

**"DELIVERING A GOURMET EXPERIENCE TO
TABLES AROUND THE WORLD"**



**IT'S POPCORN
TIME!**

Strategic Marketing Plan

**Be Ready For Any Occasion, Any
Need, At Any Time**

August 9, 2008

Presented by:

IPT's Marketing Team

Beatrice Spotts

Caroline Westhall-Miller

Strategic Marketing Plan

Plan Overview

- ▶ Executive Summary
- ▶ Situation Analysis
- ▶ Key Marketing Objectives
- ▶ Strategic Initiatives
- ▶ Tactical Plans
- ▶ Keys To Winning
- ▶ Barriers To Success
- ▶ How Will You Measure Results

Objectives

- ▶ Use Effective Communication Techniques- Deciding the different ways we can effectively communicate and interact with our customers depending on where they are, who they are, and what they need.
- ▶ Apply Marketing Concepts To Various Business Scenarios- Local retail, corporate retail, internet sales, and B-to-B, (Commercial).
- ▶ Discuss The Interaction Among The Marketing Mix Variables And The Implications For Product, Promotion, Price, and Distribution Management – Which customers are spending what amounts, and where; and keeping corporate and commercial account records and customer data apart from the retail accounts.

- ▶ Use Team And Problem-Solving Skills To Collaborate On Marketing Plan- Delegate which employees and staff will be responsible for carrying out different aspects of the marketing plan.

Executive Summary

This Marketing Report is intended and concerned with the direction and scope of the long-term activities performed by the organization "It's Popcorn Time"! to gain and maintain competitive advantage in our business market. The scope of our marketing plan should include the customers' needs, wants and values. The challenge of strategic marketing is, therefore, to manage marketing complexity, customer and stakeholder expectations and to reconcile the influences of a changing environment in the context of a set of resource capabilities. Our sales, so far this year reveal that our consumers buy 35% from the storefronts, 30% buy "from a catalog or on the Web", and business buyers would direct order. Geographic distribution research indicates that if IPT markets appropriately, they could increase sales outside the Philadelphia area by as much as 50% the next year.

"It's Popcorn Time!" is a seller of flavored popcorns and other gourmet treats. Our vision is to "Deliver The Gourmet Experience To Tables Around The World"; and our mission statement will later include ways we intend to give back to our communities. This will involve donations to church groups, homeless shelters, schools, children's after school centers, and hospitals on special occasions and holidays, along with various charity events throughout the community. There will be an individual in charge and responsible for this aspect of IPT's relationship to the community. Giving back will be a BIG part of our competitive advantage in our marketing strategy. It will also feel so good to do, and be so much fun, you will no notice it as "work"!...Well, maybe not too much anyway!

Our basic product distribution includes our flavored popcorn. In addition to common flavors such as butter, cheese, and caramel, they have patented a process for getting both thicker (chocolate) and finer (confectioners sugar) coatings to stick to the popcorn without damaging it. We have our snack sized pretzels, coated with sweet and savory flavors, and the variety of cookies that IPT has subcontracted with the local bakery to produce. Along with IPT's base in Havertown, we have our several storefronts in and around Philadelphia. We sell the products at the storefront locations and take phone orders for delivery in the local region. IPT sells our products in bulk to local gift basket producers and caterers as well. National Flower and Gift. These partnerships will increase for us and them; sales, service opportunities, and a wider variety of a customer base. Keep in mind; this will also demand of IPT more responsibility from the smallest of store fronts, to our manufacturing partners. Flyers, surveys, and brochures that reveal all of our services and gather customer data/information, for our local mailers, and e-mail subscriptions will be placed and promoted at our local stores, so therefore it will be a part of our associates' jobs at the stores to make our guests aware of all our products and services, and to gather customer data/information.

Although we still considers ourselves a local Philadelphia based company, and want to maintain a mood and measure of that tradition as part of our marketing strategy, we also want to project a sophisticated and capable attitude of serving the eclectic and diverse needs and wants of customers; (tables) around the world.

Situation Analysis

Target Markets-This defines our current customers and the potential customers IPT wants to target.– To retain loyal retail and commercial customer base in and around the Havertown/Philadelphia area, as well expanding the opportunities throughout the New Jersey, Washington D.C., and Delaware metro regions; along with the national, (domestic), and international opportunities via the internet through web-site orders.

1. Demographics- Significant and progressive changes in the economic, political, legal, technological, or socio-cultural environments in the regions we serve. Changes in the area demographics if our business has locally, and beyond. Who are our customers? Daily? Weekly? For what occasion? What are they buying? How much are they spending? Working moms, parties for schools, churches, corporate luncheons, and holiday entertainment; to name a few with any possible variance in between. Be ready for any occasion, any need, at any time.
2. Needs- Demands are growing, and phone order customers are being turned away, it is expected that a Marketing Strategy Plan will resolve the issue of being incapable of serving customer overflow through discoveries of how these customer needs can be met and work with the financial manager and advisor to help us with resources needed to accomplish this. Such as increasing our workforce.
3. Trends- Our connection with Flower, Basket and Gift, affords greater opportunities in gift-giving, and in the corporate and party circuits. Diversity is popular, people are open to new experiences and trying different things.

Critical Analysis Considered

4. SWOT-

- a. Strengths– Strong, loyal, and local customer base, both in retail and commercial.

Our business will be unique because we will supply a full(er) line of products.

Grandma's doesn't have a full line in the sense of a gourmet appeal. We are

planning to provide samples upon request in-store, via web-site offers, and as an

invitation to corporate accounts in the regions we are interested in expanding and

reaching out toward. Because our merchandise will be of higher quality, in

relationship to gourmet appeal, we will have to commit to a give a money-back

guarantee. IPT is ready, open and imaginative in how we can better serve our

customers.

- b. Weaknesses- Our managers have had to run the stores and IPT has had to use

outside salespeople to develop relationships with resellers, (B-to-B) of IPT's

products. Customer demands are becoming greater than our resources can keep up

with.

- c. Opportunities- To further train associates in developing relationships as part of

their job, not just wait on customers. Have managers learn to delegate tasks to

their subordinates according to talent and skill so as to avail the managers

themselves and free up time to build relationships with our commercial

customers, to maintain and strengthen our B-to-B ties, and follow-up with large

orders.

- d. Threats- Being unable to keep in step with new/potential customer demands in turning away phone orders where time was of the essence. This has to be seen as unacceptable in the long run, and we have to discover ways to avoid this from happening as a rule! There will always be an occasion where we cannot realistically fill an order, but it should be the exception, and not the rule, especially when it comes to "new business", it's a good way to get a bad rep with a desired group before we even start! We can inform our manufacturers at the bakeries, National Flower and Gift, our delivery team, and the rest of the backbone of IPT of our dilemma, and get feed-back on how they can or cannot support us in this situation. IPT can set a standard of how much notice or time ahead is necessary needed to meet and fulfill special orders. Grandma's treats, our rival gourmet food producer has a strong hold and handle on traditional fare of the local food, and traditional gourmet offerings, such as pies for example. We decided to stay away and steer clear of these because pies and cakes are highly vulnerable to damage in travel and perishable. We choose to focus instead on the gourmet popcorn, specialized cookies, pretzels, and expand our creative efforts on creating more variety in those products, particularly in our cultural and holiday/special occasion themes, as well as developing our gift baskets, and party packages, with National flower and Gift.
- e. Competitive- Because we offer "gourmet treats", even though IPT has a country-traditional spin from the local areas, and the Amish connection attached to our product, it is different enough from the offerings of the local fare that our product can be deemed or recognized as the more unique and sophisticated choice to

make. Although several other Amish family businesses turned down IPT's offer to partner with us because they are exploring entering the gourmet food marketplace themselves, there are two family groups willing to sell us some of their products so that we can make that available to our specialty clients such as corporate, gift basket offers, catering opportunities. What we desire to do is to be able to offer enough of a variety so that our banquet business does not have to go to anyone but us for the gourmet treat aspects of their "spreads." Two of our salespeople have resigned and taken jobs with a rival gourmet food producer, Grandma's Treats. Our patented process is kept secret so there is no threat there, however, there is the possibility that some customer information "walked out," with them, and we will have to be aware of who we have not heard from or seen in awhile. This is why our CRM database is very important. We want to take and make note of how often we hear from and see various clients as a rule relative to their buying habits.

Products Defined

1. Features & Benefits- Flavored popcorn. As well as the usual flavors offered for popcorn such as butter, cheese, and caramel; we have a patented process for getting thicker chocolate, and finer confectionary sugar coatings to stick to the popcorn without ruining the popcorn by making it too sticky or soggy from the coatings. Snack sized pretzels, also specialized with sweet and savory flavors, and the cookies that IPT has from subcontracting with a local bakery. We can request the bakery to produce different varieties of cookies we want to experiment with, and based on customer desire and demand.

Further Considerations

1. What is crucial at this time is gaining control and putting into action the plan on incorporating efficiently and functionally IPT's current features and services in sync with the traditional area Amish-type foods, National Flower and Gift, in addition to future international product features and offerings; with international recipes featuring diverse themes such as cultural, holiday, and various traditional themes. "It's Popcorn Time!" must be able to keep in step with new demands while not taking away from our loyal and local retail and commercial customer base and losing points with them. This would happen by overextending ourselves to a place where one suffers because of the other. You always want to take care of your loyal and key customer(s). Therefore, due to business growth in our local and national markets, the time has come to consider increase the size of our sales force.

Key Marketing Objectives-

Direct Marketing is an easy and convenient method to use. It is immediate and interactive, allowing private access to a wealth of information. We also want to keep a current and accurate customer databases. There is no one strategy that works for all organizations in all situations. In thinking strategically about marketing many factors must be considered the extent of product diversity and geographic coverage in the organization; the number of market segments served, marketing channels used, the role of branding, the level of marketing effort, and the role of quality. It is also necessary to consider the organization's approach to new product development, in particular, its position as a technology leader or follower, the extent of innovation, the

organization's cost position and pricing policy, and its relationship to customers, competitors, suppliers and partners.

What are we trying to accomplish?

1. Maintain strong relationships with loyal customers and build relationships with potential customers.
2. Targeting of small groups or individuals with customized offers in a personalized fashion offering access to buyers that cannot be serviced or reached in conventional ways. Low-cost, effective alternative for reaching specific markets.

Strategic Initiatives

1. Positioning – Understanding your customer's point of view, from where their needs and wants are coming from. Two-way personal communication is more effective than advertising in complex selling situations. The sales force plays a major role in most companies. The sales force works to sell the product and deliver customer satisfaction resulting company profits.
2. Differentiation vs. Competition - Our business has to be different than our competitor(s), or consumers will have no reason to buy from us instead of them. This is the heart of competition. Success in competition depends on creativity, integrity, (product quality and ethics), and popular or current trends. Implied in this view of strategic marketing is the requirement to develop a strategy to cope with competitors, identify market opportunities, develop and commercialize new products and services,

allocate resources among marketing activities and design an appropriate organizational structure to ensure the performance desired is achieved.

3. Pricing Strategy - Strategy where a company goes after two or more specific market segments with a specific product and unique marketing strategy tailored to each separate segment. Typically, differentiated marketing creates more total sales than undifferentiated marketing, however, costing more to do business. This is where an international reach could cost IPT, over the expense of the web-site.
4. Distribution Strategy - market segmentation and market coverage strategy whereby a product is developed and marketed for a very well-defined, specific segment of the consumer population. The marketing plan will be a highly specialized one catering to the needs of that specific consumer segment. Most likely for IPT's party-planning segments. While many people of various "segments" have parties, our consumer base is more local and specific right now, primarily for family entertaining, parties at the hotels who use our goods, and local businesses. We are expected to grow some in that area, for example from other states we are struggling to fill orders now coming in, we would have to consider finding funds for mass production, and increasing our work force for this/these new market(s)! Manufacturing products, marketing strategies, and advertising for the benefit of very specific geographic, demographic, or psychographic segments, this tells us about consumers or audience members of the consumer market on the basis of psychological characteristics initially determined by standardized tests. Micromarketing is a relatively new marketing concept shaped by the diversity of the consumer population and the challenge in creating a single

product line that appeals to all the diverse groups in that population. This may be a challenge we face with metro-segments, and international segments.

Tactical Plans

1. Promotional Tactics to be Used –

- a. Commercials Home shopping Networks- Explore amongst existing employees who would be interested in representing IPT. Would be a good platform for new “make-it-yourself” products, and international/cultural goods. Internet e-mail lists grow e-commerce and order/delivery capabilities. Send out samples, samples, and more samples. Perhaps develop a new product line of pancake and/or cookie mixes, and other “make-it-yourself” line of products.
- b. Trade shows-Explore possibilities where we could demonstrate and show-case our products, tried and true, old and new.
- c. International reach may require a separate marketing strategy to study various ethnic dimensions, reaching perhaps one group, or developing one “taste” at a time. IPT-Store-Savings cards, with tracking bar-code.

2. Means of communication and how we are going to build relationships with our customers. The organization applies its resources within a changing environment to satisfy customer needs while meeting stakeholder expectations.

- a. Develop a creative execution of a print ad – A flyer in-store introducing weekly and holiday specials, Sunday, and sales-days newspaper inserts, in-store brochure for party packages and catering.
- b. Develop a creative execution for a direct mail or e-mail campaign – Coupons and introductory offers. New hires, or give internet savvy associates the opportunity to get involved in maintaining our e-commerce, through promotion, those we already know are eager to move up in the business, and hire new sales people for the storefronts.

3. Timing

- a. Seasonal- Keep in step with seasonal demands, such as holiday needs, weddings, and religious celebrations,
- b. Immediate changes in customer demands when we start to become aggressive with our metro and international reaches.

4. General Thoughts on Budget (where will you spend money?) – On potential growth, maintaining the website, hiring more sales help and promoting ready, committed and deserving employees to supervisory staff, to supervise orders carry out marketing plans.

Other Considerations

1. Keys to Winning

- a. Immediately launch parts of the marketing strategy plan that is quickly in addition, cheaply implemental.
- b. Have a positive and enthusiastic attitude about the marketing plan; no fear!

2. Barriers to Success

- a. Apprehension and hesitation to launch the marketing strategy.
- b. Hesitation in investing more monies

3. How will you measure results

- a. Responses to surveys, specials, requests for samples, and so on. We will measure the responses of our immediate, and inexpensive marketing strategies.
- b. Increase in revenue within the first quarter of launching the marketing plan.

"IT'S POPCORN TIME!"



**"It's Popcorn Time!"
Delivering The Gourmet Experience
To Tables Around The World**



Ready for Any Occasion, Any
Need, At Any Time

**Gourmet Popcorn, Snaks, Cookies, Gift
Baskets,
AND A WHOLE LOT MORE!**



Buy Now!



DELIVERING A GOURMET

**25% OFF YOUR EXPERIENCE TO
Supersize Gift-
TABLES AROUND THE WORLD"
Basket**

**10% OFF ANY ORDER!
#9988776655432** Ready for Any Occasion, Any
Need, At Any Time

ct Caroline Westhall-Miller (123) 456-7890 ext. 4320
**Special Offer For New
Customers**
Marketing Plan

SOURCES

Bannan, K. J. (2008, July 14). *Give Your E-mail Marketing New Life*. Retrieved August 11, 2008, from <http://www.btobonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080714/FREE/497146584/1008/EMAIL>

Business Resource Software Inc., (2008). *Marketing Plan*. Retrieved August 11, 2008, from <http://www.businessplans.org/Market.html>

Cannon, J. P., McCarthy, E. J., & Perreault, Jr, W. D. (2008). Marketing's Value to Consumers, Firms, and Society., Marketing Strategy Planning., Focusing Marketing Strategy with Segmentation and Positioning., Evaluating Change in the Changing Marketing Environment., (pp. 4-6, 15-18, 24, 33-36, 48, 52-53, 63-65, 71, 84-87, 91-93, 97). In *Essentials of Marketing A Marketing Strategy and Planning Approach* (11th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Irwin

Cote, J. (2008). *Personal Selling and Direct Marketing* [PowerPoint Presentation]. Colorado Springs, CO: CTU Online. Retrieved August 11, 2008, from CTU Online, Virtual Campus, MKT305-0803A-07 : Marketing and the Virtual Marketplace <https://campus.ctuonline.edu>

The Small Business Encyclopedia Business Plans Made Easy, Start Your Own Business and Entrepreneur magazine. (2008). *Elements of a Business Plan: Market Strategies*. Retrieved August 8, 2008, from <http://www.entrepreneur.com/startingabusiness/businessplans/article38308-3.html>

Westhall-Miller, C. (2008). *"ITS POPCORN TIME!" SWOT ANALYSIS* [PowerPoint Presentation]. Colorado Springs, CO: CTU Online. Retrieved August 11, 2008, from CTU Online, Virtual Campus, MKT305-0803A-07 : Marketing and the Virtual Marketplace <https://campus.ctuonline.edu>