

BACHELOR THESIS TOPIC PROPOSAL 2023 - 2024

Period: semester 2

Please complete this form DIGITALLY in a clear and detailed manner. It serves as a basis for giving you an approval.

A. STUDENT DETAILS
A.1. Name and first name of student Syed Arshad Mehmood Bukhari
A.2. Student number (r-number) R0874830

B. COMPANY DETAILS
B.1. Name of the company/organization. Colruyt Group
B.2. Web address https://www.colruyt.be/nl
B.3. Sector Retail sector

C. COMPANY MENTOR DETAILS
<p>The company mentor is the person within the organization guiding the student during the work placement. The company mentor supports the student in the realization of his/her thesis by providing the necessary information.</p> <p>C.1. Last name and first name of mentor Abc</p> <p>C.2. Position in the organization Abc</p>
<p><u>Note for the Odisee supervisor</u></p> <p>More detailed company and contact information is available in the document found on Microsoft Teams: <i>BBM Thesis & WP (Supervisors team)/documents/general/AY2023-2024/Semester 1/[name of student]</i></p>

D. TOPIC AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

D.1. A concise description of the business marketing topic

The research aims to explore strategies that Colruyt Group, a prominent retailer in Belgium, can employ to strengthen its ethical marketing initiatives. It involves investigating methods through which the company can enhance consumer trust by aligning its marketing efforts with ethical values and principles. This includes examining the current state of Colruyt Group's ethical marketing practices, identifying potential areas for improvement, and proposing actionable recommendations to optimize its approach. The study ultimately seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of how businesses can effectively utilize ethical marketing strategies to foster trust and loyalty among consumers in the competitive retail landscape of Belgium.

D.2. A concise description of the issue/problem

The issue at hand pertains to Colruyt Group's endeavor to bolster the effectiveness of its ethical marketing strategies in order to cultivate and uphold consumer trust within the Belgian retail market. Despite the company's existing efforts in promoting ethical values and practices, there remains a need to address potential shortcomings and explore avenues for improvement. This issue arises from the evolving expectations of consumers who increasingly prioritize ethical considerations when making purchasing decisions. Failure to adequately address this issue could result in diminished consumer trust, potentially leading to decreased market share and competitiveness for Colruyt Group within the Belgian retail sector. Therefore, it is imperative for the company to strategically address this problem to maintain its position as a trusted retailer in the eyes of Belgian consumers.

D.3. Have you already discussed this topic with your company mentor?

If yes, what was his/her input? (opinion, remarks, feasibility)

Abc

D.4. Motivation: why have you chosen for this topic?

The choice of this topic stems from several factors. Firstly, ethical marketing and consumer trust have become increasingly important in today's business landscape, particularly within the retail sector. Consumers are more conscious about the ethical

implications of their purchasing decisions, demanding transparency and accountability from the companies they support. Secondly, Colruyt Group holds a significant position in the Belgian retail market, making it an interesting case study for examining ethical marketing practices. By investigating how Colruyt Group can enhance its ethical marketing strategies, valuable insights can be gained not only for the company itself but also for other businesses seeking to navigate similar challenges. Lastly, as a researcher, I am passionate about exploring topics that have real-world implications and can contribute to the advancement of ethical business practices. Therefore, delving into this topic offers an opportunity to explore practical solutions that can positively impact both consumers and businesses in Belgium's retail landscape.

D.5. What is your (preliminary) research question?

Define your research question in one sentence (What do you want to study?)

"How can Colruyt Group enhance the effectiveness of its ethical marketing strategies to build and maintain consumer trust in the Belgian retail market?"

D.6. What is the expected outcome? (Output and recommendations)

Output

- A comprehensive analysis of Colruyt Group's current ethical marketing strategies, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis).
- Identification of key factors influencing consumer trust in the Belgian retail market, such as transparency, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and ethical sourcing.
- Evaluation of consumer perceptions and attitudes towards Colruyt Group's ethical marketing initiatives through surveys, focus groups, or other research methods.

Recommendations

- Tailored recommendations for Colruyt Group to enhance the effectiveness of its ethical marketing strategies based on the findings of the analysis.
- Suggestions for improving transparency and communication regarding the company's ethical practices, including product sourcing, environmental sustainability, and social responsibility efforts.
- Strategies for integrating ethical considerations into various aspects of marketing, such as advertising campaigns, product labeling, and pricing policies.
- Recommendations for engaging with consumers and stakeholders to build trust and credibility through authentic, meaningful interactions.

- Long-term strategic recommendations for Colruyt Group to maintain and strengthen its position as a trusted retailer in the Belgian market while upholding ethical values and principles.
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D.7. What is the added value for the company?

The added value for Colruyt Group includes:

1. Enhanced brand reputation and trust among consumers.
2. Increased customer loyalty and advocacy.
3. Differentiation in the competitive market.
4. Mitigation of risks associated with ethical controversies.
5. Attraction of talented employees.
6. Long-term sustainability and relevance in the marketplace.

E. METHODOLOGY

Hereby we would like to refer to the tutorial 'Methodology' by Professor M. Todd available on Toledo 'Bachelor Thesis [OBF18a]' under the subtitle 'Tutorials'.

- **Which research methods will best allow you to collect the data and the information needed to best address your research question?**

- I. **Literature Review:**
 - a. Learning from existing research on ethical marketing and consumer trust.
- II. **Case Studies:**
 - a. Studying successful ethical marketing strategies in real companies.
 - b. How: Picking different companies, dig deep into their approaches. (real-time data)
- III. **Surveys and Interviews:**
 - a. Collecting thoughts and experiences of consumers on ethical marketing.
- IV. **Data Analysis:**
 - a. Crunch the numbers and make sense of stories.
 - b. Use stats for surveys, find themes in interviews.
 - c. Identify patterns, answer research questions.
- V. **Ethical Considerations:**
 - a. Ensuring the research is ethical and respects participants.
- VI. **Sampling:**
 - a. Picking the right mix of people for surveys and interviews.
 - b. Choosing a diverse group to get different perspectives.
 - c. Making sure the data represents different views.
- VII. **Data Validation:**
 - a. Checking that the data is accurate and trustworthy.

LITERATURE REFERENCES

Please list minimum 5 valid literature references (APA-style).

1. Tanveer, M., Ahmad, A.-R., Mahmood, H., & Haq, I. (2021). A Sustainable Marketing Approach. Role of Ethical Marketing in Driving Consumer Brand Relationships and Brand Loyalty. 7. Terry, retrieved by <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/12/6839>
2. K. H., & Naeun, K. L. (2023). Believing in change: The role of implicit theory on consumer's perception of the brand's corporate social responsibility message. Wiley online library. Retrieved by <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/cb.2211>
3. Lee, J. Y., & Jin, H. C. (2019). The Role of Ethical Marketing Issues in Consumer-Brand Relationship. MDPI. retrieved by <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/11/23/6536>
4. Rzhavkina, A. (2022). Building consumer trust with ethical marketing strategies. *Content Grip*.

retrieved by <https://www.contentgrip.com/building-consumer-trust-with-ethical-marketing-strategies/>
5. Shahzad , K. (2023). The Role of Marketing Ethics in Ensuring Clients' Satisfaction. *JSSR*.
retrieved by <https://ojs.jssr.org.pk/index.php/jssr/article/view/325>
6. Wang, X. (2021). Ethical Marketing Helps Brands Differentiate And Build Trust. *Forrester Logo*.
retrieved by <https://www.forrester.com/blogs/ethical-marketing-helps-brands-differentiate-and-build-trust/>

GATEKEEPING APPROACH

You are expected to consult and proactively follow up on all information regarding the gateway process in a continuous manner.

The main channel of communication is via Toledo 'Bachelor Thesis [OBF18a], subtitles 'Announcements', 'Gatekeeping Approach', 'Assignments', 'General Information' and 'ECTS'.