

MAREPIU' - AN ANALYSIS OF B2C MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

The **goal** of this analysis is to explore the potential expansion of MarePiù, a company primarily operating in the B2B frozen fish market, into the B2C sector. This study aims to assess the feasibility of this strategic shift by understanding consumer preferences, identifying key market segments, and evaluating the introduction of new products in the market. Through a data-driven approach, the analysis seeks to determine the most relevant product attributes for individual consumers, estimate potential market share, and define the best strategies for entry and **growth in the B2C market**.

Segmentation Analysis

To achieve this, the first step was to identify consumer needs, focusing on different **market segments** and the specific attributes they prioritize when purchasing frozen fish. In order to do so, we submitted an online survey that examined various aspects of consumer behavior, including **fish consumption frequency**, **preferred product formats**, and **key decision factors** (e.g., convenience, sustainability, quality). With these responses in hand, we applied **segmentation techniques** to categorize participants into broader groups that shared similar preferences and priorities.

Even though this segmentation case was problematic, we tried to balance statistical results from data with business' needs and decided to split customers in 4 segments. Based on our analysis, we recommend that the company focus on Clusters 1 and 4, which together represent a significant portion of the fish-consuming market (25% and 33% of our sample, respectively).

Cluster 1 prioritizes freshness, affordability, and unprocessed products but is less interested in innovation and sustainable packaging. This group consists mainly of young individuals (18-35 years old), including both students and workers, who frequently shop at supermarkets and prefer quick, convenient meal solutions. Although they aspire to consume fresh fish, budget constraints often lead them to opt for frozen or ready-made options.

Cluster 4, on the other hand, places strong importance on freshness, origin, unprocessed products, and sustainability, while showing lower interest in single servings and convenience-driven innovations. This group has a diverse age range, is mostly composed of workers, and dedicates more time (30-60 minutes) to meal preparation. They represent a more traditional segment that values quality over speed and convenience.

Considering that our research focused on fish skewers as a potential product for expansion, we should aim to develop a product that meets the needs of both clusters. For Cluster 1, an affordable, convenient skewer option that still emphasizes freshness could be appealing—perhaps one with minimal processing but easy preparation (e.g. gratinated salmon skewer, prepared in less than 8 minutes, no seasoning, single portion). For Cluster 4, a high-quality skewer made with sustainable, well-sourced ingredients and without excessive processing would align with their preferences (e.g. shrimp skewer, no breading, prepared in 8-15 minutes, parsley and basil, double portion).

Conjoint Analysis

The **conjoint analysis** investigated consumer preferences regarding a potential B2C product—**fish skewers**. Results showed that, although most respondents consume frozen fish, skewers were not particularly appealing, with many receiving very low ratings. However, by examining attribute preferences, we found that **shrimp** is the most favored fish type, **gratinated breading** was preferred, and the ideal product should be **seasoned with parsley and basil, ready in less than 8 minutes and sold in a double package**. Given that this exact product is already produced for B2B, introducing it to retail could be a cost-effective strategy.

Strategic Considerations

From a strategic marketing perspective, MarePiù has a few clear takeaways:

1. **Targeting Convenience-Oriented Consumers:** Given that Cluster 1 is more receptive to frozen and ready-made products, MarePiù should focus on this segment by emphasizing **ease of preparation, affordability, and availability in supermarkets**.
2. **Premium Frozen Options for Traditional Consumers:** Cluster 4 values quality but does not reject frozen products entirely. Positioning premium frozen options—such as unprocessed or minimally processed products—could align with their preferences.
3. **Skepticism About New Product Introduction:** The low interest in skewers raises concerns about whether they would be successful in the B2C market. Instead, focusing on proven popular attributes (shrimp, salmon, gratinated breading) might yield better results in other product formats.

Limitations of the Analysis

While this study offers useful guidance, it is not a rigorous, definitive assessment. Several limitations must be considered:

- **Bias in Self-Reported Preferences:** Respondents may have provided socially desirable answers, particularly regarding sustainability and willingness to pay for quality.
- **Weak Cluster Separation:** The segmentation model showed overlapping groups, indicating that consumer behavior is more fluid than rigidly divided.
- **Limited Product Scope in Conjoint Analysis:** The focus on skewers restricted the ability to test broader product opportunities that may have greater appeal.

Final Considerations

MarePiù's potential entry into the B2C market requires careful positioning and product selection. While frozen fish is a widely consumed category, product format and communication strategy will be key to success. The findings suggest that focusing on **convenience-driven consumers** while exploring premium frozen alternatives for more traditional segments could be a viable approach. However, before launching a new product, **further validation through qualitative research or test markets** is highly recommended. By refining its research approach and continuously testing consumer reactions, MarePiù can make informed, data-driven decisions for a successful B2C expansion.