



FRIESLAND CONVENTION PARTNERS

Applied Business Research II: Report

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Applied Business Research II Report

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Preface

For the study International Business at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences each student has been assigned to conduct research for a company. In this case, this research report is conducted for a convention bureau named Friesland Convention Partners located in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands.

Friesland Convention Partners is a foundation hired by Province Friesland to help increase the business tourism in their Province, while simultaneously coordinating and hosting conventions in Friesland, The Netherlands. The aim is to increase business tourism by hosting and organising multi-day events regarding various topics. Topics that are generally included are water technology, dairy, circularity, and sustainability.

The goal of this research report is to specify the resources needed to achieve the goal, provide a schedule for when activities must be finished, and identify the resources needed to be able to come up with the best solution for the actual problem.

Additionally, the sub and sub – sub questions are created to come up with the best answer for the central question. Different theories and models are used in order to answer these subs and the sub - sub questions. Furthermore, the manner of how the information will be collected is by doing interviews and observations.

Firstly, a very special thanks to Gosse Korte for providing feedback during the research process. Additionally, thanks to Herma van Keulen, Marijke Gaastra and Hidde Verhoog for providing necessary information when needed and for their support during the period of this research. Lastly, a special thank you to all other individuals that offered support during this research process.

Executive Summary

To start, in the first chapter one dives into the background of the company the research was done for which is Friesland Convention Partners. Friesland Convention Partners located in Leeuwarden; the Netherlands is a foundation that started in 2017. The goal of this foundation is to promote business tourism in the province and plan and host conventions in Friesland. The areas of expertise of Friesland Convention Partners and Friesland itself are water technology, dairy, circularity, and sustainability.

In the second chapter one can find the problem analysis itself. The main problem of Friesland Convention Partners is that they do not having a huge social media presence and their social media and marketing strategy is incomplete. The goal of this research is to be able to identify the best way on how Friesland Convention Partners can market themselves, interact and communicate with their target audience. Therefore, the central question of this research is as follows **“How might Friesland Convention Partners build both a marketing and social media strategy to be able to attract 800 new followers on Instagram and LinkedIn with at least 50% of these followers being international potential customers?”**.

In chapter three one can find the theoretical framework. To be able to answer the first sub question which is **“1. What are the characteristics of the internal environment of Friesland Convention Partners?”** the McKinsey 7s model has been used. To be able to answer the second sub question which is **“2. What is the current marketing and social media strategy of Friesland Convention Partners?”** the 5 KPIs to Measure Business Marketing Success and the 5 Categories of social media measurement model has been used. Next to that, to be able to answer the third sub question which is **“3. How can Friesland Convention Partners market themselves to attract more followers?”** the marketing positioning model has been used. Furthermore, for the fourth sub question which is **“4. How can Friesland Convention Partners improve their social media presence and become more recognized and known?”** the social media cycle has been used to answer this question. Lastly, to answer the fifth question which is **“5. What marketing communication message should Friesland Convention Partners put out to be able to attract and interact with their target audience?”** the AIDA model has been used.

In the fourth chapter one can find the research design. The research design consists of the operationalization, research type, research strategy, table of theories and research types, method of data collection, target audience and sample size. The research type used for this research are a combination of descriptive research, exploratory and explanatory research types. Moreover, the research strategy used is field and desk research. In the fifth chapter one can find the time and activity planning/schedule that was created to stay on track with the research.

In the sixth chapter the first sub question which is **“1. What are the characteristics of the internal environment of Friesland Convention Partners?”** is being analysed and answered. To summarize, Friesland Convention Partners promotes the unique aspects of the province Friesland to attract more business tourists to Friesland. Friesland Convention Partners do have set up goals and objectives however, their strategy is incomplete. The CEO is responsible for everyone that works for Friesland Convention Partners as well as the decision making. Finally, the shared values within Friesland Convention Partners are international skills, flexibility, connection to the brand, communication and staying on top of the latest details and updates in relation with law and congress locations.

In the seventh chapter the second sub question which is **“2. What is the current marketing and social media strategy of Friesland Convention Partners?”** is being answered. To summarize, Friesland Convention Partners marketing and social media strategy is incomplete. Showing off what makes Friesland unique is how they sell themselves. Furthermore, they do not gather or analyse social media

platforms, nor their websites data. Finally, Friesland Convention Partners lacks specific data on the percentage of their revenue that originates from social media channels.

In the eighth chapter the third sub question which is **“3. How can Friesland Convention Partners market themselves to attract more followers?”** will be answered. To summarize, Friesland Convention Partners should use the price-based & attribute-based positioning strategies to position their company as a budget friendly convention bureau and position themselves as the city that holds the title of leader in water technology, sustainable agriculture, dairy & circularity. This is because their areas of expertise are what sets them apart from the rest. This insight helps to answer the central question by identifying how Friesland Convention Partners should position themselves in the market to increase their followers.

In the ninth chapter the third sub question which is **“4. How can Friesland Convention Partners improve their social media presence and become more recognized and known?”** is being answered. Friesland Convention Partners must register on review websites to participate in the first step, social listening. Friesland Convention Partners must create a trend around their brand by using hashtags to social influence. To social sell, Friesland Convention Partners must employ ads and LinkedIn Sales Navigator. By utilising both LinkedIn and Instagram Friesland Convention Partners can interact with its target audience nationally and internationally and foster brand loyalty. Therefore, it is best to put and concentrate all marketing efforts on LinkedIn and Instagram. Friesland Convention Partners can utilise a variety of tools on LinkedIn and Instagram to engage, interact, and communicate with their target audience, increase followers and sales, and establish a social media presence.

In the tenth chapter the sub question which is, **“5. What marketing communication message should Friesland Convention Partners put out to be able to attract and interact with their target audience?”** is answered. There are a few marketing communications messages that Friesland Convention Partners need to put out, such as their low prices, their unique selling points, areas of expertise and their partnerships with tons of vendors, venues, and accommodation spaces. Alongside the marketing communication messages, these need to be communicated on the right platforms by using the right tools.

Finally to answer the Central question **“How might Friesland Convention Partners build both a marketing and social media strategy to be able to attract 800 new followers on Instagram and LinkedIn with at least 50% of these followers being international potential customers?”** In order for Friesland Convention Partners to reach this goal, their marketing and social media strategy includes the application of the price-based & attribute-based positioning strategy, in order to position their company in the most beneficial way in the market. Furthermore, Friesland Convention Partners need to apply the information that was gathered from the social media cycle, to do a better job at social listening, social influencing, social networking for them to socially sell. Friesland Convention Partners should promote the discussed marketing communication messages of chapter 10 on their social media platforms and use the right social media platforms and communication tools to reach their target audience and to track if the new approach is effective or not. Moreover, in chapter 11 the one can find the conclusion. Furthermore, in chapter 12 the discussion can be found. The in-depth solution, advice and plan of implementation can be found in chapter 13. After chapters 13, one can find the Appendices.