# 1. Introduction

Emission standards, energy labels, green energy. These are just some words we hear more and more often. And there is a very good reason for that. Because of a fast growing world population (9 billion people in 2050) and global warming, we need to take care of the environment responsibly.

Using renewable resources are an important part of this; green energy (e.g. windmills, solar panels) becomes more and more important. In the car industry, millions are being spent on research on alternatives for the petrol/diesel (combustion) engine. One can argue about the ‘greenness’ of an electric car, that is why hydrogen would be another alternative zero emission).

All these developments will contribute to a more sustainable environment, and reduce global warming. But there is more to it than just these measures. Producing and providing food to so many people worldwide, has its impact on the environment.

Forests disappear, the natural habitat for all kinds of animal species is being threatened, and by using chemical products, the soil is being polluted. There is a solution for this*:* organic farming*.* This might be not as much ‘in the picture’ as the above developments, it is certainly of equal importance. It has been proven that organic agriculture is more friendly to the environment, and is thus more sustainable than conventional agriculture.

This dissertation is a study on the marketing strategy of Eosta, a company that sells/ exports organic fruits and vegetables. The reason for choosing this topic is personal interest in marketing in general, and the desire to combine internship and dissertation.

By analyzing the current strategy, and looking at the market, the main goal is to give recommendations on how to improve the company’s marketing. Because social media is an important part of the new strategy, the focus is not directly on just one country; it is fairly easy to address people in multiple countries at the same time this way. The very last part of the thesis discusses a strategic decision that focuses on the Dutch market first.

Having done an internship of more than 4 months at the company, really helped me to optimally combine theoretical research with practical information about the company and its products.

The main research question is:

‘What  marketing techniques  should Eosta implement in its corporate strategy (and how), in order to strengthen its Nature & More brand image , and gain more profit?’

Sub questions:

1.‘Does the current marketing strategy work/pay off?’

An analysis of the company’s strategy is given; all relevant aspects of the marketing/communication strategy are being discussed, in order to give a clear view on the marketing landscape. Because the rest of the research is based on it, it is required to read it first, to truly understand the meaning of the research findings and recommendations.

2.‘How can social media contribute to more awareness (of organic fruits and vegetables)?

An investigation on how social media could be used in order to reach a large audience.

3.‘What other marketing opportunities are there the company could seize, in order to improve its image and turnover?’

In this final part, new marketing methods are being discussed. Taking into account the current state of affairs (the performance), as well as the feasibility of these new implementations, a conclusion will be drawn.

**2. Method**

The research consists of desk research and field research. Various Internet sources have been used for relevant articles (desk research). Professionals at Eosta have been consulted (field research). My own experience and the knowledge gained during the internship, contributed to the research as well.

In order to make clear that the research is properly defined and narrowed down, it is vital to indicate some limitations. Sub question 1 is an analysis of the strategy, and this speaks for itself. The sub question on the improvement of the strategy is clearly limited (social media), but to narrow it down further, the emphasis is on Facebook. The question is about social media as a whole, but mainly focuses on the use of Facebook, while this is a platform with the largest potential to reach as many people as possible.

In addition, while the day-to-day business of the company is very much aimed at business to business relations (B2B), the focus here is merely on business to consumer. Sub question 3 is a little broad in a way, because ‘marketing opportunity’ can involve a lot of different factors and touch upon various fields of business.

After having consulted the Sustainability & Communications Manager at Eosta (Michaël Wilde, red.) on Eosta’s view on strategy, it was possible for me to determine what to focus on, and what not to. The company is not just any profit-making firm (as is being described throughout the research); making profit is just one of the goals. It is tempting to look for cost-cutting measures in order to increase turnover and profit. This kind of strategy would be relevant for other companies, but it is not the scope of this research. That is why this chapter is not focused on the financial feasibility from a profit-making point of view, but more on how new strategic implementations can lead to an improvement of the company’s image and name. The underlying thought is of course that this will lead to more customers, which in turn will lead to more profit. One can truly understands this explanation after reading about the company’s vision and mission, and its unique Trace-and-tell system.

The following definition largely captures the essence and relevance for this research: *“*A marketing strategy is a process or model to allow a company or organization to focus limited resources on the best opportunities to increase sales and thereby achieve a sustainable competitive advantage” (Easy Marketing Strategies, n.d.). Because the other main goal is to contribute to a more sustainable and social world, this definition still not completely covers it.

The goal of this research is to see what could be improved in the current company’s marketing strategy, by determining relevant opportunities. More people need to know about organic fruits and vegetables, the problem is reaching them. Social media is a necessary tool for companies nowadays. For companies that seek to reach large (new) groups of customers at least. That is the reason Eosta decided to find out how it can use its social media tools optimally.

Last but not least other marketing opportunities will be discussed, after a thorough internal and external research. All this research was a true challenge; a sometimes unclear and daunting journey through the ‘world of organic’ and doing business nowadays.

**3. Company information**

**3.1 Company description**

Eosta is a a leading distributor on the global organic fruits and vegetables market, and does business only with certified organic growers all over the world. The company’s slogan is ‘Where ecology meets economy’; the focus is not just on making profit, but also on being responsible towards the environment. Back in the days, there was not a big market for organic food, like there is nowadays.

Since 10/15 years, the organic food market is booming, and demand is growing rapidly (even nowadays, despite the financial crisis). So there naturally is a lot of competition. But what makes Eosta unique, is its implemented corporate social responsibility strategy. Why? Eosta contributes to charity projects (like building schools) in underdeveloped countries via its growers. That is what makes the company so unique. It wants to ‘give something back’- not only to the environment, but also to the community.



Eosta was founded in 1991. What started as a small company, grew to a profit-making company with about 70 employees. Eosta was actually a pioneer on the market of organic fruits and vegetables.

**3.2 Structure**

The graph on the next page gives a clear view on the company’s structure. The board of directors (management) consists of 3 people:

The General Director (CEO), the Commercial Director and the Financial Director. The Commercial Director is responsible for maintaining and expanding the customer database and commercial opportunities, while the Financial Director is the accountant of the company, supervising financial operations.

The ‘sub-management’ consists of 7 people, and is directly responsible for the company’s strategy. The management division is actually a supervisory board, because it evaluates implementations in the strategic field.

There are 2 sales teams, divided in a ‘Vegetables team’ and a ‘Fruit team’; their job is to sell the products to customers, and maintain customer relationships. Eosta’s customers are all businesses (supermarkets, organic food stores etc.), so the business is strictly business to business (B2B). The logistics department is responsible for the transportation of products to the customer, as well as return shipments (because of rejected units).

An important task of the ‘Back-office Sales Department’ is to make sure that the logistics department knows what to transport to what place, and when. ‘Warehouse’ and ‘Packing development’ are indirectly part of ‘Logistics’, and it is not hard to see why. The warehouse department keeps track of all the inventory and receivables (products), and the logistics department has to know how a pallet should be loaded efficiently (and thus has to ‘be close’ with ‘Warehouse’, because the size and shape of packages can differ per product). For the same reason, ‘Packaging Development’ is part of the logistics department; when a new package is introduced for example, they have to know about it first.



**3.3 Vision/mission/goal**

Eosta is a leading player on the international organic fruits and vegetables market. It distributes and exports all kinds of these products (from apples and oranges to more exotic products like avocado’s and pineapples) to a lot of countries. Organic means that no artificial substances are added to the product. Eosta is anxious to make sure its products are always up to standards.

But there is more. With contacts with growers all over the world, Eosta has a strong position on the international market. It is able (and wants) to give something back to the community; it contributes to social welfare in developing countries, by funding projects like building schools.

This alone makes Eosta unique in its branch. While other companies just focus on profit, Eosta realizes that there is more. Transparency and authenticity are keywords of the company’s corporate strategy. An example of this transparency is the Nature&More product code system.

Nature&More products have a code, and consumers are able to exactly see where the product is from and what activities the grower is involved in, by entering the code on the Nature&More website. Nature&More is Eosta’s brand name for its products. “Nature & More is created by Eosta in response to consumer demand for healthy, organic and fairly traded food. Nature & More provides the marketplace with greater transparency related to the quality of organic products sold by Eosta’’ (Eosta, 2009). The authenticity means that the company does not try to tell (white) lies about the products. The story behind the products is real, and Eosta does not want to deny its commitment to a more sustainable environment.

What also makes the company unique, is its focus on compostable and renewable packaging. Eosta was actually the first to use TÜV-certified Climate Neutral products and compostable packaging.

**3.4 Product positioning**

All of Eosta’s products are organic. This means these products are produced without “modern synthetic inputs such as synthetic [pesticides](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pesticides) and [chemical fertilizers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chemical_fertilizers), do not contain [genetically modified organisms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genetically_modified_organisms), and are not processed using [irradiation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irradiation), industrial solvents, or chemical [food additives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_additives)” (Wikipedia, n.d.). The product range is really diverse; all kinds of tomatoes (vine/cherry/round), apples, oranges, bananas, kiwis, melons, garlic, onions, sweet potatoes, and many more fruits and vegetables.

The market is still relatively small compared to the ‘regular market’**.** But**: “The organic market is growing worldwide”** (MONTROUCH-ORGANIC, 2012).

We cannot deny that the size of the regular market is a threat to the organic market, but then: organic food does not really compete with regular food, because it is sustainable and healthier, as well as more expensive in general. From apples to tomatoes and cucumbers to ginger, Eosta sells it. The so-called ‘Specialties’ are nonconventional products, like really tasty little tomatoes or white cabbage.



**4. Internal analysis**

**4.1 7 P’s (Product-Price-Place-Promotion-Personnel-Presentation-Packaging)**

The following analysis is based on the 4 P’s model. “The goal is to make decisions that center the four P's on the customers in the target market in order to create perceived value and generate a positive response” (NetMBA, n.d.). The original model only focused on Product, Place, Promotion and Price (McCarthy)*.* Later adaptations added factors like peripheral clues and physical evidence. For the internal analysis of Eosta, these factors are not really relevant. But Presentation, Personnel and Packaging are all the more important to discuss. The way the company presents itself and its products is crucial (there will follow elaboration later on) because there is a lot of market share to gain on the organic market, which is relatively small. A personnel analysis is added because of the way people work together is one of the important factors of running a company. Packaging analysis is important because it is inextricably linked with selling food products, but moreover because it is interesting to see what kind of packaging such a ‘green company’ uses.

**Product**

Eosta sells and distributes only organic fruits and vegetables. These products need to be thoroughly tested before they get a label saying ‘Eco’ or ‘Bio’. Of course not all products can be tested, so Eosta has to make sure it does business with reliable growers. People from Eosta pay visits to growers regularly for this reason. But even then, the quality needs to be approved by quality inspection people at Eosta. Since not every single apple, tomato, and capsicum can be checked for mold and bumps, samples are taken consistently.

So far for Eosta’s tangible merchandise. What makes the company unique, is its social responsibility program. Strictly seen this is not a product, but it certainly is one of the company’s selling points.

**Price**

Organic fruits and vegetables are generally more expensive than ‘regular’ fruits and vegetables. There is a very good reason for this: organic farming is small-scale based, while conventional farming tends to be large-scale. In addition, growing organic products is more labor intensive, not only because of all the time it takes to check if it meets the quality standards, but also because organic farmers have to deal with soil management and natural fertilization practices. Obviously, keeping farmland sustainable in order to guarantee a continued fertility, takes a lot of effort and skills. Soil & More (an affiliated partner of Eosta) is an expert in the field of sustainable farmland.

It produces large amount of compost for agriculture, and this leads to a substantial reduction of Co2 emission.

‘’Currently, Soil & More produces about 200 000 tons of compost annually and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by about 250 000 tons a year’’ (United Nations Environment Programme environment for development, n.d.). But all this has its price of course.

Is the consumer willing to pay for this extra value? Not all of them, but we can see a trend of organic food becoming more and more popular.

**Place**

This is a very important part of the internal analysis, because it is about the way the company gets its products and sells them. Obviously, all the tomatoes, pears, and pineapples are not grown by Eosta itself. Eosta has its own suppliers, who are certified and proven to produce only organic fruits/vegetables In addition, “All warehousing and pre-packing facilities are exclusively dedicated to certified organic products” (Eosta, 2009).

Cucumbers and tomatoes from Holland, ginger from China, avocados from Mexico and pears from Argentina, it is all there. Eosta does not directly sell to the consumer, its business is strictly B2B. This means the company does not have to deal with buyers’ needs and wants directly, but has agreements on product variety and appearance (packaging, stickering) with the stores. Eosta has a large base of customers, some of them buy on a regular basis, and some every now and then.

Supermarkets in the Netherlands (Hoogvliet, C1000) and in Germany (Aldi, Edeka) make up for a large share of the profit. But as established before, profit is not just the only goal. And because Eosta wants its products to be available on a smaller scale too (in local organic stores), its customer base is very diverse.

The following list consists of only a part of Eosta’s growers. The list is included to give an idea of the amount and diverseness of growers.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Nature & More Growers** |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Farm** | **Grower** | **Country** | **Code** |
|  |  |  |  |
| Agro Roca | Bettina | AR | 325 |
| Bartusch | Ernesto | AR | 315 |
| PAI - Fruempac | Roberto | AR | 323 |
| Patagonian Fruits Tr. | Hugo | AR | 313 |
| Comfrut | Andres | CL | 338 |
| MAFA | Tarek | EG | 460 |
| Bioexotica | Kwame | GH | 420 |
| ITFC | Ayishatu | GH | 517 |
| De Reyngaard | Gino | NL | 560 |
| Gianfranco Cunsolo | Gianfranco | IT | 548 |
| Fairtrasa | Patrick | MX | 450 |
| Frank de Koning | Frank | NL | 179 |
| Groenland | Ron | NL | 116 |
| Rini Hopmans | Rini | NL | 184 |

Source: Michael Wilde, Eosta

“Thanks to the wide range of year-round products and its own pre-packing facilities, Eosta now supplies most of the leading European supermarket chains. Eosta is also Europe's leading exporter of organic greenhouse crops to the USA and the Far East” (Eosta, 2009). Sometimes customers (businesses) decide not to buy, because they think the products are too expensive at that moment. Eosta has come up with a very smart strategy to increase the chance of them buying. In Spain and South Africa, the company operates under different names to make it look like these departments are not affiliated. Because the organic market is so small, the buyer often does not have a choice, and ends up buying Eosta’s products without being aware of it. Without lying, this is an ideal way to increase the profitability of business relations.

**Promotion**

Promotion is very important for the company. It is pretty well-known on the organic fruits and vegetables market already, but one of its goals is to reach a larger group of buyers. This makes perfectly good sense of course. However, it is not just a matter of doing business with a large amount of supermarkets, wholesalers, and organic food stores. Step number one is to create awareness among consumers. When there is more demand, it is safe to start establishing new business relations. Creating awareness is a key aspect of this research; although a lot of people already know about organic food, it is still easier said than done. So far Eosta has not really done a lot to actually reach this customer, to communicate with him/her directly. This will however be part of the new marketing strategy.

People like to get information on the things they buy, especially when those things are organic. Research has proven that consumers tend to be more critical when it comes to organic food. Because more and more people start choosing for organic, the market can continue to grow. “ The driving forces behind the development include the increasing quality awareness of consumers” (Biofach, 2012). Eosta is very open about its products and operations; ‘where do the products come from?’ and ‘how do we contribute to a better world?’ With EPC (Electronic Product Code) it is possible for consumers to see where their product is from. The consumer types in the code at the Nature&More website, and directly gets all the information about that particular product and grower. But how many consumers really do this? That is hard to say.

(The Nature and More Grower Sticker with EPC code)



**Personnel**

The departments of the company have been described in the previous chapter. ‘The people make the company’ is what they say so often. This is certainly the case for Eosta, the business atmosphere is really special. Unlike a lot of other companies/organizations, Eosta has a fairly informal work atmosphere. A good work and positive work environment is a very important factor in running a business. ‘’Study after study has concluded the most important factor in job satisfaction is a positive work environment’’ (Mackay, 2011). The generally positive attitude towards each other has its effect on work. Although there is a hierarchical structure (as can be seen from the graph), the CEO treats his personnel as his equal, and vice versa. Every single day he shakes hands with everyone, and often asks them how they are doing. It creates a strong basis for a ‘we-feeling’, making it much more pleasant to cooperate with each other.

A considerable amount of employees do not work for an environmentally conscious company just for a salary, but because they are convinced of the good things about organic. They only buy organic food, because they believe this contributes to a more sustainable world. The authenticity and transparency the company pursues in its business, is even clearly recognizable on the work floor.

**Presentation**

The construction of Eosta’s brand is quite unusual. In most cases, a company’s brand is clearly promoted by the company as its own. Eosta chose not to link its brand Nature&More with the company name Eosta. There is no information on Eosta, nor on the Nature&More website, and neither on the Facebook page. Although this may seem odd, Eosta deliberately chose for this strategy. Putting a brand on the market that stands for fair products – socially as well as environmentally – creates a value of its own. That is why the company name Eosta is only meant for B2B; the buyer does only need to know he/she is buying a Nature&More product. Nature&More should be seen as the practical implementation of Eosta’s mission and key values; these values are being defined in a practical way in the ‘Nature&More Sustainability Flower’ (which will be described later on).

**Packaging**

The regulations on packaging of organic food are very strict. The amount of materials must be limited, and they must be recyclable when possible. This is to make sure that the environmental impact is relatively small. EU regulations on packaging materials are there to prevent unnecessary pollution of the environment with the production process of packages. Eosta meets these requirements of course. But it does more; “it has developed a packaging produced from renewable material, such as sugarcane” (Eosta, 2009).The packaging is completely compostable, and can become compost in just 12 weeks. The development of packaging is not that simple; because there are so many different products, packages have to differ by size and shape. The packing facilities are only being used for the packaging process of organic fruits and vegetables.

**4.2 Strengths and Weaknesses**

The long-term relationships guarantee a continuing ‘business flow’; mutual reliability (both from grower and Eosta) leads to successful cooperation. A good reputation among your business partners is important, but to be successful because consumers ‘like’ your company, is probably even more important. Here is an overview of positive feedback towards Nature&More, it is the kind of compliments the company receives on a regular basis. Random example: ‘’Great ginger! Posted by Lars, Stockholm, Sweden at Mar 02, 2012 07:08 PM Hello and thank you for the best piece of ginger I have ever seen (or eaten :)!’’

People often send e-mails to the Communication Department with these kinds of positive reviews, but more often write something nice on the ‘wall’ on the Nature&More Facebook page. The great thing about the latter is that other people can see the reviews, which can only have a positive effect on the general image of Nature&More products. Besides good reviews on products, there is a lot of positive information on the N&M Trace and Tell system.

As one can conclude from the table below, Eosta has a lot of (small) customers. These figures only concern a part of the German customers (and do not include big customers like Aldi and Edeka).

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| Biopartner | FFC fresh Food Co | Paradieschen  |  |
| Amperhof | Frank Gayde | Rothenburger Marktfrische |  |
| Apfelparadies  | Fruchthof Chemnitz Dresden  | Suhr  |  |
| Bella Vita | Früchte Franz | Univeg Hamburg  |  |
| Biogärtnerei Ostrau | Handelsspeicher Bienenbeutel | Voelkel |  |
| Biohof Bursch  | Kuhlmann | Werner Ebert |  |
| Blendinger | Lallinger | Biokarpos |  |
| Bois  | Landmann | Fresh Food Company |  |
| Chiemgauer | leimer | Limpantsis |  |
| DG Fruchthandel | Lührs Johan | Menelaos |  |
| Denschelmann & Welein | Maredo | Pantaleon |  |

Source: Eosta

A lot of small customers means high labor costs, which is not favorable from a profit point of view. From a general perspective this certainly is a weakness. Eosta wants to keep its relatively small customers though, because it does not want to become a large-scale profit-seeking ‘food factory’.

The high amount of customers (with their different wishes and requirements) leads to a unavoidable highly diversified product range and packaging in all shapes and sizes.

Despite all this, the company (again) chooses to go down the unpaved and unconventional path of doing business. It proves that the company finds it important to treat every business partner equally.

The question is if Eosta can continue to make tailor-made packaging for all those customers. There are plans to reduce the amount of different packages, which simplifies matters, and it would lead to saving money on the packaging production process. The transparency of the business certainly is remarkable; a major factor is Nature&More’s Trace and Tell system. The fact that the Communication Department has a relatively small budget, makes it hard to set up large-scale campaigns.

The last campaign (sending flower seeds to companies and people to raise awareness about the importance of bees), had to be terminated because the department was running out of funds.

‘Strengths and Weaknesses’

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strengths** | Strong, long-term relationships with growers and customers | High quality products | Solid reputation, because of overall reliability (in delivery and quality). | Transparency | Unique commitment to the natural and social environment | Motivated personnel |
| **Weaknesses** | Lot of small customers | Relatively high labor/packing costs | No link packaging and Facebook | Small budget for Communication and Marketing | Higher priced than comparable ‘regular’products |  |

**5. Sub-question 1**

**‘Does the current marketing strategy work/pay off?’**

There are some key aspects in the CSR of a company; business ethics, social awareness, environmental awareness. Let us begin with the latter one. Nowadays almost every company seems to realize how important it is to be ‘green’ and sustainable. Because of global warming and a growing awareness of subsequent environmental issues, businesses/organizations have to contribute to more sustainability, by reducing their carbon footprint.

We know that there are several companies that are really frontrunners in this field. Haagen-Dasz is a good example, and – just like Eosta – raise the issue of bees. “Honey bees are responsible for pollinating one-third of all the foods we eat, including many of the ingredients that define our all-natural ice creams, sorbets, frozen yogurt and bars.”(Socialbrite, 2010). For a lot of companies though, it is hard to implement drastic measures in order to ‘go green’; it is just too expensive. But does it have to be that expensive? Water-saving toilets and light-sensors maybe, but simple measures like two-sided printing are not. Only buying recycled office supplies, and a responsible use of electricity are other good initiatives.

The problem is that a lot of businesses do not feel the need to implement these workspace-related measures, because their clients/customers will not notice the difference (no direct influence on product/service). This is inherent for the main goal of most businesses, which is making profit and spending as little as possible. But the customer is often high-demanding when it comes to the environmental performance of a certain product; the packaging has to made of recycled materials, and it should not contain any artificial/unhealthy substances. A rather inconsistent way of doing things; ‘as long as the customer thinks we are green, we are safe.’ The marketing department makes sure that the buyer will be convinced of the greenness of the product, if this is necessary. Although one might argue that this is a rather negative view on affairs, it gives a clarifying view on the way businesses manage to appear environmentally responsible, while they are actually not.

As established above, issue marketing plays an important role nowadays; the issue of the environment is a crucial motive to be – or at least seem green.

Eosta’s CSR is a textbook example for other companies. The picture on the next page is the core of the company’s strategy, and all these aspects are of equal importance.

*The ‘Nature&More Sustainability Flower’*

**Soil** - A healthy soil is the foundation of worldwide food security.

**Water** - Fresh water is scarce and must be used responsibly.

**Air** - How can we deal with climate change and reduce carbon emissions?

**Plants** - Growing healthy, GMO-free crops while maintaining flora biodiversity.

**Animals** – Fauna biodiversity helps to maintain ecological balance and deserves protection, from worms and insects up to elephants.

**Energy** - The sun is the original energy source for food production. How can we

reduce the use of fossil fuel and promote

sustainable use of energy?

(Source:Eosta)

All of the above mentioned aspects concern the environment in which the food is produced. But these factors lack value, if the grower does not keep into account the following basic needs: *freedom, justice, and solidarity*.

**Freedom:** does the grower support individual freedom and personal development?

**Justice:** does the grower support human rights and prevent discrimination?

**Solidarity:** does the grower make sure employees have housing, food? Does he take care of their health, as well the health of the people in the community?

Eosta has close relationships with its growers, and to make sure that all these factors are actually put into practice, the company sends delegates to meet with the grower. So in contrary to a lot of other companies, Eosta not only lives up to high expectations, it also really makes a substantial contribution to society.

The company lives up to its key values: authenticity and transparency. Positive reactions from consumers (on the Facebook page) prove that this true CSR strategy works and pays off. In times of an ever growing need for caring for the environment, organic food is an important part of the solution. The extra attention for the social environment Eosta stands for, is unique.

This is why the company and its products deserve to become even more known. No strategy is perfect though, and to make sure the company will actually reach this goal, some improvements could be made. These improvements will be discussed under ‘Strategic choices’ and sub question 1 and sub question 2.

**6. External analysis**

This part of the research focuses on the improvement of the marketing strategy. The following analyses were necessary in order to discuss possible strategic improvements:

 - Customer/target group analysis

- Industry/branch analysis

- Situational analysis

The subsequent ‘Opportunities and Threats’ and the Confrontation matrix are founded on the outcome of these analyses, and the latter one is based on the prior internal research as well as information from Eosta/Michael Wilde, to give new measures a justified basis.

**6.1 Customer/target group analysis**

It is important to know what kind of people buy organic fruits and vegetables. Characteristics like age, education, gender are important information, as well as personal preferences (for example the appearance of a product). When it comes to the domestic (Dutch) organic market, we already know a lot about its consumers. A lot of research has been done on them. A good example is a research by the university of Wageningen on product package appearance. What is more attractive and appealing: a photo or just product information? The researchers came to the conclusion that most customers are attracted to highly visualized packaging (pictures and nice logos). “The logo contributes most to perceptions of sustainability and style of the picture to the perception of attractive” (Onwezen, van den Broek, and van Wijk-Jansen, 2011). Eosta thankfully uses these results in order to reach the consumer in a good way.

The real challenge is however, to reach a largergroup of consumers. The focus must also be on potential buyers of organic food, a very large group of people. A main goal of this research is to give a better insight in potential target groups’ characteristics, wants and needs. Roughly 70 percent (according to Michaël Wilde) of the Dutch organic market turnover is being generated by a small group of ‘eco-conscious people’: people “marked by or showing concern for the environment”(Merriam-Webster, n.d.).



These people buy organic food on a regular basis, because they:

1) want to contribute to a better environment and/or

2) prefer the taste of organic food and/or

3) are health conscious and/or

4) have the money to spend more on food.

**6.2 Industry/branch analysis**

The organic fruits and vegetables market is a relatively small market. “The global market for organic food is estimated at 44.5 billion euros. It grew by approximately eight percent in 2010” (FiBL, 2012). Because the organic market is growing, the threat of new competitors on the market is big. But, new entrants have to build relationships with growers as well as build a customer base, and this can take years. Nature&More has been active on the market for a long time, and has established and proven itself more than enough in terms of organic professionalism. Besides just offering the products to the customer, the company finds it important to focus on soil quality.



Its affiliated firm Soil & More specializes in how to optimally grow organic products in natural, unpolluted soil. Developing composting projects, carrying out Carbon and Water Footprints, and [improving the overall sustainability performance](http://www.soilandmore.nl/index.php/Sustainability-Services/Consultancy-Services/Grower-Development-Services), efficiency and profitability of their farming systems, are just a few of its activities. “With the Soil & More Foundation - an independent not-for-profit organization - we want to form a center of excellence for the development of truly sustainable solutions to address the world’s biggest environmental and agricultural problems, such as soil degradation, food and water scarcity, loss of biodiversity and climate change” (Soil & More, n.d.).

Eosta uses the professional knowledge of this company to assess the quality and the ‘grade of organicness’ of its growers. This way the customer is assured of buying a true organic product; grown in the most natural and sustainable soil, without the use of chemical fertilizers.

This is another example of Eosta’s authenticity and transparency, and combined with the focus on the social environment aspect, something that newcomers cannot offer. So far for a possible threat of horizontal competition.

What can be more ‘dangerous’ for Eosta, is vertical competition. Eosta has to deal with growers on the one side (purchase of products), and buyers (wholesalers, supermarkets) on the other side. But growers can decide to sell the products directly on the market, leaving out the ‘mediating’ role of Eosta. When they decide to sell their products on a small-scale, there is no real threat of course.

But when they succeed in establishing business relations with major supermarket chains, the situation is completely different. In practice, it has not happened actually. It is a big risk for the grower. He/she will have to deal with even stricter requirements when it comes to quality, so specialists have to be hired who check the outgoing products on the basis of sampling. In addition, transport needs to be taken care of. These things make it much more complicated, and requires a lot of investment from the grower. In theory though, it is a possible threat.

**6.3 Situational analysis**

It has business relations with some major supermarket/food chains in a lot of countries, which is a good thing. But this is just a small part of the market, and Eosta can do so much more. And it is really not that difficult actually.

The German market currently is the most important one for Eosta, in terms of turnover.

This is mainly because big supermarket chains like Aldi and Edeka are its customers, but also because Eosta has invested in (good) publicity – by being present at large organic trade fairs. The most prominent one is the BioFach in Nürnberg. Fairs like these are a great way to connect to future business partners, as well as to spread the ‘organic message’ (to consumers); why you should buy bio-fruits and vegetables’. According to Michaël Wilde (Communication Department), it has really paid off.

Regardless of the age or education of people, it is important to become more known among consumers. Especially because it is a relatively small market with a lot of growth potential, Eosta should seek to continue its role as market leader by being/seeming attractive.

The next step is to make sure that the ‘product sells’. The company is doing a pretty good job despite the crisis, but things can be improved nonetheless. These improvements will be discussed in the next parts.

The company launches a new commercial campaign every now and then. Every campaign focuses on a different topic; the newest campaign is all about bees.

Bees play a really important role in organic farming (pollination), and Eosta wants to spread this message. By handing out a lot of small sacks containing flower seeds, the goal is to make people more enthusiastic about nature and the environment.

**6.4 Opportunities and Threats**

Before a Confrontation matrix can be made, the main opportunities and threats need to be appointed. As discussed, the information on product packaging needs to improved (direct information on projects). The market is growing, and so is the popularity for social media. Because the market is growing, more stores are getting interested in including organic food in their product assortment. The large group of non-aware potential buyers of organic food is another big opportunity.

As for the threats, global warming can lead to flooding and dry land, which will have its effect (crop failure) on the products. Vertical competition is included, because it is something to be aware of. But because growers generally do not decide to start selling directly to the consumer, it is not a fatal threat. Oil prices are rising and rising. “If you’re watching global oil markets and getting a sickening feeling in your stomach, you’re in good company” (Time Business, 2012). Because the trucks for transporting the products need gas, these costs are increasing. The increasing costs for transport and fuel can threaten future business turnover.

‘Opportunities and Threats’

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Opportunities** | Market is growing | Popularity social media | More stores interested in organic | Large group of ‘non-aware’ potential buyers of organic food |
| **Threats** | Global warming | Vertical competition | Increasing costs (high oil prices – transport) |  |

**6.5 Confrontation matrix**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **EXTERNAL** |
| Opportunities |  | Threats |
| Market is growing | Popularity social media | More stores interested inorganic | Large group of ‘non-aware’ potential buyers of organic food | Global warming | Vertical competition | High costs (oil) |  |
| **INTERNAL** | Strengths | Strong relationships growers | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | **3 / 0** |
| High-quality products | ++ | 0 | ++ | + | - | + | 0 | **6 / 1** |
| Solid reputation | + | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | **2/0** |
| Transparency | 0 | ++ | + | + | 0 | + | 0 | **5/0** |
| Unique commitment natural/social environment | 0 | ++ | 0 | + | + | 0 | - | **4/1** |
| Motivated personnel | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | **1/0** |
| Weaknesses | Lot of small customers | - | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | **0 / 0** |
| High labor/packing costs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + | + | **2/0** |
| No link packaging and Facebook  | 0 | -- | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0/3** |
| Small marketing budget | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0 / 2** |
| Higher priced than comparable ‘regular’ products | ++ | 0 | ++ | -- | 0 | 0 | - | **4 / 3** |
|  | Total + /- | **6 / 1** | **4 / 3** | **5 / 1** | **3/4** | **1 / 1** | **7 / 0** | **0 / 3** |  |

- - very threatening

- threatening

0 neutral

+ promising

+ + very promising

From the confrontation matrix, we can see that some strengths have a strong influence (high-quality products/transparency). At the same time, some weaknesses block the business from performing well in a certain area. Most important is to build a strategy in order to improve these factors. In addition, the opportunities that require attention, will form the basis of this strategy as well. Possible strategies are being discussed in the next chapter, eliminating some of them. The recommended strategies are directly relevant as they address crucial results from the SWOT analysis, and do not clash with the company’s vision. Strategic decisions are being discussed, and a choice is suggested on the basis of the results of the confrontation matrix.

**7 Strategic choices**

In this chapter, multiple possible strategic decisions on 1) using social media to raise more awareness and 2) using other marketing opportunities in order to improve image and turnover, are being considered.

There are a variety of options when it comes choosing a new marketing strategy. When looking at the matrix, we could decide to cut down on costs by not serving small customers anymore, as this would lead to lower production costs. In order to keep growing, the company would need to look for (new) bigger customers instead. From a profit-seeking point of view, this measure would be crucial in order to make the most money out of the company’s sales. But Eosta wants to keep doing business with these small organic stores, because these are the stores that are truly inspired by organic. This way Eosta is associated with companies like ‘Bio aan huis’, which is one of their organic customers, that are committed to selling just natural products.

As becomes clear from the matrix as well, the market is growing, and there is a large group of potential consumers. An option would be to start selling directly to customers via a web shop, making it easier for people to buy organic fruits and vegetables. It would certainly increase sales, but also increase handling costs. In addition, the company would have to completely change its warehouse product lay-out, and hire a lot of new personnel that would constantly be packing small orders. Then the business would have to transform in some sort of mail-order/delivery company.

The above mentioned measures might pay off in terms of turnover (on the long term), but they require a quite rigorous change in the company’s vision or strategy; only focusing on profit, and start doing business directly with consumers (B2C). A weakness is the relatively high price, and the company could decide to lower the prices. But because profit margins are really low already, the increase in demand for the company’s products would have to be really high. In addition, the question is if stores would bother to change their prices too. This is a tricky measure, and also not recommended for Eosta.

There are other ways that can improve Eosta’s turnover, and at the same time making people more aware of organic fruits and vegetables, while not having to barter away the company’s main principles. That is why the final strategic decisions are being based not merely on the matrix results, but also on the company’s goals and mission.

In addition, Communication and Sustainability Manager Michael Wilde has been consulted; being in charge of the marketing department, he knows exactly what the company’s strategic direction will be in the future.

His view mostly confirmed the results of the matrix: the weakness of the social media (Facebook, red.) aspect, and the opportunity to reach a wider group of consumers. Since the goal of this research is to fully address these issues, adequate measures are required. Bearing in mind that these strategic measures are proportional, both in costs and the time it takes to implement them. Another measure that will be discussed, is increasing the funds for the Communication Department.

Strategic decisions:

1. Adding (direct) interaction aspect on Facebook

2. Improving information on packaging

3. Being represented at non-organic fairs

4. Investing more in marketing

These decisions are being explained in the next chapters, and examples are being given in order to clarify and justify the strategies. The first two strategies should not just be seen apart from each other; this will be elaborated on. One could consider it as one strategy, formed by these strategic decisions. Part of the social media strategy is very much on emphasizing an important strength of the company: commitment to the social and natural environment. As will become clear throughout the text, 4 factors of the Marketing Mixare relevant for adapting a new strategy: ‘Product’, ‘Promotion’, ‘Presentation’, and ‘Packaging’. These are not directly separate areas, as they are practically interwoven on certain points.

**8. Sub-question 2**

**‘How can social media contribute to more awareness (of organic fruits and vegetables)?’**

**8.1 Framework and background**

There is already a Nature&More Facebook page. But is the right kind of information on there? What do people want to see/read?

To reach a wider group of consumers, new strategic measures are required. Social media are the perfect tool to communicate with (new) customer groups; an increasing number of people subscribe to social media, it has simply become an essential way of communicating. Eosta/Nature&More already has its own Facebook page, but it needs to find a good way to address its message to the people.

People who read this kind of information are generally very pro-organic and environmental conscious Also: 58% female, 19% age 25-34 and 16% age 35-44 (stats provided by Michaël Wilde, Eosta).

Sweden is a good example of a very eco-conscious country: “For most Swedes today, sustainability is a way of life” (Sweden.SE, n.d.). The company is already active on the Swedish market, but the market share could be increased. This is not just about Sweden, because the goal is to reach a wider group of consumers in all current European markets of Eosta.

Because the goal is to reach the ‘organic-conscious shopper’ as well as the ‘organic-unconscious shopper’, the information needs to be basic (for those who do not know a lot about organic) as well as deep going.

The organic food market is still growing: “Global sales of organic products continue to defy the economic downturn, growing by 8.8% in 20101 with growth continuing into 2011” (Soil Association, 2012).

Why is the market still growing? What factors contribute to this growing demand?

Some primary factors were mentioned in an article on the website of Rodale, on which a lot of prominent articles on health and environment are published. Some of these factors are probably more important than other factors in their influence on sales, but this gives a good view on the needs and wants of the contemporary ‘buyer of organic’. The factors that are directly relevant for explaining a growing demand for organic food, are being explained on briefly.

1: [Budgeting for Organic](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C1): more and more people want to pay a little more for organic food
2. [Concern over Chemicals](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C2): the growing concern of artificial fertilizers makes people ‘aware’ of organic/naturally grown food
3. [Seeking Sustainable Packaging](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C3): oil (a fossil fuel) is being used for producing plastic packaging, and people start to realize that it is not sustainable, and opt for organic food (which is often not

 packed, or minimally).

4. [Digging In to Organic Gardening and Urban Agriculture](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C4)
5. [Betting on Slow Money](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C5)
6. [Standing up for Animal Rights](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C6)
7. [Rejecting GMOs](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C7)
8. [Young Organic Farmers](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C8)
9. [Looking for Local and Fair Trade](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C9)

10. [Understanding the True Cost of Food](http://www.rodale.com/organic-trends?page=0%2C10): cheaply grown products are not expensive, because they are generally produced on a large scale, without concern for the environment. A lot of people start to understand why organic food is more expensive; small-scale, not influencing the natural growing process artificially, which can result in lower harvest ratios.

(Zerb, n.d.).

It is vital to know what consumers want to know, and it is not just the topics mentioned above. After studying the Nature&More Facebook page and consulting Michael Wilde and Alexis van Erp (both Communication Department), it was easier to get a good idea of how to communicate and interact with the consumer. Especially the latter is very important, because interaction means two-sided communication. Of course not all of the above mentioned topics have to be addressed, but it should be clear that Nature&More is much more than just food. This is also one of the main pillars that drive Eosta; be environmentally andsocially responsible.

**8.2 Viral information**

The Facebook page could be improved. It has been proven very recently that viral information (especially pictures) can lead to a snowball-effect of reactions and likes. This draws a lot of attention, which is a good thing. After the following picture had been posted on the N&M Facebook page, a lot of people reacted. As a result, an increasing number of people started to ‘like’ the page.



Although these kinds of pictures do not directly refer to the daily business of Eosta or Nature&More, it is very catchy and to-the point. Moreover, it emphasizes Nature&More’s interest for the environment.

**8.3 Information on N&M’s uniqueness**

**(Product/promotion/presentation)**

The Trace & Tell system is quite unique; there is simply no other company that provides such detailed information on where the product comes from by means of entering a code. Informing people about this system is crucial, but there is no or not enough information on the current Facebook page about it.

The Nature&More website (where buyers can enter their code and view information) is a separate source of information, and linking these two would 1) lead to more visitors of the Facebook page and 2) a great interest in the system of ‘Facebookers’. To achieve this, there should be a clearly visible chapter on N&M’s Trace & Tell system on the Facebook page. There is feedback from consumers on some products on a regular basis, but a lot of this feedback is sent by e-mail.

This means that the reviews are only visible for the Communication Department, and are not shared with ‘the rest of the world’.

That is why buyers should give feedback on Facebook. A big ‘Tell us how you like our 1) apples 2) pears 3) tomatoes etc.’ button should give people the chance to give their review, so it will be possible for other people to directly see them.

In the next chapter a revolutionary packaging layout will be discussed, which (together with the new ‘feedback button’) will greatly increase the popularity on Facebook. Soon, popularity on Facebook will mean popularity of Nature&More (products), because these two will be inextricably linked. By linking with NGO’s people can see that the scope of Nature&More is actually wider than those of competitors; care for the natural andsocial environment.

By implementing these measures, the company will create a competitive advantage; other companies on the market simply do not offer such an advanced interactive communication system.

**9. Sub-question 3**

**‘Are there other marketing opportunities that the company could seize, in order to improve its image and turnover?’**

1. Involving customer more by including customers’ contribution to a better world, on packaging etc., making it more ‘ tangible’ 🡪 ‘link with us on Facebook’
2. Fairs

**9.1 Direct solution**

**(Packaging/presentation)**

The focus is not on the products themselves (because they are fine and delicious in general), but on the appearance of the packages. The Nature&More products that are packaged, can be recognized by a sticker with the picture of the grower on it. Next to the image of the grower, there is a code; consumers can give in this code on the N&M website, and see where the grower is from and what he does. Very interesting, and an interactive way of communicating with the customer. The goal this system is to provide clarity on where the product is from, as well as what kind of projects are funded by purchasing the product. One can see what projects the grower supports and finances, but things can be improved. Since people have to pay more for organic food, they want good value in return. This value consists of mainly of high-quality ‘unpolluted’ food. For Eosta however – as being established above – this is not enough.

Authenticity and transparency are important values, both towards society and consumer. Customers need to feel they are buying an honest product. This ‘feeling’ needs to be really strong however.

As many a research has shown, people are selfish and often greedy. Although greed is not the right term here – we are talking about environment/social conscious people after all – you have to be aware of the way people think. ‘’There's a big difference between someone acting good and someone being good. 'Acting' good is doing the right thing when there is some kind of selfish benefit to doing it’’ (Will, 2010).

In this case the ‘selfish-aspect’ is the high quality of the product, and also the information on the product. The ‘What’s in it for me’ is an important factor for almost all of us, and as a company you have to know how to make use of this. Even if the company’s only goal is not making profit; just give the people that little bit extra. Adding to-the-point information about the buyer’s contribution to society, would be a very good and simple solution. ‘’By buying this pineapple, you are directly contributing 1 cent for building a school in this village in Ghana.’’

A lot of people do not want to support charity organizations that operate in third world countries, because they think that the money will not end up in the right place. Not a crazy thought, since it is way more difficult to direct such big cash flows to the right places in corrupt countries that lack proper infrastructure. That is why such a relatively simple measure could really make a difference; an additional benefit would be that buyers tell other people ‘what good deed they have done.’ This can be during pub talk or with the neighbors, this is not of major importance. When people realize how much they can contribute with the purchase of a Nature&More product, they will spread the word and charity gets a whole new meaning for people.

In addition, a Facebook logo next to this information on the package, would be ideal; this way their enthusiasm leads them to the N&M page, which is full of information about Eosta’s unique way of doing business, as well as the interesting aspects discussed under sub question 2. So it not will not only create a snowball effect in people’s ‘regular’ networks, but hopefully also on Facebook. But there is more that can be done.

**9.2 Fairs**

**(Promotion)**

Another part of the ‘solution’ would be being present at non-organic fairs, that can be seen as a potential customer generator. Examples: Huishoudbeurs and Libelle Zomerweek. Although the visitors of these fairs are all female, it is a good way of promoting the company and its products.

Visitors of organic fairs like the BioFach in Germany are already interested in organic, but on fairs like these there is ‘a lot to gain’. Eosta should have its own stand, and take delicious samples to the fairs. Promoting the unique Nature&More system, and encouraging people to like on Facebook should have the desired snowball effect.

The above mentioned new strategy of packaging information should also be a key part of the provided information; people should really be convinced why they should buy the products. Not only because the food is tastier, and produced with care for environmental sustainability, but also because direct (personal) contribution to societal projects is guaranteed.

It will lead to a widening of the organic buying consumer base, which is crucial for the company’s growth. The earlier mentioned small group of eco-conscious shoppers is currently responsible for most of the profit on the purchase of organic food, and when this group grows, total turnover will naturally increase too.

**9.3 Large-scale campaigning/marketing investment**

Every couple of months, the company organizes an environmental campaign. A recent example of such a campaign is the ‘Bees Love Organic’ campaign. About 400.000 sacks with bee-friendly flower seed were sent and handed out, to raise awareness among people of the importance of bees – as they play an important role in the natural food chain. “By planting these seeds in your garden or on your balcony you will help to create 400,000 square meters of organic, flowery, bee-friendly environment” (Nature&More, 2012).

These kind of campaigns usually have great success; the demand for flower seed was so high that Eosta could not supply every customer/company. The primary goal of these campaigns is raising awareness of environmental issues, but another important goal is to be linked with major firms, and become more known. Supplying big organizations – like Greenpeace – with large amounts of flower seeds, can lead to a great reputation and publicity in one blow. But it is a shame when – in the middle of a campaign – marketing funds are running dry, and this leads to missed publicity. That is why the Communication (marketing) Department should receive more funds; it has proven to be successful at organizing campaigns that gained a lot of publicity and positive feedback. Therefore it makes perfect sense to invest more in this department.

**9.4 The role of the government**

The above mentioned measures could really help to strengthen Nature&More’s brand image, making it more known. Because environmental sustainability is such an important issue nowadays – and organic food is part of the solution – governments should realize that subsidies for this sector would be of great help. By reducing taxes on organic products as opposed to traditional fruits and vegetables, governments can help stimulating the consumption.

Better quality for the same price. Cutting taxes anddevelopmental aid to these countries can balance one another. There will be more financial possibilities for third world countries, so they need less money from us. This way our governments can save money and cut taxes on organic products. These progressive measures that stimulate certain products already exist, LPG for cars for example.

**10. Recommendations**

Conducting a SWOT-analysis was a good way to give a clear view on what areas the new marketing strategy should focus on. Although some recommendations can be seen separately, the most important ones are directly connected; the Facebook logo on every package will lead to a higher popularity on Facebook, where the buyers will be able to see reviews of products and information about the grower. Continuing with posting ‘viral’ information will certainly draw more page visitors.

Direct information on the buyer’s contribution (1 cent to this project) will lead to even more transparency.

In addition, it is a good way of letting people know they are contributing to a better society (without having to become member of a charity organization). This in turn will lead to positive feedback, and *because* buyers will have the opportunity to write a review and post it directly on the page, other people can see how great this brand and system is. To even further improve the brand awareness, being represented at non-food/non-organic fairs would be a good plan. This way the people who are not yet ‘into organic’, can be reached easily.

**10.1 Primary recommendations**

Because the social media aspect of marketing is so important – and it is already a primary way of Eosta’s communication with the consumer – the first primary recommendation is: to involve the consumer by including public product reviews on Facebook.

The second (linked) primary recommendation is to give direct information on what the consumer contributes to in terms of charitable projects. Consumers will be happy to see that they contribute to a better world. Some people may already know that their purchase contributes to a social project, because they are curious and go to the Nature&More website. But directly (in the store) seeing that they help improving living conditions in a certain country, will lead them to 1) buy more products out of solidarity/goodwill and/or 2) at least a positive feeling about the brand, despite the possibly higher price than that of regular products.

The third primary recommendationis making sure that the company can continue to have great success with environmental campaigns, by an increase of marketing funds. It is better to have a little more money at hand when publicity is at stake, then having to back down because the department is ‘broke’.

**10.2 Secondary recommendations**

The latter mentioned measure will arouse a high degree of interest in the brand among consumers. Because they see (on the package) that Nature&More has a Facebook page, they will be inclined to visit it. Telling the consumer about the Trace&Tell system – because it is unique – will confirm people’s view on Nature&More as an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible brand.

The last recommendation concerns being present at non-organic fairs. Visitors of these fairs are not necessarily organic-minded, like visitors of the BioFach in Germany for example. It is still recommended to continue sending delegates (employees) to these fairs as well, but to become more known among a wider group of people, non-organic fairs would be a good place to promote the business and the brand.

Of course the company has to realize that not all non-organic fairs are suitable for this; the AutoRAI (Amsterdam International Motor Show) would not be an attractive/relevant option. But lifestyle/household fairs could be a perfect place for Eosta to promote the business. To start with, The Netherlands would be the first country to start doing this in. When results are good – there is a lot of positive feedback and interest – Eosta could consider to cross the border with this idea, and send delegates to non-organic fairs abroad.

All recommendations are directly executable and implementation costs will be low. Changing and producing the lay-out of the packaging will lead to some costs, but they are expected to be proportional, since the measure will lead to more profit.

**11. Conclusion**

This plan is meant to report on Eosta’s marketing strategy, and discuss how a new strategy could lead to growth. It has been a remarkably interesting experience to analyze Eosta’s marketing strategy. Especially because of the company’s unique Corporate Social Responsibility, and of course the relatively exclusive market of organic fruits and vegetables.

This dissertation has investigated new marketing strategies that will lead to strengthening the brand image and increasing turnover. The findings add substantially to the understanding of the current strengths and weaknesses, that were evaluated and put in perspective. The opportunities and threats will have their influence on the company’s future performance, and all 4 factors combined and weighed form the confrontation matrix.

The recommended strategies are largely based on the outcome of this analysis, as it addresses the most crucial strategic factors that should be dealt with. Relevant factors of the marketing mix have been included – both in the internal analysis and the recommendations - to put matters in a practical perspective, and to optimally link a theoretical framework with the company’s (future) performance. Hopefully the company will use the recommendations for implementing the measures in its core marketing strategy.

Having read the entire research study, the reader has been informed extensively on the organic fruits and vegetables market, but especially on Eosta’s unique business approach. The recommendations of this plan are meant to boost and exploit this uniqueness, making use of opportunities optimally and efficiently. More publicity and awareness are what the company could achieve with the new strategic measures, while continuing to give commitment to the social and natural environment high priority.

Eosta has a very noble mission, because it wants to improve the social and natural environment. see the bigger picture; organic is good for the environment after all. This is the reason that the last part of sub question 3 is addressed to national governments. This sector deserves support, because it does so much for a healthy and livable world. This research study supports this, by recommending how to optimize and renew the marketing strategies, so the company should be able to strengthen its position on the market, and continue to contribute to the social and natural environment.

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