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BASIC MARKETING RESEARCH TRAINING FOR JORDAN'S NOT-FOR-PROFIT BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

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BASIC MARKETING RESEARCH TRAINING FOR JORDAN'S NOT-FOR-PROFIT BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

SUSTAINABLE ACHIEVEMENT OF BUSINESS EXPANSION AND
QUALITY (SABEQ)

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6.3.5.A.2.22.1 BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF THE INDUSTRY-
SPECIFIC AND CROSS-CUTTING BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS IN
THE FIELD OF CONDUCTING DIFFERENT KINDS OF MARKETING
RESEARCH THAT ENABLES ASSOCIATIONS TO IDENTIFY
AREAS THAT ASSURE THEIR RELEVANCY

DISCLAIMER:

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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BACKGROUND

To develop effective business plan and marketing strategy it is crucial to obtain valid and reliable information on market, products, services, customers and stakeholders. Marketing research is the logical, objective and systematic method of obtaining the needed information. The basic marketing research training for Jordan's not-for-profit associations was aimed at providing hands-on training on the fundamentals of designing and conducting marketing research. Training was conducted in the hope that it will help those associations develop the in-house skills required for conducting their own marketing research in the future.

The training consisted of three-day sessions for two different groups, one for the sector-specific associations (e.g., pharmaceutical, hospital, architecture and engineering, banking, etc.) and the other for cross-cutting associations (e.g., Young Entrepreneurs, AmCham, Jordan's Exports Association, etc.) as such association groupings match SABEQ's organizational structure.

Materials used for the training and PowerPoint™ presentations are gleaned and selected from various sources such as well-known textbooks, academic journals and mass media. The training covered the following areas:

Area 1: Introduction and Overview. Topics included the foundations and logic of research in general and marketing research in particular. The concepts and principles of market, marketing, marketing research process, centrality of information, role and classification of marketing research, problem identification and problem solving research, nature of marketing research, and benefits of undertaking marketing research for an organization. The scientific nature of research (as opposed to an intuitive approach) was emphasized.

Area 2: Marketing Research Methodology. Topics included the differentiation between management decision problems and marketing decision problems, development and articulation of marketing research questions, need for the specificity and focus of the marketing research question, qualitative and quantitative research methods, primary and secondary research data, and classifications of research methodology and data.

Area 3: Quantitative Research: Topics included an overview of the steps in marketing research process with the focus on quantitative methodology, the concept of bias in research and control of bias, issues of validity and reliability, concepts and applications of sampling such as simple random sampling and stratified sampling, probability and non-probability sampling, sampling versus census, determination of sample size, sampling design process, classification of sampling techniques, survey research, design and development of questionnaire, data analysis and levels of measurement, and the concept and application of benchmarking.

Area 4: Qualitative Research. Topics included an overview of the steps in marketing research process with the focus on qualitative methodology, differentiation between quantitative and qualitative methodology, designing and conducting of focus groups, and one-on-one interviews (in-depth interviews), characteristics focus groups, the role of focus group moderator, and projective techniques.

Area 5: Case Study: Application of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies with a case study which is reflective of the situation faced by a typical voluntary not-for-profit organization in Jordan.

Areas 6: Ethics in marketing research. Ethical guidelines set by the European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR) Ethical Principles.

The training was attended by executives, administrators and staff of nearly twenty associations that have been identified for their potential importance to the SABEQ program.

KEY FINDINGS

The basic marketing research training provided the much-needed information and skills for Jordan's not-for-profit associations and it was generally well-received and appreciated, as indicated by the reactions and feedbacks of many participants.

Most of the participants lacked a clear idea of marketing research, and it was evident from the questions and statements like: "What is the difference between market research and marketing research?" "I have been waiting for long time to know the difference between market research and marketing research."

Many of those who were aware of marketing research had only a superficial understanding of the field. Many of them considered marketing research simply a matter of surveys or focus groups. The participants were mostly unaware of the foundations marketing and marketing research, such as 4Ps (Product, Price, Place and Promotion), 4Cs (Customer Solution, Customer Cost, Convenience and Communication), segmentation, targeting and positioning, and how they had to be integrated in conducting marketing research. They were not familiar with the role and use of demographic variables in marketing and marketing research, and the need for the demographic profiling of customers/clients.

Participants were not well-aware of the fact marketing research was a scientific endeavor that requires a logical, objective and systematic approach, and the design and development of marketing research is greatly a conceptual exercise. They were not very cognizant of the need for the specific and well-defined marketing research question for guiding the research process in the right direction to obtain relevant information. Many were not familiar with rigorous conceptual thinking in terms of marketing research.

Some of the participants came to the training with the expectation of a quick and easy short-cut recipe for mastering marketing research methodology. They also believed that picking up a few terms, ideas and guidelines from websites would qualify and enable them to conduct marketing research.

They were also not aware of the return on investment for the associations from undertaking marketing research. They were also not aware of how to use marketing research for designing business strategies for developing their associations and serving their members.

Many participants were eager to learn the marketing research methodology and worked hard on learning as much as possible from the training.

The training imparted basic skills on survey research, questionnaire development, opinion measurement scales, benchmarking, focus groups, projective techniques, and sampling, among other concepts and principles.

Participants gained an overall view of marketing research methodology, methods of data collection, and their applications in designing business strategy for the development of their associations. Jordan's not-for-profit associations could utilize marketing research methodology in determining their priorities and promotional programs, and designing their customer relations management in tune with the wants and needs for the members.

The training sensitized the participants to the conceptual and theoretical foundations of marketing research methodology, and instead of seeing it only as skills and applications, participants appreciated its broader context. Participants came to realize that marketing research is a scientific method with logical, objective and systematic approach.

The training provided an impetus for initiating marketing research in Jordan's not-for-profit associations.

The PowerPoint™ presentations of the training and the templates for the performance gap analysis would be of help to participants in continuing their learning process.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Participants will greatly benefit from additional and advanced marketing research training. An intermediate training program as follow-up to the basic training is recommended. Such training will solidify what they have already learned and will further expand participants' ability to apply the concepts and skills.

In order to make use of quantitative research data effectively, researcher must possess a good working knowledge of data analysis. Therefore a data analysis training program is advisable.

A training program on marketing management is also recommended. It will help enhance the abilities of Jordan's not-for-profit associations to evolve themselves as competitive, efficient, self-sustaining entities. Also, with the same goals in mind training programs on organizational leadership, managerial skills and special topics (such as web-based surveys) are also recommended.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: POWERPOINT™ PRESENTATIONS USED FOR THE TRAINING (SIX FILES, ONE FOR EACH SUBJECT AREA).

APPENDIX B: THE TRAINING SCHEDULES

Marketing Research Training Workshop

Sector Specific Associations

Citadel Meeting Room - SABEQ

18, 19 & 21, November, 2007

(Class was not held on November 20, National Election Day)

Day	Time	Topic
Sunday, 18 Nov 2007 Theme: Introduction to Marketing Research	8:30 – 9:00	Registration
	9:00 – 11:00	Introduction and Overview:
		What is marketing? What is marketing research? Why do we need marketing research?
	11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
	11:15 – 12:00	What are the benefits of marketing research?
	12:00 – 13:00	The overall role and process of marketing research and its effect on the association's strategic planning process and outputs.
	13:00 – 13:30	Specific marketing and marketing research needs of the participants.
	13:30 – 14:15	Lunch Break
	14:15 – 16:30	Overview of Marketing Research Methods:
		Quantitative Methods: Surveys, Benchmarking
		Qualitative Methods: Focus Groups, One-on-One Interviews, Observational Methods
	16:30 – 17:00	Wrap up session

Day	Time	Topic
Monday, 19 Nov 2007 Theme: Marketing Research Techniques	8:30 – 11:00	Overview of Research Design – Quantitative
		What is “bias” in a research? How can it be controlled?
		What are the basic aspects of sampling?
		How to design a survey research?
		How to design a survey questionnaire?
	11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
	11:15 – 13:30	Overview of Research Design – Quantitative ..cont’d
		How to analyze the survey data?
		How to understand results of a survey?
		What is benchmarking?
		How to design a benchmarking study?
	13:30 – 14:15	Lunch Break
	14:15 – 16:30	Overview of Research Design - Qualitative
		How to design and conduct a focus group?
		How to understand results of a focus group?
		How to design and conduct a one-on-one interview?
		How to understand results of a one-on-one interview?
	16:30 – 17:00	Wrap up session

Day	Time	Topic
Wednesday, 21 Nov 2007 Theme: Applications and Conclusions	8:30 – 11:00	Specific applications of concepts and methods:
		How to apply marketing research concepts and methods to the specific marketing needs of business associations
	11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
	11:15 - 12:45	Case Studies
	12:45 – 13:30	Unfinished / requested topics
	13:30 – 14:15	Lunch Break
	14:15 – 17:00	Concluding overview of the course:
		What are the major marketing research methods learned from the course?
		How can they be applied in marketing and marketing research?
		Revisiting the link between marketing and marketing research.
		Concluding thoughts and observations.

Marketing Research Training Workshop
Cross-Cutting Associations
Citadel Meeting Room - SABEQ
22, 24 & 25, November, 2007

Day	Time	Topic
Thursday, 22 Nov 2007 Theme: Introduction to Marketing Research	8:30 – 9:00	Registration
	9:00 – 11:00	Introduction and Overview:
		What is marketing?, What is marketing research?, Why do we need marketing research?
		Coffee Break
	11:00 – 11:15	What are the benefits of marketing research?
	11:15 – 12:00	
	12:00 – 13:00	The overall role and process of marketing research and its effect on the association's strategic planning process and outputs.
	13:00 – 13:30	Specific marketing and marketing research needs of the participants.
	13:30 – 14:15	Lunch Break
	14:15 – 16:30	Overview of Marketing Research Methods:
		Quantitative Methods: Surveys, Benchmarking
		Qualitative Methods: Focus Groups, One-on-One Interviews, Observational Methods
	16:30 – 17:00	Wrap up session

Day	Time	Topic
Saturday, 24 Nov 2007 Theme: Marketing Research Techniques	8:30 – 11:00	Overview of Research Design – Quantitative
		What is “bias” in a research? How can it be controlled?
		What are the basic aspects of sampling?
		How to design a survey research?
		How to design a survey questionnaire?
	11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
	11:15 – 13:30	Overview of Research Design – Quantitative ..cont’d
		How to analyze the survey data?
		How to understand results of a survey?
		What is benchmarking?
		How to design a benchmarking study?
	13:30 – 14:15	Lunch Break
	14:15 – 16:30	Overview of Research Design - Qualitative
		How to design and conduct a focus group?
		How to understand results of a focus group?
		How to design and conduct a one-on-one interview?
		How to understand results of a one-on-one interview?
	16:30 – 17:00	Wrap up session

Day	Time	Topic
Sunday, 25 Nov 2007 Theme: Applications and Conclusions	8:30 – 11:00	Specific applications of concepts and methods:
		How to apply marketing research concepts and methods to the specific marketing needs of business associations
	11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
	11:15 - 12:45	Case Studies
	12:45 – 13:30	Unfinished / requested topics
	13:30 – 14:15	Lunch Break
	14:15 – 17:00	Concluding overview of the course:
		What are the major marketing research methods learned from the course?
		How can they be applied in marketing and marketing research?
		Revisiting the link between marketing and marketing research.
		Concluding thoughts and observations.

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