Ashesi University

Designing a Market Segmentation and Positioning Strategy for Unitech Premiere

Computers Limited.

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Applied Project, with the exception of the cited references and sources of data, is the result of my own original ethically cleared research 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 this Applied Project were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of Applied Project laid down by Ashesi University.

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Date: …………………………………………………..

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unitech Premiere Computers is a computer retail outlet which was established in 2017 and currently located at Achimota. It provides computer gadgets, its accessories and repair services. After three years of operating in the computer retail industry, it aims to increase its market share by providing superior services to its customers. However, efforts to climb the competitive ladder have proved futile.

To determine the cause of Unitech's inability to increase market share, qualitative research was conducted. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data from the Chief Executive Office and the General Manager while qualitative data was gathered from customers and potential customers via an online questionnaire. The collected data was analyzed using the root cause analytical tool. Analysis showed that the primary hindrances to Unitech's market share acquisition is the absence of a precise market position and poor marketing strategies targeted at mass audiences.

This project solved this problem through a proposed market segmentation and positioning strategy. The market segmentation defined the different customer groups that exists in the computer retail market. After segmenting the market, segments Unitech can competitively with its resources were highlighted. Then, various service and product attributes that are relevant to customers were identified from market research. Results were used to determine the current and aspired market position of Unitech concerning selected service and product attributes. The gap between the aspired and current market position of Unitech was bridged using bespoke marketing strategies.

This solution would reflect positively into customer satisfaction, increased sales and ultimately market share acquisition.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

The demand for technological products has grown tremendously over the years. Assertions of Pwc (2015) denote that the introduction of technological breakthroughs such as iPods, notepads, etc., has allowed for different market segments' needs to be met. Just as demand has increased significantly, so has competition increased due to the large number of firms operating in the industry. Hence, this project focused on aiding Unitech Premiere, a small business established in 2017, to increase its market share through effective market positioning amidst the harsh competition in the computer retail market.

Unitech Premiere Computers Limited has faced specific challenges that has impeded its expansionary goals. Challenges such as the inability to provide a superior value proposition, a weak marketing strategy, and its middle-men populated supply chain leading to high prices, an unfavorable location, and the absence of proper financial records were presented by the general manager as setbacks

The business's long-term goals includes establishing branch offices in six regions across the country, and becoming a major retailer and supplier by establishing direct partnerships with brands like HP, Lenovo, Apple, and Dell. The firm also aims to acquire business assets like pieces of land and building, etc., to spur business growth.

The short term goals of Unitech includes increasing brand awareness and customer satisfaction, intensifying customer loyalty, developing a comprehensive financial plan, and reducing operational costs. However, the short-term goals that was

given primacy in this project is the quest of the firm to increase brand awareness especially among specific target market(s).

To achieve this short-term goal, it relies on publicity on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. It also relies on recommendations to increase market share. Additionally, it sends out bulk messages to customers to remind them of its service offerings. Despite these efforts, the firm has been unable to build a strong brand presence in the computer retail market.

Since Unitech has no control on product quality of manufactured gadgets, this project will focus on how it can position its service favorably among target customers. Nonetheless, certain aspects of product positioning will be highlighted. The different strategies for services positioning was broadly classified by Coffie (2014) into positioning to portray service reliability, social responsibilities and branding. Hence, the positioning strategy suitable for Unitech would be finalized based on its objectives, resources and values.

1.1. Company Profile

Unitech Premiere Computers Limited was established in 2017. It is located at Achimota near the Shell Filling Station. It is mainly a retailer of computers, computer accessories and provides repair services. It seldom sells as a wholesaler. Its value proposition serves the needs of a wide range of customers which includes college students and working class persons in different fields. It currently has three employees, thus the CEO, the general manager and a dispatch rider in charge of delivery services.

1.1.1. Mission Statement of Unitech

To provide high quality computers, computer accessories and repair services at attractive prices whiles providing competitive customer services.

1.1.2. Vision of Unitech

To be the principal distributor of computers and computer accessories of major brands like HP, Apple, Lenovo and Dell in Ghana through affordable and superior service delivery.

1.2. Rationale for Selection

Unitech was selected for this project because it resonated with the entrepreneurial path of the researcher. The researcher has keen interest in entrepreneurship hence considered Unitech as a typical case study where entrepreneurial skills pertaining to research, communication, and creativity could be applied. Therefore, the execution of this project will provide the drill needed for the professional world.

Creativity is needed to achieve the short and long-term goals of a business. Hence, any efforts to increase sales sustainably needs thinking outside the box. Because current and potential customers, employees, and relevant stakeholders of Unitech would be interacted with, it is important to exude skillful and ethical communication tactics in surveys and interviews to reduce bias.

Also, Unitech was selected because the researcher was a brand ambassador at Ashesi who got real-time experience into the challenges the business faced. This developed a strong sense of passion to aid the business attain its mission and vision.

Finally, amidst the many challenges that plague Unitech, its cash flow over the past three years has been impressive. Despite the problems the firm has with strategic positioning, it has been able to record impressive cash flows indicative of a high potential firm. Hence, with the proper positioning strategy, the firm would be better equiped to attain its short and long-term goals.

Conclusively, this project is a great opportunity to exhibit the leadership and citizenship pillars of Ashesi University.

1.3. PESTLE Analysis

This project would commence with an analysis of the broader climate of doing businesses to understand macroeconomic forces and how it impacts the operations of Unitech Premiere Computers Limited.

Perara (2017) asserts that PESTLE is an analytical tool that is used to assess how external components of the macro-environment affect a business. PESTLE is an abbreviation which stands for Political, Economic, Social-Cultural, Technological, Legal and Environmental. Hence, depicts that there are seven aspects of the macro-economy that impacts the success of every business. Hence, PESTLE can also be regarded as a tool that helps a business to develop a competitive advantage or take a strategic market position.

Due to the changing nature of the following components, it is ideal to conduct a PESTLE analysis periodically so that a business is up-to-date with external dynamics or changes in the various PESTLE components. Nevertheless, this is not a rigid framework. A business can add more areas of analysis to the PESTLE or eliminate certain components depending on the industry in perspective.

1.3.1. Political

The political climate of Ghana is characterized by democracy, rule of law, separation of powers, checks and balances, and supremacy of the constitution. Ghana gained its independence in 1957. It practices democracy that upholds respect for human rights, free and fair elections, a multiparty political system, and the supremacy of the constitution and rule of law. These pillars of Ghana's democracy has made it a lucrative destination for business.

According to the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (2020), Ghana's sound political environment has spurred growth in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) over the years. Building on significant natural resources, Ghana is committed to improving its physical infrastructure (GIPC, 2020). Ghana's continuous improvement especially in road infrastructure would enable Unitech offer prompt and convenient delivery services.

In assessing Ghana's risk in international trade, Groupe Societe Generale (2020) concluded that custom duties in Ghana are not as high as it varies up to 20 percent. This would substantially enhance Unitech's international partnerships with brands like HP, Lenovo and Apple. However, the paperless system introduced by the Ministry of Trade has introduced several bottlenecks that importers are currently making efforts to negotiate, hence likely to make clearing of goods hectic for Unitech. Ghana is a member of the World Trade Organization, ECOWAS and other trade partnerships. The trade partnership with ECOWAS allows the country to enjoy concessionary privileges. Hence, Unitech has access to a broader market within the ECOWAS region without disadvantageous trade restrictions.

1.3.2. Economic

The economic climate of Ghana is governed by GDP, inflation rate, interest rate, exchange rate, and unemployment rate.

Firstly, GDP measures total goods and services produced in a country in a given period. Hence, GDP measures the level of economic opportunities available in a country. According to African Development Bank Group (2020), Ghana recorded a 7.1% growth in GDP in 2017 and has maintained strong growth momentum since 2017. Such high growth in GDP constantly places Ghana amongst the 10 fastest-growing economies in Africa. Contributions to Ghana's GDP is recorded under three major sectors; agriculture, industry and services. The Services Sector of Ghana remains the largest contributor to GDP with a 46% and 46.3% share of GDP in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

The output of Unitech fits under the Services sector and the Trade sub sector. From 2013 to 2018, the trade sub sector contributed the highest to GDP. This reflects high economic opportunities for Unitech.

Inflation refers to the general increase in prices of goods and services in a country in a given period of time. According to the Bank of Ghana (2020), the covid-19 pandemic introduced a new wave of inflation. In the first quarter of 2020, inflation remained at 7.8% but rose by 11.2% in the second quarter largely because of the panic buying of food products due to the partial lockdown enforced in that period. Specifically, inflation of food items was 8.4% at the end of the first quarter and 13.9% at the end of the second quarter in 2020. This is contrary to the lower inflation of non-food items which recorded an inflation of 7.4% and 9.2% in the first and second quarter respectively. This lower inflation outlook for businesses like Unitech who operate in the non-food sector

signals an opportunity for intense price competition to acquire customers, especially those who have been most financially affected by the covid-19 pandemic

Moreover, in 2020, the unemployment rate in Ghana was approximately 4.5% of the total labor force. The unemployment rate is the percentage of a country's labor force that are without jobs but are available to work and actively seeking employment. Ghana's unemployment rate is above the worldwide unemployment rate. Compared to other Sub-Saharan African countries and other regions, Ghana has a relatively average rate of unemployment (Plecher, 2020). This relatively high unemployment rate in 2020 was due to the covid-19 pandemic.

The surge in unemployment rate would directly reflect in the purchasing power of customers of goods and services provided by Unitech as such goods are regarded as luxuries rather than necessities.

Consequently, the relatively higher unemployment rate in 2020 led to a decline in savings. Typically, the decline in savings accompanied with the increasing demand for funds from the loanable funds market by businesses to revamp operations was expected to result in a higher interest rate on borrowing. However, the regulatory oversight provided by the Bank of Ghana (2020) has maintained monetary policy rate at 14.5% to restrict the rather high interest rate dictates of the mechanism of demand and supply of loanable funds.

Nonetheless, with interests rates no better than before, small businesses like Unitech would still find debt financing costly, especially during the covid-19 pandemic.

1.3.3. Social-Cultural

According to the World Bank (2020), the population of Ghana lies at about 31 million with a population growth rate of 2.24%, 2.22%, 2.19% and 2.16% in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively. According to Plecher (2020), the age distribution of Ghana's population is categorized under 0-14 years, 15-64 years, and 65 years and older.

Because Unitech offers phones, computers and other technological gadgets, the age range of 15-64 years contain their target market thus, the youth and working class persons. Persons between 15-64 years constituted 58.22% in 2012 and 59.5% in 2019. This is indicative of an increase in demand for the goods of services of Unitech.

Finally, socio-cultural trends like the increasing awareness about the negative effects of rays or emissions from computer monitors, the changing nature of work where various sectors see the need to computerize its operations, the changing income levels of consumers, would substantially affect the demand for Unitech's commodities.

1.3.4. Technological

Dynamics in the technological world also affects the fates of businesses. The use of computers and mobile phones have peaked in recent facets of life. Hence, with technology being a fast-paced industry, Unitech needs to ensure a high inventory turnover rate so that it can absorb new technologies with its available capital.

Also, more sign up on social media platforms and the introduction of new social media platform has made the internet a lucrative destination for online marketing. The use of apps by businesses to promote their brands can also be adapted by Unitech to provide customers with a bespoke and well differentiated customer experience.

However, the intermittent power outages in Ghana would require businesses like Unitech who provide a 24-hour service to make use of generators to mitigate the effects of such inconveniences.

1.3.5. Legal

This focuses on regulatory provisions that must be complied with. Currently, Unitech employs a single dispatch rider. In line with the businesses expansion goals, more dispatch riders will be employed in the future to facilitate quick delivery. Hence, Unitech would need to license all of its dispatch riders at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority of Ghana.

Also, since products sold are governed by strict patent rights laws, Unitech who is a retail outlet of already manufactured goods cannot alter the designs of the physical products they sell as differentiation strategies. Hence, it needs to develop and constantly revise its service offering to beat competitors.

1.3.6. Environmental

This relates to issues about the environment and environmental protection. Currently Unitech uses generators that emit harmful substances into the atmosphere. It also uses plastic packaging that contributes to the cumbersomeness involved in managing the plastic waste affects environmental sustainability. Hence, customers who are particular about environmental sustainability may shy away from patronizing the value offering of Unitech.

Table 1. Summary of Pestle Analysis

Political	Economical	Social	Technological	Legal	Environmental

Political Stability	GDP Inflation	Population Growth Rate	New inventions	Licensing Regulations	Environmental protection laws
International Trade Restrictions	Interest Rate	Population Age Distribution	High Speed of technological obsolescence	Patent and Copyright laws	
Government Development Priorities	Exchange Rate	Change in individual and business culture	Growth of the Internet		
	Unemployment	Increased Health Education	Energy Usage and associated costs.		

1.4 Porter's Five Forces

The Porter's five forces is an analytical tool that helps to study an industry in which a business operates. This tool blends five perspectives that influence industry competitiveness.

1.4.1. Immediate Rivals

The number of competitors in an industry contributes to the magnitude of competition a business would encounter. When there are a lot of rivals in the industry that offer the same product or range of products, target the same customer segment, roughly

the same size, use the same distribution channels and have little to no differentiation of the products, rivalry is intense.

In Ghana, the computer retail industry has a lot of rivals concentrated in popular places like around the Accra Kwame Nkrumah Circle, Lapaz and single operators scattered all over the country. Most of these firms are roughly the same size and use the same distribution channels. However, CompuGhana, Telephonica, Franko Trading Enterprise, Freddies Corner are known to be the bigger players in the industry. Other firms include, Laptop Palace Ghana, Dipaca venture, Websys Technology, Market Techextra Supplies, Officepoint, Smart Deals Ghana, Majora computers, only to mention a few. It is also worth noting that a lot of firms in the industry also operate as sole proprietors or operate in the informal sector.

1.4.2. Potential Entrants

According to Plecher (2020), the level of competition in an industry also depends on the ease of entry into that industry. Barriers to entry can be associated with the capital requirement, experience acquired for the field, the need to operate on an economy of scale, the importance of customer loyalty to ensure profitability, the ease to differentiating products, governmental restrictions on entry, access to distribution channels and the switching costs of consumers.

The retail of computers and computer accessories does not require a large initial investment to commence. Hence, the market contains firms of widely varying sizes. Operators however need to have adequate knowledge into the proficiency of the products they sell like the specifications of various computers, brands, and types that are appropriate for different classes of customers. Since, distributors cannot influence the

performance of the physical product as a means of differentiation, innovative steps need to be taken to ensure consumer loyalty as the cost of switching to other retailers is low. Finally, distribution channels are not regulated by any formal procedure hence new entrants can use courier services like commercial transport services which most firms in the market already use to make deliveries to distant customers.

1.4.3. Bargaining Power of Buyers

The bargaining power of buyers also contributes to the intensity of competition in an industry. According to Luenendonk (2019), bargaining power of consumers is the degree of pressure that consumers place on businesses to provide high quality, high customer service and attractive prices. A buyer has higher bargaining power when a customer purchase constitutes a large percentage of a firm's revenue stream, or there are many other firms that provide the same product. Also, buyers have high bargaining power when the cost of switching to another supplier is low or inexistent, there is high tendency for backward integration, there is available an accurate information about actual cost of operation, especially when consumers are price sensitive.

In the retail of computer and computer accessories, there are a lot of buyers and sellers in the industry hence, a single buyer's purchase only constitutes a small proportion of sales revenue of the industry. Therefore, ability to influence price is low. Nevertheless, for large orders, Unitech Premiere allows for price flexibility to encourage repeated bulk purchases.

1.4.4. Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Plecher (2020) maintains that bargaining power of suppliers refers to the degree to which suppliers can dictate the price of the value proposition being offered to customers.

Bargaining power of suppliers are high when suppliers are highly concentrated in a particular area and operate like a cartel. Suppliers have high bargaining power when consumers would incur costly switching costs, if suppliers have the capacity to embark on a forward integration, and if products are significantly differentiated and there is no perfect substitute.

Firms in the computer retail industry are highly concentrated in areas around the Kwame Nkrumah Circle interchange in Accra and other areas like Lapaz. Hence, individual retailers have a lower control over prices because substitutes are readily available. Compared to areas like Achimota (where Unitech Premiere is located) where suppliers are sparsely organized, individual retailers are more likely to command prices higher than the market average.

1.4.5. Substitute Products

Plecher (2020) concedes that a substitute is a product that can serve the same or similar purpose as another product. A business faces high competition when they are a lot of substitutes available and accessible in a market. Also, a product is prone to substitution when its quality and performance is equal or lower than that of competitors, priced similar to other products or priced less reasonably, and/or the switching costs involved is low.

Unitech, who sell computers and its accessories, adds new technological gadgets to their value proposition as and when they are introduced. Hence, even if a consumer can substitute a laptop for a tablet, Unitech is still able to meet customer needs without necessarily having to lose customers to other competitors because it sells a variety of computer products.

In essence, Porter's five forces visualizes a spectrum where perfect competition and a monopoly are the extreme ends. Unitech Premiere is more skewed towards a perfect competition hence it would need to put in much effort to increase customer loyalty since it cannot influence product design or quality as any attempt to do so will be against copyright laws.

Table 2. Summary of Porter's Five Forces

Immediate Rivals	Potential Entrants	Bargaining Power of Buyers	Bargaining Power of Suppliers	Substitute Products
Intense rivalry due to high price competition	Porous industry or easy market entry requirements	Somewhat low buyer bargaining power	Generally, higher bargaining power of suppliers	Limited availability of substitutes

1.5. SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is a diagnostic tool that can be used to determine the current state of business. SWOT is an abbreviation that stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Whiles strengths and weaknesses assess the internal capacity of the business, opportunities and threats keeps the business abreast with its external environment. A SWOT analysis of Unitech would help the brand identify strengths and opportunities to capitalize on to achieve its short-term goal of increasing its market share.

1.5.1   Strengths

In the computer retail market, experience is a crucial determinant for success. Unitech has been in operation for the past three years hence, has gained experience with working with suppliers and meeting customer needs. This period of learning has enabled Unitech understand the dynamics involved with dealing with suppliers and customers, whiles developing a good working relationship with these stakeholders. Local suppliers have developed trust working for the company hence are able to offer the firm large amounts of credit sales. Customers often use Unitech's experience as premise for repeated purchases and referrals.

Also a strength is Unitech's strong in-store customer service that encourages repeated purchases. Danziger (2014) advocates that a caring in-instore atmosphere increases customer satisfaction and tendencies for subsequent visits. Since staff at Unitech understand and exude a friendly instore culture, this competitive edge promises to ensure repeated visits of walk-in customers.

Finally, Unitech has a reliable and timely delivery service. Hence, customers are able to receive timely delivery of their purchases. Also, the reduced instances of wrong deliveries has increased the trust and reliability customers ascribe to the Unitech brand.

1.5.2   Weaknesses

Despite the strengths above, Unitech lacks proficiency in the following business areas

Firstly, Unitech is located in the Achimota new station. This hidden location does not allow it to attract potential customers that road traffic provides. The unfavorable location also deters customers of certain social classes from visiting their showroom.

Secondly, Unitech lacks a strong online marketing strategy leading to its weak social media presence. Consequently, Unitech lacks a defined position in the minds of customers, and strategic focus in its marketing activities.

Furthermore, Unitech computers uses a populated supply chain which leads to its prices being uncompetitive. Operating in a populated supply chain spreads profits across numerous middle men hence depletes profits received by Unitech. In the computer retail market, middlemen sometimes hoard new products in order to create artificial shortages. Unitech who lacks access to main suppliers have no choice than to buy from middlemen who end up with majority of the profits. It also does not allow Unitech develop strategic networks with key or main suppliers who are instrumental in its efforts to scale.

Finally, Unitech also lacks proper financial records such as statements of comprehensive income and statement of financial position which would facilitate short and long-term financial planning. The affects the ability of the business lacks to make reliable strategic decisions.

1.5.3. Opportunities

Unitech's external environment presents the following opportunities it can leverage toward achieving its sales targets.

Firstly, Unitech presently operates a single location at Achimota hence can expand its operations to other parts of the country like Kumasi and Takoradi. Such expansions to strategic locations coupled with effective and bespoke marketing mixes would translate into to increased sales.

Secondly, Unitech has only one campus brand ambassador at Ashesi. Hence, it can recruit more ambassadors to promote its brand on campuses across the country. Doing this would increase brand awareness among university students. Increasing awareness will reduce uncertainty about the brand and inform potential clients about its product and service offerings

In addition, the firm can also contract the services of digital marketing firms to aid in promoting its services online to reach a wider customer base. Unitech can develop an app to enable customers make purchases and enquiries without visiting their office. Technological advancements, such as the utilization of digital applications, enable firms to communicate with customers, while being responsive towards competitors with minimal resources (Nuseir & Aljumah, 2020). Digital marketing would increase the speed of information delivery to customers.

1.5.3   Threats

Despite the lucrativeness of the opportunities available to Unitech, it must be vigilant against forces in its external environment that may act as bottlenecks to business success. These potential frictions are highlighted as follows.

Firstly, the intense competition in the industry will put more pressure on Unitech who is a relatively young business. Since the industry is more skewed towards a perfect competition, small firms like Unitech need to put in more resources to market their product mix.

Also, increasing interest rates and stringent bank processes for acquiring loans will pose a major challenge to Unitech in the quest to raise debt financing. Recounting that the banking and business arena is recuperating from the covid-19 pandemic, small

firms like Unitech need to prove their credit competencies through collateral possessions to benefit from loan packages. Considering the few asserts that the Unitech has, acquiring a loan to boost operations on a large scale would a cumbersome process.

Furthermore, the paperless system introduced by Ghana's Ministry of Trade & Industry is faced with technical bottlenecks which is a major threat to conveniently clearing goods from the port. Osei-Owusu & Mahmood (2020) announced that the new electronic mode for clearing goods was challenging as stakeholders encountered numerous hiccups in the system leading to series of demonstrations. Because Unitech sells imported gadgets, the difficult with the paperless system will affect its inventory management and the ability to meet urgent demand.

Table 3. Summary of SWOT Analysis

Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Operational experience	Unfavorable location	Expanding into more favorable location(s)	Intense Market competition
Strong instore customer service	Weak marketing strategy	Campus Brand Ambassadors	Hostile interest rate and loan application processes
Timely delivery service	Populated supply chain	Digital marketing to increase online publicity	Bottlenecks in the goods clearing process at the port

	Lack of comprehensive financial records		

1.6. Conclusion

This chapter provided an introduction to the design of a positioning strategy for Unitech Premiere computers that would result in a competitive advantage. The PESTLE analysis provided a spy plain view to the analysis, Porter's five forces acted as a helicopters view to the research and finally, the SWOT analysis of Unitech provided a comprehensive bullseye understanding into business specific strengths and weaknesses as well as threats and opportunities that would impact Unitech's success in the computer retail industry.

The findings in this chapter provides the necessary context for exploring the problem space of Unitech. Hence, Chapter 2 provides an in-depth assessment of data from important stakeholders that helps assess the deficiencies hindering Unitech from increasing its market share.

CHAPTER TWO: NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLAN

2.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the needs assessment conducted understand the problem space of Unitech Premiere Computers. A need refers to the discrepancy or gap between a present state and a desired state (Office of Migrant Education, 2001). Therefore, a need assessment is the exercise conducted on an organization or entity to identify the gap or discrepancy that is hindering the attainment of the desired goals, in order to bridge that gap.

The needs assessments on Unitech focused on collecting information from members of top management, employees, and existing and potential customers.

2.2 Problem Statement

The computer retail market is concentrated with players like Franko Trading Enterprise, Compu Ghana, Telefonika et cetera. Due to the recognition of these brands in Ghana, it is difficult for startups to earn the trust of potential customers. Generally customers turn to be skeptical about buying from relatively unknown brands for reasons including the scare of buying fake, refurbished, or used products that are fraudulently posed to be authentic or brand new.

Unitech Premiere Computers is has a low share of the retail market for computers despite its present marketing and promotion strategies. After its establishment three years ago, potential customers do not ascribe credibility to the Unitech brand as they would with other popular competitors like Telefonika.

Hence, the objective of the needs assessment were;

- To investigate why customers purchase certain products and for what purpose. This would help in segmenting the retail market for computers and select segments that Unitech can serve better than competitors with its available resources.

- Also, it was an objective to investigate what customers and potential customers perceive the Unitech Brand to stand for.

- Using findings pertaining to the above, the ultimate objective was to use be formulate bespoke marketing strategies to bridge any gaps that may exist in the perception of customers and potential customers about the Unitech Premiere Brand and what management of the business would wish to portray.

2.3 Research Design

This research commenced with extensive interviews with the Chief Executive Officer and the General Manager. Collecting data via semi-structured interviews allowed these key respondents to unrestrictedly express themselves which trigger useful insights.

Data from customers and potential customers were collected using questionnaires. These customers were chosen via a convenience sampling approach because it helped focus on specific classes of individuals amongst which Unitech Premiere's short term objective was to increase market share. Hence, gaining the insights of these groups of persons were useful to craft bespoke marketing strategies. The questionnaire allowed respondents leave comments and opinions where necessary.

Finally, secondary literature was leveraged to determine the relationship data findings had with existing literature in the relevant project area.

2.4 Data Results and Analysis

2.4.1. Customers and Potential Customers

A total of 25 responses were collected from consumers and customers via questionnaires. The minimum sample size of one hundred was however the target for this researchh to reduce bias hence allow for generalization of findings.

The following are responses gathered from respondents

What kind(s) of technological gadgets do you use?

25 responses

Phone	25 (100%)
Laptop	24 (96%)
Desktop	2 (8%)
Ipad	2 (8%)
Tablet	2 (8%)
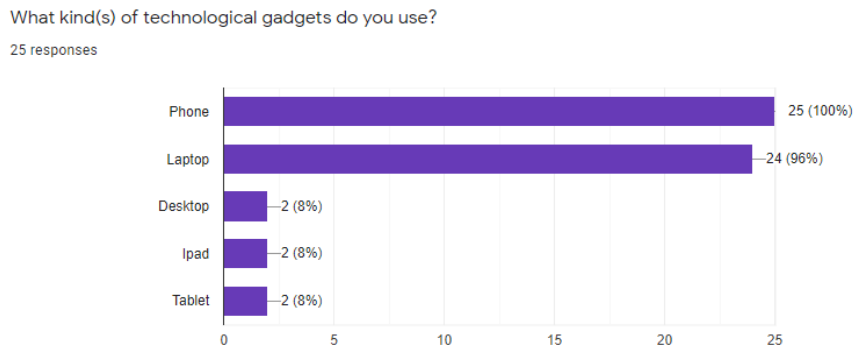
Figure 1. Percentage of respondents who use various technological gadgets

Out of the 25 respondents, 100 percent (25 responses) used phones, 94 percent (24 responses) used laptops, 8 percent (2 responses) used desktops, and 8 percent (2 responses) used tablets.

In investigating the purpose of use, categories that were revealed were school work, research, occupational activities, religious assignment, communication, leisure, and entertainment and recreation.

Please rank the following physical characteristics of gadgets based on your preference on a scale of 1 (highly irrelevant) to 5 (high relevant)
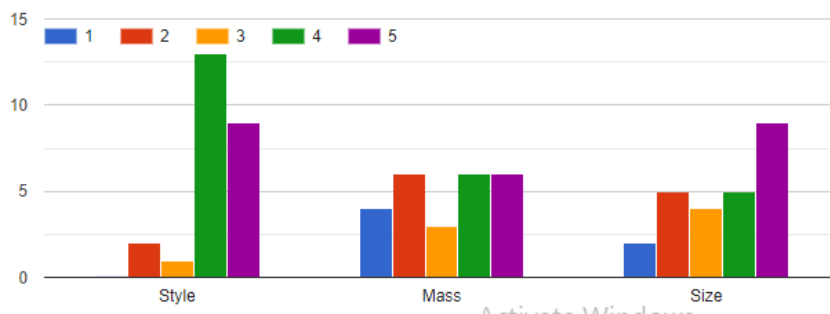
Figure 2. Level of consumer preference for different computer characteristics

Furthermore, respondents were asked to rank style, mass and size of devices based on their preferences. This was aimed at understanding the factors that influenced the buying decisions of consumers.

On the premise of style, 9 respondents viewed style of device as very important, 13 respondents viewed it as important even if it is not the ultimatum, 1 respondent was neutral, and 2 respondents considered style of device to be irrelevant in their buying decisions.

With mass of device, 6 respondents regraded mass as a highly relevant factor, 6 respondents regarded mass as moderately important, 3 respondents were neutral, 6

respondents considered mass as irrelevant while the remaining 4 considered mass as a highly irrelevant factor.

Respondents were also asked whether they have ever heard about Unitech Premiere Computers Limited and if yes, on which media platform. Responses for this question helped to determine the effectiveness of the current marketing strategies of Unitech.

According to the General Manager, the firm advertises on social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and twitter. It also relies on word-of-mouth referrals from satisfied customers. Finally, they send out periodic bulk text messages to the customers to remind them of their service offering. Hence, results from this question enabled for further assessment of the effectiveness of the current communication channel used in reaching potential customers.

If you answered Yes to the question above, how did you get to know about the Unitech Premiere Brand

9 responses

Figure 3. Channels of communication

Commented [KM1]: These charts and images should be under the results/analysis part alongside their interpretation and discussion.

From responses gathered, 72 percent (18 responses) had not heard about the Unitech

Premier Brand. Only 28 percent (7 responses) knew about Unitech. Out of the 28 percent,

about 11 percent (1 response) knew about Unitech Premiere from Facebook

advertisement, about 33 percent (3 responses) from WhatsApp, and about 56 percent (5

responses), from friends and/or relations.

     Also, respondents were asked to select whether they were a non-customer, a new

customer, a long-term customer or a former customer. This is necessary as it provided

insight into loyalty levels and level of experience with the Unitech Brand. Moreover, this

result emphasizes the need to use different marketing strategies on each group.
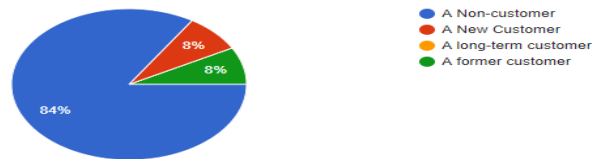
Figure 4. Status of respondents

     Finally, customers and potential customers ranked a number of service attributes

on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being highly important and 1 being highly unimportant). Such

Service attributes included price, speed of service delivery, service proximity, service

reliability, reputation, affiliation to brand, brand popularity, location, and social status

associated with brand.

This helped to evaluate the service attributes that significantly affect the willingness of customers or potential customers to patronize services of firms in the computer retail industry. These attributes further aided in effective segmentation and brand positioning.
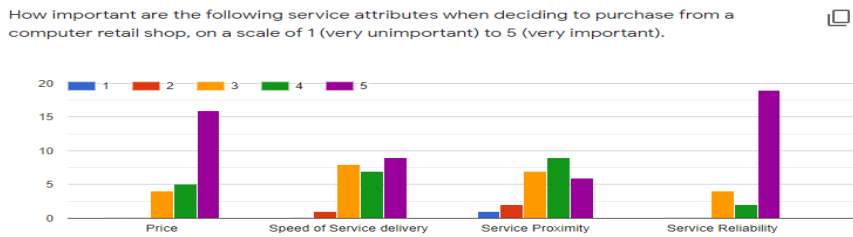
Figure 5. Service attributes that drive consumer demand in the computer retail market
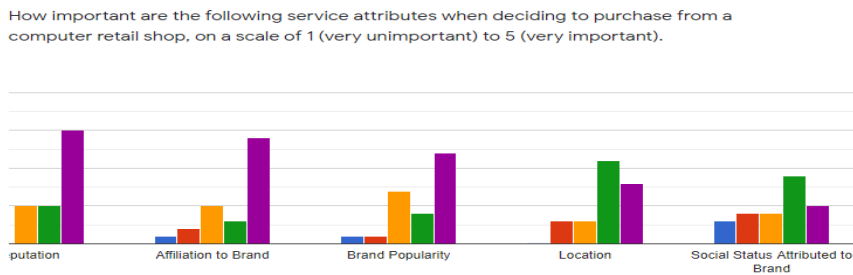
Figure 6. Service attributes that drive consumer demand in the computer retail market

2.4.2. Top Management

To obtain adequate insight into the operations of Unitech Premiere, the CEO and General Manager were interviewed via a semi-structured interview in order to allow for flexibility in the interview process. Questions spanned from how service is rendered, how inventory is obtained, the payment options available to customers, the feedback and consultation systems put in place to address customer needs and complains. Hence,

interviews of key members of top management centered on exploring the supplementary services of Unitech Premiere.

It was insightful to discover some discrepancies in opinions of customers and management of the firm. Analysis of the questionnaire results showed that most new customers were obtained through friends and relations. This contrasted the opinion of management about the traffic that their social media platform brought. This customers responses also showed that social media platforms did not account for majority of Unitech sales and new client acquisitions as management believed.

2.4.3. Employees

Employees, especially frontline employees are the parties that communicate directly with customers. Hence, it was very insightful to tap into the feedback or complaints that customers have lodged to employees and how these were handled. The dispatch rider in charge of delivery revealed that high delivery prices was a problem customers complained about.

<center>2.5. Root Cause Analysis</center>

Root cause analysis (RCA) is a systematic process for identifying "root causes" of problems or events and an approach for responding to them. RCA is based on the basic idea that effective management requires more than merely "putting out fires" for problems that develop, but finding a way to prevent them. RCA helps organizations avoid the tendency to single out one factor to arrive at the most expedient (but generally incomplete) resolution. It also helps to avoid treating symptoms rather than true,

underlying problems that contribute to a problem or event (Washington State Department of Enterprise Services, 2020)

The data mainly obtained from top management and employees was analyzed using the root-cause analytical tool because the qualitative data required the drawing of patterns and linkages which that other analytical tools like the descriptive analytical tool are not proficient in.

In the root cause analysis, the secondary problems that were detected from management as hindering the progress of Unitech Premiere from achieving their short term goals were the inability of the firm to evaluate the performance of the brand specifically because it lacked brand performance indicators.

Also, in the quest to obtain market share in the computer retail market, information gathered from management and customers showed that the firm was competing at numerous levels – price, quality, service reliability, variety, etc. Therefore, indicative of little knowledge on who their competitors are and what they prefer to be known for. Finally, management revealed that the firm used mass marketing as a key strategy in acquiring customers. It was determined that this contributed to Unitech's many unsuccessful sales as a lot of the people being reached out to are likely not to be potential clients.

It was ultimately determined that, the above secondary problems exist because Unitech Premiere has not clearly defined its position in the computer retail market as a lack of knowledge of their competitive landscape has led to targeting the wrong consumers, and a general confusion about what the brand stands for. Hence, market

positioning is essential for attaining Unitech key sort term goal of increasing market share.

Therefore, the next chapter would explore literature about the steps to effective market positioning which would translate into effective sales and market share acquisition for Unitech.

CHAPTER THREE: MASTERY OF SUBJECT AREA

3.1. Chapter Overview

The needs of humans are diverse and vary in numerous respects. Businesses therefore seek to offer products and/or services that satisfy specific needs due to scare resources and specialization, since a single business cannot satisfy all the needs of customers with maximum precision. It is due to this dilemma that businesses seek to select those consumer groups within a market which they can serve more efficiently than competitors. Camilleri (2018) describe this strategy as target marketing.

This process begins with a clear definition or mapping out of the market in question. Then, dividing the market into various groups (segments) based on demographics, psychographics, geography, behavior, or product-related attributes. A market segment is a group of individuals, groups or organizations who may share the same interests, traits and characteristics Camilleri (2018). The effectiveness of segmentation and usefulness of segments is depends on factors including measurability, substantiality, accessibility and actionability related to segments created. Dolnicar, Grun & Leish (2018) emphasize that a well-executed segmentation paves way for drawing a context-specific marketing plan or strategy.

This chapter concludes with different frameworks or strategies to aid effective position in selected market segments

3.2. Market Segmentation (MS*)*

Smith (1956), understands market segmentation as a process of identifying homogenous patterns that leads to the formation of homogenous groups in a

heterogeneous markets so that each consumer group, with its unique attitudes and wants, receives bespoke commodities. In a similar fashion, Kotler (1972) defines market segmentation as the sub-division of a market or homogenous subsets of customers, where any subset may conceivably be selected as a market target to be reached with a distinct marketing mix. Also, (Dolnicar, 2008) explains market segmentation as a strategic tool to account for heterogeneity among individuals by grouping them into market segments. (Sun, 2009) also adds that market segmentation divides a market into meaningful, relatively small and identifiable market segments, which are groups of individuals or organizations with similar product needs. Summarily, MS is a science that seeks to identify homogenous groups in a heterogeneous market.

Although market segmentation is accepted as a viable strategy for gaining competitive advantage, extant theories of competition in mainstream economics are inhospitable to segmentation strategy. Indeed, the dominant theories of competition in mainstream economics, that is, neoclassical perfect competition and monopolistic competition, view the competitive advantages gained from segmenting markets as detrimental to societal welfare because market segments represent the artificial fragmentation of homogeneous demand, which implies that "segmentation is viewed as an imperfection in the structure of markets" (Arnett & Hunt, 2004). In consolidation to Arnett & Hunt's (2004) assertion, Glass (2001) recounts that market segmentation gives firms the grounds to discriminate in pricing hence detrimental to social welfare. In the affirmative, Chamberlin (1950) reveals that other resultant factors like reduced quantities, inferior products, and wasted capacity are products of product differentiation. Bergson

(1973) buttresses that such price discriminations leads to 1% to 13% welfare losses in the US.

Bailey et al (2009) have also criticized the practicality and effectiveness of market segmentation due to changing consumer behavior. Sollner and Rose (2001) adds that MS can never be completely accurate since each individual is unique hence perfectly homogenous segments are non-existent.

However, Sollner & Rose (2001) fail to understand that MS does not seek to create completely homogenous segments based on all aspects of human behavior and characteristics but based on selected variables.

Despite the debates, MS helps to identify certain similarities or patterns that would suggest a similar response to a particular product mix and marketing strategies. It is however important for firms to develop an effective MS strategy.

3.2.1. Market Segmentation Strategy

MS strategy is a chronological approach that involves figuring out grounds of segmentation, identifying prospective marketing segments based on basis for segmentation, forming groupings out of identical segments, evaluating how much resources are needed to accommodate each segment(s), ascertaining existing resources of the firm and raising the additional resources needed, formulating plans for positioning within target segments and designing bespoke marketing mixes.

Arnett & Hunt's (2004) insinuates that MS strategies are planned out based on 3 fundamental assumptions. Firstly, in many markets, consumer needs, wants, taste and attitudes are diverse but not completely heterogeneous so that homogenous patterns exist for segment creation. Secondly, it is possible to design marketing mixes to suit different

segments, and finally, market targeting can help a firm develop competitive advantage and enjoy financial superiority.

3.3. Approaches to Market Segmentation

Executing a Market segmentation exercise requires the use a well-thought out approach. The approach used should be based on peculiarities of the study market being studies. Based on such differences, some approaches may be suitable than others. This section will high two broad approaches to MS namely: A-Priori Method and the Post-Hoc Method.

3.3.1. A-Priori Method/ Rule-based method

According to Arnett & Hunt, (2004), with A- Priori segmentation methods, segments are pre-defined ahead of data collection. Segments are formulated based on product or customer traits. After data collection, segments are examined for additional insight or information about behavioral patterns. In the events that segments overlap, there are further compared and contrasted. The goal of such an analysis may be primarily descriptive (e.g., cross-tabulation, logistic regression), or it could include the development of models that use the predefined segments to predict one or more dependent variables.

3.3.2. Post-Hoc method

Contrary to A- Priori segmentation methods, Post-Hoc methods identify segments during empirical data analysis. Similarly, the end goal may be primarily to study the groups for more information or to construct a predictive model for a group of dependent variables.

Dominique-Ferreira (2012) affirms that the Post-hoc approach is recommended when consumer characteristics or reactions to a new product are unknown.

For post hoc segmentation purposes we use characteristics or variables to describe consumers. Characteristics such as demographics, media viewing, web browsing habits and shopping patterns, which may be used to identify and reach consumers are called descriptors or *descriptor variables*. Characteristics that distinguish the segments, typically relating to the needs, preferences, attitudes and usage, are called *basis variables*. Post hoc models use the basis variables for crafting the segments, and the descriptors for targeting them. (Charan, 2021)

3.3.3. Hybrid Methods

These hybrid approaches constitutes a combination of the a-priori and post-hoc analytical approaches.

3.4. Variables for Market Segmentation

3.4.1. Geographic

Market segmentation allows firms to categorize consumers based on where they live or work. Consumers can be classified by their countries, by smaller in-country geographic areas, to provinces, cities and even based in their postal codes. Consumers can also be classified based on the climatic conditions of their areas, and the population of their country or area of residence.

This is a useful variable in segmentation when a firm seeks to target a particular area with its offering. Hence, firms can effectively utilize TV, radio, newspaper publications etc. to effectively broadcast advertisements to a particular location.

Geography is however not an effective stand-alone variable in target marketing. It is effective when used in conjunction with other variables. For instance, the fact the a person is living in a luxurious neighborhood is not premise enough to conclude that such people would prefer a Mac book to a Lenovo laptop. Hence, it is useful to combine geography with other various to effectively understand a segment.

3.4.2. Demographic

In attempting segmentation based on demographics, variables such as age, sex, educational level, income level and occupation. Demographic variables are useful depending on the industry and product type. For example, if a product is a luxury good is easily associated with high income earners, and baby products are marketed mainly based on gender, likewise for cosmetics.

With Haley (1985) estimating that demographics account for 5% variance in consumer attitude, Yankelovich & Meer (2006), assure that demographics do not provides strong premise for segmenting a market. Rather, they advocate that factors like preferences and tastes are stronger determinants of purchasing decisions of consumers.

3.4.3. Psychographic

Attitudes, opinions, values, beliefs, personality, interests, lifestyle, motivations, self-concept, and ideologies are examples of variables under psychographics. Others include, buyer clusters (social or factual buyers), strategic clusters (defenders, prospectors, analyzers or reactors), orientation clusters (customer orientation, financial orientation, internal orientation and research & development orientation), and position on

product adoption curve (innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority or laggards). (Weinston, 2016)

Psychographic criteria are, by nature, more complex than geographic or demographic criteria because it is difficult to find a single characteristic of a person that will provide insight into the psychographic dimension of interest. The disadvantage of the psychographic approach is the increased complexity of determining segment memberships for consumers. Also, the effectiveness of the psychographic approach depends heavily on the reliability and validity of the empirical measures used to capture the psychographic dimensions of interest. Dolnicar, Grun & Leish (2018).

Nonetheless, using psychographics allows firms to gather extensive knowledge, perspectives and reflective insights into consumer buying decisions.

3.4.4. Behavioral

Another approach to segment extraction is to search directly for similarities in behavior or reported behavior. A wide range of possible behaviors can be used for this purpose, including prior experience with the product, frequency of purchase, amount spent on purchasing the product on each occasion (or across multiple purchase occasions), and information search behavior. (Dolnicar, Grun & Leish, 2018)

The key advantage of behavioral approaches is that – if based on actual behavior rather than stated behavior or stated intended behavior – the very behavior of interest is used as the basis of segment extraction. As such, behavioral segmentation groups people by the similarity which matters most. (Dolnicar, Grun & Leish, 2018).

3.4.5. Product-Related

Under this, variables are associated with or unique to the commodity being marketed. Variable include, volume of purchase (high, medium, low), variety or product used, frequency of usage (first time, one time, regular, continuous, seasonal).

3.4.6. Firmographic

These variables are used when a firm provides Business to Business (B2B), Business to Education or Business to Government services. Hence, firms in this category segment their market based on variables such as age (years in business), firm size (number of employees, locations & plants), financial capacity (sales & profit level, credit rating), decision-making process (bureaucratic or decentralized), ownership type (public company, private company, government-owned, or non-profit) industry position (market share and industry position), stage (product life cycle and industry life cycle), industry trends (growth, decline or stability), whether client property is owned or leased, whether the client is involved in high or low tech, and finally the style of manufacturing (discrete or process manufacturing). (Dolnicar, Grun & Leish, 2018)

Segmenting based on these variables allows firms to identify client segments whose operations align with the culture, values, and objectives of the firm. It is important that firms find such segments as it influences the ability of the firm to provide quality services. If a firm serves another firm with significantly different culture, values and belief, it is likely to make client relationship management difficult.

3.5. Analytical Approaches in Market Segmentation

During the analysis of segments, various mathematical approaches can be deployed. These include the following:

3.5.1. Conjoint Analysis

Conjoint analysis allows the analysis and modelling of consumer preferences; that is, it helps determine the importance given by consumers to each attribute in the set of a product. Conjoint analysis has its origins in the field of psychology and marketing. The conjoint algorithm can be represented as follows:

$$: U = f(u1_k, \ldots\ldots, uj_k)$$

Where U: Total utility Ui: Part-worth of the $attribute$ I; Xi: Perceived level of the attribute i. (Dominique-Ferreira, 2012)

3.5.2. Latent Class Model (LCM)

An LC model for four nominal variables A, B, C and D, and one latent variable X, is: $x_{ijklt}^{ABCDX} = x_l^x x_{it}^{AX} x_{jt}^{BX} x_{kt}^{CX} x_{it}^{DX}$

where ABCDX π ijklt is the proportion of units in the five-way contingency table, X π t is the probability of being in latent class t=1,2,…,T; A X it | π is the probability of obtaining response i to item A, from members of class t, i=1,2,…,I; and B X jt | π , C X kt | π , D X lt | π , j=1,2,…,J, k=1,2,…,K, l=1,2,…,L, are the conditional probabilities of items B, C and D One goal of traditional LC analysis is to determine the smallest number of latent classes T which is sufficient to explain the associations observed among the items. The final step of LC analysis is to classify units into the appropriate latent class. (Bassi, 2007)

3.5.3. Clustering Analysis

Cluster analysis is one of the most popular methods for post-hoc descriptive studies and these methods use algorithms that can provide either overlapping or non-

overlapping partitions, and among the non-overlapping methods both hierarchical and non-hierarchical approaches are possible. Non-hierarchical methods that use variance minimization as a way of defining groups, are among the most popular, and are frequently regarded as the most effective because they are more resistant to outliers and sample-specific anomalies (Punj & Stewart, 1983)

3.6. Requirements for an effective Market Segmentation

Requirements for an effective market segmentation process are benchmarks that validate or legitimize the effectiveness or practicality associated with segments. Gavett (2014) addresses that after segmentation, firms must ensure that segments or target markets satisfy the following criteria or indicators.

3.6.1. Substantiality

Even though the aim of market segmentation is to create sub-groups of a large markets, firms must ensure that segments are not too small. Segments must be of reasonable size to ensure profitability and cost-efficiency.

3.6.2. Measurability

Market segments should be reasonably quantifiable in terms of size and purchasing power.

3.6.3. Accessibility

Firms needs to ensure that market segments are effectively and efficiently reachable through the communication channels.

3.6.4. Differentiable

It is also important for segments to be mutually exclusive conceptually. Thus, it should be plausible to distinguish between members across segments. However, members in the same segments should exhibit similar traits and responses to marketing mixes.

3.6.5. Stability

It is for a fact that consumer behavior is dynamic. Nonetheless, in market segmentation, firms must identify and use those segments that are somewhat consistent over a reasonable time period. Hence, firms should not use many psychographic factors like lifestyle in segmentation as these experience rapid changes over relatively shorter periods.

3.6.6. Actionability

Finally, firms should ensure that they possess the technical and economic efficiencies to deliver marketing mixes or serve the needs of selected segments.

3.7. Brand Positioning

3.7.1 Brand

A brand is a representation of stories, objects and identity of an organization (Oralkan, 2019). Blankson (2016) suggests that one of the important assets that a firm carries is the intangible value represented by its brand's/brands' purpose(s) that are acknowledged by consumers/customers. He admits that a robust position enforces accurate customer perception about the brand and has positive impact on the long-term financial health of the firm.

3.7.2. Brand Positioning

Brand positioning or a positioning strategy refers to creating communication and maintaining distinctive differences that will be noticed and valued by customers who would most like to develop a long-term relationship (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2010). Brand positioning defines how the organization's marketing and the target image are designed in the minds of consumers. (Oralkan, 2019)

The need to (re)position a brand becomes necessary when uncertainty about the identity of a brand rises. It is important that firms know how to measure uncertainty in order to know the extent or intensity of (re)positioning to undertake.

3.8. Porter's Generic Strategy

3.8.1. Cost Leadership

This refers to employing efficient processes so that cost is reduced to the minimum. Firms may use this strategy to increase profits especially in an industry where price is constant or largely determined by the market. This is also suitable for an industry where products are less differentiates. Firms use cost advantages to increase profits and secure a competitive edge over competitors.

3.8.2. Differentiation Strategy

This strategy has to do with introducing new or enhancing products attributes or features to create a recognizable difference in the level of satisfaction customers derived from using substitute products. Positioning using the differentiation strategy is reduces price wars or reactions based on price. Firms using this strategy must engage in periodic research and development programs to maintain the uniqueness of their brand. This implies that firms need adequate resources to be successful with this strategy.

3.8.3. Focus Strategy

A firm can also position when it limits itself to servings special class of the market. By selecting a narrow market, the firm is able to marry its identity with its market scope.

3.9. Generic Position Framework (GPF)

According to the Corporate Finance Institute (2015), this framework has five typical dimensions. Thus, positioning based on price, positioning based on quality, positioning based on competition, positioning based on product characteristics, and positioning based on product usage. The effectiveness of these strategies would depending on the industry and the degree of competition that exists.

3.10. Conceptual Position Maps

Each brand within a set of competitive offerings is thought of as occupying a certain position in a customer's "perceptual space" (Gigauri, 2019). Perceptual mapping is also known as positioning map as it helps to develop market-positioning strategy for products and services. Perceptual mapping offers a unique ability to understand market structure, analyzing the complex relationships among marketplace competitors and the criteria used by buyers in making purchase decisions and recommendations (Nigam &Kaushik, 2011).

However, Gower, Groenen, Van de Velder & Vines (2010), dispute that position maps are static tools that does not accommodate flexibility in consumer perception. They

maintain that interpretation is usually difficult and those not emphasize the cost and likelihood of a brand assuming a particular position.

Perceptual mapping can be effectively used for market segmentation to identify the specific target audience or customers, as well as for decisions about advertisements, brand positioning or product development (Bhattacharyya &Dasgupta, 2014).This powerful technique is used to learn (1) the basic cognitive dimensions consumers use to evaluate "products" in the category being investigated, and (2) the relative "positions" of present and potential products with respect to those dimensions (Hauser &Koppelman, 1979). In addition, perceptual maps are often used to investigate positioning issues to new or existing brands (Bhattacharyya & Dasgupta, 2014).

3.11. Approaches for Formulating Perceptual Positioning Maps

Perceptual Positioning maps can be built using two main approaches; the compositional method and the decompositional method.

3.11.1. Decompositional Method

Decompositional method is a technique where consumers only give their overall preference or ratings and those overall evaluations are decomposed. (Gigauri, 2019)

3.11.2. Compositional Method

In a compositional approach, a set of different attributes is evaluated on the basis of preference or rating and afterward the results are combined (composed) together to get an overall evaluation (Bhattacharyya & Dasgupta, 2014).

3.12. Perceptual Mapping Techniques

3.12.1. Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is essentially a data reduction technique in which the objective is to represent the original pool of attributes in terms of a smaller number of underlying dimensions or factors. After the factors have been identified, brands are evaluated on these factors by computing an overall 'factor score', and the brands' ratings on these factors are used to position the brands in perceptual space (Kohli & Leuthesser, 1993).

3.12.2. Discriminant Analysis

Discriminant analysis also requires that respondents provide attribute ratings. Similar to factor analysis, an objective of this method is to reduce the number of attributes to a smaller number of underlying dimensions. However, unlike factor analysis, discriminant analysis focuses on attributes that show differences between brands. In discriminant analysis, sets of observations represent different 'groups'. In product positioning, the set of ratings for each brand constitutes a group, and discriminant analysis will identify those underlying dimensions that are most useful in discriminating among groups (Kohli & Leuthesser, 1993)

3.12.3. Multidimensional Scaling

Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) enables the market researchers to map objects (i.e. brands) spatially. Accordingly, the relative positions in the mapped space reflect the degree of perceived similarity between the objects: the closer in space, the more similar the brands are. Respondents may either rate (metric scaling) or rank-order (non-metric scaling) the similarity for each pairing of brands, and evaluate brands in pairs, judging the overall similarity between the paired brands. Unlike other methods, MDS asks

respondents to rate brands on overall similarity, not individual attributes (Kohli & Leuthesser, 1993).

Conclusion

The root cause analysis in Chapter 2 led to the conclusion that the primary problem hindering the achievement of Unitech Premiere's short term goal of market share acquisition hinged on poor market positioning. Hence, this chapter expounded on the concept of segmentation and brand positioning. It began with various definitions of market segmentation and arguments against the concept. It also highlighted variables, the various analytical tools for market segmentation, and the requirements for an effective market segmentation

Based on the literature explored, the next chapter will explore a target marketing solution by segmenting the computer retail market and selecting segments that Unitech Premiere can serve competitively per its objectives, resources and values.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 Chapter Overview

After identifying poor brand positioning as the primary cause of Unitech's low market share in Chapter 2, and exploring various ways it can segment and position in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 recommends a segmentation and positioning strategy that aligns with the goals, objectives and resources of Unitech. This chapter also expounds on the implementation and evaluation plan for the proposed target marketing strategy.

4.2. Solution

4.2.1. Market Segmentation Approach

The target marketing begins with selecting a marketing segmentation Strategy. Selecting a market segmentation strategy involves determining which market segmentation approach to peruse. Chapter 3 highlighted the two main approaches; the Priori method and the Post-Hoc method. It also reveals a third method which is the Hybrid method which is a combination of the Post-Hoc and Priori methods.

The Priori method divides the market based on widely accepted or recognizable characteristics and attributes. It is suitable for mass marketing hence easy and cost effective. However, it limits tendencies for identifying unique patterns. In contrast, the Post-Hoc method aims to understand a market using empirical data. Hence, it is suitable for identifying unique patterns.

Unitech desires to understand unique customer traits so that it can offer bespoke customer experiences and assume a unique position in the computer retail market. As established in Chapter 1, the computer retail market has more attributes of a perfect

competition than a monopoly, hence using the Priori method would provide widely accepted patterns which would limit the ability of Unitech to identify unique patterns for target marketing. Nonetheless, the priori method would enable Unitech would cut down cost since it is not financial robust to use the Post-Hoc method extensively.

The hybrid segmentation approach balances the advantages and limitations of Priori and Post-Hoc method. Hence, the Hybrid segmentation approach would be used so that Unitech Premiere can utilize the innovativeness that is associated with the Post-Hoc method whiles leveraging the cost effectiveness of the Priori-method

The Hybrid Segmentation approach is a combination of CHAID tree analysis and K-means Cluster Analysis techniques. It determines the demographic variables that serve as distinctive criteria, borderlines or factors in a sample. This allows for further study into the specific needs of segments and purchase attitude. It then uses descriptive factors to determine segments.

4.2.2. Objectives of the Hybrid Segmentation Tool

According to Renaissance Research & Consulting (2021), the objective of Hybrid segmentation are:

- To determine whether every customer of a particular product has the same needs and specifications. Or whether customers of different backgrounds have dissimilar needs and wants. In each case, it ultimately seeks to investigate the product characteristics that influence purchasing behavior.

- To determine whether customers with different backgrounds are drawn to different product lines, and then determine the number of product lines that would serve each group, and what these product lines will look like.

- Finally, find out the demographic factors that would breakout the market into groups that revolve around certain sets of themes or issues, or the issues that unite each segment.

4.2.3. Market Segmentation

Before marketing strategies can be formulated, it is important to identify the various product needs of consumers through market segmentation.

Firstly, respondents are divided based on two of variables. The segment dynamics are analyzed based on the bivariate or multivariate nature of the variables. Two segments who have completely distinct characteristics are created. This is termed as using k-means clustering to reduce variance in attitudinal traits.

Drawing from data collected in Chapter 2, occupation (demographic factor) is used in conjunction with motivations and interests (psychographic factors) to discover customer segments in the computer retail market. A tree diagram is used to split groups based on demographic and psychographic variables

To start the tree diagram, occupation is selected as the demographic variable since the respondents were a mixture of students and working class persons. Hence, the computer retail market is broadly divided into two segments thus, "student" and "worker". Because both categories contain heterogeneous groups, the split continues until segments with homogenous motivations and interests are obtained.

Because the "student" category contain tertiary and non-tertiary students who have heterogeneous interests and needs, it is further split into "Tertiary Students" and "Non-tertiary Students". At this point, the questionnaire responses support that "Tertiary students" prioritize portable and reliable computers whiles "Non-tertiary Students" prioritize easy to use and entertaining computers.

The next major category aside "students" is "workers". Because workers is a broad category containing persons who indulge in different magnitude of computer tasks, "workers" is split into those engaged in "extensive computer tasks" and those involved in "simple computer task". The questionnaire results from Chapter 2 show that persons involved in simple computer work prioritized economical and easy to use computers while those engaged in complex computerized tasks had still had differing needs.

Because those involved in "advanced computerized tasks" still contained persons with dissimilar computer needs, the category is broken down further. Analysis revealed two distinct groups – persons who preferred "luxurious and sophisticated" computers while the remaining preferred "sophisticated but affordable" computers. Hence, income level (demographic factor) was the distinguishing factor.
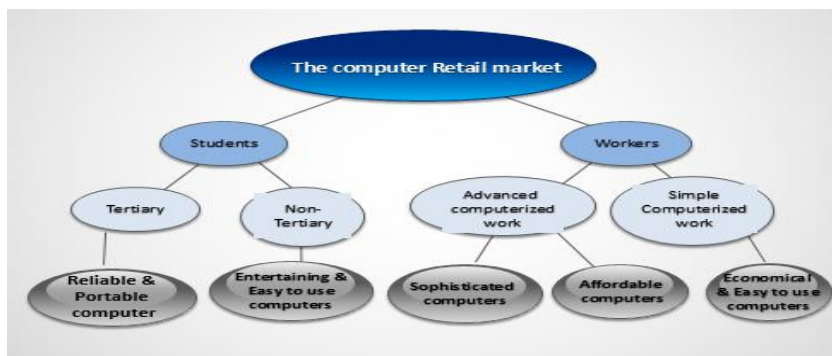
Figure 7. A tree diagram showing the computer needs of various customer segments

Due to the changing needs of consumers, this framework or tool needs to be reviewed in tandem with trends in the computer retail market.

4.2.4. Targeting

After market segmentation, there is the need to select a segment(s) that Unitech can serve adequately and effectively better than computer given its available resources.

Majority of Unitech's clients are tertiary students and persons in the working class. Hence, the firm has built expertise on how to deal with such customers. Therefore, it will be resourceful for Unitech to target consumers who seek affordable reliable & portable computers, and position itself accordingly using intentional marketing strategies.

4.2.5. Market Positioning

After market segmentation and segments selection, a positioning strategy has to be adopted for Unitech to acquire market share in the chosen target audience.

Determining a suitable market position begins with identifying a firm's current position. Hence, a firm needs to understand where it is at before taking steps to where it wants to be. Therefore, Unitech would be able to effectively position itself for market success if it first of all knows its current market position relative to competitors like Compu Ghana, Franko Trading Enterprise, Telefonika and Freddies Corner. Knowing where the business stands will inform that marketing strategies that would be adopted to help a business achieve its desired market position.

The compositional method is used to determine Unitech's current and desired market position. The compositional method is suitable because, it allows for different attributes to be evaluated and merged for themes, hence helps in generating specific position strategies. The survey results displayed in Chapter 2 (*see figures 5 & 6*) show the different ratings offered by respondents to various product and service attributes. To use these attributes in the perceptual (position) maps, these attributes are collapsed into general themes.

Because the compositional approach will allow for merging of attributes to establish themes, it is important that themes are mutually exclusive. Hence, the discriminant technique, in contrast with the multidimensional scaling and factor analysis technique, allows for the generation of distinct attribute classes devoid of overlapping themes.

From the questionnaire results gathered in chapter 2, customers and potential customers perceived that the current position of Unitech when it comes to price and quality, and service reliability and product variety. This themes were selected because they were the most relevant to Unitech's desired market position. The position maps were generated based on questionnaire results obtained.
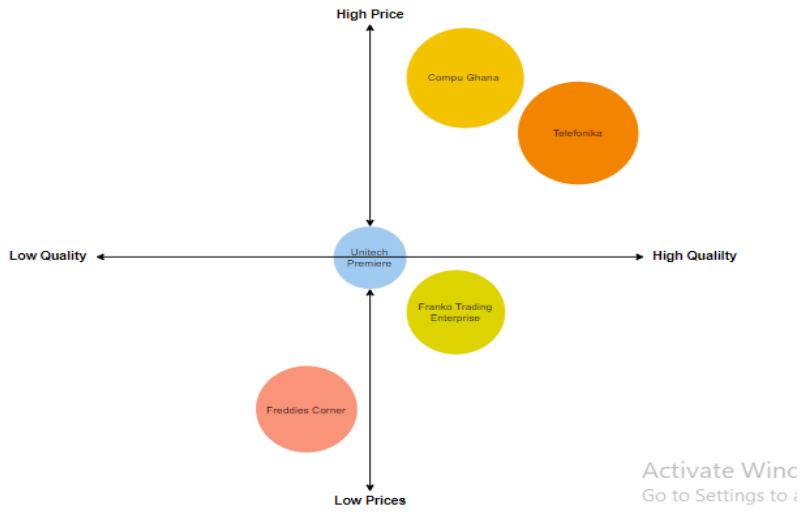
Figure 8. Unitech's market position with respect to quality and price
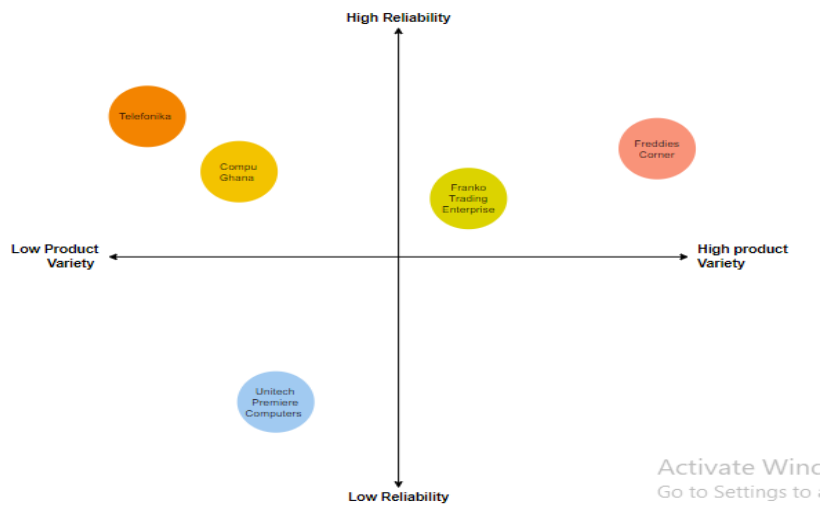
Figure 9. Unitech's market position with respect to reliability and variety

In contrast to Unitech's current market position, management disclosed via interviews that the firm would like to position as a quality brand. Moreover the proposed market segments that were selected for target marketing are consumers who seek affordable reliable & portable computers. Hence, the corresponding ideal position that Unitech should assume to fit its target market is as follows.
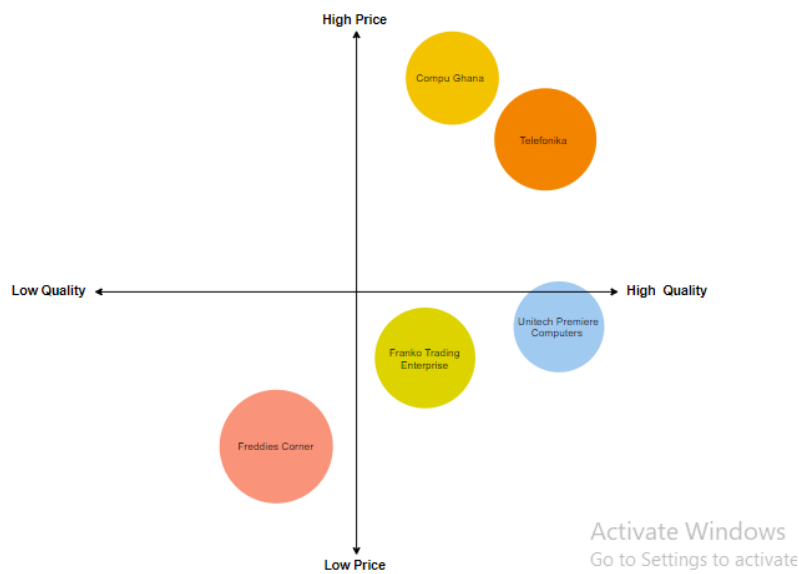
Figure 10. Unitech's desired market position with respect to quality and price
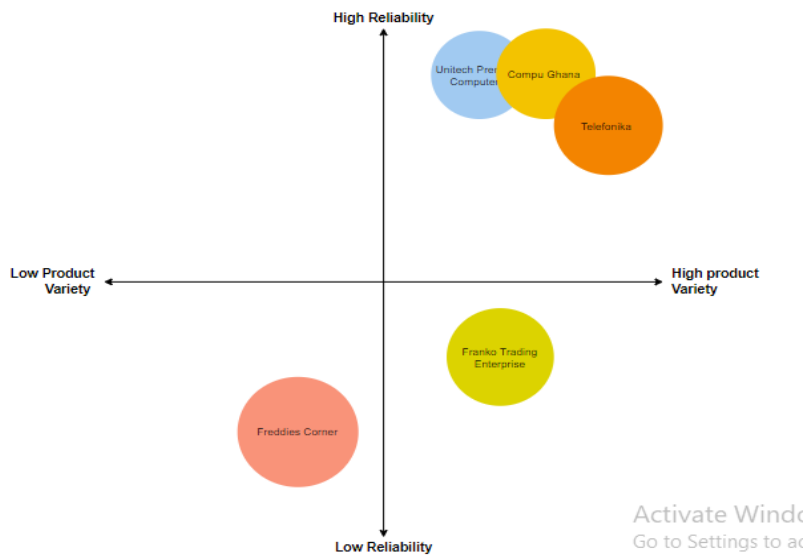
Figure 11. Unitech's desired market position with respect to reliability and variety

Therefore, the proposed positioning statement for Unitech is: Your reliable source of computers and its accessories where quality is affordable.

4.3. Implementation plan

After segmenting, targeting and determining the suitable position for Unitech, this section will elaborate on steps involved in executing the positioning strategy of Unitech. It worth noting that a target market does respond to a marketing strategy, but the implementation of that strategy. Therefore, a brilliant strategy that is poorly implemented is an effort in futility. In contrast, an effective implementation of a fair strategy will usually result in very good results whiles a good implementation of a good strategy may generate impressive results. Hence, this section will explore internal marketing tactics

and total quality control measures that Unitech should consider to successfully position as

a reliable source for quality and affordable computers.

An effective implementation plan must be and broken down and easy to

understand by employees at different levels of an organization. This will ensure that all

levels of an organization have their efforts aligned for maximum success. The plan must

be broken down to suit the language spoken by the various organization levels as

outlined.

Corporate Level
Objective: Ensure service leadership in each market segment
Strategy: Service leadership requires discipline

Strategic Business Unit Level
Objective: Achieve and maintain a market share of at least 60 percent for the next five years
Strategy: Introduce new products and service attributes that prioritizes affordability and quality

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Product Market Level
Objective: Training sales personnel to advertise and portray the Unitech brand as a cost leader and provider of affordable quality.
Strategy: Expanding product line and embarking on competitive pricing

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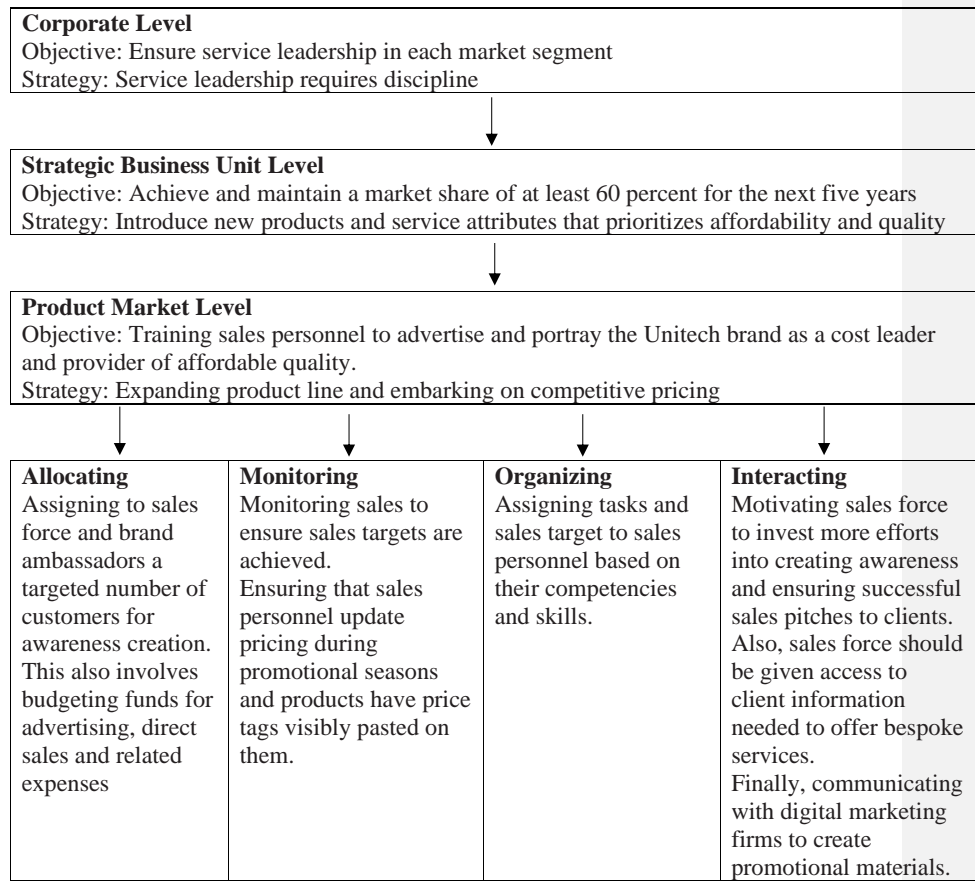| **Allocating**	**Monitoring**	**Organizing**	**Interacting**
Assigning to sales force and brand ambassadors a targeted number of customers for awareness creation. This also involves budgeting funds for advertising, direct sales and related expenses	Monitoring sales to ensure sales targets are achieved. Ensuring that sales personnel update pricing during promotional seasons and products have price tags visibly pasted on them.	Assigning tasks and sales target to sales personnel based on their competencies and skills.	Motivating sales force to invest more efforts into creating awareness and ensuring successful sales pitches to clients. Also, sales force should be given access to client information needed to offer bespoke services. Finally, communicating with digital marketing firms to create promotional materials.

Figure 12: Objectives and Strategy Implementation for Unitech Premiere Computers

Activity/ Item	Timeline	Personnel	Cost (GHS)
Sales Promotion • 1st Phase • 2nd Phase	 Dec 2022 – Jan 2022 Apr 2022– May 2022	 Two sales personnel to handle each season of promotional sales	600.00
YouTube & Facebook Ads	Sept 2021 – Jan 2021	Outsourced to digital marketing firm	2,000.00
Text Messages	May 2022 – Dec 2022	One sales personnel placed in charge after the necessary training	200,00
Shopping vouchers • Printing of vouchers • Voucher Distributing	 Apr 2022 Jan 2022 – Aug 2022	 Personnel at printing press In-store sales personnel, and campus brand ambassadors	200.00
Total Cost			**GHS 3000.00**

Table 4: Proposed Budget

YouTube and Facebook were chosen as the main social media communication channels because these are the primary platforms that university students and members of the working class (target market) visit or have accounts on.

4.4. Evaluation Plan

After implementation, it is important to evaluate performance to ensure that outcomes align with corporate strategy.

Performance metrics are a performance measurement tools that monitors key indicators of business performance. It enables the firm to focus on indicators that are mostly critical to the achievements of the firm's objectives.

Therefore the following are the four performance indicators that Unitech need to deploy to monitor its effectiveness at implementing the suggested solution:

- *Net Income growth*

Also known as net profit, net income helps businesses ascertain the amount by which total revenue exceed total expenses. Hence, Unitech should evaluate by how much net income has growth after implementing the positioning strategy.

- *Customer Satisfaction as measured by survey results*

Customer satisfaction measures the level of satisfaction customers have from the use of a product or service. Therefore, Unitech needs to assess through feedback forms whether customers and potential customers have a clear understanding of what the market position of Unitech. It can simply do this by asking consumers of what comes to their minds when they think of the Unitech brand. Responses will signal how well implemented solution is yield results.

- *Market Share growth*

Market share represents the aspect of an industry's total sales that accrue to a business. Hence, Unitech should measure its sales levels periodically (quarterly, semi-annually etc) to monitor changes in market share after the implementation of the solution.

- *Quality Costs*

Quality costs are costs incurred in attaining the quality targets of the firm. Quality costs include costs incurred to ensure product quality targets are attained and/or cost incurred after a low quality product or service has been rendered. Hence, quality costs incurred before and after the implementation of the solution should be evaluated for discrepancies so that the firm can correct deviations where necessary.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter proposed a solution and implementation plan that would allow Unitech segment the computer retail market using the Hybrid segmentation approach. This led to the identification of six segments. It was recommended that Unitech chose the segment that sought portable, affordable and reliable computers since it aligned with its resources, capabilities and experience. The chapter concluded by proposing an implementation and evaluation plan that fitted Unitech's objectives and resources.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Chapter Overview

This chapter provides closing remarks to the research conducted on Unitech Premiere Computers Limited. It explores the key insights encountered, organizational changes that need to be addressed, pitfalls to hedged against in the execution of the proposed solution, limitations of the suggested tool, and future steps that the firm needs to take beyond the suggested solution. The chapter rounds up with the challenges faced and lessons learned in the research process.

5.2. Conclusion, Recommendations and Final Thoughts

5.2.1. Key Insights

Undertaking this research ignited the following key insights:

- Unitech needed to live up to its promises about its service delivery as customers complained that they were displeased about the unreliability and lack of credibility of the Unitech Brand during certain service encounters. This revealed that reliability is a position that can be explored since most customers and potential customers revealed it to be a determinant factor in selecting a computer retail service.

- Also, it was realized that the current location of Unitech is a major barrier to its success. Determining a location strategy was not the focus of this project as management disclosed that finding a good location was not a challenge they faced. In fact, at the time of the study, the firm was evaluating a number of alternative locations. Nonetheless, the survey proved that a strategic location was

a key to success hence Unitech needs to address its location strategy with urgency.

5.2.2. Organizational Changes

Unitech needs to be flexible with the inclusion of frontline workers in business decision making. Presently, the firm practices a bureaucratic style of decision making which is a catalyst against employee innovation and creativity. Hence, there is need to enrich the job descriptions of employees in order to reduce boredom. Finally, the firm needs to improve working conditions and schedules so that employees have acceptable time for leisure since adequate relaxation has direct impact on productivity of labor.

5.2.3. Pitfalls to hedge against

Customer dissatisfaction is sometimes inevitable in the service delivery process. However, effective customer recovery protocol is essential to the maintenance of any market position. Hence, Unitech needs to be prompt to identify dissatisfaction of customers communicated on their online platforms or in person. Grievances of customers not attended to can spread negative word about the Unitech Brand. Therefore, the firm needs to develop effective customer recovery systems to address customer grievances before they escalate into large scale cognitive dissonance which would backstab their positioning efforts.

5.2.4. Limitations of the Tool

Consumer needs and preferences are constantly changing. This is particularly true for the computer retail market. Hence, the behavioral and psychological needs outlined in the hybrid market segmentation framework in Chapter 4 need to be reviewed preferably

every three to six months. A three to six month period is advised because consumer tastes

and preferences have undergone rapid changes in the last decade with innovations being

introduced yearly. Market research should be conducted to detect trends that are having

or would inspire changes in consumer preferences in the computer retail industry.

Also, the position map used as positioning tool is susceptible to irrelevance over

time. However, this tool would be particularly useful over the short-to-medium term after

which it has to be revised. This is because firms generally maintain a consistent market

position. Even if a single firm decides to reposition especially in the short to medium

term, it would not have a significant impact on the relevant of the positioning map tool,

(all other things equal).

Nonetheless, Unitech has to conduct period researches to ensure that it has precise

knowledge about the relative position of competitors.

5.2.5.Future Steps

Maintaining the right position within the selected segments requires consistent

marketing efforts. Unitech needs to follow a consistent marketing strategy like that

recommended in the Chapter 4. This is because, positioning of brands is a delicate

strategy that needs to be hammered through marketing activities in order to continuously

prune negative perceptions and instill the right image in the minds of consumers and even

competitors. Additionally, Unitech needs to change its location to a suitable one so that

this new endeavor of rebranding the business can be effective. Finally, employees need to

be trained to understand this new position of the firm in order to instill a holistic firm

effort towards attaining a competitive advantage.

5.2.6. Challenges Faced

In the course of executing the project, the stage that proved daunting was the data collection stage. It was a difficult task following-up and ensuring that respondents completed the online surveys. Responses collected turned out to be 25 percent of the questionnaire sent out. Because the nature of the project required generalizing the existence of various segments found in the computer retail market, the low survey responses limited the extent to which findings could be generalized.

5.2.7. Lessons Learned

It was a thrilling experience applying knowledge acquired from classes to the real life business scenario this project offered. First-hand experience with the use of primary and secondary data collection geared at unraveling root causes of key business problems was acquired.

The opportunity to interact with top level management members and other stakeholders has sharpened communication and inter-personal relationship skills. The various interactions with persons of various backgrounds enriched the sense of diversity and managing resultant dynamics.

How to structure questions depending on the respondent profile and context was another field of knowledge that was explored.

Summarily, this project taught how to tackle problems with the appropriate tools, and how to ask the right questions to develop a bespoke solution. This project is indeed a befitting pinnacle of the knowledge acquired in the course of the undergraduate study.

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Appendix

Interview questions for the CEO and the General Manager

1. When was Unitech Premiere Computers established?
2. What it its mission and vision?
3. Describe the company structure? How many employees does Unitech currently employ
4. What are the short and long-term goals of the business?
5. How are your operations geared towards achieving your stated goals?
6. Why is it important to implement your expansion goals at this time?
7. Who are your customers?
8. What competitive advantage do you presently have (if any)?
9. What issues do your customers complain about?
10. What have you done so far to address the complaints?
11. How many customers do you serve a week (on average)?
12. How do you communicate with customers?
13. Which advertising platforms do you use? And why?

Questions for customers and potential customers.

1. What kinds of technological gadgets do you use?
2. Please rank the following characteristics (style, mass, size) of gadgets based on you preference on a scale of 1 (highly irrelevant) to 5 (highly relevant)
3. Have your ever heard of Unitech Premiere Computers?
4. If you answered yes to the above question, how did you get to know about Unitech?
5. Please select what best describes you; non-customer, new-customer, long-term customer, former customer
6. How important are the following service attributes to you when deciding to purchase from a computer retail shop, on a scale of 1 (very unimportant) to 5 (very important) – price, speed of service delivery, service proximity, service reliability, brand popularity, affiliation to brand, brand reputation, location, social status attributed to brand