

LAUNCHING AND BRANDING A PAIN SPRAY – A CASE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a project by a San Diego based company that was seeking to launch a new product for a regional market.

INTRODUCTION

Graduating MBA students, as a part of their program at San Diego State University (SDSU) must complete a “real life” consulting project, in which at least two faculty members participate and provide guidance. One interesting project was put forward by San Diego-based start-up firm seeking a regional market launch plan for its organic topical analgesic. To assist the firm, the team conducted a competitive analysis, identified target markets, and the recommended brand building strategies through the brand positioning process. This paper discusses the salient facts of one this projects undertaken by the authors.

Background

HC Pain Spray is an organic topical analgesic made from **helichrysum**, a botanical native to the Mediterranean known for its anti-inflammatory properties. The spray relieves joint and muscle pain through the active ingredient helichrysum – some studies have shown that the extract possesses significant anti-inflammatory properties (Sala et al., 2002). Other inactive ingredients in the product include organic eucalyptus oil, organic peppermint oil, organic spearmint and organic black pepper. HC Pain Spray is a camphor free, non-oily product that falls under the cosmetic category and therefore does not require approval of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for its sales and distribution.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The topical/external pain reliever industry consists of numerous competitors. The market participants have strong brand recognition and large financial backing. In this industry, a start-up company faces challenges in creating brand awareness, achieving brand recognition and negotiating key distribution channels. To overcome these challenges, the team had to identify target markets and recommend how HC Pain Spray could be differentiated to effectively gain consumer awareness. To achieve the project objectives, the work was divided into three objectives: 1) Competitive analysis, 2) Target market, and 3) Brand Positioning.