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Marketing Planning Practice

The Hiut Denim Company

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Introduction

This report aims to evaluate the marketing environment of the Hiut Denim Company through a detailed analysis using a variety of marketing audit tools. This report will then evaluate the strategic options available for developing marketing strategies through segmentation, targeting and positioning taking into consideration challenges and constraints for the company.

Background of the Organisation

The Hiut Denim Company was set up in an existing denim jeans factory by David and Clare Hiatt in Cardigan, Wales. Hiut denim recognised the skills of the pre-existing factory workers in Cardigan. The Hiut denim company is completely focused on making high quality jeans and jeans only. The company aims to make a superior product that will stand the test of time. Due to the hand-crafting involved in creating their jeans, the company can only produce 100 pairs of jeans a week. The company has a creative team that markets their products in a unique way.

External Marketing Environment

In order to carry out an analysis on the Hiut Denims Company's external marketing environment, this report will include a macro and micro analysis. The marketing environment is defined as *'the actors and forces external to the marketing management function of the firm that impinge on the marketing management's ability to develop and maintain successful transactions with its customers'* (Ref Kotler 1994).

Macro Analysis on The Hiut Denim Company

In order to carry out a Macro-Environment analysis, a PEST analysis will be carried out.

Political	• Removal of importing quotas on textiles
Economic	• Economic crisis affecting customer bargaining power • Exchange rate affecting the rate of materials • Unemployment – affects consumers ability to buy products • Inflation – more disposable income for consumers
Social	• Sustainability • Fashion trends e.g. yoga pants • Fast fashion – cheap pairs of jeans • Social media
Technological	• New ways to enter the market – low barriers • Internet – created cheap way to market products using social media. • New software – aids manufacturing • New platforms – aids distributing

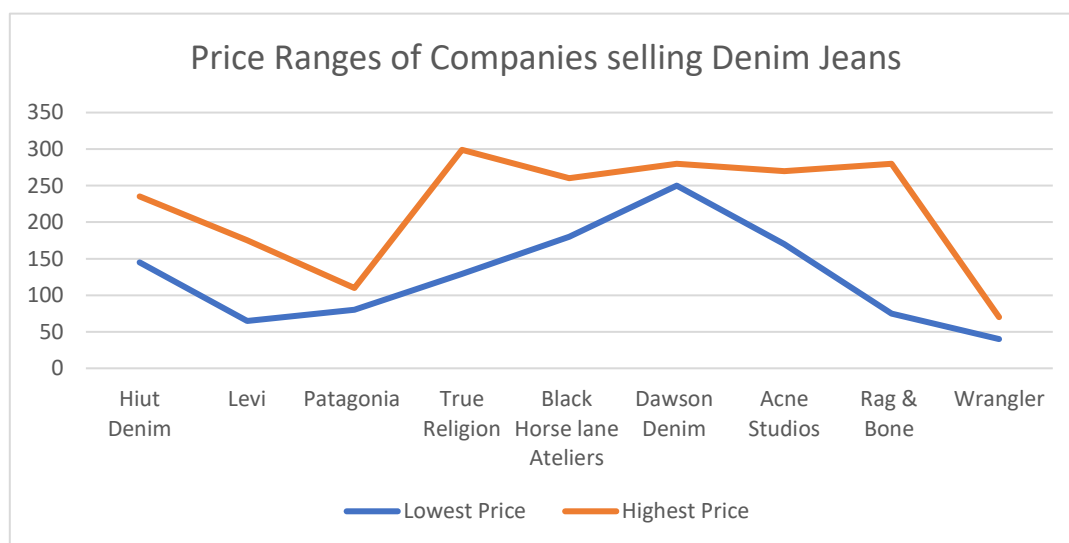
Micro Analysis on the External Environment

This will analyse the power of the suppliers, customers, threats of new entrants and substitute products and competitive rivalry. This analysis will use the principles of Porter's five forces model (Porter, 1979) to analyse the denim industry. By using Porter's model (Porter, 1979), we can understand what could cause issues for the Hiut Denim Company. Porter's model was created to analyse an industry's attractiveness and the profitability of this industry (1979). Porter ensured that organisations would take the actions of their competitors and factors that could affect their business environment. This model will help the Hiut Denim Company to adjust their strategy to suit the competitive environment and improve their potential profit.

Competitive Rivalry:

The Hiut Denim Company sells their jeans at a high price point, with men's jeans starting at prices of £150 up to £235. Women's jeans are less expensive, with prices ranging from £145 to £185 (Hiut Denim , 2019). This price point reduces the number of competitors the company has as they are not targeting the same market as Primark or New look with jeans costing as little as £8 (New Look, 2019). The Hiut Denim Company are in competition with high quality brands such as: Levi, Patagonia, True Religion, British brand "Black Horse lane Ateliers, Brighton based brand Dawson, Wrangler, Acne Studios and New York brand Rag & Bone. The price range that each brand sell their denim jeans for is represented in the chart below:

Figure 1 Price Ranges of Companies selling Denim Jeans (Levi, 2019) (Patagonia, 2019) (True Religion, 2019) (Black Horse Lane, 2019) (Dawson Denim, 2019) (Wrangler, 2019) (Acne Studios, 2019) (Rag-bone, 2019)



These brands are some of the top competitors who aim to provide high quality products to their customers. Hiut Denim are particular about their quality of their jeans, they aim to "Do one thing well" (Hiut Denim , 2018). Hiut Denim have stated that they want to be one of the top competitors against Levis and brand Patagonia (Halls, 2019). With Levi's manufacturing denim for over 165 years, (Yohn, 2015) they are an established company and competitor and one of the highest competitor rivalries to Hiut Denim (Halls, 2019).

Threat of New entrants

The jeans market is projected to grow by 6.7% from 2018 to 2023 (Mordor Intelligence, 2018). With growth in the industry, the number new entrants to the market will rise. There are little to none barriers to entry in the denim jean industry. Companies can produce a wide variety of styles in a matter of minutes (Halls, 2019). This is a threat to Hiut Denims as competitors can start up a denim manufacturing company. These competitors can provide similar products to the market, reducing Hiut Denims market share.

Threat of Substitute products

Recently denim industry has been fighting against the threat of new substitute products. The trend of wearing active wear is an alternative for purchasing and wearing jeans. This has been something the jeans market had to overcome (Mordor Intelligence, 2018). When reviewing the threat of substitute products, looking at the trend in sales of denim versus athleisure brands, it is clear activewear has cost the denim industry (Bloomberg, 2018). The denim industry must be prepared against the threat of new product. Companies must adapt to customer requirements at a faster rate as without adaption, denim companies can lose their place in the market, reducing profits (Korber S et al., 2014).

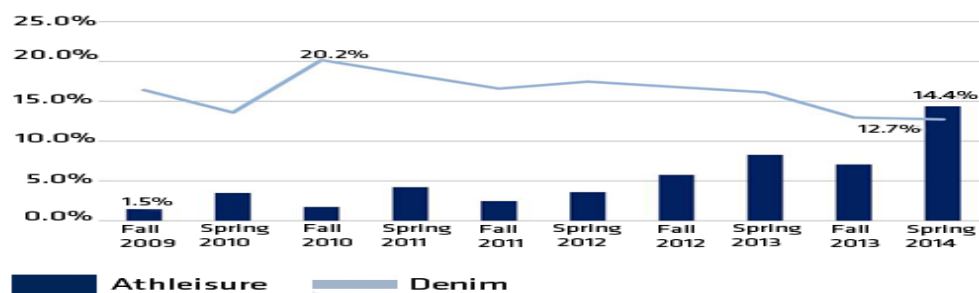


Figure 2 Denim vs "Athleisure" Brands Survey of female teen brand preferences (Jaffray, 2014)

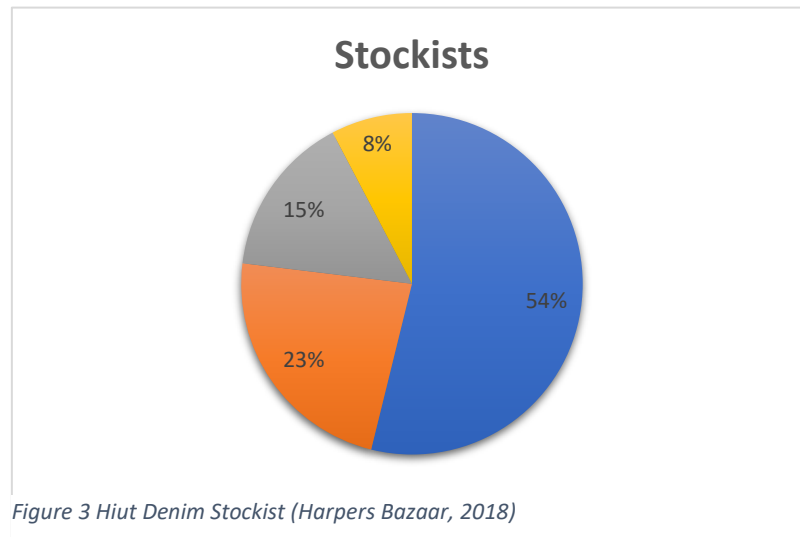
Bargaining Power of Consumers

Hiut Denim must be aware that they must adapt to customers' demands. They must reach these requests within a timely manner. The internet enables buyers to check prices and makes individuals less loyal to a brand (Waema T et al., 2013). Individuals can buy products from any supplier who meets their requirements. Hiut Denim must focus on customers who will buy jeans at a premium price (Mordor Intelligence, 2018). Hiut denim have stated that 14% of their products are returned. This results in a loss of profit for the company and increases the bargaining power of the consumer (Brosnan W., 2017). A consumer can lose faith in a company and buy products elsewhere. Hiut Denim Company mainly sell their products online and are only stocked in 13 stores worldwide (Hiut Denim, 2019). This is a threat there is more power in the hands of the customer. Hiut denim can stand to make less profit if they do not meet customer's demands. Hiut Denim must consider having more stores stock their products.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

The company do not rely heavily on suppliers for distribution. The company's main way of distributing their product is through their website. Hiut Denim imports selvedge denim from Japan and organic denim from Turkey. The company relies on these suppliers to ensure that their base material is of high quality (Halls, 2019). Hiut Denim have stated that they wish to ensure all their products will be organically made in the future. The requirement for organic materials will place a large amount of bargaining power with the suppliers (Porter, 1979). This

is a threat as Hiut denim must be prepared to pay more and work harder to source organic and ethically made materials. The company's suppliers may also increase, therefore increasing the costs for Hiut Denim to make their products and may have to increase their prices for their customers which could reduce to a loss of profit.



The product life cycle (PLC) is a useful auditing tool that can be beneficial for the Hiut Denim as this can help them plan for the future. It describes the stages that a product goes through from when it was created until it leaves the market (Randall G., 1994). The Hiut Denim company can be said to be in the growth stage as the product sales are increasing at a high rate. The company has gone through the development and introduction stages as the product has been launched into the market.

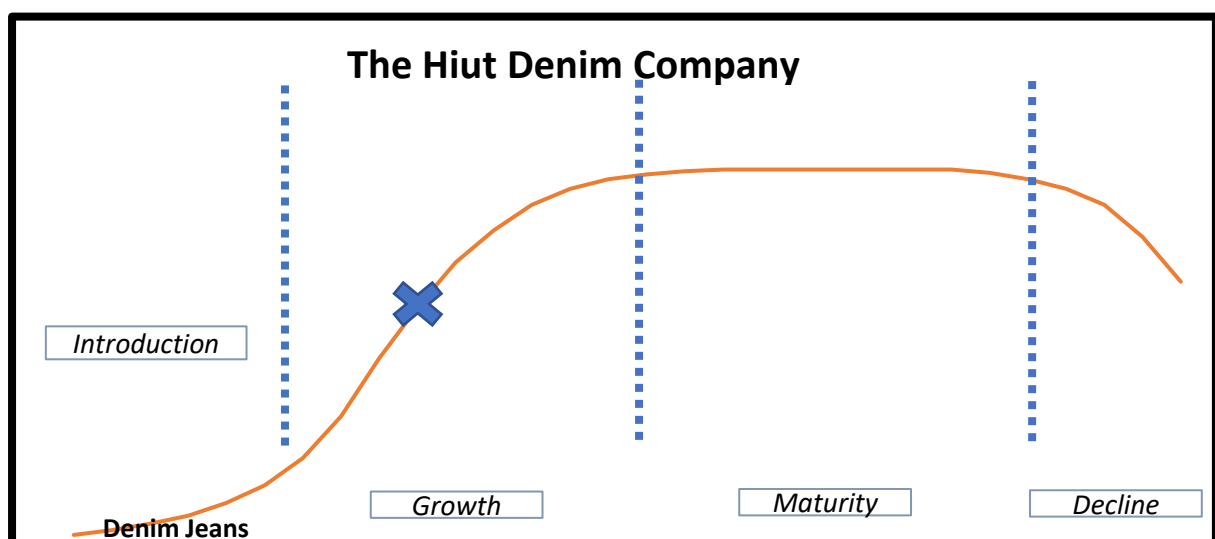


Figure 4 Hiut Denim Company - Product life cycle

The Hiut Denim Company must maintain position in the growth stage to maximise their profits and prevent progression into the maturity and decline phases. Extension strategies can help

to extend the life of the product. The Hiut Denim can take part in extension strategies such as advertising, adding value, exploring new markets new packaging and a possible price reduction. The PLC model is simplistic and helpful to predict the shape of sales growth for a product.

Internal Analysis

For the internal analysis, it must be identified if the organisation can meet the needs of the customers. Thus, creating a competitive position. To create and distribute their products the company must have resources. The required resources are Money, Manpower, Minutes, Materials and Machinery (Oxford College of Marketing, 2018). These are the 5 M's of resources and can be an internal auditing tool to help implement the chosen strategy. This tool will consider five internal elements of the company. This is part of the strategic planning process (Oxford College of Marketing, 2018). Once identified, an assessment can be carried out to ensure the elements are being used to the best of their advantage.

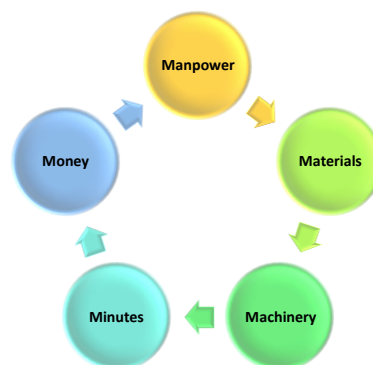


Figure 5 Five M's of Marketing to Review Internal Resources (Oxford College of Marketing, 2018)

Manpower: From research carried out, that Hiut Denim company currently employ 15 'grand masters', (Halls, 2019) who design and manufacture the company's denim jeans. It appears that there is a positive work place culture in the company as the skills of the workers are highly spoken about (Halls, 2019). The marketing and sales team are also included as part of the manpower element. It is assumed that there is sufficient manpower in the Hiut Denim Company at this time.

Materials: Currently, the Hiut Denim Company import their materials (Brosnan W., 2017) and the products are designed and manufactured at the company's factory. The Hiut denim company follows the 'agile' supply chain model (Magaya, 2016). This model suits the company as they manufacture their products under specifications by customers and sizes (Hiut Denim, 2019). In this supply chain, the management must be able to follow a design manufacturing process that is capable of small batches (Magaya, 2016). This supply chain supports the

company's marketing plans as they can control the number of products they create and what materials they choose to use.

Machinery: Machinery can range from customer-relationship management (CRM) (Dibb et al., 2016, p. 88) systems, to servers, design software and distribution packaging software. To analyse this element, we must assume aspects of the Hiut Denim company. We assume that the Hiut Denim Company make sufficient use of CRM systems and gathers data on their customers buying habits and monitor demographics. The company has had celebrities wear their products (Brosnan W., 2017). From this, it can be assumed that the company have developed relations with celebrity influencers. The company is assumed to be using their design software in an efficient manner. The software is assumed to be highly customisable, allowing the company to input their design prior to creating products. It is assumed that the company has anti-virus and internet security protecting their servers where company information, product and customer details are stored securely.

Minutes: It must be questioned if the company's manufacturing process is as effective as it could be. We know from secondary data that it takes an hour and ten minutes to make one pair of jeans (Harpers Bazaar, 2018). Although the company prides itself on high quality, this length of time to make a pair of jeans could be damaging. With other manufactures able to produce one pair of jeans in eleven minutes (Brosnan W., 2017), the company may lose customers if there is delays in receiving their orders due to long production times.

Money: The company must their financial position with every decision they make. As we do not have primary data on the company finances, it is assumed that the company is in a stable financial position. This is due to the experience that both David and Clare Hieatt have (Brosnan W., 2017). Clare Hieatt is responsible for the financial aspect (Jones, 2018). While David is responsible for marketing. It is assumed the Hieatt's successfully manage their finances and marketing plans.

From the internal analysis, we can review the company's capability, capacity and constraints. It can be stated that the company has the capabilities to achieve success with these products. They can work on improving and expanding. The organisation has a range of resources available to them. The company has skilled workers, with managing directors who have a strong sense of business acumen. The potential factor that could constrain success is their time efficiency. The company may struggle to meet customer demand if they do not expand.

Summary SWOT Analysis of Hiut Denim Company

Hiut Denim Company are a relatively new company in the denim industry. Despite the brand being new, the workers are highly experienced with over 30,000 hours of jean manufacturing carried out prior to the Hiut Denim company. The company's marketing strategies and aim to create high quality jeans, with no rush to flood the market is what gives the company a competitive advantage.



Figure 6 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis

Competitive Advantage

Hiut Denim need to ensure they meet customers' demands to stay in a positive position in the market (Porter, 2004). Hiut Denim must ensure they achieve competitive advantage over their competitors. Competitive advantage is *"how a company creates value for its users which is both greater than the costs of supplying them and superior to that of rivals"* (Johnson G et al., 2017, p. 210). Porter's routes to competitive advantage will be used to establish Hiut Denims advantage over their competitors. In order for a customer to choose Hiut Denim, the customer must value the differences between the products (Porter, 2004). Hiut Denim provide high quality products to differentiate their product from competitors.

Hiut Denim Company has a strong brand image that is growing. Hiut Denim provide jeans at a high price point. They aim to create high quality products that last a lifetime (Hiut Denim, 2019). Megan Markle was spotted wearing the company's jeans (Brosnan W., 2017). This caused a three-month waiting list for the jeans and improved the brand image (Brosnan W., 2017). The company is being portrayed in a positive light to the public and helps to gain a strong position in the market place.

The company's jeans are hand. The jeans are then signed by their creators (Hiut Denim, 2019). Each pair get their own 'History Tag', this allows the customer to be able to log on to the Hiut Denims smartphone app. The customer can their jeans being created, upload images of them wearing their jeans and can see the 'history' of any Hiut Denim jeans that they may buy second hand. Hiut Denim have recognised the 'power of the internet to tell stories' (Hiut Denim, 2018). This unique, personal experience that Hiut Denim provides their customers, adds a distinctive competitive advantage to the company. Customers enjoy feeling connected with a brand and Hiut Denim has succeeded in doing this.



Figure 7 Hiut Denim History Tag (Hiut Denim, 2018)

The Hiut Denim Company's Strategic Intent

Strategic intent is made of up vision, mission and objectives. It is assumed, that currently the Hiut Denims company use an expressive form when considering their future. The Hiut Denim company describe their mission and vision statement as "put simply, it's to get 400 good people their jobs back" (Hiut Denim Company, 2019)

The company do not have a mission statement therefore a new mission statement for the Hiut Denim Company is;

"Hiut Denim Company's mission is to build a successful organisation that is able to hire 400 skilled workers from the town of Cardigan. Hiut Denim wants to ensure that their products are created to a high quality in a sustainable way that will last...."

From using the Situation analysis carried out, we can establish the company's marketing plan. The objectives of the organisation must state a specific aim, the progress must be measurable, the objective is achievable and realistic and there is a time scale agreed upon. From the situation analysis, the company must react to threats, opportunities and weaknesses. The identified key objectives of the company are;

Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Realistic	Time
Increase social media following	By 5%	Yes – engage with followers	Yes	October 2019
Increase number of products produced	By 5%	Yes – first must employ more workers	Yes	March 2020
Source sustainable materials	Reduce carbon footprint	Yes – research must be carried out effectively	Yes	December 2019

Other areas for the company to continue working on are ensure celebrities remain wearing their products, to continue hiring locally skilled workers, use organic materials and ensure that Hiut Denims story is spread with potential customers to ensure their brand grows.

Segmentation

Marketing segmentation is defined by McDonald (1998) as the “*process of splitting customers or potential customers, within a market into different groups, or segments, within which customers have the same, or similar requirements satisfied by a distinct marketing mix*” (McDonald, 1998). By segmenting the market, Hiut Denim can help to grow company profits by targeting customers and become more efficient while improving customer retention by satisfying customers (Lancaster G., 2005). Hiut Denim are in a niche market segment. They offer jeans that are of a high quality, luxury price point that are made with sustainable materials.

Profiles

Demographic Segmentation:

Age can be segmented as it can be determined what age groups wear jeans. In the modern world jeans are a staple of every person's wardrobe. Another significant segment is gender and income. The Hiut Denim Company can target both males and females. As the company's products are sold at a high price point, their customers will be required to have a large disposable income in order to purchase jeans from Hiut Denim. Each group of consumers have a specific income and buying power, therefore purchasing products accordingly (Proctor T., 2000).

Behavioural Segmentation:

Kotler (2002) states that behavioural segmentation can be used to identify the basis of benefits consumers are looking for from a denim jeans company. Hiut Denims can target consumers on the basis of benefits such as a need to be fashionable, comfortable, unique brand and sustainable. This can assist in identifying market opportunities to determine the value propositions that can be offered to different groups of consumers. (Kurtz et al., 2009)

Potential Market Segments:

As discussed above the company can target the following with their products:

Adult Consumers ages 25-60: This is a potential market as this group can afford the high price point of the product. This group will wear jeans as casual clothing but also incorporate their jeans into their work wear. Hiut Denims provide high quality products and their jeans can withstand the pressures of casual and work attire.

Male & Female: Both sexes can be targeted. Both male and female like to wear jeans as they are a comfortable and stylish item of clothing.

High End: Hiut denim can target its jeans to consumers with a large disposable income who belong to a higher class. This class will prefer to wear premium brands of jeans.

Targeting & Positioning

A suitable targeting strategy for Hiut Denim to follow is a differentiated strategy. Porter (2004) states that the differentiation strategy requires a company to be unique. Hiut Denim can select characteristics of their brand that will be seen as important by consumers.

Hiut Denims can position themselves with a high-quality product, hand crafted by Welsh workers, made with sustainability in mind. By offering their products on these qualities, it will help the company in creating differentiation. These characteristics of the company can help in attracting its targeted segments.

Strategic Choice Evaluation

Johnson and Scholes (1998) argue that a strategy must satisfy suitability, feasibility and acceptability before it can be successful. The chosen differentiation strategy meets the criteria that Johnson and Scholes sets out. This is an effective strategy that suits the Hiut Denim Company.



Figure 8 Strategy Choice Evaluation (Johnson and Scholes., 1998)

Marketing & Communications Mix

By identifying the marketing and communications mix it will help Hiut Denim to satisfy their customers and outline how to interact with these customers (Hooley J et al., 2012).

Product	The products are high quality and made from Sustainable materials.
Price	Aimed at high income earners with a large disposable income. Products are priced competitively in the market. If the market changes, the company must act in order to ensure their price point is not below or above the average price of their competitors.
Place	Hiut Denims distribute their products through the company's website and chosen thirteen unique sellers in boutiques worldwide (See Appendix). This adds competitive advantage as customers tend to like when there is a low supply.
Promotion	Hiut Denims is a high-end product so will not use typical promotion methods. 'Email Perks' will reward customers who have high spending. These exclusive rewards will allow early access to new products or unique discounts at varies times of the year e.g. Christmas.
People	Ensure employees are satisfied and have good communications with management. The company will work on ensuring they provide a high level of customer service; Responding to customer queries over social media or via email in a time efficient manner.
Process	For the Hiut Denim company, process is related to the creation of the product. This company must ensure the products remain high quality to ensure customers will repurchase.
Physical Evidence	Expand the company to hire more employees to create products, thus decreasing waiting times for customers. The company must ensure that employees are satisfied. The website and social media sites must have a clean and easy-to-use interface. This will help ensure customers stay on the website and increase the likelihood to buy a product.

This communication mix is the coordination of marketing activities. These methods will create a way to interact with Hiut Denims customers (Blythe, 2006). The marketing communications mix goal is to inform, persuade and remind customers about the Hiut Denim company's product (Blythe, 2006). Hiut Denims company will engage in advertising, public relations and direct marketing as forms of marketing communication with their customers

Hiut Denim Promotion Methods Plan & Budget													
Description	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	£
Website													8,500
Search Engine Optimisation													1,500
Social Media Adverts													2,000
Influencers													2,500
Email Newsletters													1,000
Email Perk Discounts													1,000
PR Events													3,500
Total Spend per year:													£20,000

For these aspects of the communication mix to take place, the Hiut Denim company should ensure a suitable budget of £20,000 is in place. The in-house marketing team must engage with conversations with the company's finance team to ensure the budget is satisfactory to both divisions. The marketing team will require the use of company cars to network,

Control

To ensure the marketing plan is implemented to its full advantage, there will be controls in place to monitor the progress. Having set controls will help Hiut Denim develop effective performance measurement indicators.

Customer Feedback

Customer feedback must be monitored. This can be carried out through surveys and polls. Holding marketing focus groups will help Hiut Denim to receive feedback about their latest marketing plan. From the results of the focus groups, Hiut Denim can adjust their marketing plan according to results and follow this strategy for future marketing plans.

Target Market Sales

Measure sales by units sold, revenue generated or the profit amount. Generated sales throughout the plan are compared with marketing plan projections. Hiut Denim must review if they are meeting sales targets for their target age group. This control must monitor the age group. Further market research must be carried out if sales drop. From this research, it may emerge that there is a new target market and adjust the plan if required.

Monitoring Budget and Spending

To monitor the budget, there are several controls in place. Hiut Denim must monitor advertising expenses, such as SEO, adverts on social media, cost of influencers, PR events and email spending. It is vital to control these cost cots to maximise profitability.

Evaluation

Key Performance Indicator Dash Board

To evaluate and control Hiut Denims Marketing plan, using a marketing dashboard is beneficial. The below marketing dashboard provides a variety of information for Hiut Denim.

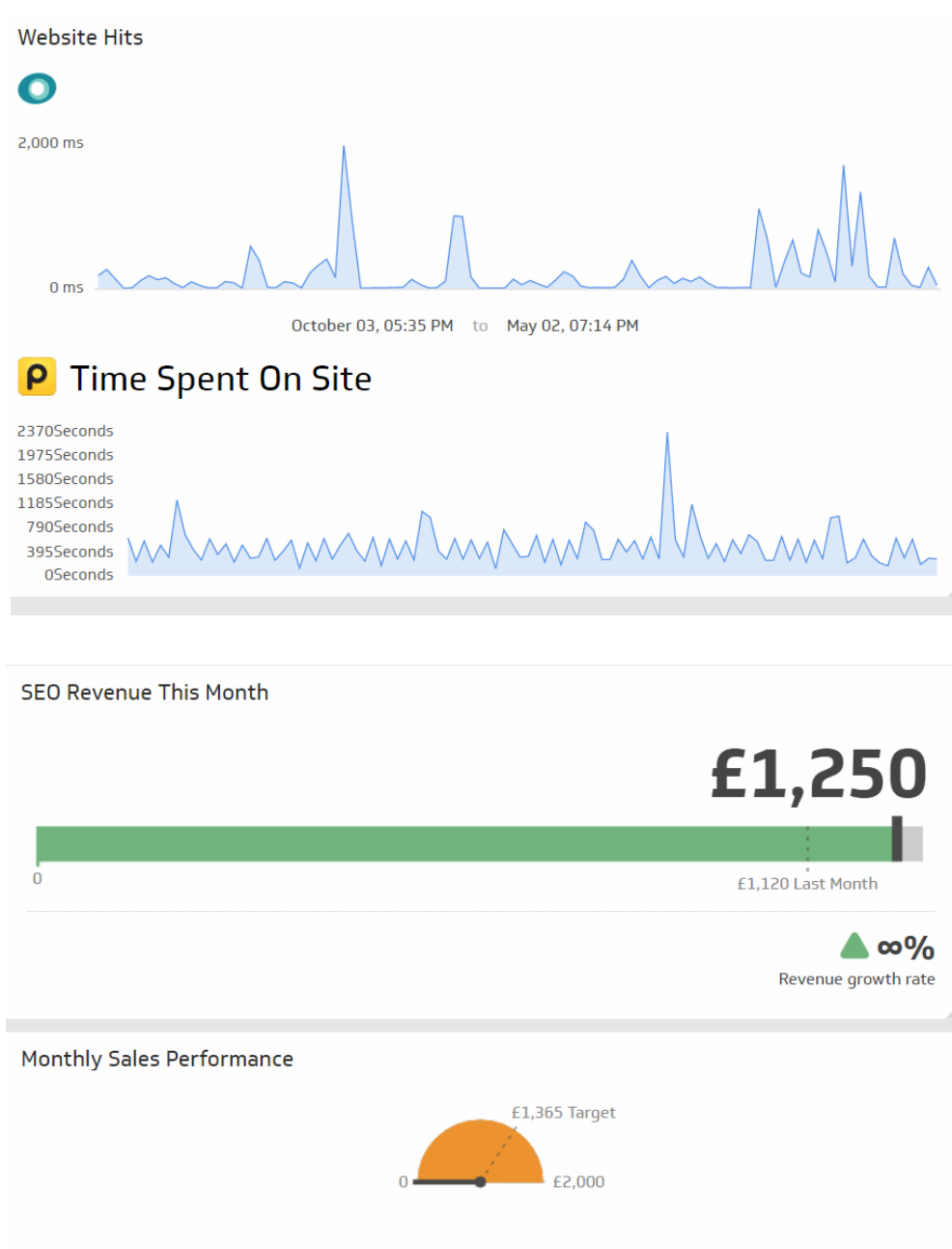


Figure 9 KPI Created for Hiut Denim (Nolan, 2019)

Conclusion

This report has evaluated the marketing environment for Hiut Denim and carried analysis internally, and externally. The report provides clear guidelines on how to adjust the marketing strategy. This will help the brand to ensure they are competitive in the market. This report suggests how to control the marketing plan and how to monitor the market to ensure they can adapt and maintain profit margins.

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Appendix

Table 1 Hiut Denim Stockists (Hiut Denim, 2019)

31 Store 31 Morgan Arcade Cardiff, CF10 1AF Wales 02920 229 622	Adler Bei Der Reitbahn 3 22763 Hamburg Germany +49 4039 908016 adler-altona.de	District 21 46 Market Street Hebden Bridge West Yorkshire HX7 6AA district21.co.uk	Gatsby Menswear 12 West street Marlow Buckinghamshire SL7 2NB 01628 486 999 gatsbymenswear.co.uk
The Hambledon 10 The Square Winchester 01962 89 00 55 thehambledon.com	Herrenbude Rothehausstr 4 D-50823 Koln Germany +49 (0) 171 14 20 208 herrenbude.de	Lanigan & Hulme Unit 9, Royal Exchange Arcade Manchester M2 7EA 0161 8345126 laniganandhulme.com	Mr. Start 40, Rivington Street London EC2A 3LX 020 7729 6272 mr-start.com
Mundos 12 Pendre Cardigan SA43 1JL 01239 613 486 mundos.co.uk	North Gentleman's Outfitters 54 Howard Street Belfast BT1 6PG 02890 507 700	Regent Tailoring 73 New Street Salsbury SP1 2PH 01722 335 151 regenttailoring.co.uk	Rivet & Hide 5 Windmill St London W1T 2JA UK 0207 636 9071 rivetandhide.com
Unsung Hero 28A High Street St Davids SA62 6SD 01437 729437 unsungherosurf.co.uk			