

# A marketing report for iams flashcard



The company has created and developed many nutritional and healthy cat and dog foods. It strives to tackle many pet health issues, one of them being weight control. It has developed special foods for cats and dogs to aid weight loss as part of a diet set by Iams itself. One of Iams' popular diet food for cats is 'Iams ProActive Health Weight Control' food. Featured on the Iams website, Iams Weight Control is described as "the healthy way to help pets lose weight without losing energy.

Formulated with 10% less fat than Original formulas, this vet-recommended diet contains a special blend of carbohydrates in combination with the fat-burner L-Carnitine to keep pets energized and feeling full, so they can gradually return to a healthier weight." This involvement can be seen as an ethical approach thus promotes itself through being 'ethical' and this appeals to the majority of the company's stakeholders. A recent report by Iams has talked of plans to move all dry food production to Leipsic, allowing the Iams Lewisburg research and production facility to be primarily focused on specialty veterinary and therapeutic pet foods, including its Eukanuba brand. Being a hugely successful and profitable company, P&G has the resources to fund extensive research projects for Iams ultimately enabling the company to develop new innovative pet food products and this puts the company ahead of the game and gives them a competitive edge over most cat and dog foods on the market. However, the main weakness for Iams which is related to the research and experimentation mentioned above, is that there are concerns of animal cruelty affecting the views of many of the company's stakeholders, in particular the target consumers.

Unfortunately, there are many websites and petitions surrounding the laboratory research work Iams carries out on animals. The most popular website being 'www.uncaged.com' which appears at the top of the search results page when searched for Iams and this can be detrimental to the company as it could deter both existing consumers and potential consumers from looking at Iams' official website and even a potential boycott of the company.

This concern of animal cruelty is a huge threat for the company and could potentially ruin the company and P&G. Uncaged's website has a dominant section on Iams. 'Our expose became a front page story in the Daily Express, and the embarrassment forced IAMS/Eukanuba and their parent company, Procter & Gamble (P&G), to claim that they would stop lethal tests on cats and dogs in their new research policy'' is part of the introduction to the section. It illustrates the impact an issue like animal cruelty can have on a company and its stakeholders.

Another alarming extract from the website highlights this weakness of Iams and P&G and shows the damage already caused and reinforces the potential threat for the company is "several major UK animal organisations – e. g. the RSPCA, the Dogs Trust, Blue Cross – severed ties with IAMS/Eukanuba and P&G as a result of the exposes and our campaigns. As have hundreds of rescue centres, shelters, kennels, catteries, 'pet' shops, training centres, cat and dog clubs and breeders. " As of yet the company has shown little effort and no marketing strategies to improve this situation or to reassure the public on its own accord.

Although there is an element of animal cruelty in Iams' research projects, some stakeholders of the company deem it inevitable when developing such life-changing products for the future and this could be seen as an opportunity for the company.

Another opportunity for the company is a potential mass-market takeover, Iams and Eukanuba are together known as a niche product and operate mainly in a specialist market but more recently some of Iams' products have been introduced onto the shelves of the biggest grocery stores nationally but there is undoubtedly an opportunity for the company to operate fully on a mass-market scale as well as in veterinary practices and specialist shops as their brand awareness increases more and more on a global scale.

This opportunity is made possible by the increase in health awareness in more recent years in regard to animals as well as humans and also pets, in particular cats and dogs, are becoming more and more of an important part in an owner's life with some owners spending extortionate amounts of money on their pets, for example, some owners particularly in the US send their pets to luxury pet hotels whilst they go on holiday where their pets get pampered and spoiled. There have also been introductions in pet clothing ranges in high street clothing retailers such as 'Topshop.' Although some people argue that Iams is more expensive than other brands, I would rather spend a little extra money to know that my puppy is getting the nutrients that she needs'' is a statement made by an Iams customer on a product review for 'Iams large breed puppy formula'' (Eopinions, 1999).

This is the view of most of Iams and Eukanuba's customers and this point of view is heavily focused on and reinforced in P&G's advertisement for Iams through the use of health and nutritional facts and the use of emotional advertising, especially in their television adverts.

More focus has been on television advertisements in recent years due to the increase in demand from consumers rather than businesses. A recent television advertisement surrounding Iams' dry pet food has reportedly increased sales significantly in dry food but interestingly in wet food too.

**Conclusion** In conclusion, it is apparent that The Iams Company have more strengths than weaknesses. The company's brand awareness is on the increase and this is helped by its television advertisements and development of new, innovative food products.

Iams have continued to convey its image of quality which is a key strength and is crucial in the success of the company.

Iams has few weaknesses but the one in most concern is the involvement in animal experimentation. This is a huge threat to Iams and P&G and with businesses and organisations already boycotting the company, it could result in more businesses and consumers boycotting, leaving the company in financial problems. It also could have a huge impact on P&G and its other products. **Recommendations**

To ensure The Iams Company meets both current and future needs, I would advise that it continues to work along its mission statement to "enhance the well-being of cats and dogs and to provide world-class nutritional food and pet-care products." It is essential that Iams continues to maintain and

increase the quality of its products and service to be able to keep its ' niche' and specialist image. This can be done by taking a sophisticated approach to its advertising and not becoming too commercialised by limiting its advertising methods and choosing the most appropriate sources for its target market.

Continuing the use of emotional advertising is also a proven effective strategy. I would recommend that the weakness and potential threat of animal experimentation is the main focus point for Iams over the next few years as it is an extremely important issue that affects the views of society and it is essential that research into experimentation and laboratory work without having to harm animals is carried out, even if this means putting a hold on the development and research of new products.

Whilst acting on this, I think it would be beneficial for both Iams and P&G to inform its customer base, other stakeholders and in particular animal rights organisations through reports or even marketing. This could prevent future threats and will enable the company and external stakeholders to monitor the progress. Iams should continue to specialise in distributing its products to veterinarians and specialist pet businesses as this was originally Iams only and main customer base therefore it is important to continue to maintain its customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Also, these businesses are extremely crucial in the success of Iams brand image and without these contacts, the company could have problems.

Generally, The Iams Company is doing well and its marketing strategies are getting more and more effective with the public with sales boosting in

grocery stores globally. Providing the company demonstrates to deal with its weakness of animal experimentation I think Iams could become one of the biggest pet food names in the future and could become a mass-market product whilst still maintaining its premium and 'niche' image.