

Marketing



Background and Management Problem Stephen's Mobile which is located in the UK has performed relatively satisfactory until recently. Recently there has been a decline in sales and management needs to make a decision relative to either improving the product or its brand or making some kind of change or phasing out altogether. Management's decision however will have to be informed by research results. In this regard, a research design based on a specific marketing research problem will determine what factors are contributing to the decline in sales and what market conditions and consumer interests will impact the direction that management ultimately takes. As an organization that targets products and services regular research is always necessary (Zeithami et al 1990, p. 53). The research will inform of the interests of customers and the situation within the relevant market (McQuarrie 2006, p. ix). With the decline in sales, market research is particularly important as there is uncertainty relative to the market situation and customer interests and habits increases (McQuarrie 2006, p. ix). Market research will determine the utility of introducing new products or for changing existing products or services so that they correspond with customer trends, interests and preferences (Bartels et al 2002, p. 285). Stephen's management will have to make a research design that corresponds with budget and within their restrictions (Avasarikar et al 2007, p. 2. 24). It will be necessary to negotiate for a practical budget in advance of the marketing research. However, the research problem must be unambiguously identified before negotiating for a workable budget. When the research problem is defined clearly, researchers, management and marketing consultants can more clearly define and assign roles prior to the start of research and this will reduce the obstacles implicit in conflicting

goals, strategies and approaches relative to the research (Avasarikar et al 2007, p. 2. 24). Overall Design In any organisation, the design of the research will typically depend on the researcher's understanding of the research problem, the current market situation relative to the product and the customers' demands, expectations and perceptions (Zikmund et al 2008, p. 43). Normally the research design changes as and when the research progresses. This is because along the way it may come to light that the initial criteria for measuring success can be narrowed down or broadened depending on what research uncovers as it moves along (Blessing et al 2009, p. 58). In this study quantitative research design has been engaged to conduct the research. Quantitative research permits researchers to prepare a summary of the data collected so that workable conclusions can be made. These conclusions are usually relative to the impact or influence of "explanatory variables on a relevant marketing variable" and the focus is then "only on revealed preference data" (Franses et al 2002, p. 10). In other words, quantitative research designs facilitate methods for measuring market performance in the areas of sales, brand preferences and market shares. As Franses et al (2002) explain, these kinds of variables are "explanatory" and can often contain "marketing-mix variables and household-specific characteristics" (p. 10). Quantitative designs are important for this research project because it provides data that is descriptive and can aid in predicting and making decisions (Franses 2002, p. 11). Quantitative research designs are therefore useful for measuring observable facts and circumstances. It permits the quantification of variables and their respective relationships (Nykiel 2007, p. 55). For instance, it is possible to collect continuing data relative to sales and to test the relationship between sales

with brand choice. Bibliography Avasarikar, D. and Chordiya, S. (2007). Marketing Research. Pune, India: Nirali Prakashan. ISBN: 8185790779.

Bartels, G. and Nelissen, W. (2002). Marketing for Sustainability: Towards Transactional Policy-Making. London, UK: IOS Press. ISBN: 1 58603 204 6.

Blessing, L. and Chakrabarti, A. (2009). DRM, A Design Research Methodology. London, UK: Springer. ISBN 978-1-84882-586-4.

Franses, P. and Paap, R. (2002). Quantitative Models in Marketing Research. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 0-521-80166-4.

McQuarrie, E. (2006). The Market Research Toolbox: A Concise Guide for Beginners. London, UK: SAGE Publications. ISBN 1-4129-1319-5.

Nykiel, R. (2007). Handbook of Marketing Research Methodologies for Hospitality and Tourism. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press. ISBN: 978-0-7890-3426-7.

Zeithaml, V.; Parasuraman, A. and Berry, L. (1990). Delivering Quality Service: Balancing Customer Perceptions and Expectations. New York, NY: The Free Press. ISBN: 0-02-935701-2.

Zikmund, W. and Babin, G. (2009). Essentials of Marketing Research. Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning. ISBN 13-978-324-59375-4.