

VERDANT LEISURE MARKETING STRATEGY

by CRISTINA ACOSTINO AIE

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Since its establishment in 2010, Verdant Leisure has steadily grown to become a prominent player in the tourism and SMEs industries in the UK. The company provides self-catering holidays and holiday homeownership opportunities across seven different holiday parks spanning Scotland and the north of England (Chi, 2022). Its strategic location enables families to enjoy breathtaking coastal regions and the Northern hill of Britain (Verdant Company, 2022). As a medium-sized company, Verdant Leisure is classified as an SME, making it a focal point when discussing SMEs in general. The company has received recognition for its growth and success, being named a finalist in the growing business category of the Amazon Growing Business Awards. This achievement can be attributed to the implementing of effective global marketing strategies over the years. This paper will analyse and evaluate global marketing strategies employed by SMEs, particularly Verdant Leisure in the UK.

Organisational Structure

According to Doole and Lowe (2012), an organisational structure is a system that outlines the arrangement and direction of various business operations and activities to achieve organisational goals. These activities include specific responsibilities, rules, and roles. Moreover, organisational structure also plays a role in determining how information flows between different levels within the organisation. For example, decisions and information flow from the top down in a centralised structure, whereas in a decentralised structure, decision-making authority is distributed across different levels (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016).

A well-established organisational structure is crucial for a company as it helps them remain focused and efficient. Additionally, it enables business leaders to understand how the company is organised and identify strategies for moving forward towards achieving goals. As an SME, Verdant Leisure also has its own organisational structure as it carries out various

operations such as human resource management (HRM), finance, customer relationship management, sales, and marketing. The company follows a hierarchical structure, where senior management and business leaders hold authority to make decisions and set directions for the lower levels.

Marketing Strategies

Segmentation

Verdant Leisure uses various segmentation variables to subdivide the market, primarily focusing on geographic and psychographic aspects. Geographically, the company targets customers located near their holiday parks and resorts in the UK. By concentrating on specific regions, Verdant Leisure can tailor its marketing efforts according to local customers' unique needs and preferences. Psychographically, Verdant Leisure targets individuals seeking relaxation, outdoor activities, and family-friendly vacations. They identify potential customers who exhibit interests in nature, outdoor sports, and quality family time. Psychographics use attitudes, values, social class, lifestyle, and other psychological characteristics mostly overlaid on certain demographic information (Weinstein and Dennis, 2014, p.25). This segmentation strategy allows Verdant Leisure to create tailored promotions, packages, and experiences that resonate with the desired customer segments.

Targeting

Verdant Leisure's targeting strategy primarily focuses on families and individuals seeking tranquil holiday experiences. By narrowing its target market, the company can focus its resources on understanding and meeting the specific needs of this customer segment. This approach enables Verdant Leisure to differentiate itself from competitors that may target a broader range of customers, enabling the company to carve out a unique market position. The company's targeting strategy aligns well with the growing consumer preference for personalised experiences and the desire for variety and choices. By focusing on specific

customer groups, Verdant Leisure can position itself as a specialised provider of niche vacation experiences, catering to its target market's unique desires and interests.

Positioning

Verdant Leisure positions itself as a provider of high-quality, family-friendly holiday experiences in picturesque settings. The company emphasises the serene and relaxing environment alongside an extensive range of outdoor activities suitable for the whole family. Their positioning strategy aims to position Verdant Leisure as a destination for relaxation and adventure, appealing to customers seeking tranquility and excitement. Verdant Leisure differentiates itself from competitors by offering a mix of leisure facilities, accommodations, and a picturesque natural environment, focusing solely on luxury or adventure-oriented experiences. The company strategically aligns its positioning with the desires and preferences of its target customers, leveraging the growing trend of eco-tourism, sustainable travel, and quality family time.

Current Marketing Mix Strategies (4Ps/7Ps)

The marketing mix serves as both a conceptual framework and a practical tool for companies to cater their offerings to meet consumer demands effectively. Often referred to as the 4Ps (Price, Place, Product, and Promotion), the marketing mix is vital in ensuring successful marketing operations and is considered the cornerstone of marketing (Thabit and Raewf, 2018). In the present day, the marketing mix has evolved to incorporate additional elements such as Positioning, Packaging, People, and even Physical Evidence. These marketing mix components have a mutual influence and complement one another. They are important in the company's business strategy (Londhe, 2014). In the case of Verdant Leisure, which operates in the tourism and leisure industry, the 7Ps marketing mix model is utilised.

Product

Products refer to the physical goods and intangible services manufactured or provided by a business, subsequently presented to customers. These products encompass a variety of characteristics, including their packaging style, unique descriptions, and compelling look, all of which play a vital role in marketing (Chakma, 2020; Al Ameri and Ahmad, 2022). Verdant Leisure offers various holiday parks and resorts with various accommodation options, catering to different customer preferences (Caiazza et al., 2016). They provide a place to stay and an entire experience encompassing nature, leisure activities, and family-friendly facilities. Verdant Leisure continuously updates and enhances their offerings, ensuring that its products remain appealing and relevant to its target market (Stinson, 2022).

Price

Considering the rival companies and current market trends, the company must adapt its pricing strategy accordingly. If the price is set too high, it may result in reduced sales and impede the company's initial market growth. On the other hand, if the price is set too low, it could negatively impact the company's profitability (Channon and Jalland, 2016). Verdant Leisure has the option to employ two different pricing strategies: value-based prices and market-oriented prices. By offering its high-end services, such as Holiday Parks and resorts, Verdant Leisure can utilise the value-based pricing strategy, adjusting prices based on the perceived value of the service. On the other hand, market-oriented prices can be applied by setting prices according to market trends and industry standards (Musso and Francioni, 2014).

Place

This marketing mix aspect concerns the locations where Verdant Leisure chooses to distribute its products to the target customers in the tourism and leisure industry. Verdant Leisure utilises various channels to deliver its product and service offerings, including its official website, mobile app, licensing agreements, and partnerships with third-party vendors

in the tourism and leisure sector (Caiazza et al., 2016). This diverse array of distribution methods enables the company to cater to the preferences and requirements of different customer segments, including individuals who may not be at ease with electronic devices.

Promotion

This segment focuses on the strategies employed by the company to reach its intended audience. Verdant Leisure employs a multi-channel marketing approach to effectively reach and engage its target market. They utilise online advertising, social media campaigns, and partnerships with travel agents to generate awareness and interest in their holiday destinations. The company also invests in content marketing, sharing engaging information about local attractions, activities, and events to create a sense of anticipation and desire among potential customers.

People

Extensive knowledge about the company's products or services is expected from all individuals interacting with or directly serving customers. These personnel must be well-educated and well-versed in the offerings of the company. Moreover, they are responsible for effectively promoting the appropriate product to each customer. The staff at Verdant Leisure plays a vital role in providing outstanding customer experiences. They receive training to be friendly, knowledgeable, and attentive to customers' needs. By prioritising personnel training and development, Verdant Leisure ensures that its staff can deliver the desired level of service. This, in turn, contributes to positive customer experiences and fosters long-term customer loyalty (Conconi et al., 2016).

Process

The process of product offering involves several key steps. Firstly, the organisation needs to develop the services they are offering. They then need to inform customers about

these services through various marketing channels. Additionally, they should provide convenience to customers by offering online booking options. It is also important for the organisation to utilise social media for marketing purposes and as a platform for addressing customer complaints and gathering feedback. Furthermore, they should prioritise taking bookings and implementing other customer-focused initiatives. The organization should utilize a customer relationship management system to foster long-term loyalty and relationships with target customers. Through these efforts, Verdant Leisure can streamline the booking process, resulting in improved customer service (Conconi et al., 2016).

Physical Evidence

Before using a service, it is essential for it to be provided and for customers to gather more information about it. Due to the intangible nature of services, the decision to utilise them can be perceived as risky. However, this uncertainty can be minimized by examining case studies and other empirical data. To ensure credibility, any company's statements regarding its service should be supported by accessible consumer information. When customers cannot directly inquire about the service, they may reach out to other customers who have previously used it (Barusman, 2019). Testimonials from satisfied customers in the UK can be particularly effective in persuading clients in other locations. Social media platforms can be immensely helpful in previewing the company's services and illustrating how customers can experience their best moments in life. They can offer physical evidence such as well-maintained parks, clean and comfortable accommodations, and facilities catering to various leisure activities. These social media platforms offer significant advantages (Moutinho, 2016).

In conclusion, Verdant Leisure has successfully implemented segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies to cater to the diverse needs of its target market. The company

tailors its marketing efforts and offerings to specific customer groups by focusing on geographic and psychographic variables for segmentation. The targeting strategy prioritises families and individuals seeking a tranquil holiday experience, differentiating Verdant Leisure from its competitors. The positioning strategy positions the company as a provider of high-quality, family-friendly holidays in picturesque environments, aligning with current consumer preferences for personalisation and variety.

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