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## Marketing Methods for Water Production in the Anamorava Region

### Abstract

The objective of this master's thesis is to examine marketing strategies from a theoretical perspective and assess their practical use in water production firms within the Municipality of Gjilan. The paper encompasses an examination of literature authored by either local or international writers.

The first section of the paper provides an overview of the industry, including an analysis of the current status of the identification and implementation of marketing strategies in four organizations. Additionally, the report identifies various challenges faced by these businesses. The second section of the paper comprises a comprehensive examination of the literature, focusing on the theoretical aspects of the important topics. These points are closely linked to the material gathered from various sources and writers. This section includes several illustrative figures. The third section comprises the methodology of the study, encompassing the details and data collected during the administration of the questionnaire to four firms and their 73 consumers. This study also provides a description of the data analysis process that was used to derive the results. The fourth section entails the analysis and explanation of the outcomes derived from the employed methodologies. The results were obtained by administering two questionnaires: one for the company, comprising 14 questions, and one for consumers, comprising 10 questions. The data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel.

This encompasses the analysis of the results, specifically focusing on the outcomes derived from the implementation of marketing strategies within the company. It is noteworthy that this analysis begins by highlighting the absence of a dedicated marketing department within the organization. Furthermore, it establishes a connection between the theoretical framework derived from the literature review and its practical application in the company's day-to-day operations.

**Keywords:** Marketing strategy, marketing concept, water producers, customer



## **Introduction**

Kosovo benefits from a strategically advantageous geographical location, which provides access to Western European markets. Additionally, it has strong historical and cultural connections with Italy, Germany, and Switzerland, both through traditional ties and diaspora communities. Kosovo is a member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) and benefits from unrestricted entry into the European Union (EU) under the Autonomous Trade Preferences program. Additionally, Kosovo has free access to the United States under the Generalized System of Preferences. Marketing strategies are crucial for the growth of businesses, particularly in today's highly competitive market. Hence, this reality compels us to ascertain the tactics employed by firms in the water production and processing sector in the towns of Anamorava. The ability to identify marketing strategies that will help an organization succeed is a challenge for businesses in Kosovo. In the current highly competitive market, water providers in the Municipalities of Anamorava, as well as other areas, must prioritize marketing techniques in order to achieve commercial success amidst rivalry from both local and international rivals. Water producers in the municipalities of Anamorava, specifically in the cities of Kamenica and Vitia, have successfully entered the market not only in the southeastern region of Kosovo but throughout the entire territory of Kosovo. Additionally, they have also been able to export their products to neighboring countries and even further away. These producers, such as Dea Water, Kika, Jeta, and Klllokoti, have achieved this by attracting consumers through offering high-quality products and, in the case of Dea Water, superior packaging. In this study, my objective is to assess the techniques employed by these organizations thus far and provide guidance and suggestions for future enhancements. The Gjilan region boasts the highest density of water sector enterprises in Kosovo, while others are mostly located in Pristina, Ferizai, Brezovica, Peja, and Mitrovica.

### **The objective of the paper**

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of marketing methods employed by water producers in the Anamorava region, specifically focusing on the four firms included in the study.

The aims of the project are:

1. To provide a comprehensive overview of marketing, including both mixed marketing and specific marketing methods discussed by local and foreign authors.
2. To compile and disseminate surveys to producers (firm management) and consumers of these products
3. This study aims to identify the most effective strategy alternatives for achieving overall success by analyzing case studies of enterprises located in Kosovo.
4. Based on the findings of the study, make inferences and provide suggestions.

To achieve the goals and accomplish the purpose of this research, the following research questions need to be addressed:

Do the four water production firms in the Municipality of Gjilan employ authentic marketing strategies?

- What competitive strategy does the eujit producer use to gain a competitive edge and comparative advantage?

Is the price the decisive factor in "competing" with the competitor?

What is the level of competition in the market?

- What is the foundation and viability of cost reduction as a competitive strategy for the four firms included in this study?
- What are the distinguishing characteristics of water-producing enterprises?
- What is the most effective method implemented thus far?
- What is the definition of promotional media, and what is their level of effectiveness?

### **Approach**

The introductory section of the study draws from theoretical literature and previous research conducted by both local and international scholars, focusing on marketing tactics and the broader field of marketing.

The basic data were obtained through surveys and interviews conducted with the management of four water-generating firms in the towns of Anamorava. In addition to the 73 arbitrary consumers who utilize the products manufactured by these firms,.

The data is shown using figures and graphs and analyzed using the Excel software.

The section titled "Research Methods and Methodology" provides a comprehensive explanation of the methods employed.

### **EVALUATION OF THE FINDINGS**

The next section presents the results of the research, which involved analyzing questionnaires completed by managers from four firms and users of their products.

#### **Evaluation of the outcomes obtained from the surveyed businesses**

In response to the initial inquiry regarding the determination of marketing policies within your firm, the managers of DEA and Klllokoti Enterprises indicated that the marketing manager is responsible for establishing these rules. Conversely, in KIKA and JETA, the owner assumes this responsibility.

- In the following question regarding market research, the figure below displays the affirmation of market research by the management of four firms.

The managers of KIKA and JETA companies have stated that they personally do market research, but DEA and Klllokoti outsource their research to external agencies.

The managers of DEA, KIKA, and Klllokoti enterprises have affirmed that they have experienced sales growth due to the implementation of marketing strategies. However, the manager of JETA Enterprise

has admitted that they lack concrete evidence to determine the impact of marketing strategies on sales. This is because they did not conduct a comparative analysis of sales results before and after promotional activities or events associated with the implementation of marketing strategies.

- In the next question, about whether the marketing plan is tailored to consumer needs or influenced by competition, the managers of DEA and KIKA companies have stated their preference for a customer demand-driven strategy, while JETA and Klllokoti have opted for a competition-driven approach.

To determine the pricing methods used by the surveyed companies, a question was asked of the managers. According to the figure provided, the manager of the DEA company mentioned that prices are determined based on market conditions. The manager of the KIKA company stated that they use the cost-plus method with a margin. On the other hand, the executives of JETA and Klllokoti companies claimed that their competitors' pricing influences their own.

In the following question, the managers of JETA and DEA companies believe that product quality plays a crucial role in sales. On the other hand, the manager of the KIKA company emphasizes that consumer preferences are the key factor. Lastly, the manager of Klllokoti Company states that lower prices compared to competitors are typically the determining factor in sales.

- When asked how they distinguish themselves from their competitors with the same product, the manager of the DEA company highlighted that their unique selling point is packaging water in glass containers, setting them apart from the competition. Similarly, the manager of the KIKA company emphasized their differentiation through the use of the highest quantity of PVC plastic packaging. On the other hand, the managers of JETA and Klllokoti enterprises claimed that their competitive advantage lies in offering the widest and highest-quality range of industrial packaging.

The managers of DEA and Klllokoti enterprises stated that they do not implement price differentiation based on market segments. However, the managers of KIKA and JETA enterprises mentioned that they do not provide transportation for geographically distant market segments, leaving it to the buyer. This indirectly leads to price differentiation.

To assess the market penetration approach, the following question was posed: "Have you successfully boosted the sales of current products in the current market?" All four managers of the companies unequivocally responded in the affirmative, confirming that they have indeed raised the sales of existing items in the existing market.

The following question aims to determine the market development strategy and its influence on sales growth. As depicted in the figure below, companies DEA and KIKA have adopted this strategy by selling their products not only in Kosovo and the surrounding region but also in new markets such as the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, and certain EU countries. On the other hand, JETA and Klllokoti companies have been selling exclusively in the Kosovo, Macedonia, and Albania markets for a longer period of time.

Enterprises DEA and JETA have lately introduced new items, leading their managers to announce an increase in sales. On the other hand, KIKA and Klllokoti have not launched any new products in the past two years. This technique of product development has not had an impact on the increase in sales.

The subsequent inquiry aimed to ascertain the impact of the diversification strategy on sales growth. As depicted in the figure below, the respondents' responses align with the previous question. Specifically, DEA and JETA have successfully marketed novel products in new markets, whereas KIKA and Klllokoti have not experienced a surge in sales due to their entry into new markets with new products.

All surveyed organizations excel in implementing one of Porter's general strategies, specifically differentiation through cost reduction. The management of these businesses achieves this by taking actions like reducing electricity costs, lowering raw material costs, and minimizing transportation costs.

Analysis of findings from consumer interviews

It is evident from the information below that the age of the respondents is proportional.

The distribution of respondents is roughly equivalent across age categories, with 24 out of the total 73 participants falling into each group. Are

Between the ages of 20 and 25, there were 24 individuals. From the ages of 26 to 35, there were 24 individuals. From the age of 35 onwards, there were 25 individuals.

The graph illustrates that 28 females and 45 males took part in the survey.

According to chart no. 3, out of the total respondents, 66 individuals exclusively consume purchased, packaged water, while 20 individuals have stated that they also consume water from the water supply in addition to the purchased water.

Among the 73 individuals surveyed, 38 identified themselves as regular drinkers of DEA water, 15 as consumers of KIKA water, 7 as consumers of both KIKA water and Klllokot water, and 15 as consumers of Klllokot water.

When asked about their preferences when purchasing packaged water, DEA water customers had the following responses: 29 individuals valued quality, 4 individuals prioritized price, 3 individuals considered packaging, and 2 individuals emphasized closeness to the site. Kika customers provided feedback on multiple aspects of the product, with 8 customers emphasizing quality, 3 customers focusing on price, and 2 customers mentioning packaging and location proximity. Similarly, JETA customers expressed their opinions, with 3 customers mentioning quality and price and 1 customer mentioning packaging. Klllokot customers also provided feedback, with 8 customers emphasizing quality, 3 customers focusing on price, and 2 customers mentioning location proximity. In total, 48 customers mentioned quality, 13 customers mentioned price, 8 customers mentioned packaging, and 4 customers mentioned location proximity.

- In the following question, respondents were asked to rate the quality of the product. The majority of participants, specifically 48 out of 73 people, focused on the flavor. Additionally, 15 respondents considered the packaging to be good, while 10 respondents emphasized the content of the water purchased for drinking. The user's text is a single period. Out of the 73 respondents, 56 of them indicated that the price of water does not influence their purchase decision. This suggests that customers of these items make their purchase based on their familiarity with the taste or substance of the water. Out of the total, 10 individuals indicated that price is a factor in their purchase decision occasionally; however, only 7 individuals explicitly stated that price does influence their purchase decision.

- Regarding the issue of whether the respondents approve of the promotional policies of the water producers, 55 individuals expressed their liking for these policies, while 18 respondents indicated their disapproval. DEA water consumers expressed the most favorable responses, whereas KIKA water and, to a certain extent, Kllokot water received the most unfavorable responses.

Out of the 73 consumers surveyed, 56 indicated that they locate the products effortlessly, 11 stated that they need to inquire with the merchants, and 6 responded negatively.

- When asked if they purchase these products solely due to their local origin, 44 participants said that they buy them based on the product's quality and price. Out of these respondents, 25 firmly answered no, while 4 indicated that they exclusively purchase them because they are local products.

The most commonly consumed packaging material is PVC, with 59 out of 73 respondents purchasing products packaged in PVC plastic. 8 respondents reported purchasing products in glass packaging, while 6 respondents indicated that the packaging material does not influence their purchasing decisions.

All respondents expressed a strong preference for these products above others, indicating high satisfaction and brand loyalty.

## **Summary and Suggestions**

Hypothesis 1: Water-producing firms in the Municipality of Gjilan employ expansion methods to enhance sales and expand their market presence.

This hypothesis has been partially validated through testing, as it has been observed that all four water-producing companies employ the market penetration strategy, while only two companies employ the other three strategies: market development strategy, product development strategy, and diversification strategy. The DEA enterprise and the JETA firm are the main water producers, whereas the KIKA and Kllokoti companies have not adopted these techniques and rely solely on the market penetration approach for their sales growth.

Hypothesis 2: Individuals who lack marketing expertise decide the marketing strategies for the four companies under investigation in this study.

Even though this theory has received some support, it is clear that the owner of KIKA and JETA sets the marketing strategy, whereas at DEA and Kllokoti, the managers or individuals in charge of marketing and sales do so.

Enterprises utilize the approaches of cost leadership and differentiation to establish a competitive edge in the market.

This hypothesis has been thoroughly validated as accurate, as all companies employ both low-cost and differentiation strategies. However, they vary in terms of differentiation. DEA distinguishes itself through the use of glass packaging, KIKA through a wide range of PVC packaging, and JETA and Kllokoti through superior industrial packaging.

Hypothesis 4: Consumers select water providers' products based on their affordability and accessibility

at retail outlets.

This idea remains unverified, as consumers mostly purchase these products based on their quality, attractive packaging, flavor, and content, which serve as distinguishing factors.

### **Final remarks**

Marketing is widely recognized as a crucial component of strategy planning for successful organizations. Market-oriented strategic planning is a managerial process that focuses on generating and maintaining success in achieving the company's objectives while utilizing its talents and resources. The purpose of strategic planning is to effectively shape the operations and offerings of a business in order to achieve profitability and growth. Additionally, it aims to ensure the survival of the business despite potential dangers. Derived from these observations and the research outcomes, the conclusions drawn in this work are as follows:

The water producers in the Municipality of Gjilan are recognized as exceptional water producers in Kosovo who closely monitor advancements in their industry.

- Two of the water producers possess marketing departments, which establish marketing policies and plans.
- Two other companies lack a dedicated marketing department, instead relying on a single individual responsible for both marketing and sales. In these two companies, the owner is the one making marketing decisions.
- Companies conduct market research, with one company opting for in-house research while the other three companies outsource their marketing efforts to external agencies.
- The two water production firms, which are the subjects of case studies, effectively monitor market trends, consumer requests, and preferences. However, two of the companies primarily focus on adopting competitive strategies.

The company Dea has commenced selling to the United Arab Emirates market and, in addition, collaborates with several other Kosovar producers to export to the markets of the European Union.

- One company uses the cost plus margin strategy for pricing; another company relies on market conditions; and two companies adhere to competition-based pricing.
- Two firms prioritize product quality based on sales; one company focuses on user preferences; and one company emphasizes cheaper prices compared to competitors.
- All polled organizations affirm that effective promotion contributes to sales growth and facilitates consumer engagement.

Water production firms have implemented diverse strategies to reduce costs.

- Their customers possess extensive knowledge regarding the products, including their flavor and composition, that they purchase.

- The consumers of these companies exhibit strong brand loyalty towards the water they consume.

Consumers purchase items from these water producers due to their locality as well as their superior quality and reasonable pricing.

- Certain customers express dissatisfaction with the promotional policies of KIKA, JETA, and Klllokoti, while those of DEA Water are content.

The physical location of the point of sale does not influence the consumer's decision, since they have stated that they can readily discover these products.

- Every consumer across all brands has unequivocally expressed a 100% preference for these items over others, indicating a significant level of dependability and contentment with the various packages and types of water products they purchase.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

After thoroughly examining the extensive literature and particularly the research results, we can provide the following recommendations for water producers in the Municipality of Gjilan:

Both KIKA and JETA enterprises should promptly establish a dedicated marketing and sales office. It is imperative that marketing choices be entrusted to qualified marketing professionals rather than the owner, especially if the owner lacks formal marketing expertise.

Since their expertise ensures accurate input, the company should conduct market research in collaboration with marketing companies.

JETA Enterprise is advised to assess company outcomes prior to and subsequent to promotional and other marketing endeavors in order to gauge the impact of marketing initiatives.

JETA and Klllokoti should align their marketing strategy with consumer demands rather than solely relying on competitive analysis to determine their marketing approach.

Given that Klllokoti possesses a team dedicated to marketing and sales, it is advisable for them to establish their pricing strategy and marketing endeavors in accordance with consumer preferences and prevailing market conditions.

It is advisable for KIKA and JETA enterprises to reassess their pricing strategy to avoid discriminating against consumers based on regional segmentation. By doing so, they can mitigate the reduction in the number of buyers from remote geographical areas due to higher transportation expenses.

JETA and Klllokoti should also focus on augmenting sales by targeting untapped markets and introducing novel items, rather than relying solely on a penetration approach.

KIKA and Klllokoti ought to enhance their advertising endeavors, as a substantial portion of customers have expressed dissatisfaction with their promotional strategies.



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