

## **Marketing Strategy Competition among Beer Companies before Liquor Liberalization**

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*This is a case study analysis of companies dealing domestic and imported beers in Thailand. Case study of domestic beers will be concerned with Boon Rawd Brewery Company, Thai Amarit Brewery (Thailand) Company, Thai Asia Pacific Brewery Company, Carlsberg Brewery Company and Thai Beer (1991) Company. For imported beer market, the study will focus the C.V.S. Syndicate Company and the TIS Worldwide Marketing (1997) Company. The purpose of the study is to analyze marketing strategy of beer companies before liquor liberalization in 2000. Research methods include qualitative and descriptive approach. The results of the study demonstrate marketing strategy of both domestic and imported beer companies. For domestic beer marketing strategy, Boon Rawd Brewery Company conducted product line strategy, product development strategy, block channel strategy, media strategy, trade strategy, and consumer incentive strategy. Thai Amarit Brewery Company adapted product line strategy, brand positioning strategy, and market expansion strategy. Thai Asia Pacific Brewery Company used brand strategy, and distribution strategy. Carlsberg Brewery Company used brand strategy, product development strategy, unique customer service strategy, selling local liquor plus Carlsberg beer strategy, price strategy, SWOT analysis strategy, media strategy, distribution strategy, service after the sale, customer satisfaction strategy, and proactive strategy. Thai Beer (1991) Company used the strategy of selling local liquor plus with Chang beer, price and channel strategy, brand building strategy, SWOT analysis strategy, heavy advertising strategy, selling point building strategy, and proactive strategy. While imported beer, C.V.S. Syndicate Company conducted trade promotion strategy, and advertising strategy. TIS Worldwide Marketing (1997) Company used brand strategy.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The nature of competition for beer market in Thailand in the past was not much rigorous because there were only two groups of operator. Boon Rawd Brewery Company produced and distributed Singha beer family and Thai Amarit Brewery Company was the producer and distributor Kloster and Amarit NB beer. Singha family beer occupied the most of market share. Kloster and Amarit NB beer grasped upper market for premium beer by positioning at a higher price than Singha beer. Competition for scrambling of market share seemed to be scarce. It was, thus, in the state of monopoly.

Owing to having a rather high rate of expansion of beer market, it caused various entrepreneurs to enter into this sphere such as Carlsberg Brewery (Thailand) Company, Thai Asia Pacific Brewery Company and Thai Beer (1991) Company. As a new product and the need to create brands, it was necessary to conduct marketing. At the same time, selling was made through existing channels of distribution. Carlsberg beer entered the market with a strategy of combining Carlsberg beer with local

liquors through agents that were available throughout the country together with advertising. However, Carlsberg beer could not achieve their target. Chang beer was then dispatched to fight once again with an addition of alcoholic degree higher than the composition of Singha beer's. Chang beer also conducted marketing, being a mass beer and big market. It was available for selling all over the country via agents. Advertising via television attracted consumers in a broad scope complementing its cheap price due to selling local liquors with Chang beer. They spent up to 500 million baht just for the promotion. There was a big competition between Singha and Chang beer in mobilizing various strategies to compete in every aspect such as rebate, exchange distribution and promotional gift. The main strategy applied continuously was the attractive price that was lower than competitors' price by selling local liquors with Chang beer in economic crisis that caused consumers' purchasing power to decrease. Therefore, price is an important factor in determination to buy beers.

Boon Rawd Brewery Company used the strategy in launching new beers that had a lower price to compete with Chang beer such as Leo, Super Leo and Super Lion beer. Each group of entrepreneurs mobilized its own competitive strategies in every pattern no matter about rebate, exchange, distribution and providing items as a gift throughout strategy related to distribution of beers a price cheaper than competitors.'

The year of 2000 was regarded as a year that the fighting for scrambling of market share was more rigorous than any other periods and it seemed that each group attempted to apply every form of strategy in fighting. In the previous time, a slogan "a beer made by Thai people" that was being raised to be a selling point of "Chang beer" belonging to Mr. Charoen Siriwattanapakdee seemed to have a rather great interesting in its derivation.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The study analyzes case studies of beer companies before liquor liberalization in 2000 as follows:

1. To analyze beer case study, company by company.
2. To study both domestic and imported beers.
3. To analyze marketing strategy of each beer companies.

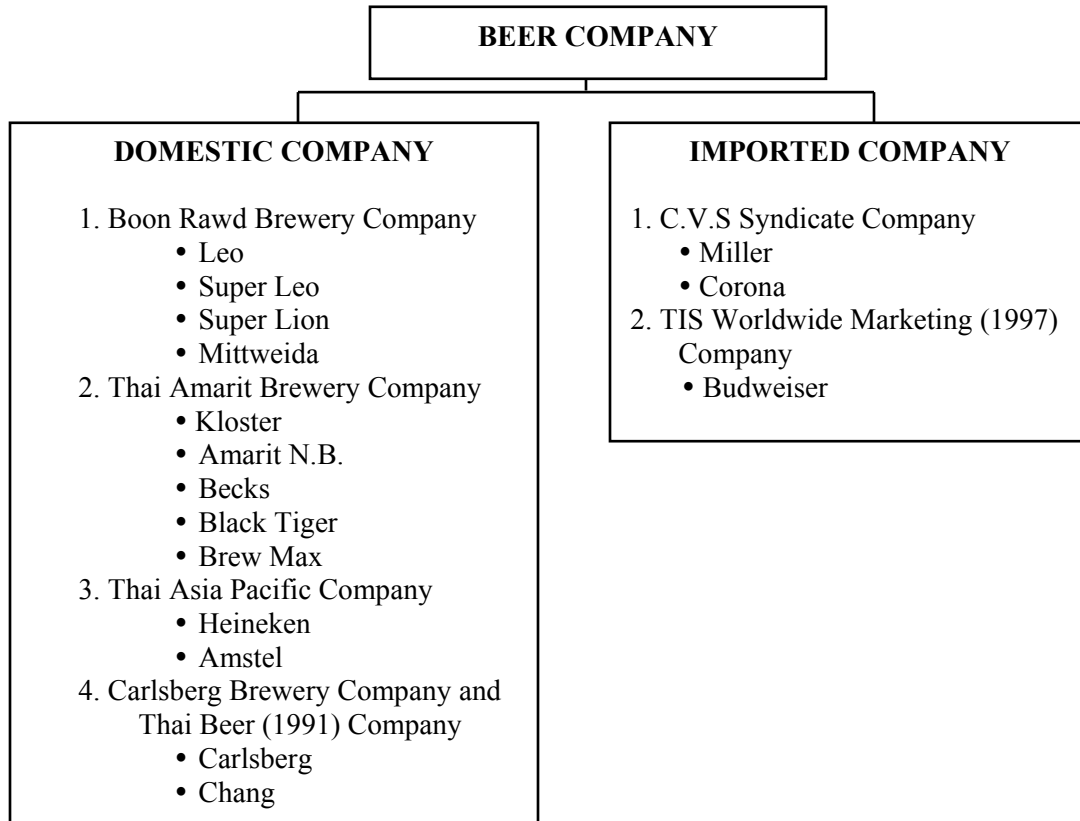
## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research method was a qualitative approach. In-depth interviews of the key people and beer company experts were conducted. The primary data was gathered from direct answers to specific questions. Secondary data was gathered from textbooks, journals, dissertations, newspapers, newsletters, seminars, etc.

Regarding the beer business, analysis conducted related to domestic and imported beer, which was classified for study as follows:

1. Domestic beer companies: Case studies were Boon Rawd Brewery Company, Thai Amarit Brewery Company, Carlsberg Brewery Company and Thai Beer (1991) Company, and Thai Asia Pacific Company. These companies were distributors of several beer brands as shown in Figure 1.
2. Imported beer companies: Case studies were C.V.S Syndicate Company and TIS Worldwide Marketing (1997) Company. These companies are distributors of several beer brands as shown in Figure 1.

**FIGURE 1  
CASE STUDY OF BEER COMPANIES**



**FINDINGS - DOMESTIC BEER COMPANIES**

Domestic beer companies were Boon Rawd Brewery Company, Thai Amarit Brewery Company, Thai Asia Pacific Company, and Carlsberg Brewery Company and Thai Beer (1991) Company.

**Boon Rawd Brewery Company**

Development of a marketing orientation, difficult though this can be in many organizations, is only one side of the coin in improving the marketing effectiveness of an organization. Marketing strategy specifies a target market and a related marketing mix (McCarthy & Perreault 1993, p. G7). Marketing strategy requires a definition of the market domain in which the company will compete and statement of how utility and value will be created for customers through product and service offerings. Recognizing customer needs and filling them better than competitors is the core of successful marketing strategy (Urban & Star 1991, p. 5). The company’s marketing strategies were as follows.

*Product Line Strategy*

A product line is a group of products that are closely related because they perform a similar function, are sold to the same customer groups, are marketed through the same channels, or fall within given price range. Product line managers need to know the sales and profits of each item in their line in order to determine which items to build, maintain, harvest, or divest. They also need to understand each product’s market profile (Kotler 1997, pp. 436-37).

The company produced new beers to be in completed amounts for every segment for the purpose of: (1) Selling for competition, (2) Scrambling for market share and insertion into the marketing space, (3)

The liquidity in laying of market policy and cooperation with alliance, (4) Having an increased amount of products to serve the demand for Singha Draft beer with a mild taste to attract customers who like the smooth taste.

**TABLE 1**  
**PRODUCT LINE OF BOON RAWD BREWERY COMPANY**

<b>Brand</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Fighting Brand</b>	<b>Date of Distribution</b>
Singha Gold	Premium	Kloster	1985
Leo	Standard	Chang	24 June 1998
Super Leo	Standard	Change	4 April 1999
			23 December 1999 (no ceased producing)
Mittweida	Super Premium	Brew Max	28 October 1999
Super Lion	Standard	Chang	2000

*Product Development Strategy*

After successfully completing the business analysis stage, product planning moves to development and testing (Cravens 1994, p. 373). In 1998, the company received the certificate of universal standard quality or ISO 9002 from S.G.S. (Thailand). In December 1985, the company began to wade into the market by developing a new beer named “Singha Gold” which was a kind of beer that had low alcoholic content of 3.5%, similar to a light beer. It was thus, a kind of beer though its taste was lighter than that of both Singha’s and Kloster’s. Singha Gold was positioned as a beer for the new generation.

On October 31, 1993, a modern technology called Stay on Tap (SOT) was brought in to produce beer cans for both Singha and Singha Gold beer. The reasons were: (1) The technology in SOT production would help in conservation of the environment and it was used widely in foreign countries, (2) It was expected that the tendency for growth in the canning market would be increasingly expanded. The proportion of the canning beer market was in the level close to the size of a small bottle.

In the matter of raw material development, the company was a centre of malt production in Chiang Mai. Its area was additionally enlarged to be able to dispatch raw materials to the Khon Kaen factory as well. The company’s branch in Chiang Rai brought raw materials (malt) used for beer production from farms in Chiang Rai and Loei province, about 10,000 rais (production capacity was about 180-300 tons per rai).

In addition to product development strategy, the packaging of Super Leo beer during April 2000 was modified due to the fact that sales volume did not meet with the target because of customers’ confusion related to “Leo.” A new label was put in place and the word “Super” was emphasized (with bigger letters) while the word “Leo” (with smaller letters) was used for advertising which included marketing activities of Super Leo being separated decisively from Leo.

*Block Channel Strategy*

After an approval from the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Finance, two new beer production factories were established in 1989, namely, Carlsberg Brewery (Thailand) Company and Thai Asia Pacific (Thailand) Company. In 1990, the government sector allowed famous beer producers from abroad to increasingly enter into Thailand for investment bringing in more rigorous competition.

The policy for combating in two simultaneous ways was prepared by the company as follows: (1) Creating a foundation by establishing about 11 agent syndicates countrywide from 360 agents (it had already been prepared in advance more than three years ago), (2) Establishing a high barrier to prevent competitors from gaining ground by rushing on advertisements and promotion with a budget of 100 million baht a year.

Eleven Syndicates of Singha traders throughout the country were composed of trader syndicate from the upper and lower northern parts, Bangkok syndicate of traders, suburban syndicate of traders, syndicate of eastern traders, trader syndicate of upper and lower central parts, trader syndicate of upper and lower Northeastern part and trader syndicate of upper and lower southern part. Duty and role of the 11 Singha trader syndicates could be described as follows: (1) Customers' name list no matter who it belonged would be recorded by each syndicate to prevent scrambling of customers among them with the exception of new and emerging customers, (2) Policy of working performance for the syndicate was to seek new customers instead of waiting for them to come visiting, (3) Selling of products that belonged to competitors including soda, drinking water and beer was decisively forbidden, (4) In order to get rid of overlapping where selling lines were concerned and undercutting among distributors, the parental company (Boon Rawd Brewery Company) established the same selling prices. Meetings would be held on a monthly basis by the syndicates. In case of any violation of the regulations, the right to be an agent would be revoked and an opportunity for a new appointment would not be opened. Because of these reasons, all agents did their best to keep their status in their full capacity.

### *Media Strategy*

Advertising can be used to build up a long-term image for a product (Kotler 1997, p. 625). Advertising was emphasized by the company as a key factor in promotion and in stressing on value, identity of art, culture and tradition, sports, and excellence in society. It had been recognized through several years in the past that advertising of Singha beer was outstanding, standardized, and worthy in art and culture as well as providing useful knowledge.

From the concept of bringing Thai art and culture in combination with advertising of Singha beer, it made the company's undertaking able to stand fast and steadily. Conducting the development of advertising rapidly throughout the time while stressing on advertising work which was concerned with new generations and youths, was regarded with extreme pride that the company was able to properly combine between old and new and to be useful to Thai societies both in the past and the present.

Advertising of Singha beer would be done via all kinds of media ranging from radio, television, motion-pictures, magazines, newspapers, and other media in order to approach receivers and consumers widely and fruitfully. The advertising of Singha beer was considered to be extremely successful whether it was a promotion or a conservation of Thai culture as it was visible thanks to outstanding awards in the area of advertising that the company received several times in the many years past.

Throughout the duration of 67 years (in 2000) that the company advertised Singha beer, the Thai identity was promoted, fulfilling an intention of Phraya Bhirom Bhadi as the initiator of the company and an establisher of the beer industry in Thailand. As he was a person who loved and treasured the value of being a Thai, he then had the thought to preserve the identity of being Thai since the beginning.

### *Trade Strategy*

Trade promotion can persuade the retailer or wholesaler to carry more units than the normal amount. The company will offer volume allowances to get the trade to carry more in their warehouse and stores. The company believed that the trade will work harder when they load the company's product (Kotler 1997, p. 667). To increase sales volume, the company used trade strategies and seller incentives and arranged for the promotion of Singha agents countrywide in the occasion of its 60<sup>th</sup> year (in 1993). The purpose was to stimulate agents to be enthusiastic, to accelerate the release of beers for distribution as much as possible, and to select agents who achieved targeted sales volume. The sales volume of each syndicate was not less than 100 million baht. The syndicate and the president of the Singha traders' syndicate who were outstanding in each part with the total amount of 38 persons were selected for visual study and for visiting the October Festival in Munich, Germany, September 22 – 29, 1993 for the first time and this project would continue to be practiced.

Credits for product orders were provided for agents throughout the country (it was the first time). Formerly, sales were conducted in cash only. The purpose was to constitute strength to the agents countrywide because the competitive situation was very tough. The first credit was provided in the

celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> year (1993) at Sirikit National Convention Center, July 29 – 31, 1993 (providing of such credits as above mentioned caused the company to immediately lose its circulated cash income per day by about 50 million baht).

There was a policy for 356 agents throughout the country to fete sub-agencies and customers countrywide for celebrations of the 60<sup>th</sup> year of Singha beer (1993) in order to thank customers including sub-agencies by: (1) Free consumption, (2) Casting of lots, distribution of gifts, and a lot of amusing games for strengthening the relationship. In 1985, Singha Gold beer was released for distribution by the company through promotional activities were arranged in conjunction with 24 agents countrywide except Bangkok, the budget for the arrangement of activities in the introduction of new beers was provided, beer booths in approximately 10 locations at various trade centers were installed, billboards and posters were put up, and advertising via television and several media was managed.

#### *Consumer Incentive Strategy*

Programs related to casting lots which were under bottle caps of Singha beer and various company's products were held several times, sports marketing was promoted for public participation in social activities with massive number of people. Being the sponsor of a country road circuit fair (annual racing fair), making the arrangements for marathon relay racing or "Green relay marathon" and joining in the arrangement of Singha Draft festivals with shops in the end of every year and so forth were other promotional activities.

#### **Thai Amarit Brewery Company**

A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve the long-run goals of the organization. Marketing strategies evolve from more general business strategies (Dalrymple & Parsons 1990, p. 31). At the other end of the scale, marketing management deals with formulation and implementation of marketing programs to support the marketing strategy. Marketing strategy is developed at the business unit level (Jain, 1990, p. 241).

Kloster (Thailand) Company, managed to apply several aspects of marketing strategy, for instance, product line strategy, brand positioning strategy and expansion market strategy in order to achieve the marketing goal as follows.

#### *Product Line Strategy*

The company had decided to produce every line of beers comprising all beer segments that could cover every target group. The spreading of product lines was integral in every segment which had been a strong advantage that enabled the company to create marketing plans in a more simplified and aggressive manner in order to achieve desired liquidity in the market. The company was able to adjust plans to cope with the competition. In conclusion, implementation of strategies had been implemented by providing complete segment of product line, which became a strong advantage to that of other companies as having integral products helped in attaining bargaining power with various distribution channels in addition to arrangement of joint sales promotion activities that helped the company establish and spread company product lines. Such were achieved as follows:

*Black Tiger*: Being a lower class level got the same mass segment with Chang beer.

*Kloster and Brew Max*: Being a premium beer.

*Beck's*: Being a super premium beer.

In the matter of marketing plan related to old brand that had small sales amount, the company appointed high potential provincial agents to be a distributor and, in case sales does not increase to the desired amount, the company would stop its production and had to carry out marketing plan to increase further the production of new product.

#### *Brand Positioning Strategy*

Kloster (Thailand) Company which was the company's agent had designed brand positioning to definitely enable each brand to have the capability to compete with the other brands, to penetrate the

market and increment market share for each segment by conducting marketing policy in the area of brand strategy which could be done by placing beers of each brand in positions such as follows:

- *Kloster*: Kloster beer was competing with Carlsberg beer which was a beer that penetrated market into an upper target level and made it a premium beer that apparently obtained solid customer groups, the company then had adapted sport marketing.
- *Amarit*: Amarit beer was in a middle level which is bit expensive than that of Singha beer but five baht cheaper than Kloster beer's. From its launching stage of distribution, Amarit beer did not come into a clear position in its channels of distribution hence the distribution of beers did not proceed smoothly. The company reviewed its marketing plans for the purpose of finding possible means to enable beers to penetrate the market for which Kloster beer was unable to achieve by increasing the production capacity and lowering its price. However, in this regard, the company had considered whether it would create an increase in sales revenue.
- *Amarit NB*: It was distributed at a price one baht more expensive than Singha beer's in order to clash with Singha beer in general mass markets. An appealing point of sales of Amarit NB beer (Natural Brew) was its German taste which was regarded as a prototype of beers worldwide. In addition, its labels were improved to create an impression that it was a luxurious and state-of-art beer, creating pride for consumers. Amarit NB beer came to an appealing point of sales between Kloster and Singha beer. Considering proximity of prices, it made Singha beer drinkers turn to drink Amarit NB beer instead. It was regarded by the company as success. Amarit NB was the kind of beer wherein alcohol does not remain in the body after drinking it. Chemical substance had not been used in fermentation in accelerating production into a large volume which other general beers in the markets does. It thus made Amarit NB beer popular among consumers.
- *Beck's*: It was identified as a German beer that went into a green bottle having flavor homogeneously known all over the world. The concentration of alcohol was 5 degree generation being distributed in three sizes, such as large bottle, small bottle and into can.
- *Black Tiger*: It was a kind of beer positioned between middle and lower level which stressed on target groups that require trial of new beers. The company repositioned Black Tiger beer to be in a lower beer level being capable of playing a price war such as performing market dumping of four bottles per one hundred baht. In addition, brand image had been designed to be in a higher status than that of its competitors. It was made in a green bottle as green bottle denotes an identity of being in a premium group.

#### *Market Expansion Strategy*

It was one of the marketing patterns for which Kloster beer had been cooperated with Mittweida beer of Boon Rawd Brewery Company in distributing beers to principal channels of distribution that were concerned with new entertainment places throughout the country.

Due to the emergence of a variety of new beers with various prices and tastes, it made drinkers turn to drinking other brands of beer hence Chang beer did price cutting until the consumers got accustomed to its taste. It was capable of gaining market share from Singha beer which had been leading the market for more than 77 years. Due to this, Kloster beer find the need to establish a base for regular customer by using pre-paid cards for those who came to try new beer flavor. Pre-paid cards were issued for an additional quantity of 15,000 cards (These had been issued to 8,000 persons in 1998). These were membership smart cards equipped with built-in chip in a card for drawing (credit card) at more than 20 selling points. Membership fee was 150 baht. Discount was made available in cases where consumption is done in gardens opened by the company (In front of World Trade Center) as follows:

**TABEL 2**  
**PRICE OF KLOSTER AND BREW MAX**

Brand Name	Regular Price (Baht/Jug)	Promotion Price (Baht/Jug)
Kloster	150	140
Brew Max	180	140

**Thai Asia Pacific Company**

Marketing affects almost every aspect of our daily life. The choices we have for the goods and services we buy, the stores where we shop, and the radio and TV programs we tune into were all made possible because of marketing. In the process of providing all these choices, marketing drives organizations to focus mainly on customer satisfaction. Most of the things we wanted or needed were conveniently made available when and where we wanted or needed them. A marketing strategy specifies a target market and a related marketing mix. It plays a big role in the market activity of any firm. (Cannon 2008, p. 5). The company's marketing strategies were brand and distribution strategy noted as follows.

*Brand Strategy*

The company was required to create a brand image for Amstel beer to be a tough brand and must achieved the same as that of Heineken beer, to battle liberalization for which a large volume of beers were expected to be imported from abroad aiming to expand its market in Thailand.

In 2002, The company aimed to make Amstel beer to be highly recognized by increasing its recognition level from the rate of 65% to 75% and that to be achieved by implementing market planning which had been categorized into three ways such as follows: (1) Giving premium items as a gift, (2) Conduct advertising relative to Amstel beer for it to be acknowledged and increasing its advertising budget by 20% annually. Perform public relations at selling points which expected to increase its recognition and stimulate increase in consumption. Moreover, push girls (PG) were dispatched to introduce beers (3) Arranged marketing activities concerning music marketing and sport marketing.

In 2000, one marketing activity had been carried out for Amstel beer by conducting opening game for Amstel caps in cheering casting lots with rewards amounting to one million baht per week. In the late of 2000, marketing campaign of draft beer was conducted by both the company and some organizers who sought permission in bringing 21 branches to be carried out by them. They were divided as follows: Heineken beer 14 locations and Amstel beer 7 locations (as compared in 1992 where there were only 18 locations). As a result, sales of fresh beers increased to 800,000 liters (which had doubled the 400,000 liters in 1999) while sales in bottle had increased to 10 million bottles.

**TABLE 3**  
**SALES OF FRESH BEER**

The End of 2000	Heineken	Amstel	Total
Liter	600,000	200,000	800,000
Million Bottle	50	10	60

Brand image of Heineken beer was attained by (1) Paying attention in every stage of production and by selection of the first grade raw materials from a source with the best quality and longer fermentation period, (2) Standardizing its taste and making it a good quality product. The company subsequently made



an improvement to its factory until it was able to receive the ISO 9002 standards certificate for good quality and subsequently had been awarded the 2<sup>nd</sup> prize as a brewery producing beer of best quality worldwide which was regarded as a honorary reward for Heineken beer, and (3) Reconsidering brand awareness to be inflicted into the minds of consumers and to access target groups through extensive use of various media such as television, radio, printed materials, etc.

#### *Distribution Strategy*

Heineken beer was the first grade beer of the world from Netherlands having cooperation with the team of Thai Namthip Company, a producer and distributor of Coke in Thailand helped successively in spreading beers to the market through its various channels of distribution of beverages. The system which belonged to Coke was able to cover channels of distribution up to 400,000 points throughout Thailand with its principal system consisting of 30 major branches, 167 minor branches and another 1,700 car units. In addition, there were about 2,000 points of post mix machine assigned to fast food shops, convenient stores and corners at various schools and so forth. Coke brought other two modern types of freezer to open Thailand market, namely, (1) Blender and, (2) Crusher rendering services in Seven-Eleven stores throughout Thailand. Aside from this, there was another kind of freezer called “Fast Lenmer Sundizer Freezer” being laid for service at supermarkets. Its feature was that it was a single freezer equipped with doors in two sides and positioned near the exit area where customers await while making payment.

Due to the fact that Thai Namthip Company was holding shares in the value of 5% of Thai Asia Pacific (Thailand) Company it had helped Heineken beer to come into distribution at nearly every point of Coke market. Heineken beer certainly benefited by occupying solid and extensive channels of distribution with what Coke market covers. Coke made an adjustment into its system to expand its channels of distribution by creating a new pattern using “Pre-sales” style or selling in advance accompanied by the use of computer named “Balintu” to link the whole system of data networks

#### **Carlsberg Brewery Company and Thai Beer (1991) Company**

Strategic marketing is a market-driven process of strategy development, taking into account a constantly changing environment and the need to achieve a high level of customer satisfaction. Marketing strategy builds competitive advantage by combining the customer-influencing “strategies business into an integrated array of market-focus on action. The marketing objectives and strategy for a particular product-market entry must be achievable with the company’s available resources and capabilities and consistent with the direction and allocation of resources inherent in the firm’s corporate and business-level strategies (Mullins et. al. 2004, p.16).

**Carlsberg:** The marketing strategy of Carlsberg Brewery (Thailand) Company is mentioned as follows.

#### *Brand Strategy*

A strong brand offers an organization with several important advantages. The brand name distinguishes a product from competitors’ products. A powerful brand identity creates a major competitive advantage. A brand that is recognized by buyers encourages repeat purchases (Carven 1994, p. 433). Carlsberg was being positioned as an international beer with a mild taste. It was a beer that has been billed in a top global rank from Denmark using a slogan in advertising ‘A unique taste worldwide.’’ It used the same procedure and formula including a yeast named *Socchraromyces Carlsbergensis* which was a specific strain of Carlsberg beer’s in fermentation that made the brand to be remembered and recognized by: (1) It was the first beer in Thailand that used an aluminum canning package for the size of 500 cc., it could be recycled and the stay on tap was used in response to the stream of environmental conservation, (2) Sports marketing was an aggressive strategy or global policy where beer brands enter as a principal sponsor in nearly all kinds of major world sports tournaments, (3) Created brand for consumer recognition as an international brand by advertising via media such as television, radio, and print

materials. Arranged promotion activity such as Euro 2000 Football and any activity to approach target groups.

In addition, strategies used for brand building by the company were as follows: (1) The quality of Carlsberg beer had to be easily recognized. Among drinking groups the stress should be on the quality of malt hops yeast raw material as it was a premium, (2) Modified package by using a green bottle with the word "Cool" printed on a black label whose its color became more intense when it was dipped in an appropriate temperature for drinking, This strategy was used only in Hong Kong and Thailand, (3) Sport marketing throughout the country was emphasized, (4) Emphasized on service before and after selling. (5) Created with an allotment of marketing budget, advertising and public relations including promotion in the amount of 250,000,000 baht to push up sales volume to meet a target established at 30 - 40 million liters calculated in a growing rate of 20% increase from the total current sales volume of Carlsberg beer which was only 25 million liters.

#### *Product Development Strategy*

If the firm segments its market on the basis of benefits sought, it should have considerable knowledge what a target consumer wants or expects in the product. If the product concept passes the business test, it moves to research and development or engineering to be developed into a physical product (Walker, et al. 1992, p. 191). In 2000, a modification of the packing was performed to make it a green bottle which included an improvement of Carlsberg taste to a universal standard acknowledged by premium groups of drinkers.

#### *Unique Customer Service Strategy*

Similarity in the customer needs to be satisfied or the product benefits sought by customers in the target markets (Walker et al. 1992, p. 76). The company was established comprising of headquarters and 14 affiliates that were responsible for rendering service to customers thoroughly and efficiently and be a sole distributor in Thailand.

#### *Selling Local Liquor Plus Carlsberg Beer Strategy*

It was considered as a selling strategy which was a monopolized strategy in compulsion to sell local liquor plus beer which the group of Mr. Charoen Siriwanapakdi's applied throughout the time. It was the nature of non-liberalized marketing operation. However, it was necessary for Thai Beer (1991) Company and Carlsberg Brewery Company to use this strategy due to being at an advantageous position to push new beers like Carlsberg and Chang beer into recognition.

The selling of local liquor plus beer strategy was being analyzed by marketers as one of selling strategies for survival in such a severe competition. It was agreed not to make a profit or agreed to sell at a price below cost which was dependent on what a company had as higher capital and the longer period that a company with a large amount of capital would be able to bear the burden of loss. Carlsberg beer was launched in 1993. Mr. Charoen Siriwanapakdi, who held a major share of Sura Maharaj Company, used the selling local liquor plus beer strategy according to a proportion designed by the company in 1993 by making a compulsion to buy two dozens of Carlsberg beer when buying Lao Kao liquor in every ten dumps (one dump is equivalent to 20 liters) because Lao Kao and Sang Som liquor were in great demand by the market. It was regarded as a new strategy which was generally in contrast to other companies that would use a strategy involving rebate, exchange, distribution, and providing a special gift which principally was the mandatory buying of Carlsberg or Chang beer in a plus upon buying the local liquors. Therefore, when the circulation or release of beers was required, as much as possible and in order to receive new incoming, general shops would sell by undercutting with the price of 100 baht per three bottles or in a retailing price of 35 baht a bottle from the regular price of 45 baht for a big bottle. Shops would increase the price of Lao Kao and color liquor to compensate losses caused by the reduction of beer price.

### *Price strategy*

One of the challenges in pricing analysis is to estimate how buyers will response to alternative prices (Cravens 2000, p. 333). The reduction of Carlsberg price enabled large numbers of consumers to have more chance to recognize and try the taste of Carlsberg beer comprehensively. The disadvantage was that the image of Carlsberg as a premium and famous global beer was lost. Carlsberg in this sense became an ordinary beer with a cheap price. To wit, instead of placing it to fight in the upper market level like Heineken and Kloster *beer*.

### *SWOT Analysis Strategy*

SWOT Analysis is a powerful technique for understanding firms' strengths and weaknesses, and for looking at the opportunities and threats their face (Lancaster & Massingham 1993, p. 99). Carlsberg Brewery (Thailand) Company studied strong and weak points and the growth chance of Carlsberg beer then brought SWOT analysis strategy to be used with the application of strong points to serve as a key mechanism to push for market growth.

The strong points were as follows: (1) Being a beer that was produced in Denmark, being in a top global rank, and being well-known for a long time. It was a good quality beer which was recognized by foreigners, (2) Its taste was mild and satisfying to Thai people, (3) Its packaging was modern and eminent and had its own identity, (4) Using of good grade and high quality raw materials and (5) Giving emphasis to marketing and after-sale service which was a principal policy of its parental company.

The weak points of Carlsberg beer were as follows: (1) Its beer image was not definite, and it was being sold in a plus manner by local liquor agents – the same as Chang beer, (2) Emergence of new beers being launched into the market such as Amstel, Black Tiger, and Mittweida beer, to compete in the market where drinkers' behavior had a tendency to try a new beer, (3) Regardless of marketing activity its market share at the end of 1999 remained below 1% of the beer market with the value of 4,500 million baht.

*Opportunity:* The total beer market value had a tendency to be increased every year because: (1) The rate of economic growth was increased in compliance with the economic boom, (2) Thai people liked to drink, (3) Due to the nature of consumers' behavior, new beers were introduced increasingly and the consumers liked to try them at a cheap price, (4) Liberalization of liquors created broader scope of opportunity for distributing beers to the Indochina region and foreign countries, and (5) Progressive telecommunication allowed consumers to receive rapid and precise information and to recognize new beers.

The SWOT analysis strategy of Carlsberg beer was made by using the strong point as a marketing strategy to: (1) Conduct via strong channels of distribution and compel the selling of local liquor with a plus of Carlsberg beer, (2) Implement the policy of Carlsberg International A/S Company, Denmark (parental company) such as marketing activity and service after the sale.

### *Media Strategy*

It had been acknowledged that the media often played a significant role in assisting manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers in planning and implementing marketing strategies (Bowersox & Cooper 1992, p. 76). Carlsberg Brewery (Thailand) Company used the media strategy by establishing an advertising motion picture to televise country wide and by using all kinds of printing material and radio broadcasting while spending a budget of more than 100 million baht for the total of six movies. The purpose was to communicate to consumers and helped them to recognize that (1) Carlsberg beer was the best beer of the world with a quality and taste that was identical all over the world and with the slogan "It was unique in the world," (2) There was participation in the societies such as acting as the first producer who used a Stay on Tap which was a cap that was helpful in preserving the environment because it could be recycled in its fullest capacity of 100% and the slogan used was "A little bit more will help the world to be cleaned considerably" and so on.

### *Distribution Strategy*

Management needs to search for distribution economies in inventory control, warehouse locations, and transportation modes. It is necessary systematically to plan and evaluate distribution as a controllable variable. Distribution decisions are a part of the strategic planning process (Luck & Lucas 1989, p. 289). The distribution of Carlsberg and Chang beer was the network of Surathip Group (owner of Lao Kao, Chieng Chun, Mekhong, Kwangthong, Sang Som, and Hongthong liquor) which was an enterprise in affiliation with a major shareholder, namely, Mr. Charoen Siriwattanapakdi who had a network of agents throughout Thailand. It was regarded as a very strong supporting distribution for local liquors and beers. It was also a key mechanism for an extension of the market. Surathip Company had 16 liquor agents, one company in Bangkok named Sumut Prakarn and Nonthaburi, two companies in the Southern part of Thailand and 12 other companies that took responsibility for 60 provinces countrywide.

### *Service after the Sale*

Carlsberg International A/S Limited (parental company in Denmark) put heavy emphasis on service the after sale. It was a kind of marketing service in a manner which was different from other companies. Service after the sale encouraged the making of a brand repeat to help consumers remember and recognize Carlsberg beer. The main objectives for service after the sale were as follows: (1) To provide customers with the test products. The company had a team to check the life of every can of beer by specifying that all the beer would be sold within a period not exceeding 6 months in order to keep the freshness permanently, (2) To arrange trade promotion in specific response to customers, (3) To stress on supporting of sports and (4) To repeat activities that return profit in response to the societal concern about environment conservation and so forth.

### *Customer Satisfaction Strategy*

Whether the buyer is satisfied after purchase depends on the offer's performance in relation to the buyers' expectations (Kotler 1997, p. 40). The effectiveness of a marketing strategy ultimately depends upon achieving customers satisfaction (Cravens 1987, p. 8). Carlsberg Brewery (Thailand) Company weighed the importance of using marketing activity in making customer satisfaction. Ways of creating this satisfaction was done by: (1) Holding international meetings for the exchange of ideas in market penetration and various techniques (2) Supporting the idea of being sponsors in different kinds of sports continuously. Regarding Carlsberg beer, the marketing was launched in a sports-like manner of marketing by publicly entering into the support of sports.

### *Proactive Strategy*

Carlsberg beer undertook several aspects of aggressive marketing practice by: (1) Being the first company that conducted marketing strategy in an aggressive manner, (2) The application of sports market strategy, (3) Using advertising media aggressively, and (4) Performing aggressively in provincial markets as following details show:

- Carlsberg was the first beer that penetrated the fresh beer market by obviously stressing on beer distribution gardens by using a production technology from Germany which had a distribution head that kept the freshness and coldness of beer thus making the taste of the same standard. Carlsberg beer had 400 distribution locations throughout Thailand in the form of beer gardens, food shops and restaurants.

- Carlsberg beer used sport marketing as a "Global policy" to act as a penetrator which helped Carlsberg beer enter into major sponsorships in key sports competitions worldwide. They were involved in nearly all kinds of activities such as being a sponsor in conducting, selling, and advertising activities with a spending budget of 250 million baht which the parent company gave to support international sports in order to build a good reputation for Carlsberg worldwide - such as being a sponsor in the Euro 96 Football match.

- Spread out to battle in the provincial market by using advertising strategy to cover the areas targeted by Carlsberg beer to penetrate the market and lay beers for distribution ranging from sub-shops, villages, sub-districts, districts, to major shops in towns which could be rapidly known to drinkers.

- Carlsberg beer used aggressive advertising media by mobilizing in large frequency due to its desire to arouse consumers to be familiar and to recognize data in the shortest period of time possible.

**Chang:** Marketing strategies used by Thai Beer (1991) Company were as follows.

#### *Strategy in Selling Local Liquor Plus with Chang Beer*

The company produced Chang beer for distribution in 1995 with an intensity of about 7 degrees by positioning it lower than Singha beer thus capturing groups of people who had low income (in the lower market). This marketing strategy was made by compulsion “to sell local liquor plus with Chang beer” as Singha beer did and by setting a target to have 10% of the market share from the total beer market valued at 30,000 million baht in three months (end of 1995). However, Chang beer was able to grasp such a market share within three weeks due to having distribution capability of Surathip Group who was an owner of Chieng Chun, Mekhong, and Kwangthong liquor, etc. the selling of local liquor in a plus with Chang beer resulted in the following matters: (1) Wholesale price of Chang beer was cheaper than the actual price in the market, (2) Liquor agents were required to launch beers into the market as rapidly as possible by dumping the price of Chang beer at 3, 4 or 5 bottles per 100 baht. It was a strategy in the market dumping of Chang beer and was a market leader that occupied up to 60% of the market share. The strategy of selling local liquor in a plus with Chang beer had a heavy impact on Singha beer due to the low purchasing power of consumers caused by the economic crisis. Most of the consumers concentrated on price which was a principal factor in making the decision. This behavior has continued since the economic crisis in the middle of 1997 which was concerned with price sensitivity. A little bit of change no matter up or down reflected in sales volume immediately. The selling of local liquor plus Chang beer strategy was occasionally higher than one dump of local liquor to be added with 5 dozens of Chang beer and so on. This pushed market share of Chang beer increased rapidly. Chang beer occupied a market share of up to 60% owing to the strategy of local liquor selling plus Chang beer compulsion which was able to be dumped at the lowest price such as 3, 4 or 5 bottles per 100 baht. The compulsion to sell local liquor plus Chang beer allowed for lower wholesale prices than it should be in the market complementing the requirement of agents to get cash and for the releasing of Chang beer as quickly as possible so that the retail price of Chang beer in the market could be dumped at the most lowest level until it was occasionally only 20 baht or 5 bottles per 100 baht while the minimum price of Singha beer was two bottles per 100 baht.

#### *Price and Channel Strategy*

The price strategy together with the strategy of strong distribution via agents of 43 company groups in the same affiliation of a major shareholder named Mr. Charoen Siriwattanapakdi, insured that the position of Singha beer (standard level) would be in a different segment from Chang beer. Singha beer was severely affected by the local liquor selling plus Chang beer compulsory strategy. The market share of Singha beer at the end of 2000 was only 40% because Singha beer was unable to dump at the lowest price (full capacity for dumping was a minimum of two bottles per 100 baht) and eventually, it was essential for Boon Rawd Brewery Company to produce Leo and Super Leo beer to fight against Chang beer.

#### *Brand Building Strategy*

Learn how to create an effective brand strategy that will help the company shine in a competitive market. Use these resources to develop, maintain, and protect the brand. Developing a brand strategy can be one of the most difficult steps in the marketing plan process. It's often the element that causes most businesses the biggest challenge, but it's a vital step in creating the company identity. For some organizations, the primary focus of strategy development is placed on brand building (Peter & Donnelly 2007, p. 84). Brand identification offers a company several important advantages. A familiar brand encourages repeat purchases (Cravens 1987, p. 367). After receiving the gold medal in the category of lager, non-limited degree, at the International Beer Competition in Australia in July 1998, the idea was

being conceived by the company to create a brand for Chang which was an elevation of the new image of being a gold medal awarded beer. The company used this strategy in creating the brand as follows:

- Added channels of distribution in food shops at deluxe level only.
- In April 1999, the marketing policy was carried out as follows: (1) Reduced the aspect of selling local liquor plus Chang beer by providing alternatives to agents which would enable them to buy beers both in a manner of either buying with a plus or buying Chang beer only, (2) Made a price adjustment of Chang beer from 320 baht a dozen to 370 baht in order to improve the image of Chang beer, (3) Pushed Chang beer to be recognized in every sphere and elevated it from a lower level to the middle and upper levels (it was applied to the lower level in the past), (4) Created value for the people to alter from drinking Lao Kao liquor to drinking Chang beer instead which was smarter and more dignified and (5) Used popular stars or singers to be a pre-centre for the media strategy such as “Ad Karabao” which achieved in making a repeat for people to remember Chang beer a global gold medal making it a necessity to be drunk in every party and so on.

#### *SWOT Analysis Strategy*

The company analyzed the weaknesses and strong points of Chang beer that would be beneficial in market planning as follows:

- The strong points of Chang beer: (1) It had a gold medal awarded in the International Beer Competition Fair at Australia in July 1998, (2) Its price was cheap and it was accessible for distribution to target groups, (3) Distributions were strong.
- The weak points of Chang beer: (1) Brand loyalty was lower than for competitors, (2) It was a new product, (3) There was a very high degree of interception from competitors.

#### *Heavy Advertising Strategy*

It was conducted by advertising via television, radio, printed materials, and by marketing activity to create opportunity in the future for the growth. Chang beer used advertising media in several patterns and had been televised since 1999 by making a repeat via advertising in the form of multi-dimensional motion pictures such as (1) The conservation of being a Thai (2) Repetition of being a gold medal-awarded beer.

#### *Selling Point Building Strategy*

The gold medal awarded beer was the selling point for Chang beer—it received the gold award, non-limited degree at the International Beer Competition Fair in Australia in July 1998, which was held by the Agricultural Royal Association of Victoria State. This point would enable the image of Chang beer to be one of a standardized beer for foreigners while the competitor Singha beer received only a silver medal award. Chang beer made foreigners feel more confident in its quality and taste. Thai Beer (1991) Company added a budget for promotion in the amount of 20 million baht for the undertaking of an aggressive marketing strategy to stimulate sales volume so they could be increased by providing sales representatives to approach shops instead of waiting for orders from shop owners, as in the past.

#### *Proactive Strategy*

Chang beer sold with local liquor and distribution strategy via local liquor agents in about 500 distribution locations belonging to the Surathip Group and 43 company groups which had the same affiliation with a major shareholder, namely, Mr. Charoen Siritwattanapakdi. Coinciding with the Thai economic crisis allowed Chang beer to be sold with the cheap price during a 1-2 year period during which a large quantity of Singha market share was being scrambled by Chang beer. In the first quarter of 2000, Chang beer had a market share of only 10.13% compared with the same period of 1998. However, it was increased to 44.56% with a total value of 42,000 million baht and, at the end of 2000, Chang beer was able to occupy a market share of up to 60%. Boon Rawd Brewery Company needed to produce a beer as a fighting brand to do battle and that beer was Leo which was launched in June 1998 as Singha beer was unable to dump at a low price.

The proactive strategy of the Thai Beer (1991) Company resulted in Boon Rawd Brewery Company producing Leo and Super Leo beer (which had a higher degree of intensity than that of Leo beer) in the same year of 1998 but not much was achieved in terms of marketing as it was a shared market between them and they were unable to scramble the market share from Chang beer. On December 28, 2000, Super Lion, which was a new beer, was launched as a brand to directly compete with Chang beer. The proactive strategy of Chang beer was to later reduce its price promptly when Super Lion beer was launched on December 28, 2000, from 300 baht a crate of Lao Kao and Chieng Chun liquor which was adjusted upwards. One crate of Chang beer, Lao Kao and Chieng Chun liquor of 36 bottles was required to be plus with 8 crates (one crate was composed of 36 bottles) of Chang beer. It, thus, made subagents bear the burden for Chang beer and then it was necessary to make an adjustment of Lao Kao and Chieng Chun liquor from 66 baht a bottle to 75-80 baht a bottle and dumped for sale the remaining stock of Chang beer in a large quantity to compensate the amount of Chang beer that was needed to be sold below cost, namely, 4 of 5 bottle per 100 baht.

As the proactive strategy involved with Chang beer plus local liquor of the Thai Beer (1991) Company, the retail price of Chang beer could be dumped to a minimum of 5 or 6 bottles per 100 baht while Super Lion and Leo beer was unable to be reduced below their cost for competition. The company undertook the marketing strategy in an aggressive manner by emphasizing the fact that it was a global gold medal awarded beer. Chang beer used a variety of advertising media to stimulate sales volume together with an additional budget of about 20 million baht to promote its gold medal award. In addition, the 4P's (product, price, promotion and place) strategy was used for undertaking market operations.

## **FINDINGS - IMPORTED BEER COMPANIES**

### **The C.V.S. Syndicate Company**

The strategy of the marketing plan is contained in a summary statement showing how the business will achieve its objectives. Effective strategies usually tell management what paths to follow for several key operating variables (Dalrymple & Parsons 1990, p. 827).

The number of competitors in the imported beer market increased. Beers imported by the company accounted for approximately 1% of the whole imported beer market. Beers produced domestically are more widely available than imported beers. The C.V.S. Company imported Miller Draft and Miller Lite beer from the USA and Corona beer from Mexico. Marketing strategies used by the company were as follows.

#### *Advertising Strategy*

In a period when the Thai economy was booming, beer was sold in large volumes. Many shops would stock a large quantity of beers. The company promoted sales by advertising in various media, such as television, radio, newspapers and magazines. As a result consumer spending on beer in various places of entertainment increased with little regard to prices. People frequently visited places of entertainment as three times a week (Friday, Saturday and Sunday), and they consumed a large number of bottles.

#### *Trade Promotion Strategy*

During the period of economic slowdown in Thailand (from the middle of 1997 onwards), shops would only stock a small quantity of beer. According to the statistical data, sales dropped by up to 40% between 1997 and 1999. In the meantime consumer behavior changed. Expenditure on extravagant products, such as the consumption of expensive beers, decreased. The typical number of bottles consumed in a session dropped from three to just one. Night time visits to places of entertainment were cut from three times a week (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) to just one day a week (Saturday or Sunday), and so forth.

The behavior of group C consumers changed. For example, drinkers who had previously drunk imported beers turned to foreign beers produced domestically, such as Heineken beer, instead. Although the company lost a proportion of group C customers during the period of economic slowdown, it was not

a policy of the company to reduce prices in order to attract group C back, due to the fact that group A and B customers still liked to drink imported beers. Strategy adjustment by the company during the period of economic slowdown was made by conducting trade promotions directly with agents, shops and customers. However, please note that such distributed products had to be the ones customers wanted, so that they made a decision to buy them of their own free will and not because they felt the products were being discounted.

However, during this period of economic slowdown, promotion policy in the beer market was in direct contrast to the state of the economy. This was because in the domestically produced beer market there was intense competition between several principal and new players such as Singha, Chang, Heineken etc. In the meantime, promotion of imported beers could not be stopped for fear of customers being misled into thinking that the company had ceased trading. It was therefore necessary for the company to carry on promotional activity, in order to show customers that our brand still existed, and this was conducted continuously. The company reduced such advertising budget by about 10%.

During the period of economic slowdown, the parent company (Grupo Modelo) provided assistance towards the advertising budget on a yearly basis, whilst the company created advertising plans specifying expenditure and target. In addition, assistance was given through the delivery of trading media.

### **TIS Worldwide Marketing (1997) Company**

Marketing strategy is a process that can allow an organization to concentrate its limited resources on the greatest opportunities to increase sales and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. An understanding of business strategy and competitive advantage is important for marketing strategy development (Cravens 1994, p. 89). A marketing strategy should be centered around the key concept that customer satisfaction is the main goal. Marketing strategy is concerned with finding sustainable ways for organizations to complete in a continuously changing world (Dalrymple & Parsons 1995, p. 59).

The TIS Worldwide Marketing (1997) Company, was an importer and distributor of Budweiser beer from the USA which used brand strategy in its marketing strategy as follows.

#### *Brand Strategy*

The company imported Budweiser beer from the USA for distribution in Thailand, concentrating on generating brand name, expanding its scope to make the public aware of Budweiser, the creation of brand image by sponsorship of sports such as the televised world heavyweight boxing championship, and using other media such as newspapers.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

A marketing strategy is most effective when it is an integral component of corporate strategy, defining how the organization will engage customers, prospects and competitors in the market arena for success. It is partially derived from broader corporate strategies, corporate missions, and corporate goals. They should flow from the firm's mission statement. Domestic beer companies were Boon Rawd Brewery Company, Thai Amarit Brewery Company, Thai Asia Pacific Brewery Company, Carlsberg Brewery Company, and Thai Beer (1991) Company. Marketing strategies of domestic beers were: (1) Product line strategy, (2) Product development strategy, (3) Block channel strategy, (4) Media strategy, (5) Trade strategy, (6) Consumer incentive strategy, (7) Brand strategy, (8) Market expansion strategy, (9) Distribution strategy, (10) Unique customer service strategy, (11) Selling local liquor plus beer strategy, (12) Price strategy, (13) SWOT analysis strategy, (14) Distribution strategy, (15) Service after the sale, (16) Customer satisfaction strategy, (17) Proactive strategy, (18) Strategy in selling local liquor plus with beer, (19) Price and channel strategy, (20) SWOT analysis strategy, (21) Heavy advertising strategy, (22) Selling point building strategy, (23) Proactive strategy. For imported beer, there were the C.V.S Syndicate Company and TIS Worldwide Marketing (1997) Company. The companies conducted (1) Advertising strategy, (2) Trade promotion strategy, (3) Brand strategy.



Central to any successful marketing strategy is an understanding of your customers and their needs. The ability to satisfy your customers' needs better than your competitors are able to can help you build customer loyalty and increase sales. However, both customer needs and the business environment in which you operate are constantly changing. Your marketing strategy needs to consider what changes are taking place, and the opportunities and threats that are emerging. A marketing strategy will also help you assess how successful you are at meeting your customers' needs, as well as how successful your competitors are. It may also help you identify new markets that you can successfully target. This guide helps you to identify which customers to focus on and your key objectives in reaching them. It explains what to include in your marketing strategy and how it can be used as the basis for effective action.

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