

SURVIVAL KIT ITEM TWO

Bloomerang Hanger

These teaching notes were prepared by Lau Geok Theng.

Item Description, Use and Preparation

- An usual size hanger made completely from paperbox paper. On one side of the hanger is a picture of a young girl holding a plant and four bold white words “YOUR NEW GREEN SPACE”. The company’s logo ‘bloomerang.com.sg’ in small print appears below the picture of the girl.
- On the other side of the hanger is a description of the purpose of the hanger. The top heading is “Greening your wardrobe, one shirt at a time.” Below this heading are three reasons: It works better, it is greener and it is fresh.
- Preparation:
 - The sample of hanger included in the survival kit can be brought into the classroom and pass around for students to have a look and feel.
 - Students should be asked to examine the Boomerang website (<http://www.bloomerang.com.sg>) carefully before coming to this class.
 - Access to the bloomerang website should be available in the classroom as the instructor may want to show the hanger in detail and discuss the use.

Some Possible Topics for Discussions

Green Movement and Environmental Concern

- Ask the students for their views on the extent of green movement and environmental concern in Asia and in your country.
- How does Bloomerang position itself as being green? The hanger is made of 100% recycled corrugated cardboard and art paper and it is completely recyclable and biodegradable, It is printed with soy inks. Is this enough?
- Is environmental concern a serious issue in the use of hanger? Hangers are currently made from plastic or iron wire. Are they a serious environmental threat? One point is – consumers do not frequently throw away their hangers. But what about drycleaners or hotels? How does Bloomerang help here?

- Drycleaners use lots of hangers and customers often throw away the hangers after getting their dry cleaned stuff home so it is an environmental concern .
- Hotels complained that they have to constantly replenish the hangers in the rooms because they get lost (customers take them away). What do customers do with these hangers they take away? Is there an environmental concern here?

Product Characteristics and Use

- What do people look for in a hanger? Is this paper hanger good enough or better than the usual one?
- Some possible comments:
 - The neck and hook may be too weak for heavy clothes
 - It is difficult to hold pants or trousers – no hooks and the ‘triangular’ portion of the hanger has no space for the pants to be placed across.
 - For dry cleaners, the hook is too thick and not sharp enough for papers to be poked through to act as tags.
- On the Bloomerang hanger itself, it claims to work better as it is flat and tangle free and easier to use and store and keeps its shape better. Is it true?
- Some possible comments in this regard:
 - It is true that this hanger is easier to store. The usual hanger, due to material-less triangular area, may result in a few hangers being tangled together.
 - It does keep its shape better than wire ones but not plastic ones. Is this attribute important?
 - It is not easier to use for shirts and blouses (same actually) and is more difficult to use for pants.
- If you need to redesign an ordinary clothes hanger (made of wire, plastic or even wood), what changes will you make? Why? (There is no right or wrong answer here. It will be a great learning experience to hear the students’ creative answers and their rationale).
- If you need to redesign the clothes hanger for Bloomerang’s business (low cost and spaces for advertisements), what changes will you make? Why? (Again, there is no right or wrong answer. The new design must be low cost and allow space for advertising) Will you take a new positioning rather than “Greening your wardrobe”? (This will depend on the materials used – if the new materials used are not green, then you cannot make this claim)

Business Model

- Students can be asked what the business model of Boomerang? What are its revenue stream(s)? What are its costs?
- Bloomerang's current business model is to give the hangers to drycleaners free and get them to use these hangers to deliver clean clothes to customers. Is there big incentive for these drycleaners to use the free hangers? (Main incentive is it is free so they save on the cost of the current wire hangers). Do they need to be persuaded? (It depends on whether they think the paper hanger can do the job. Some of them may be concern that the paper hanger is too fragile and may cause clothes to be dropped during handling by themselves or customers, resulting in reworks or customer unhappiness.) What are the costs to Bloomerang? (Costs of making the hangers and costs of delivery.) Will the drycleaners be willing to pay a small sum for these hangers? (They may be reluctant to pay much if they perceive the paper hangers to be inferior to the wire ones.)
- At the writing of this note, Bloomerang is trying to persuade hotels to carry these hangers in their rooms. The hotels will be given the hangers free of charge. Will the hotels be keen to put these hangers in their rooms? (It depends on whether hotel consider providing quality hangers an important aspect of their business.) What kinds of hotels will be more keen? (It is envisaged that budget and lower class hotels will be more keen. Premier hotels may still see the need to provide high quality hangers made of wood to patrons, even if these are lost on a regular basis.) Will the hotels be willing to pay a small sum for the hangers? (Like the drycleaner, the hotels will not be willing to pay much.)
- The current revenue stream for Bloomerang is advertising revenue for advertising messages on the hangers. For the drycleaner channel, what kinds of advertisers will be interested? (Those who see their target audience as those who regularly dry clean their clothes – executives, businessmen, trainers). Is it easy to get advertisers for such groups? (Generally, it is quite easy).
- For the hotel channels, what kinds of advertisers will be interested? (Those who see their target audience as those who travel frequently – businessmen and tourists). Is it easy to get advertisers for such groups? (Generally, a bit harder as such groups are more relevant to only multi-nationals and companies in travel business such as airlines and local places of interest targeting at tourists in the hotel rooms).
- Beyond the drycleaners and hotels, what other groups can Bloomerang target using the current business model? (One will be clothes manufacturers –

delivering clothing to retail stores using the paper hanger. Another is school hostel. A third is targeted households.)

- Can the paper hanger with the Green message be used to pursue a different business model (rather than the current given hanger free, get advertising revenue model)? One mainstream business model is to sell the hangers to consumers at lower prices than wire, plastic and wood ones and encouraging them to buy for the environment protection motive. As hangers are not so disposable, this model is hard to work.
- If we are to use the Bloomerang business model (give product free, get advertising revenue) but with a different product, what products will be suitable? (One idea is to give T-shirts to certain groups such as students or senior citizens free and put advertisements on the T-shirts. Another is to give writing pads or post-it stickers free to certain groups such as student free and put advertisements on these pads or stickers. Third is to work with cashier machine companies to provide receipt papers to retail stores free but put advertisements at the back of these receipt papers.)

NOTE: The suggestions for the use of the object above are only guidelines. I have deliberately written this note in outline form, so you can vary some of the ideas or try other ideas. I have not provided detailed descriptions or suggestions as I do not wish to bog you down with reading of unnecessary details. You can provide your feedback on the use of the above item for classroom discussion to McGraw Hill or myself (laugeoktheng@hotmail.com) so we can decide whether to include this item for future editions of the book and if yes, how to modify the suggestions for its use in the classroom.