

Article review on marketing

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Black & Decker Incorporated is a company in the general consumers market, and located in Connecticut. It was founded in 1910, and it has over 21, 000 employees with sales of over \$ 750 million worldwide. This company offers products such as coffee makers, toasters and firefighting equipment. The success of this company illustrates how a company can adjust its product line to reach the high end market. Black & Decker was successful with the Dust buster vacuum cleaner that led it to the acquisition of the General Electric's appliances division in 1984. After this milestone, the company faced challenges of redesigning some of the brands so that they could appeal to the market. The Space Maker coffee maker was inappropriate as far as customer design and appeal were concerned. The company redesigned this product to yield a very successful Space Maker Plus that served the high end kitchen appliances market. Not only did the redesigning yield a completely different image for consumer experience but it also made usage of the same appliance easier than it had been. The initial design of the Space Maker Plus was uneconomical in terms of space, and it proved uncoordinated in its elements, for instance the can opener. However, Black & Decker saw that the initial modifications could not work. At this point, the initial Space Maker was fully redesigned to give a less bulky appliance that met the needs of the consumers.

With the thermal carafe, Black & Decker used product differentiation to improve the product. The company developed a spring loaded release system through its engineering and design team prowess. By so doing, heat loss was minimized; in contrast with the foam plastic insulation which would have been highly inefficient. A completely redesigned system worked with

grooves in order to improve stability, ease of use and safety. This achievement solved a challenge that consumers faced; which involved inability to see the insertion point. To add onto this, Black & Decker reduced the size of another product – the book shaped water reservoir. The company redesigned the housing to yield a streamlined look that carried subdued graphics. These initiatives helped reduce the manufacturing and assembly costs. Expansion of the market strategy was used by Black & Decker. The company developed complementary appliances such as fluorescent light fixtures that resulted in space saving. This company has had success owing to design modifications following any discomfort in customer experience. Improving the user experience has been a critical success factor for Black & Decker; this has been achieved by collaboration in these processes.

The other dimension is that Black & Decker is in the bottom half as far as brand perception is concerned. Some of the top competitors are Milwaukee and Makita. The strategies adopted by these players include having a solid presence in the industrial segment and provision of high quality tools at a premium. From a review, it is clear that Black & Decker has been performing poorly in the Tradesmen segment. Some of the reasons attributed to this include a poor brand perception. The other reason is that entry into the consumer segment has been detrimental to the perception in the professional segment. Some strategies are vital to ensure that Black & Decker recovers from this situation. One of the strategies is dropping the tainted Black and Decker name, which has been used in the professional segment. Several hindrances are faced at this point, for instance limited

color options. In light of this, Black & Decker should utilize the ‘ construction yellow’ for DeWalt tools so that it can improve the market share.