Study of Factors Influencing on the Brand Availability at Stores in Sri Lankan Cables Firm

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

In the view of the availability of the selected brand cables at the stores, it is a vital aspect that the decision-makers will have to consider that the product and services of the internal aspects will have to synchronize with the external aspects in order to gain the advantage of the brand, competition as well as the marketing channels. Prime objective of the research is to identify and understand the factors that affect the availability of the selected cables at the stores in Sri Lanka in absolute and relative terms in order to provide effective recommendations to increase the product reachability. The research has been considered at all the stores as well as the distributor who sell the cable products all around the selected region. The participants were taken from the Colombo district, and the sample has been considered as a hundred. The study has been designed in a quantitative manner where the research instrument has taken to collect the data was a structured questionnaire. The research has attained the outcomes as there is a relationship among competitor cable products, brand awareness, intermediaries' activities with the dependent variable of availability of the selected brand cables at the stores. The researcher has figured out the aspects which could motivate the consumers to make the purchasing decisions with regards to the selected variables of the cable products.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

As far as any organizations are concerned, it is vital for them to have vast visibility of their deliveries to have the highest financial benefits as well as attaining the desired objectives. When seeing the organizations' point of view, the products and serves will have to be directly or indirectly available to the potential as well as the existing consumers to purchase or enjoy to fulfill their requirements. Therefore, the organization always tends to push its deliveries to all the available stores and the customer locations all around the regions to have revenue growth as well as bread reachability on a large scale.

In the view of the availability of the organizations' products and services to the customer touch points at all the regions, it is mostly affected by several external aspects which could not be avoided by the organizations were critical to the operations and the branding activities. The availability of the products at the stores could be reachable for mass as well as retail purchasing to the consumers where the competitor products, as well as new entrants, are highly available on a larger scale. Therefore, the organization will have to figure out the critical aspects that could affect their products and services to reach the end-users.

Considering the cable industry in Sri Lanka, it is vital that the aspects that could affect the availability of the selected cable products at the stores could be focused on the entities such as the availability of the mass competition among the larger and the new players in the local market, as the prominent players and the new players are compared for the quality of the products then the brand awareness of the cable products, the usage of the intermediators by the cable manufactures to reach the bottom line of the customers are to be concerned as very much vital to carry forward to the business activities at a micro and macro levels as well. In addition, considering the mass production organizations such as cable manufactures are at the point of challenges to face the competition, brand as well as intermediates in order to keep the products available at all the stores. As far as the competition in the industry is concerned for the cable manufacture in Sri Lanka, it is vital for them to see the aspects such as how the rival products outnumber the selected brand Cables Sri Lanka in the counts at the shelves. It is also important that the brand reachability be established to see

how it has reached among the consumers as well as the final sellers in the regions of all sort of target groups as well. In addition, the selected Cables in Sri Lanka of the current study will also in a position to figure out the aspects of the intermediates and how they could impact to have the products available at all the stores that could meet the requirements of the target existing as well as potential consumers as well.

1.2 Problem Identification/Research Gap

Developing a research problem for an organization is an expression about the concerned part of the study, looking to upscale the arisen situation, discarding trouble that exists in the organization's point of view. As far as the study is concerned, the researcher has identified that the massive rivals who have been in the cable industry of Sri Lanka for a long period of time, as well as the new local and international players to the business activities, tend to play a major role in affecting the obtainability of the selected Cables in Sri Lanka at many stores around the country where the target market is scattered through to conduct the business activities as well.

As the brand reachability is much poor in most of the regions, it is highly imposable to sell the products of the selected brand cables Sri Lanka to mass selling with even with possible discounts and offers. It is also much of a matter that the selected brand cables Sri Lanka is facing that the lack of brand image that directed to lesser product availability at the stores could affect the brand in a long scale and to provide room for the competitors as well as newcomers to establish themselves in the regional business operations as a first mentioned cable brand by the target market of potential and existing customers. Moreover, the lack of availability of the intermediates at the selected locations could also lead the brand to have a lesser presence, and that affects the sales of the brand at a mass level. In addition, the available channels are not motivated to sell the selected brand cables Sri Lanka, or there might be multiple reasons for the selected brand cables Sri Lanka's poor availability of stores all around the country as well. The research questions will be relevant to all the variables which are used by the researcher and to provide recommendations to the said research problems as well. Therefore, the lack of researchers in the literature related to identify research problem of the study motivates the author to fill the empirical gap with necessary evidence.

Considering the research problem as well as research questions, the primary research objective will be developed as below;

1. To investigate the relationship between competitor cable products and availability of the selected brand cables at the stores all around Sri Lanka.
2. To investigate the relationship between brand awareness and the availability of the selected brand cables at the stores all around Sri Lanka.
3. To investigate the relationship between intermediators' activities and the availability of the selected brand cables at the stores all around Sri Lanka.

1.3 Significance of the Study

In the view of the selected brand cables in Sri Lanka to have the availability of its' products at the stores all around the nation, it is vital to figure out the aspects that are affecting directly and indirectly in order to avoid them to make the highest impact in the business operations. As far as the competitor deliveries are concerned, they tend to increase the availability of their products at all the stores to have the highest visibility of the brand names. Therefore, this affects the selected brand cables to have the mass brand visibility, and this could also affect the brand growth on a long scale to have a sustainable business operation as well. In addition, the brand awareness has been declined or maintained low for the selected brand cables in most parts of the country, and this could lead the secondary bands to have the first nominees for the purchasing for any cable requirements for the households as well as corporates. The lower brand awareness let the selected brand cables in Sri Lanka to be affecting the revenue generation for a longer period time and to provide opportunities for the new layers to enter the business activities without any barriers to entry and lead to a massive loss in the business activities as well. Moreover, the intermediaries are seen that they tend to promote the competitor brands and to have a lack of motivation for the selected brand cables, also one of the vital aspects to be considered by the management as well. The intermediaries may be in lack knowledge about the products manufactured by the selected brand cables and lack in the count at all the stores all around the country could affect the brand in a massive level as the production is higher whereas the selling would be much lower and it

affects the entire organizational objectives as well as.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Competitor Cable Products

Rivalry is a key apparatus and a noteworthy component of economic decision making activities. Its significance originates from "contend" and signifies "to look for together" and in this way it invigorates the dimension of human yearnings, enabling to accomplish the most elevated outcomes, just as being the main thrust of mechanical development and profitability development [1]. Stankiewicz trusts that, "the challenge will be known as a wonder when members contend with one another in the journey for comparable purposes, which implies that the moves made by a few, to accomplish certain objectives, make it troublesome (or even unthinkable) to accomplish similar targets by others" [2]. Rivalry is characterized as an action of people who try to accomplish the advantages that others need to pick up in the meantime and in similar conditions [3]. Its pith depends on the disposal of contenders working in a similar industry and assuming control over their clients.

Various contenders concentrated on a chose section of the market where they are best ready to address the customers' issues, who they charge a correspondingly more expensive rate [4]. The initial step is to decide the aggressive position, which is an essential component in building a focused technique, it permits to assess the present capacities of the organization and patterns and open doors for its further advancement [5].

Brands, items and services that are seen as high caliber by clients. Suggests a firm that has self-restraint in valuing to such an extent that they don't bring down costs for a speedy momentary gain however are keen on keeping up their superior image. At the point when firms set both cost and quality, both the positive and standardizing effects of rivalry are vague. Rivalry is contrarily estimated by firms that work at the equivalent mechanical dimension in the development perspective (Aghion, 2014). The competition between the organizations offering the comparative line of items or administrations in a similar target advertise and to a similar target crowd with the objective to have the higher piece of the market share, expanded incomes,

immense benefits, and development when contrasted with the brand image at the commercial center (Bhasin, 2018).

2.2 Brand Awareness

The word brand is gotten from the Old Norse word brand, which signifies "to consume". Brands were, and still are, the methods by which proprietors of cows stamp their creatures to distinguish them. The American Market Association (AMA) characterizes a brand as a "name, term, sign, image or plan, or a blend of them, proposed to recognize the products or administrations of one merchant or gathering of vendors and to separate them from those of rivalry" [6]. Marton and Booth [7], give genuine instances of mindfulness: People have a prior understanding of a specific circumstance and know about that. They are likewise mindful of their identity, the foundation to the conditions, where it is situated just like the feel to the place, what season it is and what day it is, and furthermore what to wrap up of the day. Brand mindfulness is a procedure from where the brand is simply known to a dimension when the shoppers have put the brand on a higher position; the brand has turned into the "highest point of psyche" [8]. In a promoting setting, a lead is a potential purchaser who communicates enthusiasm for the items or service that you are moving and intentionally gives his/her communicated data with the most noteworthy mindfulness, which is made through the brand.

In the groundbreaking imperative to separate on the item, in innate of the fact that, the security between the item class needs to exist for less demanding acknowledgment. The second is to involve a trademark or jingle: There can be a more grounded linkage between a motto and a brand since it includes a visual element of the brand. By this, the jingle or motto is amazing and can roll out a major improvement. The third is to have a Symbol introduction: It is imperative to have a known image, since it is anything but difficult to retain and review a visual representation. A logo, either an officially existing one or a created one, which is associated with the brand, can take an immense part in shaping and keeping mindfulness. Fourth is the Publicity: Advertising is a capable method to get exposure and make mindfulness, since it very well may be altered to the correspondence and the addressees. Fifth is Event sponsorship: The essential job of most occasion sponsorship is to make or look after mindfulness. Keller [6], claims

that brand mindfulness comprises acknowledgment and review and that brand mindfulness, in its turn, is a piece of brand learning. To gauge brand mindfulness adequately, it is imperative to know where the vast majority of the buyer choices are made. On the off chance that numerous choices are made at the purpose of the buy, where the brand, logo, bundling and so on are obvious, brand acknowledgment estimates will be vital. In the event, those shopper choices, for the most part, are made far from the purpose of procurement, the brand review measures turn out to be progressively vital.

2.3 Intermediaries Activities

Distribution is one part of the marketing blend that in the least difficult errand exchange the product from the generation place to the buying place to the client. Distribution channels are the gathering of firms that place items or services to end clients. Distribution channels associate the product makers and clients with each other. Middle people shape the parts of the appropriation channel. There are fundamentally two distinct kinds of wholesalers. Toward one side of the range, there are general wholesalers who can give a wide range of products in various geographic locales. Seriousness level choice and degree of appropriation can influence the number of middle people [9]. The requirement for solid connections has led analysts to think about trust in distribution channels and think about it as one of the fundamental developments of channel connections [10].

Conveyance incorporates all exercises that empower the exchange of material as well as monetary control over unmistakable or potentially elusive merchandise starting with one financial subject then onto the next (Segetlija, 2011). Anderson and Narus, [11] contemplated a model in a distributor and producer working associations by thinking about both maker and wholesaler points of view and found a positive connection amongst trust and fulfillment for makers.

Other than focal points expressing over, the coordinated multi-channel dispersion likewise has a few downsides. A few specialists call attention to the likelihood of channel clashes happening as a result of incorporated poor channel appropriation. Webb and Hogan [12], contend that poor channel circulation procedure expands the level of multifaceted nature of the

dissemination framework, which makes open doors for clashes happen between various channels inside a firm. Yan, Wang, and Zhou [13], express that the fast development of internet business prompts genuine appropriation channel clashes when loads of organizations working in physical business embrace online dispersion channels. Webb and Hogan [12], contend that channel strife is a potential instrument pushing singular channels to put more endeavors in working and serving their business sectors. Contradicting to various authors guaranteeing that multi-channel circulation impacts benefit, Coelho, Easing wood and Coelho [14], have led a quantitative information investigation and reasoned that utilizing different appropriation directs diminishes gainfulness regardless of its exertion in expanding deals performance.

2.4 Brand Availability at Stores

It is a mental and physical term where the brand of a product would be noticed and recognized by the consumer (Lewis & Mitchell, 2017). A definitive choice to be made inside the distribution framework is under what conditions the items will be made accessible to the customer. It is now that the variables of channel strength by maker or retailer, shopping manner of customers and the idea of the item and its market meet up in the choice by the retailer with respect to regardless of whether to store brand X of item Y [15]. The comfort shopping-of merchandise characterization is connected to stores along these lines. On account of the brand disposition suggested in the terms strength or claim to store, these unmistakably have predominance over shopping products or stores, which thusly command comfort merchandise or stores. The suggestion is that an item (firmly favored brand) in a store will be offered on the maker's terms. For merchandise, the fundamental prerequisite isn't to stock the whole product offering, in any event inside and out, but instead one or a couple of brands due to their drawing in power. The intensity of coordination factors to impact last market deals subsequently pursues a comparative example. For comfort and claim to fame items, coordination factors can just impact the go-between, regardless of whether distributor or retailer, and along these lines would be arranged toward either-coordinate cost decrease in the conveyed cost or in stock decrease at the purpose of offer. For merchandise, the impact may reach out past the middle of the road decision-maker to the last

client, affecting deals through allowing rehash buys [16].

At last, the subject of market reaction lays on the issue of how shoppers react to changes in item accessibility. When loyalty of the brand has been accomplished, deals either that nothing in the buyer's condition has changed or that the item is as yet seen to be accessible. Similarly, as limited-time endeavors may not prevail without the presence of items at the purpose of purchasing choices, item accessibility may not make reactions without contributions from advancement [17]. Retailers try to impact deals through item grouping; given the present atmospheres of deficiency, and the idea of shopper choice procedures, in any case, the quantity of brands will end up restricted to those couple of important for the purchaser to settle on a choice. The retailer as leader turns into the point of convergence of producers' coordination, and to some degree, limited time endeavors. The lines of fight are drawn. The retailer needs to constrain assortment. To accomplish the supportable advancement objective of giving merchandise to all in the locale, evaluation of item demand, its accessibility and availability are basic.

As far as the conceptual framework is concerned, it is all about the developed structures with all the assumptions, principles as well as instructions that bind together the impression for a broad concept. Considering the independent variables, the researcher has included in the conceptual framework as competitor cable products, brand awareness as well as intermediators activities of the selected brand cable with regards to the cable industry. The depended variable which is considered in the framework is about the availability of the selected brand cables at the stores.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Hypotheses

In any research activities, the hypotheses are a precise declaration of a forecast. The hypotheses always explain about what the researcher is anticipating in the entire study as outcome. Usually the hypotheses discuss about the association among two variables which happen to be the indeed as well as depended variables. As far the said study is concerned the researcher would like to find out the association among the independent variables such as competitor cable products, brand awareness as well as intermediators activities of the selected brand

cable in Sri Lanka. The dependent variable will be Availability of the selected brand cables at the stores. The relationship among the variables will be derived at the analysis level in the study are the determining factors which lead the selected brand cable to be the as the brand leader to gain the purchasing decision of the customers. Therefore, the researcher has developed the below hypotheses for the study;

H1: Competitor cable products lead to availability of the selected brand of cables at the stores.

H2: Brand awareness leads to availability of the selected brand of cables at the stores

H3: Intermediators activities lead to availability of the selected brand of cables at the stores.

3.2 Sample and Sampling Technique

Target group would be the whole sale and retail personals o the cable products in Colombo district along in Sri Lanka. There is a large number of retailers and wholesalers selling cable products in Colombo district as a population. As per the type of business activities, the usage as well the tenure of the retails stores the research has chosen around 100 personals as a sample in randomly elected manner with all the available profiling levels for the field work. It is also important to note that the respondents will be selected to the study beforehand of the field activity.

Non-probability sampling will be used in conducting the survey. In non-probability sampling, the researcher randomly selects which respondents should be included in the sample (Malhotra & Dash, 2011). As the population cannot be estimated accurately, and the inability to generate a sampling frame, non-probability sampling has been used by the researcher.

3.3 Method of Data Analysis

Analysis is all about collected data be organized and examined as per the pre- planned statistical manner. The quantitative data is collected via the questionnaires and the data will be entered to the dedicated statistical software called SPSS (Statistical package for the Social Sciences). The reliability will by the Cronbach Alpha value and the validity will be tested via KMO and Bartlett method. Once the collected data in entered to the SPSS system, it will be analyzed with regard to the variables as descriptive analysis with

tables and graphs. Later the researcher will be identifying the relationship among the independent as well as dependent variables using the correlation statistics.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability

The reason for implying the reliability analysis at the beginning of the study was to find out where the collected data is with minor or no errors to continue for analysis. In other words, it is said that the data is reliable to carry forward. Researcher has used Cronbach Alpha to identify the reliability of the study. Hinton (2004) has expressed in his study that if the Cronbach Aloha value is more than 0.5 then the collected data is reliable to conduct further analysis.

4.2 Respondents Profile

As far as the study is concerned, the participants has stated that the primary end users of their business activities are as household, SME, corporates as well as other business categories. Among them most of the business entities has been taken as almost in an equal manner. In addition, considering purchasing manner most of the participants are from the retail business categories. On the other hand, when seeing the tenure of the business, most of the business activities are almost one to two years as well. In addition, among the participants, 63% of them has been selling the selected brand in the current study.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The mean of the selected sample's variable such as competitor cable products, brand awareness, intermediators activities as well as availability of the selected cables at the stores continue as 3.60, 3.48, 3.49 and 3.71 with a standard deviation of 1.139734, 1.145557, 1.149148 as well as 1.049521. Meaning average response towards each variable are neutral in the sample. Maximum and minimum values are 1 and 5 for all the variables saying that the respondents widely rated for all the questions in the questionnaire with the provided scale.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis also figure out the association among the independent and

dependent variables. If the p value is less than the alpha value of 0.05 then, the correlation is significant in statistical term. In below the independent and deepened variable are determined the association via the correlation coefficient.
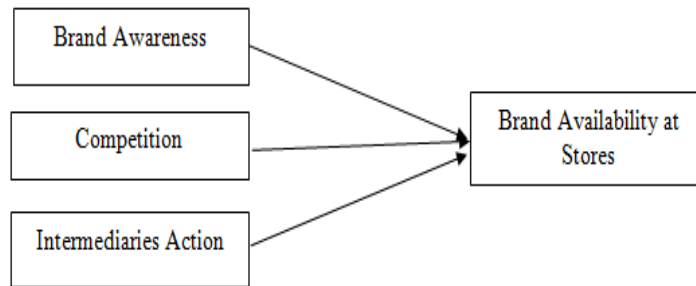

Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

Table 1. Reliability analysis of the variables

Variables	Cronbach Alpha Value
Competitor cable products	0.698
Brand awareness	0.855
Intermediators activities	0.852
Availability of the selected brand cables at the stores	0.819

Table 2. Demographic results of respondents

Demographic Factor	Sample (N)
Primary of end users	
Household	30
SME	36
Corporate	29
Others	05
Total	100
Selling Manner	
Retail	61
Wholesale	39
Total	100
Tenure of Business (Years)	
Less than 1 year	15
1 to 2 years	52
2 to 5 years	13
5 to 10 years	15
More than 10 years	05
Total	100
Trading the selected brand cables	
Yes	63
No	37
Total	100

		Availability of the Selected Brand Cables at Stores
Competitor Product	Pearson Correlation	0.193**
	Sig. (2-tailored)	0.044
	N	100

		Availability of the Selected Brand Cables at Stores
Brand Awareness	Pearson Correlation	0.242**
	Sig. (2-tailored)	0.015
	N	100

		Availability of the Selected Brand Cables at Stores
Intermediaries Activities	Pearson Correlation	0.355**
	Sig. (2-tailored)	0.000
	N	100

Table 3. Correlation summary

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Hypothesis
Availability of the Selected Brand Cables at Stores	Competitor Product	0.193	H1 Accepted
	Brand Awareness	0.242	H2 Accepted
	Intermediaries Activities	0.355	H3 Accepted

4.4.1 Relationship between competitor products and availability of the selected brand cables at stores

Competitor cable products have been proved as there is a positive relationship (correlation of 0.193) with availability of the selected brand of cables at the stores. Therefore, the decision makers of the selected company will have to consider the competitors as one of the major aspect in order to let the availability of their company cables at the stores.

4.4.2 Relationship between brand awareness and availability of the selected brand cables at stores

Brand awareness has been proved as there is a positive relationship (correlation of 0.242) with availability of the brand of the selected brand of cables at the stores. As the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level, H2 of the study can be accepted. Therefore, the decision makers of the selected company will have to consider the brand awareness to let the product availability of their company cables at the stores.

4.4.3 Relationship between intermediary's activities and availability of the selected brand cables at stores

Based on the results of the correlation test it can be said that intermediaries activities and Availability of the selected brand cables at the stores are positively correlated (0.355). Hypothesis regarding the relationship between intermediaries' activities and availability of the

selected brand cables (H3) is also accepted as correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

4.4.4 Summary

As variables are approximately normally distributed, a correlation analysis was conducted to measure the relationship between variables. Mentioned below is a summary of the correlation analysis.

As the significant value is lesser than the alpha value of 0.05 or at the 95% confident level let the researcher to conclude that the association has been derived from the correlation analysis among the variables. As per the derived values of the correlation coefficient the researcher comes to the understandings where the availability of the selected brand cables at the stores based on competitor cable products, brand awareness as well as intermediators activities.

5. CONCLUSION

As far as the independent and dependent variables are concerned, the research has attained the outcomes as there is a relationship among competitor cable products, brand awareness, intermediators activities with the dependent variable of availability of the selected brand cables at the stores. The relationship between variables, the recommendations for the relevant parties have been discussed in detail. Correspondingly, due to gaps in this research few more research areas have emerged and

those are mentioned towards the end of the chapter as well.

5.1 Limitations of the Study

These researches conducted as a methodology of quantitative manner whereas the qualitative methodology would have given in-depth understanding of the availability of the selected brand cables at the stores and help to find more subjective opinions from the respondents. Therefore, the future researches could develop a discussion guide which concludes the vital parameters of availability of the selected brand cables at the stores with relevant parameters of the cable products in Sri Lanka could give us the subjective views and let the moderator to probe more of it to get the in- depth understanding of the research objectives. Researcher limited the sample as wholesale, retail as well as sales representative for this study, whereas more clusters on the selected sample categories would help us to find out more findings in various kinds as well. The developed conceptual framework only tested with the selected region and the researcher recommends the future researchers to test it out with multiple regions as well to get further understanding of the various outcome of the research. Multiple regional approach could provide the vast findings to the researchers with the developed conceptual framework.

5.2 Recommendations

The brand will have to analyze the market requirements and to develop the products and to provide an overall best product comparing to the competitor delivers in the local and international market. It is vital that the decision makers will have to take calculated risks when studying the competitor products and to make the existing product to be enhanced.

The product mangers as well as the relevant authorities will have to make sure about the standard quality in terms of the standards as well as best practices in order to keep the product to be competitive in the stores with rest of the rival brands as well. It is very important that the quality will have to be comparable with the competitors to the consumers at the time of purchasing activities.

The organization has to be the tendency towards analyzing the competitive predicts and to figure out the aspects where the innovation could be applicable by the manufactures in order to the consumers to have a purchasing decisions at the stores. The innovation could be reflected at the end products as well as the processes of development.

The brand image will be enriched to the selected brand cables where it could be sustainable as well comprehensive so the competitors could be able to reach the brand attained level in the business operations as well as the market.

When the department of the product development and innovations of the selected company assigning the product line or launching of new products, the strategically aspects will have to be pointed out where the competitors could not be able to imitate or finding on how it has been made.

The organization will have to be focusing on to the corporate social responsibilities which could boost up the brand visibility to the public as well as the relevant stakeholders. In addition, the organization will have to make sure the corporate social responsibilities would be relevant to the organization where the brand awareness will be attained via it as well as the internal development such as employee commitment as well as motivation.

The organization will have to focus in to the aspects such as brand loyalty programs as well as other relevant measures in order to get the repeat purchasing of the selected brand cables all around the stores and to have a highest brand to be aware for when it comes to the cables solutions.

The organization's marketing and sales department decision makers will have the obligation to boost up the brand name and the awareness via the marketing campaigns, appropriate advertisements strategies as well as social media presence. The organization will have to choose the relevant mechanism to advertise and market the outcomes to all the stakeholders in a manner the brand name would be highly aware at all sort for cable purchasing behaviour.

It is vital that the intermediaries will have to be trained to market the product to be aware by the all the consumers of household as well as corporates.

The organization will have to have a better relationship with the intermediators with regards to the business point of view where they will be pushing the selected brand products to the required customers of households as well as corporation.

The organization will have to choose the best marketing channels of all the districts of Sri Lanka and to analyze the pricing of the competitors and to make the pricing strategies in manner which could be much lesser then their offerings with the acceptable profit margin to the organization.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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