

THE FEASIBLE MARKETING STRATEGY FOR CATSWOPPR IN THE NETHERLANDS

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine a feasible strategy to increase brand and target market awareness as well as produce an appropriate and effective marketing strategy through social media to help launch their first service in the Netherlands. This strategy is expected to increase brand awareness and increase CatSwoppr's social media traffic. To produce an appropriate and effective strategy, complete and comprehensive information is required. This strategy is expected to increase brand awareness and increase CatSwoppr's social media traffic. To produce an appropriate and effective strategy, complete and comprehensive information is required. The author also collects research results and journals from various previously available sources, which include cats in Europe and social media in the Netherlands.

Based on the results of the analysis, most of CatSwoppr's audience or target market is currently in the Netherlands, especially those in Amsterdam, Utrecht, Haarlem, Rotterdam, and The Hague with an average age between 25-34 years, followed by various other European countries and countries in Asia.

In addition, this research also produces marketing strategies that are expected to be effective by trying to communicate with the target market through social media and websites. In the recommendations section, the author also describes the strategies and steps that must be taken by CatSwoppr to maximize the use of social media and websites as platforms for marketing.

Keywords: social media, strategy, marketing, brand awareness

INTRODUCTION

CatSwoppr was founded in January 2021 by Suki de Boer and Magnus Kanholt. The idea behind this start-up is to help the cat community, individual cat owners, and non-profit organizations which help big or small cats. At first, it was just a small idea such as providing an online platform or application where people can sign up to be cat sitters, now it grows bigger into something more helpful and easy to implement such as; sharing awareness that is cat related, giving tips and tricks, helping to find a new home for any cats, online vet, market place, etc. That is when they believe this is the right time now for people to give something back to cats. At the beginning of the development of CatSwoppr, it was just Suki and Magnus who worked in the start-up until they decided to recruit more people and the results led to many people becoming interested in the start-up and joining the team to contribute to CatSwoppr. In total, 11 people have an important role in their contribution, ranging from marketing, business developer, software developer, and social media specialist (Boer, S. d. 2022).

With the popularity of cats today and also the number of people who are willing to spend money and time on cats, they believe CatSwoppr has great potential in the future and is able to compete in the start-up environment. CatSwoppr focuses on creating services that are made for cats, Catswoppr is considered a social start-up because the business start-up is driven to make a difference and an impact on the cat-lovers community, and there aren't many start-ups businesses that focus specifically on cats because most are focused on dogs or just pets in general. And, it can be seen that dogs are more popular than cats. It is really unique for this specific start-up to actually create something different and impactful for the cats and their community (Boer, S. d. 2022).

As for now, CatSwoppr is in the business development stage for its first online service, the progress right now is to grow a larger audience which it is proven it grows stably on their social media platform. Currently, they managed to help 50 clients of cat owners. The reason behind why they decided to approach or make clients first is to build a customer relationship which later will be easy for CatSwoppr to introduce their first online service 1 to their clients. The product which is still under development is called Cat Day Calendar or in short, for CDC, the use of the application is to notify users of cat birthdays which users can share with their friends or other users and there will be many services that are provided in the application such as buying cat gifts, marketplace, access to medication, forum, and community, etc (Boer, S. d. 2022).

CatSwoppr always accommodates various ideas on its platform, thus, the services will keep on working and continue to develop, later there will be many CatSwoppr services that will make the users and targeted audience easier.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Entrepreneurship literature is intensive on understanding startups' formation, development, and influencing factors. There has been increased attention to the effectuation theory in explaining entrepreneurial behaviors.

The behavioral management theory is often called the human relations movement because it addresses the human dimension of work. Behavioral theorists believed that a better understanding of human behavior at work improved productivity, such as motivation, conflict, expectations, and group dynamics.

SWOT Analysis is a tool used for strategic planning and strategic management in organizations. It can be used effectively to build organizational and competitive strategies (Gürel, 2017).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methods used by the author are both qualitative and quantitative because the purpose of the method is to obtain further information to elaborate on this thesis.

The qualitative method is based on the contents of various documents, books, official websites, and journal articles that have been discussed by experts in related case studies that have been selected by the authors to help write this thesis. The information that has been collected will later help answer various research questions and research puzzles from the contents of this thesis.

However, to obtain certain information, quantitative methods are needed to find the market and demographic that match the research topics. Market charts and interviews with Catswoopr employees would be the source of the information for quantitative methods.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CatSwoppr is a start-up company that focuses on providing products and services for cats in a form of an online platform, people can sign up on their website to share their journey owning cats, be cat sitters, and more. The company consists of 3 core teams, marketing, business developer, and software developer teams, where the company gives freedom to their employees to choose their own daily responsibility and work in the way that best suits them.

As it's still relatively new, CatSwoppr doesn't have a budget and revenue right now due to the uncertainty of how much budget they will use to improve and expand their company's needs, they are currently trying to play it safe by expanding their services and doing brand awareness on their social media platforms which are Instagram and Facebook. Although, there are some projections for future spending. All employees are currently unpaid and any necessary costs are usually borne by the founder.

Currently, CatSwoppr uses Instagram, Facebook, and their website to attract cat lovers. While managing to gain a large following with a well-planned content strategy and scheduled related content posts that have marketing materials in them, the content that gets posted is; related to cats, but until now there is no fixed content strategy or interesting content other than cat pictures to attract more cat lovers. This is also supported by data showing that the number of accounts involved is decreasing, or only around 4,635 accounts in the last 90 days.

CatSwoppr uses social media to approach new clients and create content to attract the cat community. Besides that, CatSwoppr implements CTA and WOM strategies. It is also known that based on the analysis, most of the audience or target market at the moment is in the Netherlands specifically located in Amsterdam, Utrecht, Haarlem, Rotterdam, and The Hague with an average age between 25-34, followed by various other European countries and several Asian countries such as India and Indonesia.

According to Koen Van Gelder, a tobacco research expert who also researches pet owners in the Netherlands, it is known that so far cats are the most popular pets in the Netherlands. By 2021, there will be at least 3.2 million pet cats in every Dutch household. So with this,

with the popularity of cats in the Netherlands, CatSwoppr's target market is cat owners, cat lovers, and the cat community of all ages in the Netherlands.

Based on the result, the majority of Dutch people who use social media on a daily basis are young people, which is around 90% on average. The social media platforms most used by Dutch people and growing are WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. However, due to the high trend among young people in the Netherlands, TikTok has become the platform with the largest user growth compared to other platforms, followed by Tumblr and Pinterest.

Although CatSwoppr firmly believes that at the moment they have no competitors, the presence of companies engaged in the same industry makes potential competitors even more likely to exist. Petbacker and Cooper Pet Care are potentially CatSwoppr's biggest competitors, their business services operate on a wider scale, making their services accessible to people everywhere. The services provided are more diverse and are also available for dogs and cats, especially with services that CatSwoppr does not currently have, thus making them quite popular among animal lovers.

However, it is the differences that CatSwoppr has that make them an advantage over its competitors. A blog that is posted regularly every week on their website where cat owners can find various information about cats, even users can participate. There is also a community section, where users can talk to each other in the community.

CONCLUSION

After conducting research using qualitative and quantitative data, the authors provide recommendations to CatSwoppr to find a suitable and consistent strategy to improve the sustainability of CatSwoppr's operations, both internally and externally. CatSwoppr strongly recommends implementing the following feasible recommendations. Certainly, these recommendations will affect one another.

- 1. Improving Website Performance**
- 2. Improving Social Media Marketing Performance**
- 3. Improving Digital Marketing Performance by Using Google Ads**
- 4. Obtaining Funds**
- 5. Organized Work Structure and Rules**
- 6. Culturally Varied Work Environment Orientation**

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