**Archives of Business Research – Vol. 9, No. 3**
**Publication Date:** March, 03, 2021
**DOI**: 10.14738/abr.93.9844.
Kwadade-Cudjoe, F. (2021). Organizational Strategic Marketing Management: Critical Analysis of the Marketing Strategies / Practices Currently Employed By the Water Resources Commission, Ghana, Indicating Challenges and Opportunities. Archives of Business Research, 9(3). 140-156.

# Organizational Strategic Marketing Management: Critical Analysis of the Marketing Strategies / Practices Currently Employed By the Water Resources Commission, Ghana, Indicating Challenges and Opportunities

**Dr. Francis Kwadade-Cudjoe**
FBCS, FIMIS, PhD, MBA, BSc (Hons)
Senior Lecturer, Knutsford University College and
Adjunct Lecturer, GIMPA Business School, Accra, Ghana.

**ABSTRACT**

**Strategic marketing management is the implementation of an organization's marketing mission through focused processes to get the most out of existing marketing plan and to identify target customers. Again, it is to help the discovery of other marketing opportunities for the organization to transform plans into reality. The marketing plan should outline the marketing strategy of the organization for the coming year, quarter or month. A typical business marketing plan should include: overview of the marketing and advertising goals, description of the current marketing position, timeline of when tasks within the strategy will be completed, key performance indicators to be tracked, and description of the target market and customer needs. When an organization adopts this approach to market its products / services to customers / consumers, there is a strong expectation of success for the organization. The initial capital outlay pumped into businesses is normally huge, and this should not be made to go waste. However, most organizations gloss over this important point and put out mediocre plans and strategies to managing their businesses. Business wo/men should project their businesses from a better marketing angle with good competitive strategy to enable them achieve competitive advantage.**

**Key Words:** Marketing, marketing plan, strategic marketing management, performance indicators, target customers and competitive advantage.

## INTRODUCTION

Marketing is defined by Hornby (2001) as the activity of promoting, advertising, selling and delivery of an organization's products to consumers in the best possible way. Additionally, the American Marketing Association in Kotler (2003) defines marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, selling and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational

objectives. This definition takes care of the marketing tools / mix (5Ps), namely; 'Product, Price, Promotion, Place and People', which are vital for any marketing system. These and the additional 3Ps – Profit, Plans and Processes (which are more of service in nature), would be used to explain and analyse the marketing practices currently employed by the Water Resources Commission (WRC), Ghana (University of Leicester, 2002).

According to Kotler (2003), marketing management is the art and science of choosing target markets and getting, keeping and growing customers / consumers through creating, delivering and communicating superior customer value.

Furthermore, strategic marketing management as described by Aquino (2017) and University of Leicester (2002) is the implementation of an organization's marketing mission through focused processes to get the most out of existing marketing plan and to identify target customers / consumers. Strategic marketing management would also help the discovery of other marketing opportunities for the organization to transform plans into reality.

Regarding marketing plan, McGuire (2020) describes it as a report that outlines the marketing strategy of an organization for the coming year, quarter or month. McGuire (2020) and Kotler (2003) add that a typical business marketing plan would include:

- overview of the marketing and advertising goals,
- description of the current marketing position,
- timeline of when tasks within the strategy will be completed,
- key performance indicators (KPIs) to be tracked, and
- description of the target market and customer needs.

## WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION, GHANA

The Water Resources Commission (WRC), has a mission to regulate and manage the sustainable utilization of water resources of Ghana and to co-ordinate related policies for socio-economic development of the country. The vision of the WRC is 'Sustainable water management by all for all'. The organization was established in 1996 by Act 522 of Government of Ghana (Parliament of the Republic of Ghana, 1996; Wrc-gh.org, 2020a).

WRC started business in 1999 after presentation of a report by a study group in 1998 on the ways of facilitating the WRC's responsibility of regulating and managing Ghana's water resources on a sustainable basis (Water Resources Management Study, 1998).

Currently, WRC has completed the pilot-phase of its life-cycle, with the setting up of three (3) pilot-basin-offices to regulate and manage the resource in the basins; a basin is an area of land where rainfall collects and drains off into a common outlet, such as into a river, stream or other body of water. The first basin was created in the Year 2000 with the third (the last) taking-off in early 2006. There are 14 river-basins in Ghana (Water Resources Commission, 2006). See appendices 1 and 2 for the organization-chart and functions of the WRC (as spelt out in the Act 522 of 1996), respectively.

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MARKETING PRACTICES EMPLOYED BY WRC

The marketing practices of the WRC would be described and analysed under the following areas:

- value delivery service,
- marketing practices,
- product,
- price,
- promotion,
- place / distribution channel,
- people / labour market,
- sales,
- costs,
- profits, and
- suppliers / competitors.

### WRC's Value Delivery Process

According to Kotler (2003), the task of any business is to deliver customer value at a profit. The two (2) views of the value delivery process are:

- traditional physical process, and
- value creation and delivery.

The WRC marketing approach at the start of work was traditional, where the organization was selling water rights to users (consumers) for fees and, did not apply any value creation before marketing the products. Currently, the WRC has embellished its marketing strategy for its products by adding a lot of values to make the products of the organization attractive to consumers. However, the activities of unlicensed / illegal 'small-scale mining groups', known in the local parlance as 'galamsey', to wit 'gather them and sell', have been doing a lot of damage to the resource. These unlicensed 'small-scale miners' pollute the river bodies through digging for gold nuggets for sale, after the activities of the WRC to make the resource good for users (Mantey, Nyarko & Owusu-Nimo, 2017).

The government of Ghana is seriously tackling the problems being caused by these illicit miners. Examples of activities by the WRC to make the water good for the users are the setting up of Basin Boards and Buffer Zone policy to protect the resource from encroachment (Wrc-gh.org, 2020b). See appendices 3 and 4 for the diagrams of the traditional and value creation processes of products of an organization.

### Marketing practices of WRC

Kotler (2003) advocates that marketing practices of an organization should present relevant background data on product, price, promotion, place, people / market, sales, costs, profits, competitors, suppliers and the forces in the macro-environment. The information to be gathered on the above from the WRC would therefore, be used to carry out a SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunities and threats) analysis on products from the organization.



**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.

**Product**

University of Leicester (2002) explains 'product' as a good, service or idea to satisfy the customer's needs. It is not only the texture, colour and smell, but including the package, brand-name / trademark, generalised image and others attached to the product. Furthermore, 'product' is the physical item / service that an organization is selling. The intrinsic characteristics of the product are important, but customers' perceptions of the product, called the brand-of-the-product can be as important as the actual characteristics of the product. The brand of the product actually moves the customer to willingly acquire the product (University of Leicester, 2002). See appendix 5 for a diagram of the three (3) levels of a product.

To acquire a product (in the case of WRC, 'water rights' are issued to users), one applies to the WRC for a license of allocation of raw water. The application is granted only after the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ghana, has issued an environmental impact assessment (EIA) certificate to the user.

The water rights application form is then purchased from the WRC (Wrc-gh.org, 2020c), and an administration fee is paid depending on the user type during the submission of the forms. The fee ranges from GHS1000 to GHS3000 (Wrc-gh.org, 2020d). Various user-product types are:

- domestic / municipal,
- industrial / mining,
- irrigation,
- power generation,
- construction,
- aquacultural,
- livestock,
- navigation,
- environmental, and
- recreation (Wrc-gh.org, 2020e).

After receipt of the application, WRC sends a team, comprising a water-engineer (surface / groundwater) and water-quality specialist to the locality to examine and verify the accuracy of the application. If the application is accepted, another team consisting of a legal officer, water-quality specialist, water-engineer and a member from the EPA would hold a forum for the community where the project is sited. Questions from the community members are posed to the team and, it is upon the successful holding of the forum that the application is granted / approved (Water Resources Commission, 2006).

**Price**

According to University of Leicester (2002), 'price' is what is paid for the exchange of a product / service. To a buyer, it is the value placed on what is exchanged, usually purchasing power is exchanged for satisfaction. Again, this element of the marketing mix is the amount the customer pays for the product / service to be obtained.

Marketing experts argue that organizations should think of price in a broader sense, to include the total of all financial costs that the customer pays (including transaction costs) to obtain the product. The total cost of the products when subtracted from the perceived benefits derived by the customer yields an estimate of the customer value obtained in the transaction. It is expressed mathematically as:

**Customer Value = Perceived Benefits – Total Cost.**

However, the equation involves both tangible and intangible elements, and may not look like a typical mathematics equation (Fontanella, 2020).

Kotler (2003) and University of Leicester (2002) give a hint that 'price' is important, because it is the only revenue-generating element of the marketing mix; the others consume resources. There are two (2) basic strategic pricing alternatives:

- skimming, and
- penetration.

***Price-Skimming***

A price-skimming strategy sets prices high at the introduction stage of the business and then lowers prices at the latter stages. This approach enables the product to rope in maximum revenues layer by layer from segments willing to pay the high price. Two (2) requirements vital for the success of a price-skimming strategy are that there should be:

- few close substitutes for the product, and
- a sufficient number of people willing to pay a premium price for the product (University of Leicester, 2002; Maximilian, 2015).

***Price-Penetration***

Price-penetration strategy sets prices low at the outset of the product life cycle and uses the approach as a thrust to enter the market, and then raises prices at the latter stages; it is the opposite of price-skimming. Through this approach a large number of buyers and market share are won, but at the expense of profitability. This pricing strategy can be successful when:

- all segments of the market are sensitive to price, even at the early stages of the product life cycle,
- production, distribution and promotion costs decrease rapidly per unit as output increases, and
- competitors are likely to enter the market quickly (University of Leicester, 2002; Maximilian, 2015).

According to Wrc-gh.org (2020f), raw water users pay charges based on the amount of water allocation. The rates of charge are minimal, as the WRC has adopted the price-penetration strategy. This is so, because WRC would like to capture the entire market at this stage of growth. The rates are:



**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.

| Product | Charge (GHS) |
|---|---|
| 1. industrial / mining | 10.00 per cubic metre (1000 litres) |
| 2. domestic / municipal | same |
| 3. irrigation – private scheme | same |
| 4. irrigation - government scheme | 10,000.00 per ha per season |
| 5. hydropower | 0.60 per KWh of power generated |
| 6. navigation / recreation | 86,000.00 per horsepower of vessel engine |
| 7. aquaculture – cage | 86.00 per sq. metre of surface area per annum |
| 8. aquaculture – pond | 10.00 per cubic metre (Wrc-gh.org, 2020f). |

Normally, a successful applicant of 'water rights' from the WRC compensates the local community by providing a constructed bore-hole with hand-pump for their use.

Common approach of some users to avoid sanctions by the WRC is to apply for higher volumes of water than needed, so that they would be covered should they consume more than their allocation. Also, some users pay their monthly water charges in advance, in order not to go against the payment regulation of the WRC, as they would be sanctioned should payment go overdue. The WRC has accepted these methods by the users as marketing practices for its products.

**Promotion**

University of Leicester (2002) explains 'promotion' as a means of communication between the seller and buyer. In its broadest sense, promotion means to motivate consumers to action. Additionally, promotion includes any means of spreading the word about the product. Technological advances have made it advantageous for organizations, as possibilities abound on the internet for communicating with previous, existing and even potential customers. This can be done through emailing such consumers, or even the brand of the products / services being attractive to engage the attention of these consumers to promote the products / services.

The promotion mix consists of: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity and point-of-sales communication.

The number of registered users of the nation's water resource by 2019 was 259 for surface water and 124 for groundwater use (Wrc-gh.org, 2020g). As the number is not encouraging, the WRC has put in place series of promotional activities using the district assemblies (DAs) concept initiated in Ghana in 1992. The DAs are the district-based segments of each of the 16 regions in the country, for facilitating faster decision-making and implementation of programmes.

The promotional approach was through the preparation of a communication strategy, in which awareness creation of water as a finite resource (needing protection and conservation), is one of the objectives. The DAs are closer to the people and know every activity on use of the resource within the districts (Wrc-gh.org, 2020h).

**Place / Distribution / Channel**

University of Leicester (2002) defines 'place' as a means of getting the product into the hands of the customer / consumer or the routes by which marketers of products and services can ensure that the items reach their intended market. In addition, this element (also referred to as distribution), is the need for the organization to have its products and services available in, and spread over many different locations. Opening of many outlets / channels by the organization within countries or having franchises globally enables the products and services to easily reach out to consumers.

The place mix involves: channels of distribution, physical distribution, wholesaling and retailing.

As explained under promotion, the DAs are the outsource institution for the WRC. The DAs are also roping in some community-based organizations (CBOs) within the districts to identify users of raw water within their communities. The setting up of basin offices and boards by the WRC are also channels of distribution. With the intermediaries of distributing the resource / product well-laid and delivering, the WRC has high hopes to register more water users in Ghana (Wrc-gh.org, 2020h).

**People / Labour Market**

According to Daft (2003), 'labour market' refers specifically to the people available for hire by the organization. This element of the marketing-mix deals with the skills and expertise of the organization needed for effective marketing of its products and services. Moreover, as an enterprise, it is important to acquire the right skills and expertise to properly manage the system of activities, and enable better sales for the enterprise. This is due to the fact that a high capital outlay is always expended before the commencement of any organization (University of Leicester, 2002).

Staff strength of WRC is about 40, comprising senior and junior members. Currently, WRC does not have a union. Graduates from universities normally do their national service at the WRC. Generally, WRC's staff are given the necessary training, including training in the use of the computer technology for efficient service delivery, and to manage the users of the resource very well.

**Sales**

383 raw water users have so far been registered and licensed by the WRC as at 2019 (Wrc-gh.org, 2020g). Raw water sale is a new concept in Ghana and, it is the hope of the WRC to expand the coverage. Vigorous value creation marketing approach has been going on over the years, so as to promote more users of the product. It is the hope of the WRC to raise the number of users to an appreciable level, in order to generate more revenue for regulating and managing the water resource of the nation.

**Costs**

As water rights is a new concept in Ghana, getting users to register for the product is a herculean task. This has compelled the WRC to organize a lot of sensitization seminars and workshops across the country. Fortunately, Danida (Danish Development Agency)


**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.

supported financially the initial component description – phases 1 and 2 of the institutional and tasks assignments of the WRC (Niras-Danida, 2005). The Ghana Government also takes care of the internal cost, example, the emolument of staff.

### Profits

Though the WRC has been generating a lot of funds from the sale of water rights to users of the commodity, all payments go into government consolidated account. In order to be effective and efficient, the organization should be allocated a proportion of the revenue generated from water users to manage its tasks, especially those outside Danida's scope. Really, getting money from the treasury is cumbersome and difficult (Wrc-gh.org, 2020a).

### Suppliers / Competitors

The WRC has been outsourcing tasks to research institutions, example, Water Research Institute (WRI) and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), for quality inputs for its activities and building a good working-relationship with its suppliers. Currently, the WRC does not have a competitor (Niras-Danida, 2005).

## USE OF STRATEGIC MARKETING MANAGEMENT TO IDENTIFY THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

According to Aquino (2017) and University of Leicester (2002), strategic marketing management is about selecting markets to target and developing marketing strategies to reach, serve and satisfy these markets. The forces in the macro and micro-environments would be interspersed with the strategic marketing management, and then the auditing of WRC activities, especially in the areas of marketing environment, marketing systems and marketing functions. This would help to analyze the problems and opportunities within the WRC (Kotler, 2003). See appendices 6 and 7 for the diagrams of strategic planning process view and factors influencing an organization's marketing strategy through the external environment.

According to Kotler (2003), due to the rapidly changing global situation, an organization has to monitor the interactions of the six (6) / seven (7) key or major macro-environment forces. These forces are:

- political-legal,
- ethical,
- social-cultural,
- technological,
- demographic,
- economic, and
- natural / physical.

There are also significant micro-environment actors which needs to be monitored. These are:

- customers,
- suppliers,
- competitors, and
- distributors.

These macro and micro-environment actors would normally lead the organization to new opportunities and threats within the environment it operates.

**Political-Legal**

As explained by Kotler (2003) and University of Leicester (2002), the environment is composed of laws, government agencies and pressure groups, including non-governmental agencies that shape decisions regarding the manner in which the society is organized.

Currently, in Ghana there is a law only on pollution of rivers, and not general pollution of the environment. Even this law is lax, to the extent that mining companies which occasionally spill chemicals into rivers, manage to come out exonerated from the offence.
As an environmental audit, the WRC, EPA and the Mineral Commission would have to come out with laws and strong regulations to monitor the environmental pollution, such as, littering and pollution of water bodies, example, cyanide spillage into rivers.

**Ethical**

According to University of Leicester (2001a), managerial ethics reflect a code of behaviour expected of managers by the public, whilst conducting an activity. The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) has produced a code of professional standards on ethics and disciplinary procedures in accordance with Royal Charter Bye-laws for guiding the institution (Cim.co.uk, n.d).

As a marketing audit, the WRC would have to be socially responsible to win the confidence of people staying around the basins. Apart from re-claiming the polluted rivers, they must also provide other social amenities to the population living around the basins, as its corporate social responsibility.

**Social-Cultural**

Kotler (2003) mentions that society shapes our beliefs, values and norms. Culture embraces the beliefs, values and norms that are transmitted from one generation to another socially.

As a marketing audit, WRC must understand the residents' view of themselves within the basins, so as to help market healthy rivers for sustenance. The laws from the basin boards must also address the needs of the different sub-cultures within the basins to achieve effective management of the rivers.

**Demographic**

Hornby (2001) defines demographic as the changing nature of the population in a community over a period of time. Due to the importance of water to humans, most settlements have evolved around rivers, leading to encroaching and destroying of rivers that support human sustenance. Most rivers in Ghana have been encroached upon (with garbage or physical structures). This has led to depletion of rivers and, where available, have been polluted and made unsafe for human consumption. The death of a river is a threat to human life.


**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.

As a demographic audit, a basin-based approach by the WRC to re-claim the polluted rivers has been adopted. This is the right way to go about solving the demographic problems of the communities staying within the river basins of the nation.

**Technology**

Kotler (2003) declares that the most dramatic force shaping people's lives is technology. Technology shortens the process involved in production and marketing of goods and services as seen in the use of the internet, example, business-to-customer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) marketing. The WRC uses the Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) from Vodafone Ghana, where the staff in an office building are linked together through an intranet system and therefore, share information across the link.

The company also has a web site (www.wrc-gh.org), where its activities can be viewed globally. Wide Area Network (WAN) for linking the basin offices has strongly been considered. As a marketing environmental audit, the WRC plans to link all the basin offices in the nation with WAN for faster sharing of information between the basin offices, should be speeded-up. Early sharing of information by the basin offices will contribute a lot to proper management of problems encountered within the basins.

**Economic**

Lancaster and Reynolds (2002) describe 'economic' as factors of concern to marketing firms because they are likely to influence, among other things, demand costs, prices and profits. Generally, mismanagement by governments has affected the economic power of their citizens.

However, water as an economic good for humans, should be well preserved, hence the activities of the WRC to re-claim the polluted rivers, regulate and manage them. As an economic audit, the WRC should be allocated about 40% of the revenue generated from water use to enable the enhancement of its activities of re-claiming and managing the rivers in Ghana.

**Natural / Physical**

Kotler (2003) declares that the deterioration of the natural environment is a global concern. In many cities, air and water pollution have reached dangerous levels. There is a great concern about the depletion of the 'greenhouse gases' in the atmosphere due to, example, the burning of fossil fuels and over industrialization of cities in most communities, globally.

The WRC has clearly explained to the nation that, water is a finite commodity that must be preserved for posterity and human sustainability. The re-claiming of polluted rivers in Ghana, example, through the setting up of basin offices and boards, is an audit of restoring the natural asset (water) for human use.

Micro-environment is explained by Daft (2003) as those sectors having a direct working relationship with the organization, the WRC. The three (3) factors to be discussed within this environment are:

- customers / consumers,
- competitors, and
- suppliers.

**Customers**

According to Daft (2003), customers are people / consumers in the environment who acquire goods and services from the organization. As recipients of the organization's output, customers are important because they determine the business' success.

The WRC has the monopoly of marketing raw water in Ghana, but care must be taken to manage the asset well, so as not to incur the displeasure of the water rights holders. The WRC Board has an onerous task of managing the organization well to produce good and acceptable products to the nation. The civil society organizations and water users would not hesitate to demonstrate / revolt against the organization, should the final products not found to be acceptable.

**Competitors**

Daft (2003) explains competitors as other organizations in the same industry or type of business providing the same goods and services to the same set of customers. According to University of Leicester (2002), Porter argues that the intensity of competition within an industry is largely dependent upon five key forces; threat of supplier power, buyer power, substitutes, intensity / degree of rivalry and barriers to new entrants (De Wit & Meyer, 2004; Daft, 2003; Kotler, 2003). In addition, Porter (2004) in Competitive Strategy reveals that the intensity of competition in an industry is neither a matter of coincidence nor bad luck, but something rooted in its underlying structure and goes beyond behaviour of current competitors.

Fortunately, the WRC does not currently have a competitor. Nevertheless, as a marketing audit, the WRC must work tirelessly to re-claim and manage the polluted rivers in Ghana to the standard required for use. The government would not hesitate to allow competitors in, should the WRC fail to deliver.

**Suppliers**

Daft (2003) describes suppliers as the providers of the raw materials an organization uses to produce its output. The WRC has been outsourcing most of its activities to research institutions and stakeholders for quality output.

As a marketing audit, the WRC must have a good relationship and co-operation with these outsourced companies in order to save money, maintain quality and speed-up delivery of products.


**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.

## USE OF STRATEGIC MARKETING MANAGEMENT TO IDENTIFY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Daft (2003) explains 'internal environment' as the strengths and weaknesses of elements within the organization's boundary. The functional areas within the WRC are finance, engineering, quality control and information technology.

SWOT analysis would therefore, be conducted / provided on the WRC from the information gathered from 4.1 to 4.10 above. The analysis would be conducted on the following for the WRC:

- strength,
- weakness,
- threat, and
- opportunity.

### Strength

In the area of strength, the following are identified:

- Monopoly of marketing products.
- Identified approach (outsourcing, workshops and seminars) to execute its mandate.
- Identified channels of marketing products (District Assemblies and Community Based Organizations).
- Costs of products are marginally low.

### Weaknesses

- Inadequate marketing skills, as there is no marketing department.
- Poor financial stability.
- No brand-name / trademark.
- R&D skills not enough.

### Opportunities

- Better managed rivers would provide good health status of the poor.
- Enactment of appropriate environmental laws would prevent / improve environmental (river) deterioration.
- Sharing of information among stakeholders (water sector) should be made easy, faster and apprising.
- Social responsibility of the WRC should be seen / felt by the inhabitants staying close to the river bodies.
- Outsourced tasks should provide effective output to lead to cost savings.

### Threats

- People settling very close to rivers is dangerous; kills lives (e.g. Tsunami in Asia) and leads to pollution.
- Non-availability / enforcement of laws for controlling the environment should not be entertained.
- Poverty of the citizenry, especially those settling along river banks (engage in fishing for sustenance) should be eradicated.

- Non-availability of wide area network (technology) to link the basin offices and head office should seriously be tackled.
- Non-understanding the culture of the inhabitants would create a big problem for the WRC (De Wit & Meyer, 2004; Daft, 2003; Kotler, 2003).

## STRATEGIC MARKETING MANAGEMENT TO IDENTIFY PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT GO UNNOTICED

According to Kotler and Andreasen (1999), once an organization has analysed its marketing environment, internal strengths and weaknesses, the next task is to develop a core marketing strategy. This strategy is the organization's strategic marketing planning process - selecting key target segments, carefully positioning the organization and then coordinating a set of marketing mix elements to implement the positioning to the target segments. The core marketing strategy must be customer-centred, visionary, differentiating, sustainable, easily communicated, motivating and flexible.

There are two (2) main consumer types of WRC's products; these are individual small-scale and large-scale business users.

On the individual side of consumer are individual customers who have established vehicle washing bases and aquaculture ponds. These consumers do not use much of the product.

The business side of consumer are customers of the product in mid-to-large-scale quantities. These include users in the industrial / mining, municipal (water utility companies), irrigation and hydropower generation.

Highlights of WRC's marketing strategies therefore, would include:

- goal formulation,
- financial objectives,
- marketing objectives,
- positioning,
- product management,
- pricing,
- distribution,
- marketing communication,
- marketing research,
- action programmes, and
- implementation and control.

### Goal Formulation

This would be considered under both financial and marketing objectives.


**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.

***Financial Objectives***

- Earn annual revenue of GHS10.0b - next 5 years.
- Achieve first-year total sales of GHS4.0b - 20% average-increase on rates of charge stated at **3.4.2** above.
- Government of Ghana granting at least 40% of Products' sales to the WRC to improve upon the regulation and management of its functions.

***Marketing Objectives***

- Achieve first-year registration of 1,000 users, which represents about 261% increase on current number.
- Increase second-year registration by 80%, making total number about 1,800 users.
- Establish more distribution channels (DAs, CBOs and NGOs).
- Increase advertisement (on airwaves, print, television and internet).

**Positioning**

The WRC is the sole distributor of raw water in Ghana.

**Product Management**

The WRC should review its Legislative Instruments (LIs) for both surface and ground water users. The LIs would need to be reviewed to reflect the current use of the products by the water rights holders. Some of the industrial / mining, municipal and vehicle washing bases use both surface (rivers) and groundwater (underground water) for their activities. The Legal and the groundwater sections should seriously work on the LIs, so as to make them effective by the December 2021.

**Pricing**

As the concept of payment for raw water is new in Ghana, the penetration strategy is being used to capture all users within the initial life-cycle of the WRC. Prices of the products would have to be adjusted systematically as the concept catches on.

**Distribution**

The DAs, CBOs, NGOs, basin-offices and boards are the distribution channels. Discussions on airwaves and television stations should be interposed with articles and posters floated in the print media. In addition, they should be used to sensitize the populace and distribute the products. Registration through the internet should be made to work well to avoid cyber fraud / manipulation from unscrupulous water users.

**Marketing Communication**

Advertising campaigns should be developed to create brand-names / trademarks to differentiate among users. According to Lynch (2003), the key criterion in measuring communication strategy proposals is cost-effectiveness – the cost of obtaining an effective communication with the customer; the effect usually being measured as the sale of the product / service.

## Marketing Research

Awareness of products should be measured for before, during and after marketing campaigns to know the depth of product acceptance. Customer satisfaction should also be studied to identify opportunities for future product-development efforts. According to Finlay (2000), focus groups are becoming more significant in unearthing tacit knowledge. Furthermore, business intelligence systems currently use formalized methods to obtain information on business trends, especially the actions of competitors.

## Action Programmes

Action programmes should be developed yearly to achieve the WRC's objectives. For example, the programme for 2021 should include:

| | Date | Programm | Theme | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| i. | 22/3/2021 | World Water Day | Water for life, a decade for action | National seminar for water stakeholders |
| ii. | 27/4/2021 | National Water Policy | Review of the national water policy to be more effective for Ghana | Finalising review policy for submission to parliament |
| iii. | 17/8/2021 | Basin Boards meeting | National workshop on all Basin Boards to inform the citizenry on activities of the WRC | Briefings on experiences of Basin offices / Boards |

## Implementation and Control

The marketing strategies listed above would indicate to management the problems and opportunities available to the WRC when implemented at the action-programme stage. Control mechanisms, including feedback and feedforward (University of Leicester, 2001b) would be applied when necessary to make the goals achievable. The budget for the period would also be subjected to control mechanism to know the deviations from actual and the necessary corrections effected to achieve the goals in the marketing strategies.

## CONCLUSIONS

Strategic marketing management is a very useful management tool which when properly applied to any business would help unveil a lot of hidden problems.

For the WRC, problems like the positioning of the product in the market, distribution channels, pricing mechanisms, product management, marketing communication and research on the product might have easily gone unnoticed.

Furthermore, the use of the strategic marketing management theory to analyze the macro, micro and internal environment forces, actors and boundary of the WRC to identify problems as listed under weaknesses and threats at 5.2 and 5.4 is noteworthy and handy.



**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.

The strategic marketing theory is a very useful marketing management concept, which should be recommended to every business, both new and existing.

## Reference

Aquino, M. (2017). Strategic Marketing Management Definition. Retrieved from https://bizfluent.com/info-8186633-strategic-marketing-management-definition.html.

Cim.co.uk (n.d.). The code of professional standards – General regulations for the provision of professional standards, ethics and disciplinary procedures in accordance with Royal Charter Bye-laws 16-19. Retrieved from https://www.cim.co.uk/media/cim...

Daft, R.L. (2003). Management (6th edition). USA: South-Western.

De Wit, B., & Meyer, R. (2004). Strategy: Process, Content, Context, (3rd edition). Bedford Row: Thomson Learning.

Finlay, P. (2000). Strategic management: An introduction to business and corporate strategy. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Fontanella, C. (2020). What is customer value? (& how your business can generate it). Retrieved from https://www.blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-value.

Hornby, A. S. (2001). Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (6th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kotler, P. (2003). Marketing Management (11th edition). NY: Pearson Education, Inc.

Kotler, P. T., & Andreasen, A. R. (2008), Strategic Marketing for non-profit organizations (7th edition). NY: Pearson Education Ltd.

Lancaster, G., & Reynolds, P. (2002), Marketing: The One Semester Introduction. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Lynch, R. (2003). Corporate Strategy (3rd edition). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Maximilian, C. (2015). New Product Pricing – Price Skimming or Penetration Pricing? – Pricing in the introduction stage. Retrieved from https://marketing-insider.eu/new-product-pricing/...

Niras-Danida (2005). Integrated Water Resources Management Component of the Danida-Assisted WSSPS II. Accra: Danida.

Mantey, J., Nyarko, K., & Owusu-Nimo, F. (2017). The footprints of galamsey in Ghana: The western region under microscope. Retrieved from https://www.theigc.org/project/the-foot...

McGuire, S. (2020). What is Marketing Plan and how to make one? Retrieved from https://www.venngage.com.

Parliament of the Republic of Ghana (1996). Water Resources Commission Act 522. Accra: Assembly Press.

Porter, M. E. (2004). Competitive Strategy. Techniques for analyzing industries and competitors. New York: Free Press.

University of Leicester (2002). 2602 Strategic Marketing (13th edition). Cheltenham: Learning Resources.

University of Leicester (2001a). 2600 Management, People and Organisations (11th edition). Cheltenham: Learning Resources.

University of Leicester (2001b). 2601 Accounting for Managers (12th edition). Cheltenham: Learning Resources.

Water Resources Management Study (1998). Ghana's Water Resources, Management Challenges and Opportunities. Accra: Assembly Press.

Water Resources Commission (2006). Ghana Water Update. Accra: Hallel.

Wrc-gh.org (2020a). Water Resources Commission Act 522 of 1996. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/documents/acts-and-regulations/...

Wrc-gh.org (2020b). Riparian buffer zone policy for managing freshwater bodies in Ghana. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/...

Wrc-gh.org (2020c). L.I. 1692 Water use regulations, 2001. Schedule A Regulation 2 (2) -Water rights application form. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/...

Wrc-gh.org (2020d). L.I. 1692 Water use regulations, 2001. Schedule B Regulation 2 (3) (a) - Administrative and processing fees. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/...

Wrc-gh.org (2020e). L.I. 1692 Water use regulations, 2001 – Raw water product types. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/...

Wrc-gh.org (2020f). L.I. 1692 Water use regulations, 2001. Schedule B Regulation 2 (3) (a) – Raw water charges. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/...

Wrc-gh,org (2020g). Water use and drilling license registers. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/...

Wrc-gh.org (2020h). Communication strategy and action plan, 2018 – 2022. Retrieved from https://www.wrc-gh.org/documents/reports/...



**URL:** http://dx.doi.org/10.14738/abr.93.9844.