

Running head: DRIVING DIVERSITY

Driving Diversity:

An Integrated Marketing Communications Plan

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DBX in the Forest (Aston Martin, 2019).

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Abstract

Aston Martin's first SUV, the DBX, brings diversity to their product line. Beginning in 2020, an integrated marketing communication plan will promote the DBX to increase sales among women and current owners of Aston Martin vehicles. Situational and SWOT analyses describe the current dynamics of the company, the SUV market, and the internal strengths and weaknesses of Aston Martin. The marketing objectives: increasing product diversity, creating new sales, and building brand loyalty all help define the marketing strategies; these marketing strategies highlight the rarity and luxury of Aston Martin vehicles and the practicality of the DBX, while focusing on our target market of women and current Aston Martin owners. The marketing tactics involve sponsoring events and creating print, video, and social media advertisements. The plan is implemented on a timeline that includes a product launch and long-term advertising placements. Overall, the plan will be evaluated based on sales and repeat purchases from current customers.

Situational Analysis

In the past decade, consumers have demanded sport utility vehicles (SUVs). Automotive manufacturers respond with creating supply to fulfill demand. Now, some might say the market for SUVs is oversaturated, but Aston Martin senses having an SUV will allow them to diversify their product line. Aston Martin makes sporty, luxurious cars and builds racecars for their teams. They are best known for their not-so-subtle cameos in the James Bond movie franchise. Despite being an iconic British brand, Aston Martin is not immune to changes in the market. Their current product line singles out consumers who are looking for bespoke sport cars and grand touring cars. Diversifying the product line is critical to stabilizing revenue.

Product: Now, Aston Martin is expanding their product line to include the DBX, an off-roading, towing SUV that allows consumers to drive in luxury both on and off the road.

Price: The DBX will retail for an estimated \$225,000 USD, making it a direct competitor to the Lamborghini Urus and the Bentley Bentayga, two high-end luxury SUVs that retail above \$200,000.

Place: The DBX will be sold primarily in Europe via web and dealerships but will also be made available at select dealerships in North America and Asia.

SWOT Analysis

INTERNAL

Strengths – Aston Martin has pedigree; it was founded in 1913 and are best known for having their cars appear in James Bond films. They also have racing teams in the World Endurance Championships, British Grand Touring, and Rallying. They have high standards and high-quality craftsmanship, so customers can put a name and face to the person who painted their car, the two

people who sewed the leather seats, or the small department that assembled the engine, as seen in several promotional videos.

Weaknesses – Aston Martin has limited product diversity. The product line is primarily expensive luxury sports cars; this puts the company at risk, despite surviving seven bankruptcies due to the high cost of producing vehicles by hand. There is an inability to mass produce due to the size of the company and skill required to build the product line. This also results in a high cost of production and a high price for consumers.

EXTERNAL

Opportunities – JATO Dynamics, a global automotive intelligence supply company, describes a significant opportunity: “With 29.77 million units sold, the SUV earned the top position among all segments. This made for another record year thanks to the increase posted in 2018. Volume grew by 6.8%, or almost 1.9 million units, which is impressive considering the economic situation in the three largest vehicle markets: USA, China and Europe. SUVs also posted the highest market share of all time with 36.4%, up by 2.5 percentage points when compared to 2017” (Munoz, 2019). Women currently buy 62% of all new cars sold and influence 85% of car buying decisions; they are also more utility-minded (Edmunds.com Inc, 2016). Ergo, women are an important segment for product development and marketing, especially for a market of SUVs having such high demand.

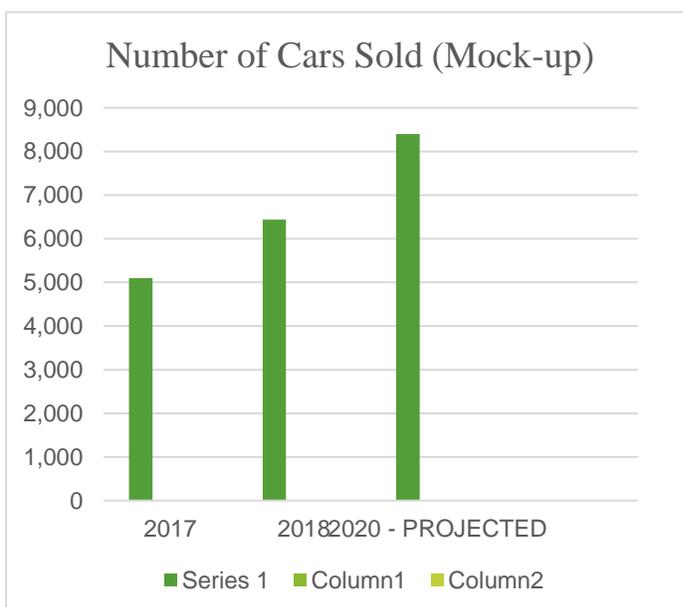
Threats – The popular demand of SUVs causes manufacturers to respond, creating a saturated market of SUVs. This gives the DBX a plethora of competitors. The DBX’s two main competitors are the Lamborghini Urus and the Bentley Bentayga, both high-end luxury SUVs, but below this price range, there are dozens of competitors. The automotive market tends to

fluctuate with the economy. The new car market has lagged, while the used car market is booming (Einstein, 2019). Overall, the opportunities and strengths of Aston Martin outweigh the risk of not having an SUV in their product line.

Marketing Objectives

- Diversify Product Line
- Increase Sales
- Build Brand Loyalty

The main objective of marketing the DBX will be to diversify the product line for more stable revenue. Other objectives include increasing brand loyalty by having more products for more uses and increasing sales of family-size vehicles. In Europe, our goal will be for Aston Martin to sell an average of 700 cars per month in 2020. In 2018, the average was 537 cars per month; Aston Martin sold 6,441 cars in 2018, which is an increase of over 26% from the 5,098 cars sold in 2017 (Rosenholtz, 2019). The goal is not simply to increase overall sales, but to diversify revenue to protect the company due to its small size.



Target Market

Our current customers are primarily older men; ergo, with the DBX, we will focus on a different segmentation. The target market for the DBX is women aged 30 – 70 with a median household income of \$75,000 a year or higher. In the United States, this accounts for 40.3% of households (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Aston Martin will also sell the DBX in the UK and Asia, most notably the United Arab Emirates. Our typical customer will already own a sports car, or even another Aston Martin model and will have Aston Martin in their evoked set of brands.

By standard, our brand and new DBX model will target consumers who value Veblen goods and handcrafted, high quality products. These targeted individuals are willing to pay more for quality and often take part in conspicuous consumption; meaning, they tend to display their wealth through purchases. This target market will include innovators, thinkers, achievers, experiencers, and strivers. Finally, we will also target current owners of Aston Martin vehicles to utilize the 80/20 rule; meaning, 20% of our customers are brand loyal and make up for 80% of our sales. This also allows us to target the women in our male customer's lives who are familiar with the luxury of Aston Martin but want a more practical vehicle.

Marketing Strategies

Positioning Statement – Aston Martin has designed and built handcrafted automobiles since 1913. Our product is exclusive and rare. Less than a decade ago, 96% of Aston Martin vehicles ever made were still in existence in the UK (McCloud, 2010). The DBX will be the first off-roading, towing Aston Martin; the rarity of the DBX is even higher than our typical models, like the DB11. The DBX has few rivals in its price range and comes with the pedigree of an established British company that values its heritage while paving the way in racing and other new technologies.

Message Strategies – We will motivate the target market by creating advertising that highlights the rarity, pedigree, and luxury of Aston Martin combined with the off-roading, towing capabilities of the DBX. The DBX is an all-new way to experience an Aston Martin, allowing consumers to indulge anywhere, whether it be in the mud, on a hill, towing a boat, or just picking the kids up from school.

Signature Creative Piece – A multi-channel advertising campaign that spans print, social media, video, and events. A series of advertisements will show the DBX in different environments with the copy: “Indulge Anywhere.”

Mock-up online and print advertisements using the DBX prototype with camouflage paint. The final advertisements will have the finished model with silver and green paint:



DBX in the Mud (Aston Martin, 2019). DBX in the Snow (Aston Martin, 2019). DBX on Downing Street (Aston Martin, 2019.) Vector logo (Aston Martin, 2003). All photographs and logos reproduced under fair use for academia.

Marketing Tactics

Our day-to-day tactical marketing will include sponsoring events popular with both men and women, giving current Aston Martin owners an \$8,000 rebate on a DBX, racing the DBX in rallying championships, using print, video, and social media advertising, such as ads on Facebook. These advertisements will reinforce the positioning statement and message strategies

and they will use variations on our signature creative piece. Finally, we will assure that our public relations department and marketing goals have a unified voice. To reinforce the message strategy of rarity, we will also limit production of the DBX at 5,000 units per year (Anderson, 2019). Because Aston Martin vehicles thrive on their exclusivity, saturating our product line with too many DBX models will not be beneficial to our overall brand image. These marketing tactics will help reinforce our objectives and strategies.

Implementation

We will launch the DBX in December of 2019 at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, an automotive charitable event in California. This will give the DBX publicity for its inaugural 2020 year. In December of 2019, we will begin running print, Facebook, and video ads. Social media will be our primary platform for targeting women since we can refine our advertising audience based on demographics through account data, ultimately saving us money. We will also work with journalists to help promote the DBX through public relations. During the holiday season, we will announce rebates for current Aston Martin owners to increase brand loyalty. During the spring and summer of 2020, we will sponsor car shows, Aston Martin owners' clubs, and enter rallying (racing) championships in Europe. We will also bring the DBX to our other racing appearances so attendees can see the DBX up close. Other events we plan to sponsor will be more popular with women, such as garden shows, craft shows, and festivals.

The high investment in rebates will allow us to inspire brand loyalty by giving current owners of our vehicles an incentive to buy the DBX, a vehicle that deviates from our normal sports car models. Event sponsorships and visual advertisements will increase awareness of the product. We will also join Rallying competitions, but this will come from a separate budget allocated for

racing and entrance fees from Aston Martin Racing, a related organization with additional funding and involvement from Prodrive and Red Bull Racing.

We are using an Objective and Task budget because it is the “best budgeting approach because it relates dollar costs to achieving specific objectives” (Clow and Baack, 2018). We will spend 40% on rebates, 40% on a plethora of events that appeal to both men and women, and 20% on online and print advertisements. This budgeting style helps us specify exactly what we need to do and at what cost without overspending.

Analysis of the Objective and Task budget:



Evaluation of Performance

We will evaluate the performance of our marketing and advertising plan through sales, both the DBX model and overall sales for 2020. We will also keep track of repeat buyers to understand the effectiveness of targeting previous customers as part of our target market. Because production will be limited, if we sell all five thousand DBX models in one year, we will consider this a successful endeavor and will slightly modify and repeat as necessary for following years.

Conclusion

The Aston Martin DBX will diversify our product line by offering a popular vehicle model that is capable of towing, off-roading, and hauling five people. Now, we have different models for different lifestyles and will be breaking into a large market with high demand. Because practical vehicles are popular with women, targeting them will be beneficial; and, by targeting individuals who already own an Aston Martin, we will strengthen our brand loyalty. Our marketed strategies will play to our strengths by highlighting the luxury and rarity of our vehicles. Displaying the DBX's capabilities will help segment consumers who want a practical Aston Martin for daily use. Our implementation strategies help reinforce our market segmentation choices by reaching our target market where they are most likely to see our advertising. Finally, we will evaluate our plan by analyzing sales and tracking repeat customers. From there, we will adjust as needed in the coming years.

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