

MARKETING ISSUES OF A NEW COMPANY IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF FABULOUS MOM AND BABY BOUTIQUE

By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case is pertaining to new start-up company, Fabulous Mom and Baby Boutique which is operated as a one stop center for mother and baby's products. The company focused on the Islamic concept of fashion which is long, loose and thick. As a new start-up company, this boutique concern about the important of fashion marketing strategies to penetrate the matured fashion market and the need of positioning their brand in order to build the customer trust and loyalty towards their products.

This case is an exploratory multiple methods from the previous research to analyses the marketing and positioning strategy normally practiced in the apparel industry. The purpose of this case study is to suggest the best marketing concept and strategy to be use by the company in facing the highly competitive market. Furthermore, what ultimately separates a successful fashion business from the rest is of how often the brand will resonates with customers. Here, marketing plays an important role in introducing the brand to public and this study propose the solution on getting the brand to customer's heart.

Based on the findings, the marketing and positioning strategy was evaluated on its effectiveness towards penetrating the market. The best marketing concept, the balanced marketing mix and the solution to positioning the brand was constructed. Based on the evaluation, recommendations were made to apply for FMBB as the chosen case study company.

The recommendation made was that the company should use relationship marketing and social marketing concept to produce longer lasting and sustainable result since the company is promoting the Islamic concept of Muslim women dressing. The company has to ensure the right balance of its marketing mix to create value to customers. The author also recommends the best possible process of brand positioning and ways to create brand awareness. She believe that player in the apparel industry needs to work closer with their staff more effectively in order to optimize the implementation of the marketing plan through joint efforts and tackle the critical issues identified in this project.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the case study is based on my original work except for quotations and citations that have been duly acknowledged. I also declare it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UMK or other institution.

NOR AZIAH BINTI AMIRUDDIN

Date :

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS OR GLOSSARY

The following table describes the significance of various abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the thesis. The page on which each one is defined or first used is also given. Nonstandard acronyms that are used in some places to abbreviate the names of certain white matter structures are not in this list

Abbreviation	Meaning	Page
FMBB	Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique	1
IFF	Islamic Fashion Festival	2
SWOT	Strengths-Weaknesses- Opportunities and Threats	39

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PART I: CASE DESCRIPTION

1.1 PROLOGUE

On 1st April 2014 in Kuala Lumpur, Mrs. Lailatul Asmah Binti Mohd Tahir, General Manager cum Marketing Manager of Fabulous Mom and Baby Boutique set up a business in fashion industry, focusing on Muslimah styles. Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique (FMBB), a start-up company, carry Ready-to-Wear designer and casual/contemporary apparel & accessories in Islamic fashion styles for maternity and nursing dresses and also child clothing. The company will offer its customers a wide range of premium dresses to choose from.

Throwback about fashion in our region, before the advent of Islam in Southeast Asia, women walking around in public only in sarongs worn as bodice wraps. When the country embraced Islam, people adopted more modest forms of dress. While Muslim women of the Malay would not have strictly adopted the hijab in the past, they did seek to shield by drawing a shawl or shroud over themselves in public. In accordance with the advent of Islam, Islam gives guidance about all aspects of life, including matters of public decency. Islam has no fixed standard as to the style of dress or type of clothing that Muslims must wear. However, some minimum requirements must be met.

Islam describes the parts of the body which must be covered in public. Clothing should not reveal aurat (parts of the body that should not be exposed according to Islam); Islam also guides that clothing must be loose enough so as not to outline or distinguish the shape of the body. The clothing must be thick so that the colour of the skin it covers is not visible, nor the shape of the body underneath. The women cloths also must not imitating men and cloths can be decent but not flashy.

Mrs. Lailatul Asmah's desire to set up a business in Islamic fashion is due to its current impact toward the whole fashion industry. In Malaysia, we can see this trend really affect consumer to spend more for fashion apparels. Indeed, Malaysia is the one of the country that the Muslim fashion industry is fast developing. Started in 2008 under the patronage of Malaysia's First Lady, the Malaysia's Islamic Fashion Festival (IFF) is inspired in order to promote the Islamic fashion industry in Malaysia. For the last six years, the IFF has already visited Abu Dhabi, Astana, Dubai, Jakarta, Monte Carlo, New York, Singapore, Bandung and London.

"Islamic fashion is becoming a lucrative business with the current market estimated to be worth more than US\$96 Billion (RM302B) a year", said Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor at the opening of the Islamic Fashion Festival (IFF) Gala Dinner and Fashion Show, at the Monaco Sporting Club in Monte Carlo on August 10, 2013. She further pointed out that "...according to the prestigious Dubai French Fashion University, over half of the world's 1.6B Muslim

population is spending a substantial part of annual income on fashion and accessories”.

Based on the current industry trend, Mrs. Lailatul Asmah belief that by offering a nice selection of upper-end Muslimah styles merchandise with benchmarked customer service, Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique will quickly gain market share. Mrs. Lailatul Asmah Binti Mohd Tahir pointed that, *“marketing has very important relationship with the fashion industry. No matter how excellent and attractive of the apparel design, the product needs a marketing campaign. How will these fabulous new designs jump from my boutique into the average consumer’s closet? The only way to reach many Malaysians’ Muslim women is through advertisements such as magazine ads, television commercials, Internet ads, or even the side of a bus passing through downtown”.*

Indeed Mrs. Huraizah, the owner of Ad-Dhuha Enterprise on 12th April 2014 in Bangi, said that her company generate awareness and sales by utilizing the internet platform; the webpage, Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, she will meet her customers through exhibition and expo, focusing on how women approach shopping by obtaining mentions and reviews in the top fashion publications and local papers. Ad-Dhuha is one of the players in the Islamic fashion industry.

“Nowadays, since there are lots of players in the industry, Muslim women can choose from a broad selection of designs to create a look that matches

their values, traditions and tastes. Therefore, marketing plays important roles in getting your customer. This recent famous buying method of consumers is on-line purchasing”, Madam Huraizah added. She said that the fashion players should plan ahead a very comprehensive marketing strategy in capturing this lucrative segment of fashion by not forgetting information technology.

Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique target to sale their merchandise for the first 6 months of the business through on-line to create the awareness of the product to public. Their boutique is proposed to be open in the next 6 months of year 1 of its operation and will provide additional services such as alterations, special ordering which is custom made for customers and services for post natal women. *“As a new comer in the industry, the marketing is very crucial. So, I will discuss the comprehensive marketing strategy in details with my partner then. The positioning of the company’s brand is also essential in order to penetrate the fashion market,”* Mrs. Lailatul Asmah finally concluded.

1.2 COMPANY BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Company History

Fabulous Mom and Baby Boutique were incorporated in 1st April 2014. The company carry Ready-to-Wear apparel & accessories for maternity, nursing and also child clothing in Muslimah styles. Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique is a woman-owned business currently organized as a partnership.

Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique propose to make on-line sales for their first 6 months of its operation. After the first half of year one, the company will launch the boutique at BUSANA @ Menara MARA. The additional services to be provided are alterations services, special ordering which is custom made for customers and services for post natal women.

1.2.2 Company Details

Registration No.	:	002315259-A
Company Registered Address	:	92, Jalan Puncak Saujana 3/1F Taman Puncak Saujana 43000 Kajang
Key Partners	:	Nor Aziah Binti Amiruddin Lailatul Asmah Binti Mohd Tahir

1.2.3 Company Overview

It is Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique's mission to become the premier Muslimah maternity and nursing boutique for the upscale expectant mothers. This will be accomplished by offering the newest designer fashions and to be a one stop centre for mom and baby's products. The company's tagline is:

"The place you can find quality apparels and accessories for mom and baby at affordable prices..."

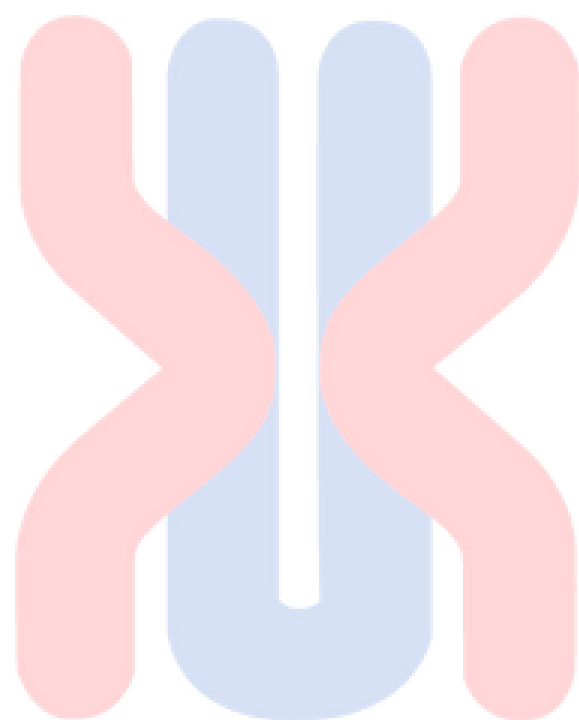
Using the brand Fabulous4u, the company hope that their products' design will suit their customer's fashion desire.



1.2.4 Major Products and Services

Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique is a new boutique that offers a wide range of premium maternity clothes and accessories; Muslimah dresses as well as baby clothing. The concept is to offer designer products for both the mother and child in one store. This level of convenience is rarely offered by anyone else. While there are other stores that offer upscale maternity clothing, only few offer products for both mother and child in the same store. Some of Fabulous Mom & Baby Boutique product offerings include:

- Maternity clothes
- Nursing clothes



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