

Pr plan for mands clothing

[Society](#), [Child Abuse](#)



Introduction

In recent years, Marks & Spencer's clothing sales have experienced a period of decline and have been involved in a large amount of discounting which has a negative impact on the profit margins within the department. The purpose of this PR plan is to consider an appropriate marketing and PR strategy that would lead to the turnaround of this ailing department.

Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of this PR and marketing agenda is essentially to reinvent the positioning of the M&S clothing division, so that it is not forced into having to discount and is therefore able to maintain stronger profit margins. Historically, Marks & Spencer's has maintained a strong reputation for providing quality basics, without necessarily being at the cutting edge of fashion, with the establishment of additional ranges, aiming to have the impact of turning this perception around. Yet, the increased use of disposable fashion from the likes of Primark has put increasing pressure on companies such as Marks & Spencer when it comes to retaining their market share (MacDonald, 2011).

Despite this, the marketing campaign, "Leading Ladies", has shown a slight turnaround of fortunes, indicating that a concerted effort within the PR and marketing area could indeed have a dramatic effect on this ailing area within M&S (Marks and Spencer, 2014).

Audience

The audience is potentially one of the hardest things to identify, in terms of this overall PR plan, as Marks & Spencer's clothing covers such a potentially wider audience. It is suggested in this case, however, that by focusing on ladies wear, the overall agenda for the clothing department can be considered and looked at in the long run (Hackley, 2009).

The target audience for this plan therefore is to focus on the fashion conscious, yet affluent 20 – 40 year old category. Attempting to compete with the prices of disposable fashion outlets is simply impractical; therefore, the focus needs to be on the high income a professional, fashionable women who also want their clothes to be excellent quality and durability.

Message

Linked to the chosen audience is the message that M&S clothing products are providing quality, durable essentials that offer a sophisticated and professional look, with a touch of fashion that is not a disposable, cheap fashion product.

One of the key problems which have been identified within the M&S clothing range in recent years is that the cost of the product has simply not warranted the quality of fashion being provided, and the balance between quality and cost needs to be redressed (Parrish, 2010). Maintaining a strong quality is important. Yet, it is necessary for the fashionable element of the product to be brought to the forefront of this message, and this needs to be delivered clearly to the young, affluent audience. In order to achieve this M&S is going to focus on the younger audience by engaging with young

workers and students. Offering discounts and selecting the relevant media publications that aim at these people will be a crucial part of delivering this message.

Communication Strategies

Bearing in mind the message and the target audience in question, the choice of communication strategy will be particularly important when it comes to successfully providing this shift in emphasis and new marketing strategy.

Given the chosen audience, the communication strategies also need to be aimed at a younger audience, using factors such as the internet and e-mail marketing, in order to portray a younger, more cutting-edge image.

Establishing affiliations with third parties and appropriate magazines will also be important for encouraging potential consumers to view Marks & Spencer clothing in a slightly different light. Events such as fashion shows and launches of product ranges in locations that are going to be targeting this new audience. Working with Universities and popular work areas in central towns will assist in this matter.

Celebrity endorsement is also potentially going to assist in shifting the perceptions of Marks & Spencer away from products which are slightly old and staid. By partnering with the appropriate celebrities and also appropriate events, the general perception of the company can be changed, over time, and this needs to be a relatively mid-term agenda for M&S.

Resource and Budget

The overall size of M&S and the ability to draw on financial resources from other departments such as the food and home department provides evidence of real opportunities in regard to spending a large amount on this revised PR and marketing approach that would be impossible for other organisations without the backing of these departments. In order to completely reinvent the perception around an organisation the size of M&S will require a consistent and large resource, over a relatively prolonged period of time. In addition, however, it is proposed that a six-month time horizon be looked at, with the majority of the focus being placed on shifting the emphasis and eventually reinventing the product range. It is therefore suggested that a team of four marketing professionals should be given the agenda of achieving this plan as part of a specific six-month project (Hallbauer, 2008).

Initially, it is proposed that a budget of ? 260, 000 will be provided on the basis of ? 40, 000 per month to cover the advertising in key locations and in order to ensure that the manpower is available in every store across the country. It is also recognised that having a strong celebrity endorsement may be very beneficial, the budget may need to be adjusted to reflect this.

Evaluation Methods

By looking at the current difficulties being faced by the M&S clothing range, it can be seen that it is largely attached to the perception of individuals and the demands of the potential target audience. With this in mind, evaluating the marketing and PR agenda will not only involve looking at quantitative figures such as the change in sales, but more crucially at the changing perceptions of customers and potential customers. Also for this reason, at

least initially, the necessary way to evaluate the PR agenda will be to undertake an analysis of customer perceptions and satisfaction of products. After the initial six-month period, it is anticipated that there will be shifting sales figures and therefore the evaluation methods used would need to alter to take this into account. It is, however, recognised that this marketing agenda will not completely change the fortunes of the company in a matter of weeks and evaluation methods need to be reflective of this gradual shift, if the agenda is not to be deemed a failure, at a fairly early stage (Newman & Cullen, 2002).

References

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