



African Leadership Academy

Developing the next generation of African leaders

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TheCoca-Cola Company

Mozambique



Internship Description: 12th May 2014- 30th June 2014

My internship took place in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique and I worked under the supervision of the Senior Operations Marketing Manager and side by side with the Franchise Brand Manager. During the first two weeks of my internship, I shadowed various people in the marketing industry starting from the team leaders in the market place to top marketing managers in the office. **As a statistics minor, my internship focused on collecting data and sampling from our clients and customers from both the formal and informal market.** I was able to conduct market research about Coca-Cola's main competitors in rural and urban Maputo, which gave me an opportunity to travel to various districts and villages, where Coca-Cola has not yet established a solid position in the market.

As a researcher, I created my surveys and chose my sample estimates based on the company's market segment. I then randomly selected 30 regions in the capital city; 15 from the big bazars (informal market) and 15 from the key account clients in stores, and big malls. My aim was to gather information from both Coca-Cola sellers and consumers in order to answer the following questions: what is the customers' number one preferred brand? What is Coca-Cola's main competitor in the market? What product sells the most in the market? Do price, flavour, and brand name matter to the customer when purchasing soft drinks? If yes, would the customer select a local brand that is cheaper over Coca-Cola? Or does Coca-Cola's brand name have a larger influence on customer preference. The answers to these questions varied a lot when the region and the client's financial situation were accounted for.

Since my internship was very short, I only had 2 weeks to conduct the research. Coca-Cola made a driver available for me so that I could begin each day around 6am, 7am or 8am in various targeted locations, where I conducted my surveys. I sampled 30 customers and 30 Coca-Cola vendors per day, a total of 60 people per day. My trips varied from going to very far off places such as Ressano Garcia, in the border between Mozambique and South Africa where I would spend the day in the field from 7am to 9pm, to nearby markets such as Shoprite only 15 minutes away from the office. My role as a marketing researcher required me to interact with the public on



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on almost daily basis, to summarize all the feedback from our clients and sellers and to report it to the senior operations marketing manager with possible solutions to some of the problems. For instance, in rural Maputo, Coca-Cola had less profit as most of Coca-Cola sellers were only located in small stores and tents, this made the product less convenient for customers who buy soft drinks at bus stops and in the streets. Additionally, due to the lack of ice boxes most of the street vendors couldn't sell the product and if they did sell it, the drinks were hot which made the overall preference for the product decrease in comparison to urban Maputo. **Without being prompted by my manager I immediately made estimates of how many coolers were needed in region X, and reported to team leader of the informal sector.**

Overall, my internship was less office oriented and was a more hands on experience. I believe that through my research, on a small yet significant scale Coca-Cola has a better understanding of the different needs within the market segments in Maputo. The company also now has a better sense of the public opinion regarding their preferences in the soft drink industry. **Learning about statistics and sampling at any university is one thing, but actually conducting a market research is whole different story.** Most of the times, we read facts in the internet and the reported stats regarding those facts and we question its accuracy and how the data was gathered. However, after conducting this research, I know how hard it is to gather information even on a sample size as small as 30 people. I am more familiar with some of the possible mistakes that can occur during the data gathering process and have learnt to appreciate the work of other statisticians in the field. That being said, I also learned how to managed big data sets, and improved my communication skills as in order to gather data, I had to effectively communicate with the public and explain in detail what my research was about and how I intended to use the information.

Before my internship I was largely unaware of how the corporate world worked in Mozambique. Previously, I had been exposed to NGO's in the country, but having the opportunity to intern in Maputo at one of the most successful companies in the country made me realized that there are a lot of opportunities to develop and expand my area of interest at home. Before this internship, people used to ask me: where do you see yourself working in 10 years? I would say in South Africa or Angola, countries where I assumed that would have better opportunities and could develop professionally. **I now know that I can do all of the above at home in Mozambique, and that there is a demand for economists and statisticians at home that I want to meet.**