



# Marketing Analysis of E-bikeshop.co.UK

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## **1 Terms of Reference**

As a result of continued success of The E-Bike Shop in the UK market place, we began to implement a plan to expand into the Irish market. The goal of this strategic marketing plan is to make this transition into the Irish Market as smooth as possible. Our marketing plan seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Irish expansion. The plan seeks to enable us to identify a specific customer base which we can sustain into the future, with excellent customer service. From the findings of this marketing plan, we hope to develop a successful marketing structure in the Irish market, so we can continue to grow our business further.

## **2 Executive Summary**

We identified that Ireland has had some recent growth in the cycling industry and has the potential to grow even further if the industry was marketed in the right way. Particularly relevant to the E-Bike Shop was the growth in the use of E-Bikes in Europe from 98,000 in 2006 to 854,000 in 2012, and this trend is projected to continue (Stewart, 2014).

After a comprehensive analyses we identified a number of key opportunities in the Irish market, such as the growing pressure of becoming more environmentally friendly. Environmental concerns had a knock on effect on policies employed by politicians, who encouraged commuters to travel in a more eco-friendly way. One such scheme which benefited the cycling industry was the Cycle to Work Scheme, which is a tax incentive to cycle to work rather than using other means of transport (Citizens Information, 2015).

Although we identified that the Irish market was growing, we found a number of problems with introducing our product to the Irish market. Our own market research indicated that there was very little known about E-Bikes within the wider consumer market. Also, the high initial investment for the e-bike is a major deterrent factor. The e-bikes on average costs six times that of a regular bike (Sheehan, 2014).

We aimed to overcome this obstacle by looking towards the older market, focusing on the 40 to 60+, who would become our main target market. As they had more available discretionary income to buy a more expensive product. At the same time we did not neglect the younger professionals, who may be interested in cycling and E-Bikes. We designed a pricing scheme which was more suited for these younger consumers with less income.

### **3 The Business Mission:**

Our business mission is to get the public back cycling using e-bikes, we want to make the cycling experience easier, faster and longer. We will do this by providing the public with the e-bike, which is becoming an increasingly popular way to get around. Our sole purpose is to sell e-bikes, and accessories. While at the same time providing the best service, qualified staff and using only the best quality products in Ireland and the UK. At the E-bikeshop, we are concerned with processes of sustainable development. Our main focuses are, selling good quality e-bikes and the customers we have. The shop is 100% committed to doing whatever it takes to make customers happy. All staff will provide the best customer service they can.

Who we value:

Our customers: They are the most valued part of our business; we will provide each customer with individual care and individual appointments to help get the right e-bike for them. We hope to always exceed their expectations of the store and our staff. We aim to improve the lives of the “grey market”, which comprises of adults between the ages of 40 to 60+. They will benefit from the assisted cycling power of the e-bikes we sell, be it for fun, transportation or helping them take longer journeys. Our secondary markets will also include the 25 to 40 year old, young professionals and a new rental market.

Our staff: we only take on the best staff, e-biking enthusiasts are a must, we value each one of our e-bike technicians and any ideas or suggestions they have, we reward creativity. We want to augment the customers experience and improve the customer’s knowledge of the e-bike.

Our suppliers: They have a consistently strong performance record, and thus we strive to maintain a strong professional relationship with them.

## 4 External Marketing Audit

### 4.1 Macro-Economic Environment

#### 4.1.1 *Economic Factors:*

Ireland is still feeling the burden of the financial crash, the Minister for Jobs Richard Bruton, announced this February, that unemployment levels are still at “10.5% and many people around the country are yet to feel the benefits of economic recovery”, he insisted “we have a long way to go” (Russell, 2015)

As a consequence of globalization we not only have to be aware of increased competition, but also the greater opportunities available to us. Take for example, the advantage of being a company based in the EU, we benefit from the free movement of goods. This is important to us as we order in all of our products from EU manufacturers. This can allow them to decrease their cost of purchasing and shipping (European Commission, 2010)

Taxation is quite high in Ireland at the moment (water, income tax), meaning less disposable income. For example all metered water bills will be capped until January 2019 at €160 for single adult households and €260 for multiple adult households. Introduction of new charges will limit people's disposable income. (Money guide Ireland, 2015).

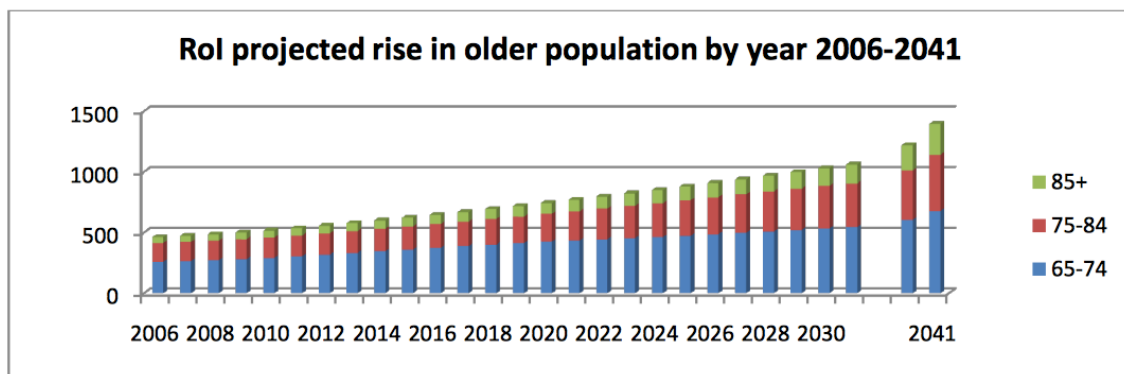
Awareness: As a consequence of changing economic circumstances, consumer spending habits have changed significantly. The price of oil is not predicted to stay at its current low for a long period of time, a barrel of oil is still approximately \$50 “peaking at \$115 a barrel last June”. Overall the lower oil prices are not a major threat to the E-bike market. (Murphy, 2015). According to the website Pumps.ie, Irish consumers will still spend €1,868 this year on petrol if you drive an average-sized family car the average annual distance of 16,000km, this is a considerable amount. (Pope, 2014).

#### 4.1.2 *Social Factors:*

Increased awareness of sustainable global growth and sustainable energy.

Wealth of the older age group coupled with a longer life expectancy; means a huge opportunity in market of 45 years old and over.

However, the ageing population is increasingly less healthy than their predecessors. Dutch scientists analysed data relating to over 6,000 people over many years. The volunteers were split into ten-year age groups, i.e. those aged 20-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59. The study found that overweight, obesity and high blood pressure increased with age in all generations. However, those born more recently had a higher prevalence of these risk factors compared to their counterparts born 10 years earlier.



(Condon, 2013)

According to the 2006 census, there were 468,000 people aged 65+ (11% of the population) in the Republic of Ireland, by 2041, there will be 1.4 million aged 65 and over (22% of the population). Data from (McGill, 2010)

Pressure groups encourage people and government to be more socially responsible and find ways of protecting our environment; Bikes don't pollute. Consumers are increasingly aware of their responsibilities now.

Rise in health concerns: People are now more aware about the benefits of being healthy and encouraging children to do the same. This can be seen by the figure the 55% of schools that replied to the Department of Education's Life Skills survey had a formal healthy eating policy in place (Peter McGuire, 2014). While this number should be closer to 100%, this is a sign that the Irish society is becoming more aware of importance of leading a healthy lifestyle.



#### 4.1.3 *Political and Legal Forces:*

Green sentiment: The government provides funding for companies that provide resources which don't harm the environment, for example the cycle to Work Scheme. This scheme aims to give a tax savings for people who cycle to work, as a result of deducting the charges on the bikes purchase before other taxes are subtracted from your salary (Citizens Information, 2015)

Globalisation; free movement of goods and people. Ireland benefits from being a member of the EU; extensions on the economic benefits discussed before as a result of political alliances.

EU Directives E-Bike Legislation - There are restrictions on how you can sell and market E-Bike products and what the legal definition of an E-bike is. For example, pedelecs up to 25 km/h (16 mph) and a motor of no more than 250 Watts rated output are considered bicycles. There is a degree of variation from country to country.

#### 4.1.4 *Physical Forces:*

Physical environment has to be protected and not polluted. Hence we ensure batteries are made with environmentally friendly materials and are easily disposed of. The European E-bikes producers use lithium-ion batteries, which are more expensive but more environmentally friendly than the ones used in Asia.

The European renewable energy directive: All European countries must adopt a strategic plan to make 10% of their public transport run on renewable resources by 2020. (Environmental protection agency, 2013). The government have put in place plans to have at least 10% of all journeys on bicycles by 2020. National cycling policy. With EU standards in place Ireland has also committed to reduce its reliance on cars, currently 3/4 of journeys are made by cars, and also to meet our greenhouse gas obligations. (EPA, 2013)

#### 4.1.5 *Technological Factors:*

According to Flurry's data, "app use grew from 80% of peoples' phone use – 2 hours and 6 minutes daily - to 86%, or 2 hours 19 minutes" (Arthur, 2014). Apps can be utilised in any industry from social media, to news updates. The biking industry can take advantage of apps, from the use of road maps, weather apps, route planners etc.



## 4.2 Market

Studies have shown that cyclists are more likely to perceive the average cyclist as being an average commuter who cycles for functional reasons, while non-cyclists are more likely to perceive the average bicycle user as an enthusiast who invests in specialist equipment and cycles for leisure (Gatersleban, 2009).

This is a significant characteristic of the primary market, as it conveys the difficulties associated with promoting bicycle use. If the average non cyclist perceives cycling as a hobby pursued only by a small number of enthusiasts, it will be difficult to entice them to use conventional bikes, let alone their more expensive electric counterparts. If previous attempts to promote cycling are anything to go by, the role played by other interest groups will be of significance. The Nottingham Cycle Friendly initiative is a good example. The success of this scheme stemmed primarily from the collaborative efforts of a variety of employers in the area, such as the Nottingham City Council, Nottingham Trent University and the Boots company (Cleary, 1999).

Any attempt to promote E-Bikes in the Irish market will be no different. In this case, the involvement of broader civil society bodies will be important. The implementation of the cycle to work scheme has had a profound impact on the sale of conventional bikes, and was characterized by the cooperation of retailers with the central government and numerous employers with the aim of reducing congestion and carbon emissions. Given their substantial price and green characteristics, the support of wider interest groups in improving distribution channels will be very important.

An analysis of the global e-bike market highlights a number of significant factors. The market is currently dominated by China, which accounts for 85% of all global sales. Their widespread use stems partly from their low costs, which averages at \$167 compared to \$1546 in Europe and \$815 in the US. This can be partly attributed to differences in battery chemistry. Chinese e-bikes utilise lead acid batteries which are cheap, but inefficient lasting for short periods of time and taking hours to charge. Most e-bikes sold outside of China use lithium ion batteries which are much more efficient but at least three times more expensive in many cases. Despite this, usage has grown significantly in Europe over the past few years from approximately 98,000 in 2006 to 854,000 in 2012. It is expected that this trend will continue, given the economies of scale that will no doubt result from increased production and the declining cost of lithium batteries over time (Stewart, 2014).

To summarize, the market for electric bikes in Ireland is plagued by a number of obstacles, but shows much potential for future growth: Firstly, efforts to promote cycling to non-cyclists will be cumbersome, given their perception of cycling as a lifestyle hobby. Secondly, efforts to promote e-bikes ahead of conventional bicycles will be difficult without the support of decision makers in the wider community given the substantial level of government support given to retailers and commuters in that market. Lastly, the substantial growth in the European market should hopefully contribute to increased Irish sales, although this could be greatly helped if the issues pertaining to consumer sentiment and wider civil support could be resolved.

### **Competition**

With the development of environmental considerations, more Irish dealers are beginning to retail and produce E-Bikes. While the Irish market has begun to grow the Irish market as it is very limited. Joining in Ireland market, e-bike shop has three main challenges. Firstly, its most strong competitor, Greenaer will compete with e-bike shop on its servicing, good quality and price. Secondly, companies such as Kenbay and Ci-ebike, will compete with e-bike shop with special rental policy. Thirdly, companies such as Bicycles4u, E-bicycle and Goeco will compete with e-bike shop providing much cheaper e-bikes.

**Greenaer:** Greenaer is an award winning retailer who seeks to provide their customers with the finest quality electric bikes. They provide e-bikes from brands such as Kalkhoff, BH Emotion, Haibike and Staiger Sinus as these allowed them to sell their products as a price range between €1750 to €4200 (Greenaer, 2015).

They have a strong social media presence and they frequently communicate with their customers, this allows them to provide a more intimate service. They differ from their competitors in that they provide a comprehensive selection of accessories.

“Sustainability is at the heart of Greenaer, which is about offering products that will last and maintaining these products with great service to give them the longest life possible” (Greenaer, 2015).

They are focused on conservation and hope to change people’s minds on what type of transportation they utilise. There provide an Electric Bike Servicing centre in Dublin 2. They offer both new and second hand E-Bikes, as well as offering a rental service to the tourist groups.

**Kenbay:** Kenbay Electric Bikes was founded in Ireland in 2006 and has its own brand “Kenbay” and sells its products nationwide. To be more competitive, Kenbay provide their customers Rental service so they can gain more experience before purchasing. They have a special promotion in which the customer can rent their product for a 100 euro for the week and if they decide to buy the product at the end, this 100 euro is subtracted from the price. They provide relatively inexpensive products with their cheapest being 1020 euro, but they have a limited selection. (Kenbay, 2015)

**Ci-ebike:** Ci-Ebike was founded in 2005, they aim to provide customers with high-quality products and a top quality service. It sells brand from CE Mark (European Certification), GS Mark (Germany), UL Mark (USA), PSE Mark (Japan), and Inspection Center Mark (China) with cheaper price from €799 to €1499. To expand their market in Ireland, they have looked to attract retailers from across Ireland, such as Dublin, Cavan, Cork, Kildare and Wexford (Ci-ebike, 2015). They also compete in the rental market proving specific rental policies of different models of e-bikes.

**Ebicycle:** The primary strength of Ebicycle is their low price; ranging from €899 to €1699. However, they have a selection of six different types of e-bikes (Ebicycle, 2015). While they are a cheaper alternative for the consumer they have a limited range of products.

**Goeco:** Goeco is a family business providing e-bikes from Europe to Ireland customers. The price of their e-bikes is from €750 to €1599 with a 2 year warranty guarantee. It also offers other products for disabled users and a unique accessory, a retractable bike roof, to cope with the tumultuous Irish weather.. They also offer a recycling service for old batteries free for charge (Goeco, 2015).

## 5 Internal Marketing Audit

### 5.1 Strategic Issues Analysis

Coming into the Irish market from a very similar one in the UK, we have set out certain objectives, which we want to achieve in Ireland. The Irish bike market has been expanding steadily in the past few years, especially in Dublin City as a result of campaigns by Dublin City council and the Irish government, who have committed themselves to increasing the uptake of cycling in the major cities in Ireland so to lower pollution and traffic. (Caulfied, Brian, 2014) We aim to take advantage of these campaigns and offer the customer an efficient and enjoyable product, which will make cycling in the cities more appealing. The aim is to start slowly and pursue a strong online presence to support our opening of a main store in Dublin City centre. We believe in the initial phase, having a physical store will help us reach out to not just our target market but also to the general public so we can promote E-Bikes. As we have found through our research of the Irish bike industry there is very little information about our product in the wider society. (See Table 1) Dublin is our choice location to begin our move to Ireland as it was identified as a “Great Bike Hope among Emerging Bicycle Cities” (The Copenhagen Report, 2013). This is why we believe this move could be very profitable for us and we hope in the next five years to not only be a strong competitor in the Irish Bike Market but one of its leaders.

We have identified the target market in the Irish market from carrying out a segmentation analysis of the market so as to identify which consumers we should aim our product at and how exactly we should go about this. First of all we segmented the market demographically by categorizing the market by age and sex. In doing so, we identified the older age demographic, ages between 40 to 60+ (the grey market) as a segment we should look to aim our product towards. This market is vitally important as a result of extended life expectancy, now this group will be consuming for longer than before, there is also a greater number of this age group now than ever before with 40% of people in Western Europe to be over the age of 50 by 2020 (Stroud and Dick, 2013).

While we identified this demographic as important, we need to narrow in on what segment of this demographic we were aiming to sell our products too directly. We did this through behavioural and Psychographic segmentation. Identifying the lifestyle pursuits of this age group as vital, as they age and are living longer they will need an outlet to exercise that is classified as exercise but isn't too strenuous. This is why we feel an E-Bike is a perfect fit for such members of this group pursuing a healthier lifestyle. We also identified the younger demographic of 20 to 35 as a possible market

segment to exploit, but we also identified that this groups consumer was more price elastic. In light of this, we proposed promotions and rental services for this market segment, narrowing this demographic segment to those who were looking to pursue a more healthy and active lifestyle.

We identified Dublin as our primary location as a result of the increase in the number of people cycling in the county over the last couple of years (Caulfied, Brian; 2014). Dublin is Ireland's capital, with a population of 1.2 million (CSO, 2012) and is projected to grow over the next fifteen years by more than 400,000 (CSO, 2013).

## **5.2 Service strategy**

The owner of this store Martin Brown has been a cycling enthusiast all his life, owning traditional bike stores from a young age, he has been an e-bike user for over ten years. The E-bike shops competitive advantage is seen in the products they sell and the superior service they give. One of the key attributes of this company is the personal service they provide. Customers need to make an appointment with the shop, this is so they can work solely with the customer and give them their full attention. They are happy to spend as much time as it takes to find each unique customer the most practical e-bike. The e-bike shop pride themselves on customer service, offering the best after-sale service and also the best product guarantees in the UK. "Remember if you have bought your e-bike from us we offer the best guarantee in the country: Two years on all electrical components, five years on the frame and one year on all parts"(e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015). They also offer the lowest price service in the UK, on average they will service and have your e-bike back within 24 hours.

Interestingly, they only repair e-bikes sold by the store, as they were spending too much time fixing peoples cheap e-bikes that had been shipped in by other competitors from China, they would rather spend time satisfying the maintenance needs of their customers who have bought from them. This shows the pride they take in their products.

## **5.3 Product strategy**

The e-bike shop does not sell any e-bikes that are made outside of the EU. Furthermore, over the past few years they have reviewed most e-bike brands, with their own review blog on website, and will only sell the best brands. As professionals with years of experience they have decided that the Raleigh, Haibike, Lapierre & Moustache e-bike range are the best quality. The store is the largest supplier in

the UK for Haibike sDuro, xDuro Bosch / Yamaha e-bikes in the UK. Although they are not the cheapest retailers of e-bike, they differentiate themselves by only selling top of the range products.

#### **5.4 Core competencies:**

They have expert knowledge of the e-bikes they are selling, they have reviewed many brands and have narrowed it down to the products they think are the best. This can be seen through their tutorials and reviews of their products on their YouTube videos and review blogs.

They are the largest UK based e-bike specialists. They have been open for ten years way before e-bikes had become popular and owner Martin while proudly boast that the store is “the largest independent crank drive supplier in the UK and one of the largest in Europe. “There are now more than 35 different styles of e-Bikes on offer, from Road, Leisure, Hybrid, Trekking all the way to full blown Enduro e-Bikes, the means that there is something to offer every rider”(E-bike cycle tourist website).

##### *5.4.1 Product*

To give best quality to customers they have decided that the Raleigh, Haibike, Lapierre & Moustache e-Bike ranges are best suited to provide a the high standard their customers expect. They are the largest supplier in the UK for Haibike sDuro & xDuro Bosch / Yamaha e-Bikes. Nowadays, there are 35 kinds of e-bikes from £1749 to £5999, as well as the limited Haibike xDuro Full Carbon Ultimate 2015 e-Bike of £11,999 sold on the website. (Theebikeshop.co.uk, 2015)

##### *5.4.2 Promotion*

The company puts heavy emphasis on having and maintaining a social media presence, on websites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. On the Facebook, e-bike shop share information of e-bike events, tour activities and their latest products. On their blog they focus on products introduction and new e-bikes test videos. However, without enough promotion and ads, there is only little attention. The website is aimed at online sales of e-bikes, accessories and parts, they run promotions on their website for particular bikes every week.

The price range the company offers may be above that of many of their competitors, but this is as a result of the company opting to offer superior top quality brands rather than the lesser brands. They seek to offer the best quality goods which break down less often than other goods available for cheaper in the market. A big selling point of their goods is the service they provide to their loyal customers, offering customers some of the best after sale services in the market. While also giving the best guarantee in the market, two years on all electric components, five years on the frame and one year on all parts. All these strengths should be mirrored when they move into the Irish market.



## 6 SWOT Analysis

### STRENGTHS

- Eco-friendly aspect of the product.
- E-Bikes allow people who have a physical limitation, take for example, obesity, get back on their bike - or back to exercise.
- High quality products and great after-sale service.

### WEAKNESSES

- Design is bulky and heavy, which makes it more difficult to cycle than traditional bikes.
- Needs to be charged, and currently facilities are lacking where this can be conducted.
- While the purchase of an E-Bike is a “once off” expense, it is still a deterrent when consumers look into purchasing it. E-Bikes cost on average around 6 times the price of a standard bike, starting at about €1,450 (Sheehan, 2014). The initial shock of the high price could deter potential customers immediately.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- The Cycle-To-Work Scheme encourages more consumers to use bikes.
- E-bikes are the fastest growing sector of the bike market in Europe, with 400,000 of them sold in Germany last year, he says. (Sheehan, 2014)
- As of late the Irish consumer has become more aware of their health and wellbeing and there has been a huge growth in the health and fitness industry, this is an opportunity for an E-bike company as they provide an outlet for people to be more active without the exercise being too strenuous.
- Wealth of the older age group coupled with a longer life expectancy; means a huge opportunity in market of 45 years old and over.

### THREATS

- Traditional Bikes.
- Bike theft in Dublin: David Timoney conducted a survey on the theft of bikes, “the survey found that one-in-six people who had their bike stolen do not return to cycling” (IT, 2015).
- Competitors: while there is no market leaders in the marketplace as of yet, there are competitors who are currently growing, such as Greenaer.

## 7

### Marketing Objectives

#### 7.1 Marketing Objectives – Strategic Thrust

As the firm is a British company seeking to establish a foothold in the Irish market for electric bikes, the strategic thrust will be characterized by a process of market development, wherein existing stock will be sold in a different geographical market in Ireland, but one with very similar characteristics to the British market.

Both markets are predominantly English speaking, both are governed by authorities who are very much concerned with sustainable development and have enacted policies in the past conducive to this end (the cycle to work initiatives in both states for example). Furthermore both have attained a similar state of economic development and have enacted austerity policies in recent years, guaranteeing similar levels of disposable income amongst consumers. Lastly, both are members of the European Union, enabling the firm to exploit the European Common market and avoid bothersome barriers to trade.

As a consequence of these factors, market development will be relatively straightforward, requiring similar marketing decisions and pricing policies. The main risk in pursuing this market is represented by possible fluctuations in the sterling-euro exchange rates, which are set to hit a low of 0.65 by 2017, a level not seen since the start of the century (Evans-Pritchard, 2014). Although this should do much to lower initial investment costs, it will have a detrimental effect on revenue from Irish consumers. However, given the substantial size of the Eurozone, and the more considerable expenses associated with expanding outside Europe, expansion into other English speaking markets would be much less prudent.

#### 7.2 Marketing Objectives – Strategic Objectives

Naturally, the primary objective of the firm in this case should be to build sales and profits. As the firm is preoccupied with a strategy of market development, holding is not a viable option as the firm does not possess a stable market share at this point in time. Harvesting and divestment are also untenable for the same reasons.

## 8 Core Strategy

### 8.1 Target Markets

The Irish bike industry has been growing steadily for the last few years, with cycling Ireland members with a 35% increase from June 2012 to the same month in 2013 (Sticky Bottle, 2013). The increased popularity in cycling is one the main factors for the E-bike Shop's rationale for expanding into the Irish market. Our primary target market is the Grey market and those consumers who are between the age demographic of 40+. We have identified this segment of the market as a key area as studies by Brian Caulfield found that the age groups of 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 are the most likely to cycle (Caulfield, Brain; 2014). While he did not find that the 55+ age demographic were likely to cycle, but that now people over the age of 50 are likely to become an increasingly important market in the future as people now have a longer life expectancy than ever before and they are increasingly active, healthy and financially independent (Fahy, John; 2012). This "Grey Market" could be the perfect sector to aim our product at, in particular segmenting the market further to identify those who are seeking to lead a healthy and active lifestyle.

We also identified a secondary market of young professional between the ages of 25 to 40, as these will not have as much financial security as their older counterparts. We identified two ways in which to attract this target market. These two methods are through a rental services and the Copenhagen Wheel, which we have briefly discussed already and will go into more detail on later.

### 8.2 Competitor Targets

The E-Bike Shop is not the cheapest amongst the main competitors we will face in the Irish market. While we have already identified our competitors we haven't yet identified the main competitors we will look to compete with and those who we look to exploit. One such competitors who we consider to be not necessarily weak but who we can challenge directly and come out the other end best off, is Kenbay Electric Bikes. Our customer care driven business model coupled with our wide range of selection of E-bikes should allow us to compete effectively with their limited range of just four models. (Eletricbikes, 2015) Another weak competitor we identified was the Ebicycle they may be cheaper but they have limited product line, and lack high quality products. Our purposed location in the city centre coupled with our high quality products will allow us to overwhelm Kenbay and Ebicycle, eventually taking their share of the E-Bike market.

We identified the company which would be considered as the strongest competitor in the market, Greenaer. They are an award winning retailer in the industry, we would consider them to be our major competitor in the Irish market place (greenaer, 2015). They have been written about in the media and got a glowing review for their products in the Irish Times as recently as November (McNally, Frank, 2014). Once we establish ourselves in the market our next step will to be challenge Greenaer for market dominance.

### **8.3 Competitive Advantage**

While E-Bike Shop may not be the cheapest in comparison to their competitors they will be competing against. They have pursued a first rate customer care strategy in the UK and has established them as one of the best when it comes to customer care. The company is aware they might be more expensive than other competitors in the market but their customer care is what distinguishes themselves and they offer one the cheapest after sales servicing in the UK (e-bikesshop.co.uk, 2015). This differentiation strategy is one which we intend to bring to the Irish market. While providing these customer services, we think a physical store is essential in Dublin City center as the target group we have identified is less likely to partake in e-commerce (E-Commerce Marketing, 2015).

We also have identified another way in which we can differentiate ourselves from our competitors, by the introduction of the Copenhagen Wheel. As this has only be recently developed not many Irish outlets have them available. This device would allow for electric bikes to be greatly cheaper as the wheel just attaches to the bike wheel of a traditional bike (The Journal, 2013). This would allow for the bike shop to reach a much larger and younger market, as it will allow those without less discretionary income to spend on an E-Bike. While other competitors have conversion kits for sale the Copenhagen Wheel will allow this to be done more efficiently for a similar price.

While we are not looking for the company to be a cost leader, we are looking for it to differentiate itself from the other competitors in the market through its high standard of customer service and its differentiated product. We look to maximizing the profits of the company through these differentiations and attracting as many consumers as possible without getting the company “stuck in the middle” by trying to attract too many different segments of the market.

## 9 Marketing Mix Decisions



**Our Products:** Intangible components and our augmented product benefits.

What we are not: It is sometimes easier to start by introducing e-bikes by identifying what they are not; there is a difference between Powered Bicycles (PB) and Power Assisted Bicycles (PAB). “On a Powered Bicycle the bike operated with a switch”, so that power starts without a pedal motion, in contrast PAB riders are assisted with power once they start to pedal. “The power e-bikes get, when the user starts to pedal, is commonly provided through “either a hub motor (front or rear) or through direct drive to the chain near the crank”(Geoffrey, 2012).

The E-bike shop has grown dramatically over the past decade. When asked what has made his store so attractive to UK customers, owner Martin Brown proudly states, “Customer service is 100% the main selling point of the E-bike shop”. “We are successful because we have the passion and knowledge to fully support the brands that we sell” (e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015).

### **The E-bike shop service is best in the UK:**

All of its employees come from a cycling background and have a broad knowledge of what they are selling. This is shown by the fact that every employee must record a video blog each month on an e-bike product they are testing. The E-bike shop’s employees are trained prior to joining the store and can only begin work once they have attained a certain level of knowledge. All staff are “qualified Bosch / Yamaha technicians” (e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015). The website has a store review section that has a 4.9 rating out of 5 stars. E-bike found that “offering a local and personal approach to cycle pre sales and after sales support worked wonders & gradually by word of mouth our small client base was naturally growing at a rate we couldn't have anticipated” (e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015). The store offers a unique one on one consultation session (by appointment only) and unlike their competitors they are happy to spend the time it takes, to make sure each customer has the right e-bike for them.

### **The best guarantees in the country: Servicing**

They have the lowest servicing fee currently in the UK and will bring it to Ireland. The shop offers and e-bike-service of usually 24 hours, on a standard service. As mentioned earlier “if you have bought your e-bike from the E-bike shop, they offer the best guarantee in the country: two years on all electrical components, five years on the frame, one year on all parts”. (e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015).

**The exclusive factor for members:** Once you have purchased an e-bike from the E-bike shop, they offer exclusive customer only e-bike workshops, as well as only servicing the e-bikes of their own customers, as they found in earlier years some of the attention of their own customers was being diverted towards cheap imports of badly made e-bikes from China. The store sent out monthly updates on new products and gadgets that are e-bike friendly.

Martin Brown is all about his clients “As you can probably tell, it’s not all about offering a professional service, but it’s the personal touches that count to. We aim to keep this within our roots, at the end of the day a happy customer is the best form of advertising any business could want” (e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015).

### **9.1 The products we sell:**

When starting out ten years ago e-bikes were relatively new and in the early stages of production, they were heavy and often weighed down by their batteries. Over the last ten years the E-bike shop has tested a wide range of e-bike and is adamant that “European manufacturers with new technologies revised and improved the e-bike designs”. As a consequence the store only sell European brands.

For the E-bike shop there has been a growing interest in mountain bikes as well as our standard city bikes. We only deal with top of the range products. Our customers are willing to pay a higher price for the brands we sell as they know they won’t let them down. All products are hand assembled or made in the EU and we pride ourselves on using the best e-bikes out there. No expenses spared. We use the best European manufacturers, the E-bike shop loves German and French design, the following is a list of our manufactures; Haibike, Lapierre, Moustache, Raleigh. We sell more of these brands than any store in the country (Martin Brown, 2015). The motors of each e-bike are either Bosch or Yamaha and all staff fully trained on installation.

### **Motor Comparison:**

“Bosch and Yamaha use 250w crank drive motors, they are integrated into the bottom bracket area and drive on the crank which gives full use of the gears and a natural efficient feel for the rider. They are similar sizes. In fact the Yamaha motor is slightly smaller than the Bosch”. The Yamaha motor is also approximately 500 grams lighter than the Bosch (Martin Brown, 2014).

### **The Bosch and Yamaha debate: Which is the better motor:**

We would suggest, rather than buy a bike dependent on the drive system used, we would recommend you steer more toward the type of e-bike you will be need, for example, is the e-bike for getting to work or is the e-bike for mountain biking rides. “You may even end up with 2 very similar bikes one using Bosch & the other using Yamaha. You’ll find within the Haibike range generally the higher end, better spec’d component bikes will feature the Bosch Performance system” (Martin Brown, 2014).

### **E-Bike parts:**

The store also sells spare parts for our Bosch and Panasonic E-Bikes. Such as chargers for our batteries, new batteries for the bikes if needed, head units and “the all famous Bosch Tuning Dongle, the “Bosch tuning dongles remove the 15mph speed cut off point on all Bosch powered e-bikes. They are software based and wire into the speed sensor using 2 wires (wire clips included)” (e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015). Why again is our service unique? Well, the E-bike shop has nearly all spare parts in the shop, unlike our competitors who order them in”

### **Accessories:**

The E-bike shop aims to have everything needed for an e-bike enthusiast or general users, the accessories we sell, range from helmet, clothing, handlebar grips, saddles, tyres, all the way to cleaning equipment and car bike racks. Everything a customer would want for the e-bike is here.

### **What’s we are trying in the Irish store:**

All the above will be offered to our Irish customers, as well as this, for the Irish launch we are bringing some new ideas to life. The E-bike shop will now do mountain bike tours for its existing customers,



this will entail some of the staff (who are all e-bike enthusiasts), joining customer's a monthly basis to ride their e-bikes on a planned route by the E-bike shop, again showing the benefits of being an E-bike shop customer.

Also to be launched in our new Dublin Store is the Copenhagen Wheel, this will allow customers on a tighter budget to enter into the world of e-bikes. How it works: The Device is installed as part of a rear hub of a bike wheel, replacing the bikes original wheel and is “packed with a proprietary computer, batteries and sensors that monitor how hard a rider is pedaling and activate an onboard motor whenever support is needed”. The Copenhagen wheel will be compatible with smartphones, using wireless connectivity to communicate and “track distance traveled and elevation gained, share with friends the number of calories burned and lock the wheel remotely as soon as the owner walks away from the bike”. Its charge time is slightly longer than our other batteries clocking in at just over 4 hours. Costing between €500 to €600 this will appeal to buyers on a lower budget. (The Journal.ie, 2015)



(Copenhagen Wheel site, 2015)

## **9.2 Promotion:**

For the expansion into the Irish market all information about products will be the same: the only alteration to the website for the shops expansion into the Irish market will be the “Irish store tab” on the “[e-bikeshop.co.uk](http://e-bikeshop.co.uk)”, here customer can find the location and information about the new shop. We have the new Irish tab highlighted so that new customers know where they are going. As well on the Irish tab section of the website, we will have information about the Irish rental service, which is exclusive to the new store, and we will also have information about purchasing through the bike to work scheme that is only available in Ireland. We will still use all our experienced systems of marketing; which include our Facebook page, the Blog and YouTube videos (as bikes used in blogs /YouTube channel will be the same to both Irish and English customers). Our twitter and google plus

pages as well as all social media platforms will be maintained by both our Irish and English staff equally.

**In Ireland:** We are really going to push our after sale service: With the introduction of the e-bike club, this will supplement our already award winning customer service that has made the E-bike shop popular in the UK. The E-bike shop Ireland, will introduce its e-bike club, when the Irish store opens in late 2015. This will consist of monthly mountain biking tours in the Wicklow, the stores club will take out groups of 20 with a guide (one of our employees). As well as this we will provide monthly in store workshops, for our biking enthusiasts, on topics such a bike maintenance. For the stores first year in order to draw in new customers we will provide this service for free. We will continue to only offer e-bike servicing to our clients. We will also introduce the group discount, for any cycling enthusiast groups out there, who are ageing and want to make the switch to e-bikes, we will offer a 15% discount for groups of ten or more who are ordering new e-bikes.

**Our app:** An app will be made available for our Irish Customers in late 2015, this will update users on weather conditions, road works, new routes and news about the store, such as events we are holding. Here customers will also be able to book an appointment for the store and also rent bikes prior to coming to the store.

**Advertising:** One simple form of advertising will be on our bikes themselves, each bike will be sold with our logo on it, which includes our website address, our Irish details will be found on its own tab on the UK website.



**Rental options:** In order to get more people trying out e-bikes we will provide a rental service, this will be located in our store in the centre. We will hire two extra staff members who will be in charge of this section of the business as to not take time away from the e-bike technicians.



**Travel websites:** The store will advertise its rental options on [www.discoverIreland.com](http://www.discoverIreland.com) and [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie)

**The tour de Picnic:** Every year Electric Picnic hold the “Tour de Picnic” which is a 90km cycle Charity Cycle from Dublin to Stradbally Kildare, the E-bike shop will be sponsoring its staff and some lucky customer from the UK store in Electric Picnic’s 2015 cycle. This we hope will get the name out there in Ireland for the new store.

**Nationwide and Ireland AM:** We have arranged for the store to feature on two local Irish TV show. TV3’s Ireland am and Nationwide -RTE. Both shows are widely watched by our “grey” target market. The owner of The E-Bike Shop will air on Ireland AM to discuss the future of e-bikes. The Nationwide crew will come to the new store, located in Dublin’s city centre, right after the store opens in late 2015. When the crew comes we will give them a tour of the shop, show the some popular bikes and film a workshop with some of our customers. We will invest for the first two years in billboard advert in the city centre, at peak traffic jam areas. Advertising the e-bikes as a faster, cheaper, and more environmentally friendly way to travel.

### 9.3 Price

The current pricing range of our bikes in the UK market is €2500 - €24,000, but we do not intend to bring this wide range of bikes to the Irish market initially. We intend to keep our price range between €2500 to €6500. (e-bikeshop.co.uk, 2015). We feel this range will keep shipping costs to a minimum. We will not sell the more expensive ranges as our market research implies that the high initial cost of the bikes acted as a major deterrent from prospective buyers (See Table). This price range is in line with our perspective major competitor in the Irish market, Greenaer whose pricing is between €1500 - €4500. (Greenaer, 2015) While we are not looking to directly compete on pricing, it is still important for us to not bring our full range into the Irish market initially as this would not be cost effective for us to do so.

With this pricing range we looked towards the “Grey Market” as our primary target market, as they tend to have more discretionary income to spend and also they are more active generation than previous generations before them (Gunter, Barrie; 2013) As the pricing of E-Bikes are considerably more expensive than their traditional counterparts we felt this was the best market segment to concentrate our primary marketing objectives upon.

We also identified another age demographic made up of young professionals between 25-40 years of age. As they are considered in most cases to have less disposable income than their older counterparts we have already discussed, there is a need to make our products more accessible for these consumers through new innovations and special offers. New innovation we hope to offer our younger customers is the Copenhagen Wheel. Which is not only an ingenious piece of technology but will decrease the cost of making bikes electric, as it is just replaces the back wheel of traditional none electric bikes and it retails at \$699 having this available in our stock will make our business more accessible to younger professionals. (Journal.ie, 2013)

Another pricing plan we are looking to implement is the opportunity to rent our range of E-Bikes. We will look to have a rental service for in around Dublin City and its suburbs, our pricing will be aligned with businesses in other major cities in Europe. An example of such a city is Berlin, where you can rent an E-Bike for €35 for a day (Berlinbicycle, 2015). We would offer similar pricing to this with special offers of less for multiple day rentals. This will potentially attract tourists but are main aim for this pricing strategy is to attract young people to test our range of E-Bikes, in the hope they become customers and buy our products after they experience them for a reasonable price.

#### **9.4 Place**

Our primary location during the initial entry into the Irish Market will be Dublin City, as it is Ireland's biggest city population wise as it has a population of over 1.2 million people (CSO 2011). We felt this was the only place which made sense to set up originally as this location has the biggest potential market. As this is our initial phase of expansion into the Irish market we felt we didn't want to overextend ourselves, but still wanted to enter a market where there was a large potential for growth.

We identified of having a shop and workshop in the city centre of Dublin as a vital component of our expansion to the Irish market, as our target audience is an older generation who are not less likely to purchase online. Therefore to have a physical presence in the city is vital to attract these customers. We will also continue our online sales, the physical store will just add another outlet for the sale our products.

## 10 Organization and Implementation

Marketing department: As a small business the staff were originally responsible for our marketing implementation, and will continue to do so. However as part of our Irish launch and the new services we will be providing in Ireland (1) The E-bike shop app, (2) the e-bikes members club, (3) the rental service, (4) the Copenhagen Wheel, we will take on one new staff member whose job will be solely to run the shop's marketing campaign. Our campaign however will still involve and value our bike technicians and other staff who post weekly on the shops blog and YouTube videos, as well as providing workshops and e-bike club outings. With this in mind we will set aside 2 hour each week where we will discuss our marketing plan and also allow the staff to work on their marketing area, for example their video blog.

The new staff member who will be in charge of our marketing department, will have the following key duties: Measuring how well our different marketing areas are doing. Working alongside the staff and owner on the Facebook and twitter groups, making sure this is updated daily. Controlling the store app and website and updating it daily. Arranging press and TV appearances for the store. Keeping up good relations with our billboard operators and travel websites, where we advertise.

Our customer are our main focus so keeping them happy will always reflect well on us and gain new business, all staff must remember this.

## 11 Control

### **Short term Control System**

We will conduct month by month evaluation of a number of short term indicators which will allow us to identify how the business is performing. One such short term indicator is our profitability, we will be evaluating our performance each month to see if we are profitable overall in our business practices. We will also evaluate ourselves in how efficiently we are controlling our costs. This will allow us to see if we need to cut costs in places, but also it will allow us to also evaluate how cost effective our services and each product is for our business. The final indicator we will monitor is our cash flows, we will compare the actual cash flows against our forecasted cash flows. This will allow us to know if we need to re-evaluate our forecasted cash flows and see if they are going as planned. Also this will allow us to identify times of surplus cash flows so we can utilise this cash in the best way to maximise our income. It will also allow times where we may have a shortage of cash, and take actions like taking out a loan to temporarily cover your costs. These are the three indicators we will utilise in our short term control system.

### **Long Term Control System**

We will use three methods to measure our results on a long term basis these are, consumer trends, competitors and changes in technology. Monitoring consumer trends will allow us to evaluate which products are successful in this new market place for us, and what others aren't. This will allow us to decide which models and price ranges are best suited to this specific market. Consumer trends will also allow us to identify if our products suited our original target market and if our original target market are actually purchasing our products. Analysing our competitors will allow us to know if the competitors we identified before we entered the market are still the same companies we identified originally. If not this will allow us to keep update on who are new competitors in the market are. Changes in technology is important for us as it is vital we do not allow ourselves or our products become obsolete, as we live in a technological age where advances are being made every day we need to ensure we do not fall behind our competitors.



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## Appendix

### Survey Results

What would be your main deterrent from using E-Bikes?

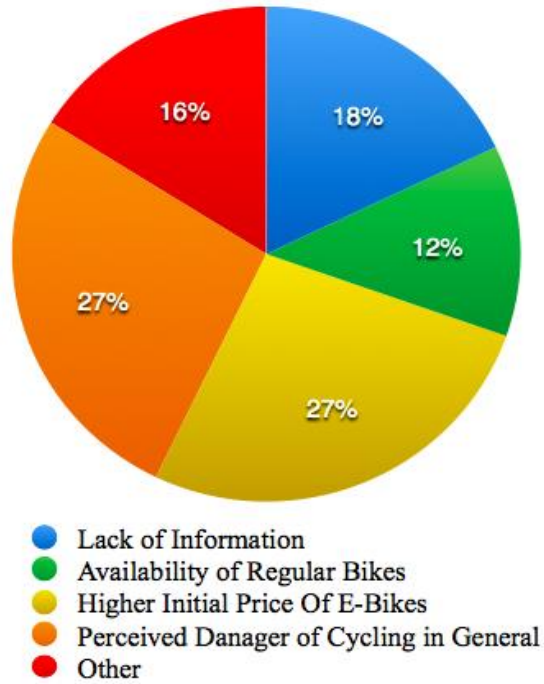


Table 1

If you could rent an E-Bike around Dublin with an app, would you avail of this service?

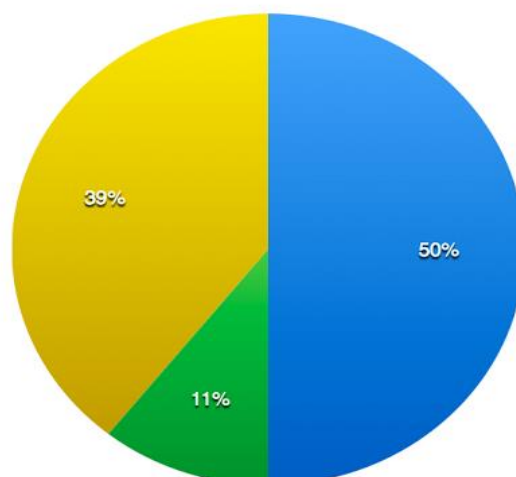


Table 2

**How do you currently get to Work or College?**

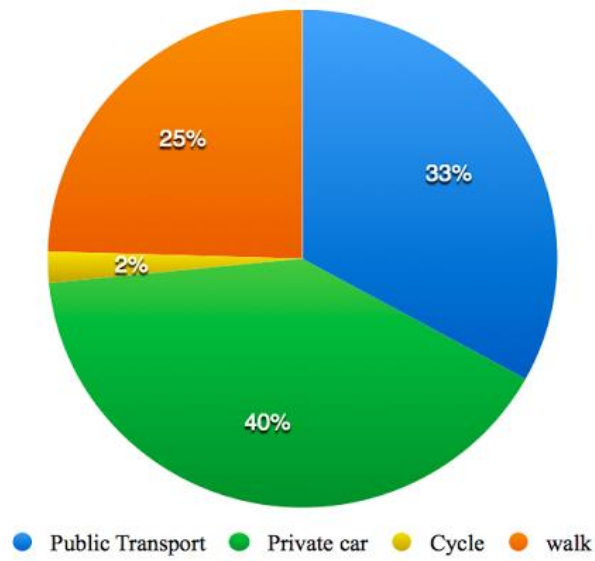


Table 3

Table 4

|

**If You Could Rent An E-Bike Around Dublin With An App, Would You Avail Of This Service**

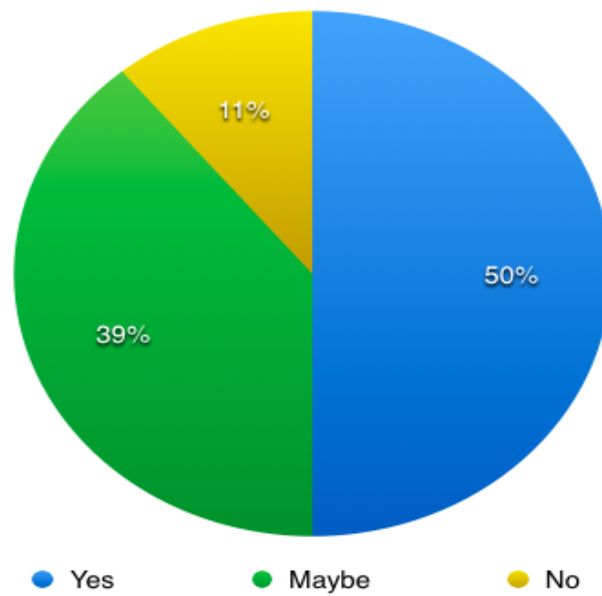


Table 5

**If You Could Rent An E-Bike Around Dublin  
With An App, Would You Avail Of This Service**

