



## MARKETING MANAGEMENT SBS MBA/MSc

### Assignment – Bahrain 2020

STUDENT ID

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UNIT TITLE / CODE: **MKT 501**

NAME (in Full): **Abdulrahman Salih Saad Aluhidan**

#### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- All assignments are to be submitted **7<sup>th</sup> May 2020** on to [examinationboard@atmsedu.org](mailto:examinationboard@atmsedu.org) and cc to [azrafatima@atmsedu.org](mailto:azrafatima@atmsedu.org), [assignmentsubmission2019@gmail.com](mailto:assignmentsubmission2019@gmail.com)
- If assignment is not submitted on date, will follow with penalty of 10% deduction of marks for every day.
- Similarity between students work is strictly not accepted, any student found with similar work will be graded Zero and fail for the course. However, Plagiarism is an academic offence and will not be tolerated under SBS
- Assignment once submitted to exam board is final for marking.
- Total 100 marks

#### GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENT

1. If assignment is Question & Answer based then.
  - Introduction is needed for each question.
  - Question has to be answered based on the mark allotted for each question with references if any idea or information is taken from other source.
2. If assignment is case based then,
  - Executive summary
  - Table of content
  - Body of assignment (questions related to case need to be answered)
  - Conclusion / Recommendation if any
  - References (in-text + citation) to be used

**Total Marks \_\_\_\_ / 100**

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a form of **cheating**, by representing someone else's work as your own or using someone else's work (another student or author) without acknowledging it with a reference. This is a serious breach of the Academic Regulations and will be dealt with accordingly. Students found to have plagiarised can be **excluded from the program**.

Plagiarism occurs whenever you do any of the following things without acknowledging the original source:

- ✓ Copy information from any source (including the **study guide**, books, newspapers, the internet)
- ✓ Use another person's concepts or ideas
- ✓ Summarise or paraphrase another person's work.

### How do I avoid plagiarism?

To ensure you are not plagiarising, you must acknowledge with a reference whenever you:

- ✓ use another person's ideas, opinions or theory
- ✓ include any statistics, graphs or images that have been compiled or created by another person or organization
- ✓ Paraphrase another's written or spoken word.

### What are the penalties?

The penalties for plagiarism are:

- ✓ Deduction of marks,
- ✓ A mark of zero for the assignment or the unit, or
- ✓ Exclusion from the program.

Plagiarism is dealt with on a case-by-case basis and the penalties will reflect the seriousness of the breach.

Please note: claiming that you were not aware of need to reference is no excuse.

## **Marketing Management Assignment**

### **Structure – Marketing Strategy (Brand)**

For your brand of choice please prepare a marketing strategy on the below guidelines. This should clearly reflect the marketing mix – product, place, price, promotion and packaging as discussed in the class. The learnings on Brand Equity in the class should be the emphasis of the assignment.

Please note the brand should have linkage in the UAE – must be an existing brand or a brand that intends to be introduced in the UAE.

1. Executive Summary – summarizing points 2-8.
2. Brand Overview – describe the current status of the brand with a brief historical background. Also define the brand's current state on the Product Life Cycle.
3. Competition Overview – Define competition
4. Target Market – Define who is being targeted
5. Segmentation – Demographic, Behavior, Psychographic
6. SWOT – on brand or industry
7. Market Research if any carried out – if no research carried out then suggest a need if any
  - 7.1 Product – BCG matrix. Also include packaging plans if any.
  - 7.2 Place – Choice of retail strategy
  - 7.3 Price – penetrative or skimming or competitive
  - 7.4 Promotion – pull or push strategy including choice of medium – digital or traditional
8. Conclusions and Recommendations – suggestions for change in current practices if any to make it more effective should be discussed.
9. Appendix – Any other information you may provide.

# MARKETING MANAGEMENT



**MBA – Bahrain 2020**

**Abdulrahman Salih Aluhidan**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

I have chosen in this assignment to write about IKEA Saudi Arabia, the popular Swedish company, and I never got the chance to learn about it. I want to show you how this company operates in a very Islamic and conservative country. How they treat their customers there? How the culture and environment are impacting the whole business? And how do they market their brand. I will show you how Ikea could develop its business in Saudi Arabia over the past two decades.

In this assignment I will show you how a Swedish furniture company could succeed in doing business in the Saudi Arabia and how its market share looks like after about two decades of business in the country. I will also show you what are the major challenges that faces IKEA in Saudi Arabia and how IKEA responses to them. I believe that moving an international business to a country like Saudi Arabia will be always a questions mark, yet IKEA has managed so far to proof that its business strategy and marketing plans can be applied anywhere.

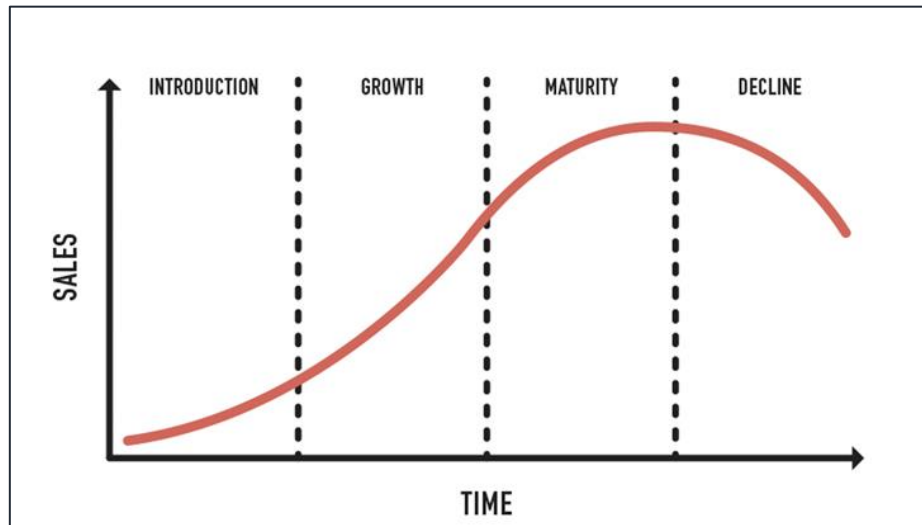
Finally, I will show you how IKEA has expanded its business in Saudi Arabia and what Marketing strategy and method IKEA focuses on in Saudi Arabia. Knowing that business like selling furniture in Saudi Arabia can not be simply expanded as the local furniture companies are considered to be very aggressive, not only that, customers also tend to buy more from local companies as they provide desired Arabic and traditional designs. We will see how IKEA penetrate such challenges and becomes one of the well-known leading brands in home-furniture in Saudi Arabia market today.

## HISTORICAL & PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE:

IKEA was founded in 1943 and started its business by a small furniture store in Sweden. IKEA's first advertisement was in 1945 and kept progressing its successful way and published their first catalog in 1951. (IKEA). Today, IKEA over the past six decades has opened more than 180 major retails around the world that are currently operating in 40 different countries. (IKEA)

IKEA opened their first retail in Saudi Arabia in 2001 in Riyadh, and later it opened two other retails in Jeddah in 2004 and in Dhahran in 2008. I believe that, IKEA has succeeded in doing business in Saudi Arabia after they knew that their market share was increasing in the region during these times. From 2008 until 2018, Ikea has opened 4 more retails in Saudi Arabia. That indicates IKEA has expanded its business in Saudi Arabia as it is stated in their mission statement "A better everyday life" is meant to target all nations, all cultures, and all mindsets. (IKEA)

IKEA product life cycle status in Saudi Arabia is now going to be in early maturity phase. I believe that because IKEA has been in the country for about two decades and its products are pretty much well known for everyone. Also, its business in the country has been expanded notably during the past ten years. If we look at the below figures and table, we will see IKEA product life cycle is located at the maturity phase in Saudi Arabia and among the leaderships in the local market:

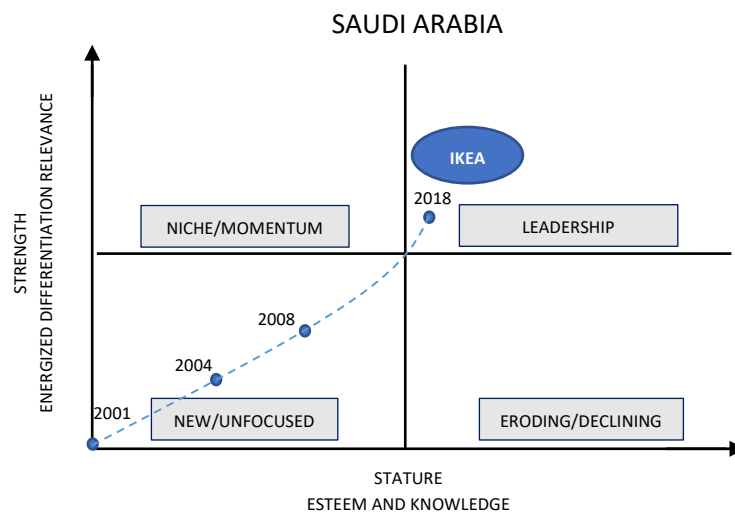


\*\*Figure 1: knowledge.panxpan.com

Period	IKEA Saudi Arabia	Product lifecycle status
2001 - 2008	Opened 3 Major retails	Introduction
2009 - 2018	Opened 4 more Giant Retails	Growth
2019 – 2029	I think IKEA will be in the maturity phase for a long time in Saudi Arabia.	Maturity
2030 - ?	I think Ikea will not start to enter the declining phase in the country for another decade or two.	Decline

\*\* Table 1– self estimation.

Also, if we look at Ikea Saudi Arabia in 2019 from a universe of brand performance, we will find it located at the leadership quadrant in the furniture industry in the country.



\*\* Universe of brand performance – self estimation – IKEA Saudi Arabia



## COMPETITION

The competitive environment is somehow hard to join. The main idea here is that IKEA came to Saudi market in 2001 and there were and still many local furniture competitors that target most customers. On the other hand, people in Saudi Arabia buy Arabic, Ottoman, and Egyptian furniture styles. Also, all these local companies manufacture and design their products based on customers' needs and requirements, which IKEA does not provide such service. However, the cost of these local companies is very expensive relative to IKEA. People start targeting some alternatives when cost becomes an issue. Therefore, IKEA has taken an advantage over these local companies.

Before 2010, the Saudi furniture market did not have many powerful furniture competitors to IKEA; only local small companies that focus on traditional Arabic designs which IKEA has been trying to include similar designs in their catalog. However, in 2010 one big competitor that is *Home Centre*, a UEA furniture company established its business in Saudi Arabia. It is now one of the biggest home furniture companies operating in Middle East and North Africa as well. (Home Centre)

In fact, IKEA had very decent market share since its establishment in Saudi Arabia before its market share was affected notably after 2010 when more powerful furniture companies started to enter the local market such as *ABYAT*, a Kuwaiti company that competes with IKEA notably and it established its business in Saudi Arabia in 2013. *ABYAT* today operates in the GCC countries and its retail locations are always to be found next to IKEA locations in Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, if we look at the Saudi market itself, it is not supportive enough to establish or launch new businesses in the same industry as the country doesn't produce or have the raw materials used to manufacture furniture like wood, which makes it difficult for new businesses to enter. That is somehow a relief to big companies, especially IKEA. Also, IKEA is smart enough to compete against all local big companies like *Home Centre* and *ABYAT* in a way that customers and consumers always find what they are looking for. However, I still believe that IKEA struggles to provide enough Arabic designs and that is a big advantage to its competitors that provide many Arabic designs. The only advantage here that IKEA has over them is the low pricing strategy.

In the following table, I will try to address the competition based on the marketing mix, and all information is gathered from the companies' websites:

Company	Product	Price	Place/Stores	Packaging/ Promotion
<b>IKEA</b>	Focus on modern design	Low	7	Easy to assemble/pull
<b>Home Centre</b>	Focus on many designs	Medium	28	Easy to assemble/pull
<b>ABYAT</b>	Focus on modern design	Medium/High	4	Easy to assemble/pull

\*\*Saudi Arabia

I believe that IKEA has the chance to compete in places and in designs as well to maintain a healthy position in the market, especially that new cities have been announced in the country vision 2030 like Neom, which I think it is a good opportunity for IKEA to represent its products in such planned locations.

## TARGET MARKET

IKEA deals with its consumers based on the current social conditions. Its target in every region is to “achieve a particular lifestyle.” (IKEA) However, there are many other social factors that play a big role in any country, such as comfort or cost. Therefore, IKEA understands that the furniture industry in any country is totally based on the social trends. For example, IKEA understands how to target many people from many societies and cultures by its cheap costs and stylish products. The cheap cost is a joint working between all societies. In Saudi Arabia, IKEA targets all levels of society and their low-cost strategy with their aim to provide local designs help them to be approached by nearly everyone. If we look closer at IKEA marketing and targeting strategy, we will find that IKEA tries to merge with the local Saudi traditional and religious beliefs. For example, it modified its catalog and website to be accepted and approached by all society

Also, IKEA targets all kind of customers and provides a wide set of furniture that is suitable for home and business offices as well. However, IKEA does not focus on business furniture and its main target is home furniture. If we try to look closer at IKEA customers, we will find that they are all different levels and types of people from age 2 years till over 60 years old and that is something impressive to provide furniture suites all

ages and all needs. Furthermore, IKEA focuses on representing local employees to assist their marketing target and to spread social responsibility among customers.

## SEGMENTATION

### Geographic:

IKEA focuses on its retail locations to be in big cities like Riyadh, Jeddah, Dhahran. Most customers in these cities prefer to have modern furniture styles, which are provided by IKEA, while other customer in other locations tend to lean more towards the local traditional styles like Arabic and Egyptian Style. For example, people who live in the far south or north of the country like their own design to be mostly different.

However, during the past decade, Customers in Saudi Arabia tend to go more for modern designs, not all of them, but it has been increasing year after year. I believe that social media and advertisement have played a role in such matter.



\*\* [www.spa.gov.sa](http://www.spa.gov.sa)

\*\*Saudi Traditional furniture\*\*

## Demographic:

IKEA understands that targeting customers in Saudi Arabia needs to be in alignment with their culture and faith, especially that most people if not all are Muslims. Therefore, IKEA tries to show enough respect and alignment with the local culture.

→  
Global Catalog



←  
Saudi Catalog – No woman

\*\* ikea.com/sa

→  
Mixed Saudi Employees



←  
Women with Hijab

\*\* ikea.com/sa

"We Believe in People"

## Psychographic:

IKEA also focuses on its media by sending environmental and cultural messages that can be seen on their website or in their catalog. IKEA tries to live with people and grabs their default attention by seeing their local food and Islamic designs whenever they visit IKEA.

→  
Islamic/Arabic Design



\*\* ikea.com/sa

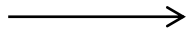


\*\* ikea.com/sa

←  
Local food: Dates

### Benefits Scouts:

IKEA serves its customers by providing furniture solutions that fits many home designs. That contributes significantly in customers benefits who look for stylish furniture, yet it also provides more options to store and provide more options rather than only furniture. For example, a couch from IKEA can be turned into a bed:



Couch with bed



\*\* [ikea.com/sa](https://www.ikea.com/sa)

### Usage rate:

IKEA provides good usage rates to its customers or IKEA family member as IKEA calls its customer. Some usage rates IKEA provides include like special discounts, members workshops, loyalty rewards, items replacements, community projects, and free drinks during week working days “As an IKEA Family member you have access to a number of exciting member benefits. Some save you money, some save you time, others save you fuss.” (IKEA)



## SWOT ANALYSIS

As IKEA entered the Saudi furniture market in 2001 in Saudi Arabia, many local competitors were affected. The new position and market share that IKEA has had in Saudi Arabia has raised some strengths and weaknesses. Here is a full SWOT analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivery System</li><li>• Availability</li><li>• Low Cost and Quality</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High Labor regulations</li><li>• Local competitors</li><li>• limited appearance</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manufacturing</li><li>• New locations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local GCC Competitors</li><li>• Political Risks</li></ul>
Opportunities	Threats

### Strengths:

**Delivery:** IKEA has its own delivery system. Some of its competitors do not have the ability to deliver their products. Also, IKEA might order a specific item from another location and deliver it to any location across the country.

**Availability:** IKEA's retails are found in the biggest populated cities in Saudi Arabia Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dhahran. Schools and many companies including local furniture companies close on Fridays because it is the Islamic day to Muslims. However, IKEA opens from 10 a.m. to midnight, 7 days a week in Saudi Arabia. (IKEA)

**Low Cost and Quality:** IKEA prices are very reasonable and affordable by most of the population. On the other hand, the quality of IKEA is also acceptable. Local furniture companies cannot compete against such costs and qualities.

### Weaknesses:

**High Labor regulations:** Saudi Arabian government regulates foreign business strictly.

In fact, if foreign workers are not Muslims, they cannot be found in some cities such as Makah or Medina. This will affect IKEA if new locations or stores needed to be opened in such cities. Also, the government requires such companies to pay fees per its foreign worker every year.

**Local competitors:** People in Saudi Arabia love the Arabic and Ottoman furniture that is made by the local furniture companies. Although the prices of these companies are higher than IKEA, but people still give some loyalty to these companies that make them strong competitors to IKEA in the local furniture market.

**Limited appearance:**

IKEA has limited itself to only some cities in Saudi Arabia. The country size is very large “830k-sq” and has more 20 large cities that some of its population exceeded 1 million people. Of course, all of Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dhahran has more than 2 million people in population, but, the weather in Saudi Arabia is very hot almost all the year. Meaning, people do not travel between cities a lot and most of the country is deserts. Therefore, small local furniture companies are found across the country, which gives them the ability to reach more customers in the country, especially in some cities such as Al-Ahsa that its population is more than one million people.

### Opportunities:

**Manufacturing:** The demand on Arabic, Ottoman, and some other old traditional furniture in Saudi Arabia has been a factor that keeps the industry growing. Many people like to design their own furniture such as, colors, material used, and shapes or locations. On the other hand, IKEA furniture is final products that cannot be adjusted or reshaped. I believe that if IKEA aims to gain more customers in the society, it will by letting the customer customize their own furniture and perhaps involve some of the Arabic or Ottoman styles as well.

**New Locations:** Since the country has a very large distance on land and the society is strongly related to the furniture industry, I believe that if IKEA locates new retails in new cities, it will surely gain more profits and customers.

### Threats:

**Local GCC Competitors:** There are some GCC furniture companies that are targeting the Saudi market like *Home Centre* and *ABYAT*. I believe that the dependence on importing furniture will reduce in future as many GCC furniture giants are establishing their roots in the country and raw material supply is also getting more channels.

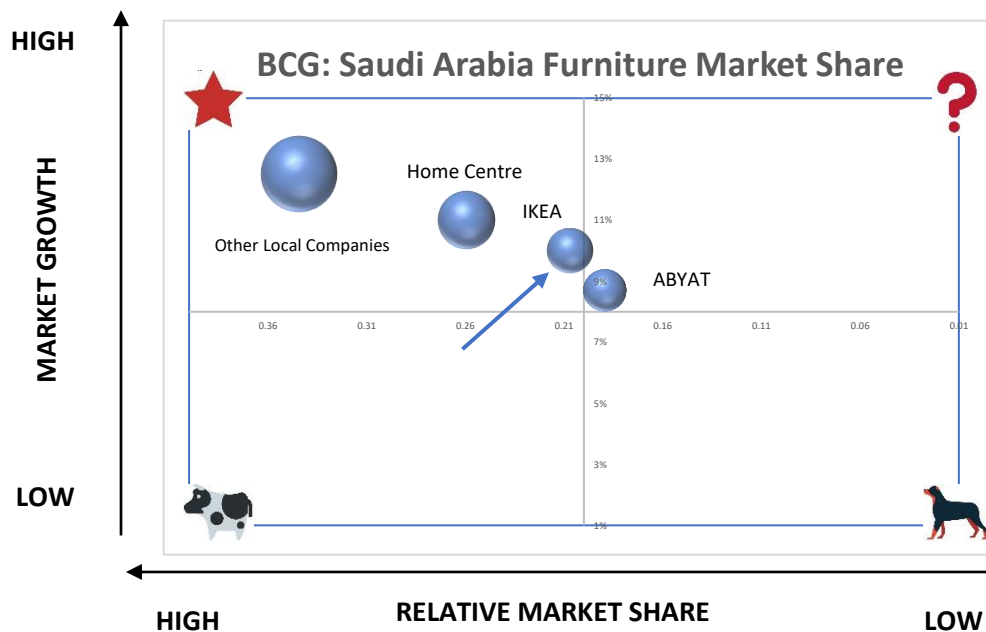
**Political Risks:** Saudi Arabia is a country that near or surrounded by some Arabic countries that are currently having civil wars or international issues. Such as: Syria, Egypt, Israel, Qatar, Yemen, and Iraq. The whole region is not guaranteed in terms of political risks toward International Corporation companies operating in Saudi Arabia and that might be a solid thread to IKEA.

## MARKETING RESEARCH

### BCG Matrix: Product

To have an accurate BCG matrix for the industry and locate where is IKEA position at, we need to know the market growth and market share for the industry in Saudi Arabia. The revenue estimated in the furniture and homeware segment is \$88 million in 2020, and it is expected to show an annual growth rate about 11% by 2024. (Statista) Comparing the market growth and share of Saudi Arabia to China is about 13% while considering only 34 million people live in Saudi Arabia. (GMI) This is an indicator that people tend to buy more furniture every year. On the other hand, if we look closer at the product segmentation and why type is being purchased by customers, we will find that the traditional Arabic style is still leading in all designs. Yet, people also like to buy good quality furniture with affordable cost which helped IKEA to locate itself among the top three marketing leaders in the country although not many local designs are provided.





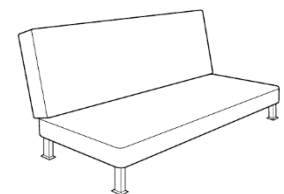
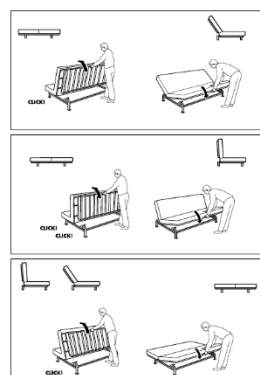
\*\* BCG Matrix – Self estimation based on industry marketing info.

As we can see above in the BCG chart, IKEA has located itself in a good position, mostly in the star quadrant, yet a part of IKEA is still located at the question mark quadrant. That only indicates that IKEA needs to invest more in its product designing and try to catch up with other competitors like *Home Centre* that provides many designs including local and Arabic designs.

On the other hand, IKEA has its own stylish packaging boxes and user manual that most of its products can be assembled by customers. IKEA tries to include tools and necessary items and user manual to assist its customers assembling their products without extra labor work or service.



\*\* ikea.com



PLACE:

IKEA retail locations strategy are present in only large populated cities in Saudi Arabia. IKEA has many potential places to cover other areas in the country which will assist IKEA to compete effectively in the market, especially with local competitors.



\*\*IKEA – Google map: Saudi Arabia

As you can see above, there are still many locations can be utilized by IKEA and expands its business in the country, especially now; the Saudi government is supporting citizens to buy new homes with 0% interest rate in any location in the country. (Sakani) If we compare IKEA locations to *Home Centre*, then we will find that the IKEA competitors have a bit of a location quantity advantage in the country.

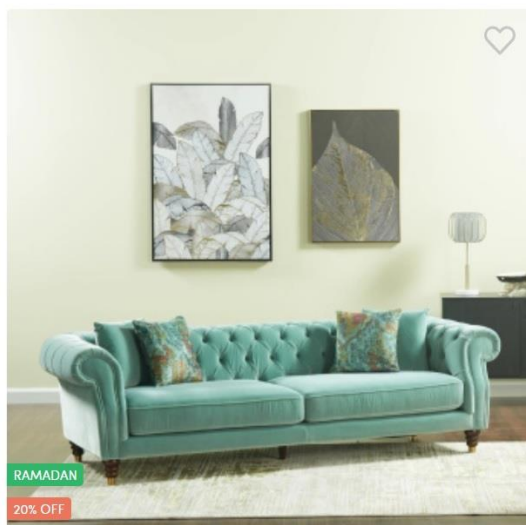


\*\*Home Centre - Google map: Saudi Arabia

## PRICE:

IKEA pricing strategy has been a major contributor in its popularity, not only that, it helps IKEA succeeding and penetrating international markets around the world. It is also believed that IKEA aims to provide products with decent quality and with affordable prices to be reachable by everyone. “The main source of IKEA’s popularity is the pricing of its products. Keeping prices low is IKEA’s core philosophy since it wants its products are within everyone’s reach.” (Pratap 2020)

If we compare IKEA product prices in Saudi Arabia, we will find that most local competitors that focuses on local traditional Arabic designs are higher than IKEA, which gives IKEA a pricing advantage in the local market. If we compare prices of IKEA and *Home Centre* of one similar product, we will find that IKEA has always asked for a lower price.



RAMADAN  
20% OFF

SAR 3,039 SAR 3,799

homecentre

\*\* Home Centre Saudi Arabia



New SÖDERHAMN 4-seat sofa SR 2,040



\*\*IKEA Saudi Arabia

IKEA has provided 4 seats sofa compared to 3 seats offered by *Home Centre* and IKEA’s price is about 30% less. The only difference here is that *Home Centre* focuses on local Arabic/Victorian design, which I believe is not going to affect customers a lot as IKEA has provided more benefits in usage and price. Therefore, IKEA’s pricing strategy can be perceived as penetrative and competitive as well in Saudi Arabia.

## PROMOTION:

Since IKEA has placed itself in the maturity phase in Saudi Arabia, I believe its promotion strategy to be mostly a pull strategy, although it still uses online media to advertise its products. If we look at IKEA promotion closer, we will find that it tries to pull its customers who seek modern designs in Saudi Arabia. Also, IKEA has always been known of its annual design catalog that contains lots of products, yet not everything is listed there, only new designs. “The full range of IKEA products includes around 9500 products and each year the company introduces around 2000 new ones.” (Pratap 2020)

If we consider the Saudi furniture market, it is based mainly on traditional designs and IKEA has been trying to penetrate the market by its low pricing promotions and discounts. Not only that, IKEA’s pull strategy makes customers buy more products and collect purchase points to be a loyal IKEA family member, which will result in more discount rewards. On the other hand, I also believe that, IKEA uses an effective pull strategy in selective seasons like going back to school season, where IKEA posts and advertises its products in a mysterious way that customers feel curious to know more.



\*\*[www.ikea.com/sa](http://www.ikea.com/sa) “Back to School”



\*\*[www.ikea.com](http://www.ikea.com)

As you can see above, audience will always be eager to know more about such advertisements and what else can they find when they visit IKEA retails. I find this very attractive and it invites customers to visit and discover what more is being offered.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

IKEA Saudi Arabia has managed its business properly in a way that it could not only survive, but also reach a well-known furniture brand among customers selections today. Also, IKEA since its establishment in the country has been focusing on its own pricing strategy, which can be perceived successfully, however, low pricing strategy can also be perceived as low quality, which IKEA has proven the opposite; customers today in Saudi Arabia are aware of IKEA's product quality as much as they know about its low prices.

On the other hand, doing business in a country like Saudi Arabia is always very changeable. The society is highly active on social media, attached to local culture, and it is considered as one of the most religious societies in the world today. Besides that the country has been going through political challenged since the Gulf war in 1992, yet IKEA, as a Swedish company, could manage its way in the Saudi market and penetrate its furniture style while merging with the local society understanding and respecting their beliefs.

I would recommend to IKEA that if it could expand its furniture business in other regions in Saudi Arabia, especially other local GCC competitors have an advantage covering areas in north and south the country. I believe it is highly advised that IKEA acts quickly as the population at such locations are growing and the government supports them by providing home loans with no interest, which will affect the furniture business located there.

I would also recommend to IKEA in Saudi Arabia that to start manufacturing its products in the country based on the customers desires and requirements. Also, the main local competitors' business is based on Arabic and Ottoman styles, therefore, IKEA could benefit from this point if it starts producing such products to local customers. I believe that IKEA will have many beneficial outcomes if they include some traditional designs in their annual catalog.

## APPENDIX

IKEA as an international company that has been doing business in Saudi Arabia, has succeeded spreading its brand name in the Middle East. Today, we find IKEA not only in Saudi Arabia, but also in UAE, Bahrain, and Kuwait. In fact, what IKEA has done just to keep its business running in Saudi Arabia is a successful strategy that has dealt with people, culture, politics, and religion.

IKEA has changed many of its strategies to get closer to Saudi customers. For example, IKEA has changed their food menu from Swedish food to some Halal and Arabic food. Also, I believe that IKEA is doing a great job in their delivery system with the poor foundation of addresses in the country. IKEA's Saudi website is also another example that IKEA is also trying to reach many customers in the society with cultural and social advertisement posts.

On the other hand, I believe that IKEA is facing some difficulties with its foreign workers now. The Saudi government regulates such workers and asks for annually fees. Also, Saudi Arabia is a country where political risks are high due to the surrounded political issues and movements. However, I believe that since the Saudi currency is pigged with the U.S. dollar, IKEA will not face financial crisis in the meantime.

-END-

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