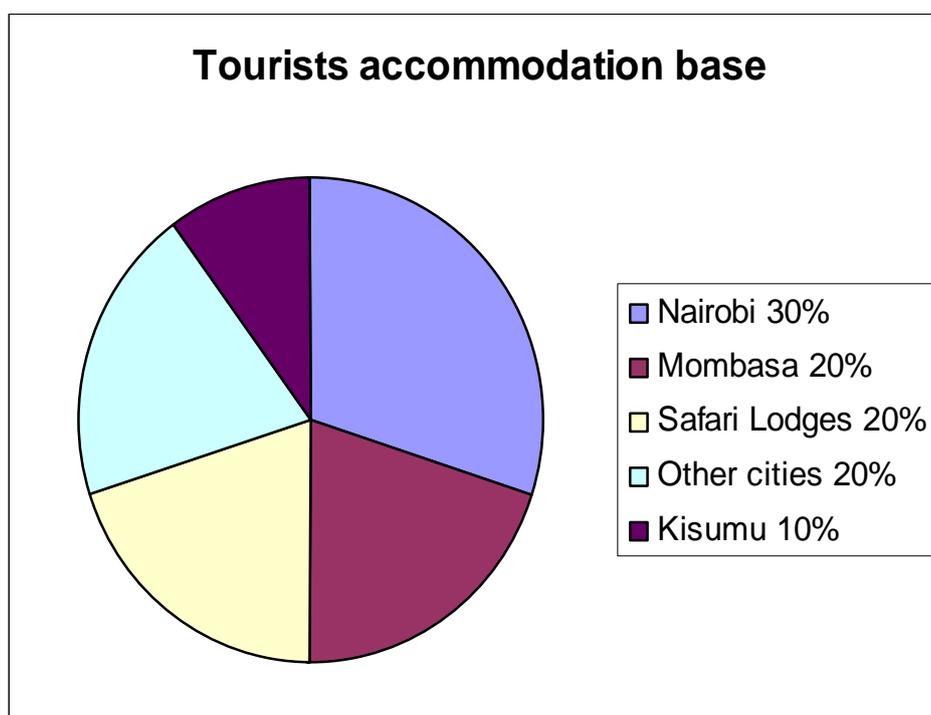


Figure 5: Locations where the tourists were based showing the percentage of tourist that was based there.

Tourists were mainly concerned about the roads and infrastructure they thought that even though they had the pleasure of seeing the country the state of roads was poor with potholes and this led to most of them being tired during and after their holidays. To avoid this most proposed air travel over longer distances and an improved road network to cover the whole country. A lack of many Chinese restaurants except in Nairobi was also a cause of concern for

the tourists. They recommended the setting up of Chinese restaurants at the major tourist attractions as this would offer them a place to have foods that they are familiar with.

However 80% of the respondents declared that they had enjoyed the country and would love to visit again in future the Kenyan safari unique wildlife offered them a good experience and helped them see animals that they had only read of in books and this made their trip worthwhile. Also the hospitality of the local Kenyan folk left the tourists with a lasting impression and made them so happy and welcome in Kenya. Finally the tourists were asked if they would visit Kenya in future and if also they would recommend their friends or family to visit Kenya, this was essential to gauge what exact image they had of Kenya and would give the researcher the image of the country among those visitors.

4.4 Competition

With more and more countries realising how profitable the tourism industry is, the Kenya Tourist Board needs to restructure its operations so that it can appeal to more people. Traditionally the well off Chinese have been touring the United States and Europe so it is important for the board to realise that it is entering a market that other countries have invested in heavily and it will encounter a strong challenge from competitors who have greater resources and hence they have also to invest more to prosper in this market and acquire a market share that is viable and lucrative. (The Kenya Tourism Report 2009)

To achieve this, the board has to pursue a differentiation policy because it can't be compete with some of the bigger economies in Europe and United States differentiation policy will give them an advantage to help improve their good reputation

4.4.1 Market growth

The tourism market has been on an upward trend from 2003-2007 but slowed down due to chaos after the disputed election which led to some western countries declaring travel to Kenya unsafe however the damage that was experienced on the short term was minimal but experts have predicted that the chaos could have a longer-term impact. By now all the countries have cancelled the travel advisory and the board hopes that the losses accrued over that period will be minimal in the long-term, enabling the market to continue with the steady growth (www.tourism.go.ke 2008).

4.4.2 Future objectives

The board hopes to continue benefiting from Kenya's reputation as a prestigious destination in Africa to help it grow in China and to consolidate its number one position as a top Sub-Saharan tourist destination. To achieve this, the board has to invest in the market and diversify holiday packages. Because adventure and safari have been traditionally Kenya's main tourist attraction the board needs to tailor new holiday packages for example honeymoon and cruise holidays, to help appeal to wider and different demographics in the tourism market. (The Kenya Tourism Report 2009)

According to the Daily Nation newspaper (2009), Partnerships with Kenya Airways a long-time leading African airline will help boost the tourist board because the airline will help by reducing its profit margins for tourists visiting Kenya helping make Kenya an affordable and viable destination to a larger potential market. This partnership has a 500,000 Euros budget contributed by both companies and aims to promote Kenya worldwide. (<http://www.nation.co.ke> 2009)

4.4.3 SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis are the strengths weaknesses opportunities and threats, the Kenya Tourist Board possesses and will be crucial in its activities in China. According to Southerland and Canwell (2004, 276) swot analysis is a very suitable technique in understanding the overall future of an organization as well as considering the launch of a new marketing activity. In this research the Kenya Tourist Board enjoys Kenya's good reputation as a leading tourist destination, has experienced and passionate employees, Kenya has a land full of unique tourist attractions, the board is motivated on China as a target among other advantages. Taking advantage of these strengths will enable the board to manage its threats and ensure it achieve its targets in China, and attain a higher market share in China.

4.4.3.1 Strengths

In this research strengths are the internal capabilities that will help the board in its pursuit of its objectives Southerland and Canwell (2004, 277) Its what the organization is good at its key advantages over competitors in terms of its products and services as well as its facilities, customer service and the expertise of its employees.

Kenya is positioned as a leading tourist destination and is rated as a must visit country for people from other continents visiting Africa. This helps Kenya have better opportunities when trying to attract tourists from overseas as compared to other rival countries and the board will capitalise on this status to attain its objectives in China.

The Ministry of Tourism is reserving more funds on its budget allocation in strengthening and improving marketing services in the entire tourism industry. Adequate allocation of funds will ensure it has more funds to spend than its competitors. This will ensure there is more money to be spent in marketing activities in China and there is a high rate of returns expected, from this high marketing investment in China.

The employees at the board are all professionally trained and have experience in the tour and travel industry this workforce will help aid the board achieve its objectives in China since the employees have necessary knowledge and are able to communicate and implement the board's vision on China.

Kenya enjoys different sea and wildlife and has the richest wildlife safaris in entire Africa. Also historical sites for example Fort Jesus in Mombasa offers Kenya an advantage when targeting tourists from China. These natural gifts will put Kenya at a leading position when marketing Kenya in China and many Chinese tourists will be interested to visit all these beautiful places.

The election of barrack Obama as American president, whose father was Kenyan has led to thousands of people visiting Kenya and also has led to America upgrading Kenya into a 1st class tourist destination and Obama's Kenyan roots has led to an uplift in Kenya's image worldwide. It is expected that this will help Kenya in China and put them in a position to attract more visitors who may be interested in cultural visits, and the board will put emphasis on this area to boost the cultural tourism sector.

4.4.3.2 Weaknesses

According to Southerland and Canwell (2004, 277) weaknesses are what the organisation is not good at. where does the business fall in terms of the way it does things, Are the products and services good enough, is the market good enough.

Rivalry among key tourist agencies is one of the major weaknesses in the Kenyan tourism industry, the agencies run and price their business as they please without price controls and regulations and this many times results in many tourists being conned giving Kenyan tourism an unhealthy picture in the international arena. The Kenya Tourist Board has to protect all tourists, especially Chinese tourists visiting Kenya, to ensure Kenya continues attracting Chinese visitors and Kenya does not acquire a bad reputation among the Chinese.

The high cost of operations of tourism and related activities in Kenya as compared to neighboring countries for example Tanzania makes visiting Kenya more expensive and sometimes

tourists will tend to visit these countries while Kenya should be their natural first choice due to its rich natural endowment. Due to this fact the Kenya Tourist Board will have to offer competent prices in China or risk losing to more affordable sub-Saharan African destinations.

4.4.3.3 Opportunities

Southerland and Canwell (2004, 277) define opportunities as what is happening outside the organization that offers some opportunities to the organization? The authors further give examples of the transport system in the area been improved, or a major competitor has closed down.

The launch of direct flights between the Guangzhou, China and Kenya by Kenya Airways on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays (www.gdnews.com 2008) has given Kenyan tourism the opportunity to appeal to more tourists from China and this has helped Kenya be an appealing destination compared to competitors who do not enjoy the access of direct flights as Kenya Airways is the only Airways with direct flights between Africa and China. Tourists will now not need to make many connections via Europe or other countries making the journey easier and appealing (http://www.newsgd.com/news/guangdong1/content/2008-11/26/content_4728038.htm 2008).

The economic boom in China has presented tour marketers with a big new emerging niche market which needs to be satisfied and this can only be prepared through proper channels, marketing and development of a tourism terrain designed to cater for the needs of these tourists as the board has established a set of needs that need to be satisfied via development of a new set of services. Capitalizing on this ever growing Chinese economy will help easily aid the Kenya Tourist Board aspirations.

4.4.3.4 Threats

Southerland and Canwell (2004, 277) threats focus on changes in the external environment in this case study it was checked what challenges these threats may bring to Kenyan tourism. Regional competition is enormous among east and southern African countries for tourists all over the world and these competitors are now targeting China, leading to an increase in the cost of operation, especially in the marketing activities and these costs are later transferred to the consumers, making the cost of travelling higher. However this has to be controlled in China by the Kenya Tourist Board seeking to work in conjunction with Chinese tour agents as this will help save costs and the Chinese agencies understand the market better hence they have a higher probability of being more successful it is important these partnerships be established early to give Kenya a leading role in the Chinese market.

Kenya has had two major terrorist attacks targeting foreigners in 1998 and 2002 and this has been a major threat to Kenyan tourism because many countries will offer negative travel advisory against Kenya from time to time. For now the situation is under control but the past negative activities still affect Kenyan tourism in a bad way (www. eastandard.net. 2009) Political unrest after a disputed election in late 2007 had a negative impact on Kenyan tourism and this is an effect the Kenyan Tourist Board has been trying to solve the short term effect has been mitigated but it is unknown what sort of impact it will have in the future although the officials are hopeful. (www.nation.co.ke 2009)

The strengthening of the Kenyan shilling in the world market has negatively affected tour operators and this has been happening many times lately making cost of travelling to Kenya expensive for most foreign nationals it is hoped the shilling can consolidate itself at a favorable position and remain steady to enable normalcy in the Kenyan tourism, import, and export market. . A summary of the SWOT analysis for the board is shown below on figure 6.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Good reputation Availability of investment funds Professional staff World class attraction sites.	Unhealthy rivalry High operation costs	Barrack Obama-interest American destination endorsement Launch of direct flights Chinese economic boom	Regional competition Terrorism Political unrest Strengthening of the shilling

Figure 6: Table showing a SWOT summary for the Kenya Tourist Board.

4.5 Marketing in China

China is the world's most populous nation and the third largest country in the world in terms of landmass. China with a quarter of the world's population lead an isolationist style until in

1979 when it joined the United Nations and since then it has progressed in its development and association with the west and has invested heavily in the following fields, Industrialisation, agriculture, science and technology and national defence. The Chinese still have the communist lifestyle whereby a group of villages around a town form a traditional market. According to Paliwoda (1997, 549) China's party and state bureaucracies are in need of reform, bureaucracy is being reduced with planned decentralization and the number of officials to be reduced while their expected level of education is increased. The author goes further to explain that China's economic system is highly centralized with decision making confined to the leading central economic organs, highly centralized planning precludes the functioning of markets, functioning of the economy mainly depends on administrative measures with little impetus from economic interests

Since the turn of the new millennium China has become an economic power and has seen numerous companies from the west invest in China and it is not known how long this trend will continue but it has led to an improvement in infrastructure in China and improvement in the living standards of the common citizens. It is possible to establish a jointly owned venture with a Chinese company or to establish a wholly foreign owned enterprise as long as the foreign investors obey the Chinese trade rules and regulations however these foreign investments come have various problems. Paliwoda (1997, 549) lists the following as the problems involved in foreign owned businesses in China, too many people involved in the negotiations, unfamiliarity with international practice, aversion to risk, impractical goals, secrecy, diverse objectives, high housing costs, labor issues, procurement problems.

However since the new millennium China has been improving these conditions to enable it achieve its economic objectives the improvements so far have made reference to Zhang and Snyder (1988) a study of foreign investments in China which established a checklist in foreign trade which is the five P's (project, partner, pattern, Profitability, and protection). Potential investor checklist should discuss the points in figure 6 below adopted from the Zhang and Snyder (1988) (China Business Review March-April Zhang and Snyder (1988) China Business Review March-April) the proposed project should be compatible with Chinese planning objectives.

The 5 P's of Chinese business will be crucial for the Kenya Tourist Board to enable them to check whether the project in China is compatible with guidelines of Chinese business operations. Of crucial importance and as highlighted it will help and give the board guidelines on the selection of a good partner in China because the partner will be vital in the operations in China and he will be central to all operations giving directions and guidelines.

Figure 7 below gives a summary of the main points to be observed by the Kenya Tourist Board in the implementation of this plan.

<p>Project</p> <p>Is the proposed project compatible with Chinese planning goals?</p> <p>Does it fall into a priority sector of China's economy?</p> <p>Partner</p> <p>Which Chinese organisation would best partner your company?</p> <p>Do they value morals and ethics? What is their reputation?</p> <p>Pattern</p> <p>What type of investment structure is best for the project?</p> <p>Profitability</p> <p>What is the projects market and anticipated market share?</p> <p>What form will profits take?</p> <p>What are the restrictions on using and repatriating foreign exchange?</p> <p>Protection</p> <p>What kind of protection does Chinese law provide this sort of investment?</p> <p>How will disputes be resolved?</p>

Figure 7: The 5 P's in Chinese business adopted from Zhang and Synder (1988) China Business Review March-April.

4.5.1 The future

China has remained independent in foreign policy but has continued to form partnerships in the west and now has a strong economy and one of the most improved in the new millennium alarming the west, and it is expected to continue growing giving China a stronger importance in world policy on various issues. China has also been pursuing economic and cultural ties with the developing world and Kenya is in this category. This economic prosperity and China's new status could lead to China being a suitable investment country for both the developed and developing nations for the next decade however this is assured due to the recent recession which has led to slowed growth in all major sectors in the world leading to China lowering its forecasted economic growth along with many companies retrenching employees across the world.

However for now the Chinese economy will continue enjoying growth and also the Chinese government is formulating and implementing measures to help ensure the effect of the recession does not affect the growth momentum. As discussed earlier, the Kenya Tourist

Board will launch this plan in China with hoping to enjoy the new policy changes and also taking advantage of China's new economic status.

The economic and foreign policy is what appeals to the Kenya Tourist Board and has led to the increasing interest in China and has led to the search for increased investment in China. This research hopes that the Kenya Tourist Board can fully exploit China's new attained status as an economic power. The Chinese economic and foreign policy environment allows foreign investment from both developed and developing nations and it is this favourable environment that the Kenya Tourist Board will seek to take advantage of.

4.6 Organisational strategy

The Kenya Tourist Board is responsible for all regulations and standards control and set the standards and dictate how affairs will be carried out in the Kenyan tour and travel industry. The board has to formulate a policy on how it will approach the China issue a major target market. The board has previously ventured in other new international markets so it possesses experience in venturing into new markets. As discussed in this case China presents a good opportunity for the Kenya Tourist Board to prosper and compete for market share the next step will now involve establishing a strategy to pursue this opportunity in order to achieve the board's future target. This will start with a standard policy plan in coordination with the tour agencies in Kenya and some partner tour agencies in China to help the board have a similar vision and objectives in the Chinese markets.

4.6.1 Cultural development

Needle (2004, 144) describes that culture is a learned behaviour, a collection of beliefs and traditions, shared by a group and successively learned by people who enter the society, the author further quotes from (Hofstede, 1994) culture is a collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category from another. In international business culture it is always an important aspect and in this study the Kenya Tourist Board will study and understand the business culture and practices in China as well as study the Chinese daily practices and norms. After this the Kenya Tourist Board will build and develop a corporate culture that best serves its interest in the Chinese market it is important the board first understand what its present corporate culture is before considering the changes. According to Neuhauser, Bender and Stromberg (2000, 5) corporate culture is described as the following, Shared underlying assumptions and core values as a group, behaviours and habits. The way things are done, symbols and language, most visible and simplest level of culture. It is important to understand and develop a corporate culture when entering the Chinese market will ensure better interaction with the Chinese tourists because the Kenya Tourist

Board employees will be in a position to easily understand the tourist's ways and behaviours. There will also be a uniform standard of practice for the Kenya Tourist Board employees and partner agencies when doing business with the Chinese.

4.6.2 Partnership with local tour agencies

In the past tour agencies have been operating on their own and have been protecting their own interests but now for the Kenya Tourist Board to enter the Chinese market effectively they need the agencies' cooperation where the agencies will have to change their policy and standardise in line with the board's values and objectives. Through this the board's marketing work will be made easier enabling communication to more people about their vision and the advantages of visiting Kenya.

Many agencies are privately owned businesses or private limited companies and not all may agree to be operate in harmony with the board's vision because it may differ with their mission and objectives however, the board will form a negotiation team to negotiate with the agencies selected to take part in this joint mission. Enticers for example tax reductions and subsidies will be given to agencies who agree to work with the board to help promote its vision, these returns will help the agencies recoup any investment they make in the China venture and they will also be a tool to help enhance the working relationship between the board and these agencies which will be a useful tool for the future and this will serve as a beneficial situation for both.

This partnership will be a crucial part in the adoption of this plan because the Kenya Tourist Board will use these agencies to communicate its vision and objectives to existing and potential customers, making these partners a crucial part of this plan. It is important that the Kenya Tourist Board works with partners with a longstanding business interest in China, with good morals and who are well motivated to the adoption of this plan and prepared to work with the Kenya Tourist Board. Standard tours most agencies have expensive tours because they are well established with an established reputation, with long-term alliances and high quality packages and they mainly target high clientele with a good income. A few other agencies target middle class income earners in the hope that they will appeal to more clients. However to achieve their target here their operations and tour packages have to be changed and realigned to and be uniform.

The new tour packages for China will target middle-high income earners so that they can be more attractive to a wider set of potential clientele and enable them to attract as many people as possible. The new packages will be aligned according to the interviews conducted earlier in this research paper to help cater for most of the needs and requests of the Chinese

tourists. The new target group is the majority in China and has the ages 25-50 so it's a good target. Also it is between these ages that people tend to establish their own families so honeymoon and family packages will be tailored to cater for the Chinese market. Service upgrading in conjunction with the agencies the board will make its services and procedures accessible, affordable with the least complications. Some of the services it will offer will include helping tourists with their visa applications before the tourists arrive in Kenya as usually the process involves tourists filing forms on arrival and sometimes one is too tired to line up on arrival after a long haul flight. Technology improvement will be a key in this industry's growth plans and here the Kenya Tourist Board will improve internet coverage especially in parks far away from the cities where there is sometimes no network and tourists have a have difficulty contacting their families and conduct their other businesses while on holiday.

Infrastructure development is a key area in the tourism industry study conducted by the (East African standard and daily nation) newspapers showed that some roads leading to international game parks were in poor condition and required urgent attention to ensure these parks remained easily accessible. So the board will have to work with the ministry of transport and ministry for tourism to ensure an improvement in these roads to ensure faster, safer and reduce cumbersome movement (www.eastandard.net 2009), (www.nation.co.ke 2009)

4.7 Competing for future success

For the Kenya Tourist Board to be successful in its Chinese venture it will have to make well informed choices in its choice of how it positions its products and services and how it delivers this position. First they have to differentiate its product and services to the Chinese clientele; this will include employing a different strategy in its business in China and will ensure the market views Kenyan tourism differently in comparison to its immediate regional rivals. A good strategy here will include sourcing support and selling the good quality of Kenyan products, services and facilities to potential customers because people appreciate quality whenever they make any purchase. Extensive advertising of Kenya as a quality and first class destination in Africa will have to be undertaken to ensure Kenya occupies a favourable position with Chinese tourists.

Training employees through specialised training programmes by both the Kenya Tourist Board and the partner agencies is also vital in competing for future success because it is these employees who will deliver this position so they have to understand it better than anyone else.

4.7.1 Key sectors

For this plan to succeed some factors are crucial to be put in place it is a step by step process, without this it will be difficult to realise and capture the desired position. Political stability and cordial relations between Kenya, the international world, and China are a key area that the Kenyan government will promote. This will help boost Kenya's image internationally as well as give it a better placing than its regional rivals who have some local or international problem with the Chinese regime.

Improved national security is a key area the government will have to improve national security as well as improve the security of tourists while in the country to help boost both the image and the tourist of the industry in 1988 murder of a British tourist girl named Julie Ward occurred in the Massai Mara national park and this case is yet to be resolved 21 years later and this has resulted to negative broadcasts by the western press as it tries to solve the murder. This has led to a negative image for Kenyan tourism but this has so far recovered. To be successful in China the tourists must feel safe. (www.nation.co.ke 2009)

Partnership with an agency with long standing experience in the Chinese tourism will be a crucial factor in determining how successful the Kenya Tourist Board will be in the Chinese market. To achieve the board needs to find an agency with objectives similar to the boards and which has an interest in Kenyan tourism as this will help ensure that both partners benefit from their working relationship and are also working towards their long-term goals.

It is important also to check the partner's reputation in the public domain to check if they value morals and ethics and will be able to serve the public first before the company's interests, because this will enable the board to build a long-term relationship with the customers and make Kenyan tourism a strong brand in China. Ensuring there is repetitive benefits and interaction and making the customers lifetime customers other than a one-time sale and this will bring long standing long-term benefits.

4.7.2 Relationship marketing in tourism

Relationship marketing in tourism has evolved over the last 15 years many people and whole families have their favorite family destination that they visit annually for a few days or weeks. This comes by having a special attachment creating loyalty to that particular place. Relationship marketing ensures there is a history in collaboration between the Chinese tourists, Kenya Tourist Board and partner agencies. As relationship marketing becomes more important in the tourism industry it is important to note that it is of minimal use if not properly implemented. Below some advantages of relationship marketing in tourism are discussed.

It is cheaper and leads to repetitive business transactions making the agencies advertising cheaper because getting a customer is usually 5 times more expensive than retaining an older one. These relations help an agency reduce its marketing costs. Though the Kenya Tourist Board will initially invest heavily in China over time it will build relationships and enhance its reputation it is expected that its investments in marketing will reduce over time.

Customer satisfaction is guaranteed after interacting with the customers the board will know how to satisfy their needs. The Kenya Tourist Board will understand what the customers need and define everything well after conducting a customer survey and asking questions about the various aspects of doing business with them as they will obtain knowledge on how to best satisfy their Chinese market in such a way that they can withstand any future challenges that they will encounter in this market.

Being in constant touch with customers and potential customers will open opportunities for the Kenyan board and give an opportunity to make extra sales, this will be achieved in China through giving new and loyal customers as much information as possible on what is on offer creating likelihood for them to make extra sales. This does not necessarily require giving excess information the board will focus on valuable information and make it easier for the customers to understand. The biggest benefit in tourism relationship marketing will be the good word of mouth recommendation from the Chinese who will have visited Kenya by giving their friends and work colleagues. People tend to trust their colleague's testimony more and this will lead to increased business opportunities for the Kenya Tourist Board and partner agencies at no cost it will involve new business avenues opening unexpectedly. This also comes with a risk in that mostly the new customer expectations will be high leading to more pressure on the board and agencies.

Relationship marketing will be a vital part for the Kenya Tourist Board in China because it will serve as a strong tool for building competitive advantage in the tourism business since this line of business is very competitive it is important to have an advantage over rivals since tourists can easily choose a different destination. Due to this competition the Kenya Tourist Board will have to keep improving its customer relationship policies in China to ensure continued growth in that region.

4.7.3 Relations in Kenya-China tourism

In the tourism business, to organize trips between Kenya and China there are various relationships that are essential to make any tour a success, in all the levels of relations there is exchange of information and transactions taking place. These relations require expertise and enthusiasm to ensure the customers are catered for are satisfied and to ensure the board and

agencies make a profit. In this case study relations and the roles, Kenyan government and Kenya Tourist Board, Kenya tourist agencies and Chinese partners, Kenya Tourist Board and Kenyan agencies, Chinese tourists and Kenyan agencies, agency employees and the tourists.

Tourism usually encompasses all other sectors of the economy and its success is related to what happens in other government ministries. The Kenyan government has a very important role in the Kenya tourism industry to help set up the development agenda for the tourist industry and help coordinate and supervise activities taking place in this industry. Also of importance the Kenyan government helps make relations and conditions conducive between Kenya and China to ensure the board has the goodwill of the Chinese government when conducting business in the country.

The government will help improve conditions and infrastructure via its other ministries because it would be impossible for the ministry of tourism to make all the needed infrastructural adjustments these changes fall under the jurisdiction of other ministries. The government in brief facilitates the board conducts its activities via the tourism ministry.

The tourists as the end users are the most important people in this process and are the one who determine what will be in the tour package and because it is negotiable they also determine how much they will pay for the tour package. Of most importance they help determine the attributes in the package and what they would like removed or added in the package and any special needs. Also they help the board improve its tours via their recommendations and feedback analysis with the board where they tell the board and agencies what they would like improved.

The agencies are mandated with the important role of ensuring the quality of tours is of the highest standard and to help ensure that the facilities which the tourists use are of the highest quality according to accepted international standards. They improve these facilities by identifying geographical sites that are conducive for tourist hotels and development of other sites. In this case they will be mandated also with tailoring tour packages which serve the Chinese region of tourists well and ensuring they give these tourists the best offers in their travels. It is important they promote Kenyan tourism in China and other countries abroad. Through this more people will know about Kenya and they will be able to make a choice whether to visit or not this can be done in China via advertisements a good example would be through use of brochures.

The agencies employees and experts will play an important role in the whole process a role that should not be under estimated they are the ones who interact with tourists and help determine whether the whole tour satisfies the customer's needs. The management must put

in place strategies to help ensure that the tours are of the highest quality but it is the employees who help ensure this desired quality or else the whole process will not achieve its intended target.

The employees determine whether the customer is satisfied or not and with customer satisfaction gaining a prominent importance it is important the board and agencies hire highly trained employees to ensure they have the skills and motivation to take care of the customers' needs.

4.7.4 Pricing strategy

Pricing strategy is an issue that the board and partner agencies will have to consider carefully in every business, the price to offer to the customers is a critical issue because it will affect other major areas of operations, namely the features the packages will have, how the board and its partners will promote these offers, the objectives the board will set in its operations, this will include profit maximization or stabilization.

For the Kenya Tourist Board it is important to have a minimizing price strategy and price discounts. In a minimized price strategy the board and its partners could lower their prices as compared to their competitors. It is difficult to sell tour packages in a competitive environment when offering a higher price. A minimized price strategy will focus on the board giving cheaper packages in China while this might lower its profits but could recover by attracting higher number of visitors and selling their packages to large groups.

Price discounts will be given to Chinese customers in order to entice them. These discounts could be in various packages, for example quantity discounts where discounted flights and packages could be offered to groups of customers who make the purchases in large groups. This could especially be tailored for large Chinese corporations and organizations interested in sending their employees to Kenya and it could benefit both parties. A trade discount would also be crucial in improving relations between the board and its partner agencies in Kenya and China. Under this arrangement these partners will be allowed to have various benefits for performing their roles as a valuable partner, hence they would have packages that are more affordable for their customers, minimizing, improved infrastructure, improved internet and television marketing, building competitive advantage

Nowadays in tourism business competition has increased in all sectors and key to prosperity in competitive environment is by building a competitive advantage. According to Porter (1998, 4) the rules of competition are embodied in 5 competitive forces, namely entry of new

competitors, threat of substitutes, bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, rivalry amongst existing competitors.

In this case study competition will mainly be from countries offering similar tourism sceneries and countries drawing their attention to China due to its increased attractiveness as a target market. Hence the Kenyan Tourism Board should innovate ways of branding its packages in such a way that they will be more attractive than their competitors. The key method to be employed by the Kenyan tourism board in its pursuit of competitive advantage would be differentiation from its rivals. Porter (1998, 14) states that in a differentiation strategy a company seeks to be unique in its industry along some dimensions that are widely valued by buyers. The author further selects one or more attributes that many buyers in an industry perceive as important and uniquely position it to meet those needs. This will be a very beneficial step for the board in a market that is already saturated with similar offers from different countries the world attention is on China and the average Chinese family is being offered with numerous tour offers and they can only choose Kenya if they perceive it to be a viable and unique destination.

4.7.5 Future trends in tourism

The world tourism industry is a big industry and was worth 6.5 US trillion dollars by 2006 and it's expected to grow worldwide. The world tourism organization forecasts that international tourism will continue growing at an average rate of 4% according to (www.heritagedestination.com 2009). It is expected to be the fastest growing industry for the next decade creating millions of jobs the world over and opening the world up. It is expected to create millions of employment opportunities worldwide.

In Kenya it is expected to grow more and develop as more foreign countries become interested in Kenya as a leading tourist destination. The government expects more tourist agencies to open as more people become interested in this profitable business and seek to obtain a share of the National heritage. The Kenyan government is expected through the board to move their focus more towards developing economies as well as long established economies and this is why China is imperative as a strong rapidly growing economy, another important factor will be the promotion of domestic tourism where local Kenyans are encouraged to visit and explore their own country.

Increased government investment is required and with these new opportunities to be exploited will help open new opportunities and this will increase the tourism output in Kenya and worldwide and increase the employment opportunities in this industry as well as opening

new service industries to support the tourism industry. This scenario will be evident in Kenya and many other African countries an opportunity to increase income.

As more entrepreneurs start operating in the tourism industry increased competition will start and this will lead to increased price competition as tourist agencies work to offer the best packages to their customers and potential customers. The law of demand states; when the supply increases the price decreases due to the forces of demand and supply hence an increase in industry tour operators will lead to more competition and price competition.

Only agencies and countries offering the best packages will be able to endure the competition so the board will have to make a survey of prices being offered in sub-Saharan countries so that it will advise Kenyan tourist agencies how to price their tour packages and what discounts to put in their packages. This does not necessarily mean that their profits will reduce they will offer lower prices but this could lead to the industry becoming more attractive to the middle class who are the majority.

With increased entrepreneurship it is expected more competition will arise and this will lead to more quality and innovation being demanded by customers. Only agencies offering the best quality and services will be able to succeed in this industry, more innovation will be required.

Agencies will have to employ highly trained and skilled personnel to ensure they offer the best services in this industry and help serve their customers professionally. Usually customers can book online for their tours and travels but its best to engage the services of an agency and contact a professional because this will help obtain important information from him. Improved quality can only be achieved through brainstorming and incorporating the best ideas in the agencies' processes to ensure there is increased customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is the major objective in any industry and this can only be achieved through quality services that ensure the customer is satisfied. Nowadays the business world customer satisfaction is the key in all undertakings and helps lead to customer loyalty and increased profits for the company. Kenya is well equipped with highly trained personnel who will ensure that Chinese tourists enjoy high standard service most of these staff is trained in Utalii College in Nairobi which is one of the leading colleges in world tourism (www.utalii.co.ke 2009). Utalii College is in partnership with leading colleges in Switzerland and their graduates have the capacity and skill to serve Chinese tourists well.

The environment provides the best habitat for wild animals, a major source of interest for over 70% of international tourists visiting Kenya and other sub Saharan African countries and it is important for this environment to be conserved or else the wildlife will be endangered.

There have been environmental concerns across the world due to industrial global warming and forest clearing. In Kenya according to various publications forest cover has been encroached due to land being converted for human settlement.

Forest cover in Kenya has reduced over the last 20 years due to human settlement, deforestation, charcoal burning in forests and important water catchment areas. This affects various sectors of the economy. A good example is the 2009 debate where the government has been trying to resettle people from Mau forest the most important water catchment area in Kenya. (www.eastandard.net 2009) too much opposition by the local area leaders and the issue is yet to be solved. At all costs the Kenyan government has to control human settlement in the forest to ensure wild animals' eco-system remains intact with no external interference.

For Kenyan tourism to continue growing the government has to work with environmental groups to ensure that the forest cover remains intact and there is as little disturbance to the wildlife natural habitat so that it can conserve its tourism resources. Lack of environmental conservation may lead to Kenya losing its agricultural and tourism potential (www.greenbeltmovement.org 2009)

5 Findings, and discussions

5.1 Current analysis

As discussed earlier the Kenya Tourist Board is mandated by the Kenyan government with aligning programs towards the achievement of Kenya's tourism objectives and to coordinate tourist activities in the country. The board faces various challenges as it tries to achieve this objective.

Competition analysis research has shown that despite the financial crisis across the world tourism has largely remained intact. Tourism is now one of the most internationalised industries and flourishes globally presenting different possibilities for expansion due to the worldwide technological advancements. With this expansion competition has increased and every country is trying to invest more funds in the tourism industry.

Being a very competitive industry it is hard to forecast whether Kenya can be able obtain the Chinese market share without losing to its immediate neighbors in sub-Saharan Africa countries, in East Africa and southern Africa offer the most competition especially Tanzania, Uganda, Namibia and South Africa. In this market plan it is important to devise strategies that will help the Kenyan board be both competitive and profitable in the Chinese market. Discussed below are factors that can help ensure Kenya is competitive in China.

5.2 Mission Statement.

This statement summarizes why a certain business exist, and what its core objectives are it further explains what it plans to achieve and how it plans to achieve it. A mission statement is crucial in the co-ordination of all departments of an organization to work towards the same objective and to motivate all workers of the organization work towards that objective. The objective of this plan is to enable the Kenya Tourist Board to make Kenya the destination of choice of choice for young and middle age Chinese tourists. This plan hopes to succeed in helping the Kenya Tourist Board fully exploit the growing potential in the Chinese tourist market and help it outperform its immediate rivals in this market and gain financially from the economic boom in China that has enabled Chinese families to have more money to spend on leisure.

5.2.1 Demand Driven tours

For a tourist to make a choice of where to visit and what to do there takes a long time and the Kenya Tourist Board should create a programme enter the customer's domain and understand what its customers want, then tailor the best packages to satisfy these customers. The board has to keep in constant touch with the tourists and potential tourists to create the most suitable packages for the Chinese group. The Kenyan board should interview the tourists on their likes and preferences, and then brainstorm on how best to satisfy the Chinese group.

The Chinese tourist will travel to Kenya for various reasons and the tourist is the one who decides how much he is going to spend on his tour and on what but sometimes it is the tour operator who decides what will be in the tour package. For the Kenyan board this could be altered by letting the tourists decide what they want to see and do and when this will ensure the tours are tailored towards the demand and the tourists' conditions. This could also be extended further to cover the goods and services the tourists buy. Usually it is the tour operators who decide the goods and services that will be provided to the tourists. In Kenya's China quest this could be tailored for the goods to be aligned with what the tourists want. This could be further tailored by observing the Chinese tourists spending habits to help ensure the goods they demand are always available.

To achieve this there needs to be cooperation between the various Kenyan government ministries that are directly impacted by the tourism industry. This could be through initiation of cooperation projects to improve and also develop existing goods and services, this would involve cooperation and a close working relationship between the trade and tourism ministry. This development and cooperation could be extended to other areas in the tourism industry to ensure uniform development and improvement in the tourism industry.

5.2.2 Competitive advantage via differentiation

A competitive advantage is the position a company adopts against its competitors. A competitive advantage main agenda is to allow a company to perform better than its rivals in a given target market it is achieved by developing a set of attributes that keep a company ahead of its competitors. It can be attained via cost leadership, differentiation, or focus economics. It is crucial in this plan for the Kenya Tourist Board to create a sustainable competitive advantage one that its rivals cannot copy.

The differentiation strategy of destinations in Kenya is also a key area that the Kenyan board will employ to ensure they are number one in attracting Chinese tourists. In differentiation the Kenyan board will ensure its tour packages, goods and services sold are different and unique from its immediate sub-Saharan competitors. To achieve this may require higher investments but not necessarily, because Kenya is a naturally endowed country with unique tourist sites. However in areas where it invests highly and to acquire uniqueness it can charge a higher price to recover its costs and this study would expect the Chinese tourists to be ready to pay higher prices for the unique products and services.

The Kenya Tourist Board will work hard to achieve differentiation. They primarily will check their promotional activities and see what they are offering in China. This will give them a clear idea how to tailor differentiated packages. This will be done by the board sending delegations to the promotional activities of their immediate rival countries to study what their competitors are offering and how they can outdo what the rivals are offering. This is where the agencies and promotional teams will be important because they will be needed to communicate clearly the package's unique attributes and the accompanying products and services, uniqueness it is essential for the uniqueness to be well communicated to the market so that buyers can understand why they are paying more or why they are paying at all.

The Kenya Utalii College (2009) will be the key institution in helping the board and agencies achieve staff differentiation its training programmes will ensure that the staff managing Chinese tourists are well equipped to give the tourists their best and to ensure they are highly skilled to offer all the special services that the tourists may require. The Kenya Tourist Board in conjunction with Utalii College will be required to hold training programs for this special group of employees.

The Kenyan tourist board and partner agency employees are essential for this whole plan to succeed so they will need to play their roles distinctively and effectively or else it will be a failure. This can be achieved by employing highly qualified tour experts and taking them for

further training and helping them understand the tasks properly. The differentiated staff should focus on realizing the following objectives.

The differentiated staff should be able to ensure they give more quality than expected to the Chinese tourists this will leave the visitors more impressed and feel well taken care of, be updated because things and conditions change overnight in this industry and a small detail can make a difference the staff should be able to ensure they are updated on important issues, Differentiated, tour packages, products and services to ensure they are able to attract and sell effectively to potential customers.

Differentiation in staff is an essential part in ensuring that the staff is highly skilled to solve issues that may arise. They are the link between the Kenya Tourist Board, tour agencies and the Chinese tourists and they are responsible for satisfying the unique needs of every tourist it is only highly skilled staff who can be adequately equipped to serve the Chinese tourists distinctively and also meet impromptu challenges that may occur during a tour and all cases of emergencies.

Preserving existing structures and norms in Kenyan tourism will not ensure prosperity in the Chinese market. The Kenyan board needs to grow and develop a new school of thought in the Chinese market and this will need thinking and innovativeness. Putting new ideas and facilities up the many things are changing worldwide rendering past ways futile. New methods of working and a new approach of issues need to be developed according to present times. Using ways from the past too much will make Kenya remain behind and not be so competitive in China. These new concepts will impact Kenya's operations and other countries also where new ways need to be devised.

5.2.3 SWOT analysis.

Strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats focus on internal and external factors that directly affect the operations and success of the Kenya Tourist Board in its operations in China. SWOT analysis basically helps companies maximize their strong points and also at the same time mitigate on their weak points in pursuits of a profitable strategy. SWOT analysis will be crucial if the Kenyan board is to prosper in China due to the nature of the tourism industry being highly competitive it is important for the board to use its greatest strengths when approaching the Chinese market. These strengths will be helpful during strategy formulation and help ensure prosperity in China.

Strengths the internal attributes that Kenya has and this study suggests that for success to be realized in China they must be developed and be intact as this will allow the board to achieve

its desired objectives as well as help build Kenya's competitive position in the tour sector. This study suggests the following strengths be maximized on.

Kenya's reputation will be the major key in China and any other country the board ventures its operations into. Being viewed as a strong brand among respected tourist destinations will help in its approach in the Chinese market. The Chinese people will from the start view Kenya as a country they would like to visit. Kenya's positioning as a leading tourist attraction is an attribute and image that the board and the Kenyan government will have to maintain in order to improve on its existing standing.

Target market, China as a target market has potential due to developing economic changes in the country as a whole and the target market being young and middle age people. This target group has been carefully chosen due to the potential and beneficial opportunities it presents. There is potential for this target group which has money to spend on leisure and travel. The Kenya Tourist Board will implement this plan to help them exploit this target market.

Wildlife and Facilities, Kenya's unique wildlife, and excellent hotel facilities will be key in Kenya Tourist Board achieving its target market in China, being home to the worlds famous and biggest five animals has given Kenya an advantage over rival countries and helped make Kenya a leading destination. Kenya has many world class hotels well equipped with amenities as compared to other African countries and this gives the Kenya Tourist Board an advantage in appealing to potential tourists in China and any other part in the world.

The Kenya Tourist Board should maximize on these main strengths in order to be ahead of its competitors in China. This will lay a foundation to help implement new changes that may occur in the technological and environmental field. Weaknesses and threats that face the Kenya Tourist Board basically highlights internal and external factors that may prevent the board from achieving its objectives in China it is important for the board to establish ways to mitigate its weaknesses to a minimum impact and it is also important for them to work with the government to help take care of the external factors. This includes things discussed earlier in this report for example security, inflation of the Kenyan shilling and terrorism. With these being properly taken care of this plan will be successful in exploiting its target market with maximum benefits.

5.2.4 Assumptions

Assumptions help market planners develop a standard document which holds similar views from those making the market plan. It has been important to discuss assumptions of external operations that might affect the plan's effectiveness and directly or indirectly affect the

operations of the Kenya Tourist Board in China now and in the future. The two major assumptions made are that Kenya will continue enjoying a stable peaceful political environment which is conducive for foreign visitors and foreign investors. A good political environment is conducive for foreign trade. It has also been assumed China's economy will continue growing steadily despite the economic recession as this will increase the potential of the target market and give the Kenya Tourist Board opportunities for more growth. These assumptions are crucial and central in the successful implementation of this plan. Without these factors occurring as assumed this plan cannot be as successful as planned.

5.2.5 Target Market

China is geographically the target market with the major cities of Beijing and Shanghai being the primary targets because here people earn better pay putting them in a better position to afford a tour to Kenya. Customers are wealthy young and old professionals with their families who have the ability to spend on leisure and travel. This also includes college students who may be interested in making group tours to Kenya. This target market gives the Kenya Tourist Board a prime opportunity to solidify its operations in China and establish itself here ahead of competitors. The target group has been carefully chosen and it presents the board with a big opportunity to enhance its reputation in tour operations in China.

The Kenya Tourist Board should start by studying the market and clearly understand the business culture in China and try conducting its operations according to this culture, it should also train and hire new employees in accordance with the needs of the new market as this will help them adapt to any challenges they may encounter in the new market. The board should cooperate with partner agencies when hiring the employees, to ensure the employees will be able to clearly deliver the board's position to potential customers. The Kenya Tourist Board should know that its success in China could be well connected to the size of the Chinese population and could grow rapidly, so it is important it allocates an adequate budget for this marketing plan there have been cases where markets grow rapidly overpowering the resources available for the venture. Finally the board should set objectives and marketing methods to help achieve these objectives as well as proper customer relationship methods.

6 Recommendations and suggestions

This study recommends that the Kenya Tourist Board tailors high quality holiday and tour packages. Quality will help penetrate the Chinese market so the Kenya Tourist Board should ensure its offers in China are of the highest quality and it should be able to improve this quality continuously. It is recommended the board improve this quality by considering the customer's needs to ensure the board is able to deliver its desired position. This will be a

crucial part in the implementation of this plan because quality boosts sales and it is something the board should monitor closely.

The Kenya Tourist Board and the Kenyan government should initiate and enhance cooperation between government ministries directly impacted by tourism because this will help to ensure that the board's tourist packages are well supported by not only the ministry of tourism but also by other supporting industries. Some of the major ministries that should be included are: Ministry of roads, Ministry of internal security, Ministry of trade, and Ministry of foreign affairs. This working partnership between the ministries is crucial because they will help the whole package offered in China be more appealing and complete. Most of these ministries offer support services to the tourism industry.

Customer relationship management by the Kenya Tourist Board, good customer service with motivation is important for long-time relationships in business and the Kenya Tourist Board will have to prioritise customer relationship management to ensure tourists from China experience the best service and are truly satisfied. To keep the relationship process improving the board will employ experts who will research recent customer relationship modes and then train the board employees on how to employ these new methods with Chinese tourists.

Communication as discussed in this study is a major part in current business transactions and also in everyday life it is vital for the successful implementation of this plan that the board develops a good and sustainable communication model for its venture in China. The Kenya Tourist Board will also open channels to effectively communicate with tourists once their visit comes to an end as this will help the board learn how the tour was and how satisfied with the service and visit as a whole the tourists were. This will help give the board effective suggestions on areas where there needs to be improvement. After this the suggestions will be discussed and the most viable ones retained and put into practice to help coordinate visitors in the future.

The Kenya Tourist Board will develop a contact model that makes communication and business transactions with Chinese tourists to be as simple and straight-forward as possible. This will be achieved right from the first contact, purchase of air tickets, application of visas, selection of tour packages, and movement within Kenya as simple and straight-forward as possible. To achieve this, the board will alter its current dealings and processes to ensure the customer is well catered for at all instances and the whole process is serving him well.

6.1 Marketing mix

A marketing mix encompasses the components of every business plan; these will be crucial areas for the Kenya Tourist Board in this marketing plan. Every business must have a marketing mix that encompasses the major 4 P's of price, product, place and promotion. These four components are crucial for proper implementation of a marketing plan. The Kenya Tourist Board will have a good marketing mix to enable it attract its target customers. The mix will include their pricing strategies, advertising programmes, improved tour packages and other related areas.

Positioning helps businesses acquire a distinctively competitive position in their target customer's mind. The Kenya Tourist Board should position Kenya as a leading tourist country that many people desire to visit. The Kenya Tourist Board should ensure that its customer's enjoy tours with good organisation and high-quality destinations that will remain in the visitor's memory. The board should plan its tours with consideration of its customers input to ensure it delivers the customer's desired position. Lastly the board will plan tours that will put its customers first, ensuring they are fully satisfied from the first to last contact and keep in touch with the customer in order to obtain feedback on how satisfied the customer was so as to increase customer satisfaction in their future transactions. How well the Kenya Tourist Board positions itself in the Chinese market will be crucial and there will be a close relation between the success they will achieve in China and the position they assume.

Pricing decisions are a very delicate issue due to the competition in this sector of business, although it is important to note that people will not only consider the price it is important for the board and agencies to offer competitive prices. The pricing decision will vary between the board and partner agency agreements which will seek to see that the pricing of the tour packages is both viable and fair to their customers. However pricing can be based according to the tour a customer wants, which would be customized pricing where the customers will pay for what they request. However it is important to ensure the pricing is fair to ensure the customers are satisfied.

Pricing will also take into consideration the present market conditions in relation to the dollar to ensure that the present valuation of the Kenyan shilling in the world market is measured since it fluctuates regularly. The global recession should also be considered because middle class citizens across the world are reducing on leisure expenses and this will ensure that they can still afford to pay for a tour but only at a fair price which they should be able to consider worthwhile.

Past transactions between a particular customer and the board or agencies will be documented and taken into consideration. A customer who has visited Kenya in the past will be viewed as an asset to be protected and taken care of due to his profitability as a lifetime valued customer. The Kenya Tourist Board will set up a discount scheme where customers will earn points according to the number of times they have visited Kenya and it is from these points that they will earn various discounts, and this will make Kenya more appealing as a destination to Chinese tourists and will strengthen the bond between the Kenya Tourist Board and the customers.

South Africa and Tanzania being the key competitors in sub-Saharan Africa, the Kenya Tourist Board will make its pricing decisions after checking what prices and packages these two countries are offering in China and after this they will discuss how they can offer a price that is both competitive with their rivals and also profitable for the Kenya Tourist Board and partner agencies.

The number of tourists making the tour should also be considered when making a pricing decision because it is assumed that the larger a group is the more profitable it is, not only in its payment of the trip but also expenditure in Kenya purchasing other goods and services and this will make their total expenditure higher. Hence making them more lucrative customers compared to other smaller groups or unitary groups. It is essential for mechanisms to discount groups on the basis of their size to help make their tour cheaper. This could be a good incentive when targeting groups of students or corporate groups.

Pricing will ensure Kenya as a destination is viable and attractive; it will also from the start preserve Kenya's images as an affordable destination as compared to other countries. It would be bad for Kenya to appear as an unaffordable destination for the middle-class people. The pricing decisions will also take into account the board's long-term objectives in China, what the board wants to achieve should be considered it is not useful in the long-term to set a high price and not think of the future. Also since Kenyan tourism is not very popular in China it is vital that the board starts with good offers which are affordable.

Finally the pricing will consider costs of preparation of the whole tour process and money involved in making the whole tour a success, starting from the first point of contact to when the customer leaves Kenya, this includes communication costs, flight costs, accommodation costs, salary for tour guides, visa charges, and internal transportation within Kenya after calculating all these costs it is only then the board will calculate the cost of a certain package. Calculating the expenses in the whole tour will help ensure the board does not operate at a loss and also doesn't offer high prices that will put off customers.

How easily a target customer obtains information about the board's services will be key in the success of the Kenya Tourist Board mission in China. The main operations offices will be located in major cities across China with Beijing and Shanghai acting as China's headquarters. The Kenya Tourist Board main office in Utalii house, Nairobi, Kenya will serve as the main Kenyan headquarters where all the important official communication and new agendas will be formulated to ensure all the offices in China are being controlled from a central point and it is easier to follow up on a decision and liaise when needed. The offices in Chinese cities will be located in the central business districts where though the rent may be higher it is easier for many people to access them and do so easily.

The Kenya Tourist Board has its own website known as "magical Kenya" from which people from all over the world can check what they want. These pages are clear and give customers numerous options on exploring Kenya, magical Kenya A list destinations, sights and activities to undertake while in Kenya, travel guide, guidelines for customers to plan their tours and a contact list for customers to make enquiries in case they need additional information. This study recommends that the Chinese language option be incorporated and Chinese language professionals be incorporated to help translate these pages to the Chinese language as this will help Chinese people connect with the information there easily and also to understand what is being explained, by doing so it will signal the board's intention of placing the Chinese market in a position of preference. China is a leading internet user in the world with hundreds of millions having access to the internet, and this will help the board penetrate a market with millions of potential customers.

Advertisements and promotional tours are recommended to be used as a major way to take the message to the Chinese market since these advertisements can be put at strategic points, for example during prime-time news and between popular programmes. The board taking place in trade fairs and exhibitions will be a good opportunity to access many people within a short period. The Kenya Tourist Board will make sure it participates in as many local and international Chinese fairs, it is at these places the Kenya Tourist Board will be able to target high-level corporate customers who have high spending power and can visit Kenya in big groups.

Brochures distributed to existing and potential customers will be a good way to give information to the target groups. These brochures will also be distributed in schools and large companies in China twice a year in March and October before the summer tourist peak and Christmas holidays to remind the Chinese what the Kenya Tourist Board is offering and the benefits of visiting the country. The brochures should have important brief information with a good visual impression to capture the attention of anyone who may view its contents.

Marketing is a very important phenomenon in everyday business dealings it is a daily process of promoting what a business is offering. This report recommends that the board engages aggressive promotional methods in China in order to acquire a considerable market share. This aggressive marketing could also be used in other parts of the world where the board want to maintain its market shares and in areas where it needs to diversify its operations. Aggressive marketing strategies will help the board acquire substantial market in China as well as create awareness of Kenyan tourism as a brand in China. Since the demographics of this study show that China is a big country it is important for large amounts to be allocated in the promotional budget and to be used in broadcasting strategic advertisements in the local Chinese media and special local monthly productions.

Kenya Airways, which flies directly to China, should be involved as a partner in this to serve as a partner in promotional activities in China. They will be asked to stock magazines for free distribution to Chinese people using their airline. In addition they will be requested to give subsidised prices to tourists visiting Kenya from China. Also they will make arrangements to fly the tourist straight to Mombasa international airport because Mombasa is the prime tourist centre in Kenya and this could reduce the tourist logistics and transportation problems within Kenya.

This report also recommends the development of integrative promotional methods which involve locals living around major tourist areas. This will promote mutual benefits three-way between the board, locals and tourists. This is where the locals will be used as goodwill ambassadors to Kenyan tourism and welcomes the visitors, telling them about the local culture it is important for locals to be involved in this programme.

6.2 Communication

Communication will be vital in the successful implementation of this marketing plan in order for the Kenya Tourist Board to achieve its target in the Chinese market. The board will develop and implement an effective communication model that unifies all the board and partner agencies in China. This plan will not be viable without an effective communication culture so the board and partner agencies will bring their employees involved in China together and give them the dynamics of effective communication in the implementation of this marketing plan.

Regular and open updates will be made to agency employees via meetings, emails, on notice boards and at strategic points in their offices to give updates on progress and changes this will help alert the employees in, schedules, new targets and any important happenings.

Employee training on information distribution is recommended as not everyone is gifted in open communication and to avoid information breakdown. This will be done via workshops where information experts are invited to inform the employees on important ideas towards successful communication. Bonding sessions will be organised for employees over weekends where they will improve their communication skills and get opportunities to understand their colleagues better.

Understanding and interweaving the Kenyan and Chinese communication cultures will be important in having successful communication. In this plan this will be achieved through extended employee training and exchange programmes where Kenyan employees could move to China for a few months and vice versa. This exchange will help blend and harmonise the communication culture between the two countries and help implement the plan to greater success.

Proper communication is the key to successful implementation of this marketing plan. The key step will be to make sure all departments of the organization understand the goings on all the time and why it is happening, to help them understand what the board's targets are and how these targets can be achieved.

6.2.1 Implementation and control

For the board the implementation will be a key step where it will put theory into practice and progress the plan into action, this is a challenging part and could require a time frame. All the employees and departments will have to work hard.

Financial resources ability is the key in making sure this plan is achievable so the Kenyan ministry of tourism is required to allocate enough funds to the Kenya Tourist Board for the Chinese campaign. Without proper funding even a good plan might fail, so allocation of required financial resources is the first key step in putting this plan into motion and ensuring there is enough security till its completion.

Expertise is very crucial in the implementation of this plan, the board and agencies will recruit new employees and skilling their employees to ensure they have the personnel to make the plan successful. This will help ensure there is proper implementation focused on the plan's target lack of this will render the plan ineffective and lead to the board not achieving its targets and this can be detrimental to the whole plan.

Schedules and time plans will be documented during the implementation to help monitor what should be done when and who should do it. This schedule by the Kenya Tourist Board

will be crucial in the systematic coordination and supervision of the whole plan and help ensure it is done correctly and at the right time. A supervisory board will be put in place to help ensure it documents correctly what has been done and how it has been done.

The above steps will help the board ensure the plan is implemented correctly and it has focused on the plan's key areas as well as ensure it is working towards achieving the key targets of the whole plan.

Marketing controls help monitor an organisations undertakings towards achieving their desired objectives. The objectives of this marketing plan are both long-term and short term. The results of its implementation can be obtained by measuring the number of tourists visiting Kenya and the revenue increase experienced by the Kenya Tourist Board. These measures will be conducted by both the board and partner agencies and it is from these figures that it will see how effective the plan and what can be improved in this plan.

Financial figures will be measured against how much has been invested and this will help the board and partner agencies realise how much return on investments they have realised and if it is worth having a sales forecast on a quarterly basis will be a good way to ensure if they are doing well. Emergency back-up plans and funds will be reserved by the board to ensure they have the capacity to correct mistakes and support if the plan not as effective as planned.

This report has provided information on how the Kenya Tourist Board can become a major destination in the tourist market in China and what it needs to do to attract more tourists to Kenya and form long-term business relationships in China. The author has obtained important data via interviewing major stakeholders in Kenya tourism, China tourism and Chinese tourists who have visited Kenya hence giving him data from which he has established some major recommendations on areas that should be improved to help Kenyan tourism in China.

The author has established SWOT analysis that he has used to write this marketing plan, via the swot analysis the author has clearly shown what the Kenya Tourist Board's needs to improve and avoid so that it can be successful in the Chinese market. The potential of the Chinese market has been highlighted discussing the growth of the Chinese economy and the improved living standards of the Chinese citizens hence showing that there are plenty of opportunities for the Kenya Tourist Board to achieve their objective in the Chinese market.

The author has also explained and analysed how the Kenya Tourist Board can position itself and be able to mitigate the external forces that may hinder them from being a major player in the Chinese market. This has been achieved via a careful analysis of the challenges the board will face in China and the competition the board will face in China from other sub

Saharan-countries, the global tourism market being very competitive and dynamic has necessitated the author to establish a competitive position for the Kenya Tourist Board for now and for the future.

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List of questions:

Chinese tourists.

- 1 How many times have you visited Kenya?
- 2 How did you come to learn about Kenya?
- 3 How many times have you visited Kenya?
- 4 When did you last visit Kenya?
- 5 Which city were you staying during your visit?
- 6 Why did you select Kenya and not any other country?
- 7 In a scale of 1-5 how much did you enjoy Kenya? 5 means extremely satisfied?
- 8 How do you rate the services and accommodation facilities in Kenya?
- 9 What in your opinion do you think should be improved and how can it be improved?
- 10 Are you considering visiting again in future and would you recommend to a friend to visit Kenya?

Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours Employees

- 1 1 What position and duties do you play in Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours?
- 2 2. How long have you been working with Asili Adventure Safaris and Travel tours?
- 3 3. Have you handled tourists from China? If yes how often?
- 4 Do you have any important about Chinese tourists?
- 5 What special advice would you give to a tour operator trying to attract Chinese tourists?
- 6 Do the Chinese tourists request for any special services that are not common in Kenya?
- 7 Do you have a key group of customers that you serve often? If yes do you give this group preferential treatment?
- 8 After a trip do you keep in touch with your customers?
- 9 Do you think your regional competitors are a threat to your operations in China? If yes what steps have you taken to stay ahead?
- 10 How do you handle your customer complains?

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