Bachelor’s thesis in Business Administration

Brand Awareness among Customers

A Case Study of ICA-Kvantum

Authors:
1. Umer Shahzad h07umesh@du.se
2. Muhammad Azeem h07muhaz@du.se

Supervisor: Juergen Hartmann
Examiner: Sabine Gebert-Persson
Subject: Business Administration
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Dedicated to our parents who see their future in our success........
Acknowledgment

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Umer Shahzad
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Abstract
This research paper has been prepared by Bachelor students from Dalarna University in Borlänge. The project is centered on a case study of ICA – Kvantum and its brand awareness among customers. The purpose of this study is to find out that which measures can help ICA-Kvantum to create brand awareness among its current and potential customers by looking in to the importance of information of its offerings and use of effective communication tools to convey this information. Further, to recommend them what they need to do, to increase brand awareness among their customers with the help of managerial implications. The research question was formulated as what actions could be seen effective for ICA-Kvantum to maintain or improve brand awareness among its current and potential customers.

The project was created with the help of theoretical concepts of brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, consumer decision model, integrated marketing communication approach and strategic planning process. These theories were applied in this thesis in order to find out the most effective communication measures to maintain or improve brand awareness among current and potential customers of ICA-Kvantum.

The primary and secondary data was collected. Primary data was gathered through the survey among ICA-Kvantum customers in the front of the store in Borlänge. The personal interview with manager was conducted in the office of ICA-Kvantum store located in Borlänge. Secondary data was gathered from textbooks, academic journals, theses and websites.

The empirical findings have been presented in detail and then analyzed with the help of theoretical concepts. The analysis and further results from survey and interview focused on importance of information, marketing communication tools, brand awareness and loyalty, perceived quality and implementation of strategic planning process. Moreover, the main weaknesses and strengths of ICA-Kvantun have been evaluated. The conclusion including short summary of analysis and its results have been provided at the end. Each weakness of issues related to brand awareness i.e. importance of information, effectiveness of marketing communication tools and strengths and weaknesses of ICA-Kvantum discussed in the paper, has been pointed out along with solutions and managerial implications.
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List of Abbreviations

IMC ......................................................................................................................................................... Integrated marketing communication
AB ......................................................................................................................................................... Public limited company
ROI ........................................................................................................................................................ Return on investment
CDM ......................................................................................................................................................... Consumer decision model
IT ............................................................................................................................................................. Information technology
TQM ......................................................................................................................................................... Total quality management
Chapter 1. Introduction

This chapter contains subject areas, problem background, research question, purpose of the research, limitations and introduction of the company.

1.1 Subject Areas

The study will deal in the following subject areas:

![Subject areas]

Figure 1.1: Subject areas Source: Authors

1.2 Problem Background

After the economic crisis in the world and increasing competition, almost every industry sector is affected in terms of losing profit and less business growth. In such time, to face the challenges and threats, companies struggle to gain more and more market share through implementing different marketing measures. According to Macdonald and Sharp (2000, p.5) one of the major goals of marketing is to maintain or improve brand awareness among customers and is important in situation where consumers are involved in finding out information to make the right choice. They further examined the role of brand awareness in the consumer choice process. Their study showed strong support that brand awareness is important in providing information to the consumers to make a decision where more alternatives are available.

Percy and Rossiter 1987 cited in Macdonald and Sharp (1996, p.1) stated that brand awareness is necessary for communication process to be occurred among customers and the brand. The provision of information about products and services leads consumers to know about the offerings and make a decision.

Al saltiel, et al. (2009, p. 46) states that brand is much more than a recognition factor, much more than a conveyor of additional information about unseen qualities of company’s products.
The challenge is how to set the direction to introduce the product and to take concrete steps in line with the identified vision. Macdonald and Sharp (1996, p.10) stated that the concept of understanding brand awareness is usually dismissed by managers as unimportant and not worthy of monitoring. They stated that amongst many managers, brand awareness is seen as a battle and once won can be forgotten.

Integrated marketing communication (IMC) plays important role in creating brand awareness. Holm (2006) studied the IMC, which plays important role in creating brand awareness, and concluded that it is important to use IMC as a measure to create brand awareness. It is crucial to understand the needs of interaction with customers as important as other marketing plans. The above mentioned studies prove that brand awareness is an important managerial aspect to be considered by firms. In scope of this fact, measures to create or maintain brand awareness should not be avoided after a strong brand is achieved. By looking in to the importance of brand awareness, it is important for the managers to keep on improving it or at least maintain the level of brand awareness affecting brand equity through effective marketing communication.

By considering the importance of brand awareness among customers, this research was carried out for ICA-Kvantum due to the fact of more competition in the market; as ICA-Kvantum has many competitors such as Willy’s, Lidl and Hemköp. To maintain its market share it is necessary for ICA-Kvantum to find out effective measures, one of these is provision of information to existing and potential customers by using effective communication tools to create brand awareness among them.

1.3 Research Question

The issues dealt in the research would help to answer the following research question:

“What actions could be seen effective for ICA-Kvantum to maintain or improve brand awareness among its current and potential customers?”

1.4 Research Purpose and Objectives

By looking in to the background based on the previous research done in the field of brand management, the importance of focusing on brand awareness with the help of IMC tools has been identified. The purpose of this study is to find out the role of information of products and services in creating brand awareness. Further, to find out that how ICA-Kvantum can convey
such information of its offerings by using effective communication tools to increase brand awareness among its existing and potential customers.

With reference to the research problem and description, the following steps will be followed:

- First task is to collect empirical data through expert interview in order to identify the current situation of brand image and how it is communicated among the customers.
- To gather data with the help of survey, dealing in perception of customers about role of information of products and services and to know effective communication channels which can be used to convey such information
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in existing communication tools by analysis and to find out needed measures to improve brand awareness.
- At last, to provide recommendations to ICA-Kvantum which would help to increase awareness of its brand among existing and potential customers.

1.5 Limitations

The following limitations were faced during this study:

- The time limit for the research was limited from four to five months.
- The research was done by taking into account only one store of the company i.e. ICA-Kvantum which is situated in Borlänge Sweden and its customers.
- The data was collected by translating the English questionnaire to Swedish language for the convenience of customers.
- The data collected from website of ICA was only available in Swedish and was translated with the help of Google translator.
- The survey was done in three days of the week i.e. Friday 11th, Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th of March, 2011 by considering the importance of possible difference in weekend and normal working days which could have affected on collection of data.

1.6 Company’s Presentation

1.6.1 ICA AB

The ICA Group is one of northern Europe’s leading retail companies, with approximately 2200 of its own and retailer-owned stores in Sweden, Norway, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.
The group includes ICA Sweden, ICA Norge, Rimi Baltic and real estate properties as well as ICA banken. ICA banken offers financial services to customers in Sweden. ICA is a joint venture owned 40 percent of Swedish Hakon Invest AB and 60 percent of the Dutch Royal Ahold NV. According to the shareholder agreement, Royal Ahold and Hakon Invest jointly share controlling influence over ICA AB. (ICA AB, *Om ICA*, 2011)

The history of ICA starts since before 1917 with the foundation of AB Hakon Swenson (Hakonbolaget). In 1938, cooperation between Hakonbolaget, Speceristernas Varuinköp (SV) and Nordsvenska Köpmanna AB resulted as a new name ICA (ICA History, *Organization*, 2008).

ICA Sweden has four store profiles to meet customer needs for different situations: ICA Nära, ICA Supermarket, ICA Quantum and ICA Maxi. In total there are 1359 ICA stores in whole Sweden. There are 6268 employees working for ICA excluding store staff. ICA buys products and sells them on, with a profit margin, to the stores in Sweden and franchise stores in Norway. ICA also gets revenue through sales of services to these stores, such as in marketing, logistics, training and in-store technology. ICA is a group with various activities in several countries. ICA is not small or large, but both. It does not follow a single business model, but several. Even with different business models the main goal is to make sure that customers are given value on hourly and daily basis in the chain. (ICA AB, *ICA Sverige*, 2011)

1.6.2 ICA- Kvantum

The research was done by taking case study of one store of ICA-Kvantum in Borlänge. ICA Kvantum is one of the four profiles of ICA AB stores in Sweden. There are 118 stores with this brand name selling a range of products consisting of 10000 to 30000 in each store all over Sweden. The retail annual sales calculated was 21 904 MSEK for last year. (ICA AB, *ICA Sverige*, 2011)

ICA-Kvantum has one store in Borlänge located in Kupolen centre. The store has all the products available on other ICA-Kvantum stores. The average number of member customers visiting ICA-Kvantum store weekly is 19000 of which 21.5 % customers are over 65 years. (Wester, 2011)
Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter includes the theoretical concepts used in the research for showing the importance of problem identified, collection of data, its analysis and concluding the results.

For the study, a number of theoretical concepts have been used from different books, articles and WebPages. The summary of the theories used in this research are shown below with the help of Figure 2.1.

![Diagram showing the theoretical concepts used in the research]

**2.1 Important Definitions**

Before focusing on measures to create or maintain brand awareness, it is necessary to get idea what is brand, branding, brand awareness and brand equity? The definitions from number of authors in different books help to understand about the issues related to brand.

**2.1.1 Brand**

The American Marketing Association cited in Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 274) has defined a brand as, “a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors”.

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*Source: Authors*
From the above mentioned definition we can say that brand is something which creates identity of a company and its products or services and provides with something that creates a difference from other similar providers of these products or services.

2.1.2 Branding

Dunn (2004, p.3) defines branding as, “a disciplined process consisting of six easy steps which includes: market analysis, market communication, brand architecture, employee involvement, big idea and measurement”. He also mentioned that a brand help to differentiate a company from competitors and it makes its products, services or experience different from them. According to Haeley (2008, p.6), “branding can be defined as a process of continuous struggle between producers and customers to define promise in terms of brand and its meaning”.

2.1.3 Brand Awareness

According to Elliott and Percy (2009, p. 196), “brand awareness is the target audiences’ ability to identify a brand within a category in sufficient detail to purchase or use it”. The authors have mentioned two ways in which to identify a brand. Customers can recognize or recall it. Recognition brand awareness is when the awareness of the brand reminds customers of their needs. Recall brand awareness is when the needs occur and customers must remember a brand that will satisfy their needs.

In this paper, understanding brand awareness is crucial to gain the insight of issues related with it. Brand awareness is taken as the ability of customers to identify the brand of ICA-Kvantum and focus is that what is the role of information of offerings of ICA-Kvantum in creating this ability. Moreover, how such information can be given to the customers by using communication tools that would increase brand awareness among them.

2.1.4 Brand Equity

Passikoff (2006, p. 30) defines brand equity as, “the status or strength of the brand and its ability to meet or exceed the expectations of consumers use to define the category ideal. This identifies how consumers view the category, compare offerings in the category and ultimately buy in the category. It is what they really expect from a brand”.

According to Aaker, (1991) cited in Associates, (1999, p. 75), the term brand equity is typically used to describe the financial asset value of a brand that derives from the goodwill and loyalty it has built up among customers, as a result of its high awareness, its perceived quality, its imagery and its personality associations.

2.2 How Brand Equity Generate Value?

According to Aaker (2010, p.7), Brand equity consist of assets and liabilities which is associated with brand name and symbol for adding value to the product or service given by the firms or organizations to their customers. To manage the brand equity, investment is considered as an important factor for creation and enhancement of assets. The brand equity management effectively involves the decisions about the brand building activities that create strong brand value. Brand equity is considered as a value for the customer and firm as well. In brand equity, assets and liabilities should be associated with the name and symbol of the brand. If change occurs in brand name or symbol, assets and liabilities can be affected and lost as well. Assets in brand equity involve the following which creates value for both firm and customer:

1) Brand awareness
2) Brand loyalty
3) Perceived quality
4) Brand associations

2.2.1 Brand Awareness

It means that how strong the brand exist in consumers’ minds. If consumers’ minds are full of mental emotions then each emotion represents a single brand in terms of brand awareness. It can be measured in different ways and is different in how consumers remember the brand in their minds. (Aaker, 2010, p.10)

a. Brand recognition

Two factors of brand recognition involve familiarity and liking. Firstly, it means that familiarity takes place from previous experience. It is not necessary that consumers remember the brand, its differences or knowledge. It is just to remember the brand on basis of past experience. Customers always prefer old brand because they gained experience
from them in comparison with new brand. In choosing brand of any type, familiarity with brand is always on top in selection process. Secondly, in economist point of view consumers’ selection of familiar brand is not an instinctive response. When consumers see a brand it makes them remind the brand which has been seen several times by them before. It makes the consumer to realize that company spends a lot to support its brand. It assures the consumers that company will spend money on good products rather than bad products. Consumers take this as recognition or a signal that brand is of good quality. (Aaker, 2010, p.10)

b. Brand recall
A brand is said to have recall if it comes to consumers’ minds when its product class is mentioned. Whether or not a customer recalls, your brand can be the deciding factor in getting on a shopping list or receiving a chance to bid on a contract. (Aaker, 2010, p.11)

2.2.2 Brand Loyalty
It is considered as the second brand asset of brand equity. The two reasons that why is it appropriate and useful to include. First the creation of brand value to the firm is the command of customer loyalty. Second it is an asset which encourages and justifies loyalty.

a. Loyalty and brand value
According to Aaker (2010, p.21), brand loyalty is considered as a major key when brand is to be bought and sold because high level of loyal customer base can be generation of a very predictable sale and profit. The brand which has no loyal customers is not valuable and it is valuable only for new customers. Brand loyalty has great impact on the marketing cost as well. It is better to have low cost on old customers in comparison to attract new customers. It is a very rare and big mistake that companies pay attention to the new customer instead old ones. Loyal customers are considered as a barrier of entry for the competitors in the market.

b. Loyalty segmentation
Loyalty segmentation provides strategic and tactical insight which helps in building strong brands. Market is usually divided into following groups: Non customers which buy the competitors’ products, Price Switchers which focus on the price and not on quality and brands, Passively Loyal who have the habit to buy the product and not seasonal customer, fence sitters
who are indifferent between two or more than two brands as well and the committed. The fence
sitters and committed customers only ties or stick with the brand but other customer should be
focus to improve the brand loyalty and attract new customers as well, which also attracts
customers who are willing to pay more for their brands. (Aaker, 2010, p.22)

c. Enhancing loyalty

Enhancing loyalty is the fence sitters and committed approach for the creation of strong
relationship with brand. Factors like brand awareness, perceived quality and an effective clear
brand identity can contribute to the goals of company to enhance loyalty of customers towards
brand. (Aaker, 2010, p.23)

2.2.3 Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is associated with the brand which is evaluated as brand asset for many
reasons:

a. Perceived quality drives financial performance
b. Perceived quality as a strategic thrust
c. Perceived quality as a measure of “brand goodness”

a. Perceived quality drives financial performance

The investment in brand equity is an important thing and it will pay off as well. To link it with
intangible assets like information technology (IT), it is difficult to analyze. Following three
studies shown the perceived quality as driver of financial performance:-

i) It shows that perceived quality is considered as an important part in company’s return on
investment (ROI) and having great effect on market share as well. Improvement in perceived
quality means improvement in ROI.

ii) Claes Fornell and his colleagues believe that perceived quality is an important factor of customer
satisfaction which has great effect on ROI.

iii) According to equitrend method, perceived quality had great impact on stock return. It is better
than ROI. (Aaker, 2010, p.17)

b. Perceived quality as a strategic thrust

Perceived quality is considered as strategic variable and the end goal of Total Quality
Management (TQM), i.e. ensuring provision of quality equal to or above customers’
expectations, for many organizations. Quality is an important part of the value and mission for many firms. Study revealed about 250 business managers showed that identification of sustainable competitive advantage is based on the perceived quality which they consider it the most important asset for the organization.

It is the key positioning width for major and well known corporate brands like Ford or Honda and other brands as well. These brands are span product classes, they are perceived quality brands rather than their functionality. (Aaker, 2010, p.18)

c. *Perceived quality as a measure of “brand goodness”*

This factor is at the heart of consumers who are buying the brands and it also affects the brand identity as well. Perceived quality shows the measurement in goodness that is associated with overall elements of the brand. Functionality is closely related to the perceived quality. (Aaker, 2010, p.19)

2.2.4 Brand Associations

To keep the brand equity managed, it is emphasized that brand is supported by the associations that build a positive image to consumer minds. Association can be product attributes, celebrity spokesperson or a specific symbol. Brand association is based on brand identity i.e. how organization looks by its brand in the consumers mind? Building up strong brand with the help of brand associations is important to improve and implement brand identity. (Aaker, 2010, p.25)

Theory presented by David A. Aker (2010) helps to understand that why branding is important to be considered by the managers as part of managing their business and how it creates value for both the customers and the firm. It shows that brand should be seen as a strong asset which creates competitive value for the firms and strong brand helps to compete even in hard competition.

2.3 Customer Awareness

Ryals & McDonald (2008, p.256) stated that customers have radar screens, and so the first task to potential suppliers is to appear on radar as a member of the customers’ awareness set. Boyd, Mullins, and Walker (2008, p.403) have identified that in order to increase customers’ awareness and willingness to buy, the firms have to follow the following steps:
i) Heavy advertising directed at target segment to generate awareness among the customers; use of selective media relevant to target.

ii) Extensive sales force efforts focused on potential customers in target segments.

iii) Additional product development limited to improvement or modifications to increase appeal to target market.

iv) Offer free trial, liberal return or extended warranty policies to reduce target customer’s perceived risk of adopting the new products.

Understanding awareness from customers’ perspective is important that help us to know that why there is need of communication with the customers and how it can create value for the firms to make their customers aware of the benefits they provide.

2.4 Consumer Decision Model

Howard (1989, pp.29-36) has presented consumer decision model, which is made up of six interrelated components, as described below, and through which customers have to pass while making a purchase decision.

a. Information

According to massive amount of research information is the most important part in insisting the customers to purchase decision. Buyers receive information with five sense organs: seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. Typically brochures, newspapers, radio, television, and word of mouth are the sources of information for the buyers. As the Consumer decision model (CDM) in Figure 2.2 shows information (F) causes the buyers to recognize the brand. Thus it is the start that can inspire the customers and may insist them to think about purchase. (Howard, 1989, pp.29-36)

b. Brand recognition

Brand recognition (B), as defined before in chapter 2.2.1, is the extent to which the buyers know enough about the criteria for categorizing but not for evaluating and distinguishing it form other brand in its product category. Brand recognition as referring to the products form in contrast to the consumer attitude toward the brand, which has to do with its function, namely, what the product does to cause the buyers to like or dislike it. (Howard, 1989, pp.29-36)
Brand image is the total picture of the brand in the buyers mind and is made up of all three elements (brand recognition), (attitude toward the brand) and (confidence) which is ability to judge the quality of brand.

c. **Attitude**

Attitude (A) toward the brand, the second part of the brand image, is defined as the extent to which the buyer expects the brand to yield satisfaction of their particular needs. To the extent the buyer does, it spurs their intention to buy the brand.

d. **Confidence**

Confidence (C) is the third element in the buyers’ image of the brand. It is defined as the degree of certainty of their evaluative judgment if a brand is correct. The buyers’ confidence in the particular brand is increased when their thinking is clarified by repeated reminders from marketers and from peers, that their peers like it, that it is distinct from other brands and that the information is consistent with what they already know about the brand. (Howard, 1989, pp.29-36)

e. **Intention**

Intention (I) to buy is defined as a mental state that reflects the buyers plan to buy some specified number of units of a particular brand in some specified time period. It is useful for the marketer to understand buyer intention.

f. **Purchase**

To marketer, purchase (P) is obviously the most important variable n the entire system.

---

**Figure 2.2: Consumer decision model**

Source: Howard (1989, pp.29-36)
The consumer decision model is used in this study to show the importance of information as a key element to create awareness among customers and this theory helps to know from customers that how they perceive such information i.e. is it important for them to know the offerings and to how much extend they are interested in it.

2.5 Integrated Marketing Communication

Integrated marketing communications (IMC) has become the major communication development of the last decade. Kitchen and Pelsmacker (2004, p.18) described IMC as a key competitive advantage of marketing as it provides an effective strategic way of communication between customers and organizations.

According to Fill (2005, p. 450) IMC is a strategic approach to the planned management of an organization’s communications. IMC requires that organizations coordinate their various strategies, resources and messages to engage coherently and meaningfully with target audiences. The main purpose is to develop relationships with audiences that are of mutual value.

*The main tasks of marketing communications are:*  
- To differentiate  
- To reinforce  
- To inform  
- And to persuade. (Baines, Fill and Page, 2008, p. 446)

2.5.1 Marketing Communication Tools

Belch and Belch (2009, p.15) has stated integrated marketing communication tools as each element of the promotional mix as shown in Figure 2.3 reproduced below.

![Figure 2.3: Elements of promotional mix](Source: Belch and Belch(2009, p.16))
a. Advertising: is well known and the most widely used. It is defined as a non-personal form of communication. Advertising aspect is a paid element from the promotional mix. In order to advertise, the place and time have to be bought.

b. Direct marketing: means that company communicates directly with the final customers. It is much more than direct mail and mail-order catalogue. It involves a variety of activities, including database management, direct selling, tele marketing and direct response ads through direct mail, the internet and various broadcast and print media.

c. Interactive/internet marketing: includes use of websites to promote products and services. It is done by providing information to customers as well by entertaining and interacting with them.

d. Sales Promotion: refers to increase sales with adding extra value. It is covered by two main groups such as customers-oriented and trade-oriented activities.

e. Publicity/Public relations: A form of news, editorial, or announcements which describe company and its services or products in non-personal way of communications.

f. Personal Selling: Is a form of person-to-person communication in which a seller attempts to assist and persuade buyers to purchase the product or service or to act on an idea. (Belch and Belch, 2009)

This theory is used firstly to create questionnaires for survey from customers and for interview from company, that has helped to know what communication tools the company has already been using and their effectiveness or weaknesses. Secondly, it has helped to recommend that which promotional tools can be used to create or maintain brand awareness to cover the weaknesses in communications.

2.6 Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process presented by Kotler and Keller (2009, p.88) has been used by managers for all marketing activities and to perform marketing tasks in a strategic way. In the similar way, Elliott and Percy (2009, p.83) has presented strategic planning process that managers can take into consideration for effective brand’s marketing communication.

a. Review of Key Areas before implementation

Elliott and Percy (2009, p. 83) mentioned that, before implementing the 5 step strategic planning process, it is necessary that all marketing communication must be consistent with all marketing plan. It is important to consider the importance of overall marketing plan to get help in
Creating overview about the market, that what is already known, and then set the objectives and goals for brand communication in light of it.

According to the authors there are five key areas where the manager should look for information before they begin with strategic planning process for brand’s marketing communication as shown in Table 2.1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Areas</th>
<th>Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product Description</strong></td>
<td>What are you marketing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market Assessment</strong></td>
<td>What is your overall assessment of the market where you compete?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source of Business</strong></td>
<td>Where do you expect business to come from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competitive Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>What is your competition and how does it position itself?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing Objectives</strong></td>
<td>What are the marketing objectives for the brand?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: Marketing background issues in strategic planning

Source: Elliott and Percy (2009, p. 83)

It is necessary for managers to write down that what will be introduced in the market. It can be service you offered or products which are available at your end. After that it is also necessary to make an assessment of market with up to date information of that market where you exist or will target. What is needed in this assessment is the information about the market that may have influence on the brand. The next area is to check out from where the business will be beneficial. It may be beneficial by targeting existing customers for other products or may be targeting other potential customers using different brands. Competition analysis or evaluation should also be done before creation of strategic planning process. And after analysis of all these areas it is necessary to find out the overall objectives defined in overall marketing plan and in the light of these objectives you must set specific market share or goals for the brand as well.

**b. Implementing Strategic Planning Process**

The planning process given by Elliott and Percy (2009, p.85) consists of five steps as shown in the Figure 2.4 reproduced on next page:
Step 1: Selection of Target Audience

The first task in strategic planning process is to select the target audience. This audience should be selected in line with the marketing overall objectives. These objectives describe that which audience should be selected and how they would be beneficial for business. If the marketing strategy is to create category then the objectives would be to achieve a trial action and the selection of audience should consist of potential new customers. On the other hand, if strategy is to increase usage then the objectives would be to achieve repeat–purchase actions and selection of audience should be existing customers. It is also necessary to create profiles of these audience to make a comparison between users, non-users of brand or both, which would help to target these profiles accordingly. (Elliott and Percy, 2009, p.86)

Step 2: Understand the Target Audience

After selection of target audience, the next step is to clearly identify that how the targeted audience may act about purchase decisions. It is necessary to understand the audience because, if the brand is going to affect the purchasing decision positively, it would help to know what is involved in making that decision. Studies of consumer behavior tell that numbers of people are involved in a decision to buy or use of products and they play different roles. Five possible roles can be involved:

- Initiators: propose purchase or usage;
- Influencers: recommend purchase or usage;
- Deciders: make the actual choice;
- Purchasers: make the actual purchase;
- Users: use the product or service.
Using the consumer decision making model, the manager is in a position to determine how best to influence the decision process in order to maximize the opportunities for your brand. This model can be used to understand the behavior of the customers towards the brand and thus should be considered by the managers. (Elliott and Percy, 2009, p.87)

**Step 3: Determine the Best Positioning**

The next step in strategic planning process is to measure that how brand can be placed in the minds of the targeted audience. The basic brand positioning already exists in consumer minds for existing products but particular communication positioning strategy which would be adopted for brand should be strategically determined in strategic planning process. The important decision in positioning the brand is related to decision of linking the brand with existing category need in audience minds where the brand is already competing or by repositioning the brand by linking it to another category need where brand will have more competitive advantage. By determining the positioning, it can also be measured that how brand will be presented and what would be the benefits of this brand for the targeted audience. (Elliott and Percy, 2009, p.88)

**Step 4: Develop Communication Strategy**

According to Elliott and Percy (2009, p.89), the next important step is to develop an effective communication strategy in which first task is to build communication objectives by selecting the desired effects. Managers must consider what they want to say about the brand in order to make the targeted customers aware of the brand. The communication effects can be;

*Category Need:* It is necessary to get knowledge about the existence of need in for the targeted market otherwise communication is of no use. In case of new products, we can say that need may not exist before the products are introduced in the market for instance: in case of early stages of computers or CD players. But for existing products, it is necessary to know what is the need of the customers and by identifying the need, managers should build their communication objectives.

*Brand awareness:* Creating or reinforcing brand awareness is always a communication objective. The link between the message and the brand has to be established to create effective marketing communication.
Brand attitude: Creating or developing brand attitude is always important communication objective. It is a function of how involved a person is in the decision to purchase or use of product/services. It explains what a person knows and feels about the brand.

- Brand awareness Strategy

Elliott and Percy (2009, p.91) state that to develop an effective marketing communication strategy it is important for companies to create right brand awareness strategy. It means to understand that if the purchase decision follows from recognition or recall of the brand. Recognition brand awareness is when someone sees the brand at the point of purchase and must remember the brand as something that will satisfy the need. On the other hand, recall brand awareness occurs when someone has a need and must remember the brand as something that will satisfy that need.

Step 5: Set Media Strategy

The last step is to select the appropriate communication options that would effectively deliver the message to targeted customers. The important act here is to identify the suitable and effective set of promotional tools and to ensure that how these tools will be implemented effectively to yield positive results. To set a media strategy it is also required to consider the processing requirements of the message and the selection of communication options that will help facilitate the processing of that message. Promotional tools like direct marketing, personal selling, advertising, sales promotion and public relations should be selected in an effective way which would help to deliver the original brand message and to create awareness among targeted customers by providing them information of the offers and benefits of brand. (Elliott and Percy, 2009, p.96)

The strategic planning process has been used to provide an example of targeting potential customers for ICA-Kvantum to create brand awareness among them with the help of effective marketing communication tools.
Chapter 3. Methodology

This chapter contains the issues of methodology used in the research including; research approach, research design, research sample, research methods, research strategies and validity and reliability.

3.1 Marketing Research

Benett (1988, p. 117) cited in Kinear and Taylor (1996, p. 5) defines that “marketing research specifies the information required to address the issues of designing the method for collecting information; managing and implementing the data collection processes; analyzing the results; and communicating the findings and their implications”.

Kotler and Keller (2006, p. 102) defines marketing research as “the systematic design, collection, analysis and reporting of data and findings relevant to a specific marketing situations facing the company”.

Thus marketing research is to gather information related to certain marketing issues and performing its systematic analysis which would lead towards conclusion. But to carry on all these processes, one needs to follow scientific way i.e. provide evidence for a specific reasoning by following the methods and techniques to achieve the purpose of the research.

Below is the description of methodology issues according to literature and which has been used for the research.

3.2 Research Design

Churchill and Iacobucci (2005, p.74) defines research design as, “the framework or plan for a study, used as a guide to collect and analyze data.” The authors mentioned three types of research design as shown in table 3.1. Exploratory research aims to gain insights and ideas and is helpful in finding to out the specific problem, increasing familiarity with the problem, establishing priorities for further research. Descriptive research describes characteristics of certain groups and is used to estimate the proportion of people who behave in certain way. It requires a clear specification of who, what, when, where, why and how of the research. Causal research is mostly used to show the relationship among two variables. Such design is mostly suitable for laboratory and field experiments.
### Table 3.1: Types of research designs

Source: Churchill and Iacobucci (2005, p.76)

This research can be placed in the first category i.e. exploratory design as it includes literature search, survey, interviews and analysis of selected case. Moreover, the purpose of the research is to explore the problems more precisely i.e. by collecting data and then with systematic analysis find out the weaknesses of the selected firm to create brand awareness among its customers. Thus, it would be right to say that the exploratory design has been followed in this research based on its purpose to break large and vague problem in to specific smaller and precise reasons.

### 3.3 Research Strategy

The research strategy implemented in this research is case study. Number of authors stated that case study research is a valid research strategy in marketing, operations management, management information system and strategy (Bonoma,1985; McCutcheon and Meredith,1993; Benbasat et al.,1987, cited in Hak and Dul, 2008, p.24). Hak and Dul (2008, p.24) stated that case study strategy is a useful for number of reasons;

- When the topic is broad and highly complex
- When there is not a lot of theory available
- When context is very important

They further mentioned that many authors advocate the use of case study for exploratory design research. Yin (2003, p.42) defines different types of case studies which includes *single-case designs* and *multi-case designs*. He further classified these types, based on the unit of analysis, in to *holistic* and *embedded* case studies.

In this research embedded single-case study has been used where data will be analyzed from two units i.e. one of the employees through interview and customers with the help of survey. The
case study strategy was chosen for the matter of convenience i.e. to gather data in terms of easy access to informants and least expenses.

3.4 Research Approach

Denscombe (2007, p.248) mentioned two types of research approaches i.e. *Quantitative* and *Qualitative* research. Quantitative research is associated with numbers as the unit of analysis whereas qualitative research is connected to words as the unit of analysis. In quantitative approach the collected is presented through statistical procedures. But in qualitative approach the data should be presented in words (description), figures or tables but in non-numerical form. This research is based on combination of both approaches where qualitative data is collected through interview and quantitative data is collected through survey/questionnaire to achieve the purpose of the research. Both approached were used as quantitative analysis was needed to know results from customers about the issues under investigation where qualitative data provided the authors to analyze the situation of the company related to investigated issues.

3.5 Primary and Secondary Data Collection

Wilson (2010, pp. 135-136) defines primary data as “data which is collected by researcher himself by using tools such as interviews, observations and questionnaires rather than simply relying on existing data sources”. According to author there are some reasons why primary data should be collected. For instance, when existing secondary data is unavailable or existing secondary data is not enough and inappropriate for the study. On the other hand secondary data is data which has been collected before by other researchers for other purpose. Secondary data encompasses a range of different sources which may include: general reports, theses, newspapers, academic journals, textbooks, internet websites, dictionaries etc. (Wilson, 2010, pp. 170-171)

In this research, both types of data were collected and used. Primary data was acquired with the help of questionnaire and interview. Questionnaire was used for survey among customers to gather their views about communication methods, of ICA-Kvantum, they have experienced whereas interview was conducted with manager of the store to identify the present situation of the company related to issues under this study. Further, secondary data was collected through university library and on the internet from academic journals, theses, textbooks and websites to
create background of the study and to formulate theoretical chapter of the thesis. English and Swedish dictionaries were also used for translation purpose and to know the meaning of complicated words.

3.6 Research Methods

To collect primary data two research methods have been used i.e. questionnaire and interview.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Lewis, Thornhill and Saunders (2009, pp. 362-363) discussed two main types of questionnaire i.e. self administered and interviewer-administered questionnaires. Self administered questionnaires are usually completed by the respondents and such questionnaires are administered electronically through internet, through post or by hand to each respondent. In this research self administered questionnaire has been used which was distributed to the respondents by hand and were received back at the same place of survey.

Bell and Bryman (2007, pp. 258-260) mentioned two main types of questions used for questionnaire i.e. open ended and closed ended questions. The questionnaire (see appendix) used for survey consists of seven questions consisting of two open-ended and five closed ended questions. Open ended questions were asked to support the exploratory purpose of this research to know what customer may recommend about the communication tools used to create brand awareness and find their opinion to improve. Of these two open ended questions, one question is list question with number of options and an open option to specify respondent’s own view. Close ended questions consisted of set of fixed alternatives from which respondents could select appropriate answers. The close ended questions were dichotomous questions with options “yes” and “no”.

The questionnaire for survey was distributed at store of ICA-Kvantum in three days i.e. Friday 11th, Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th of March, 2011, during 13:00 to 16:00 hrs each day.

3.6.2 Interview

Lewis, Thornhill and Saunders (2009, pp. 318-320) defines interview as, “a purposeful discussion between two or more people”. The use of interview can help to gather valid and
reliable data relevant to the research question. The authors stated three main types interview based on level of formality and structure.

- Structured interviews
- Semi-structured interviews
- Unstructured or in-depth interviews

Denscombe (2007, p.176) stated that semi-structured interview has clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. It helps interviewee to develop his answers and ideas by replying to open ended questions. In this study, semi-structured interviews have been used to let the respondent generate his ideas about issues to be examined in the study. The questionnaire was based on nine open-ended questions related to the issues of brand awareness and communication tools.

The interview was conducted with Johan Wester, manager of ICA-Kvantum store in Borlange. A contact was made with him by visiting store to brief about the issues to be examined and an appointment was asked for interview. Interview was conducted on 15th February, 2011 on Tuesday afternoon. (See Appendix B)

3.7 Survey Sample

Churchill and Iacobucci (2005, pp. 324-330) has discussed two main approaches to select sample for research i.e. probability and non-probability sampling which further include many types. In these types, non-probability convenience sampling is technique by which researcher get sample because people who are willing to complete the questionnaire are available when needed. In this research non-probability convenience sampling approach has been used to get responses from customers of the store. To conduct survey 101 questionnaires were planned to be distributed out of which 74 were received from respondents who were customers of ICA-Kvantum. Thus a convenience sample consisting of 74 respondents was representing the population of ICA-Kvantum AB store in Borlange.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Criteria of research quality are defined as dimensions of what researchers refer to validity and reliability. Validity is related to the extent to which the data collection method or research method describes or measures what it is supposed to describe or measure. Meanwhile, reliability
relates to the extent to which a particular data collection approach will yield the same results in different occasions. (Crowther and Lancaster 2008, p.80)

In this research, in order to increase the validity, the authors followed certain steps. Firstly, the relevant theory was gathered in order to ensure the data and results valid. Secondly, the authors used various sources of evidence, for instance survey and interview. Thirdly, the triangulation was achieved by using two different research methods. Before sending survey, it was tested among five friends. 

In the scope of reliability, the theory has been selected in relevance to research problem and questions in this study. The primary data was collected though questionnaires and interview which were based on frame of references.
Chapter 4. Findings, Analysis and Results

This chapter includes findings from survey and interview and its analysis. The findings are presented with the help of tables and figures to easily understand the interpretation of data collected. Further, it contains the results of this study based on analysis of findings and the theory.

4.1 Analysis of Questionnaire

The data was collected from 74 respondents with the help of questionnaire (See appendix A) distributed to them. Below is the presentation and analysis of the findings gathered through survey questionnaire with the help of tables and figures.

4.1.1 Demographic Classification of Respondents

Variable of gender and age were inquired in the questionnaire to know demographic and social features of the respondents. Main intention of asking about these variables was to understand that which profile of customers are usually buying products from ICA-Kvantum. Creating a profile of the customers would help better to target desired group effectively by providing them services according to their desire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>62.16 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37.84 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Gender of respondents

Source: Authors

The results given in Table 4.1 show that most of the respondents were males which constitute 62.16 % and others are females i.e. 37.84 % of the total. It means that male customers are visiting ICA-Kvantum store more often than female customers. One reason could be that couples visited the store and males responded to the questionnaire rather than females. But even then, the interest of males to respond to the survey shows that they are more curious about information and offers about products and services of ICA-Kvantum and it should be taken in to consideration by the company.
The age groups of respondents are presented in Table 4.2 which shows that 17.57% of the respondents were less than 25 years which are mostly seen as young customers and are usually students. The other age groups i.e. 26-30, 31-45 and 46 and above constitute of people with jobs and retired people with families. The results show that respondents more than 26 are mostly shopping from ICA-Kvantum store. It means that people under 25 years are visiting ICA-Kvantum less than other age groups thus ICA-Kvantum should target them by offering services and products which would help to raise the number of young visitors to the store.

### 4.1.2 Importance of Information

The question 2 in questionnaire was asked to know the importance of information about products and services of ICA-Kvantum for the customers. The obtained results as presented in Figure 4.1, show that 88% of the total respondents require information about the products and services offered by ICA-Kvantum where 12% do not feel necessity to receive information about these products and services.

#### Q 2. Is information about products and services important for you?

![Figure 4.1: Importance of information](source: Authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 and above</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Age groups

Source: Authors
Thus results show that majority of people feel the need of information from ICA-Kvantum about its products and services and ICA-Kvantum should focus on providing such information to its customers.

**Q 3. Is information about products and services enough for you?**

![Figure 4.2: Satisfaction of information provided](image)

The question 3 of questionnaire was asked to know that to what extent customers are satisfied with the information provided to them. The results given in Figure 4.2 shows that 54 % of respondents said that the information about products and services provided by ICA-Kvantum is enough for them whereas 46 % said that they are not provided with sufficient information about offerings of the ICA-Kvantum. These results do not show much satisfaction of the customers towards provision of information by ICA-Kvantum and create need to take certain measures that would help their customers to receive information which would help them to be more motivated to make purchase related decisions.

### 4.1.3 Effectiveness of Marketing Communication Tools

The question 4 was asked from respondents to know that which type of communication method can be used effectively by ICA-kvantum to convey its information of offerings. It was necessary to know which methods are preferred by customers to be used by ICA-Kvantum and which is helpful for them to receive information and get aware of the products and services ICA-Kvantum offers. The results in Table 4.3 reveal that 29.73 % respondents prefer internet, 27.02 % like newspaper advertisements and only 9.47 % people think Tv commercials can be used to
provide them enough information about offerings of ICA-Kvantum. Further, some respondents like more than one method to be used as shown in Table 4.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of communication methods</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper add</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27.02 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tv commercial</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.47 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29.73 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tv commercial and Internet</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.21 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper add and internet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.76 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper and Tv commercial</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.06 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.75 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Type of communication methods  
Source: Authors

These results clearly show that respondents prefer Internet and Newspaper advertisements and thus ICA-Kvantum should focus on improving these methods to make their customers aware of their offerings.

The question 5 in questionnaire was asked from respondents to inquire if the selected types of communication methods motivate them to make purchase decision.

**Q5. Does such type of advertising and communication motivates you to buy products?**

![Pie chart showing response to Q5](image)

Figure 4.3: Role of communication methods in Purchase decision  
Source: Authors

The results in Figure 4.3 shows that 65 % respondents think that selected type of communication and advertising methods motivates them to make purchase related decisions where only 35 %
think that advertising and communication methods do not play important role in convincing them to make purchase decisions. Thus, ICA-Kvantum should consider that improving communication tools and advertising channels would result in motivating their customers and would yield more positive results in their sale figures.

### 4.1.4 Role of Promotional tools

The question 6 in questionnaire was asked from customers to know if promotional tools like product samples, discounts, rebates, events etc attract them to do shopping at ICA-Kvantum.

![Figure 4.4: Role of promotional tools](image)

The results presented in Figure 4.4 shows that 55 % respondents are in favour of having promotions on ICA-Kvantum products whereas 45 % thinks that they are not attracted to these promotions. These results prove that promotional activities can play important role in attracting more customers and thus ICA-Kvantum should consider that discounts, events, rebates and other promotions can help to motivate customers to shopping.

### 4.2 Analysis of Interview

The interview was conducted with manager of ICA-Kvantum store and the questions were asked to identify weaknesses in creating awareness of ICA-Kvantum brand and to provide measures which can help to create brand awareness among its existing and potential customers.
4.2.1 Role of Information

A question was asked from the manager to know if they think that information of products and services of ICA-Kvantum play important role in attracting customers. The answer was:

“Yes, it is very important for customers and any organization because it is most important way to attract the customers”. (Appendix B)

The reply from manager shows that ICA-Kvantum considers information as an important factor to attract customers. It is necessary for firms to provide information with the help of reliable channels to customers as theory of consumer decision model shows that information is the first and important component which customers have to pass while making a purchase decision. To convey information and insist customers: brochures, newspapers, radio, television and word of mouth can be used. Thus ICA-Kvantum should also take measures to provide enough information of its products and services to its customers by using effective channels which would result in brand recognition among its customers.

4.2.2 Brand Awareness

There were three questions asked from the manager about importance of brand awareness. The first question was asked to know if ICA-Kvantum considers brand awareness as important aspect to be noted for marketing purposes.

“Yes, it is very important for ICA-Kvantum to create brand awareness among the customers but still we have problems because four firms are using the same name like ICA-Maxi, ICA-Kvantum, ICA-Nara etc. Due to similar names it is very hard to attract customers specifically to ICA-Kvantum”. (Appendix B)

The reply from manager pointed out that ICA-Kvantum considers brand awareness as important aspect for marketing purposes but their brand name is considered as a problem due to similarity in names with other ICA profiles.

The second question about brand awareness was to know how ICA-Kvantum creates brand awareness among customers.

“We are using different methods to create brand awareness among customers like city bus, Radio, internet, facebook homepage and Newspaper advertisements............. We advertise our products to member customers through e-mails they buy most and regular”.  (Appendix B)
The reply from manager tells that ICA-Kvantum has been using different marketing
communication tools. They use interactive marketing, Radio, newspaper and Social media to
provide information about offerings to its customers. Further, use of membership cards to know
the likeness of customers and to provide information about the products which they like is
beneficial and positive measure.

The third question was asked to explore the weakness or strengths of ICA-Kvantum in targeting
the profiles of customers.

“We are targeting families because they are more social and we have this opportunity when
families come and buy here............” (Appendix B)

The reply from manager provided with a weakness of ICA-Kvantum that they are mostly
targeting families and other profiles are less considered by them to be targeted. There is need for
ICA-Kvantum to segment the market in different groups and then target them with different
marketing strategies resulting in more customers visiting ICA-Kvantum. Further it was revealed
that ICA-Kvantum takes brand awareness as a strategy and plan for long term to create
awareness among its customers.

4.2.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of ICA-Kvantum

It was also asked from manager to tell what he thinks can be seen as strength or weakness of
ICA-kvantum for its brand in the market. ICA-Kvantum sees high quality and fresh products at a
reasonable price as its strength and the location of the store is good which helps to attract the
customers. Further, the services offered by them are attractive for the customers which they think
as strength for them.

The manager also replied to a question, “We have only Swedish language for our website.....”
(Appendix B). It means that people around ICA-Kvantum who cannot speak Swedish have
limited access to the information of offerings of ICA-Kvantum. It can be seen as weakness for
ICA-Kvantum due to the fact that around the location of the store in Borlange large number of
immigrants and international students are living. Moreover, it was also answered by manager
that, “the prices of ICA-Kvantum are 2% higher than Willy:s and parking is not enough for
customers....” (Appendix B). It was also explored that ICA-Kvantum is not targeting youth and
the working hours are less than other grocery stores which are Mon-Fri 10-20, Saturday 10-17
and Sunday 11-17.
The threats and opportunities for ICA-Kvantum were also asked by the manager and according to him competitors and other profiles of ICA group with similar names can be seen as threats whereas he pointed out that targeting the youth can be seen as an opportunity and a location in Kupolen shopping centre can yield better results for their sale.

4.3 Results

a) Importance of Information

After analysis of data collected with the help interview and questionnaire for survey, the results have been obtained on the ground of findings and theory. It was noted that brand awareness has been seen an important aspect by ICA-Kvantum. Based on consumer decision model, information is the first element that leads the customers towards brand recognition and purchase decision. From the findings and analysis it can be seen that both ICA-Kvantum and its customers grade information about products and services important to be conveyed. It was also explored that many customers do not receive much information about the offerings from ICA-Kvantum. Thus it is crucial for ICA-Kvantum to take steps that would provide information about its offerings to customers by using effective marketing communication tools.

b) Marketing Communication tools

By looking in to effectiveness of marketing communication tools ICA-Kvantum uses interactive marketing and social network like facebook and moreover customers also prefer to receive information about offerings of ICA-Kvantum through internet. The internet channels which ICA-Kvantum uses to convey information to its customers is enough but a weakness was found that the website of ICA-Kvantum is not available in English and is only available in Swedish language. The IMC tools should be used in a way to differentiate from the competitors and ICA-Kvantum can take steps to differentiate their offerings by making the information available to its customers in English language. It would not only help outlanders i.e. immigrants and international students to get information about ICA-Kvantum products but would also help to create a positive image of the brand in customers’ minds. Further, the other elements of promotional mix, i.e. advertising, direct marketing, sales promotions are also used by ICA-Kvantum. The survey also showed that promotional activities like samples, discounts/rebates etc are important for customers. But ICA-Kvantum focuses on providing these promotions only to
families, where young people should also be provided with these promotional offers on the products which they like. From survey it was also found that customers also prefer to receive information through newspaper advertisement and based on this ICA-Kvantum should consider increase in newspaper advertisement as an important tool to convey the information to its customers. Such advertisement should also be printed in English language for the immigrants and international students which would help to create awareness of ICA-Kvantum offerings not only to Swedish speaking customers but would also target those who do not understand Swedish language.

c) Brand Loyalty and Perceived Quality

The analysis of interview and survey questionnaire provided that ICA-Kvantum uses certain measures to create brand awareness among its customers. ICA-Kvantum takes brand awareness strategy important like other marketing activities. From interview it was revealed that customers are offered with membership cards which shows a measure to create brand loyalty but loyalty segmentation is more focused on one segment i.e. families. ICA-Kvantum should consider other profiles of customers as important as they are targeting families. Further it was found in interview that ICA-Kvantum tries to provide high quality products at reasonable price to its customers but the prices are even 2 \% higher than its competitor Willy:s. ICA-Kvantum should take some steps to control the prices of some products less than their competitors and other products can be at same prices. Such measure would help in attracting more customers as by decreasing the price of some products would make them aware of the offered quality of other products as well whose price would be same.

d) Strategic Planning Process to Target Potential Customers

From the analysis of interview it was known that ICA-Kvantum has only planned to target families and they are providing all promotional offerings and information about products and services by considering only families important for their business. From the survey we came to know that many of the customers of ICA-Kvantum are young people and they are visiting the store much often. Further, it was found from interview that ICA-Kvantum sees it as an opportunity to target young people and create awareness of their offerings among them. The Figure 4.5 shows an example that how young people can be targeted strategically by using
strategic planning process and which communication channels can be used to create awareness among them.

**Figure 4.5: Targeting young customers**

Source: Based on Elliot and Percy (2009)

To create awareness among young people steps shown in Figure 4.5 can be used strategically. ICA-Kvantum should understand the targeted young customers. The targeted young people can be influencers means that they may be influenced by the offerings of ICA-Kvantum and can recommend to other people to shop from ICA-Kvantum. They can also be deciders to decide on what choice they should make and what they should buy. They can also be purchasers and users who would make the purchase and uses it. In this case it is necessary for ICA-Kvantum to understand the targeted young people and then determine that what can be offered to them. The targeted young people show more interest in products like sweets, chocolates, soft drinks, ice cream and consumer electronics which are related to entertainment and leisure. Thus the strategy of ICA-Kvantum should be to make sure availability of products what young people need and are interested to purchase. To convey the information about these products internet and newspaper advertisements play important role which ICA-Kvantum is already using as a communication tool. Further, ICA-Kvantum can arrange events in schools and colleges and can sponsor games which may result in creating a strong image in the minds of young consumers. The availability of such information should also be assured in English language and the newspaper advertisement should also be distributed in international student residences which are living in surroundings of ICA-Kvantum. These all measures would result in targeting potential customers and creating brand awareness among them to gain more market share and would yield positive results for ICA-Kvantum.
Chapter 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter includes short summary of findings, analysis and results and provides the answers to the research question. Moreover, some managerial implications are given based on the theory and results.

5.1 Conclusion

This research paper identified the measures which would help ICA-Kvantum to create awareness among its existing and potential customers. The main aim of this research paper is to answer the research problem formulated as, “What actions could be seen effective for ICA-Kvantum to maintain or improve brand awareness among its current and potential customers?” The purpose was to know the role of information of offerings provided by ICA-Kvantum, in creating brand awareness among customers and how such information can be conveyed to the customers by using effective communication tools.

In order to carry out this research paper, the survey was conducted among ICA-Kvantum customers in Borlange and the interview was done with the manager of this store. The survey has been answered by 74 respondents, where males constitute 62.16 % and females represent 37.84 % of the total. Thus based on results of survey, female customer should be targeted by ICA-Kvantum to attract them to come to the store. By analyzing the age of respondents, it was revealed that customers who are visiting the store represent people with jobs and retired people with families. It means that young people have to be attracted by ICA-Kvantum by offering them special offerings and service.

In the light of brand awareness, it was noted that information of offerings is seen as an important factor for ICA-Kvantum, but its customers are not so much satisfied with the provision of information. Hence, ICA-Kvantum should implement marketing communication tools to inform its customer about its offerings in effective and efficient way.

By the results regarding the issues related to marketing communication tools, 29% respondents chosen the internet as the most effective channel to receive information about products and services. At the same time, ICA-Kvantum uses mostly interactive marketing and social media to convey the information to customers. The one weakness has been observed through interview as the webpage is only available in Swedish language and excludes non-Swedish speakers. 55% respondents are interested in having promotions on products and services offered by the store. It means that ICA-Kvantum should focus its activities to provide additional benefits i.e. promotions to its current customers in order to motivate them to shop more frequently.
By the further results, it was shown that ICA-Kvantum creates brand loyalty by giving its customers membership, mostly to families. Thus, others profiles of customers have to target, especially young people.

By looking into main strengths and weaknesses of ICA-Kvantum for its brand in the market, it offers high quality and fresh products at reasonable prices. The weaknesses are seen in the webpage which is not available in English language. Due to good location, many immigrants and international students living in the surrounding of the store, ICA-Kvantum should take actions to attract these groups of potential customers as well. Strategic planning process to target potential customers should also be formulated and further implemented in order to target and create brand awareness among young people in order to motivate them to shop in ICA-Kvantum.

All these measures which have been identified in this paper would help ICA-Kvantum to create brand awareness among its existing and potential customers by understanding the role of information of its offerings and effective provision of such information, which should be considered important by ICA-Kvantum.

7.2 Recommendations

Based on the interview with manager of ICA-Kvantum and the survey among its customers, these recommendations would help in both maintaining and improving brand awareness among its customers.

- ICA-Kvantum should create its own slogan, because there are 4 firms using the same name like ICA maxi, ICA kvantum, ICA nara ,as revealed from interview. This would help to give customer a clear message about the brand and it would help to create brand awareness among its customers.

- ICA-Kvantun needs to target female customers in the way that they are provided with services that would facilitate them to do shopping even if they come alone to the store, for instance: free transport, children care service, assistants available on request to help in shopping with small children.

- ICA-Kvantum should target people under 25 years visiting the store by offering services and products which would help to raise the number of young visitors. The example is given with the help of strategic planning process to target young customers in section 4.3.
ICA – Kwantun has to improve its webpage to make it more communicative for both current and potential customers. The webpage should be available in English in order to attract immigrants and international students. Moreover, social media has to be properly implemented and constantly monitored and updated. The usage of different channels such as, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube.

- Provide advertisements in newspapers printed in English language to target outlanders.
- In order to increase brand loyalty, membership cards should be distributed to other profiles of customers, but not just to families.
- ICA–Kvantum should take some steps to control the prices of some products which are available in other shops with the lower prices in order to attract more potential customers.
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Articles


Books


Websites

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Appendix

A. Survey Questionnaire

**English Questionnaire**

Dear ICA customers,

*We are students of Bachelor’s degree at Hogskolan Dalarna and carrying out this survey for our research project. Kindly, allow us some time to successfully achieve our research objectives which would result in better for both ICA and its customers. It will help to understand the customers and create more value for you by offering services that would be flexible for you. Thank you so much in advance.*

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Gender: Female □ Male □</th>
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1. Are you customer of ICA-Kvantum?
   - YES □ NO □

2. Is information about products and services of ICA-Kvantum is important for you?
   - YES □ NO □

3. Is information about ICA-Kvantum products and services is enough for you?
   - YES □ NO □

4. What type of communication methods (advertising) that ICA-Kvantum uses provides you enough information about its products and services?
   - Reklam /Newspaper Add □ TV commercial □ Internet □ Other please specify........................

5. Does such type of advertising and communication motivates you to buy products from ICA-Kvantum?
   - YES □ NO □
6. Does promotional activities like product samples, discounts, rebates, events etc. attracts you to ICA-Kvantum?

☐ YES ☐ NO

7. What you think ICA-Kvantum should use to provide you enough information about its products and services?

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Questionnaire in Swedish

Kära ICA kunder,
Vi är studenter i kandidatexamen vid Högskolan Dalarna och gör denna undersökning för vårt forskningsprojekt. Vänligen, ge oss lite tid att kunna nå vår forskning mål som skulle leda till bättre för både ICA och dess kunder. det kommer att hjälpa att förstå att kunder och skapa mer värde för genom att erbjuda tjänster som skulle vara flexibelt för dig. Tack så mycket i förväg.

Namn: ___________________________ Ålder: ___________________________ Kön: Kvinna ☐ Män ☐

Är du kund hos ICA-Kvantum?

☐ ja ☐ nej

Är informationen om produkter och tjänster i ICA-Kvantum viktigt för dig?

☐ ja ☐ nej

Är informationen om ICA-Kvantums produkter och tjänster tillräckligt för dig?

☐ ja ☐ nej
Vilken typ av kommunikation metoder (reklam) som ICA-Kvantum användare ger dig tillräckligt med information om sina produkter och tjänster?

☐ Reklam  ☐ Tv reklam  ☐ Internet  ☐ Annat .................

Ger en sådan typ av reklam och kommunikation dig motivation du köpa produkter från ICA-Kvantum?

☐ ja  ☐ nej

Motiverar PR-verksamhet och kommunikation att du köper produkter från ICA-Kvantum?

☐ ja  ☐ nej

Vad tror du ICA-Kvantum bör använda för att förse dig tillräckligt med information om sina produkter och tjänster?

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B. Interview


Q no 1: Do you think information of products and services plays an important role in attracting a customer? Why?

Yes. It is very important for customers and any organization because it is most important way to attract the customers.

Q no 2: Do you think that brand awareness is important aspect to be noted for ICA-Kvantum for marketing purposes?

Yes, It is very important for ICA-Kvantum to create brand awareness among the customer but still we have problems because 4 firms are using the same name like ICA-Maxi, ICA-Kvantum, ICA-Nara etc. Due to similar names, it is very hard to attract customers specifically to ICA-Kvantum.

Q no 3: If yes, how you create brand awareness among your customers? (Different methods of creating awareness)

We are using different methods to create brand awareness among customers like city bus, Radio, internet, facebook homepage and reklam. We also use membership cards that when customers use the
card then we get all the information relating to their shopping and interest that which kind of products they buy usually. So we gather all this information and then we advertise our products to member customers through mails about the products they buy regularly.

**Q no 4: Which customers do you target for brand awareness mostly? And why you think is the reason behind it?**

We are targeting families because they are more social and we have this opportunity when families come and buy here, they also bring their children. So it will be an awareness for their children also about ICA-Kvantum so next time when they want to buy something they will come to ICA-Kvantum. We also have some green shopping basket for customers because it is interesting that green color shows the single status for example that customer he/she is single. So many people come here for fun also that they can easily contact other single person and have good time. This is also helpful for brand awareness.

**Q no 5: How often you arrange activities or advertise information to create customer awareness of brand? Tactical or strategic (short term activities or long term plan)?**

Yes. It is strategical and we have long term planning for this.

**Q no 6: Do you use any strategic planning process while you implement any activity for brand awareness?**

Yes, we already have planned strategy about how to create brand awareness among customers and then implement.

**Q no 7: What you think that makes ICA-Kvantum brand important for customers to be considered? High quality of products, Low cost or good services?**

High Quality- Fresh Products- at a reasonable price

**Q no 8: How website of ICA provides information of ICA-Kvantum products? Is it available in other languages or only Swedish?**

We have only Swedish language for our website.

**Q no 9: What you think are the Strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for ICA-Kvantum when it comes to brand awareness?**

**Strength:** our name is our strength. Good location. Quality products and good service.

**Weakness:** 2% high price than Willys. Not enough space for parking. All products and information are in Swedish language. Working hours are less. Not targeting Youth.

**Threat:** Competitors. Other companies with same name ICA.

**Opportunity:** targeting the youth. Kupolen is the biggest shopping center.
C. Group Contract

Group Contract for Bachelors Thesis

Task: Carrying out project with ICA-Kvantum as subject for bachelors thesis.

Expectations:
To successfully achieve the study by implementing effective research methods and marketing theories to develop our knowledge.

Obligations and Rights within the group:
- The group has to follow the action plan scheduled.
- Each member has to be responsible for assigned tasks.

Project Authors: Umer Shahzad
Muhammad Azeem

Company’s contact person: Umer Shahzad
University Contact Person: Muhammad Azeem

Theoretical Framework: Both
Documentation of progress and meetings: Both
Collection of Empirical data: Both
Data Analysis: Both
Final Presentation: Both

Both members of group are responsible for their individual and collective tasks. In case of absence of one member or incomplete task, both members will take responsibility to finish the affected task within scheduled time frame.

We hereby confirm to work our responsibilities as described above. Moreover, the information related to the project, company or any other means used in this project, would just be used for academic purposes.

1. Umer Shahzad Signature: ...Umer Shahzad.....
2. Muhammad Azeem Signature: ...Azeem Muhammad..
### D. Schedule of Thesis

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