STARBUCKS IN SWEDEN

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our target market is comprised of young Swedish individuals aged 15 to 35 who place a strong emphasis on social interaction and drinking coffee. We will position ourselves in the Swedish coffee market with a strong emphasis on the cultural practice "fika", to increase the appeal of our traditionally American brand. Our product strategy will have a central focus on organic produce in correlation with our target market's environmental awareness, while being culturally aware and adapting to Swedish food and taste preferences. Furthermore, we will be pricing our coffee lower than competitors as we garner more market share and build better brand salience in the Swedish coffee market. Our strategy for placement focuses on the physical location of our cafes, taking into consideration densely populated areas where Swedish consumers frequently visit. Ultimately, what will drive our brand's success is organically integrating Starbucks into everyday Swedish culture; we will incorporate campaigns that hone in on appealing to a commitment to fika and Swedish tradition. With both primary and secondary research conducted in our marketing plan; data, insights and information have been gathered to make our plan a more viable strategy to pursue.

CURRENT MARKET ENVIRONMENT

Our target market of young individuals, between 15 and 35, within Sweden who highly value social interaction, puts a great emphasis on drinking coffee. Drinking coffee has become deeply ingrained into Swedish culture, beginning among the younger population, as a way to socialize and meet up with anyone from friends and family to business associates. According to Siemenskaffe, in 2016, Sweden was the sixth largest coffee consuming nation in the world with a consumption of 8.2kg per capita, which explains why these younger individuals put such a great emphasis on visiting cafes for coffee. In addition, Sweden's entire coffee consuming market represents 1% of the total coffee consumption in the world, demonstrating the degree to which this age group places an importance on coffee at a young age (Siemenskaffe).

The way that these younger Swedes consume coffee is very different in comparison to other countries, especially the U.S., where Starbucks Corporation was founded. In Sweden, our target market deeply associates drinking coffee with social interaction. While it is common practice in the U.S. to grab a coffee and drink it on the go, it is very rare to see people in Sweden with a "to-go" cup. When these Swedes consume coffee, they choose to sit down and socialize with one another, most likely enjoying a freshly baked pastry with their beverage. There is even a Swedish word for this social interaction, "fika", which does not have a direct English translation, but essentially means "having a cup of coffee together." A study from 2014 mapped Swedes' "fika-habits" and demonstrated that those under the age of 35 in Sweden spend on average 268 hours, or 11 days, a year on fika (Colamosca and Sperle). This explains why our target market is positioned towards those individuals between this age group.

Because the 15 to 35 year old age group in Sweden utilizes coffee shops as a space for social interaction, cafés are seen as meeting points. A café is one of the most common places to meet with a friend, take a break, or to meet for business. While it is still socially acceptable to visit cafés alone, it is a less common practice. If someone does enter on their own, they are usually seen reading a magazine,

book, or studying. Consequently, seating opportunities must play an essential role in our cafés-- it determines whether or not a customer chooses to make a coffee purchase.

Another factor that plays an important role in deciding which café to go to is the taste of the coffee itself. These younger individuals are usually loyal towards one brand of coffee, mostly the same one that they used in their own household while growing up. In 2017, domestic coffee brands served 95% of the Swedish market. Moreover, in the past five years, organic coffee has become more and more popular towards the younger crowd in Sweden (Euromonitor International). This growing popularity in organic coffee has led to the success of many larger manufacturers such as Gevalia and Zoega; in turn, cafés have also started to produce and sell organic coffee to meet this higher demand (Expertvalet). Ultimately, coffee shops must adhere to consumers' emphasis on the coffee's taste to remain relevant and competitive in the market.

The coffee shop market is hypercompetitive in Sweden, nearly everywhere you go you will find a café nearby. There are three large coffee shop chains within the Swedish market, which include Espresso House, Wayne's Coffee, and Coffeehouse by George, while most of the remaining cafés are small, family-owned businesses. In total, there are 3000 cafés in Sweden and only 350 of those are part of these larger chains (Butovitsch). However, out of all 3000 cafés in Sweden, our famous Starbucks brand only operates 16 stores throughout the country (Statista; Appendix E). Though the Swedish coffee shop market may be saturated, our reimagined strategy will improve our performance against competitors.

To penetrate the Swedish coffee market and become a dominant player, we must compete with the already-established coffee chains of Espresso House and Wayne's Coffee. Espresso House is the largest chain within the market and runs a total of 190 cafés in Sweden. They have grown fast in popularity during the last couple of years and part of their success is due to the seating opportunities in each of their locations. Espresso House focuses on acquiring large facilities and creating an environment where people can sit down for hours with very comfortable seating options. Another important aspect in their strategy is their choice of location; they are continuously opening new cafés in the busiest part of Sweden's cities (Espresso House). On the other hand, Wayne's Coffee has taken a different strategy by focusing on becoming 100% organic. This positioning strategy has also proven to be a success within our Sweden target market. The increasing emphasis on organic goods has led the company to success, allowing them to expand while planning to open 20 new stores every year until 2021 (Fastighetsvarlden). Coffeehouse by George has taken a slightly different strategy, focusing on the dishes and pastries served rather than focusing on the coffee itself. They also have a wider selection of food than most of the competitors that target our market.

Part of our target market, those who are older than 18, are also likely to hang out in bars in addition to coffee shops, for social interaction. In their report "Consumer Lifestyle in Sweden," Euromonitor International demonstrates that younger people spend 3.5 times more money on alcohol than on coffee each year. This has become increasingly popular among young Swedes as it is now more common to visit bar locations not only on weekends but also during weekdays. Because of this, bars can be seen as indirect competition for Starbucks (Euromonitor International). This poses the question on how we must position ourselves to gain advantage over the Swedish 15 to 35 year old market.

SWOT ANALYSIS

<u>Strengths</u>

Amongst our many strengths, we possess one of the most valuable brands in the world. The logo is nearly ubiquitous with coffee in the minds of consumers all around. In fact Interbrand, a prestigious brand consultancy group, ranks Starbucks as the 60th most valuable global business brand with a value of \$8.7 billion for the brand alone (Interbrand). The value of our brand allows us to have a higher margin of error in our business, while also positioning ourselves effectively in the minds of consumers. As a leading global coffee retailer, we also possess an efficient and effective supply chain that can meet demands all around the world, making expansion easier and less costly. Beyond that, we have been able retain over \$2.1 billion in cash and equivalents, as reported in the most recently quarterly filings. This cash reserve gives us the freedom to make investments and strategic business decisions without needing to take on debt. While allowing the company to heavily invest and market its products and stores, the cash reserve also provides a cushion in case of an economic downturn.

<u>Weaknesses</u>

A key weakness that consumers are slowly beginning to realize - Starbucks products are considered low quality coffee, relying heavily on milk and syrup (Mescall). This recipe works in the somewhat uninformed coffee markets where cafe culture is relatively nascent. However, in long established coffee and espresso consuming societies found in Sweden, a drink hinging on heavy use of milk, syrups and low quality beans just does not capture the interest of consumers (Mescall). Additionally, due to the sheer size and demand of its operations, Starbucks is forced to compromise with beans that are lower quality, so alternatively uses dark roasts in order to mask this (Stoffel). Thus, Starbucks drinks themselves are slowly becoming a weakness as consumers become better educated about coffee and the culture surrounding coffee and cafes as they develop. Additionally, Starbucks is perceived by consumers as a place to pick up a quick coffee or study; it doesn't necessarily serve as a place for social interaction and leisure. This was an aspect that our interviewees corroborated as well stating, "it's not my favourite place to go since they do not have comfortable chairs" (Appendix A).

Opportunities

Effective entry into the Swedish market presents great opportunities for revenue and sales growth if done properly. Sweden already has an incredibly pervasive coffee culture that's amongst the leaders in consumption per capita globally. It's a market where coffee consumption is ingrained into society. This means that if we are able to gain a stronger presence in the market, the Swedish market can add a strong

and consistent revenue source for us. Therefore, it only makes sense that the biggest brand in coffee takes advantage of Sweden's coffee culture.

<u>Threats</u>

Challenges with entering the Swedish coffee market include existing chains as well as a focus on high-quality, artisanal, and organic coffee. The presence of chains such as Espresso House and others amongst Sweden's more than 3000 cafes, provides a highly saturated competitive environment for Starbucks to tackle. Pre-established chains can make it difficult for Starbucks to acquire and retain customers, especially since its coffee isn't suited to traditional European tastes for high quality roasts and expert barista work (Mescall). Beyond that, competitors, such as Wayne's Coffee with their focus on organic coffee, are better targeted towards the coffee purist market that prefers higher quality beans and drinks. Overall, the wave of artisanal coffee bars and cafes that have high quality ingredients and employs professional baristas, present a threat to the relatively mechanized mid-to-low quality drinks that Starbucks produces (Mescall).

OBJECTIVES

As a brand, we plan to attain the brand image of a sociable environment for young adults to come and visit. First, we aim for our target market to have an idea of the brand salience that leads to an overall brand image. Because we currently only have 16 stores within the country, our goal is to expand to at least 25 cafes within the first year of implementing these new initiatives. Next, it is important for us to recognize the sustainable values of our young consumers by using organic coffee beans, ceramic mugs, and "green" cups for to-go orders in at least 50% of coffee orders. This will help build the emotional bond with the consumer and increase their perceived value in our brand, which will eventually lead them to choose Starbucks over competitors in the market. Furthermore, a more long term goal would be to gain a larger market share within the Swedish market and expand the total number of cafes we have within the country. When brand resonance is attained, we aim to have 100 cafes within the next 5 years, which is about half the amount of shops that our competitor Espresso House currently attains.

MARKETING STRATEGY

It is vital that our marketing strategy is multi-faceted, realistic and implemented consistently over time (Summerfield). In addition, there is an imperative need for our marketing strategy to be culture sensitive; given that the Swedish coffee drinking culture differs vastly than the United States culture, it is crucial that we tailor our marketing to align with Swedish culture.

Positioning

Given our target market of young individuals between the ages of 15 and 35 who place a high importance on social interaction, it is evident that we must position ourselves with an emphasis on a unique experience. This unique experience will provide emotional benefits to our consumer, in an environment where American style meets Swedish culture. With the concept of fika being prevalent to this age group, it is significant for us to focus on this in order to expand the size of our cafes to cater to this market. Because Swedes are partaking in this activity several times a day, it would be highly beneficial to use this as leverage to increase the reach we have with younger Swedish consumers (Euromonitor International). As a brand, we are more than just coffee, we are an experience that creates a sense of community along with shared culture of warmth and belonging (Starbucks). Effectively this serves as an American take on the Swedish fika, providing a unique experience for Swedish customers that could attract and retain consumers.

Product Strategy

Sweden is a very environmentally conscious country and this awareness is most prevalent in its younger generations. With our target market comprising of those aged 15 to 35, there is an increased consciousness of the environment and the need to go green. As a result of this awareness, many coffee

franchises have become specialized in offering freshly ground organic coffee beans. Coffee has been described as Sweden's unofficial national drink (Euromonitor International), therefore it seems apt that the coffee beans being supplied are fitting with the environmental and organic ethos of Sweden. In addition, increased environmental awareness amongst our target market has heightened the need for not only organic coffee beans but other organic produce such as milk. The demand for organic milk has increased by over 58% between 2012 and 2015, and is expected to continue in this progression (Euromonitor International).

Our target market places a great value on fika. Fika is more than just drinking coffee, it is about spending time with people, eating delicious homemade baked goods and slowing down to take a break from the day's routines (Euromonitor International). As a result, we will focus on providing a selection of baked goods as an accompaniment to consumers' coffee. The baked goods typically found in our American branches comprise of bagels and breakfast sandwiches. Therefore, to cater to the preferences of our target market, we will supply baked goods synonymous with their culture such as cinnamon buns and semla instead of more traditionally American baked goods (Appendix D). These accompaniments are typical food choices for fika, which will further emphasize our recognition of Swedish cultural practices. At present, Swedish consumers do not have a high appreciation of the Americanized baked goods we offer, with one interviewee stating "they do not serve typical swedish pastries, it's more of an American style which I'm not such a big fan of" (Appendix B). Another strategy we will implement is the use of coffee mugs and serving plates instead of the classic Starbucks "to-go" cups and paper bags. This adds to the idea of fika, as this serveware implies that consumers will be sitting in to lounge and take their time with their drinks.

Beyond fika and the organic focus, we recommend that Starbucks optimizes their drink offerings to better appeal to the highly informed Swedish coffee consumer. Although frappuccinos and the like have enthralled American consumers, coffee and espresso consumers in countries with established cafe cultures, such as Sweden, tend to focus on more traditional or pure coffee drinks that accentuate the coffee beans themselves (Mescall; Stoffel). In order to better appeal to these highly-informed consumers, we will make a concentrated effort to source higher-quality beans and find alternatives to the dark roast that consummates the bulk of Starbucks' coffee offerings (Stoffel). By offering customers more options in terms of roasts and higher quality coffee beans, we can better compete with pre-existing chains and local cafes in Sweden. This type of menu or product optimization seems vital in order to gain the respect and business of the Swedish coffee consumer.

Pricing Strategy

Of the various pricing strategies, we should utilize the competition-based pricing strategy in our Sweden Starbucks locations. Because our overall goal is to gain more of the market against the existing coffee shop chain competition, competition-based pricing makes the most sense. At the Wayne's Coffee and Espresso House, one cup of coffee costs about 32 SEK to 34 SEK. To price competitively, we should price our coffee at 29 SEK. The choice to price a cup of coffee at 29 SEK rather than 30 SEK, exemplifies the consumer mentality that 29 SEK seems exceptionally cheaper than 30 SEK. Additionally this lower than competition price can help offset any possible consumer concerns about Starbucks being overpriced for the level of quality they deliver.

<u>Placement Strategy</u>

Our placement strategy will consider where we will locate our cafes. We find that the best places to encourage a more welcoming, sit-down environment are independent store locations as well as locations inside malls. The Swedish focus on spending leisure time at social meeting places, and because of this, they enjoy places like malls or lively plazas. Therefore, placing our stores in these locations will drive more foot traffic and parallel places that Swedish consumers would normally frequent in their daily routines. By providing a large, welcoming and hospitable retail point, more Swedes will be convinced to give our Starbucks brand a chance for their breaks from day to day life. In addition to this, we will ensure that all aspects of our cafes are culturally specific to Sweden. This being said, the music played in our cafes will be subtle, relaxing, and helpful to promote the inclusive and cosy environment synonymous with traditional European coffee houses.

Marketing Communication Strategy

Putting our marketing strategy into action, we plan to communicate our Starbucks brand through a billboard (Appendix F). The purpose of the advertisement is to convince Swedish consumers to choose Starbucks over competitors such as Espresso House and Wayne's Coffee. Because Starbucks is heavily associated with USA, we wanted to make sure that the choice of color, text, image, and words of our advertisement emphasize the Swedish culture. To better communicate with the Swedish consumers, we used the English phrase "We always have room for fika" in Swedish. The letters in the word fika alternates the blue and yellow colors of Sweden to further target our Swedish consumers. While we want to bolster the Western, American image of Starbucks, we also want the advertisement to emphasize and embrace the Swedish culture.

The advertisement we have created features two people sitting across from each other, both drinking from a mug. It is important to use an image with more than one person as socializing is a key aspect of fika. In addition, the mug also embodies the fika culture that we want to emphasize. By offering customers the option to drink their coffee in a mug rather than only to-go cups, we foster a more communal, homely atmosphere that Swedes are more accustomed to. The laid-back, social atmosphere subtly portrayed in the advertisement depict a culture-specific image.

Theses billboards would optimally be placed in densely populated areas in major cities like Stockholm, in order to make maximum impressions. This would allow us to inform a wide range of urban consumers about Starbucks' commitment to fika and Swedish cultures or traditions.

Beyond that, we need to be aware of overall European Union advertising standards, since Sweden is a member, and since both the EU and Swedish government set standards and regulations for marketing.

In general, since one aspect of our marketing strategy is to take advantage of the Swedish consumers tendency to appreciate eco-friendly products, in our case organic coffee beans and ingredients, we must be vigilant about The Marketing Act (2008). The act, "emphasized that the term 'environmentally friendly' can only be used for marketing purposes if the product or service either improves or at least does not harm the environment," (Ahsberger). Therefore we must ensure that all Starbucks marketing is careful when highlighting our suggested eco-friendly or organic policies.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Transcript of Informative Interview 1

Name: Karin Fredriksson

Age: 25

Occupation: Financial Assistant

Marital Status: Single

- 1. Describe the type of occasion when you go out for coffee?
 - a. To have "Fika" with my friends. If I only want a coffee I'll drink it at home.
- 2. What is the most important to you when choosing a place to purchase coffee?
 - a. The location and seating opportunities plays an essential role
- 3. To what extent does price play a role in the coffee you purchase?
 - a. It doesn't really matter because I don't visit Cafés that often
- 4. How long would you like to spend or normally spend at a Café?
 - a. Usually like 2-3 hours
- 5. How much does the location of a coffee shop matter?
 - a. The location is very important for me
- 6. What thoughts do you associate with Starbucks?
 - a. USA, expensive, Frappuccino, fancy drinks
- 7. Have you ever visited Starbucks, if yes, do you feel Starbucks offers a welcoming environment for its customers?
 - a. Yes, lots of times but mostly in the USA when I've been there on vacation. In Sweden
 I've only been visiting their stores a couple of times, but it's not my favourite place to go since they do not have comfortable chairs. But i must admit that I do like their Coffee.
- 8. How does Starbucks coffee compare to other coffee shops such as Espresso House and Wayne's coffee?
 - a. Hmm, hard question since I do not visit Starbucks that often, but I would say they have more expensive drinks than Espresso House and Waynes Coffee. Also, one thing that I

realized when I visited Starbucks is that I couldn't order in Swedish since they had a english-speaking cashier the one time i visited.

Appendix B: Transcript of Informative Interview 2

Name: Alexander Truedsson

Age: 26

Occupation: Business Controller

Marital Status: Single

- 1. Describe the type of occasion when you go out for coffee.
 - a. For fika with friends and colleagues.
- 2. What is the most important to you when choosing a place to purchase coffee?
 - a. I don't really know. I guess the taste of the coffee.
- 3. To what extent does price play a role in the coffee you purchase?
 - a. When I was a student I use to care a lot, but not too much anymore.
- 4. How much does the location of a coffee shop matter?
 - a. I usually go to the same coffee shop, Espresso House, that is close to where I live.
- 5. What thoughts do you associate with Starbucks?
 - a. USA, Bagels, expensive, abroad, safe place
- 6. Have you ever visited Starbucks, if yes, do you feel Starbucks offers a welcoming environment for its customers?
 - a. Yes, but mostly when I've been abroad. I like it and feel like its welcoming and the staff always says hi when you enter, however I do remember it was very crowded and not a nice place to sit down.

- 7. How does Starbucks coffee compare to other coffee shops such as Espresso House and Wayne's coffee?
 - a. They do not serve typical swedish pastries, it's more of an American style which I'm not such a big fan of.

Appendix C: Made-up Persona

Gender/Name/Age: Male/Felix Andersson/27 Education/institution: A bachelor degree in Business Administration Career: Banker Marital Status: Single Where he lives: Östermalm, Stockholm The way he dresses: Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein Where does he shop food: ICA (The largest grocery chain in Sweden) His favourite treat: Pick and mix candy Water he drinks: From the tap Favorite app: Instagram The book he is reading: The 4-hour Workweek by Tim Ferriss Fitness routine: Workout at the gym 6 times a week, usually in the morning before work The country he dreams to travel to: USA People he admires: Bill Gates Shows he watches: Criminal Minds, Suits Favourite music/artist/album: House/Avicii/True

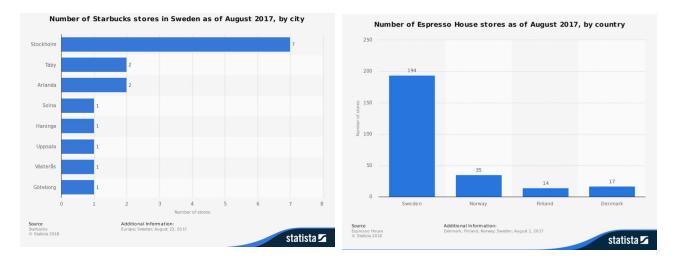
The meaning of the living space for him: An place for relaxation and hangout with friends



Appendix D: Swedish Baked Goods



We plan to swap out American pastries to replace them with Sweden-specific baked goods. These are images of common Swedish treats that would take the place of American bagels and breakfast sandwiches. On the left is semla, which are Swedish marzipan and whipped cream filled cardamom buns. The left image are Swedish cinnamon buns, which lack the overly-sweet glaze that is common in American cinnamon buns. By offering these baked goods, we embrace the preferences of the Swedish consumers.



Appendix E: Starbucks vs. Espresso House Statistics

Appendix F: Print Advertisement

