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Relatório de Estágio- Dunster House, Inglaterra

Relatório de estágio apresentado à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Línguas e Relações Empresariais, realizada sob a orientação científica da Professora Doutora Susan Howcroft, Professor Auxiliar do Departamento de Línguas e Culturas da Universidade de Aveiro.

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Nomear pessoas da minha família ou amigos seria reduzi-los a um espaço que contradiz a imensidão que significam na minha vida. Simplesmente, obrigada!

palavras-chave

estratégia de negócio, marketing, canais de comunicação, feiras, expansão international.

resumo

O presente relatório propõe-se analisar o trabalho prático e de pesquisa levados a cabo durante um estágio de 6 meses no departamento de Marketing, na empresa Dunster House. A análise remete, numa primeira instância, para a contextualização da empresa, indústria onde atua, bem como segmentação de clientes. A questão central prende-se com os principais canais de comunicação, nomeadamente as feiras, como parte integrante da estratégia de marketing nacional e internacional da empresa. Os resultados deste relatório confirmam uma utilização bem-sucedida desses mesmos canais no seio da estratégia de negócio da empresa, com especial destaque para uma boa gestão e desenvolvimento de estratégias *web*, que contribuem para o aumento das vendas *online*. As áreas de exposição e as feiras funcionam como canais de comunicação que, apesar de não se considerarem canais de venda direta, contribuem para o reconhecimento da marca. Os resultados do processo de pesquisa de feiras sugerem que a empresa necessita de continuar a investir e a desenvolver uma estratégia de marketing baseada nas necessidades do consumidor, prevista na pesquisa das feiras, como forma de prestar um serviço de qualidade aos clientes atuais e, em simultâneo, ser capaz de adquirir novos. Desta forma, foi elaborado um manual de feiras, providenciando informação precisa no que concerne a estratégias de marketing inerentes a todo esse processo.

keywords

business strategy, marketing, advertising channels, exhibitions, international expansion.

abstract

The current report provides an analysis of the practical work and research carried out during a 6 month internship in the marketing department at Dunster House. The analysis draws attention to the company background, industry and customers' segmentation and resulting business strategy. The major discussion is focused on the main marketing channels, namely the exhibitions examined as part of the company's national and international marketing strategy. The outcomes of this report find that the marketing channels are currently being successfully applied within the company's business strategy. The major areas of strengths include good management and development of web strategies to increase online sales. Display areas and exhibitions work as marketing channels which cannot be considered as channels of direct sales, but means of brand awareness enhancement. Findings in the exhibitions research process suggest that Dunster House needs to continue to invest and develop a marketing strategy based on customers' needs, reflected in the strategy expected for exhibitions, as a way to continue providing quality service for current customers and to be able to acquire new ones. A manual for exhibitions was, therefore, created to provide valuable information on marketing strategies.

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INTRODUCTION

Prospering in this globally integrated environment requires constant enhancement of business strategies and even though globalization¹ is now a landscape of many opportunities, it can also present many hurdles for companies since they are likely to face greater competition than ever before. Rapid and constant changes generate new demands and require appropriate flexibility and responsiveness and at this point it is essential for companies to adjust their practices to respond better to these new challenges. In particular, the Marketing Department of a company ought to manage different activities in order to enable the company to respond to new opportunities and threats and to prevent their products/ services becoming obsolete simultaneously².

In this context, the current report aims to present the practical work and research carried out as an integral part of a six month internship at Dunster House Ltd for the Masters in Languages and Business Relations programme. This internship has a vital role for the student to understand the practical application of theoretical concepts and provides an exceptional opportunity to observe the working environment of the company, namely of the Marketing Department and its contribution to the company's business strategy.

Accordingly, the various parts of the report reflect the Intern's involvement in a range of different tasks and all the observations and findings will be described from a business perspective, not only to apply the theory learned through the main business subjects from the Masters programme (International Business, Brand Management, Business Models, Strategic Management and Competitiveness), but also to benefit the company, by providing accurate and specific information for its business strategy.

¹ Globalization is a concept defined by many authors. According to Dr. Nayef R.F. Al-Rodhan, in his study *Definitions of Globalization: A Comprehensive Overview and a Proposed Definition*, June 2006, "Globalization is a process that encompasses the causes, course, and consequences of transnational and transcultural integration of human and non-human activities."

² In 1960, in his article "Marketing Myopia", Harvard Business Review, Vol. 38 Levitt, T. was already drawing companies' attention to marketing negligence against selling emphasis, which leads to product obsolescence.

Initially, the internship programme will be presented, including an overview of the project, its relevance, timeline, and tasks performed all through the internship and expected results. Afterward, a brief background of the company, together with its history, range of products, branches and organisational structure will be given. For the purpose of this report, the core will be based on the Marketing Department, specifically the channels of communication and exhibitions, as a vital part of the company's national and international business strategy. For a better understanding of the role of exhibitions within the marketing mix³ framework of the company, it is necessary to give particular attention on the company's industry and competitiveness, along with customer segmentation to understand the markets' needs nowadays and the way they affect the company marketing strategies. Based on the review of International Marketing Literature and data from the company, the purpose is oriented towards the role and effectiveness of exhibitions and trade shows for the expansion of the company into international markets. Professional growth and the business/management skills acquired will also be examined as a final part of the report.

In accordance with the degree programme, which aims to meet a varied range of needs such as to develop competencies in foreign languages, with a view to enabling plurilingual communication in the world of business, this report will be written using the English language, not only as a means of personal development, but also to allow the company to understand this report and use it as a tool, if necessary.

All the necessary and relevant documents will be attached in the appendices to this report.

³The term "marketing mix" became popular in 1964, when Neil H. Borden published the article *The Concept of the Marketing Mix*.

PART I. THE INTERNSHIP PROJECT

1.1 Program

The internship is intended to be an opportunity for the Intern to develop academic and professional skills through involvement in the different activities in the Marketing Department of Dunster House. Over the 6 month period the Intern will be attached to all of the current areas in Marketing. This will be carried out around the current workload in the Department. The Intern will have the opportunity to spend more time in areas of particular interest, following discussions with the Marketing Manager.

The detailed program of the internship includes the following activities:

Planning: To understand the seasonal planning process and the use of the Marketing Plan to co-ordinate and manage a range of different promotions and activities.

Influencing: To gather relevant information and present it either verbally or written in a way that is both clear and compelling, to contribute to the efficiency of the department in terms of marketing the products.

Communication: Confidently dealing with a range of both Dunster House (Sales, Admin, Branch Managers, Dispatch) and External Company personnel, in order to effectively communicate the requirements and actions of the Display and Events area.

Decision Making: In the absence of the Display manager to take the necessary day-to-day decisions on the running of the Visitor Display Area in Bedford, including directing and maintenance of the workload.

Numeracy & Finance: Review the costs and benefits of each of the Exhibitions/Shows within the season and use the information to make recommendations on those that should be re-booked the following year, those that should be dropped and any new venues that should be trialed in 2014.

Organization and Documentation: Review current procedures that relate to both Display and Exhibition management and recommend practical improvements to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Creative Vision: Review the look and feel of the 'dressed cabins' in the visitor Display gardens and recommend improvements to both their physical dressing and how this should be followed through to the imagery used on the website, through either renders or photography.

Project Management: Managing the many and various strands and timelines associated with organising an Exhibition/Show of activity for different Shows/Exhibition.

Marketing: To review the current signage and promotional material used in each of the branch locations (Navigation signage, Reception areas, TV Slide-show content, Product Price Signs, Supporting Brochure Information, Product Feature signs) and make recommendations for improvements.

On-line Integration: Review the current promotional information on the Dunster House website for each of the branches and the location, facilities and product displays and make practical recommendations for their improvement.

The training period includes attachments to different areas in the Marketing Team within the first week. It is expected that within month one the Intern visits 1-2 of the 4 Dunster House Branches with the National Display Manager. Within month two the Intern will visit the remaining Dunster House branches and in month three it is likely that the Intern has been involved in the preparation, building and also attending an exhibition. The monitoring and evaluation plan will be in-line with the current standard 1 month, 2 month and 3 month Dunster House probationary review process.

1.2 Tasks and Expected Results

The above programme gives an overview of the internship in the Marketing Department. This section aims to present the different activities and tasks carried out through the placement to complete the given programme. As a result, the Intern will be involved in the negotiation and booking of different indoor and outdoor events during 2013 (e.g. County Shows, Grand Designs Shows); development of the stand design and branding, organization of transport and travel to the different sites; involvement in the build-up and breakdown of the stand at shows and, finally, production of a post-show review report.

As far as the displays are concerned, the Intern will be occupied in the regular update Visitor Show Areas at the 4 branches to incorporate product prototypes and new product launches. Regular review of the marketing used to promote the location of the branches and how the

company communicates the key unique selling points of the different building types are also part of the Intern's responsibilities. In addition, the Intern will participate in the organization of the day-to-day maintenance of the buildings in the Bedford Show Area and the general upkeep of the area.

It is expected that the Intern will gain an understanding of the different channels through which Dunster House market their products e.g. On-line, In-branch, Advertising, E-mail, Direct Mail, and Exhibitions. It is also expected that the Intern will come to understand the New Product Development process used to bring products to market including design, prototyping, testing marketing and sales (On-line and Off-Line).

1.3 Relevance

The relevance of a project consists of how efficient its outcomes are expected to be with respect to its goals and further evaluation. This internship, in particular, is practical work that plays a vital role for the student to engage with the reality beyond the theoretical concepts of books. Theoretical knowledge is of no value without exposure to the practical, thus the internship provides an opportunity to see and observe the working environment of companies and how the background theory fits contributing to her knowledge. However, an Internship not only provides work experience, but also a whole learning process that may be even more valuable in the long run. After all, internships lead to the development of soft skills, namely an international internship in which the Intern has to use a different language from the native language and to get used to a totally different daily cultural routine. Interpersonal communication and teamwork skills are some other skills which will be developed in such an international environment. In particular, an international internship within a Masters that envisions enabling students to use plurilingual communication in institutions and in the world of business, as well as to provide training in management and marketing, ensuring the application of languages in these scientific areas. Therefore, the internship experience at Dunster House provides an opportunity and challenge to put into practice the main relevant knowledge acquired during the Masters degree.

1.4 Project Timeline

The following timeline is intended to be a tool for the internship programme, so the student can place and organize herself within an accurate chronological sequence during the internship experience. In the end, this timeline enhances the understanding of the whole learning process, as it draws attention to all the assignments the student will be involved in.

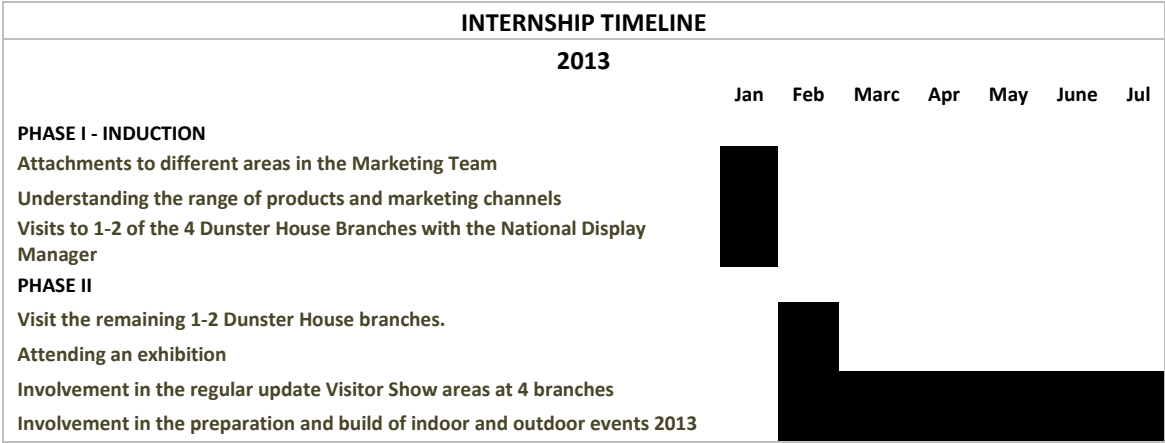


Figure 1: Internship Timeline

PART II. DUNSTER HOUSE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

2. 1 Company Background

Dunster House is a garden buildings family business established in 1994 which is now run by two brothers who are the second generation of the family to run the company. They currently have 19 factories, each producing different parts and products for Dunster House. Each factory is used for a specialist task. Four of the sites are located in the UK, to cope with the high demand for the products countrywide. The main branch is Bedford, which is also the Head Office for all operations. The site has a large visitor show garden which was re-launched in May 2012. With over 100 staff working at this site it is the largest and busiest of the four. It hosts a range of functions, including windows and glass production, carpentry, product design and development and marketing. The Northern Branch, in Flixborough, was opened in 2007 and has proved vital in delivery of products to the northern regions of the UK. It hosts its own display areas showing off a wide range of products, from Log Cabins, Garden Offices to Climbing Frames. The South-West Branch, in Warminster, was opened in 2010, while it is the smallest of the four branches; it still has a good display of Log Cabins and Climbing Frames. Finally, the South-East Branch, in Faversham, was opened in October 2012 and it is now the largest branch, with the biggest visitor display area.

During the challenging times of the global recession, that started in early 2008 and continued throughout 2009, it is impressive how Dunster House products have been improved, transforming them into best quality products. In fact, as an innovative company and as one indicator of the quality of its performance, the business has had significant growth in the last few 3 years. Besides the 4 branches sites in the UK, Dunster House now has a group of 3 manufacturing facilities across Europe in Hungary, Estonia and Poland.

Baltic Log Cabins, established in 2005 in Estonia, the largest of the 3, employs 80 people and is focused on Log Cabin production and sourcing of feedstock for Hungary and Poland. Furthermore, it is also responsible for textile and wood pellet production.

Boldogfa, opened in 2008 in Hungary, is responsible for the manufacture of all the pressure treated products, such as Climbing Frames, Garden Furniture, Garden Offices, Gazebos, Sheds, Greenhouses, among others. It employs 50 employees.

Finally, Dunster House Polska, in Poland, is the newest factory, opened in September last year, this is where the Summerhouses, Play Systems and some Garden Offices manufacturing takes place. It now employs 20 people.

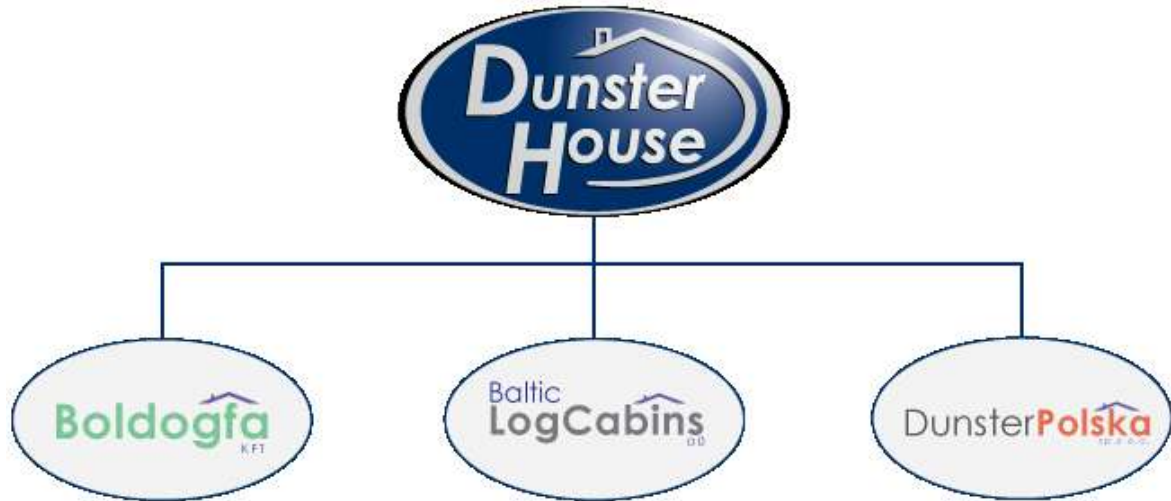


Figure 2: Organizational Chart of Dunster House

All products are made by the company, not bought in from other companies, to ensure the customer gets the highest quality products. The company also delivers their products, also saving time and money for the customer.

Dunster House now employs over 200 full time staff at its 4 UK sites and offers a wide range of products. In fact, Dunster House's focus was originally on producing uPVC windows and doors but rapidly, and thanks to the innovative perspective of its owners, expanded to a wide variety of wooden buildings. Thus, currently, the main products produced include Log Cabins, Climbing Frames, Summerhouses and Greenhouses. The stock also includes Garages, Car Ports, Saunas and Gazebos, Barbeques, Solar Products and Garden Furniture. Dunster House stocks all the customer could need for outdoor living. The products they sell on the website/in store are designed in-house, in the UK, by their experienced Computer-Aided Design (CAD) team.



LOG CABINS



GARDEN OFFICES



CLIMBING FRAMES



PLAY HOUSES



SHEDS



SUMMERHOUSES



GAZEBOS



GARAGES



WINDOWS & DOORS



HOT TUBS



BBQ STOVES



PLANTERS & TRUGS

Figure 3: Dunster House's Main Range of Products

Overall, the range of products serves most people’s needs. From the traditional Log Cabins, influenced by chalet design, as the forebear of all Dunster House Log Cabins, to the range that includes more modern and contemporary style cabins, customers can find practical solutions to store garden tools, toys, furniture and utensils in perfect conditions and enjoy their outdoor life relaxing with family and friends. All products are designed so the customer can decide the depth, width, style and sizes according to their requirements. The position of windows and doors, as well as the roof style, are also decided by the customer. Products are also designed with the best materials, such as a smooth plasterboard finishes and large high quality uPVC Windows and Doors, as well as thickly insulated walls, thus reducing the cost of warming and energy for the customer.

Based on 2012 product sales, the figures show the most sold products by the company. The results show Log cabins are the most popular product, followed by Climbing Frames and with Gazebos and Shelters, Greenhouses and Sheds sharing the lowest percentage of all, due to the wettest spring for 30 years, coolest winter summer and customers’ needs and priority changes.

MOST SOLD PRODUCTS

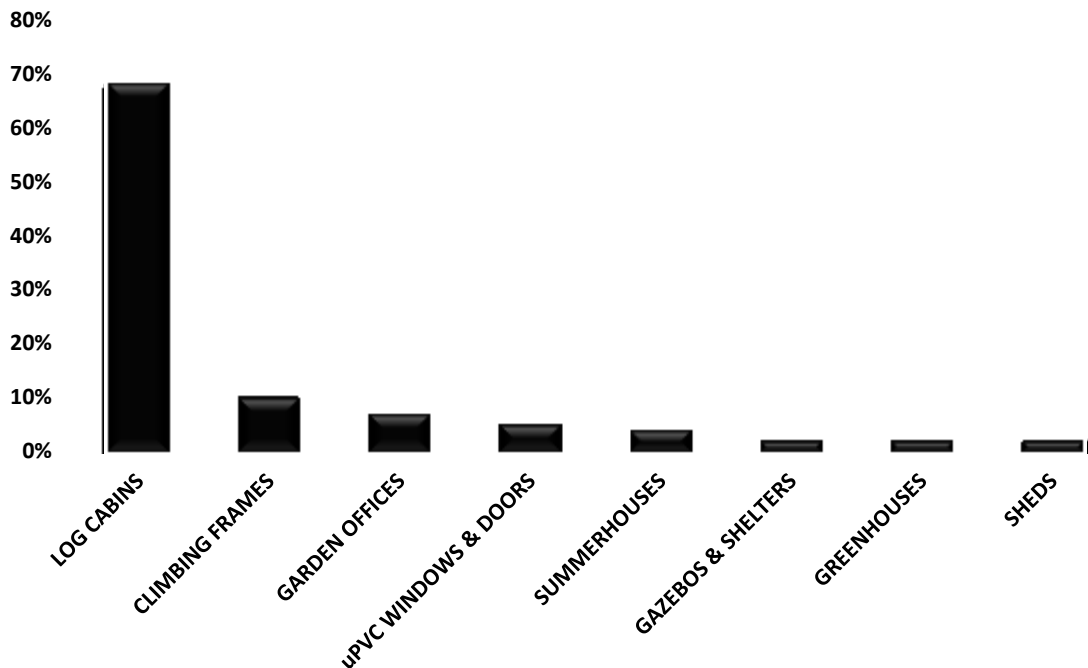


Figure 4: Dunster House's Most Sold Products

To create value for its stakeholders, namely shareholders, customers and employees, the company invests heavily in new machinery and equipment to ensure the high quality of the products is maintained as the company believes it is important to ensure customer satisfaction by controlling the quality of every component. Therefore, the metal brackets manufactured for sale are also used by themselves and any parts that have to be bought in, such as screws and bolts, are bought from established suppliers the company has been working with for years. In all of the factories people are also employed specifically for the task of quality checking and most of the line items are also photographed at various stages as well as being signed off by the Quality Control Teams. Similarly, the company has its own work force and vehicles as it is never reliant on outside agents to uphold the standards set. As the company owns its own fleet of over 50 delivery vehicles of different sizes, the majority of customers' orders can be delivered free of charge. Another benefit with having their own fleet is that they can ensure the product gets to customers in the best condition possible and as quickly as possible. Products area delivering is throughout mainland England and Wales as well as most of Scotland. The company strives not to be beaten on price or value for money and quality for the customers' money. Their reliable service is something they continue to uphold every day.

The standard of service is high and the company strives to give customers full satisfaction when they order. The company's reputation as one of the leading garden building companies in the UK has been earned and they intend to keep it this way by designing, prototyping, testing and manufacturing products, thus having total control of the production process. Furthermore, due to manufacturing skills and know-how, high quality timber products can be provided and, more important, the best price on the market can be offered to customers.

In addition to its commitment to its customers, Dunster House's dedication to society in general is also an integral part of its business. Thus, the company manufactures products by using FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) wood, promoting sustainability. Another example that benefits society and environment is solar products which are eco-friendly and environmentally sustainable. More recently the launch of a urine diversion toilet also shows the concern of the company to contribute towards the development of a socioeconomic and ecological society. In line with its own Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)⁴ philosophy, the company also produces

⁴ The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility has evolved throughout different definitions during the last decades. According to the Green Paper, *Promoting a European framework for Corporate Social*

products for disabled people, designing them especially for mobility restricted users. Therefore, Dunster House endorses its enabling and positive impact on society, through its humanitarian products that aim to reach not only European countries, but mostly underdeveloped countries through providing easy and cheap solutions.

2.2 Organisational Structure

For the Intern to comprehend the operations of a company like this it is important to have a clear and comprehensive understanding of its organisational structure.

The general classification of business structure is the kind of relationship the owner has with his or her employees. At Dunster House, which is a private limited company, people and jobs are arranged in a way to meet its goals and even though it is now a medium sized business with a formal structure, face-to-face communication is still the norm in the company. The organisational chart below illustrates the internal structure and hierarchy of Dunster House's business.

Responsibility, presented by the Commission of the European Communities, in Brussels, 2001, page 6, "Most definitions of corporate social responsibility describe it as a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis".

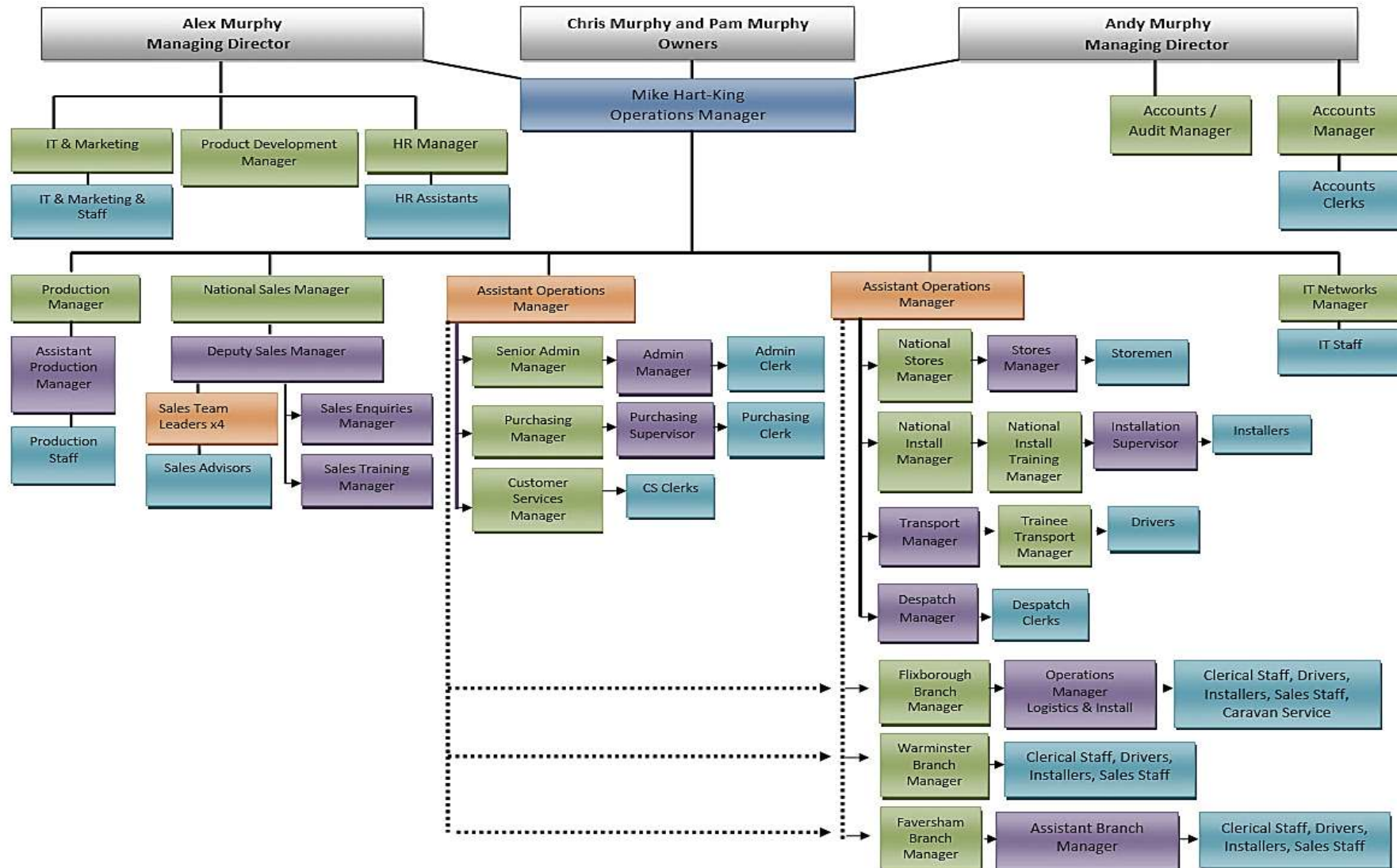


Figure 5: Dunster House's Organisational Chart

Research shows that the organisational structure affects the company's performance.⁵ In particular, evidence suggests that performance declines when the company's strategy does not have the most appropriate structure to go with it.⁶ In a company of this size, the employees' responsibility is defined by what their managers want them to do or report and the directors have the final responsibility for ensuring that the employees' actions match each of the strategies formulated for the company to earn above average returns.

To ensure the leading position in the market industry of garden buildings, Dunster House operates with different departments which make up a corporate organisation that strives for the best given value for the customer. Within a truly engaged and commitment driven culture based on ethical values and transparency, all the different departments of the company contribute to its success. At Bedford, there are more than 20 departments. The geographic dispersion of the branches and the wide range of the business create the need to have departmental division in each of them, though the marketing department, which controls the marketing strategies from the Head Office, in Bedford. The organisational structure and controls of Dunster House thus provide the framework within which its business strategy is formulated and implemented. As an Intern, it is crucial to understand their position within this structure during the induction period of the internship, in order not only to get familiarized with it, but also to place herself within the company.

The involvement in the daily marketing activities has allowed the Intern to conclude that all the procedures, formal reports and decision making processes are part of the directors' responsibility, in order to have all the structural elements aligned with the strategy they have formulated for the company. Therefore, the Directors specify the work to be done and ask the managers to give the employees the know-how to do it. This organizational structure directly influences the way managers work and all their decisions to support the implementation of the company's strategy. As a result, Directors provide stability to the company in order to maintain its competitive

⁵ T. Burns & G. M. Stalker. *The Management of Innovation*, London: Tavistok, 1961; P. R. Lawrence & J. W. Lorsch *Organization and Environment*, Homewood, 1967; Richard D. Irwin.; J. Woodward. *Industrial Organization: Theory and Practice*, London: Oxford University Press, 1965.

⁶ A. M. Rugman & A. Verbeke. "A regional solution to the strategy and structure of multinationals", *European Management Journal*, 26(5): 305–313, 2008; H. Kim, R. E. Hoskisson, L. Tihanyi, & J. Hong, "Evolution and restructuring of diversified business groups in emerging markets: The lessons from chaebols in Korea", *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, (2004)21: 25–48.

advantage, by managing and controlling the daily routines, providing the opportunity to develop other competitive possibilities simultaneously that can shape future success for the company. These possibilities are mainly visible on the web development projects in line with all the opportunities that the online world provides to companies nowadays. Thus, it is clear that at Dunster House there is a flexible structure that allows the company to exploit and develop new competitive opportunities, not only in terms of new products, but also in a way to sell the current ones effectively, through web development.

The strategic and organisational control of the company's operations guides the managers' actions towards the comparison of the actual results with the expected ones, suggesting, if necessary, solutions to reach them. It also allows them to verify if the company is using the right strategies in accordance with the internal and external environment in which they operate and to examine if what the company is doing, as suggested by the opportunities of that environment, is actually what it can do, as suggested by its competitive advantage.

This organizational structure also requires good and effective communication channels between Directors and managers for them to evaluate the company's performance correctly; to adjust strategies; to reformulate them, if necessary, and implement them bearing in mind all that is required to do so. The Intern's participation in these exchanges of information is simultaneously a contribution to the company and learning and gaining knowledge for themselves. These interactions are either formal, at weekly scheduled meetings, or informal, at any time to respond speedily to emerging changes. As all operations are controlled from Headquarters, the Executives share a deep understanding of each of the branches in order to ensure the business strategy is appropriately implemented, even taking into account that each branch has its own market demands.

The increasing market expansion of Dunster House has also required the implementation of software solutions able to plan the business resources, as the complexity of managing the company is increasing too. Moreover, the effectiveness of Dunster House's organisational structure seems to be intimately related with the combination of its strategic and financial control by its Directors and National Managers, in a balanced management strategy in order to produce short terms returns and also contributing to the long term ones. The relationship between structure and business strategy is, thus, reciprocal: the company's structure needs to change whenever the strategy changes direction. In particular, during the company's expansion, the need to expand the structure into a larger one capable of handling the demands of a company

becoming global is clear. Essentially, the organisational structure of Dunster House details the work that has to be done strategically to achieve competitive advantage.

2.3 Strategic Management and Competitiveness

Dunster House's impressive performance during the last few years suggests an effective marketing strategy implementation within the proper organisational structure. Therefore, the role of the Intern working in the Marketing Department is also to understand how her responsibilities can be coordinated with other employees, in order to integrate successful actions that allow the company to design and exploit the right competencies.

Undoubtedly, one can say that Dunster House's success seems to be its heavy investment in the launch of new products every year. This prevents the company from becoming obsolete, while it keeps improving the existing products offered to the market at more accessible prices. An example of the latter is Log Cabins, but also some premium products, providing great value options, for example Garden Offices. Another factor that seems to drive the company's performance is its ability to change according to the customers' needs and interests. Furthermore, the meticulous and constant analysis of the competition in the areas in which it operates allows it to rapidly respond to any market demand. Thus, the company takes whatever action necessary to implement, reformulate or change its strategy, doing any essential upgrade, to maintain its sales revenues and performance. However, corporate success is never guaranteed and the likelihood of Dunster House continuing to succeed in the long term depends on the ability of its leaders to evaluate the appropriateness of their strategies, as well as the actions being taken to implement them. Their competitive advantage is reliant on the implementation of a set of national and global strategies as the company grows globally, that the competitors are unable to duplicate. These strategies need to be in line with the company's vision and mission statements.

2.3.1 Vision and Mission statements

The vision statement of a company highlights its expected achievements articulating the ideal description of the company with its plans for the future. In other words, it points the company in the direction of where it would like to be positioned in the years to come.⁷ The vision is meant to

⁷ T. Yu & A. A. Cannella, Jr. "Rivalry between multinational enterprises: An event history approach". *Academy of Management Journal*, 50 (2007): 665–686; S. E. Christophe & H. Lee. "What matters about Internationalization: A market-based assessment", *Journal of Business Research* (2005) 58: 636–643; Y. Lou,

be thought out with passion appealing to stakeholders' feelings in a concise and easy to remember statement.

The strategies, devised and adopted by the Directors, need to be aligned and consistent with the vision statement, to avoid disappointing the stakeholders and, as a consequence, misdirecting the mission of the company. Both mission and vision must be clear and even though some companies do not waste time working on them, the fact is they place the company in the market, giving a picture of its goals and all the necessary business strategies to achieve them. Dunster House's mission states the following:

Our dedicated aim is to provide a safe working environment for all our staff and for all people that we are in contact with either directly or indirectly. We are strongly committed to create a fulfilling and opportunity filled platform for ALL members of staff. We constantly seek business opportunities and products to enrich customers' lifestyles at affordable prices. To provide the highest levels of professionalism, integrity, fairness and honesty to preserve the longevity of the company for the benefit of all our staff and customers.

Dunster House benefits from some information, as it is going worldwide these are the kind of challenges that require a more precise position. Internally, the mission statement provides the company with direction to select its strategies; it also prioritizes the allocation of its resources as it allows the corporate organisation to learn more about the company's culture, thus providing a more engaging team work environment.⁸ Externally, the company benefits from differentiation against its competitors in terms of values and corporate culture. Even though, there seems to be no vision statement within the structure of the company. Therefore, putting some of the company's energy into stating its vision may contribute to greater internal and external higher achievements.

"Product diversification in International joint ventures: Performance implications in an emerging market", *Strategic Management Journal*, 23 (2004): 1–20.

⁸ Hitt, M., Ireland, R e Hoskisson, R. *Strategic Management: Competitiveness and Globalization, Concepts and Cases*. South-Western, Mason, USA, 2010, 16-20.

2.3. 2 Industry and Competitors' analysis

Nowadays companies like Dunster House operate in a very complex environment, characterised by globalization, hyper-competitiveness and continued recession, which can only be understood by analyzing all the components dimensions. These include segments such as the economy, demography, society, culture and technology, and although companies cannot control them, it is at least important to understand them, pulling together as much information as possible in order to examine their business strategy in accordance with that information. This environment directly influences not only the company itself, but the whole industry in which the business operates, being affected by the threat of new entrants, the power of suppliers, the power of buyers, the threat of product substitutes, and the intensity of rivalry among competitors.⁹ All of these factors challenge the company in their position to benefit as much as possible from their industry environment. Certainly, the more Dunster House knows about the industry environment and, consequently, about their competitors, the greater the likelihood to succeed and earn above-average returns.

Nevertheless, companies also face the challenge of the information revolution and the process of transmitting, obtaining and changing information is as fast as technology progresses and companies have a growing awareness of this when doing business. In particular, the information on competition, which gives the companies competitive advantage, is crucial not only to take opportunities based on information about rivals, but also to invest in information technology as a way to exploit technology itself and competitors' activity. At Dunster House there is a general understanding that technology is more than computer systems and when analyzing competitors' activity the Intern has to take that into consideration to conceive proper reports which encompass a wide spectrum of information.

During a half month period, the competitors' activity has been regularly assessed by the Intern, who has gathered and interpreted information about the main competitors, not only to examine what they are doing in terms of strategies, but also to throw the company into relief enabling a clear picture of the effectiveness of its business actions. Given the fact that the garden buildings

⁹ Hitt, M., Ireland, R e Hoskisson, R. *Strategic Management: Competitiveness and Globalization, Concepts and Cases*. South-Western, Mason, USA, 2010, 50-59.

industry reveals high rates of competitiveness in the UK¹⁰, it is essential that the Intern understands clearly the factors and conditions that may affect the company's performance. By carefully analysing the competitors' activity, it is easier to predict the company's actions, along with the competitors' intentions, in a way to find opportunities and avoid threats. These reports allow the company to revise their promotional campaigns on a regular basis, not only to gather information on new possible campaigns, but also to adjust aspects such as product prices. Therefore, to analyse the competition is to be the "company's eyes and ears". For this, it is essential to have good analytical skills, in order to conduct extensive and detailed reports.

All the reports follow different criteria according to their specific purpose:

The daily Optional Extras Report aims to monitor the optional extra prices of the main competitors and provide the sales team with accurate information when speaking to a potential customer to inform them that buying from Dunster House will save them money. While doing this report it is useful to search, from time to time, if the main competitors have launched new products which are comparable to Dunster House's.

The weekly Competitive Promotions Report¹¹ aims to look at the overall website layout and content of the main competitors, including snapshots of the main information found, such as promotions, competitions, new products and other relevant information.

The monthly Website Competitive Report intends to give an analysis of Dunster House's main competitors' websites¹² in order not only to check what the competition is doing but also to provide useful information for Dunster House's online goal setting and planning strategy. The homepage, navigation, organization of the site, links and labels, search results, readability, performance and content are some of the criteria followed for the analysis.

¹⁰ According to AMA Research, UK, "Garden Rooms and Buildings Market Report – UK 2011-2015 Analysis", 3rd Ed., there is a diverse range of large and small manufacturers of garden rooms and buildings, including subsidiaries of large European groups, medium-sized UK companies and family businesses and core manufacturers are selling direct via their own websites. According to the same report, log cabins are the largest market estimated at 77%, by volume.

¹¹ For an example of a Competitive Promotions Report *vide* Appendix I

¹² For an example of a Competitive Websites Report *vide* Appendix II.

The monthly New Products Report includes information on new products the company may be interested in manufacturing and selling. That includes products' features, such as type of timber and pricing. When carrying out other reports, the Intern should always be on the lookout for new ideas.

Finally, the monthly Competitive Social Media Report aims to examine competitor's social networking sites to understand the number of followers they have and the content they provide in order to increase their followers. In this report it is extremely relevant to analyze the efficiency of social media as part of the company's communication business strategy. Nonetheless, the pervasive presence of information faced nowadays can also be a problem because of the increasing volume of information to go through. Thus, it is essential for the Intern to understand the information the company is looking for according to its business goals.

This market analysis shows that these reports affect the company in diverse ways. First, they provide a wide range of information on the products and position of the company within the market, since these reports allow the company to place itself in the industry it operates against the main competitors. These reports also shape the company's structure according to the competitive analysis by showing what the competition's market direction is. In addition, they suggest ways to improve the company's competitive advantage, including new ways to outperform rivals. They also spawn new business opportunities within the existing operations and, in the end, they affect the whole industry structure as companies are likely to adjust their business strategies according to the information included in these reports.

These reports are also a source of improvement not only of the information process, but also of the production process. In other words, competitive information changes not only the business strategy, but also the products themselves. As a result, products are transformed, improved or adjusted according to the information gathered. In addition, the reports allow the company to evaluate different action, scenarios and alternative strategies, in order to improve their marketing performance.

2.3.3 Business Strategy

“There are no longer mature industries: rather, there are mature ways of doing business.”

(Porter Michael et Victor E Millar, 1985)

There seems to be little doubt that the more that Dunster House is aware of the companies it competes with, the greater the likelihood of reducing possible negative effects from their business strategies. Competitive reports and Key Performance Indicators are essential to understand the company's position and their business strategy. Running the business generally for the lower cost market, but offering some differentiation at the same time, stands for the company's business strategy.

The company is strongly committed to the cost leadership strategy¹³ as a way to achieve competitiveness and all its actions point towards this strategy. Accordingly, cost controls are made by cutting out expenditure on middle men, as Dunster House is the manufacturer itself and does not have third parties involved either in the production process or in distribution. Their business strategy is also based on the delivery of products designed to fit the customers' needs and interests. The possibility of different building dressing and purchasing options also raise the company's value added reputation. Dunster House is concerned with helping customers to reduce costs by managing different options on wood treatments, wall thicknesses, and type of glass, floor and roof insulation, assembly, accessibility and usability of buildings, amongst many others. All these options may relieve customers of expense and simultaneously create value for the company. Therefore, the company develops strategies which explore multiple avenues to aggressively go after business and beat the competition while, at the same time, maximizing sales and marketing efficiencies.

Even though the main range of products includes the same type of products, the company is also differentiating into new areas, such as dry toilets and other eco-friendly products in an international environment, which requires a separate business strategy. Exhibitions, as part of the international business strategy of the company, demand a different approach, as they involve a more complex process. Because exhibitions are an effective marketing strategy to promote these

¹³ For more information on Business Level Strategies *vide* Hitt, M., Ireland, R e Hoskisson, R. *Strategic Management: Competitiveness and Globalization, Concepts and Cases*. South-Western, Mason, USA, 2010, 97-120.

products, it is, therefore, crucial that the Intern finds precise information and understands its relevance to the company's business strategy.

2.3. 4 Customer Segmentation

“Sustained growth depends on how broadly you define your business – and how carefully you gauge your customers’ needs.”

(Theodore Levitt, 1960)

As seen above, the business strategy of a company ultimately aims to maximize profits and grow market share, which is intimately related to the depth of knowledge it has of its customers. Customers’ behavior is highly influenced by the economic, social and technological environment that surrounds them and the constant and complex shifts they face may alter their consumption preferences (Dawson, J., Findlay, A. and Sparks, L. 2006). So, it is important that Dunster House take this into consideration when identifying, classifying and understanding their customers in order that they can target, gain and manage them in the most profitable way. Within this framework of customer importance, it is important for the Intern to learn as much as possible about who the company's customers are and to understand the opportunities customer segmentation offers within the company's marketing initiatives.

Mosaic UK, from Experian Limited, is a tool that helps businesses to deeply understand their customers by identifying them, placing and explaining their preferences, amongst many other aspects, providing companies with an interactive guide which helps them to set, improve or adjust their business strategy. Experian's UK Consumer Dynamics Database encompasses information for the UK's 47 million adults and 24 million households, classified into 15 groups and 67 types¹⁴. This allows the analysis of the latest trends in UK society and the use of statistically relevant data can provide sophisticated customer insight for companies such as Dunster House.

In autumn 2012, Mosaic UK carried out a study¹⁵ that provided Dunster House with a deep understanding of the following questions: *What do Dunster House's customers look like?; Where do they live?; Can more customers be acquired?*. After processing 24,587 customer records from the previous 2 years, the following breakdown was produced:

¹⁴ For more information please visit the website <http://www.experian.co.uk>

¹⁵ Following the privacy and property policies of the company, the study cannot be attached to this report.

	TARGET	%	BASE	%	INDEX
A Alpha Territory	2,428	10.1	902,144	3.6	279
B Professional Rewards	5,284	21.9	2,050,178	8.2	267
C Rural Solitude	2,833	11.8	1,042,546	4.2	281
D Small Town Diversity	2,746	11.4	2,221,799	8.9	128
E Active Retirement	605	2.5	1,132,638	4.5	55
F Suburban Mindsets	3,737	15.5	2,822,655	11.3	137
G Careers and Kids	2,059	8.5	1,411,489	5.7	151
H New Homemakers	549	2.3	1,497,322	6.0	38
I Ex-Council Community	888	3.7	2,113,944	8.5	44
J Claimant Cultures	214	0.9	1,372,740	5.5	16
K Upper Floor Living	100	0.4	1,282,568	5.1	8
L Elderly Needs	113	0.5	1,289,504	5.2	9
M Industrial Heritage	1,199	5.0	1,900,875	7.6	65
N Terraced Melting Pot	388	1.6	1,810,751	7.3	22
O Liberal Opinions	986	4.0	2,119,920	8.5	47

Figure 6: Mosaic UK Customer Profile

The 15 groups shown in the above table break down into a further 67 sub-types, as stated above. This allows companies to further improve their customer targeting. Analyzing Dunster House's customers one can say that 12 specific sub-types can account for approximately 50% of their business.

According to the data, 80% of customers fall into 6 key groups, which account for 40% of the UK. Overall Dunster House customers are twice as likely to be in these 6 groups compared to the UK. The top three groups by index are Alpha Territory, Professional Rewards and Rural Solitude all with an index of nearly 300. The top three groups of customers by percentage are Professional Rewards, Rural Solitude and Suburban Mindsets. Professional Rewards are characterised by a suburban lifestyle, mainly composed of executives and managers (senior positions), living with significant equity, they are financially comfortable and well educated, mostly married and likely to have children. Suburban mindsets are known as the *manual and white collar* professionals, usually married, middle aged and likely to have children. They invest in home improvement, mainstream brands and appreciate family life. Rural Solitude customers live in small villages, sharing a strong community spirit. They are likely to be married, working on farms, following country pursuits and a mature lifestyle living in large properties. Finally, Alpha Territory customers are usually very successful and well educated people, with rewarding careers and living with substantial wealth which allows them to buy luxury items. Further segmentation of the customers by product type against the UK averages shows the following results:

MOSAIC UK GROUP	CABINS	PLAY	WINDOWS	INSTALL	SUMMERHOUSES	SHEDS	GAZEBOS	GREENHOUSES	TOTAL	UK
A Alpha Territory	8.3	14.7	4.5	14.0	12.1	11.7	8.2	8.8	10.1	3.6
B Professional Rewards	21.5	23.6	16.9	24.0	32.9	23.1	21.9	27.6	21.9	8.2
C Rural Solitude	11.1	13.6	9.4	10.1	14.9	13.7	12.7	22.6	11.8	4.2
D Small Town Diversity	12.8	8.0	13.9	9.7	14.9	11.4	12.7	12.3	11.4	8.9
E Active Retirement	3.0	1.2	2.5	3.4	4.9	3.7	4.5	3.4	2.5	4.5
F Suburban Mindsets	17.0	12.9	18.0	16.7	8.2	11.9	15.2	7.7	15.5	11.3
G Careers and Kids	8.1	11.5	5.9	7.3	4.5	8.5	9.7	4.2	8.5	5.7
H New Homemakers	2.2	1.9	3.7	1.3	1.0	0.9	4.0	0.8	2.3	6.0
I Ex-Council Community	3.8	2.8	5.8	2.3	1.5	3.7	3.7	3.1	3.7	8.5
J Claimant Cultures	0.6	1.3	1.2	0.3	0.1	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9	5.5
K Upper Floor Living	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.2	-	0.4	5.1
L Elderly Needs	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.5	5.2
M Industrial Heritage	5.2	4.0	7.1	3.9	2.5	3.2	3.2	5.7	5.0	7.6
N Terraced Melting Pot	1.2	1.1	3.8	1.1	0.1	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.6	7.3
O Liberal Opinions	4.1	2.7	6.0	5.2	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	4.0	8.5
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	9.203	6.964	4.288	1.884	671	437	401	261	24.109	24,971.073
	38.17	28.89	17.79	7.81	2.78	1.81	1.66	1.08	100.00	

Figure 7: Mosaic Customer Profiles - by Product Type

According to the data analysed, Log Cabins account for 38% of the product type that has been purchased, while Play accounts for 29% and Windows 17%. The table also shows that the profile for the total customer base is similar to the profile of each product type, meaning that there is not a great range of variation for customers buying different products. One can also conclude that customers purchasing Play products, such as Climbing Frames, are over represented in the Alpha Territory; Professional Rewards; Rural Solitude and Careers and Kids sub-groups. This is quite understandable, bearing in mind the key features of each group. Rural Solitude customers are also 5 times more likely to purchase a Greenhouse product type, again in accordance with the lifestyle patterns of this group. Finally, customers buying the Window product group are the most different from the typical Dunster House customer.

Currently, this study is allowing Dunster House to optimize not only its business strategy but, consequently, the value of those customers. The profile of the existing customers is helping the company to change its marketing activity so their strategies match the customers' needs and, simultaneously, managing new strategies to acquire new ones. This data can also improve customers contact, reducing wastage and saving on costs. The valuable insights into the existing customers also allow different marketing strategies since the customers themselves are also different. Finally, this analysis, as part of the Intern's roles, has provided an essential approach in the necessary market research for Exhibitions, as can be seen later in this report.

2. 4 Advertising Channels

Identifying the foundation of Dunster House's marketing strategies is to understand its corporate values, mission and vision along with analysing the company's competitiveness, products, industry and other forces. As a result, the company can plan its marketing activity efficiently, determining the most effective channels to brand and distribute their products. Companies usually use different communication channels to reach their marketing goals and at Dunster House they strive to use the right mix of different channels available and relevant to their business strategy within the industry and culture they operate in. To decide which instruments to use, it is crucial to understand how effective each one works in pursuit of the company business strategy and delivers their value proposition¹⁶ to customers.

Dunster House's main channels include their own and direct channels such as its in-house Sales Team and online advertising through its website and significant Google advertising activity, as explained later in this report. Exhibitions also play an important role in the company's communication flow, thus it is essential for the Intern to find the synergies between the different channels and how they contribute to the effectiveness of Exhibitions.

Based on the Canvas Model Business¹⁷, the channels a company uses to reach the customers and to deliver them the value proposition may include communication, distribution and sales channels. One can say the following stand for the phases of Dunster House's communication and sales channels:

¹⁶ According to Osterwalder, A., & Pigneur (2010), "The Value Proposition is the reason why customers turn to one company over another. It solves a customer problem or satisfies a customer need".

¹⁷The Canvas Models Business is a model presented by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur that describes the different ways through which an organisation creates, delivers and captures value.

Channel Type		Channel Phase					
Direct	In house Sales	Customer awareness through advertisement	Inquiry	Sales response	Purchase	Delivery	Post Sale Service
	Online Sales						

Figure 8: Phases of Dunster House's Advertising Channels

The evaluation of all communication tools can lead to a ranking perceptible through the Marketing Key Performance Indicators. These allow the company not only to monitor its marketing activity investments but also to maximize the revenues in the short and long term from each of the channels. The following chart presents how much the company spends with each of the channels, based on 2012 figures:

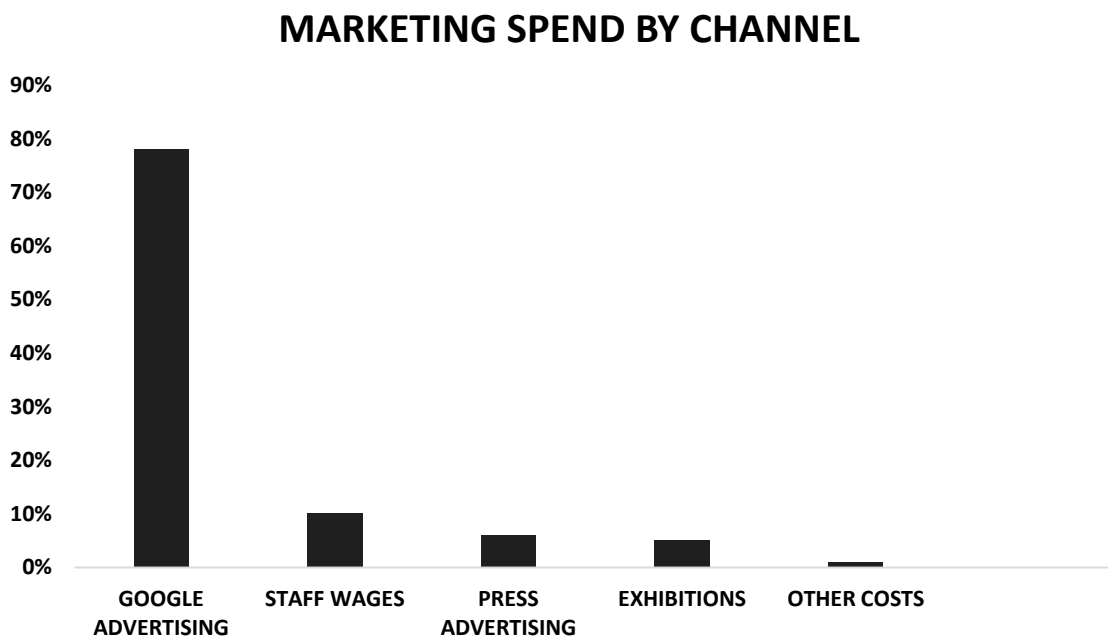


Figure 9: Dunster House's Marketing Spend by Channel

2.4. 1 Online Advertising and Sales

Online advertising and sales are, as seen before, important channels used by Dunster House to reach their customer segments. In fact, research finds that shopping starts online and 94% of consumers' research products online before buying them¹⁸. Responsive to that, Dunster House is

¹⁸ Source: "2010 Compete Online Shopper Intelligence Study".

an example of how technology has acquired strategic significance as approximately 20%-30% of their sales are made online. Accordingly, the online world has completely changed the way they market and produce their products in order to create value for their buyers. Online advertising is, then, the most effective marketing strategy and for someone working in the marketing department it is crucial to understand the whole flow of marketing information.

For a company that sells that much through online sales, the website is the main channel. It is crucial to update and optimize it to prevent misleading potential clients. Consequently, the website works as the face of the company, which means that its visual appearance must be a marketing priority, along with the quality of the information included and the usability of the navigation system. The website needs to be intuitive and designed from a customer's point of view, as it is the company's main selling medium and communication channel.

Dunster House's online advertising also includes Google Adwords, which encompasses Google search and display advertising. Google advertising counts for 77% of the marketing spend as shown in the chart above¹⁹ and it is cited as the initial source of 80% of the company's revenue. Therefore, technology plays a crucial role in the value chain (Porter, 1985) of the company as the online presence is driving the business. Accordingly, it is one of the most valuable and profitable marketing activities for the company. Dunster House gains competitive advantage over its rivals by performing that activity at a lower cost compared with the return on investment (ROI)²⁰. Google is responsible for a large amount of business, but also drives other channels as Recommendations (customers buying because someone they know recommended the company) and previous customers buying again from the company. Recommended and previous customers make up 13% of all sales revenue. In the end, these revenues make Google worthwhile overall.

Social media activity is also part of the online promotional mix. Facebook, in particular, is the most important social media used to reinforce the brand of the company. For that reason, Dunster House is aware of this increasingly useful tool for its business and it is now more than ever managing different strategies towards a more efficient use of this modern day online tool, in

¹⁹ Figures from the company, 2012.

²⁰ Expressed usually as a percentage, return on investment is a measure of profitability that indicates whether or not a company is using its resources in an efficient manner. Read more: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/return-on-investment-ROI.html#ixzz2RgCeHB58>.

accordance with its communication business strategy. Those strategies include customer tailored challenges, in order to develop a more interactive relationship with clients. Moreover, it is also developing multiple interactive channels for the customer to access the Dunster House website and social media no matter if it is mobile, email, social or web, as long as there is access to simple streams that feed them with the information they are searching for.

The whole process of different activities²¹, which includes creating products, their marketing and delivery to buyers, as well as support and after sales service, all affect the effectiveness of the company's performance. The online activity affects the whole system of activities, enhancing the company's ability to coordinate them, both within (suppliers) and outside (buyers) in a more effective way.

As the company is competing globally it is now coordinating different strategies in order to hold on to its local competitive advantage. To do that, it has created a different international website which includes the different range of products, as the end customer differs. Accordingly, the website is translated into 5 different languages (Spanish, Arabic, French, Polish and English), in order to exploit commercial opportunities in different countries. This is similar to the separate Windows and Doors website (<http://windowsanddoors.co.uk>), which is separate from the one which sells Garden Buildings.

2.4. 2 Emails, Newsletters and Brochures

In addition to Google Adwords the company has other forms of advertising, such as Local Press adverts, e-mails, newsletters, press releases and promotional brochures.

E-mail marketing is an important tool for both the acquisition and retention of customers. Weekly Review e-mails are sent to all customers who have had their product delivered 2-3 weeks earlier. Each Monday a weeks' worth of customers is compiled into a list and the company e-mails them requesting that they review the product they bought and their shopping experience with the company.

Newsletters are also essential, as press advertising for Dunster House, since they are a way to connect with customers, who have contacted the company but have not bought yet, on a

²¹ For more information on the types of competitive advantage, see Michael E. Porter, *Competitive Strategy*. New York: Free Press, 1980. Chapter 2.

personal level sharing the latest news about the new products, promotions, offers and competitions. The value of the content, the visual impact of the newsletters and even its subject title affect the customers' interaction and the way they see and follow the company. In this context, the customers' segmentation mentioned earlier in this report, is crucial in order to target customers in the most effective way.

Brochures, as powerful marketing material, are another example of how information technology helps to improve the design of Dunster House products. Knowing their target customers and what motivates them to buy their products is essential in order to show the necessary information to position the brochures appropriately for the audience. As the company sells a wide and diverse range of products, they create a range of separate brochures, each covering specific product categories that motivate the customers by providing them with clear information on each product group. The Play Systems brochure, launched in March 2013, is a good example of how to attract customers' attention by associating the play systems with imaginative children's story telling techniques.

All of these different advertising tools, collectively, lead to the continued marketing success of the company. Together, they all contribute to the Exhibition success, as all are part of the marketing support activities of products logistics, as covered later in this report.

2.4. 3 Display Areas

For the Intern to understand the different channels through which Dunster House market their products, it is important to review Visitor Display Areas and Exhibitions as communication channels rather than opportunities of direct selling.

Visitor Display Areas are a hugely important *in loco* advertising to Dunster House, as they are used as show cases where the customers have the chance of a rationale direct contact with real products. Bearing this in mind, there must be a strategic concern about the way the display area is designed and conceived so it draws customers' attention and creates a welcoming space for them. All the products displayed have to show the company's business coherence and be determined by their values also shared in their online advertising.

The variety of products shown in the Display Areas is intended to inspire customers with the many different options, sizes and prices, available. It also provides a gateway into children's play products by ensuring that the play systems are strategically and eye catchingy located. The creation of a garden living lifestyle also allows the customers to feel and imagine their own garden

as a retreat. For that reason the buildings are dressed with furniture and different artwork to create the ideal vision of outdoor living.

The information highlighted on price signs on product furnishings also contains information on products features and must be updated regularly and strategically placed so the customers can get a clear and reliable idea of the products cost and benefits. Signage, navigation and dressing of display areas, are part of the Intern's tasks, have shown the importance of Dunster House's Visitor Display Area in their marketing business strategy. Therefore, the Intern has reviewed the current signage and promotional material used in each of the branch locations, as well as updated the Visitors' Reception Show Areas with changing promotional campaigns signage, making improvements when required.

The visit to the South – East branch, in Faversham, Kent, on the 18th April, provided valuable understanding in terms of the branch's Reception Area, Display Area, as well as competitive analysis and the overall effectiveness of the marketing communication and advertising provided by the Head Office. By examining and reporting all these aspects while visiting the branch, it was possible to get a more accurate picture of the synergies between the branches.

In the Display Area in Bedford, there are currently more than 40 buildings including Log Cabins, Play Systems, Garden Offices, Gazebos and Summerhouses correctly labelled and filled with appropriate accessories or optional extras. Dressing the buildings requires hard work and a daily dedication, so the company can exhibit their wide range of products in order to showcase different materials and to create an outdoor space in harmony with nature to maximize both their functionality and beauty. Accordingly, the area is also meant to welcome the customer in a way to convince him/ her to buy the product they are looking for.

In the end, Display Areas require a thorough and continuous process of erecting the new season's products and making sure that customers find themselves touring the garden where great presentation ideas and clear promotional messaging motivate them to buy the product.

2.4. 4 National and International Exhibitions

Exhibitions are also an effective marketing strategy for a company to show and market its products nationally and overseas. At Dunster House, exhibitions are part of a significant marketing investment due to the large number of exhibitions attended every year. This number is likely to increase as the company expands. The Intern's involvement in the negotiation and booking of the

different outdoor and indoor national and international exhibitions has required an understanding of the different procedures which support the whole processes.

Initially, it is important to understand the reasons why Dunster House attends exhibitions. The obvious answer may be to drive financial revenues. But the fact is that, in a company like this, exhibitions do not generally give the same return as Google or newspaper advertising. Therefore, the company also attends exhibitions to spread brand awareness and presence and to place their staff in front of the right demographic audience at the right time. These two reasons intertwine quite significantly and although the company does not always attend the most cost effective shows, it makes sure it attends those where the demographics are largely appropriate to market the products. This strategy has proved to be beneficial as while customers may not buy at the show, they may later in the year at a more appropriate time, because they became aware of the brand. Exhibitions are also an important part of a marketing plan when trying to expand the company. Attending a show in a specific place, location or country also allows researching it in terms of its market and demographics. On the other hand, exhibitions are also an opportunity to analyse the competition present at the event; to bring business ideas on new products or even to extend the business networking as it is easy to find traders, distributors and manufacturers at exhibitions.

Exhibitions may be indoor or outdoor, national or International venues. Deciding on which ones to attend takes a long process of analysing, selecting and taking actions procedures. From the Intern's learning and researching experience, those procedures have been captured in a process of 3 key actions. The actions are documented in detail in the *Pre- Exhibition Procedures*; the *Exhibition Procedures* and the *Follow-Up Procedures*.

The Pre-Exhibition period is certainly the longest of all three. It includes research, selection and booking procedures, as well as setting objectives and marketing targets for the exhibitions. This stage may, therefore, start with the research of Dunster House's products, as before selling the product the Intern needed to make sure they understand the product, where best to sell it before searching for appropriate events. Therefore, it is necessary to list and segment the wide range of Dunster House products by category, according to their customers' benefits. Product benefit

segmentation²² stresses the causes behind customers' choices while buying Dunster House's products, instead of those from the competition. It is a study based on the differences in specific benefits that diverse products provide to their customers and it lists all the benefits they bring to the customers in contrast with the competition. This marketing approach predicts consumer behavior and people that may be seeking to buy a certain product. In the end, it provides a picture of necessities that can be created for customers.

Products can then be divided into two main categories including Lifestyle Products²³, which consist of the main range of products, and Humanitarian Products. These two categories can generally provide some of the following benefits to customers: high quality timber; pressure treated buildings; 10 year warranty against insect infestation and fungal decay, variety of sizes; online pricing and ordering service, easy to use and with detailed explanations of features throughout; eco-friendly, solar lighting and heating systems, low maintenance and health benefits; mobility restricted usage, among others. These benefits allow the necessary understanding of customers' behavior and their consumption patterns. The main conclusion of this segmentation suggests that, overall; customers that seek these benefits are people looking for elegance, comfort and privacy, ideal places to relax with family and friends, beauty of garden and cosy escapes. These also include eco-conscious people looking for alternatives to save the environment and money and off-the-grid communities. For the Humanitarian Products categories, National Governments, NGOs and bulk trade purchases have also been included. This customers' segmentation has benefited from the Experian customer segmentation explained before in this report and it is, in the end, a cultural approach to British society and culture.

²² "Benefit-based segmentation is a strategy capable of grouping consumers according to these product attributes or benefits" Haley, R. I. "Benefit Segmentation: A Decision-oriented Research Tool. "Journal of Marketing 32 (1968): 30-35

²³ "Lifestyle" and "psychographics" have been used as segmentation bases since the 1960s. Lifestyle may be viewed as a composite variable that results from factors such as culture, values, activities, opinions, and interests which embody "the patterns that develop and emerge from the dynamics of living in society." Psychographics refers to a broad range of general psychological and personality variables. (Lazer, W. "Lifestyle Concepts and Marketing." *Toward Scientific Marketing*, 1963)

The research process is, therefore, the first thing to be done at the beginning of the exhibition season. The company usually begins looking into the shows for the upcoming year in the latter months of the year. November tends to be when research formally begins, but in a year of a sizeable investment in exhibitions the booking process goes on throughout the whole year.

Afterwards, the exhibitions selection process requires accurate and rational market research and the Intern has to make sure they used the most up-to-date and reliable sources. A large amount of research has been done to gather as much information as possible from both outdoor and indoor national and international exhibitions. This research contains an amount of information for each show ranging from the type of show, product base, attendance, the demographics of the attendance and the rate card cost per square meter.²⁴ Accordingly, it is crucial to set up proper and specific criteria to select an exhibition. These may contain the global exhibitions offered by the sector, searching by key words such as *garden lifestyle* or *home building and improvement*; their importance within the sector; the organiser and the number of years operating in the sector; the financial reputation of the organiser; the competitors present at the show; audience demographics (which includes number of visitors, exhibitors and press); location of the show and Dunster House's branch affected; facilities and accessibility. After gathering this information for each show it is important to dig into more detail such as the costs involved in the show, the costs of the stand, membership (if required) and many others. It is necessary to do an accurate cost breakdown for each show.²⁵

Previous shows attended are easier to filter down to ones which the company wants to go to again. In these cases, it is just necessary to keep track of previous years' figures and success; previous attendance and demographic and all costs and sales that are acquired by the show over the year and analyze them when making the decision whether to re-book it or not. The Exhibition Sales Manager usually produces a report, which includes the cost effectiveness and demographic appropriateness in order to make a final decision. Once all the data is collected and the research forms provided have been filled in, then these must be presented to the Marketing Manager for approval. This includes discussing the benefits of how going to the exhibition can help the company move forward; the best products to take and the required space and potential stand layout. After the Marketing Manager has approved it, the data will need to be shown to the

²⁴ See Appendix III for an example of a selection process spreadsheet.

²⁵ See Appendix III for an example of a show cost breakdown spreadsheet.

Marketing Director to make the final decision on the Exhibition. Once the entire exhibitions programme is approved, the booking process can begin.

Booking an exhibition may require contacting the organisers to gather more information about the show. Having made this initial contact, it is simply a case of negotiating to get the stand you want, in terms of size and location, for the best possible price. For indoor shows, a proposed stand layout is created so the company can decide how to best use the space available. This stand plan normally evolves through various stages. Once completed it is submitted along with all the other documentation, such as the application form, risk assessments, liability insurance certificate and water, Internet and electricity supplier. Once booked, the preliminary stand plan is discussed with the Installation Manager. The Dispatch Manager must also be informed, as soon as possible, of the dates of the show, expected dates of buildup and break down and expected products that will be taken, so they can plan their involvement accordingly.

Most commonly, indoor shows cost significantly more than outdoor shows. This tends to be because the former are more successful and have more limited space compared to huge outdoor show grounds. The after booking stage depends entirely on the type of the show, as an outdoor show is far less complex to organise when compared to an indoor one.

Once the exhibition has been booked a confirmation email should be sent from the venue organisers, with an attached confirmation, detailing everything that has been booked. This needs to be cross checked against the requirements, to ensure that all relevant details have been included. An invoice is then sent so the company can place a purchase order to pay for the event.

The next steps include personal logistics and accommodation which depend on the venue where the exhibition is being held. It is necessary to understand exactly how many days are necessary, personnel availability for the buildup, show period and breakdown of the exhibition. The travel and transportation of people and products are also aspects that must be considered at this stage of the process. This will require taking into consideration what vehicles will be needed to accommodate the transport of all members of staff, their luggage and any tools they need to bring. Travelling outside the UK to attend international exhibitions requires different procedures according to each country's legislation. All the necessary data for these procedures has to be organized in such a way that it can be presented to the Marketing or Exhibitions Manager or Directors on request. Cost breakdowns may also be included in comparison with the company's initial budgets.

Budgets along with marketing strategies, branding plans, exhibition architecture, graphics and products should all be included in the setting objectives phase, so the company can accurately establish objectives and measure the effectiveness of the show afterward. These objectives may also include reports on the sales performance expected and how it will be measured by the quantity and quality of contacts and leads during and after the exhibition. Literature suggests²⁶ that exhibiting at a Trade Fair can meet a variety of objectives, but those companies that agree them before attending the show are most likely to succeed. Therefore, Dunster House's basic objectives may include a clear, explicit, realistic and measurable statement of what they want to accomplish so they can find the best way to achieve it. The following may be considered Dunster House's objectives:

Sales

To generate sales through new orders or qualified tradeshow leads (give numbers)

To increase direct sales (give numbers);

Products

To introduce new products like the new eco-friendly products or Play Houses (give numbers on how many to exhibit and how many to sell);

Customer Relationships

To enhance relationships with current and existing customers (give numbers on each new customer);

To collect customers testimonials (record information);

Market Research

To open new markets opportunities (give numbers and types on possible partnerships, have a clear idea of the possible partners presented by asking for the exhibitor's list of attendees);

²⁶ Carman, J. M. "Evaluation of Trade Show Exhibitions," XI (2), (Winter 1968), 35-44.

To analyse Dunster House's competitors present in the show in terms of display, advertising marketing materials (brochures), customers' service (give numbers on their presence);

Branding

To improve the company's brand image (give numbers on online enquires made after and because of the show);

To announce/ launch news ideas/ products to the market and to customers.

The objectives listed above can, therefore, help the company to establish their marketing target for each exhibition. Target marketing strategies may include contacting previous and potential visitors of the show in advance, with free tickets and show information about the location of Dunster House stand. Another marketing strategy may be local advertising in pre-show publications, magazines, local radio stations or trade journals. In the show itself it may be useful to offer some show special offers and take advantage of all new promotion opportunities on the website and social media. Special offers can be advertised before the show, to make the visitor pick up something, as promotional literature, before and during the show. All these pre-show promotions or target marketing are Dunster House's to get the best quality audience to the stand at the event.

After setting the company's goals it is crucial to give every team member preparing and manning the show stand personal goals to achieve during each hour. Therefore, the exhibitions procedures, which include the buildup, exhibit products and breakdown of the show, may be according to the goals defined earlier for the show. The buildup and breakdown require a specialized team used to installing products. Dunster House has to make sure that the most experienced Sales People are on the ground to make the best of the show in the simplest way possible. If everything is in accordance with the established aims, there are no procedures to follow during this stage.

The period immediately following the exhibition is the time when Dunster House monitors the effectiveness and success of the exhibition closely. In reality, studies²⁷ suggest that not many companies analyze the outcomes of their exhibition's activities properly. At Dunster House,

²⁷ Doug Kessler, The global Association of the Exhibition Industry. Booklet "How to Measure Exhibition Success"

reports are written after the exhibitions to justify the investment made, to improve the next ones to attend and to measure the effectiveness of this marketing channel within the overall marketing strategies. However, it would be useful to set more specific data to analyse, in order to create a standard score analysis to give precise, consistent and quantifiable information on each show in comparison with the goals set before attending the exhibition. In fact, given the importance of exhibitions in the marketing mix it might be useful to create a measurement mix that can help Dunster House to quantify those goals using, for example, the suggested metrics based on the market study by UFI- the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry Organisation ²⁸.

For the leads in particular it would be interesting to have a specific qualification system to provide accurate data for the sales reports. The following suggests a leads qualification system that Dunster House could be included in their exhibitions measurements.

A	Large order, customer ready to buy
B	Small order, ready to buy OR Large order, longer time frame
C	Small order, longer time frame
D	Send literature or add name to database
E	Other', e.g. press, salesmen...

Figure 10: Leads Qualification System

LEADS COST EFFECTIVENESS CALCULATION	
COST OF STAND	£0.00
BUILD UP AND BREAKDOWN OF STAND	£0.00
ACCOMMODATION	£0.00
TRAVEL	£0.00
MARKETING COSTS	£0.00
TOTAL SHOW COST	£0.00
EVENT DURATION	Hrs
AVERAGE SALES VALUE	£0.00
LEAD CONVERSION RATE	%
LEADS REQUIRED PER HOUR	

Figure 11: Leads Cost Effectiveness Calculation

²⁸In "How to measure Exhibition Success, A Workbook for Marketers". Written By Doug Kessler. ufi The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry.
http://www.ufi.org/Medias/pdf/thetradeindustry/exhibition_promotion/ufi_metrics_booklet.pdf

The exhibition marketing strategies may also be measured taking into account all the pre-show activities (advertising, mailings), at show activities (brochures and leaflets given out, competition, partnerships) and post show activities (all the reports, orders, inquires, and others). The opportunity given to the Intern to write a marketing report after attending exhibitions was important to measure critically the success of the whole process behind the exhibitions, including any other relevant information such as recommendations for future exhibitions.

To assess the real value of attending exhibitions, it is essential to start with accurate exhibition attendance figures (including previous years) to give a real picture of their coverage and effectiveness. This is crucial to measuring the exhibition results and ensuring it is more likely that more successful exhibitions will be chosen in the future.²⁹

2.4. 1.1 The role of Exhibitions in International Marketing Strategies

“Almost all managers acknowledge that trade shows represent a major marketing opportunity for firms operating in international business. However, more often than not, senior managers only consider trade shows in terms of sales potential and sales leads.”

(Sharland & Balogh, 1996)

An international strategy is one through which a company sells its goods or services outside its domestic market.³⁰ Implementing and conducting international business strategies is, nowadays, easier than before due to better and cheaper travel, communication becoming more and more global and trade barriers slowly reducing. As Dunster House is rapidly growing, they are looking more for international business development to pursue global sales challenges. Moreover, current local national market opportunities increasing present many restrictions to businesses, such as market saturation, increased competition, which force them to follow an international strategy to grow. However, international business expansion embraces different strategic issues such as

²⁹ In “How to measure Exhibition Success, A Workbook for Marketers”. Written By Doug Kessler. ufi The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry.

<http://www.ufi.org/Medias/pdf/thetradefairsector/exhibition_promotion/ufi_metrics_booklet.pdf>

³⁰M. W. Peng & E. G. Pleggenkuhle-Miles. “Current debates in global strategy”, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 2009, 11(1): 51–68; M. A. Hitt, L. Tihanyi, T. Miller, & B. Connelly, “International diversification: Antecedents, outcomes and moderators”, *Journal of Management*, 2006, 32: 831–867.

international competence, the need to evolve the structure within the company and rising costs (Poul H. Andersen & Jesper Strandkov, 1997). Additionally, the entry modes³¹ in foreign markets along with International Selection Models (ISM)³² and marketing plans may lead to related issues. At Dunster House, international exhibitions are used as an opportunistic means³³ of entering markets abroad. Therefore, exhibitions can be seen as a first stage of entry to foreign markets and assessment of international marketing opportunities. In fact, the market of Dunster House's products in international marketplaces may start in international exhibitions, which later turn into export sales.

The Intern's research for international exhibitions makes clear the reasons behind Dunster House's choice to operate in international markets: need to expand, result of high rate of domestic competition; to increase market size; to attract buyers/ procurement agents within the European retail marketplace and to use key resources in the development of new products. However, to decide which international business strategy to follow may not be that obvious, since it requires much research and development of the markets and products. The research for international exhibitions has proved to be a small part of that long term process.

International exhibitions entail a more multifarious selection with regard to the booking and attendance process, when compared to national exhibitions. This is because they exist in a more complex environment. First, they involve more costs, as the costs of travel, shipping the products; personal accommodation and the show stands themselves are more expensive. Also, having the opportunity to show products in a multicultural environment increases the likelihood of selling them to a broader audience, which also increases the financial investment. Accordingly, managing

³¹ According to International Business literature the three most common entry modes strategies are Exportation, Joint Venturing and Direct Investment.

³² ISM has been formally defined as the process of defining criteria for selecting markets, investigating market potentials, classifying them according to the agreed criteria and selecting which markets should be addressed first and those suitable for later development (Kumar et al., 1994).

³³ Bradley (2004) distinguishes between opportunistic and systematic selection of markets and exhibitions may be considered opportunities taken by the companies to select a market.

and monitoring international exhibitions requires more effort to measure and ensure the investment returns.

A deeper examination of international exhibitions opportunities and risks may also take into consideration contextual factors (Douglas and Craig, 1995). In fact, if national exhibitions require different approaches and strategies since shows vary according to type, indoor or outdoor show and regional disparities; international exhibitions are “more complex, and potentially more volatile than the domestic environment because of the heterogeneity of tastes, culture, and other market variables” (Sharland & Balogh, 1996). It is then necessary to segment Dunster House’s range of products into Lifestyle and Humanitarian products and different customer segmentation, in order to design products that fit particular consumption contexts. As a consequence, considering these two main groups of products, the company has to formulate and implement two different international business strategies. Based on the Ansoff matrix³⁴, the Lifestyle Products may follow a Market Development Strategy, since the company is selling the existing products abroad into new markets. On the other hand, the Humanitarian Products pursue a Product Diversification Strategy, as the company is developing new products and introducing them into new markets.

The research and development of new products is, therefore, aligned with the market research where those products can be positioned and promoted. This is illustrated by the example of the development and launch of sanitation solutions, the main product of the Humanitarian range of products. This launch suggests a “blue ocean” strategy³⁵ defined by the company, through giving rise to a completely different industry and investing in emerging economies when the Western World is being affected by the economic crisis.

³⁴ The Ansoff matrix was first published in 1975 and it is a strategic marketing planning tool that defines four marketing strategies that companies can pursue to grow their business. These strategies include Market Penetration (when companies push existing products in their current market), Market Development (when companies develop new marketing for the existing products), Product Development (when companies develop new products for the existing markets) and Product Diversification (when companies develop new products for new markets).

³⁵The Blue Ocean theory “denote [s] all the industries *not* in existence today -the unknown market space, untainted by competition. In blue oceans, demand is created rather than fought over” (W. Chan Kim & Renée Mauborgne, 2009)

The Eco Composting Toilet, which features a Urine Diversion System (UDS), separating both urine and solid wastes, was launched by Dunster House on World Toilet Day, 19 November 2012, and was designed, along with some other products such as housing solutions, to supply less developed countries, including emerging economies, with practical, economic and eco-friendly solutions. However, investing in these countries may be both a challenge and an opportunity. The opportunity lies in the large scale demand for water, sewage and sanitation supply. Therefore, these countries offer a huge opportunity for investment, considering the high level need for services and products for their populations. On the other hand, the cultural, political and social differences between countries may pose real challenges to companies that want to enter their economies. In this context, the research for international exhibitions to market this specific product has provided valuable insights into those challenges.

Taking into consideration the type of product designed to reach one specific target, more than just attending international exhibitions, it is important to gather as much information as possible on the issue of sanitation as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)³⁶. It is crucial then to understand that these Humanitarian products require a different international strategy, and, therefore, a different international trade show strategy. As a result, it is more effective to attend summits and conferences, initially, as a means of assessing the culture; examining product acceptance; global communication and possible partnerships to make. The sanitation solution is part of a business to business strategy, since Dunster House may manage to market this product to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or trade bulk, while Lifestyle products can be marketed in business to customers at shows such as retail shows. The selection of which shows to attend, therefore, needs to be made with considerable attention and thought.

The participation in these international business events can be an effective means of marketing and communication of Dunster House products. More than selling, it is a means of sharing experience and business to business communication, which facilitate the understanding of different cultures and, as a consequence, the penetration into foreign markets, as they are of

³⁶ "The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest". Goal 7 states the following "Ensure environmental sustainability" by increasing access to safe drinking water and safe basic sanitation. *In United Nations* <<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml>>

interest and attract people and companies from all around the world. For that reason, it is crucial to use people with Intercultural and communication skills at the events, in order not to lose business opportunities.³⁷

Dunster House is still, at the moment, in the process of evaluating the outcomes of the research carried out by the marketing and export departments on this particular product. The complexity involved in the research and selection of events seems to be the same while managing the outcomes of the attendance when turning them into opportunities to export. Political and economic risks involved may be considered before attending the event itself. It is important to assess the potential of the events in terms of the visitors' profiles and behaviour; previous successes and provide an effective analysis of the period following the event. In fact, the follow up of the events may be considered an ongoing information analysis process in which the non-selling activity can provide more valuable insight into the internationalization process of the company, when compared to the actual amount of leads achieved. In this context, the Dunster House's international business strategy needs to include an International Trade Show strategy, blending its marketing strategy with sales and export information, so the opportunistic selection of markets moves towards a more criteria based process, as suggested below:



Figure 12: Dunster House's International Marketing Decision Flow

In conclusion, different types of products require different market strategies, since they may be distributed to different marketplaces. As the international expansion of the company has only

³⁷ Studies carried out by the European Commission and ELAN (*European Language Activity Network*), show the connection between language skills and the success of business relations, namely on exportation. Vieira, Sivia Santos "Importância e Ensino das Línguas Estrangeiras nas Empresas-Um Estudo", 2010.

begun recently³⁸, it is premature to evaluate the effectiveness of exhibitions in the international marketing strategy of the company. The outcomes can only be measured in the long term and will determine the expansion of product development for international markets.

2.5 Marketing strategies: successes and short comings

Dunster House operates in a very large market with the potential for large sales. The opportunities are enormous and, even though the company operates within an industry with high rates of competitiveness, they benefit from a good brand image in the UK market. There is general consensus of this when taking any marketing decisions. The usage of the online world to market and brand their products is, definitely, one of the most valuable and successful marketing strategies. In fact, the company covers highly technological development and has skilled and experienced staff involved in the whole process of designing functional solutions that fit the company's requirements. The department also has experienced manpower in its management, so decisions can be taken quickly, easily and efficiently. Accordingly, regular meeting arrangements allow a good flow of quality trading information throughout the entire department, in order to maximize its the potential within the organizational structure of the company.

Nevertheless, some marketing activities and decisions should be based on a long term strategy and not on a daily decision making process. Unfortunately, the company's focus on incremental and short term decisions can make it difficult to justify the cost of long term campaigns and customer engagement and relationship building. In this context, the company's focus on simultaneous goals of direct customer acquisition in the short term, as well as growing the customer portfolio, can result in tremendous influence and momentum in the long term. Short term promotion policies aim to market particular products at a particular moment, which may ignore the customers' needs and, consequently, the company's performance. Therefore, the investment in a long term approach may not yield immediate returns or outcomes, but might be what it takes to sustain the long term success of the company. For that reason, the company might have to follow a more customer orientated business model, based on customer segmentation and focusing on the needs of the buyer and not those of the seller. Through

³⁸ The company has only attended two international exhibitions so far, Spoga Gafa and Intersolar, both in 2012 in Germany.

accurate data on the customers' profile, location, habits and needs, the company may be able to plan marketing programs longer in advance.

The exhibitions research process cannot be perceived as the short process of searching and booking shows either. In fact, it may also benefit from the potential of a customer/ market segmentation as the whole process of the research requires deeper examination of a series of factors, including the potential knowledge of customers/markets to develop efficient market strategies and product development. The use of knowledge of customers may also contribute to the long term strategies. The exhibitions research similarly needs to be thought out beforehand and must include a clear and efficient approach on the flow of information between the marketing, sales and export departments, so the company can capitalize on this business opportunity.

Finally, shortcomings may also include the lack of information and specific data about marketing efficiency in the other branches, as these are controlled from the Bedford branch.

2.5.1 Recommendations

As a result of the opportunity to work on exhibitions market research, the following recommendations are made to provide a better understanding on the process. There should be an exhibitions procedures manual³⁹ which collects all the important information taken into consideration during the exhibition processes. It is expected that this manual will save time and be easily implemented by providing an accurate methodology to follow for the exhibition processes. The information pulled together in this manual is partly included in this report. Although, due to the specifications for the length of this report, the Intern has decided to create a manual in which more specific information can be provided, namely a marketing approach for exhibitions as part of the company's strategies to promote their products.

Throughout the report there are numerous questions to be considered. The report itself can be used as an informative tool where the company can have access to descriptive and analytical information on the products and overall business strategy, and exhibitions procedures.

³⁹ *Vide* Appendix III

PART III. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: BUSINESS/ MANAGEMENT SKILLS ACQUIRED

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?’
‘That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,’ said the Cheshire Cat.
‘I don’t much care where,’ said Alice.
‘Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,’ said the Cat.
‘So long as I get somewhere,’ Alice added as an explanation.
‘Oh, you’re sure to do that,’ said the Cat, ‘if you only walk long enough.’”
(Lewis Carroll, 1865)

An international internship customized specifically to a student’s academic path has provided an opportunity to gain experience in the real world marketing of a business and has made a difference not only to the Intern’s professional life, but also to the future of the business itself, through the Intern’s cultural and academic inputs over the course of the internship.

Generally the internship has allowed the development of different skills, such as intercultural, communication and team working skills. The intercultural and team working competencies are increasingly important and the opportunity of working within a marketing environment, which encompasses different cultures, has equipped the Intern with the skills to work in a wide variety of contexts. The daily interaction in a foreign language, by means of writing and presenting information, has also permitted further refinement of communication and presentation skills.

The development of professional skills such as marketing report writing skills, analytical and critical skills have helped to shape a professional identity towards the ability of adopting strategic responses to different market environments through continuous market research on exhibitions during the internship. The findings of the work carried out also include the development of skills in product management and promotional strategy.

The changes to the initial program, as the Intern had to perform tasks related to competition assessment, have provided valuable insights not only in terms of professional ability to adapt to unexpected changing conditions, but also in the different synergies within the department, which

would later benefit the exhibitions processes. Those insights also include interpersonal, problem solving, time and stress management skills.

Finally, the daily challenge, resulting from the involvement in different tasks, offered the possibility of engagement in a growing learning experience that went from a narrow and unspecific idea of how a marketing department works, to a clear understanding of the big picture of business life. Nevertheless, professional growth is of no value if there is no self-awareness and appraisal of personal performance. Therefore, one may not dissociate professional development from personal maturity. These two are intimately correlated, as they strongly rely on the whole learning process through discovery and challenges, failure and successes, fears and achievements. In any case, learning enriches the person and helps shape future goals and refine career paths. In the end, learning is more than an internship or education: it is facing and solving real world problems, which requires personal commitment, responsibility and ethics. Consequently, the professional growth gained through this international experience is not an outcome; it is rather an ongoing process of enhancing employability in the long run.

CONCLUSION

A new world order, imposed by the effects of globalization, is shifting domestic economies towards a broader trade and investment. Marketing plays a crucial role in this shifting process. An internship in the marketing department provided the contact not only with the professional world, but also with that reality of observing how effectively the advertising channels, in particular the exhibitions, affect the business strategy of a company like Dunster House. This professional experience has allowed valuable insights into the marketing field that none of the other options available to end the Masters programme would allow.

The opportunity of participating in the expansion of the company, through the research and booking of an increasing number of exhibitions, was itself a means of professional growth. This opportunity included introducing new ideas, changing and creating new procedures. As a result, the chance to work in a truly engaging team and participatory environment, in which there was no distinction between the Intern and the full time employees, has allowed effective progress through the experience. The structure of this report itself reflects the chronological process of the experience through the understanding of the company, its history and range of products, organisational structure, industry and customer segmentation, business strategy, advertising channels to the understanding of the whole process behind exhibitions.

Working directly with the Marketing and Exhibitions Managers allowed not only working and learning by observing experienced professionals in the marketing field, but also increased and encouraged the responsibility and commitment to effectively perform a wider range of duties.

Successes in the workplace during the internship also proved that communication skills are essential, in line with the goals of the Masters programme. The biggest challenges included the management of anxiety while communicating in a foreign language with other departments, understanding accurately the information for the assignment of different responsibilities and contacting Exhibitions or Trade Shows Offices. To overcome these difficulties, it was necessary to plan, create forms for organizing, defining, implementing action points, documenting tasks performed on a regular basis and reporting them to managers. In this context, it was possible to apply some skills acquired in other professional environments, such as time management and organisational skills.

Writing this report in English has also proved to be an efficient strategy for the improvement of the Intern's language skills. This report has ultimately provided an important tool to understand

the company, its products and operations, not only in terms of the marketing channels, but also in the production, prototype and launch of products. In particular, it has allowed a critical perception of all the activities from a business point of view. Pulling all the information together related to the exhibitions process provided a better and proper understanding of all the procedures required. At the same time, it has offered valuable insight into the UK Exhibitions market.

Choosing a main topic was also a crucial aspect of this internship report, as it is not sufficient to state all the activities the Intern has carried out. This choice aimed not only to treat a topic with academic relevance, but also to benefit the company with information on hugely invested projects like exhibitions.

The change of the initial program has also produced the development of skills such as flexibility and adaptability. Thus, the initial program was not only achieved, but also enhanced by assigning other tasks, which have, in the end, improved on the initial ones.

Finally, the reflection on this experience, as a last stage of an academic path, is an important moment to recognise the skills acquired, but also to be sure of what to do next in terms of professional career. This internship was therefore a privilege, since to work for a company such as Dunster House has offered such a remarkable and valuable experience which will certainly provide an open door to the labour market.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I – COMPETITIVE PROMOTIONS REPORT

Competitive Promotions Report

Prepared for Dunster House

Cecilia Rodrigues

Competitive Promotions Report

This report aims to provide snapshot information on Dunster House main competitors' promotions during the current week.

Climbing Frames UK

- The company presents offers on “**In stock products**”, which include discounts on products such as:



Lacey Fort Climbing Frame
212921



Sherborn Climbing Frame
212365



Utah Climbing Frame
210101



Westvale Climbing Frame
23800



Atlantic Climbing Frame
65210



Melford Climbing Frame
212952



Grandview Climbing Frame
212860



Penshurst Climbing Frame
212402



Arlington Climbing Frame
212433

- The company continues presenting **Manager's special offers** on chosen products. This week offers include the following discounts:



Meadowvale Climbing Frame
24035



Harwood Climbing Frame
212525



Atlantic Climbing Frame
65210



Sandpoint Climbing Frame
211719

- **“Package Deals”** is another promotion on Climbing Frames and Outdoor Toys, when buying a kit. The products in the package deal cannot be changed by the customer.



Belfort Prestige Climbing Frame



This product, for example, includes:

- Straight Slide
- Rockwall Ladder
- 1.2m (4ft) High Deck
- Vinyl Roof
- Sandpit Area
- Picnic Table
- Small Garden
- Medium Garden
- Swings
- Trapeze Bar

CABIN LIVING

- **25% off all underfloor heating orders made in March 2013.** The prices also include connection to a fused spur as part of any full electrical installation by the company's electricians.

Garden Buildings Direct

- **Promotions** include *Deals* such as *Warehouse clearance*; *Low priced Bargains* and *Hot Deals*. The company also offers *Great Values* and *Everyday low prices*.
- **Low priced bargains** include promotions on garden storage, sheds, log cabins and plastic products.

BillyOh 4000M Lincoln Tongue and Groove Double Door Apex Garden Shed

- > Cladding: Tongue & Groove
- > Range: Deluxe
- > Delivery: FREE to most of mainland UK*

*FREE Delivery
Most of mainland UK typically
2-5 working days

From: **£199.49**

Options (sizes approx)

8 x 6	From: £199.49
7 x 7	From: £209.99
7 x 8	Was: £229.99 Now from: £219.99
6 x 8	From: £219.99
10 x 6	From: £289.49
8 x 8	From: £289.99
6 x 10	Was: £299.99 Now from: £289.99
9 x 8	From: £299.99
10 x 7	From: £299.99
7 x 10	Was: £349.99 Now from: £309.99

[View Product](#)

Everyday LOW Prices



BillyOh Clubman Log Cabin

- > Log Thickness: 19mm
- > Roof Style: Alpine
- > Doors: Double Half Glazed

Options (sizes approx)

3.0 x 2.5m Only: **£799.49**

[> View Product](#)

*FREE Delivery
Most of mainland UK typically
5-10 working days

- **Hot Deals** include promotions on products such as Sheds, Log Cabins, Garden Storage and others.

HOT DEALS **5000**



SAVE £19.59

6 x 10 Workmans T&G Apex Shed
(floor options available)
Was £399.49

NOW **£379.90**

FREE Delivery Typically 2-5 Working Days* Most of mainland UK

HOT DEALS



10 x 8 4000 Lincoln T&G Apex
(floor options available)

from only **£329.49**

FREE Delivery Typically 2-5 Working Days* Most of mainland UK

HOT DEALS



SAVE £10.09

Mad Dash Bunny Tower Xtra Playhouse
Was £219.99

NOW **£209.90**

FREE Delivery Typically 2-5 Working Days* Most of mainland UK

- **Great Values** include promotions on products such as Sheds, Log Cabins, Garden Storage and others.

GREAT VALUE **BILLYOH**



10 YEARS WARRANTY

from only **£133.49**

8x20 POPULAR
Classic Overlap

FREE DELIVERY [VIEW PRODUCT](#)

GREAT VALUE **BILLYOH**



10 YEARS WARRANTY

from only **£99.99**

BUDGET 3x6
30S Windowless

FREE DELIVERY [VIEW PRODUCT](#)

- **Everyday low prices** include promotions on products such as Sheds, Log Cabins, Summerhouses, Play houses and others.



Premium Lodge Log Cabin 3.5m x 3.0m

from only **£719.49**

FREE Delivery Typically 5-10 Working Days* Most of mainland UK



Premium Sportsman Log Cabin 3.5m x 2.5m

from only **£859.49**

FREE Delivery Typically 5-10 Working Days* Most of mainland UK



Premium Montana Log Cabin 4.0m x 3.0m.

from only **£1,149.49**














FREE Delivery Typically 5-10 Working Days* Most of mainland UK

HORTONS GROUP

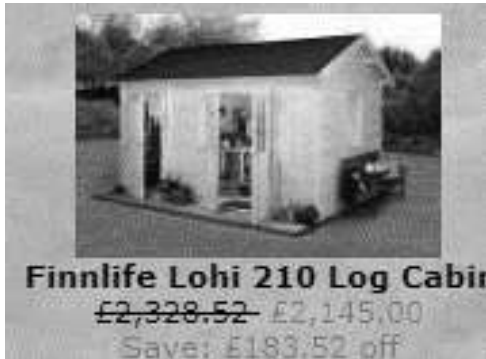
- **Monthly specials for March** include promotions on log cabins. The promotions have been changed from last week.

LAST WEEK

CURRENT WEEK

Monthly Specials For February			Monthly Specials For March		
 <p>Used Treated Railway Sleepers £26.00 £24.71 Save: £1.29 off</p>	 <p>18mm Gravel £100.00 £77.77 Save: £22.23 off</p>	 <p>10mm Shingle £80.00 £57.77 Save: £22.23 off</p>	 <p>Cresley 33mm 5.0 x 11.0m £5,000.00 £3,908.22 Save: £1,091.78 off</p>	 <p>Easbourne 33mm 5.0 x 12m £2,400.00 £1,158.24 Save: £1,241.76 off</p>	 <p>Folkestone 33mm 5.0 x 11.0m £3,000.00 £1,504.54 Save: £1,495.46 off</p>
 <p>Fossilite Pulli 2.75 x 4.1m £3,300.00 £1,061.77 Save: £2,238.23 off</p>	 <p>20mm Shingle £80.00 £57.77 Save: £22.23 off</p>	 <p>20mm Gravel £80.00 £57.77 Save: £22.23 off</p>	 <p>Hustington 33mm 5x2m £2,475.00 £2,443.25 Save: £31.75 off</p>	 <p>Regate 33m 4.0 x 4.0m £2,475.00 £2,365.25 Save: £109.75 off</p>	 <p>Sarah Log Cabin 45mm 2.5 x 2.5m £2,000.00 £1,803.28 Save: £196.72 off</p>
 <p>Building Sand £22.00 £15.19 Save: £6.81 off</p>	 <p>Beamlock post & beam double timber garages and carriage houses £4,000.00 £4,136.52 Save: £136.52 off</p>	 <p>Es display 10' x 8' Extra strong treated studio summerhouse £1,900.00 £1,792.50 Save: £107.50 off</p>	 <p>Sheffield 45mm 3.0 x 4.0m £2,500.00 £2,440.42 Save: £59.58 off</p>	 <p>Middlesbrough 45mm 3.0 x 3.0m £2,275.00 £2,176.20 Save: £98.80 off</p>	 <p>Bracknell 45mm 3.0 x 3.0m £2,200.00 £2,127.27 Save: £72.73 off</p>

- The company has also **Special offers** on the following Log Cabins:



I LIKE LOG CABINS

- The company has changed the sale of the week comparing it to the previous week.

I LIKE SHEDS

- The company has not changed the sale of the week comparing it to the previous week.

MERIT GARDEN PRODUCTS

- The company has finished the *Sale on this week* promotion and changed the head banner by a different image.



SUMMER GARDEN BUILDINGS

- The company continues offering different promotions on some products.



Cedar Victorian Greenhouse 594 - Steep Roof, Hinged Door

20 sizes, eg 6'x8' £4246, eg 8'x10' £5439, eg 10'x13' £6827
Width 6'5", 7'8" or 10'0". Lengths from 5'4" to 20'7". These traditionally styled cedar greenhouses feature a steep Victorian style roof pitch and a narrow module glazing design.... [...more info](#)

OFFER

Free staging & shelf - until 14th Mar

Free Installation Free delivery Low Rate Finance



Apex Shed 063 - Shiplap, T and G Floor and Roof

12 sizes eg 4'x6' £218, eg 6'x8' £284, eg 8'x10' £541
Sizes from 4'x4' to 8'x12'. These high quality shiplap sheds are traditionally made with large rigid panels and a factory fitted door, unlike other budget priced sheds. Other... [...more info](#)

SAVE!

5% OFF - until 7th Mar!

Free delivery

LOG CABINS



28mm Corner Cabin Offer 201 - Georgian, Double Door

one size, 10'x10' reduced to £1399
Size 10'x10'. This incredible value log cabin is designed to suit a corner location and features 28mm thick logs. Quality features include double hinged doors with a mortice lock.... [...more info](#)

SAVE!

Clearance price fixed until 7th Mar!



Hexagonal Double Door 45mm Log Cabin 96

one size, 12'x10' £2480
Size 3.5x3.0m. 45mm thick wall logs. This superb hexagonal log cabin features double doors with two opening windows and three non opening windows. All round glazing creates a light... [...more info](#)

SAVE!

Special low price fixed until 7th Mar

Optional Installation Includes delivery Low Rate Finance

TIGER SHEDS

➤ The company is offering a **March Madness sale** which includes discounts on many buildings, such as sheds, store boxes, garages and log cabins. Offers end on Thursday, 14th and the prices shown have already been discounted to reflect the sale.



Comparing one of the log cabins on promotion to a similar one from our range:

The Panthera | 28mm



- 3mx3m
- 28mm
- 19mm T&G Roof&Floor
- Fully Glazed Double Doors
- Installation included

Log Cabin Deluxe Avon 300 Log Cabin



- 3mx3m
- 28mm
- 19mm T&G Roof&Floor
- Toughened Glass Double Glazing
- Installation: 537.00

➤ The company keeps the **delivery promotion**, offering **free and fast deliver** within the number of working days as marked on the logo for individual products.



TUIN

- The company is offering a wide range of products on sale, such as log cabins, garages, garden furniture, gazebos and outdoor toys.



Looking at one of the Log Cabins on promotion:



Britt Log Cabin 3x2.5m

Log Cabin Measuring 2x3.5m/28mm interlocking logs

£863.98

RRP: £1,166.37 Save 26%

- **Log Cabins 'Private Label' Sale** is an offer for a limited time. The cabins included in this promotion are not in the company's catalogue. **There are a total of 53 log cabins on Sale.**

Log Cabins 'Private Label' Sale

Log Cabins from our 'Private Label' range on offer for a limited time. These cabins are not in our catalogue and available at very special prices for consumers. A really cheap log cabin!



Hanneke Log Cabin 3x3m

REGULAR PRICE: £1416.12

SALE PRICE: £1048.98

3 Weeks, 5 Days, 1 Hour, 10 Minutes remaining for this offer!

The Hanneke Log Cabin measuring 3x3m in 28mm interlocking logs.



Washington Log Cabin 5.4 x 5.4m 3m Veranda

REGULAR PRICE: £5095.39

SALE PRICE: £3774.36

3 Weeks, 5 Days, 2 Hours, 10 Minutes remaining for this offer!

The 50mm Washington Log Cabin measuring 5.4m x 5.4m. A verandah of 3m is to the front. Double Glazed.



Flevoland Log Cabin 4.4 x 3.4m

REGULAR PRICE: £3638.84

SALE PRICE: £2695.44

3 Weeks, 5 Days, 1 Hour, 10 Minutes remaining for this offer!

The 58mm Flevoland Log Cabin measuring 4.4m x 3.4m. Featuring double glazing as standard, and a large front verandah of 2m.

- ▶ **Weekly special offers** on some products. The company changes these offers every Friday at 9:00 am.

Weekly Offers

Weekly special offers: These offers change every Friday at 0900 and are rarely repeated.



Tourist Open Gazebo
3.4x3.4m

REGULAR PRICE: ~~£1278.03~~
SALE PRICE: £1022.43
2 Days, 17 Hours, 10 Minutes remaining for this offer!

The Tourist Open Gazebo measures 3.4x3.4m and is perfect for providing shelter within the garden. Featuring a pyramid style roof, roof shingles are included as standard - available in a choice of five colours.



Hardwood Tree Seat

REGULAR PRICE: ~~£435.87~~
SALE PRICE: £348.69
2 Days, 17 Hours, 10 Minutes remaining for this offer!

Complete with ecru cushion set. 69/185cm



Picnic Table Deluxe

REGULAR PRICE: ~~£328.09~~
SALE PRICE: £262.47
2 Days, 17 Hours, 10 Minutes remaining for this offer!

Softwood picnic table: 180 x 155 x 72cm

APPENDIX II- WEBSITE COMPETITIVE REPORT

Website Competitive Report

Prepared for Dunster House

Cecilia Rodrigues

Website competitive report

This report intends to give an analysis of Dunster House main competitors' websites in order not only to check what the competition is doing but also to provide useful information for Dunster House online goal setting and planning strategy.

Who's the competition?

- Garden Buildings Direct
- Walton
- Tiger Sheds
- Elbec (We do not have access to the site)
- Taylors Garden Buildings

What to analyse?

- Homepage
- Navigation
- Site organization
- Links and labels
- Search Results
- Readability
- Performance
- Content

GARDEN BUILDINGS DIRECT

URL: <http://www.gardenbuildingsdirect.co.uk>

Homepage

- ✓ Flash head banner with promotional campaigns changed comparing it to the last month;
- ✓ A lot of substantiated information showing their main products and setting the proper context for the visitor (one top and right side menu);

! Both menus include the range of products which could reveal an attempt to make the homepage more accessible but the way menus are presented shows no coherence and it becomes repetitive for the user. Besides that, there is also the possibility of “view all departments” (view all the products), which makes the homepage overcrowded of information;

- ✓ Side Menus (right and left one) include Guides and social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blog and YouTube);
- ! Available only in English;
- ! Not accessible for the disabled;
- ! Too colourful and confusing in terms of campaigns presented (Hot Deals/ Great values/Everyday Low prices red sashes).



Navigation

- ✓ The navigation system is easy to use, since the menus provide direct access to various contents on the site;
- ✓ The images are also very intuitive and easy to understand, presenting an alternative method of navigating through the website;
- ! Apparently we can return to homepage from any page, but if we click on “Find more for your garden” options there is no way to go back to the homepage since we are already navigating in other sites of the company: too confusing for the user.



Site organization

- ! The site is apparently easy to use and understand but, for example, some of the head banner images contain a hyperlink but others do not have it, which is confusing for the user;
- ! The user has to scroll down a lot in order to reach other parts of the pages;
- ! No consistency in the presentation of information. For example, on the homepage, at the bottom, there is a section for sheds specifically and it is not easy to understand the criteria behind that choice of including that product and not any other else from the range;



- ! At the bottom of the homepage they also include the social media links, but they forgot to include the link to the blog.

Links and labels

- ! Links are not spread out in a consistent way: some images contain them, but others from the same group don't. The same with words;
- ! Shed products have a "shed quick link" but other products no, which may confuse the user. These links are useless since there are too many options to access the same pages.

Search Results

- ! No advanced search functions;
- ✓ Search results have the option of being sorted by "best sellers", lowest price", "highest price" and "product name";
- ! The results are not organized and are difficult to understand. In a search for "summerhouse" these are the results:

The screenshot shows search results for 'summerhouse' with 35 product results. The results are displayed in a grid format. The first result is 'BillyOh 5000 Georgian Corner Summer House' with a price from £524.99. The second result is 'BillyOh Pathfinder Huntsman Log Cabins' with a price from £799.49. The third result is 'BillyOh 4000M Lucia Tongue and Groove Summerhouse' with a price from £299.99. The fourth result is 'BillyOh Pathfinder 'Nook' Log Cabin' with a price of £649.49. The labels for the products are inconsistent, with some using 'Summer House', 'Log Cabins', and 'Summerhouse'. The prices are also inconsistent, with some showing 'From' and others showing 'Only'. The search results are not organized and are difficult to understand.

1st result

2nd result

3rd result

4th result

- ! The search results do not remind the user of the product searched for.

Readability

- ! The contrast between the colour of the text and its background is not sufficient in some cases;
- ! Use of footnotes completely inappropriate for a website;
- ! Text is not always easy to read: font size too small.

Performance

- ✓ Easy web viewing of optimized images;
- ✓ Pages load quickly;
- ✓ Direct links to key action point immediately ;
- ✓ Intuitive URL.

Content

- ! Too much depth and breadth of content offering which makes the web too repetitive;
 - ! The content matches the company's goals and the needs of the audience, but the repetitive amount of contents may confuse and annoy the user since it is easy to become lost while navigating on the website;
 - ! The website is not being updated;
 - ! Animation should be used to add value to the website rather than reducing the performance without providing any benefit to the user. In some case, when the user clicks on a product the next page is animated with more adverts. If the user clicks on the product it means it may be interested on that and therefore wants to know more about it, but it is not interested in fancy animations that may annoy at some point;
-
- ✓ Average mix of in-depth information versus superficial content;



Misleading advertising content.

The screenshot shows a website header for 'gardenbuildings.co.uk' with a telephone sales number '0800 169 6016'. Below the header is a 'PRICE MATCH' banner for a 'BILLYOH LINCOLN 4000 POPULAR TONGUE AND GROOVE DOUBLE DOOR APEX GARDEN SHED'. A 'Price promise' text states: 'We aim to be lowest price online. If you have seen the same product or a like for like product then please let us know by filling in the form below, and we will do our best to beat that price.' The form includes fields for 'Your name:', 'Your email:', and 'Your Telephone:'. It also has a section 'Which option have you seen cheaper elsewhere:' with radio button options for various shed sizes and prices: 7 x 5 (£189.49), 8 x 6 (£224.49), 10 x 6 (£269.49), 12 x 6 (£314.99), 10 x 8 (£329.49), 12 x 8 (£349.49), 16 x 10 (£589.49), and 20 x 10 (£699.49). There are also fields for 'Price found: £', 'Price location? (url if possible):', and 'Other info (e.g additional options/delivery costs):'. A 'Submit Details' button is at the bottom.

Price Match of products is apparently a strategy to benefit the customer but it is indeed a way for the company to get information from its competitors.

- ✓ Basic contents of a website are included: Terms and Conditions, FAQs;
- ✓ Connexion to current job opportunities with the company.

WALTON

URL: <http://www.waltons.co.uk>

Homepage

- ✓ Flash head banner with promotional campaigns changed comparing it to the last month. Three of the images remain the same;
- ✓ Images below have also been changed ;



- ✓ Substantiated information showing their main products and setting the proper context for the visitor (two top menus);
- ✓ Top menus include “about” the company, FAQs, Help & Support and Blog. Below that menu there is another one with the range of products. The menus are presented in a clear, logic and moderate way;
- ✓ The homepage provides immediate contact details such as sales & customer services which gives an open feel and add a personal touch to come back to the site again;
- ! The background image does not match with the rest of the website.



- ✓ Side Menus (right one) includes contacts, payment options and Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Google +, YouTube, Pinterest and Blog);
- ! Available only in English;
- ! Not accessible for the disabled;
- ✓ Page not too long with content disposed in an organized and logic way.



Navigation

- ✓ The navigation system is easy to use, since the menus provide direct access to various contents on the site;
- ✓ The images are also very intuitive and easy to understand, presenting an alternative method of navigating through the website;
- ! When going to one page there is no way for the user to know in which page he/she is unless looking at the URL.

Site organization

- ✓ The site is easy to use and understand. All the head banner images contain a hyperlink;
- ✓ The user doesn't have to scroll down a lot in order to reach other parts of the pages;
- ✓ Consistency in the presentation of information.

Links and labels

- ! There are no labels in section headers for the user to understand where he/ she is on the website;
- ! Links are not easy to distinguishing from each other.

Search Results

- ! No advanced search functions;
- ✓ Search results have the option of being sorted by "A-Z", "Price Ascending", "Price Descending";
- ✓ The results are organized and are easy to understand. In a search for "summerhouse", for example, the results match the search.

Readability

- ! Some images contain text with poor contrast;
- ! Script may cause screen flicker;
- ! Text is not always easy to read: font size too small.



Performance

- ✓ Easy web viewing of optimized images;
- ✓ Pages load quickly;
- ✓ Direct links to key action point immediately ;
- ✓ Intuitive URL.

Content

- ✓ Moderate to high quality content offering;
- ✓ Good combination of information with animations and images;
- ✓ The content matches the company's goals and the needs of the audience.
Playhouses and outdoor images are appealing;
- ✓ Information presented in an interactive way;
- ✓ Animation is used to add value and provide benefit to the user;
- ✓ Good mix of in-depth material (products information) *versus* other content (product reviews, for example).

TIGER SHEDS

URL: <http://www.tigersheds.com>

Homepage

- ✓ Flash head banner with promotional campaigns changed comparing it to the last month.



- ! The homepage forwards the user only to promotional campaigns and to a couple of products;



- ! The user gets to understand the range of products offered only by the top menu since the homepage only refers to sheds and a workshop (even though the company's name is very suggestive). Thus the homepage doesn't set the proper context for the visitor in an immediate contact;
- ✓ One top menu which includes GARDEN SHEDS/ LOG CABINS/ SUMMERHOUSES/WOODEN PLAYHOUSES/STORAGE SHEDS/ METAL SHEDS/ PET HOUSES & OTHER/ MARCH MADNESS SALE;
- ✓ The menu is presented in a clear, logic and moderate way;
- ✓ The homepage provides immediate contact details, help and centre options;
- ✓ Bottom menu includes Help& Advice, Payment options and Social Media (Facebook, Twitter and Google+);
- ! Available only in English;
- ! Not accessible for the disabled;
- ✓ Page long enough with content disposed in an organized and logic way.

Navigation

- ✓ The navigation system is easy to use, since the menus provide direct access to various contents on the site;
- ✓ The images are also very intuitive and easy to understand, presenting an alternative method of navigating through the website;
- ✓ The top menu is frozen when scrolling down, which facilitates the navigation;
- ! When going to one page it is not clear for the user to know in which page he/she is.

Site organization

- ✓ The site is easy to use and understand. All the head banner images contain a hyperlink;
- ✓ The user doesn't have to scroll down a lot in order to reach other parts of the pages;
- ✓ Consistency in the presentation of information: all the pages have the same layout and use images/text in a consistent way.

Links and labels

- ✓ There are labels in section headers for the user to understand where he/ she is on the website;
- ! Links are not easy to distinguishing from each other.

Search Results

- ! No advanced search functions;
- ✓ Search results have the option of being sorted by “Name A-Z”, “Name Z-A”, “Price Low to High”, “High to Low”, “Delivery Time”;
- ✓ The results are organized and are easy to understand. In a search for “summerhouse”, for example, the results match the search.

Readability

- ! In general, the contrast between the text colour and its background is not sufficient
- ! Images contain text with poor contrast;
- ! Text is not always easy to read: font size too small.



Performance

- ✓ Easy web viewing of optimized images;
- ✓ Pages load quickly;
- ✓ Direct links to key action point immediately ;
- ✓ Intuitive URL.

Content

- ✓ Moderate quality content offering;
- ✓ Good combination of information with animations and images;
- ✓ The content matches the company’s goals and the needs of the audience;
- ✓ Information presented in a very interactive way. For example, putting the mouse on an image and it will change the appearance, thus giving the user ideas how to display the product;
- ✓ Animation is used to add value and provide benefit to the user;

- ✓ Good mix of in-depth material (products information) *versus* other content (product reviews, for example).

TAYLORS GARDEN BUIDLINGS

URL: <http://www.taylorsgardenbuildings.co.uk>

Homepage

- ! The homepage of the website is not specific. The URL forwards the user for the 1st page on the right, but if he or she clicks on the menu “Home” it will be forwarded to a different page even though it contains a similar content from the other one.



The welcoming message is useless after presenting the categories of products.

- ! The homepage forwards the user to the range of products using the title “Main Categories” (not intuitive) but in a very confusing way, without any criterion. The titles of products are not clear or highlighted enough;
- ! Top menu includes Products/ about us/ Delivery/ Brochure Request/ Contact us and Blog. This menu is not consistent since the company should not use the main menu with an option of brochure request. It should not also use the main menu for the blog, since the company uses other social media, as the twitter. The main

menu could be used to specify the products instead of including just the general tag of “Products”

- ! Side menu with products but not all of them. This menu is not highlighted enough as a main menu of the range of products. The way it is presented is not attractive either;



- ✓ The menu is not presented in a clear, logic and moderate way;
- ✓ The homepage does not provide immediate contact details;
- ! Colours are too light, not distinguishable, making it difficult for the user to see content, including separating foreground from background.
- ✓ Social media are not presented/ used efficiently within the company’s communication business strategy. Twitter is just mentioned as this:



- ! Available only in English;

- ! Not accessible for the disabled;
- ✓ Page too long with content not disposed in a disorganized way.

Navigation

- ✓ The navigation system is easy to use;
- ✓ The images present an alternative method of navigating through the website;
- ! When going to one page it is not clear for the user to know in which page he/she is.

Site organization

- ! The site is not easy to use or to understand.
- ! The blog opens in the same page as the website. It should open in a different web page. The blog is extremely confusing and disorganized and it was built as another page of the website using the same layout. This shows the company has no concerns about developing an effective social media communication business strategy. There is no reference or connection to Facebook on the website even though the company has its page;
- ! Many black spaces throughout all the website;
- ! The user has to scroll down a lot in order to reach other parts of the pages.

Links and labels

- ! Links are not easy to distinguish from each other.

Search Results

- ✓ *Search by* tool has the following options:

- ! In a search for “summerhouse”, for example, the first 15 results do not match the search.









The image shows a search tool interface with the following elements:

- A search bar at the top with a magnifying glass icon and the text "Search by ...".
- A "Phrase" section with a text input field containing "summerhouse".
- A "Product type" section with a dropdown menu showing "All".
- An "Approximate size" section with a dropdown menu showing "All".
- A "Price range" section with two input fields and a "Search" button at the bottom right.

Products Found

[Compare Products](#) > [Clear](#) > Please click on the products below for detailed information

 <p>A Safe and Natural Wood Treatment 5 Litres A natural treatment for wood, a safe way to preserve and stain your shed, summerhouse, log cabin or fence. FREE Delivery 5-10 working days</p> <p>MSSP : € 26.99, Our Price : € 22.99 , save €4</p> Details >	 <p>Floral Wall Clock Weather Station A wall clock and weather station featuring floral design. Use to measure both temperature and humidity. Ideal for both indoor and outdoor use. FREE Delivery Within 7 Working Days</p> <p>MSSP : € 28.99, Our Price : € 25.99 , save €3</p> Details >
 <p>Protek Wood Protector Colours 5L Protek Wood protector with 5 year protection in 16 colours, can be used on any porous material FREE Delivery 5-10 working days</p> <p>MSSP : € 28.99, Our Price : € 25.99 , save €4</p> Details >	 <p>Radio Controlled Weather Station A Radio Controlled clock with built in thermometer and hygrometer. Ideal for conservatories, summerhouses as well as outdoor walls. FREE Delivery Within 7 Working Days</p> <p>MSSP : € 34.99, Our Price : € 29.99 , save €5</p> Details >
 <p>Decking Wood Stain 2.5 Litres A Wood Stain for timber Decking. The Solution creates a Hard coating which is water repellent and Crack resistant. FREE Delivery 5-10 working days</p> <p>MSSP : € 38.99, Our Price : € 32.29 , save €6</p> Details >	 <p>Solar PIR Porch Light Highly portable Solar Powered Porch Light with built in PIR detector. Suitable for garages, workshops, log cabins and other garden buildings. FREE Delivery Out of stock until further notice</p> <p>MSSP : € 39.99, Our Price : € 36.99 , save €3</p> Details >

Readability

- ! In general, the contrast between the text colour and its background is not sufficient;
- ! Images contain text with poor contrast;
- ! Text is not always easy to read: font size too small.

Performance

- ✓ Easy web viewing of optimized images;
- ✓ Pages load quickly;
- ! *Search by* tool takes too long to download;
- ✓ Direct links to key action point immediately ;
- ✓ Intuitive URL.

Content

- ! Poor quality content offering;
- ! Poor combination of information with animations and images;

- ! The content matches the company's goals by showing the products but not in an effective way since the website is not easy to use and the user gets easily lost by the amount of information. Use of scroll down boxes with overcrowded information.



- ! No interaction or animation in the presentation of information;
- ! Poor mix of in-depth material (products information) *versus* other content (product reviews, for example).

APPENDIX III – EXHIBITIONS PROCEDURES MANUAL

EXHIBITIONS PROCEDURES MANUAL

PREPARED FOR DUNSTER HOUSE

CECILIA RODRIGUES

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MANUAL INTRODUCTION

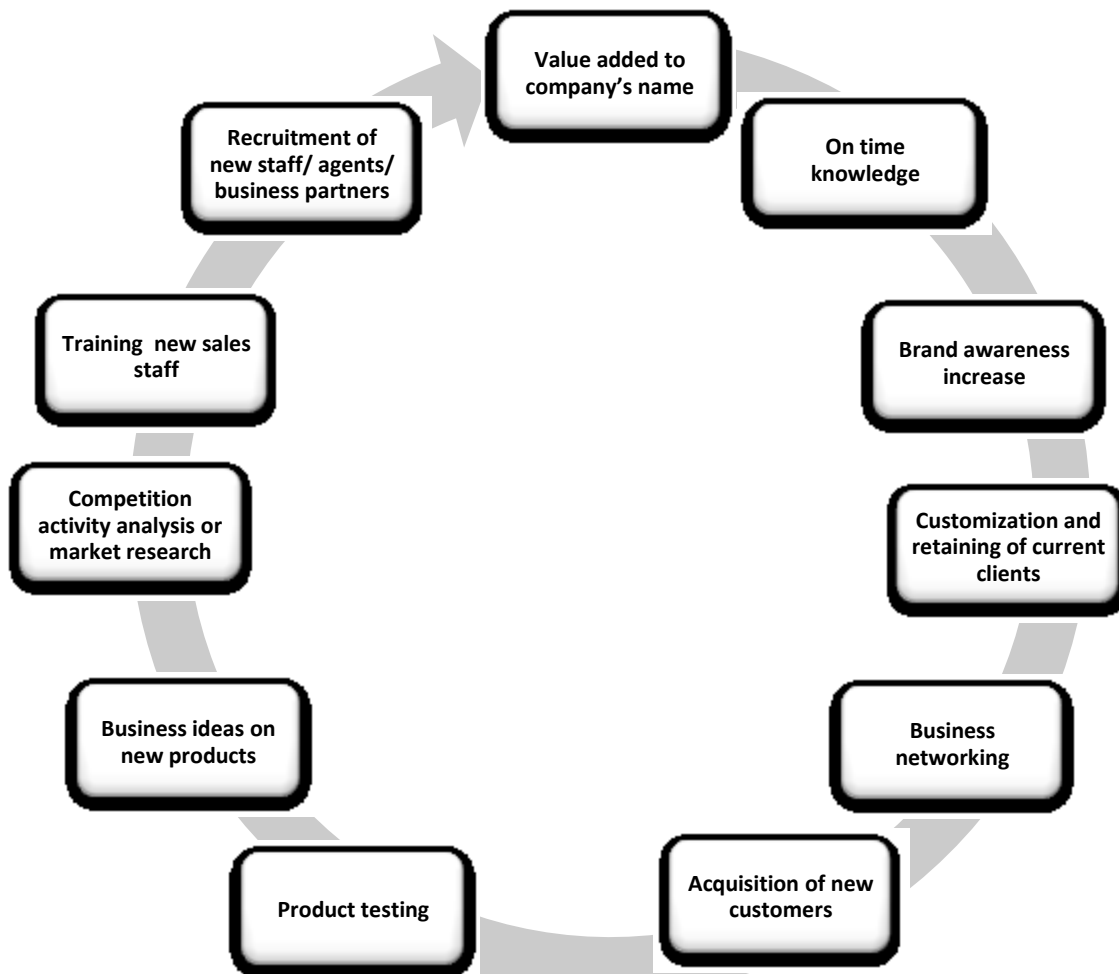
The present manual intends to provide accurate and substantial information on the necessary procedures during the booking process of national and international exhibitions, for the benefit of Dunster House. Terms defined in this manual shall form part of an internship experience in the marketing department of the company, namely on the exhibitions process, carried out by Cecilia Rodrigues, and shall, therefore, be taken as a recommendation.

The information gathered in this manual is the result of reliable sources the intern came across during the learning, researching and booking process of exhibitions. Furthermore, the procedures suggest an attempt to reflect the company's philosophy, appropriate and consistent with applicable rules of property and privacy.

This manual includes information already provided by the company through the existent exhibitions procedures, but also encompasses market research approaches in addition to marketing strategies, in a visual and comprehensive method, to be considered during the pre and post exhibitions periods.

1. REASONS FOR EXHIBITIONS

When thinking about the reasons why the company attends an exhibition, the obvious answer may be to get financial revenues. Although, attending an exhibition may be more than that since exhibitions, in a company like Dunster House, do not generally give the same return as Google or newspaper advertising. Therefore, the company attends exhibitions to spread brand awareness and presence and to place its staff in front of the right demographic at the right time. These two reasons intertwine quite significantly and although the company does not always attend the most cost effective ones, it makes sure it attends those where the demographics are largely right to market the products. This strategy has proved to be beneficial as customers may not buy at the show but later in the year at a more appropriate time because they became aware of the brand. Overall the following list the main reasons Dunster house attends exhibitions:



2. NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

There are many reasons to attend an exhibition and all of them account for the company's marketing activity depending if the events are national or overseas. Accordingly, international exhibitions or shows assume great importance in the company's international marketing activity. It is then crucial that the company is aware that national and international exhibitions require different efforts, objectives, communication skills and marketing strategies to be able to monitor the impact these two different types of exhibitions have within the company's business strategy.

In particular, international exhibitions provide the opportunity to create leads and establish relationships with agents, other manufacturers and distributors that can lead to expansion into foreign markets. These shows can also be a fertile ground to create relationships with new customers for small or middle sized businesses, thus cutting time for exporting. They can also present an opportunity to meet new ideas on exhibiting the products in different ways at future events but also at home display areas or national shows.

For a company like Dunster House attending exhibitions over the last few years, it is important not to exhibit on an automatic or repeated basis without questioning the appropriateness or effectiveness of the shows attended. Mainly it is important to differentiate the results from a national and international exhibition. For that, it is necessary to compare the results between national and international exhibitions, as shown in the example:

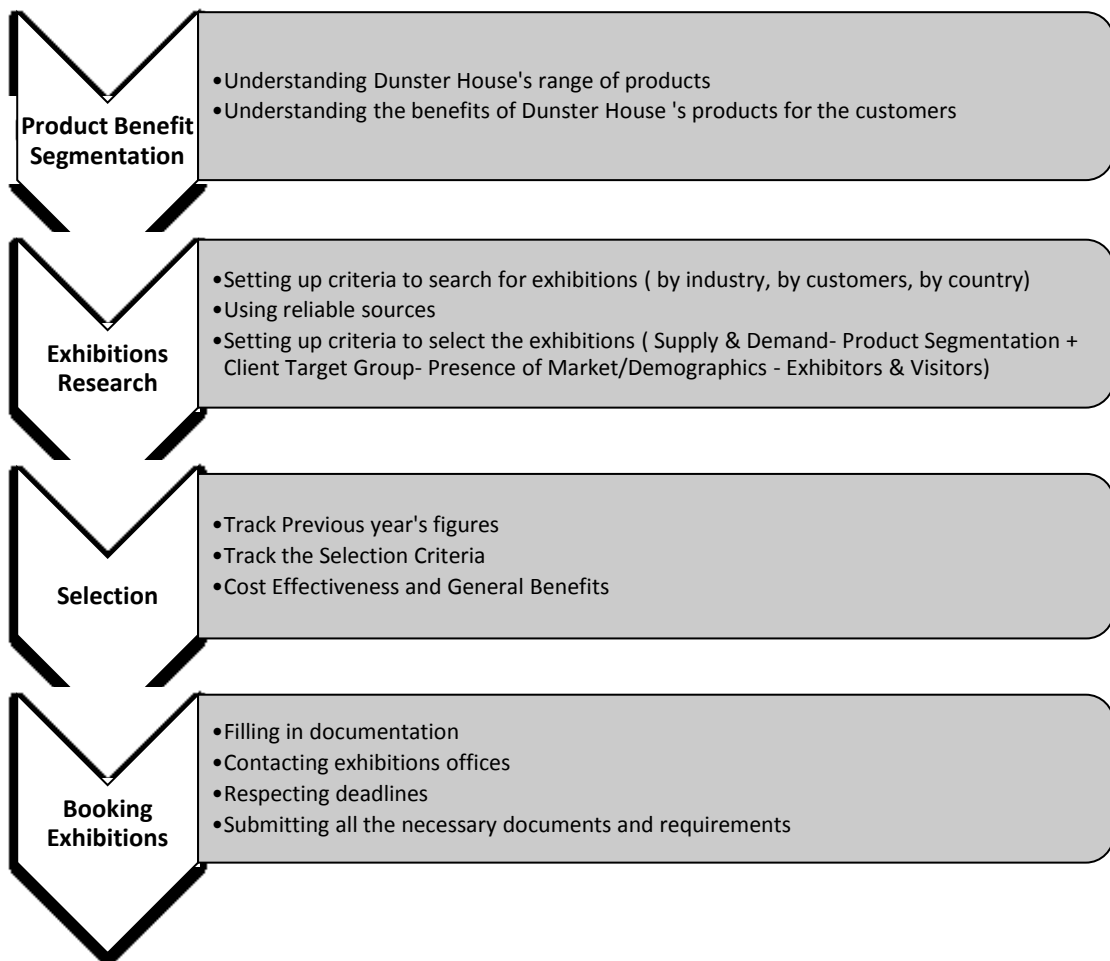
	International Exhibitions	National Exhibitions
Results: concrete sales leads		
Effectiveness: industry scope		
Expenditure		
Follow process after exhibition		

3. PRODUCT BENEFIT SEGMENTATION AND BENEFITS FOR CUSTOMERS

The Pre Exhibition period is certainly the longest one of all three and it starts by a research process of Dunster House's products, since before selling the product one has to make sure she/he understands the product for later understanding where to sell it and, therefore, search for venues in the places found. Therefore, it is necessary to list and segment the wide range of Dunster House's products by category, according to the benefit for the customer. Product benefit segmentation stresses the causes behind customers' choices while buying Dunster House's products instead of those from the competition. It is a study based on the differences in specific benefits that diverse products provide to their customers and it lists all the benefits they bring to the customers against the competition. This marketing approach predicts consumer behaviour and people that may be seeking a certain product. In the end, it provides a picture of necessities that can be created for customers. Products divided into two main categories include Lifestyle products, which consist of the main range of products, and Humanitarian products. These two categories can generally provide some of the following benefits to customers: high quality timber; pressure treated buildings; 10 year warranty against insect infestation and fungal decay, variety of sizes; online pricing and ordering service, easy to use and features detailed explanations throughout; eco-friendly, lighting and heating systems solar products, low maintenance and health benefits; mobility restricted usage, among others. These benefits allow the understanding of customers' behaviour and their consuming patterns. The main conclusion shows that, overall, customers that seek these benefits are people looking for elegance, comfort and privacy, ideal places to relax with family and friends, beauty of garden to take some time out with a refreshing drink and a good book, cosy escape. These also include eco-conscious people looking for alternatives to save the environment and money and off-the-grid communities. For the humanitarian products categories, National Governments, NGOs and bulk trade purchases have been also included. This customers' segmentation has benefited from the Experian customer segmentation.

4. UNDERSTANDING THE EXHIBITIONS PROCESS

After understanding the products features and benefits for the company's customers it is essential to figure out where the products can be marketed. In other words, the exhibitions research process is going to be conducted according to the outcomes of the customer and product benefit segmentation. The following chart exemplifies the flow of the exhibitions process.



5. PRE - EXHIBITION

5.1 SETTING UP THE CRITERIA TO SELECT AN EXHIBITION

INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOWS

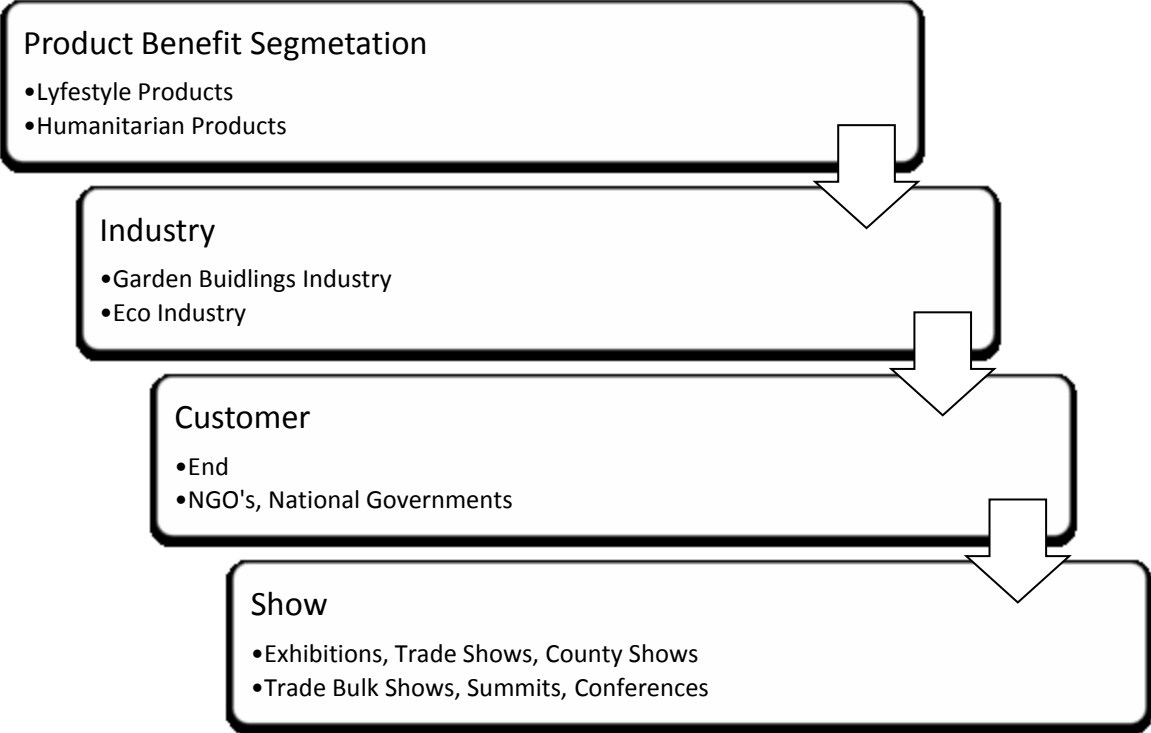
Selection Criteria	Product Segmentation	Client target group	Exhibitors	Visitors
JANUARY				
FEBRUARY				
MARCH				
APRIL				
MAY				
JUNE				
JULY				
AUGUST				
SEPTEMBER				
OCTOBER				
NOVEMBER				
DECEMBER				

**UK
EXHIBITIONS/SHOWS**

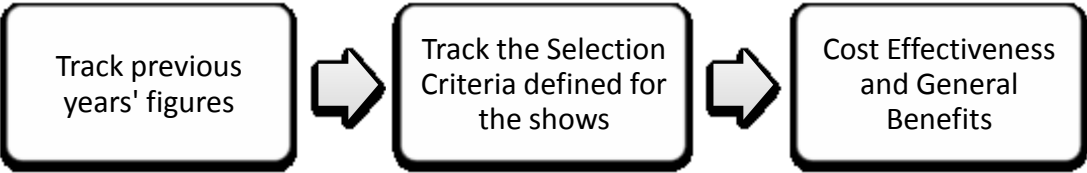
Audience Demographics

									Visitors			Exhibitors				Contact		
	Branch	Visitors	Type	Location	Product	Industry Sector	Organizer	No. Years Operating	WHO?	Existing Customers	Origin	WHO?	Competitors	Origin	APP DLD	Email	WEB	Phone
JANUARY																		
FEBRUARY																		
MARCH																		
APRIL																		
MAY																		
JUNE																		
JULY																		
AUGUST																		
SEPTEMBER																		
OCTOBER																		
NOVEMBER																		
DECEMBER																		

5.2 RESEARCH PROCEDURES



5.3 SELECTION PROCEDURES



See below an example of an exhibition cost breakdown.

Total Expected Cost:																	
Expected Cost:		Grand Designs															
Stand	W	D															
Extras																	
Electrics	Number	Cost	Total														
Sockets																	
Lights																	
	£/m²	Total															
Carpet																	
	Days	£/Day	Total														
Forklift Hire																	
Product Depreciation																	
	Cabin	Office	Greenhouse	Shed	Summerhouse	Play	Other										
Average £ per product																	
Felt Rolls																	
Manpower	£/Sales Staff	£/Installers															
Show Week Days (Mon - Thur)																	
Show Weekend Days (Fri - Sun)																	
Build Days																	
Break down Days																	
Accommodation																	
	£/Room																
Single Rooms																	
Twin Rooms																	
Double Rooms																	
Petty Cash																	
	£/Day	Total															
Travel																	
Build	No. Of Cars	Average £/Gal	Miles	Mile/Gal	Total												
Exhibition	No. Of Cars	Average £/Gal	Miles	Mile/Gal	Total												

5.4 BOOKING PROCESS

The booking process has to follow specific procedures:


a) Documentation required:

- Application form
- Risk assessment
- Electricity supply
- Certificate of employees liability insurance
- Stand design submission

Please mind the deadlines required.

5.4.1. APPLICATIONS, REQUIREMENTS AND INVOICING

129th Lincolnshire Show – 19th & 20th June 2013 RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

COMPANY NAME:	DUNSTER HOUSE LTD	
ADDRESS:	CAXTON ROAD, ELMS FARM ESTATE, BELFORD	
	NOKILL OLE	
RESPONSIBLE PERSON:		
DATE ASSESSMENT UNDERTAKEN:	04/04/13	
SIGNATURE OF ASSESSOR:		

HAZARDS	LIKELIHOOD RATING	SEVERITY RATING	RISK RATING	CONTROL MEASURES IN PLACE
Slipping, Falling	1	1	1	employees will instruct and visitors to be careful when using the stairs
Erecting the Climbing frame during build up	1	1	1	employees are fully trained and will use step ladders.
Dismantling the Climbing frame during breakdown	1	1	1	employees are fully trained and will use step ladders.



MALVERN SPRING GARDENING SHOW 2013

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

SHOW GARDENS

COST ESTIMATE

This information is required in order that a sponsorship sum to cover the cost of the garden can be verified. This information will remain confidential between the applicant and TCAS/RHS. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain sponsorship.

	£
Excavations	N/A
Hard Landscaping – paths etc.	N/A
Water Features	N/A
Buildings	£3000
Boundary walls, screens etc.	N/A
Features, including statuary	£300
Plants	£100
Labour	£123
Plant & Machinery	N/A
Clearance of site	N/A
Transport	£95
Accommodation	£180
Printed information – leaflets, brochures, etc.	£2000
Fees	£1500
Hospitality, tickets etc.	£200
Other	N/A
Contingency	£500
TOTAL	£ 7998

EXHIBIT CO-ORDINATOR'S DETAILS

Name of person completing this form	
Company	DUNSTER House LTD
Representing	

This information will remain confidential between the applicant and the RHS/TCAS

Please return this form by 20 December 2012 to:

Nina Acton, Malvern Spring Gardening Show, TCAS, The Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR13 6NW or email nina@threecounties.co.uk



CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE (a)

(Where required by regulation 5 of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (the Regulations), one or more copies of this certificate must be displayed at each place of business at which the policyholder employs persons covered by the policy).

- Policy Number:
1. Name of policy holder: Dunster House Limited
2. Date of commencement of insurance policy: 31 July 2012
3. Date of expiry of insurance policy: 30 July 2013

We hereby certify that subject to paragraph 2:

1. The policy to which this certificate relates satisfies the requirements of the relevant law applicable in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Island of Guernsey, the Island of Jersey and the Island of Alderney (b); and
2. (a) the minimum amount of cover provided by this policy is no less than £5 million (c)

Signed on behalf of Aviva Insurance Limited (Authorised Insurers)

Authorised Signatory
David McMillan
Chief Executive Officer - UK General Insurance

Notes

- (a) Where the employer is a company to which regulation 3(2) of the Regulations applies, the certificate shall state in a prominent place, either that the policy covers the holding company and all its subsidiaries, or that the policy covers the holding company and all its subsidiaries except any specifically excluded by name, or that the policy covers the holding company and only the named subsidiaries.
- (b) Specify applicable law as provided for in regulation 4(6) of the Regulations.
- (c) See regulation 3(1) of the Regulations and delete whichever of paragraph 2(a) or 2(b) does not apply. Where 2(b) is applicable, specify the amount of cover provided by the relevant policy.

You are strongly recommended to retain copies of each Employers' Liability certificate that has been issued to you.

A copy of this certificate must be displayed at all places where you employ persons covered by the policy.

Aviva Insurance Limited
Registered in Scotland No 2116 Registered Office Pitheavlis, Perth, PH2 0NH
Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Documentation check list example

- **Application Form**
- **Risk Assessment**
- **Liability Insurance Certificate**
- **Water, Internet and electricity supplier**
- **Stand submission**
- **Carpet inquiry**

5.4.2. PERSONEL AND PRODUCT LOGISTICS

It involves booking lodges (www.travelodge.co.uk) travel for the personnel required for the show and all the marketing materials necessary for the show. These may include the following:

- Brochures
- Leaflets
- Posters
- Signage (price signs and others)

5.4.3. STAND DESIGN

When deciding on the design of the stand, it is worth remembering the objectives for participating in the exhibition, as this will help to make the design more effective:

- **If the goal is to establish the image of your company and to sign wholesale contracts** it is not necessary to show all your product samples. The most important thing is for the stand to be stylish and convenient for attracting customers;
- **If the goal is to sell from the stand** it is especially important to consider the design of the stand, so that it doesn't look like a market stall. Visitors should be comfortable; so it has to make sure they remember the name of the company.
- With stand design, as with the exhibition as a whole, it is crucial to pay attention into the small details. Empty boxes and coats hanging on the backs of chairs can ruin even the most creative design.

- Minimalism is currently popular in stand design: an elegant stand from decent materials with quality lighting, stylish colour posters on the back wall and very little decoration.
- As the design and construction of the stand is not only expensive but also complicated, cutting corners is dangerous.

REMEMBER: More buildings we take to the shows, the more effort is required. Fewer buildings may mean more time dedicated to the installation and dressing of each building.

5.5 SETTING OBJECTIVES

Setting specific objectives for a show can be based on two variables: market and/or sell the product.

SETTING OBJECTIVES	
MARKET	SELL

MARKET	
NUMBER OF LEADS	ATTENDANCE/TOTAL COST OF THE SHOW

LEADS	TOTAL NUMBER OF LEADS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEADS PER DAY • LEADS PER SALES PERSON 	

SELL	
ATTENDANCE/TOTAL COST OF THE SHOW	NUMBER OF SALES

SALES	TOTAL NUMBER OF SALES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SALES PER DAY • SALES PER SALES PERSON 	

5.6 TARGET MARKETING

Target Marketing involves Marketing & PR Campaigns in order to target visitors before attending the show. This intends to be a highly targeted campaign to generate maximum exposure for the show to ensure DH reach the right people. This may comprise executing a combined media and marketing campaign including:

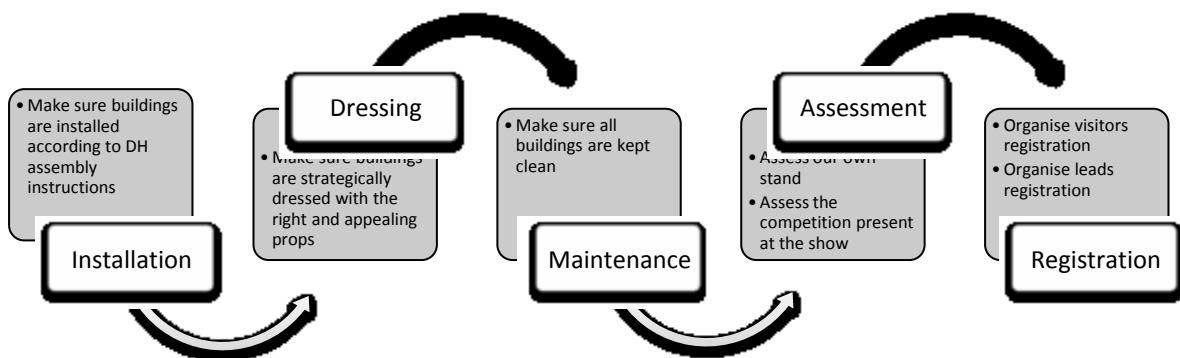
- Online campaign using Google search and social media;

- Advert in Pre-Show National press/magazine campaign; trade journals including advertising and editorial support in enthusiasts press;
- Targeted direct mail campaign to over xxxx potential visitors;
- Radio campaign - including a high profile promotion;
- Extensive poster distribution across the area where the show has been allocated;
- Powerful PR campaign targeting national and regional media;
- Offer shows specials advertised before the show, but to be taken at the show.

The shows organizers usually offer marketing and PR services for enquiries like these.

6. THE EXHIBITION

During the exhibition itself many aspects must be aligned with the exhibition's strategic goals.



7. FOLLOW UP

The period following up the exhibition is the time when Dunster House monitors the

A	Large order, customer ready to buy
B	Small order, ready to buy OR Large order, longer time frame
C	Small order, longer time frame
D	Send literature or add name to database
E	Other', e.g. press, salesmen...

effectiveness and success of the exhibition closely. This may include writing reports⁴⁰, assessing the quality of the leads achieved and how many of them actually turned into sales enquires.

The following exemplify ways of assessing the quality of the leads achieved:

LEADS COST EFFECTIVENESS CALCULATION	
COST OF STAND	£0.00
BUILD UP AND BREAKDOWN OF STAND	£0.00
ACCOMMODATION	£0.00
TRAVEL	£0.00
MARKETING COSTS	£0.00
TOTAL SHOW COST	£0.00
EVENT DURATION	Hrs
AVERAGE SALES VALUE	£0.00
LEAD CONVERSION RATE	%
LEADS REQUIRED PER HOUR	

⁴⁰ For an example of a report *vide* Appendix I

CONCLUSION

This manual is part of an ongoing process and shall therefore be complete along with the outcomes from experience in the field and results from exhibitions and shows attended by the company.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Iteca. 24th April 2013. <<http://www.iteca.kz/en/for-what-ex/#1.1>>