ASHESI UNIVERSITY

A STRATEGIC PROMOTIONAL PLAN FOR LIVE TRUTH LIVE CATHOLIC

Undergraduate Applied Project Report submitted to The Department of Business Administration, Ashesi University College in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.

B.Sc. Business Administration

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Applied Project Report is the result of my own work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the Applied Project Report were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of applied projects laid down by Ashesi University College.

Supervisor's Signature: _____

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Live Truth Live Catholic (LTLC) is a Catholic book and gift store located in East Legon, Accra, and has been operating since March 2019. At LTLC, they have an extensive product range such as religious books, rosaries, jewelry, CDs/DVDs, sacramentals, Holy water, and clerical shirts among several other products.

The management of LTLC expressed that they have a low customer base. A needs assessment showed that their promotional efforts have proved ineffective, resulting in low customer acquisition and retention because their current promotional strategy is not appropriate for the type of market that they operate in. Their promotional strategy is only reaching 0.07% of their potential customers because it is not targeted correctly. Literature suggests that when developing effective promotional plans or strategies, businesses have to consider the characteristics of their target audience, factor in their promotional goals or objectives, and identify the tasks that are essential in achieving these objectives.

The proposed solution uses elements of the promotion mix to develop a customized promotional strategy that comprises of advertising, direct marketing and sales promotion. To carry out these strategies, LTLC has to consider the stages a consumer will go through before they decide to make a purchase at their shop through the use of the AIDA model: attention, interest, desire, and action. Each element of the promotion mix can be used to achieve one or more stages in the AIDA model.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter is aimed at analyzing the internal and external business surroundings in which Live Truth Live Catholic (LTLC) operates. The external analysis includes an assessment of the industry at large as well as a political, economic, social, and technological analysis of the state of the industry in which the company operates. The internal analysis would consist of the company profile, its values, and an assessment of its strengths, weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats they may face.

1.1.1 Rationale for Project

The selection of LTLC was based on the fact that they have no active marketing structures put in place. To date, they have not been able to cover their initial costs of setting up; thus, developing an effective and efficient promotional plan is vital in aiding them to reduce expenses and allocating funds appropriately.

Secondly, they have no social media presence, and in terms of technology, they are failing to tap into the many available opportunities, such as a social media presence. Thus, a strategic promotional plan will help them utilize the technological skills of their employees by assisting them in developing creative approaches to sales and customer relations. Thirdly, the company is struggling with the attraction of customers. Finally, they have access to a lot of resources and have room for growth.

1.2 Industry Overview

1.2.1 Company Profile

LTLC is a Catholic book and gift store located in East Legon, Accra. They started operating in March 2019. Their mission is "to provide a religious retail outlet aimed at encouraging believers to grow spiritually and increase their knowledge of the Christian faith." Their vision is, "To be an apostolate and a one-stop-shop that will expose Christians to the scripture and traditions in its pure form as handed down from the early Church Fathers." Their target audience consists of Christians, mainly Catholics, and religious bodies.

The promoter, Mr. Frank Osei-Wusu, is a businessman and a cradle catholic. He is leading his family to be at the forefront of this apostolate. At LTLC, they have various product offerings such as religious books, Bibles, rosaries, CDs/DVDs, sacramentals, Holy water, clerical shirts, and jewelry, among many others. It is a Company Limited by Shares and a small-scale company with one worker in charge of sales.

1.2.2 Industry Analysis: The Specialty Store Industry in Ghana

The industry that LTLC operates in is described as the Specialty store industry, a sub-industry of the Retail industry, in Greater Accra, Ghana. Specialty retail stores specialize in a specific category of products set for a niche market. Bookstores, sports gear stores, and health stores are a few examples of specialty stores. The Catholic shops in Accra are Catholic Book Centre, Adabraka and Christ the King bookshop, Cantonments.

1.2.3 PEST Analysis

A PEST analysis framework was used to analyze how key factors (political, economic, social, and technological factors) in Ghana affect business in the said industry and the company accordingly. The owners can use this analysis as a guide in making strategic decisions for their company.

Political Factors

Ghana is considered to be one of the most stable countries in West Africa since it transitioned to multi-party democracy in 1992; thus, this attracts substantial investor interest (Ghana Investment Promotion Center, 2019). Political stability is essential for businesses because it affects investor and consumer confidence. Political stability may lead to a predictable pattern in economic policies, and based on this, LTLC can observe the said patterns and take long-term decisions. Ghana ranks 81 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) (Transparency International, 2018). According to the government of the United Kingdom, one of the challenges of doing business in Ghana is corruption (Department for International Trade, 2016).

Per Ghana's 1992 constitution, by Article 26(1), the provision states that "every person is entitled to enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion subject to the provisions of this Constitution" (Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, Article 26(1)). This act gives freedom for citizens to enjoy, practice, and promote their religions; thus, specialty bookstores are free to do such.

Economic Factors

Analysis of the performance of the Ghana cedi against major trading currencies, especially the US dollar, has been noted to be depreciating despite the government's intervention (Entsie, 2019). Per a 2019 KPMG report, the stability of the cedi, cost of clearing at the ports as well as Ghana's tax systems have emerged as critical concerns for businesses (Eduku, 2019). A depreciation in Ghana's causes firms such as LTLC who import their goods, to face higher costs of imports, and an increase in expenses would affect the profitability of the business.

Social Factors

Socio-cultural and demographic factors such as religion, education level, and population sizes affect the specialty stores industry in various ways. In Ghana, Christianity is the largest and the most popular religion, with Islam being the second most popular. The number of Christians has increased steadily from 43% in the 1960s to 72% currently. There is an excellent relationship between these two religions in Ghana. Holidays from both religions are observed and respected in the country. Other religions also have the freedom to exercise their rights (Miaschi, 2017).

Ghana is considered to be a deeply religious country and is embracing the Christian faith with a zeal that is progressively shaping its national identity. Many Ghanaians attend church on Sundays, weeknights, all-night prayer vigils. Also, billboards advertising Christian meetings line the streets all across the country. It is common to see people studying the Bible on “trotros,” and many office workers keep open Bibles on their desks. Christians also have ways in which they publicly express themselves in their religion. Catholics and Anglicans would either wear a rosary on their neck or hang them on the rear-view mirrors in their cars. Others would also place their church logo stickers on their vehicles to identify themselves to their denomination, i.e., Presbyterians and Methodists. According to opinion surveys, mega-church pastors are respected and admired (Bigg, 2017). A large population attaining to Christianity means that LTLC can cater to a broad target audience. The seriousness taken to Christianity is a factor that would push sales in religious stores.

The Ghana Library Authority launched a yearlong celebration under the theme, “Reading for Progress,” to promote literacy and life-long learning. Efforts are being made to revamp libraries in the country as well as increase the reading habit of the Ghanaian child (Lartey, 2019). This initiative may throw more light on libraries and bookstores in the country, thus improving sales in this industry.

Although Ghana currently has an annual population growth of 2.39%, its birth rate has been declining over the years (Macrotrends, 2019). Population changes directly affect businesses. The demand and supply of goods and services in the economy can vary based on its population. A decline in Ghana's birth rates means that total consumers will fall, and this can cause the demand for goods and services to fall, causing more significant competition.

Technology Factors

Ghana can embrace technology in any form. Accra is home to a fertile tech start-up scene, and numerous enterprises use technology one way or the other to do business (McDonnell, 2017). In terms of retail, in Ghana, consumers can order products and make payments on websites. A dispatch rider or delivery company then delivers the product to their doorstep. Some retailers also have social media pages where they advertise their products. Customers can follow retailers on these social media pages and directly message them to place orders for products they would like. Method of payment has also evolved over the years from traditional methods. Payments can be made via cash, debit/ credit cards, and mobile money, among others. The "Mobile money" method of payment has become the most used method of payment by Ghanaians. "Ghana has recently become the fastest-growing mobile money market in Africa with registered accounts increasing six-fold between 2012 and 2017" (Ozyurt, 2019). Mobile money is a technology that allows people to receive, store, and send money using a mobile phone (WorldRemit, 2019). Using the various methods of payments provides for efficiency in businesses and increases sales as well as customer satisfaction.

In shops, technology is used to record customers' information, scan items, a Point of Sales (POS) system is used to make payments, among other options. The use of technology in order-taking also increases efficiency because it eliminates writing down items customers have bought in a notebook and manually writing receipts for customers. LTLC can take advantage of such technology to increase productivity and sales in their business.

1.3 Internal Context

1.3.1 SWOT Analysis

This part of the chapter is an analysis of the company's strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities they can take advantage of and threats they may face. This analysis was done based on information obtained from interviews with the Administration & Operations manager as well as information gathered from the PEST analysis.

Table 1: Summary of SWOT Analysis

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Easy to find/ Excellent location. • Sales personnel are seasoned Catholics. • Hands-on and involved owner. • Nice ambiance. • Loyal customers.	• Special orders take time since items are imported. • Items may be expensive as compared to local items since they are imported. • The high cost of premises. • A limited selection of books.
Opportunities	**Threats**
• A frequent buyer program. • Have book reading/ book signing by local authors. • Local governments' efforts to increase the reading habit of the Ghanaian child.	• E-books/online books are eliminating the need for physical books. • The plans to construct 13 new libraries in Ghana.

Strengths

LTLC has a good store location because it is located on the main road in East Legon. It is in a building with other shops such as a salon and nail shop, a pharmacy, and a boutique, among others, making it easy for customers to linger and come across the shop. Another strength of the shop is the fact that their sales personnel are seasoned Catholics. Since they understand the faith, they can quickly help customers find what they are looking for or recommend products to customers. The owners are very involved with the running of the business. They travel to religious destinations personally to purchase items to sell in the shop. They are present at the shop on an almost daily basis and interact with the customers as well. The shop has a beautiful and calm ambiance where soothing gospel music is played and a television showing religious videos. There are also comfortable cushions for sitting to read and scan through items. Customers' details are taken when they make purchases, and this is stored alongside sales in the system. After observing the system, several names appeared many times, and this shows that the shop has loyal customers.

Weaknesses

Having an excellent location for LTLC comes with a higher cost to bear. They incur a high cost of premises, which affects their profitability. Another major weakness of LTLC is the price of its items. They import most of their products; thus, shipping costs and exchange rates play a role in their pricing, and this results in higher prices for its items as compared to that of other bookstores who sell local items. Also, since they import their books, there is a limited selection of books as compared to a library or a foreign bookstore that would have a variety of publications. Special orders made by customers also take time since they are imported.

Opportunities

The retail industry presents LTLC with various opportunities that they can exploit. They can take advantage of mobile money, an increasingly popular means of payment in

Ghana. They can also take advantage of the use of a Point of Sales (POS) system, which would increase efficiency in their business. LTLC can tap into many social media opportunities in terms of promotion for their business. Ghana has earned the 9th position globally in terms of hours spent on social media, and Ghanaians spend considerably longer hours online than their African counterparts (Tarlue, 2019). LTLC should have a social media presence since Ghanaians devote a lot of time on social media. Potential customers and customers would be able to see their product offerings, and this would have a positive impact on their sales. There is no need to train the sales personnel as they are technologically inclined. Thus, they can easily tap into these technological opportunities.

For LTLC, their repetitive customers present an opportunity to have a frequent buyer program. They can identify loyal customers and present them with a loyalty card that gets stamped after every purchase. Customers can be given discounts or free items if they get a certain number of stamps. They can also have discounted sales one day in a year for frequent buyers.

They can hold small book seminars or a book club at the shop where books are read and discussed by local authors. Since the government is making efforts to increase the reading habit of the Ghanaian child, LTLC can take this opportunity to capitalize on it. It is perfect timing to market their books. They can also take advantage of their established relationship with their supplier, which would increase demand at the shop since customers can come to them to order rare and unique things from their supplier.

Threats

E-books are slowly eliminating the need for physical books. Readers can get books on their mobile phones, tablets, or laptops instead of traveling to bookshops to purchase books. In modern days, Christian devotionals also come in the form of e-books, and there are smartphone apps the generate daily readings and prayers, among others.

The plans by the Ghana Library Authority to construct 13 new libraries in Ghana may also harm bookstores, mainly because people can rent books at a lower price as against purchasing the book at full price. However, LTLC can mitigate the risk that the plan for new libraries and e-books present since they have more products that can help deal with the threat.

CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the methods used in conducting a needs assessment at LTLC. It talks about the methods and tools used to gather data and also presents results from the research that was performed. A needs assessment is a tool used to make better decisions and is used to define areas where performance could be improved (Watkins, Meiers & Visser, 2011). The objectives of this needs assessment were to measure the impact of the promotional efforts of LTLC and to identify the gaps within their marketing strategies. Findings from this needs assessment would inform strategies needed to improve performance at LTLC in the short and long term.

2.2 Methodology

This part of the chapter focuses on the methods used in the data collection for the needs assessment. Primary research was used to collect qualitative data from the owner, staff, and

customers of LTLC. The qualitative research approach produces a detailed description of participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences; and interprets the meanings of their actions (Denzin, 1989). The type of research design used were surveys and observation. The main methods used in collecting survey data from the owner, staff and customers of LTLC were telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and questionnaires. The face-to-face interviews with the owner and one employee were semi-structured whiles the telephone interviews with the customers were structured.

2.2.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were the first data collection method to be administered. A questionnaire is a set of standardized questions that follow a fixed order and is used to collect individual data about one or more specific topics (Lavrakas, 2008). Open-ended questions were asked to acquire qualitative data since the respondent can answer in a free form with little restrictions. A self- administered questionnaire was used to enable participants to complete the questionnaire without coercion and to minimize bias (Jones, Baxter, & Khanduja, 2013). Over two weeks, in administering the questionnaires, a convenience sampling approach was used. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method where data is collected from members of the population who are conveniently available to participate in the study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Over the period of study, when customers visited the shop, they were given the questionnaire in a paper form (See Appendix I). The optimal number of respondents was 50 customers; however, only 11 customers filled the questionnaire. Thus, telephone interviews were conducted to attain 39 responses.

2.2.2 Interviews

2.2.2.1 Structured Telephone Interviews

When customers visit LTLC, their names and contact information is taken by the sales personnel. Permission was obtained from the shop management to acquire and use this

information, that is, name and telephone numbers of their customers. The number of people that were called to be interviewed was determined by the number of people that filled the questionnaire. Using the list of names and numbers, names were selected using systematic sampling, and this involves selecting the sample at regular intervals from the sampling frame (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

Structured interviews provide uniformity for the information that is obtained, thus assuring the data comparability. Structured interview questions are specific; hence it minimizes the possibility for variability, which will reduce error and facilitate the data processing and analysis (Jalil, 2014). This method was chosen because it allows for a large number of customers to be interviewed quickly and efficiently. Customers were asked open-ended questions using an interview guide (See Appendix I), and data was collected by note-taking.

Thirty-nine customers participated in the telephone interview. A consent form was read to them, and they had the option to either agree or disagree to be a part of the study. The telephone interviews lasted approximately 3 minutes each.

2.2.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather information from the owner of LTLC and one employee. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes. They were asked a series of open-ended questions based on their marketing strategies, and this structure was used because it allows for the topic to be discussed in detail, and the interviewee can express themselves more. The use of open-ended questions would result in a better understanding of the problems the business faces and would make it easier to uncover its needs. The interview was based on a semi-structured interview guide (See Appendix II), which is a schematic presentation of questions or topics that need to be explored by the interviewer (Crabtree & DiCicco-Bloom, 2006). Data was being taken by an audio recording as well as note-taking.

2.2.3 Observation

The last data collection method that was used for the needs assessment of LTLC will be participant observation as a complete observer. With this role, the purpose of the researcher's activity will not be revealed to those being observed (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). The objective of the observation was to study specific details about the shop and its customers, such as the age range of people that walk in, customer interaction with the sales personnel, the use of promotional material in the shop and customer interaction with the shop's products. This participant observation was done over three days during the shop's opening hours using an observation guide (See Appendix III).

2.3 Problem statement

Live Truth Live Catholic does not have an effective promotional strategy put in place, so their promotional efforts have proved ineffective resulting in low customer acquisition and retention. Their current promotional strategy is not appropriate for the type of market they operate in. Their promotional strategy is only reaching 0.07% of their potential customers, which implies that their promotions are not reaching people the way it should, and this is because it is not targeted correctly. They need a promotional strategy that will allow them to maximize their budget allocated to marketing.

2.4 Key Findings

2.4.1 Semi-structured Interview Findings – LTLC Owner and employee

LTLC attracts customers by talking to people and telling them about the shop. They have placed advertisements in the Mary Mother of Good Counsel Catholic Church bulletin about eight times and in "The Catholic Standard" newspaper three times. They have printed some brochures, and they have a promotional video that is shared on WhatsApp.

To ensure that customers revisit the shop, they take their customers' contact information and call them to thank them for their patronage. They also ensure that customers

feel welcome when they visit the shop. LTLC considers mainly Catholics as their target market; however, some of their products are tailored towards all Christians.

An average of 3 customers visit the shop per day. They have not been able to identify any peak day or peak hours. There are days where they do not receive any customers.

The most significant issue LTLC management believes its business is facing today is pricing. Their products tend to be high priced since most of the products are imported—the high exchange rate results in a higher cost of importation resulting in high prices of commodities. Management has also realized that people want products from them, but they do not have the time to visit the shop. They consider their inability to reach a large audience as their biggest marketing issue.

LTLC considers its publications as their most effective marketing strategy. They intend to take advantage of social media to reach potential customers. They hope to acquire more customers and achieve higher sales with a strategic promotional plan.

2.4.2 Interview and Questionnaire Findings - Customers

A total of 50 responses were generated from the interviews and questionnaires; 11 from the questionnaires and 39 from the telephone interviews. Since the data collected was qualitative, the responses generated were grouped into themes.

- The first question respondents were asked was about where they first heard about Live Truth Live Catholic. 32% of the respondents first heard about LTLC through a friend. 30% of the respondents saw it while driving by, and 22% of the respondents heard about it from the owner. 8% of the respondents heard about it on WhatsApp, that is, they saw the promotional video. 6% of the respondents saw it in the bulletin at church whiles the remaining 2% saw it in the Catholic Standard newspaper.

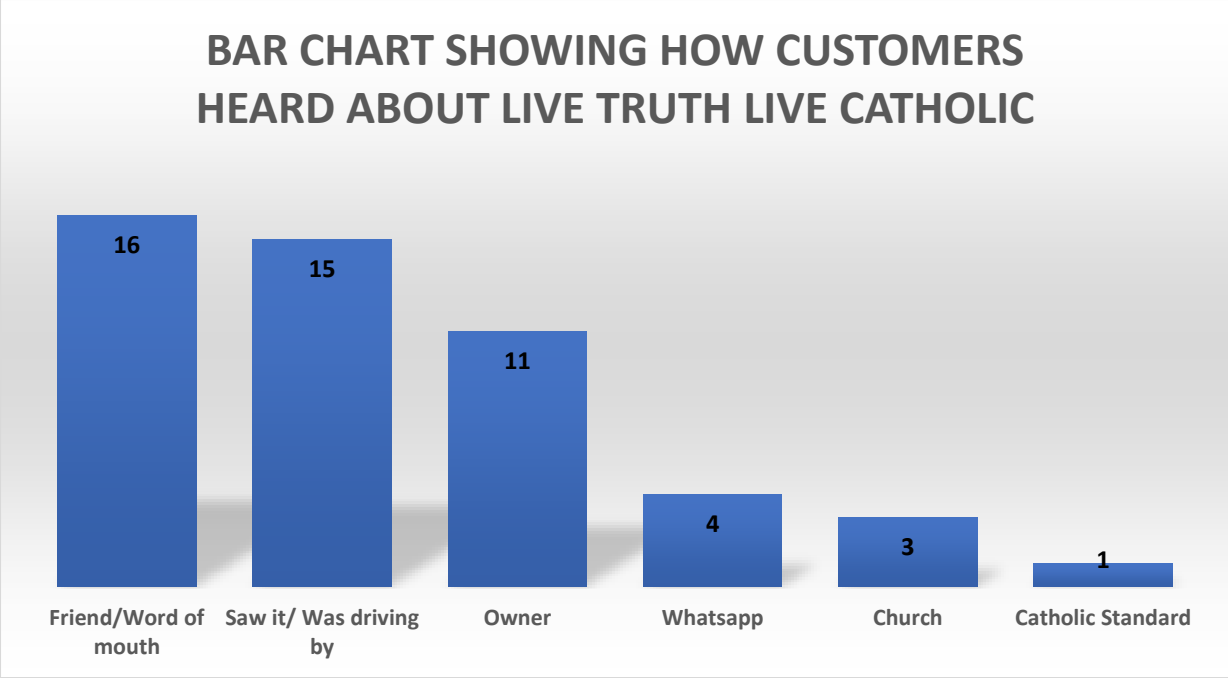

Figure 1: Bar Chart Showing How Customers Heard About Live Truth Live Catholic

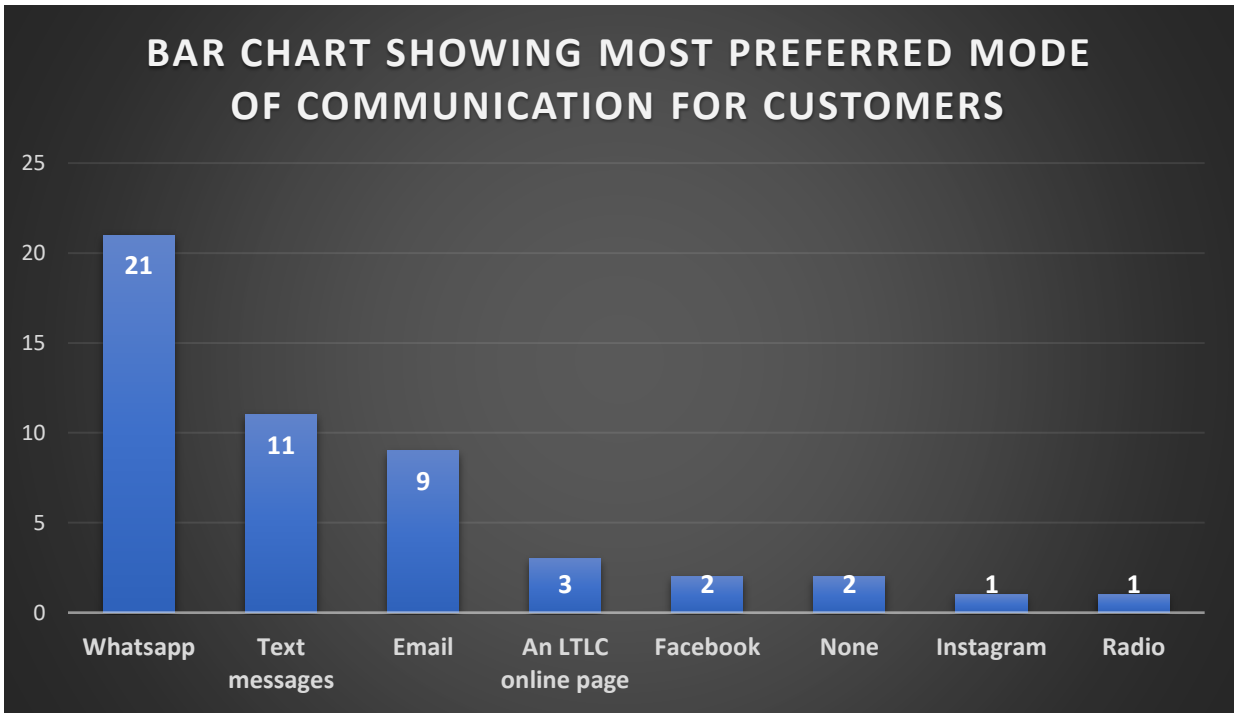

Figure 2: Bar Chart Showing Customers' Most Preferred Mode of Communication

- Next, respondents were asked about their most preferred mode of communication. With this question, some respondents gave more than one response (i.e., WhatsApp and

email); thus, the answer they mentioned first was picked. The most preferred mode of communication was WhatsApp, with 42%. The second most preferred mode of communication was through text messages with 22%. 18% of the respondents would prefer contact by email. The remaining 18% would prefer either a Live Truth Live Catholic online page, Facebook, Instagram, or radio.

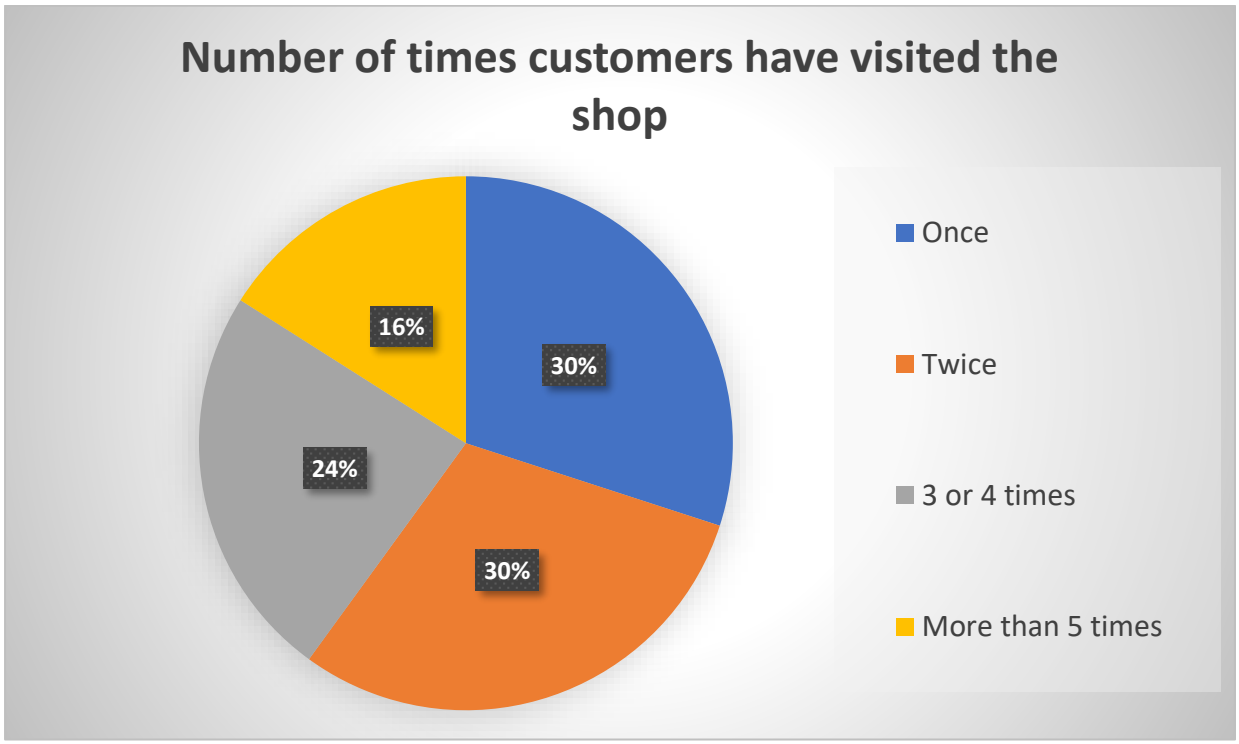

Figure 3: Pie Chart Showing Customer Patronage.

- 60% of the respondents had visited the shop once or twice. 24% had visited the shop 3 or 4 times, and 16% had visited more than 5 times. The majority of respondents are not repeating customers; thus, LTLC has to improve their customer retention strategies.

Figure 4: Bar Chart Showing Respondents' Reasons for Trying LTLC

- Participants were asked about what made them want to try LTLC. The majority of respondents visited LTLC because they were looking for something. Most of these respondents who fell in that category were looking for gifts. However, other items being searched for include: a book, candle, rosary, cd, poster, hymnal, and a dictionary. The second most prominent reasons participants visit LTLC is because they are Catholics. Other respondents visited LTLC just to see the kind of products available. Some respondents appreciate the beauty, uniqueness, and quality of products being sold. A few respondents tried it because of the referrals they got, and the remaining respondents tried it because they found the location convenient. The other few religious bookshops can be found in Central Accra. Central Accra tends to be far for most customers and is also a bustling and chaotic area.
- The last question respondents were asked revealed the most insights. Respondents were asked what they would do differently if they were to run this book and gift store. The most common response was that they would advertise more or have an online presence. Most respondents believed that a lot of Catholics do not know about LTLC and would be very excited to find out that a place like this exists. They suggested having stands at

church and visiting parishes during mass to inform parishioners about the shop, perhaps through announcements. The second most prominent response was either they had no idea, or they would do nothing differently. Some respondents said they would reduce the prices of products or introduce more affordable products. These respondents believed that only the "elites" could afford products at LTLC; thus, the shop should have a more extensive product range with more affordable products for people of all social classes. Another recurring suggestion was directed towards the type of products the shop should stock. Some respondents suggested stocking more child-friendly books, bigger rosaries to fit men, and more local products. A few respondents stated that the location of the shop was not too visible. The least recurring suggestion was to have more branches.

The key insights realized from the survey:

- LTLC customers seem to be a community, and most of the respondents heard about the shop through a friend. Thus, word of mouth is an important consideration when developing a solution for LTLC.
- The fact that most respondents would like to hear about LTLC's product offerings through WhatsApp and text messages is a significant finding. These means of communication are relatively more personal than others, like email or social media pages. People want LTLC's in their space and want to be communicated with on a personal level.
- LTLC has paid to do some advertisements in the Catholic Standard, church bulletins, and on GTV, however, these platforms are not where most of its customers heard about the shop. This proves that their promotional efforts are being directed towards wrong and ineffective mediums.

These findings would be used in the crafting of a solution for LTLC.

2.4.3 Observation

During the observation period, it was observed that the customers that visited the shop were a balance of men and women. Customers ranged from age 30 to 60, with most customers being falling between the ages of 30 and 50. The location of the shop does not give people the chance to come across it when going to other shops. All customers observed during the observation period were not drawn by something in the window; they already had the intention to enter. Most customers visited the shop looking for something already. When they enter, the salesperson immediately gets up to approach them and welcome them. They ask for the availability or location of what they are looking for. If they were just browsing, the first products they are drawn to are the rosaries. Customers interact with the products for approximately 2 minutes, and the average number of products customers bought was 2.

CHAPTER 3: MASTERY OF SUBJECT MATTER

3.1 Chapter Overview

Before this chapter, the main issue recognized was that LTLC was using the wrong approach in its attempt to attract and retain customers. Thus, this chapter aims to understand theories and concepts surrounding promotional strategies used in the retail industry and specialty markets like the one LTLC operates in. This chapter also uses scholarly articles to provide insights on literature and tools that will aid in developing a promotional plan for Live Truth Live Catholic.

3.2 Marketing

When marketing is mentioned, most people think about just advertising; however, it stretches beyond that. The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines marketing as "activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large" (American Marketing Association, 2013). The main highlight from this definition is the inclusion of capturing value for clients, partners, and the society, as most definitions one may come across are tailored solely towards customers.

According to Kotler and Levy (1969), marketing is seen as the task of finding and stimulating buyers for the firm's output. The authors discuss how marketing goes beyond selling to the improvement, pricing, distribution, and communication of products. Customer needs tend to change; hence progressive firms study these changing needs and design products and services to meet those needs. The authors also mention how marketing used to be viewed as a way of "pushing" products to customers; however, in modern days, marketing is more associated with finding ways to attract customers instead.

Both definitions from the various authors highlight how marketing is not just about selling and advertising but about creating value for customers by satisfying their continuously changing needs. Thus, promotions are essential because they are used to communicate customer value and to build excellent customer relationships (Todorova, 2015).

3.3 Promotional strategy

Promotion is an element of the marketing mix; Price, Place, Product, and Promotion. As mentioned earlier, promotion is used to ensure that consumers are aware of the products or services that the organization is offering. According to Adefulu (2015), a promotion strategy is a process whereby information about the organization's products or services is encoded into a promotional message for delivery to the customer. Jeyanthi (2014) defines a promotion strategy as an activity designed to help boost the marketing of a product or a service. The author continues to discuss that the importance of a promotion strategy is its ability to help businesses attract new customers while at the same time retaining older ones.

The promotional mix is a combination of different channels that can be used to communicate a promotional message to consumers (Ansari, 2011). The channels used include; advertising, direct marketing, public relations and publicity, personal selling, direct marketing,

sales promotion, and word of mouth. This is sometimes referred to as the marketing communications mix. A study by Kumar and Patra (2017) shows that the promotional mix has significant and positive effects on brand equity, so businesses should increase their promotions budget because an increase in promotional activities will result in high brand equity.

According to Todorova (2005), to have an effective marketing communications strategy for your business, marketers need to analyze the pros and cons of each element to consider and select the elements appropriate for the company and how to allocate a budget between them. Novak (2011) discusses that to develop a good promotional strategy, it is crucial for a business to factor in their promotional goals or objectives. Thus, businesses should identify tasks that are essential in achieving these objectives and use these activities to create a mix that best fits the business. The author also believes that a well-designed promotion is halfway to the success of a business and gaining customers.

Advertising is any controlled form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, and services by an identified sponsor that is used to inform and persuade the selected market (Bolen, 1984, p.4). Advertising can be done through mass communications media such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, print ads, banner ads, signs and billboards, in-store displays, direct mail, web pages, brochures and catalogs, posters, motion pictures, and emails. Mobile marketing has provided a channel for the use of advertising, direct marketing, and sale promotions. Mobile advertising provides marketers with the chance to promote their products and services in a personalized and interactive way (Smutkupt, Krairit, & Esichaikul, 2010).

Direct marketing uses different techniques, mostly through telephones and emails, to communicate directly with customers, and this technique is critical because it helps in developing a good relationship with customers. Companies can use direct marketing to present

new products or services directly to clients, and this can result in higher sales (Karaxha H., Tolaj S., & Abazi A., 2016). Mobile marketing has provided a channel for the use of direct marketing. According to Smutkupt, Krairit, & Esichaikul (2010), the fundamental goal of direct marketing is for consumers to respond, and mobile media makes it more possible to achieve that as compared to other media channels. They argue that this is mainly because customers have their phones almost all the time, allowing marketers to reach potential customers.

Although mobile phones have become a universal communications channel, there is a manner in which mobile marketing must take place. Mobile direct marketing is condemned for spamming because it can irritate customers. To deal with this, Tezinde, Smith, & Murphy (2002), suggest that mobile marketing should only be operated with permission from customers. Firms should only contact customers who have given their consent, and this would avoid irritating others. Also, customers should be allowed to opt-out of receiving messages at any time.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2009), public relations means “building good relations with the company’s various publics by obtaining favorable publicity, building up a good corporate image, and handling or heading off unfavorable rumors, stories, and events.” Curri-Memeti (2011) states that the primary goal of public relations is to influence the opinion of the public. The author further discusses how good public relations requires good knowledge of the company and its activities, its development possibilities, the problems it currently faces, or it used to face, analysis of the competition, and projecting or predicting any future events.

Personal selling is a presentation by the firms’ sales force for matching, sales, and building customer relationships. Company salespeople must know their customers' businesses better than customers do and align themselves with customers’ strategies. Personal selling remains one of the essential elements of the promotional mix as it makes room for the company

to listen to customers, assess their customer needs, and organize efforts to solve their customers' problems. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Personal selling is useful because it allows for direct two-way communication between the buyer and seller. This gives the organization greater opportunities to investigate the needs of its consumers and flexibility in adjusting their offers and presentation to meet these needs (Perreault & McCarthy, 2000). According to Oluyinka (2019), for personal selling to be effective, sales representatives should be well trained on what is expected from them on the job. This would give them the ability to convince customers as to why they need to purchase such a product. Sales representatives should also be well motivated to avoid the self-interest of representatives to increase the price.

Sales promotion is a technique aimed at impacting customers through personal communication and a system of market instruments to provoke or accelerate the purchase with short-term effects. It includes marketing activities to add product value for a limited amount of time to stimulate consumer purchases and intermediary performance. Sales promotion consists of a variety of tools, usually short-term, designed to promote faster or greater purchase of specific products or services (Kotler & Keller, 2006). A research conducted by Genchev & Todorova (2017) shows that for reaching information about various promotional activities, the most commonly used is the internet with 82.5% and promotional brochures with 77.2%. Mobile marketing can be used to help a business reach its sales promotions objectives effectively. Businesses can use text messages to send potential customers text-to-win campaigns or limited time offer coupons (Smutkupt, Krairit, & Esichaikul, 2010).

3.3.1 Consumer Decision Making Process: AIDA Model

The presence of AIDA is vital when using the marketing communications mix or any other model if a business wants to have a compelling marketing communications message (Kehinde, 2009). E.St. Elmo Lewis first developed the AIDA model in 1898, and AIDA is an

acronym that describes the various stages a consumer goes through when they encounter a promotional campaign before they decide to purchase a product or service. A, I, D, A represents Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action, respectively (Li & Yu, 2013). This model was introduced centuries ago and has been modified by other scholars; however, its principle remains intact and relevant. Attention involves getting consumers to be aware of the existence of the product. For interest, consumers show interest in the product based on the information they have received on the benefits of the product. Next, consumers express the desire to have a product because it meets their needs, wants, or interests. Finally, they take action by deciding to purchase the product or some other relevant actions (Michaelson & Stacks, 2011). The AIDA model comes with many advantages and some limitations. The model is not appropriate for all marketing. AIDA works best for marketing individual products but not a product line (Karpusheva, 2018).

Businesses use AIDA in traditional marketing, social media marketing, and direct marketing: mobile marketing and email marketing. According to Mumtaz (2019), the internet and social media are essential ingredients for running small businesses. Online marketing provides the opportunity for businesses to give explanations about products or services interactively, and this helps to create a desire in consumers to purchase the product or service. Online marketing helps in achieving the final phase in the model, action, with the provision to allow consumers to make card payments for purchases, among others (Hassan, Nadzim, Zaleha, & Shiratuddin, 2015).

Advertising mainly captures the attention of consumers, but it can also be used to create interest and desire in consumers (Hoek & Gendall, 2013). Promotional tools are used to create awareness and to get consumers interested in the product. However, awareness and interest do not necessarily result in desire and action. To get consumers to desire and take action, promotional mix tools that are attributed to these components should be used (Heymer, 2008).

Sales promotions are slightly effective in capturing attention and creating interest; however, they are very effective in leading to desire and, as a result, are somehow effective in getting consumers to take action (Kelley & Hyde, 2002). Research by Zondiwa (2017) shows that although sales promotions are a great tool to increase sales, it has to be used alongside other tools such as advertising or personal selling. Also, findings from the study prove that advertising influences product awareness, and internet advertising is essential as the world is turning digital.

A study conducted by Rehman, Nawaz, Ilyas & Hyder (2014) identified that mobile marketing has significant effects on interest, desire, and action. Mobile marketing is an enjoyable medium where customers show interest in the advertiser's promotional messages or campaigns (Rehman, Nawaz, Ilyas & Hyder, 2014). Research by Bamba and Barnes (2007) shows that customers enjoy receiving promotional offers on their mobile phones and, as a result, show positive perception. Advertise use mobile marketing to create desire by sending MMS messages or videos to customers, and mobile marketing has also made it possible for customers to purchase their desired products without leaving homes and offices, thereby achieving the action stage (Barutcu, 2007).

3.3.2 Customer Acquisition and Retention Strategies in the Retail industry

According to Pitliya (2016), retailers retain existing customers by implementing a Customer Loyalty Program, where they provide current customers with rewards for their repeat purchases. The rewards can be in the form of discount coupons, vouchers, and early access to sales, among others. Retailers also issue membership cards to attract and retain customers by motivating them for a repeat purchase. This is done by giving points to customers which they can redeem on their next visit and thus get discounts or free products equal to the points available in their cards.

Retailers use customer surveys to identify the points of improvement in a customer's experience and also to identify the customers' needs. This can be done through various survey techniques such as feedback forms and suggestion drop boxes, among others. Excellent customer service is also another essential strategy to retain customers as it keeps customers happy and satisfied. Excellent customer service includes good after-sales services by keeping in touch with customers to ask about their experience with the product, connecting with customers through social media sites, and emails to regularly update them on new products (Shweta, 2008). Sales promotion is the leading promotional tool that retailers use. Sales promotion consists of a variety of tools, usually short-term, designed to promote faster or greater purchase of specific products or services (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

CHAPTER FOUR: SOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 Chapter overview

LTLC aims to increase traffic and attract more customers to its shop. Unfortunately, their current promotional strategy is not appropriate for the type of market they operate in. This chapter focuses on a solution that solves the identified problem of LTLC as well as an implementation plan. The proposed solution is a customized promotional strategy using elements of the promotional mix alongside the AIDA model to maximize marketing outcomes for improved customer patronage.

4.2 Marketing objectives

LTLC has developed Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART) objectives to help them achieve their marketing goals.

Objectives

1. To ensure that at least 30% of Catholics in Accra are made aware of the existence and the product range available at LTLC by the end of 2020.
2. To ensure that at least 50% of those who are made aware of LTLC visit the shop by the end of 2020.
3. To increase sales by 20% by the end of 2020.

4.3 Promotional Mix and AIDA model

The five main elements of the promotional mix are advertising, public relations, direct marketing, personal selling, and sales promotion. Based on the research conducted, not all the elements of the promotional mix will be beneficial in crafting a solution for LTLC. LTLS's customized promotional strategy should include advertising, direct marketing, and sales promotion. Since advertising is effective in reaching a large market, it is needed to raise awareness of the existence of the shop to the Catholic community in Accra. This would help LTLC to achieve their first and second objectives. Direct marketing will inform consumers of new products and discounts. Sales promotions are essential because they will encourage and persuade consumers to buy products, and they have an immediate effect on sales. Sales promotions will also make advertising and direct marketing techniques more effective. Direct marketing and sales promotions will help LTLC to achieve their last objective, that is, to increase sales.

To achieve their promotional goals, while communicating their products to their current or potential customers, LTLC has to consider the AIDA model. Promotions aim to get consumers to decide to purchase a product or service, and the AIDA model would help LTLC understand the stages that a consumer goes through before they decide to purchase a product, that is, attention, interest, desire, and action.

LTLC firstly has to make consumers aware that their brand and products exist. Next, they need to get consumers interested in their product and, subsequently, make consumers move from liking the product to wanting the product. Finally, the consumer has to make the decision and take action by purchasing their product.

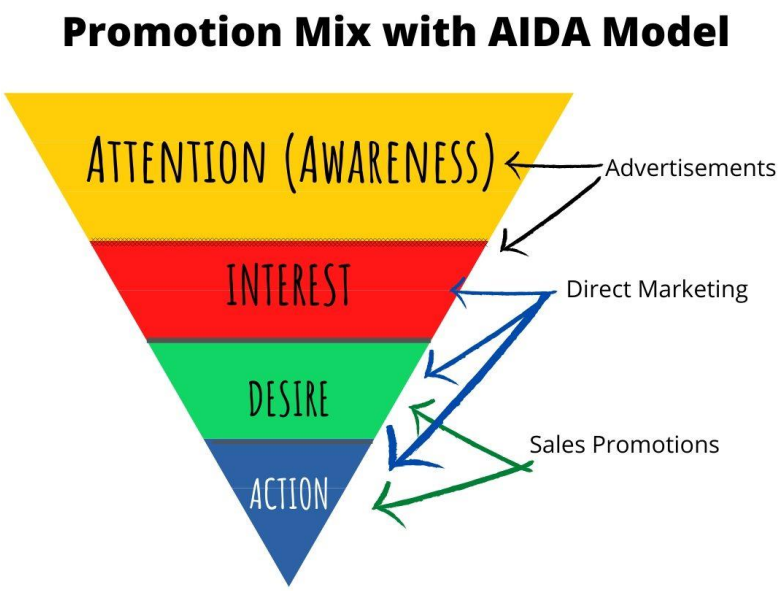

Figure 5: Promotion Mix with AIDA model

Figure 5 shows how advertisements, direct marketing, and sales promotions can be used to achieve the attention, interest, desire, and action of consumers. Figure 6 is an illustration of the proposed solution. It shows the elements and tactics pertaining to each element that would be used in developing the solution.

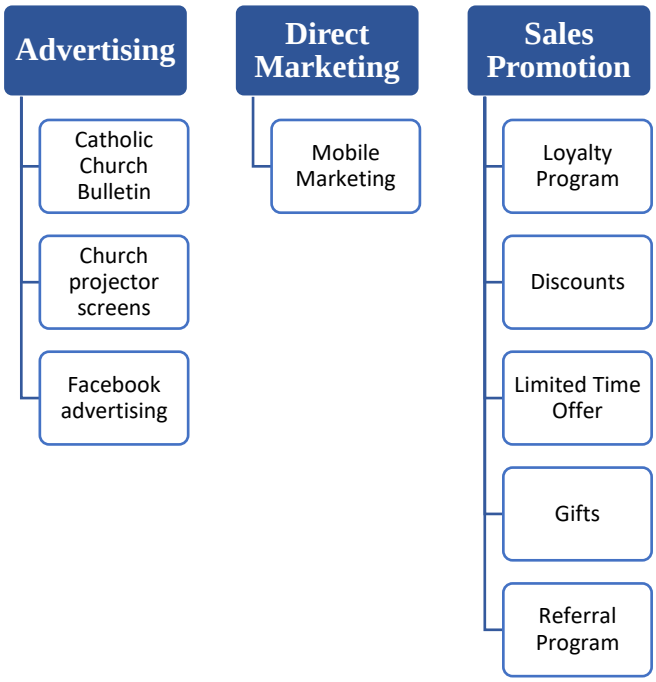

Figure 6: Proposed Solution for LTLC

To make all promotional efforts effective, LTLC has to incorporate a delivery service in their operations. This would increase their reach as there are consumers who may want products but cannot visit the shop physically—according to Mumtaz (2019), providing delivery options aids in achieving the action stage of the AIDA model. Delivery pushes customers to decide to purchase the product finally.

4.3.1 Advertising

Advertising is very effective in capturing the attention and interest of consumers (Lamb, Hair & McDaniel, 2011). To create awareness to potential customers, the first promotional strategy LTLC must take advantage of is Advertising. Advertising is the attempt to influence the buying behavior of customers with a persuasive selling message about products or services. In business, the goal of advertising is to attract new customers by defining the target market and reaching out to them with an effective ad campaign (Ward, 2018). A good advertisement would gain the attention of consumers and possibly get them interested in the product.

Catholic Church Bulletin

In most Catholic churches, there is a bulletin printed out for parishioners every Sunday. The contents of the bulletin include Bible readings for the mass, church announcements as well as some advertisements. The first advertising tactic would be for LTLC to place ads in the bulletins of at least 10 Catholic churches in Accra to attract more customers. The advertisement should include details such as the name of the shop, their logo, a summary of the product range, their location, and contact details.

Church projector screens

In most modern churches in Ghana, there are projector screens used during services to project readings, hymns, prayers, announcements, advertisements, and in bigger churches, a live recording of the preacher for those who cannot see the stage. The second advertising tactic would be for LTLC to take advantage of this and advertise on the screens of at least 10 Catholic churches during announcements. Implementing these advertisement strategies would satisfy the attention stage in the AIDA model.

Facebook advertising

Research by Hoek and Gendall (2003) proves social media as a powerful advertising tool in reaching a wider audience very quickly and its ability to attract and influence consumers to make purchasing decisions. Per the survey conducted during the needs assessment, the most preferred social media platforms by customers of LTLC were Facebook and WhatsApp. Thus, the next advertising tactic would be for LTLC to use Facebook advertising actively to reach more potential customers. To do this, they must create an LTLC page, and this would be used to target Christians, mainly Catholic users. Facebook provides them with a platform where they can advertise their product range to their potential customers at no cost. With this page, they can post a promotional video where users can like, share, and be engaged through comments. They must post regularly about their products and promotions, among others, to engage their

current and potential customers. This page can be used to respond to any queries that customers may have, and they must respond in a professional and friendly manner. Although advertising is most effective in creating awareness, according to Mumtaz (2019), posting catchy pictures and videos of products, promoting product features and benefits, and regularly updating social media pages with relevant information and promotions will help gain the interest of consumers.

Table 2: Recommended Schedule for LTLC's Facebook Posts.

DAY	CONTENT
SUNDAYS	Bible Verse of the day.
MONDAYS	Picture of the product of the week with a description.
THURSDAY	Video of one or two products.

Table 2 is a proposed content schedule that can be used to be consistent with the posts. Recent studies show that there are optimal posting frequencies for Facebook. Once a day is optimal, and businesses should post on their Facebook Pages at least three times per week (Myers, 2020).

LTLC can also pay for Facebook advertising by using the Facebook Ads Manager to create a Facebook ad campaign. In doing this, they would have to specify the demographics of their target audience that they would like to reach with the campaign, their location, how much they are willing to spend, and how long the ad campaign should run. Facebook ad campaigns have eleven objectives, and some of these objectives will help LTLC to expose their ad to as many people in their audience as possible. Subsequently, this would drive nearby customers to their physical store.

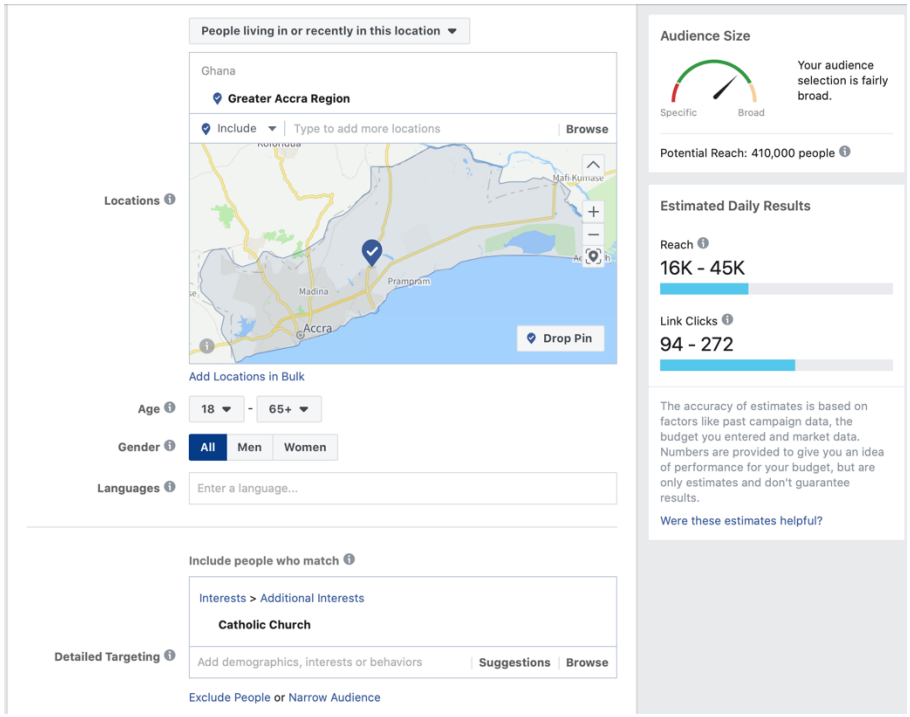

Figure 7: Paid advertising on Facebook

Image source: www.facebook.com

Figure 7 shows how to specify your audience with the Facebook Ad Manager. Since LTLC operates in a niche market, they can select the Greater Accra Region as their target location, people aged 18 to 65+, people of both genders, and most importantly, people who show interest in pages relating to the Catholic Church, as their target audience. By doing this, they will be capturing the attention of this group of people and making them aware of the existence of LTLC.

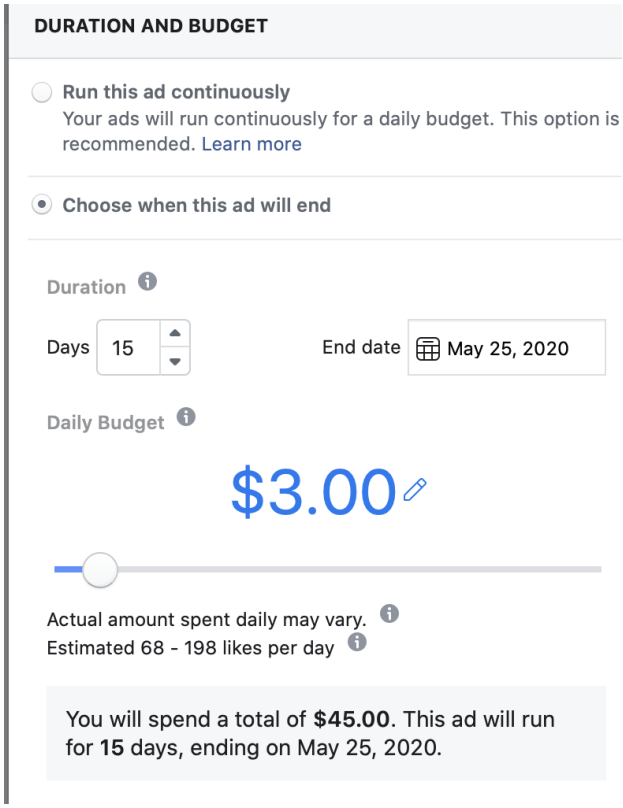

Figure 8: Paid advertising on Facebook

Image source: www.facebook.com

Figure 8 shows the budget and schedule for the ad. LTLC can indicate a budget of $3, and the ad would run for two weeks. Facebook estimates that with this budget, their page can get from 68 to 198 likes per day.

4.3.2 Direct Marketing

The second promotional strategy LTLC should take advantage of is Direct marketing. Direct marketing is a type of promotion where you communicate details about your product, service, or business directly to customers. This can be done through the telephone or email; however, LTLC's direct marketing tactic includes solely mobile marketing. Results from a study show that mobile marketing has a more significant impact on the AIDA model as compared to email marketing (Rehman, Nawaz, Ilyas & Hyder, 2014). Direct marketing can be used to achieve the interest, desire, and action of consumers.

Mobile marketing: WhatsApp marketing

Advertise use mobile marketing to create desire by sending MMS messages or videos to customers. MMS is currently not an option in Ghana; thus, the alternative would be to use WhatsApp. Also, per the survey conducted, the most preferred method of communication for LTLC customers was WhatsApp. WhatsApp is a free messaging app that allows its users to send text messages, voice notes, share images, documents, location, and make voice and video calls, among others. Subscribers are more active on WhatsApp and text messages; thus, they have higher open rates as compared to email. According to Nielsen's Facebook Messaging Survey, 53% of respondents say they are more likely to shop with a business they can message directly (Liffreing, 2016). Thus, the next direct marketing tactic would be for LTLC to use WhatsApp to chat directly with their customers.

To get started with WhatsApp marketing, they must get a number solely for business purposes. Next, they should join WhatsApp and place their logo as their profile picture, and the username should be "Live Truth Live Catholic" (as shown in figure 9). When customers visit the shop, the salesperson can ask for their numbers and request their permission to contact them, send them promotions and other relevant information.

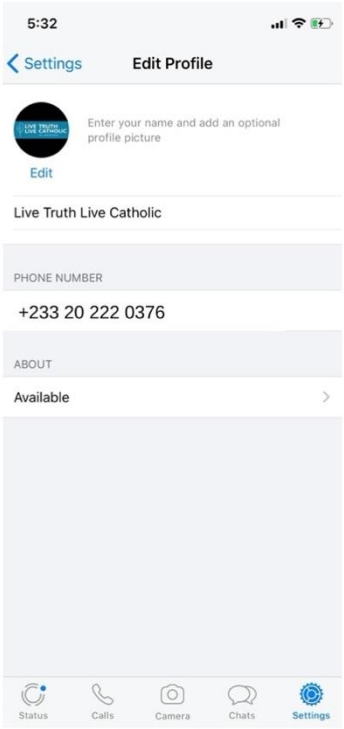

Figure 9: WhatsApp Profile Page.

Sending quality images and videos of products to customers on WhatsApp and responding to questions, complaints, comments, and suggestions help keep customer interest high (Ruia, 2017). LTLC is advised to use WhatsApp as a means to provide excellent customer service to its customers by receiving orders, responding to inquiries, and promoting products. When customers ask for directions to the shop, LTLC can use WhatsApp to send the exact location of the shop.

LTLC can also WhatsApp to discuss their sales promotions. They can either send general messages to all their customers by a broadcast or send promotions based on customer preferences. To do the last bit, they have to segment their contact list. To segment their contact list, they would use their sales history to segment their customers based on product categories. Thus, when there is a promotion for a specific product, they can send a message to customers who have bought similar products in the past. This strategy would only work for existing customers, thus, achieving customer retention.

Another important feature of WhatsApp that LTLC can take advantage of is the WhatsApp status. With this feature, there is a tab to upload posts that last for 24 hours then disappear after. They can use this to promote their products and deals, offers, or post Bible verses, among others making sure each post contains the business' logo. They should also post content based on the Catholic calendar, i.e., a post each day during important celebrations like Lent, Easter, Rosary month, or Christmas. They can also post reviews on products from customers on their status. Showcasing positive reviews previous customers have after purchasing your product can create desire (Ruia, 2017).

A sample post for the WhatsApp status is shown below in figure 10, and a sample flyer promoting a product promotion is shown in figure 11.

Figure 10: Sample Post for WhatsApp Status

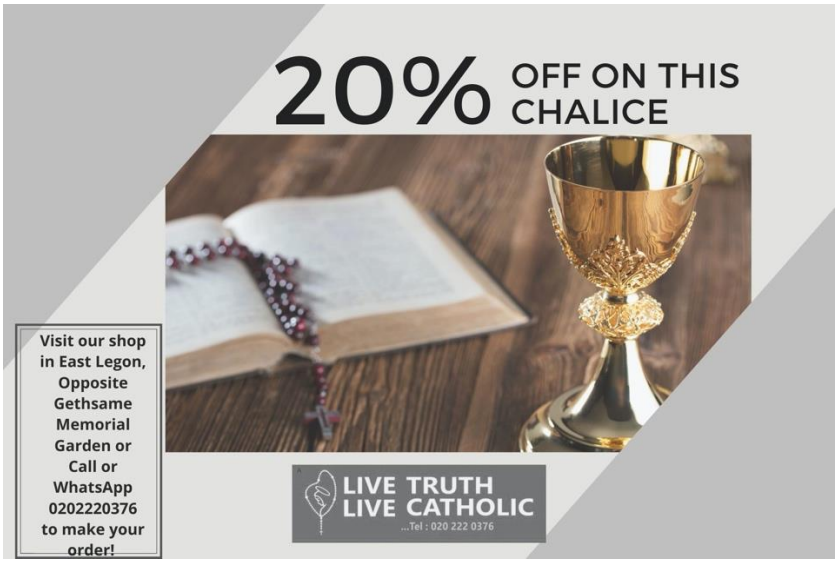

Figure 11: Sample Flyer for Product Promotion that can be sent on WhatsApp

<u>Tips for Direct Marketing</u>

- When customers receive messages that are personalized, they are more likely to pay attention and take action (Hott, 2020). LTLC can personalize messages by addressing customers by their names in messages, and this would grab their attention and get them interested in continuing to read the message.
- LTLC should depict products in creative ways. This would communicate the value of the product to the consumer and get them to desire the product. An example is a picture or video of someone praying the rosary.
- When sending promotional messages, LTLC should include statements like “Call 0202220376 to place your order” or “Order now.” This helps push consumers to take action and finally purchase the product (Ruia, 2017).
- LTLC must provide respect and quality in sending messages to their customers. To avoid spamming, it is advisable to, for instance, send a single message with several paragraphs rather than sending numerous separate messages (Skaf, 2017).

4.3.3 Sales Promotions

The greatest strength of sales promotions is its ability to create strong desire and purchase intent (Lamb, Hair & McDaniel, 2011). To get consumers to desire and subsequently purchase their products, the next promotional strategy LTLC should take advantage of is Sales promotions. A sales promotion is a short-term marketing strategy to attract more customers, introduce a new product or lift sales temporarily through sales incentives such as coupons, discounts, loyalty cards, limited time offers, and gifts, among others.

Loyalty cards/programs

The first sales promotion tactic LTLC should take advantage of is loyalty programs. Although sales promotions have the intention of driving sales in the short-term, loyalty programs focus more on the long-term. Loyalty programs are reward programs offered to customers who have been identified as frequent purchasers.

LTLC can use loyalty programs to achieve customer retention as it incentivizes customers to keep coming back. This loyalty program does not necessarily have to be in the form of discounts. LTLC can incorporate a business value into the loyalty program, and this can help build a stronger relationship with its customers. Structuring their loyalty program around values that are common or mutual with customers' values, their customers are more likely to become loyal customers.

LTLC can take this approach by continually donating rewards to a poor and needy foundation of their choice. They must be fully transparent about this strategy, so customers are fully aware and trust that their money is being used for what they have promised. LTLC should give recurring customers loyalty cards where they can either choose to receive a 20% discount on their 5th purchase at the shop or choose to donate their rewards to a poor and needy foundation or any charity. A sample flyer to be sent to customers and a sample loyalty card is shown below in figures 12 and 13.

Figure 12: Sample Loyalty Program Flyer

These flyers should be sent to LTLC customers on WhatsApp and printed and shared with customers who visit the shop.

Figure 13: Sample Loyalty Card

These loyalty cards should be given to customers the salesperson has identified as repeat customers.

Discounts

LTLC can use discounts to increase sales in the short term. Per the survey, some respondents mentioned that the items in the shop were a bit pricey; thus, a certain group of people could not afford most products. Discounts can come in the form of a percentage off, discounting items by a flat cedi amount or free delivery. Through discounts, certain groups of customers may be able to purchase something they wanted but could not afford. LTLC can offer discounts on certain products once a quarter.

Limited Time Offer

The next sales promotion tactic LTLC can use is the limited time offer. A limited time offer is a type of sales promotion where an organization offers discounts, deals, or rewards to customers if they purchase within a specific time frame. This strategy would be an excellent way for them to draw in customers and increase traffic as it creates a sense of urgency. Customers will feel that if they do not purchase within the time frame, they would not have that opportunity again. LTLC can give customers 30% off a particular product, which would be valid for 24 hours. This strategy can be performed once a month.

This sales promotion strategy has to work with direct marketing and advertising because LTLC would have to send customers this information through WhatsApp or post on their Facebook page. Sample flyers are shown in figure 14.

Figure 14: Sample Limited Time Offer Flyer

Gifts

The next sales promotion tactic LTLC should take advantage of is the use of gifts. LTLC can give free, customized bookmarks to people who purchase books from the store. Every time the reader uses the bookmark, they would remember the shop. The bookmark should have the shop's logo and reflect the brand, i.e., a catholic image in the background. A sample bookmark is shown below in figure 15.

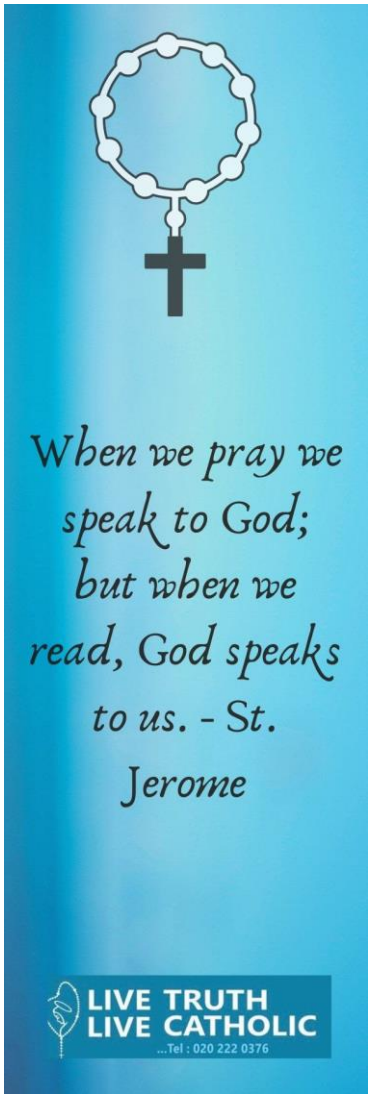

Figure 15: Image showing a Sample Bookmark

Referral Program

The final and most essential sales promotion strategy LTLC should take advantage of is referral programs. This is the most crucial strategy for them because results from the survey showed that most customers heard about the shop through word of mouth; thus, they have to take advantage of and capitalize on the use of word of mouth. Referral programs are a sales promotion strategy where the organization pushes its customers to bring in new customers to enjoy certain benefits such as special discounts, offers, or monetary benefits. The referrer and the referee can both get a 10% discount off their next purchase.

In creating a referral program, LTLC would have to build customer segments to target their referral messaging. It would work best if these messages are sent to their frequent customers because they are the ones who will probably be paying the most attention to their messages or regularly visiting their Facebook page.

A manual referral process would work best for LTLC since they are a relatively small retail store, and they operate in a physical location. They also have to be able to track the referral program. To monitor the program, they can hand out physical coupons to their customers and instruct them to write their names on them. When their referees come to the shop and submit these coupons, it will be easy to identify who referred them (a sample coupon is shown in figure 16). Alternatively, customers can tell their friends to mention their names to the salesperson during their purchase.

Figure 16: Image showing a Sample Referral Program Coupon

Sales promotion techniques, most importantly, limited time offers and referral systems, help achieve the action goal in the AIDA model as it motivates the consumer to take action and make a purchase immediately.

Other promotion ideas

1. LTLC can put an outdoor signboard nearer to the road. Per the survey, some respondents mentioned that the location of the shop in the building makes it hard for people who are not attentive to notice it. An outdoor signboard can make more passerby's aware of the shop.
2. LTLC can also hold book launches or book readings at the shop to promote the book, and this can result in more people purchasing the book. They can also hold events like Catholic "Question and Answer (Q&A)" sessions with a prominent Catholic figure, such as a Bishop, which will promote the shop as more people become aware of its existence, and they can also browse through the other products after the event.

4.4 Implementation Plan

This part of the chapter provides a plan and recommendations for implementing the proposed solution. The implementation plan shows how, when, and how often LTLC should execute the proposed solution.

Table 3: Implementation Plan

Key
$- relatively affordable
$$- slightly expensive
$$$- expensive

Solution/Activity	**Details**	**Date**	**Frequency**	**Budget**
Advertising				
Catholic Church Bulletin	Place an ad in the bulletin of at least 10 Catholic churches.	September 2020	Every other Sunday for two months.	$
Church Projector Screen	Show an ad on at least ten church projector screens during the announcement period.	September 2020	Every other Sunday for one month.	$
Facebook advertising				
Free advertising	Create a Facebook page for the business. Post pictures, videos about the shop's details, products.	June 2020	-	$

	Interact by responding to inquiries current or potential may have.			
Paid advertising	Pay for a Facebook Ad.	July 2020	-	$$
Direct Marketing				
WhatsApp Marketing	Use WhatsApp to send personalized messages to customers. Establish good customer relationships by directly chatting with customers. Take orders, respond to inquiries, and promote products. Send new customers the location of the shop upon request. Post content on WhatsApp status.	August 2020	-	$$
Sales Promotion				
Loyalty Program	Loyal customers choose to receive a 20% discount on their 5th purchase at the shop or choose to donate their	August 2020	-	$

	rewards to a poor and needy foundation or any charity.			
Discounts	Reduce the price or free delivery for a range of products (sale).	September 2020	Once a quarter	$$$
Limited Time Offer	Give customers a percentage off a particular product which would be valid for 24 hours.	September 2020	Once a month	$$
Gifts	Give a bookmark to customers who buy books.	August 2020	-	$$
Referral Program	Referrer and referee get 10% off their next purchase.	July 2020	-	$$

This chapter presented a proposed solution for LTLC's issue of low customer attraction and retention. The solution was developed using elements of the promotion mix alongside the AIDA model, and the desired outcome of the solution is higher customer patronage of LTLC.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter aims to highlight the key insights collected during the project and includes a general conclusion of the project. It will outline certain limitations encountered while carrying out the project. It will also give some recommendations to LTLC that they need to consider in carrying out the solution.

5.2 Conclusion

This project aimed to identify the factors that were affecting the growth of LTLC. After conducting the needs assessment, it was uncovered that LTLC was struggling to attract and retain customers. This was mainly because they were using the wrong approach in their promotional efforts, and their promotional strategy was not appropriate for the type of market that they operate. One lesson was that it was important to study the demographics and other characteristics of a target group to develop a tailored and effective promotional plan.

The proposed solution is a customized promotional plan, including tactics in advertising, direct marketing, and sales promotions. This will enable LTLC to attract more customers from the Catholic community and will help them retain and gain loyal customers.

5.3 Limitations

- There may have been some bias when undergoing this project as the owners of LTLC are my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Osei-Wusu.
- Since, patronage at the shop is low, at the time of my data collection, I did not get enough people to fill the questionnaire; thus, I had to resort to telephone interviews. I could have gotten more than 50 respondents for the survey, as currently, the shop has received over 200 customers.

5.4 Recommendations

- LTLC should partner with a delivery company to enable them to reach a wider audience as there are people that may want products but cannot visit the physical shop. Orders will be taken via phone call or WhatsApp, and customers can pay via Mobile money or pay cash to the dispatch rider.
- They should consult a marketing expert to train their staff in charge of marketing and to help them implement the solution. The staff must be conversant with WhatsApp and Facebook to post content regularly, send information to customers, and respond to inquiries in a professional manner. They can hire someone or train current staff to be designing posts for their social media pages.
- They are encouraged to conduct surveys when they commence the implementation plan to test its effectiveness. They can ask customers where they heard about the shop or what drew them to come and make a purchase. This is to identify which of the strategies are working best to know what to prioritize, continue, or discontinue.
- They should continue to keep a database of customer information.

The presence of AIDA is essential when using the marketing communications mix if a business wants to have a compelling marketing communications message (Kehinde, 2009). To capture the awareness, interest, desire, and action of consumers, the promotional mix tools that are attributed to these components should be used (Heymer, 2008). The proposed solution is effective because each tactic is aligned with one or more stages in the consumer decision-making process, the AIDA model.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Consent Form

I would like to ask your permission to be part of a market study for my Final Capstone Project. Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated. You are free to be part of this activity, and you are equally free to withdraw from the study at any moment during the activity. There are no risks of being part of this study, however a major benefit of contributing to this study is an improved promotional plan for Live Truth Live Catholic.

The data collected during this study will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and is strictly for academic purposes. Names and identity will not be disclosed at any point of the study as the information will be made anonymous. At the end of the study, physical evidence will be destroyed.

If you have any questions, you can ask me, Nana Abena Nyarko Osei-Wusu, the researcher behind this study. If you agree to be part of this study, you will be contacted to either fill a questionnaire, or to participate in a telephone interview conducted by myself.

For further information, you can contact my supervisor, Rose Dodd. This study and consent form has been reviewed by Ashesi IRB for Human Subjects Research. For further information contact the committee through irb@ashesi.edu.gh.

Signature of Research Participant

_____ _____

Respondent's signature Date

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Appendix II: Questionnaire and Interview Guides

Customers – Questionnaire and Telephone Interview

1. Where did you first hear about us?
2. How would you want Live Truth Live Catholic to communicate its offerings to you?
3. How many times have you visited the shop?
4. What made you want to try Live Truth Live Catholic?
5. What attracted you to the shop?
6. Which other or similar bookshops did you patronize before here and why?
7. If you ran this book and gift store, what would you do differently?

Owners/Management

1. When was Live Truth Live Catholic established?
2. What is your mission and vision?
3. How does the company attract customers?
4. How does it ensure that customers revisit the shop?
5. What are the bookshop's strengths and weaknesses?
6. Who is your target market?
7. What is the product portfolio of this book and gift store?

8. Approximately how many customers do you receive in a day?
9. What are the biggest issues facing your business today?
10. What do you consider your biggest marketing issue?
11. How have you done promotions in the past?
12. What goals do you have for your marketing strategies?
13. How effective are these strategies?
14. How do you intend to reach potential customers?
15. What would you like to achieve with a strategic promotional plan?
16. How would you measure the success of this promotional plan?

Appendix III: Observation guide

Customer:	**Observation date:**	
Time entered:	**Time exited:**	
Areas of observation		**Observations**
What are their demographic characteristics?		
Were they drawn to something in the window or were they already intended on entering?		
What do they notice first or where do they first go?		
How long do they interact with the product?		
How many products do they pick up and eventually buy?		
How long does it take before the sales personnel initiates contact with customer?		