DIGITAL MARKETING IS A PROMOTION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE FOOTWEAR SECTORS IN VELLORE

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship in Vellore District has gained great importance in recent years, and it is thanks to this that, according to information from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, a large part of the formal employment in the country is generated, since with the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises the business dynamic has managed to position itself. Many of these undertakings are in the footwear sector, as the country has high consumption indicators in this line, so this research proposes to analyze how it could favor companies in the sector with the insertion of digital marketing, thus exploring the advantages offered by ICT in this regard. The research is based on a mixed design, as it combines quantitative tools with the revision of sector and qualitative figures, as it raises reflections on the inherent aspects of ICT and alternatives for trade today. The final results show growth opportunities for entrepreneurs in the sector, highlighting the importance of training and education for leaders and actors of organizations.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, competitiveness, marketing, globalization, footwear

INTRODUCTION

Marketing activities in the leather industry are critically important similar to the companies in a global competitive environment. Benchmarking of international activities, monitoring the activities of competitor countries, adopting models from the best practices of other countries and improving marketing activities are utmost important. Besides, evaluation of the works of industry-supporting various non-governmental organizations such as public organizations and associations is also essential for success in competition. Assessment of many industrial promotion factors will be guiding for the benchmarking activities to be conducted, or enable optimizing many activities. This study includes a comparative country analysis under the light of the data retrieved with web screening method about various associations, non-governmental organizations, foundations etc. acting in various countries ambitious in the leather
industry. The differing formats of the websites of such organizations regarding the data offered about the countries has imposed a limitation for the study; albeit, the comparisons have been compared with the compilation and incorporation the data retrieved from both the contents of these websites and from secondary sources. This study also gives a snapshot of marketing activities of world leather industry in today’s situation.

Industries are trying to conform to the changing conditions and forms of commerce in a global market and develop suitable marketing efforts in parallel to their own potentials. Furthermore, in the environments where the global competition is felt so deeply, monitoring and following the movements of other competitors has also become critically important. The circumstances require an examination not only on company basis, but also in terms of the general attitudes and subsidies of countries. Getting prepared for giving correct response to the change is also an important action that the companies should take.

Leather industry enterprises are continuously influenced by the social, cultural, technological, political and legal changes around them on both strategic and tactical terms. The leather industry must keep up with the changes around it to be able to survive and compete against its rivals. In the competitive environment, leather industry is expected to utilize up-to-date technologies in order to improve its current situation and enhance its export potential. The marketing and promotion efforts, which employ various electronic environments following the marketing activities and current general tendencies, are among the leading issues, which must be carefully followed in the leather industry. A scientific infrastructure based on information and technology must be created by the leather industry due to the breakneck and global commercial and competitive conditions required by the modus operandi. This infrastructure must be based on serious knowledge and form the basis for R&D studies.

Meanwhile, ensuring continuity and standing against competition without promotion and marketing is not quite possible. Under current conditions, the Turkish leather industry has serious knowledge on production, while the changing world and consumer preferences and trends let the consumers to adopt different expectations and necessitated the development of new products with different characteristics. Moreover, the need of producing new modified products, which remove certain disadvantages of the natural products, has required the reconfiguration of the infrastructure according to these demands in many industries. And this results in efforts for developing new products and enhancing product quality. However, only carrying out product oriented efforts is not enough for survival of companies. Marketing activities must be improved, but considering the current conditions, it must be achieved with minimum cost.
Under the current global economic crisis, leather companies are struggling to survive. Many companies opt to reduce their capacities due to stagnancy during the crisis. In the studies conducted, the necessity of certain activities such as increasing the export potential, concentrating on marketing activities, giving more importance to branding and endeavoring for international marketing by penetrating into new markets have been identified for overcoming the crisis. In order to fulfill the objectives of the industry, strategically, focusing on the production and marketing of high value added products is necessary. Efforts are required to create an image and branding for such products in the world market. Information generation and globalization also have strategic importance for providing an infrastructural support for the production and marketing of high value added products. In international markets firms may experience „myopia“ because of their concentration in their commercial affairs. Monitoring which is done by nonprofit organizations rather than companies is more efficient and independent. Certain studies include researches dealing the subject on the country of origin (Yamamoto et. al., 2009a, Sekeroglu et. al. 2009) but an overall benchmarking is unavailable. Therefore, we wanted to monitor and screen the web sites of the selected associations in the global leather sector. In this way a promotion-weighted benchmarking may provide a clearer view.

Global Players in Leather Industry

Developed countries gradually abandoned the labor-intensive leather and leather products industry in time, and raw skin processing started shifting towards underdeveloped and developing countries, due to high cost of labor in leather industry and environmental pollution. The expansion of the liberal market economy after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Block also caused to a change of equilibrium in the leather industry. The earlier production centers in Europe gradually shifted towards the East. Currently the center of gravity of the world’s leather production is Asia. China is the leading of all prominent countries in the leather industry. India and Hong Kong are among the other rivals. However, in the leather garment sub-industry, Italy leads the industry compared to Asia and South America, as also being the center of fashion. Among the EU countries, France is also among the leading countries. Germany, as the biggest importer of the EU, imports mostly from Turkey, China and India.

Certain developing countries such as Turkey and Brazil also endeavor especially for positioning in the global market. Branding may be considered as a concept, which has been on the agenda of Turkey for nearly ten years. Especially from the perspective of the textile and ready wear industry, in addition to the high production strength, the development of the design capacity also can be considered as an important factor. Having a prestigious brand in international markets is extremely important for the Turkish Companies. Indeed, highly serious changes are being observed in the retail industry at present.
For instance, from the economic aspect, the devaluation of the US dollar is considered as a very important issue in Brazil, and they particularly highlight that such policies have influential on exports. Currently, there are 2148 leather entrepreneurs in Brazil and 24 of them form a cluster of shoemakers, exporting Brazilian-made semi-finished and finished goods to 160 countries. Especially, new companies focus on foreign markets and they highly stress branding and product differentiation. Brazilian companies consider fairs important and it is understood that they are involved in various production, technology and fashion exhibitions in the USA, Asia and Europe.

Analysis

In this study there is a comparative country analysis collected from the web sites of the various associations (non-governmental organizations, foundations etc.-See Appendix I) operating in the countries that have a special importance in the world leather industry.

- The Target Mass
- Emphasis
- Population
- Leather Processing Capacity
- Number of Employees
- Sales Amount
- Prominent Subjects in Sales
- Weaknesses of Marketing
- Intensively Exporting Countries
- Competitors
- Branding
- Characteristics of the Companies in the Industry
- Representative Unions and Associations

These are the main factors for the assessment of the industry in terms of marketing and promotion; and the researchers choose them as their data can be accessed in the general sense. These associations are also the biggest and most influential associations for the leather companies within their countries.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Digital marketing allows integration between different ICT media, making it easier to take advantage of the possibilities offered by new technologies, thus generating greater
interaction and attracting users to the participation and consumption of goods and services. In accordance with the above, a digital marketing plan can enable organizations to integrate different media, hence the strategic focus of any company, must be determined in part by the type of virtual tools that can insert in its operation. If a company today, wants to reach more domestic and foreign customers necessarily will have to embrace ICT tools as part of their daily work.

When citing the most notorious advantages for SMEs when inserting ICT tools for marketing purposes, the following can be cited: retention of consumers, construction of a recognized name, greater visibility, greater ability to contact consumers, consumer-focused marketing and measurement of results. Thus, it can be indicated that digital marketing promotes corporate objectives, essentially improving results for the company.

As it can be observed, the aspect that is found in the first instance is that of social networks, since they have managed to give a very marked dynamic to the issues of footwear sales, especially with potential customers under 40. However, the following options, such as email, blog and corporate websites, continue to be competitive alternatives for SMEs, as they can be incorporated at low cost and work massively, reaching a greater number of people with the ease of integrating traditional strategies.

The ICT alternatives are diverse at this time, making it easier for entrepreneurs and existing companies to insert mechanisms to compete dynamically thus generating many options for growth in sales and income, while also providing new employment alternatives for personnel in these areas. Considering the insertion of digital marketing for SMEs is an almost obligatory step, since reaching a greater number of people and gaining visibility can be one of the alternatives for positioning goods and services and constantly gaining customers.

CONCLUSIONS

Digital marketing is currently valued as an alternative for SMEs in Vellore District especially for the footwear sector. This may represent a great opportunity for positioning and business dynamics, since this sector is a major player in the country's economy. The alternatives today are diverse and many of them even free, so that with the necessary training and monitoring of the key steps proposed could reach a scenario of greater competition, reaching a large number of customers both in the domestic and international market. Economic globalization is a phenomenon that has led to dramatic changes, one of which is undoubtedly the inclusion of ICTs in all commercial activities.

REFERENCES


