Marketing Plan for Jones Soda Company

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**Organizational Overview**

Jones Soda Company (JSC) is an independent Canadian company for beverage manufacturing that was started by Peter Van Stolk in 1996. Its unique style was evidenced by its use of bottles that resemble classic beer bottles and by pricing higher than for regular soft drinks. Despite its small size, the company has enjoyed huge success in the soda market. However, just like any other beverage manufacturer, the Jones Soda Company has to continue reinventing the wheel and come up with new product to meet changing customer needs. To achieve this, Jones Soda has come up with a healthy drink to be marketed to the public. The product will be available in super markets, and to begin with buses who have Japanese sectors in their route. These are places with high numbers of prospect consumers of the new chocolate brand. The product will soon be introduced in Dubai as well as the entire region of United Arab Emirates. The new product is intended to meet the following different segments in an attempt to achieve the company’s competitive advantage not only in UAE but also in of its existing constituents (Maxwell, 2009).

**Mission statement**

JSC is entitled to production of unique and different beverage to its consumers not only in Dubai but globally.

The Jones Soda Company soft drink is well packaged in classic beer bottled resemblance. It is an organic juice that meets the increased demand for healthy drinks in the market. The product has an opportunity for the company to reassert itself in the market as well as a way to give the consumers what they want. The product is a success because, as Maxwell (2008) says, the market is turning from synthetic juices and turning to more organic foods and drinks due to health needs (Evanson, 2012).

**Consumer analysis**

According to Evanson (2012), market data indicates that an increasing number of people are willing to pay more for a drink as long as they can be sure that it is an organic drink. This, as Stevenson (2011) asserts, is very important in the marketing of natural organic, classy and correlates to their lifestyle drink because the production of such drinks is more expensive as opposed to the synthetic juices and this is an important factor because the prices for the product have to meet the production costs and the profit margin.

**Market analysis**

The main challenge in marketing for JSC is to overcome market barriers caused by customer loyalty to the existing products such as Pepsi and Coke. According to consumer insights, a great number of Canadians are loyal to specific brands and find it hard to change from one brand to another (Wilson, 2009). However, Jones Soda Company will be able to overcome this problem because it will target the younger people who are more willing to explore more possibilities. This however, will not be a complete advantage in itself, because once these customers have switched to Jones Soda soft drinks, the challenge will be to make them loyal customers as the product grows.

**Marketing mix**

In determining its product’s offer**,** Jones Soda Company began an underground movement that used salespeople in RVs as an alternative to the common ads on TV. This strategy minimizes the cost while it maximizes the profits from the product sales. In promoting its product, the company has for the last nine months, been travelling in the United States making entries to both small skate parks and large events such as the Summer X Games. In addition, the exhibitors could showcase the brand to the kids and offer free drinks and key chains (William, 2010). JSC have hired great athletes, such as BMX riders to help promote its products.

Jones Soda Company has also tried to stay avant-garde with product development. It is known for its uniquely flavored drinks, especially during holidays and other special events. For Halloween a few years ago, JSC introduced a couple of new flavors, candy corn and caramel apple. Other flavors are Broccoli Casserole, Turkey and Gravy, and Pecan Pie.

**Market summary**

The brand attempts to appeal to lifestyle conscious consumers who want a healthy product with a great taste. Jones Soda Company soft drinks brands have been very successful, seeing substantial profit since its foundation in 1996.

**SWOT analysis**

**Weaknesses**

Among the weaknesses of the company is its recent suffering when its deal with Starbucks distribution fell making it incur some massive losses. This caused the company to be hesitant in closing a deal with Walmart, as the adage goes, “once bitten, twice shy”.

Another weakness is the fluctuation of the U.S dollar value. The lower U.S. dollar has made it tough for Jones Soda Company to export its products to other markets that has proven to be more expensive for the Seattle-based company. However, JSC has some suppliers in Canada, so it still has the ability and chance to take advantage of the trade policies on both sides of the 49th Parallel.

Corn syrup, a common sweetener for soft drinks, has become more expensive due to high demand for corn. This has prompted many suppliers to switch to cane sugar. Jones Soda Company recently changed to sugar sweetening of its products in hopes that sugar prices will remain stable.

**Opportunities**

In spite of JSC’s setbacks, JSC is still moving forward with strategies to go conventional. Distributors are set to take charge in distributing. JSC new products, Jones Natural and Jones Energy Drinks are already being developed. This provides prospects to the company’s future.

In addition, JSC has already started to explore potential markets in Dubai and UAE. Owing to its Canadian roots, JSC has already achieved timely success in distributing soft drinks in Canada. Now might be a time as any for the company to explore where it has not been represented. According to its research, it was found that UAE is the region that is most likely to have a good number of potential customers of the new product.

**Threats**

Jones Soda Company’s direct competition in the new market is Coca Cola in Dubai and Pepsi, which remains the top manufacturers of bottled beverages worldwide. Consumers are especially concerned in this day and age with low sugar, low calorie, or calorie free beverages. Unfortunately, Jones Soda Company, along with the other soft drinks companies, have had to compete with fresh juice drinks distributors, as the rise in consumer concerns with cost and environmental effects have decreased sales.

**Trends**

There are a variety of activates of JSC that are evident as bad signs and some are good signs. Concerning the negativities, consumers have become increasingly aware of the environmental effects of plastic bottles and bottled beverages, encouraging companies to alter their corporate practices. Jones Soda Company has also seen a rise in the number of consumers who has attempt to save money by switching to bulk fresh juice. Another threat is the fact that the corn syrup, which Jones Soda Company has been using as a sweetener for its soft drinks, has become more expensive due to high demand for corn. This made the company opt for sugar cane, which is also a threat due to the recent consumer trends toward healthy living. (Maxwell, 2009). Recent research shows a correlation between unhealthy diet choices among young consumers and serious health problems, including diabetes, have generated a consumer backlash against many consumer product companies. In addition, the recent announcement by Seattle Seahawksith, JSC is another possible threat. In addition, American Airlines has announced to end its deal with Jones Soda, which puts the company at risk for losing sales.

**Strengths**

The area where Jones Soda Company may have the possibility of avoiding this competition, however, is in the product benefits. The product is electrolyte-enhanced, which gives it a competitive edges other soft drinks and juice products. Jones Soda’s main competitors are its own cross brands, which gives the company a gain in the marketplace in Dubai (Wilson, 2009).

**JSC has three important objectives, which are to:**

1) Respect for the individual

2) Service to its customers

3) Striving for its excellence

 The achievement of JSC will depend upon fruitful marketing communication relying on sound decision making by management on the coordination of the different components of the promotional mix. For marketing communication to be fruitful, a dependable choice must be made dealing with the promoting blend: the product or the idea itself; the cost at which the product will be offered; and the areas in which clients will purchase the brand.

**Control/monitor**

The standard of living that JSC attracts are that of younger consumers, from tweens to high school graduates, those who reveled in the coolness of the unique, different, and who enjoy alternatives whether they be into sports or other pursuits.

Jones Soda Company appeals to this segment by flying under the radar, even asking its customers to help package the product. From the start, JSC asked consumers to send in pictures of them. Some of these ended up on Jones Soda labels. The company has allowed some of its customers to label themselves after JSC hence giving them a sense of ownership. It makes it more relevant to them and provides an emotional connection (Stevenson, 2011).

 **Evaluation process**

In this regard, JSC Company is less affected by competitive rivalry. The company faces limited competition in the industry since it already acquired a large percentage of the buying public in Canada.

I see JSC being the largest world’s corporation despite a few threats such as competition, fiscal and monetary policies of U.S due to its opportunities in expanding overseas and trading online and targeting the young generation, which is the largest population in Canada. The products of the company are appealing owing to the trends in the contemporary world whereby consumers purchase items based on the physical appearance as it can be eluded, the classic bear bottled product of JSC, healthy products, and availability. The products of JSC are readily available due to its ability to have distributors that venture into uncommon places such as tattoo rooms and barbershops where most of their prospect consumers are found.

**Key success factors**

In order to succeed in the market, the JSC will have to utilise the changing market trends- the market is realizing the importance of taking natural and organic soft drinks as opposed to the synthetic beverages (Evanson, 2012). This, as William (2010) says, has been caused by the increasing health issues and the increasing campaigns by the health organisation asking the public to be more considerate of the kind of drinks they take, especially manufactured drinks. This presents a good market for organic drinks and the public will only need to trust the product.

**Implementation plan**

It has a unique implementation of its plan in that its connection to its target group of consumers is more personal as compared to other drink manufacturers, and loyal customers like it. This approach makes it easier to be distinguished from any other company that manufacture drinks (William, 2010).

**Initiatives**

Upon approval, JSC will have to ensure that the workforce is available. This includes the workers who will be involved in the production of the product: the sales persons and the distributors of the product. The new products will have to be supplied alongside the existing products so as to maintain the current customers while attracting the new customers. The management should make sure the materials for production are readily available. Relationship with the public should be established to keep the good image of the company growing.

**Budget**

Price is a major element in the budget. It is important because of its relation with the positioning of the product. The pricing of the product of JSC products will affect the marketing mix elements, which include the features of the product, promotion, and channel decisions. The strategies that exist for pricing include premium pricing. Premium pricing is the use of prices that are high because of products uniqueness. The strategy is applicable where a company has a competitive advantage and this is the case with JSC. The company will have to incur some huge amounts of cash to make this a success. Therefore, the budget for the fast year stands at 5 million dollars.

The institutions’ business strategy provides an outline of its improvement agenda and recognizes the key essentials that Jones Soda Company use to enhance improvement across the system to enable it succeeds as far as their business goals are concerned. Jones Soda Company strategies are unique owing to its unique objectives and what it endeavors to offer to its customers.

 The worldwide setting of commerce institutions has become extremely multifaceted as more and more firms and personal entrepreneurs fight to swell their market gap. This has led Jones Soda Company to also struggle to distinguish its products and services in the global marketplace. This is because globalization has enlarged the buyer’s awareness and led to new demands and standards. Additionally, nationals have become interdependent. It is now evident that businesses from different countries will appreciate and respect other cultures through the expansion of global commerce in this era (Wibbeke 89). In light of that, Jones Soda Company needs to embrace appropriate acculturation approaches, employ efficient cultural awareness sculpt and avoid ethnocentric administration approach in its development and expansion efforts.

 Global business etiquette denotes to demeanors and behaviors regarded as suitable in global social and business situation. Such behavior comprises cultural variations in making preambles, swapping commerce cards, recognizing position and rank, communicating intercultural among others in global business setting, the competence and competitiveness of a firm are determined by how successful a firm is globally (Trompenaars 74). The above depends on how well the Jones Soda Company transact cross-culturally. Given the above, the following strategies are vital in cross-cultural communication in Jones Soda Company’s global business:

 To start with, development of global management skills is a basic need in cross-cultural business and decision-making. Jones Soda Company managers should prepare for skill for strategic negotiation and cross-cultural interactions. The entire course of communication is culture explicit and entails a great deal of sensitivity. With the above, Jones Soda Company managers are required to be in in a position to adapt to different cultures and deal with people in different settings. The above places those in a good position to learn the difficulties connected with cultural tones and values. It is paramount to note that competitive positioning and long lasting appropriate Jones Soda Company business operations globally will entail a great knowledge of negotiations and decision-making strategies of managers from the two different parts of the world.

 To attain good ends in global business, institutions’ managers should be adequately trained in cross-cultural communication and compromises. They should not understand their objects in the communication but should know their limit in decision-making. They should also be aware that information can be posed in different forms and be ready to endure vagueness and reasonable levels of inconsistency (Trompenaars 74). For instance, Dubai, a meaning is expressed through body language, hiatus, rephrasing in so far as in the words utilized at cooperation gatherings. On the other in the Canada, a meaning is expressed chiefly through spoken words. Given such diversity, cross-cultural skills are basics to attaining effectual and prolific global negotiations. Consequently, Jones Soda Company managers should be prepared with the suitable information and capability to run multifaceted situations that occur from cultural diversity.

 Secondly, there is a need for flexibility in the global market area. As discussed above Jones Soda Company dealers should be are of the cultural differences of other trade partners. The above then calls for the need to be flexible and ready to enter the other cultures without difficulty. Ideally one has to discard temporally his cultural norms and adapt to the culture of the business setting he or is working in (Cotton 45). The above will enable the trade between the two institutions to run smoothly. However, if the trade partners are so conservative and cling to their culture as superior, then no negotiation is likely to take place in the business arena. Flexibility enables one to accept, appreciate, and respect others thus fit into the global business setting with easy.

 To improve communication linkage and ensure continued links there is need to invest additional resources in improving communication abilities. The pledge of capital to exact useful areas of intercultural communication should be regarded as relating to one particular association, and to the effectual effects on the business’s communication relations.

 Another strategy is to avoid prejudice. The above entails pre-judgments or opinions that control social behavior. Individuals who serve other with discrimination always build supposition, or capture predetermined ideas shallowly devoid of inquiry. Sometimes we assume similarity in thinking that people are similar (Martin, Jeanette & Lillian 23). At a time, we tend to believe that our cultures are superior, or we are superior by the virtue of belonging to a certain country.

The above discussion will enable Jones Soda Company new brand marketing plan to be a success in Dubai provided the factors to consider in entering into a foreign market is concerned.

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