The Role of Data-Driven Trade Marketing Performance in Directing Sales at Square Toiletries Limited

Submitted to:

Ms. Rukaiya Rob

Lecturer

School of Business & Economics (SoBE)

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Submitted by:

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Management Information Systems (MIS)

Spring 2026

School of Business and Economics

United International **University**

Date of submission: July 21, 2026

The Role of Data-Driven Trade Marketing Performance in Directing Sales at Square Toiletries Limited

Fareha Tasnim

This report is submitted to the school of Business and Economics, United International University as a partial requirement for the degree fulfillment of Bachelor of Business Administration

Letter of Transmittal

July 21, 2026

To

Ms. Rukaiya Rob

Lecturer

School of Business & Economics (SoBE)

United International University

Subject: Submission of Internship Report (INT 4399)

Dear Ma’am,

With due respect, I am pleased to submit my internship report titled **“The Role of Data-Driven Trade Marketing Performance in Directing Sales at Square Toiletries Limited”**, prepared as a partial requirement for “INT 4399” under the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme at United Internation University.

This report has been prepared by following the guidelines provided, and is based on my internship experience at **Square Toiletries Limited**. The report reflects my effort to apply my academic knowledge of Management Information Systems (MIS) to practical business operations within STL.

I sincerely appreciate you for your continuous support throughout my internship trajectory, which has greatly contributed to my professional development as well as academic. I hope that this report meets your expectations and serves the intended academic purpose.

Sincerely,

Fareha Tasnim

ID: 111201269

BBA in Management Information Systems (MIS)

United International University (UIU)

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Declaration of the Student

I hereby declare that this internship report titled "**The Role of Data-Driven Trade Marketing Performance in Directing Sales at Square Toiletries Limited**" has been prepared by me as a partial requirement for the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree with a major in Management Information Systems (MIS) at United International University.

This report is based on my personal experience and observations during my internship at Square Toiletries Limited from 1st March 2026 to 2nd June 2026. The work presented here is entirely my own. It has not been submitted previously for any other degree, diploma, or examination at this or any other institution. All sources of information used have been properly acknowledged.

I also confirm that no confidential or proprietary information of Square Toiletries Limited has been disclosed in this report without prior authorization.

Sincerely,

Fareha

Fareha Tasnim

ID: 111201269

BBA in Management Information Systems (MIS)

United International University

Corporate Evidence

SQUARE TOILETRIES LIMITED

STL/HRD/1374/2026
July 02, 2026

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Ms. Fareha Tasnim, a student of BBA, United International University has been completed her internship program in our Sales Department under the guidance of Mr. Kazi Reza-E Rabbi, Executive, Trade Marketing, Sales Department. The duration of internship program was from March 01, 2026 to May 31, 2026.

She was punctual, discipline and hardworking. She showed her interest towards her assigned job.

We wish her all the success in her future endeavor.

Monami Haque
Director
Square Toiletries Limited
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SQUARE

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Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my UIU academic supervisor, Ms. Rukaiya Rob for her continuous encouragement and guidance throughout my internship. Her incisive criticism and rigorous academic standards were crucial in forming the approach and framework of this report.

I would also like to thank the Trade Marketing team of Square Toiletries Limited, specifically Kazi Reza-E-Rabbi (Senior Executive), Sazzad Sarker (Executive) & Imam Jafar Sadik (Executive), for assigning me impactful tasks during my internship period and sharing their extensive knowledge of trade marketing and sales dynamics in the FMCG industry.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my family and friends for their constant encouragement which motivated me to successfully complete this internship and report.

Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive overview of my internship experience at Square Toiletries Limited (STL), one of Bangladesh’s foremost fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies and a subsidiary of the Square Group. The internship was conducted within the Trade Marketing function of the Sales Department. The central focus of this report is the role that data-driven trade marketing performance plays in directing and optimizing sales outcomes at STL.

The report examines how structured data management, analytical tools, and information systems are leveraged to monitor field-level execution, track trade program achievements, analyze product performance across multiple geographic tiers, and maintain competitive market intelligence. Drawing on the academic foundation of Management Information Systems (MIS), the report demonstrates how information flows, and data processing underpins effective trade marketing in a competitive FMCG environment.

Key activities undertaken during the internship included managing and analyzing IMS (In-Market Sales) trackers, conducting multi-level product performance analyses using advanced Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Power BI, supporting trade program execution by coordinating with the field force hierarchy, and providing audit documentation support for the seasonal নববর্ষের মিষ্টিমুখ (Nababarsha’r Mistimukh) trade program. The findings affirm that data-driven approaches to trade marketing are not merely supplementary, rather they are central to directing sustainable, measurable sales growth at STL.

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List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

FMCG - Fast-Moving Consumer Goods

STL - Square Toiletries Limited

BBA - Bachelor of Business Administration

MIS - Management Information Systems

IMS - In-market sales

RSM - Regional Sales Manager

ASM - Area Sales Manager

TSO - Territory Sales Officer

SO - Sales Officer

OTC - Over-the-counter

GMP - Good Manufacturing Practice

KPIs - Key Performance Indicators

DB - Distributor

TP - Trade Price

MRP - Maximum Retail Price

ETP - Effective Trade Price

R&D - Research and Development

ISO - International Organization for Standardization

OEM - Original Equipment Manufacturer

B2B - Business to Business

B2C - Business to Consumer

FY - Financial Year

CAGR - Compound Annual Growth Rate

FDI - Foreign Direct Investment

ETL - Extract, Transform, Load

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Report

In today's FMCG landscape, companies and organisations gain a significant competitive advantage by analysing data and transforming it into insights which help businesses make substantial decisions. Trade marketing involved strategies and activities which facilitate increasing product sales by retailers or distributors, mostly both. Which is primarily why companies depend on data analytics and information systems: planning, managing, evaluating, and executing these efforts. Without a reliable and strong data system, trade investments can go wasted or redirected; companies might make poor decisions and face challenges in tracking field operations; they might end up struggling to compete with other companies in the existing market.

One of Bangladesh's leading consumer goods manufacturers, Square Toiletries Limited (STL) is a subsidiary of the Square Group which has products available across the country. Managing and maintaining a large retail network as such demands careful planning and coordination. Information systems help the company in keeping track of sales performance, monitor field activities, and identify areas that require improvement and modification. These systems play a substantial role in improving trade marketing and commercial performance by supporting better decisions.

This report was prepared as part of the requirements for completing the BBA program, majoring in Management Information Systems at United International University. The internship was conducted in STL's Trade Marketing department from March 1 to June 2, 2026. Throughout the internship, I was able to observe daily operations and actively participate in different tasks; those experiences provided practical insights into how information systems support trade marketing. This report further discusses how data is collected, organised, analysed, and executed to improve trade marketing performance and increase the effectiveness of sales at STL.

1.2 Objectives of the Report

This report is guided by the following objectives:

Primary Objective:

To examine and articulate the role of data-driven trade marketing performance in directing sales at Square Toiletries Limited.

Secondary Objectives:

- To document the responsibilities and activities undertaken during the internship within STL's Trade Marketing function.
- To analyze how information management tools, particularly advanced Excel analytics and Power BI can be applied to monitor, evaluate, and improve trade marketing performance.
- To explore how data-driven communication with field personnel translates analytical insights into measurable sales actions.
- To assess the alignment between MIS academic knowledge and practical application in the FMCG trade marketing context.
- To identify key challenges encountered in the trade marketing data environment and evaluate how they were addressed through the application of MIS knowledge.

1.3 Rationale of the Report

This report highlights two reasons. First being, STL operates in the highly competitive FMCG industry where trade promotions, marketing activities, and field-force performance need to be monitored, modified, and improved on a regular basis. Bangladesh's FMCG market has been continuously growing in the past few years as to the increasing consumer spending, urbanisation, and a young population (Invest Bangladesh, 2024; The Business Standard, 2024). Having such a competitive environment as such, making trade marketing decisions as effective depends on precise and thoroughly analysed data.

Secondly, one of the primary objectives of Management Information Systems is helping organisations to use information effectively for better decisions. Since the Trade Marketing department at STL counts on data for planning, monitoring, and evaluating different activities, it presents a more practical example of how MIS knowledge is accommodated into a business setting.

Overall, this report focuses on how trade marketing at STL is followed by data rather than assumptions. It further elaborates how even if sales and marketing are the primary objectives, information systems support daily operations through data management, analysis, reporting, and very importantly decision-making.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Report

Scope

This report is scoped to my internship experience within the Sales Department, specifically the Trade Marketing function of Square Toiletries Limited, covering the period from 1st March 2026 to 2nd June 2026. The report focuses on the following areas:

- In-market sales (IMS) performance tracking and analysis using Microsoft Excel.
- Trade program coordination and communication with the field force, including Regional Sales Managers (RSMs), Area Sales Managers (ASMs), Territory Sales Officers (TSOs), and Sales Officers (SOs).
- Data processing and analysis of product performance at retail, market, region, and division levels.
- Documentation and audit support for seasonal trade programs, specifically the 2026 Nababarsha Mistimukh (নববর্ষের মিষ্টিমুখ) promotional initiative.
- Voluntary data visualization using Power BI to support analytical findings and insights.

Limitations

There are a few shortcomings that must be acknowledged in the context of this report.

- **Confidentiality Constraints:** Some of the data or information could not be included as to company privacy policy. For the same reason, no confidential data or actual sales records have been shared.
- **Limited Duration:** While the internship provided valuable learning opportunities, it was only three months long. Therefore, there was only so much time to obtain the long term impacts of different trade marketing activities.
- **Scope of Role:** As an intern working at the sales department, my responsibilities were limited. I have observed many strategic activities but I was not actively involved in making business decisions as such.
- **Tool Adoption Gap:** The sales department does not currently use Power BI. Although, I used it as a learning tool in order to practice data visualisation or create dashboards, its effectiveness within the company could not bring any value.
- **Departmental Perspective:** As the report primarily focuses on my experience in an individual department, it may not reflect how other departments operate or collaborate; and may not cover the experiences and activities of other respective departments.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

The following key terms are used throughout this report and are defined below for clarity:

The Trade Marketing:

Trade marketing is the kind of marketing that focuses on improving product sales through retailers and distributors. It entails promotional campaigns, product placement, and also trade offers that encourage better sales.

IMS (In-Market Sales):

In-Marker Sales or IMS at STL means the actual sales of products in the market. It is one of the key performance indicators that is used in order to evaluate the work of the sales team.

IMS Tracker:

This tracker is an Excel spreadsheet which is used to organise and analyse IMS data. It helps monitoring target achievement and helps identifying the performance of different Sales Officers and markets.

Field Force:

This refers to all of the sales personnel working in different regions and territories, and they make sure their company's products are available in the market; they stay connected with the retailers, execute trade programs, and work tirelessly towards achieving their sales goals.

Regional Sales Manager (RSM):

The Regional Sales Manager's focus is primarily on sales performance; they manage field employees and also ensures trade programs are carried out successfully within their respective region.

Area Sales Manager (ASM):

They supervise TSO's as well as SO's and monitor their performance; an area sales manager further helps achieving sales goals based in their designated area.

Territory Sales Officer (TSO):

A TO looks after the sales performance; and they make sure to maintain an amiable relationship with retailers within their specific territory.

Sales Officer (SO):

A sales officer is responsible for maintaining retailer relationships and making sure that the products are not only visible and attractive in the market but also and widely available. They work directly with retail stores.

Power BI:

This one is a powerful software which is used to analyse and present data through visual reports. For this report specifically, it was used voluntarily for the better understanding of sales performance.

Management Information Systems (MIS):

It is the study and use of information or data technology that supports business operations, decision-making, and organisational performance.

FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods):

FMCG or Fast-moving consumer goods essentially is the goods or products that are bought and used by consumers on a regular basis. Products as such are toiletries, personal care products, food and beverages, etc. STL primarily focuses on the production of personal care and toiletries within this industry.

Trade Program:

Trade programs are promotional activities which help improving sales through retailers as well as distributors who use different incentive schemes. Note to mention, it is a short term activity.

Cash Memo:

A cash memo is a receipt provided as proof of purchase. During STL's "Noboborsho Mishtimukh" program, RSM's cash memos were collected in order to verify sweet purchases, which were made for retailers during Pohela Boishakh 2026.

CHAPTER 2: COMPANY AND INDUSTRY PROFILE

2.1 Company Analysis

2.1.1 Overview and History

One of the leading companies in the FMCG industry in Bangladesh is the Square Toiletries Limited (STL), and it operates under its parent company, Square Group, which is also one of the most diversified and largest industrial conglomerates in the country (Square Group, 2015). The story of the Square Group started back in 1958 as a small partnership firm named Square Pharmaceuticals Limited in Ataikula, Pabna, which was established by Samson H. Chowdhury, along with his three partners. The name “Square” was given to represent and reflect the four founding friends’ partnership as well as the company’s vision to focus on accuracy and quality in manufacturing (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026b). Throughout the next six decades, the single pharmaceutical venture expanded into diversified groups, comprising IT, textile, healthcare, food and beverage, media, agribusiness, and consumer goods. With an annual revenue of around 1 billion USD as of 2017, the Square Group employs more than 56,000 people today (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026b).

Figure 1: Major Subsidiaries and Sister Concerns of Square Group

Back in 1988, STL started out its journey under Square Pharmaceuticals Limited as a small manufacturing division. At that time, it only had a limited range of products such as soap, shampoo and toothpaste (Square Toiletries Limited, 2022, 2026a). By 1994, STL had established itself as a separate private limited company, making it an independent entity under the Square Group (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). Since its incorporation, it has come a long way in terms of growth, having both a diverse product portfolio as well as significant market presence. Today, STL offers 20 brands featuring over 55 product variants which include categories such as skincare, hair care, baby care, oral care, fabric care, household care, male grooming, and OTC hygiene (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). It also reflects its commitment by holding an ISO 9001 certificate, indicating its internationally recognized standards for quality management (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). From starting with just a single product division back in 1988, to STL's current multi-category FMCG manufacturer with several active export programs demonstrate how aligning proper strategy, brand investment, and manufacturing capability helps to create a lasting powerful market presence.

Figure 2: Diverse Portfolio of the Square Group

2.1.2 Trend and Growth

We can get a better understanding of STL’s growth by looking at the bigger picture of the FMCG market in Bangladesh. The current value of the FMCG sector in Bangladesh is around USD 4 billion and it's growing at a pace of 7 to 10% each year, which helps explain STL’s fast growth pattern. Some of the few significant factors influencing this growth are higher incomes, urbanization, more awareness about the benefits of branded hygiene and personal care products (The Business Standard, 2024a; The Business Standard, 2024b; BBF Digital, 2025). By the year 2025, Bangladesh’s middle and affluent class is predicted to reach 34 million people, growing since 2020 when it was around 19 million (The Business Standard, 2023). This kind of growth is a significant reason behind the country’s track on becoming one of the largest consumer markets in the world by 2030 (The Business Standard, 2022; The Business Standard, 2023).

Even with this kind of macro level growth, this sector hasn’t been as saturated as expected. On an average, Bangladeshi people spend around just 22 USD in a year on FMCG products, whereas Indians spending is around 40 USD and Philippines’ expenditure is over 100 USD. The noticeable gap here isn’t just because of the income limitations, rather it also comes down to the behavioral factors of people which includes their infrequency usage of the personal care products (The Business Standard, 2025). One of the challenges for growth right now for STL is that their core segment which is the personal care and hygiene, is especially underpenetrated in comparison to regional norms (BBF Digital, 2025; FICCI, 2024a). Besides being this a challenge, it also can be a big opportunity as cities are growing and the consumer habits are changing as well. It can create new room for this segment to grow.

As this environment pushes STL to take strategic steps, the company has already taken those steps which can be seen in their recent product and market decisions. Take the nature-based herbal personal care brand ‘Maya’ for an example, STL has been investing more in this, reflecting their intentions of pushing this brand into the premium and aspirational segment where the customers are willing to spend more on the product for its better quality and staying loyal to it (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). Back in 2001, STL started its exporting journey which has grown and it's now active in more than 25 countries across Europe, North America, Asia, the Middle East, Australia, and Africa. It is such a clever parallel strategy taken by the company, reducing any reliance on the domestic market, while also helping build a name for itself in more mature consumer markets (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a).

2.1.3 Product / Service / Customer mix

STL's product portfolio is divided into three wide categories: personal care, fabric and household care, and hygiene and health, and includes 20 brands, which have over 55 variants (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026). They are all created internally, within the walls of STL's own Research and Development (R&D) department, which STL describes as a strategic asset, and differentiator from other toiletries brands that are dependent on contracts, or other OEMs (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026). Key brands are Jui (hairs), Meril and Meril Baby (skin and personal care), Chaka and Chamak (fabric and washing), Senora and Supermom (feminine and baby care), Kool (personal care), Sepnil (hygiene and sanitization), Magic (household), Revive (skin care), Maya (herbal and natural skin care), Xpel, Spring, Rain Shower, White Plus, Select Plus, Femina, Zerocal, Shakti, and Maxclean (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026).

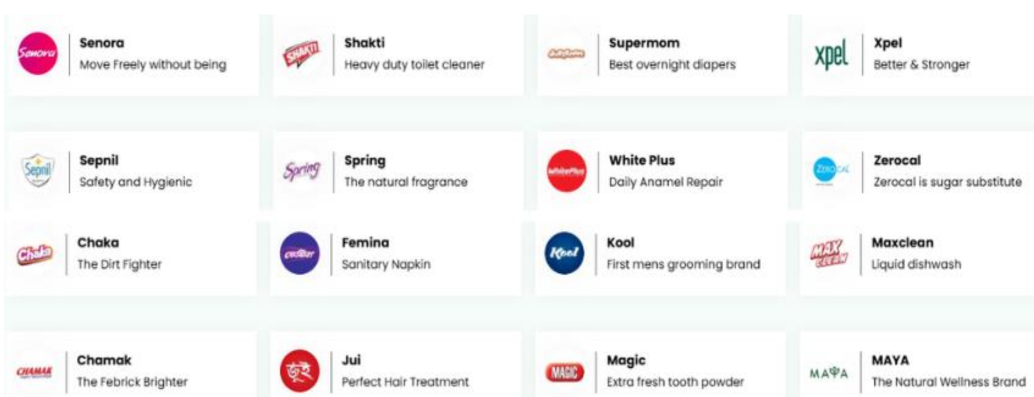

Figure 3: Some Key Brands of STL

One of the standout items in STL's collection is the Maya brand, which stands as their most conscious plunge into the realm of nature and herbal personal care, boasting items like the cold-pressed castor oil, olive oil, neem facewash, and rosehip gel cream. The brand is a high-quality alternative to an imported brand that is locally accessible and culturally relatable, which is mentioned in several reports (BBF Digital, 2025; FICCI, 2024b) of the upward trend in aspirational expenditure among urban Bangladeshi consumers. This approach aligns with the overall findings in the FMCG sector, where brands which can integrate a local cultural appeal with a superior product formulation are likely to grab a share from the rising aspirational consumer class (FICCI, 2024b).

STL's multi-tier channel is evident in its customer mix. The firm is targeting the modern trade chains and institutional buyers at the highest level. In primary level, the goods are purchased in bulk by National and regional distributors and then they resell to secondary wholesalers. On the ground level, STL's field force has thousands of retail outlets covering urban, peri-urban and rural Bangladesh, with whom they have direct relationships. The company also has customers in other countries with whom it is working in an export program, providing contract manufacturing, private labelling and OEM services to toiletries manufacturers, hotel chains and retail organisations around the world (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). The availability of different pricing, promotion and service methods at each level necessitates a data management and field-force coordination characteristic of STL's Trade Marketing function.

2.1.4 Company Operations / Activity

STL has business activities in research and development, manufacturing, supply chain management, brand marketing, sales distribution and brand trade marketing. It has two manufacturing plants, one in Rupshi and one in Pabna, and each is fully automated with machinery specific to the manufacturing of each product purchased from top quality global suppliers such as Symrise, Hercules, Dow Corning and BASF (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). The production processes follow the rules of Good Manufacturing

Practice (GMP) and the company holds ISO 9001 certification whereby systematic quality management is observed in all processes (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). In addition, the company is also executing technical formulation alliances with organizations from Germany, the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Singapore, providing STL with access to up-to-date product technology from around the world without the expense of in-house global research and development (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a).

Figure 4: STL's Manufacturing Unit

Sales Department is one of the most operationally important functions in STL, the objective of which is to make product available, execute the trade programme and ensure the market performs, at all nodes of the distribution chain. The Sales Department organises its national coverage in a layered hierarchical geographic structure that comprises National, Regional Sales Managers (RSMs), Area Sales Managers (ASMs), Territory Sales Officers (TSOs) and ground level Sales Officers (SOs). In this structure, the role of Trade Marketing is to act as the analytical and coordinative backbone, implementing and developing time-driven trade programs, tracking field performance relative to agreed-upon targets and analyzing product performance information for market opportunities and gaps. This model of organizing operations and using information to guide performance is an example of a structured information system approach described by Laudon and Laudon (2022) as used by organizations attempting to make consistent management decisions based on operational data.

STL also expands its businesses overseas. The company started exporting since 2001 and currently exports to more than 25 countries in six continents: South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe, North America, Africa, and Australia (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). The company also provides contract manufacturing services, OEM and private labelling to their customers from other countries thereby diversifying their revenues beyond the volume of domestic trade. Under the aspect of Corporate social responsibility, STL has also undertaken activities to generate jobs in vulnerable communities, financial support initiatives and philanthropic activities that uphold its core values through consumer's well-being, employee welfare and social responsibility (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026b).

2.1.5 SWOT Analysis

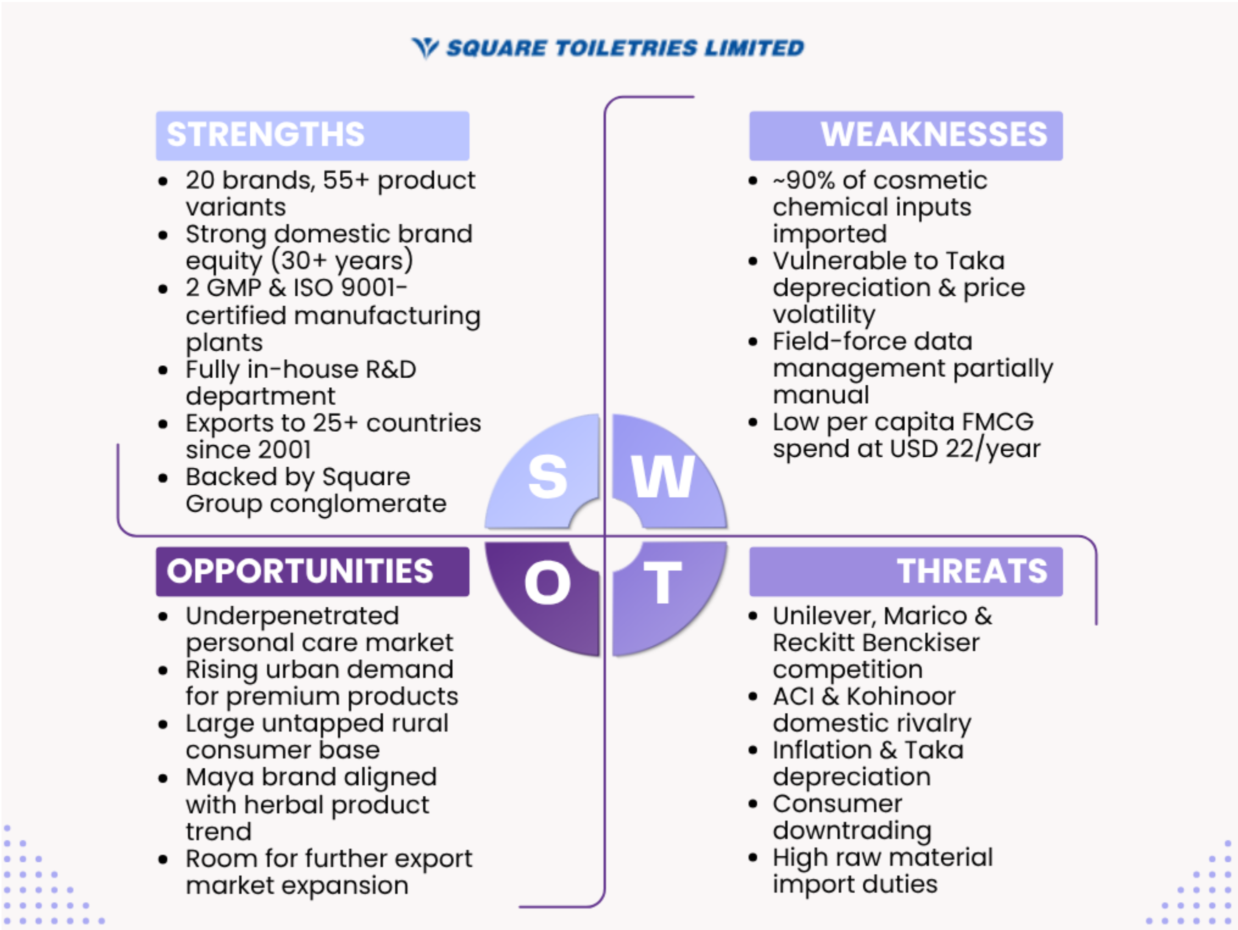

Figure 5: SWOT Analysis of Square Toiletries Limited

Strengths: STL's greatest strength is its brand portfolio and its durability, since it has been developed 100 per cent internally by STL's R&D team. This in-house creation model (rather than licensed or imported brands) ensures STL enjoys full ownership of brand, formulation, and product roadmap (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a). Manufacturing at 2 manufacturing units with ISO 9001 and GMP certifications assures constant manufacturing high quality and Square Group being a member assures monetary safety and conglomerate level organisational sources. Given its operations and value, a structured multi-continent export program has been running since 2001, which STLs is one of the few Bangladeshi FMCG brands to have (Square Toiletries Limited, 2026a).

Weaknesses: STL's raw materials come from foreign suppliers such as world-renowned fragrance and chemical companies, therefore exposing STL to foreign exchange risks and commodity risks. STL's management has pointed out the depreciation of the Taka has been specifically affecting the profitability of its import-inputs (The Business Standard, 2025). During the internship, it was noted that internally, the dependency on manual data processes in field-force management translates to reporting delays and inconsistencies, impacting the agility and accuracy of trade marketing decisions.

Opportunities: The personal care industry in Bangladesh is structurally underpenetrated compared to other markets, e.g., per-capita FMCG expenditure is USD 22 in Bangladesh, USD 40 in India and more than USD 100 in the Philippines (The Business Standard, 2025; FICCI, 2024a). This gap will create a medium to long term volume growth opportunity with increasing urbanization, incomes and changing consumer hygiene habits. The documented transition of consumers towards branded and premium products in urban markets is a direct opportunity for STL's Maya brand strategy (BBF Digital, 2025). Further, urban-rural consumption gap has been a greater concern in the industry and rural distribution expansion can function as an additional structural growth lever (FICCI, 2024b).

Threats: There is a strong competitive pressure in the Bangladesh FMCG market. Unilever Bangladesh holds 50-60% market shares in the segments where it operates and has strong market shares in beauty, personal care and home care (The Business Standard, 2022). Most STL categories are competitive with the presence of well resourced players such as Marico Bangladesh, Reckitt Benckiser, ACI Consumer Brands, and Kohinoor Chemical (The Business Standard, 2024a). The post-2022 inflationary pressures from rising commodity prices and currency depreciation and macro-economic pressures have curbed consumer expenditure on non-essential brands and categories in the FMCG market and have led to downtrading across the market landscape (The Business Standard, 2025; BBF Digital, 2025).

2.2 Industry Analysis

2.2.1 Specification of the Industry

Square Toiletries Limited belongs to the category of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) Industry which is a broad category of the industry that includes low-cost, high-turnover products that the consumers buy regularly and in a short span of time (Khayer et al., 2023). Bangladesh FMCG industry is divided into three main segments: Food & Beverages, Personal Care, and Household Care (Khan, 2024a; Invest Bangladesh, 2023; Khayer et al., 2023). The two segments which are most analytically relevant in this report are Personal Care and Household Care segments, since STL operates mainly in these two segments.

Figure 6: Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) Industry

Personal Care refers to items that are used in the day-to-day care and cleanliness of the body, such as soap, shampoo, hair oils, lotions, creams, perfumes, toiletries, and cosmetics (Khayer et al., 2023). In terms of brand investment and new product development, this is the most competitive market as multinationals like Unilever Bangladesh and Marico Bangladesh are present in the market along with established local brands (The Business Standard, 2024a). According to Khayer et al. (2023), the Household Care segment includes cleaning agents and sanitizers like laundry detergent, dishwashing liquid, antiseptic solution, mosquito aerosol and toilet cleaner. The Food and Beverage segment is not in the main focus of STL's business and is therefore not included in the detailed analysis of this section.

The FMCG industry has a number of structural features that shape the competitive landscape: low margins per unit (compensated by high volume), wide ranging and geographically spread consumer base, extensive distribution needs, and fierce competition between multinationals and local players (LightCastle Partners, 2019; Khayer et al., 2023). Sectors have a large distribution network, with about 2,000 distributors in operation, and 15,000 to 20,000 wholesalers in the FMCG distribution chain in Bangladesh (UNCDF, 2021). This distribution complexity and the availability of the product with brand visibility in urban, peri-urban and rural markets is one of the most relevant challenges in the sector and is a key catalyst for the development of the trade marketing discipline, which STL's Sales Department is therefore designed to support.

2.2.2 Size, Trend, and Maturity of the Industry

According to Invest Bangladesh, the current value of the FMCG market in Bangladesh is estimated at USD 3.9 to 4.2 billion, which is close to reaching USD 4 billion in the coming years in the range of 2023 to 2025, as cited by industry experts and analysts (Invest Bangladesh, 2023; BBF Digital, 2025; The Business Standard, 2024b). At the official sector level, total FMCG sales stood at about USD 3.9 billion in FY2021-22, ahead of the prior year (FY2020-21) when it was USD 3.7 billion with a steady rising trend despite the global economic disruption (Invest Bangladesh, 2023). Urbanization, growing income level, growth of middle and affluent class and increasing exposure to global consumer trends through digital media has propelled the sector to compound annual growth rate of about 7-10% in past ten years (BBF Digital, 2025; FICCI, 2024a; The Business Standard, 2024b). According to FICCI, the market size was estimated to be about EUR 3.4 billion last decade and that pace represented the CAGR of the last ten years (FICCI, 2024a).

Yet this is a very small comparative share of the sector in the overall economy. Bangladesh's FMCG market is less than 1% of a country's economy of USD 500 billion (The Business Standard, 2026). By comparison, the FMCG market in India makes up more than 3% of its economy and is more than ten times the size of the market in the Philippines, which has a significantly smaller population (The Business Standard, 2025). The driving reason for this difference is per capita consumption; per capita FMCG spending in Bangladesh is around USD 22-23, whereas in India, it is USD 40-44, and in China, Indonesia, and the Philippines, it is more than USD 100 (Invest Bangladesh, 2023; The Business Standard, 2025). This is not just a reflection of income limitations, but also a behavioural issue as the frequency of product usage is lower than the regional average even at the same income level (The Business Standard, 2025; BBF Digital, 2025).

The industry is characterised by a double structure in terms of market maturity. Relatively higher penetration rates, brand rivalry and rising demand for high quality and nature based products are typical characteristics of urban markets especially Dhaka and Chattogram. But rural markets are still far underdeveloped, and there are large numbers of potential consumers who remain under-exposed to branded FMCG products and are very price-sensitive (LightCastle Partners, 2019; FICCI, 2024b). Hence, the industry is said to be a growth-stage industry and mature industry with a bifurcation in geographical focus of competition dictating the approach of the key FMCG companies such as STL to market expansion. Bangladesh is likely to become the ninth largest consumer market in the world by 2030, as the middle and affluent class is projected to grow from around 19m in 2020 to 34m by 2025, which will be a significant structural boost for FMCG demand in the medium-term (Invest Bangladesh, 2023; The Business Standard, 2023).

2.2.3 Industry SWOT Analysis

The macro level strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that shape the competitive landscape of the FMCG industry in Bangladesh with special reference to personal care and household care sector where STL operates is examined below through the same SWOT analysis.

Strengths: The most important strength of the FMCG industry in Bangladesh is consumers. With a median age below 30 and a swelling middle class, a population of around 170 million people creates the natural seedbed for continuing growth in the demand for FMCG products (Invest Bangladesh, 2023; The Business Standard, 2023). The multi-tier distribution systems also are well developed, with some 2,000 distributors and 15,000 to 20,000 wholesalers to assist with the distribution of the products from manufacturing to over 15 million retail stores across the country (UNCDF, 2021). The diversity of the industry structure, with the presence of capable multinational companies meshing with competitive domestic manufacturers, enables them to cater to consumers across the entire spectrum of pricing, ranging from value to purchase mass products to premium branded products (The Business Standard, 2024a).

Weaknesses: The structural weakness is that the industry is still highly dependent on importation of raw materials. Cosmetic chemical raw materials are used in manufacturing approximately 90% of the cosmetics. Cosmetic chemical raw materials are mostly imported and are subject to the risk of exchange rate fluctuations and commodity price volatility (Invest Bangladesh, 2023). This cost strain is exacerbated by high and supplementary and regulatory duties on raw material imports of FMCG goods, which makes it hard for domestic manufacturing companies to compete with imports on prices without facing a margin squeeze (The Business Standard, 2024c). A fall in net FDI inflows, which amounted to USD 1.27 billion in FY2023-24, marking a 13% drop from the previous year and the fourth consecutive year of year-on-year decrease, leads to diminished technology transfer and restraint in the adoption of fresh innovation in products and process from the international market (BBF Digital, 2025).

Opportunities: Rural market development is the most important structurally significant opportunity in the Bangladesh FMCG industry. Though more than 50% of the population of Bangladesh lives in the rural areas, the FMCG market penetration is less, and high price sensitiveness and low brand awareness among the rural people are limiting the consumption of the FMCG product (FICCI, 2024b; LightCastle Partners, 2019). There is potential for companies to realise sizable volume growth by bringing to market products that are differentiated, consistent and priced right for the rural market, and are available in the right place at the right time. In the urban markets, the documented consumer preference for branded and quality products along with nature-based personal care products presents a value capture opportunity for manufacturers who want to invest in product differentiation (BBF Digital, 2025; FICCI, 2024b). Digital and social commerce platforms are also creating new avenues for consumer engagement, allowing corporations to access aspirational urban consumers as well as to foster customer loyalty through non-traditional retail channels (LightCastle Partners, 2019; FICCI, 2024b).

Threats: The inflationary environment which began after 2022 is the most immediate external threat to the Bangladesh FMCG industry because the rise in the price of the commodities and the depreciation of Taka undermined the profit margin of the manufacturers and reduced the purchasing power of the consumers (The Business

Standard, 2025; BBF Digital, 2025). Downtrading, lesser purchase frequency, and liking of lesser pack sizes have resulted in lesser growth for some categories, among others (The Business Standard, 2026). As far as the competitive landscape is concerned, the multinationals with significantly higher R&D and marketing spend abroad continue to push price and innovation on domestic players in the premium segment (The Business Standard, 2024a). One of the long-standing structural barriers is imposing high duties on important inputs like cosmetic chemicals, which hinders the cost competitiveness of local personal care manufacturers compared to their regional counterparts (The Business Standard, 2024c; Invest Bangladesh, 2023).

2.2.4 Porter's Five Forces Analysis of the Bangladesh FMCG Industry

Porter's five forces model is a structured tool used to analyse and understand the level of competition and the structural attractiveness of an industry, as it considers five external forces, which all affect the profit potential available to companies operating in that industry (Porter, 2008). When applied to the FMCG industry in Bangladesh, especially the personal care and household care segments, STL is competing in, the picture presents a competitive landscape of moderate to high intensity in most areas.

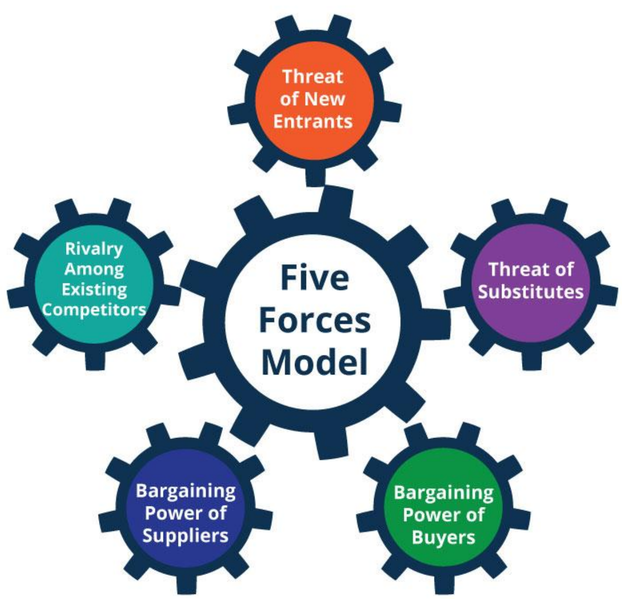

Figure 7: Porter's Five Forces Model

1. **Competitive Rivalry (High):** Personal care products in the Bangladesh FMCG space are competitive and rivalry in the sector is intense. Multinationals like Unilever Bangladesh, Marico Bangladesh and Reckitt Benckiser are operating in mostly the same product lines as incumbent domestic players like ACI Consumer Brands and Kohinoor Chemical (The Business Standard, 2024a). Within the categories of Unilever Bangladesh, it holds around 50 to 60% of the market share (The Business Standard, 2022). In the competitive environment that ensues, margins are squeezed and ongoing brand-building, product innovation and trade marketing effectiveness are essential.

2. **Threat of New Entrants (Moderate):** There is a significant barrier for new entrants into the FMCG personal care business. The multi-tier trade system in the country consists of around 2,000 distributors, and wholesalers are 15,000 to 20,000, so it takes a lot of time and money to develop a credible distribution network in those tiers. (UNCDF, 2021). Brand equity and customer loyalty are also higher for established brands and increases the barrier to entry. The less onerous nature of contract manufacturing, however, makes production less of a barrier, so smaller or even regional players will be able to gain entry into specific product niches without significant investment in production.

3. **Bargaining Power of Suppliers (Moderate to High):** Approximately 90% of cosmetic chemical inputs used by Bangladesh FMCG manufacturers are imported from international suppliers (Invest Bangladesh, 2023). This reliance on a restricted number of global suppliers of chemicals and fragrances gives disproportionate power to suppliers and makes domestic chemical manufacturers susceptible to fluctuations in the foreign exchange and commodity prices, particularly since the onset of the post-2022 commodity price boom (The Business Standard, 2025).

4. **Bargaining Power of Buyers (Moderate):** Large modern trade chains and institutional buyers have some bargaining power over the suppliers in terms of

shelf space, promotion and price at the retail level. However, on the consumer front, in the personal care (PC) segments, brand loyalty mitigates price sensitivity to some extent, with consumers' willingness to pay for branded and premium offering in urban markets showing signs of improvement (BBF Digital, 2025; FICCI, 2024b).

5. **Threat of Substitutes (Moderate):** Bangladesh has unbranded, locally made, or informal market alternatives in most personal care and household care categories and these alternatives are appealing to price-sensitive rural and lower-income consumers (LightCastle Partners, 2019). The threat of substitution is the highest when the economy is under economic pressure, as the drop in consumer value perceptions for the product is at its peak and results in downtrade behaviour of customers towards less expensive, generic product alternatives (The Business Standard, 2026). This risk is addressed through the consistent investment in brand quality, price structure, and trade promotions of established brands.

CHAPTER 3: INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

3.1 Position, Duties, and Responsibilities

From 1st March to 2nd June 2026, I served as the Sales intern under the Trade Marketing in STL's Sales Department. This position offered deep insight into the operation and analysis aspects of trade marketing in one of the leading FMCG companies in Bangladesh. The tasks performed were many and analytically challenging, to provide an overview of how data driven processes drive commercial performance at the field level.

Responsibility 1: Field Force Communication and Trade Program Coordination

The interns had to work closely with STL's hierarchy on the ground (Regional Sales Managers, Assistant Sales Managers, Territory Sales Operator and Sos) on various active trade programs of STL. The main coordination aspect was with Territory Sales Officers (TSOs) where I regularly spoke to them to ensure the Trade Program was successfully completed, to provide interpretation of the submission/compliance standards and instructions as well as feedback from the Trade Marketing team.

To achieve this involved systematic organization of communication. This included exposure to which TSO operated in which market, how they were doing in meeting program targets, and how to position the communication in a constructive way and with intent based on that performance. Through the experience it has been recognized that organizational communication based on timely information and arrangement with conscious intent has a direct impact on the quality of the ground-level trade execution.

Responsibility 2: IMS Tracker Management and Performance-Based Field Communication

One of the most analytically intensive tasks was maintaining and updating the In-Market Sales (IMS) tracker in a variety of trade programs on a regular basis. The tracker consisted of a broadly structured MS Excel worksheet that recorded the IMS targets across different territories as well as IMS achievement data broken out by each Sales Officer and market.

I used the Sort and Filter function to dissect every territory level performance data, and Conditional Formatting to make a visually obvious separaiton of the high and low achievers. In particular, I divided performance into two groups: one group of TSOs and SOs recording a performance of 70% or higher compared to the IMS target, and a second group recording a performance of less than 70% compared to the IMS target. Having made this segmentation, I adapted field communications to them. High performers were reinforced and encouraged to complete the remaining gap; underperformers were targeted for follow-up messages that were specific to progress in the program, and sent to motivate them to try again to achieve the program goal.

This process of taking raw IMS data to form differentiated levels of performance and then using those levels to go back to a field to communicate is a direct application of exception reporting and decision-rule logic, two concepts from decision-support systems in MIS. The IMS tracker was de facto a working management information system which made information-based supervision at Territory level possible.

Responsibility 3: Trade Program Excel Tracker Development

I got to know more about the creation of structured trackers based on Excel for active trade programs. These trackers were generated with the purpose of collecting data at the program level, calculating metrics of achievement based upon pre-established targets, and delivering summary views in an easily accessible way to the Trade Marketing team and supervisors.

Formulas and functions used in this process included SUMIFS and COUNTIFS to perform multi-criteria conditional aggregation of data, VLOOKUP and XLOOKUP to match and reconcile data in multiple tables, a series of nested IF statements to route program results based on various condition metrics, IFERROR to handle errors in long chains of conditional logic, and Pivot Tables for dynamic cross tabulation summarization of program results. Conditional Formatting was used so that threshold breaches can be seen at a glance and provide quick managerial review without manual interrogation of the data row.

This design of these trackers involved not just technical skills in excel but also the insight of what information was needed by end-users. The entire principle behind user-centred information design which places the importance on building systems based on the unique reporting needs of the decision-maker is part of the fundamental principle of MIS: Systems are designed for the information needs of the decision maker and must be designed around those needs to facilitate their reasoning and decision making.

Responsibility 4: Product Performance Analysis and Power BI Visualization

One of the more important analytical roles was to process and analyse product performance at a number of geographic levels of STL's sales structure. I systematically cleaned and preprocessed the data using Excel, addressing issues such as data inconsistencies, duplicates, and the use of IFERROR functions to identify and manage incorrect data prior to analysis. I then used SUMIFS and COUNTIFS to sum up many dimensions at once (product, market, territory and region), VLOOKUP and XLOOKUP to cross reference tables of product and geographic information, and Pivot Table to create dynamic cross tabulations to compare at various geographic levels.

The goal was to have a clear view of the specific product's performance from retail to market, regional and divisional level that would allow the Trade Marketing team to see the pockets of strengths and areas of under performance without getting into the minutia of raw data files.

In addition to the analysis performed in Excel, this was a self-directed project that involved leveraging findings from the Excel analysis to further explore the information in Microsoft Power BI, a business intelligence and data visualization solution not included in STL's current toolbox. I realized that the processed performance data could be visually displayed, so I created additional dashboards where I analyzed the same data outputs and figured out ways to make them easier to interpret and visually understand at a single glance. The dashboards were developed according to the key performance indicators (KPIs) identified in the analysis and segmented by product, geographic tier and time period, and were built using colour coded threshold logic and bar charts to visually represent patterns of performance.

The complete chain of activities, from loading raw data, cleaning and applying transformations in Excel to creating and visualizing the data in Power BI, loosely follows the Extract, Transform, Load (ETL) pipeline and business intelligence system concepts found in the MIS coursework. The exercise gave hands-on experience in the entire analytical process and highlighted the importance of the last mile to turn processed data into intelligence which is easily actionable for decision makers.

Responsibility 5: Audit Support for the নববর্ষের মিষ্টিমুখ (Nababarsha'r Mistimukh) Trade Program (2026)

The 2026 program Nababarsha'r Mistimukh, which is a trade promotion program for the Bengali New Year, was a two-stage responsibility for handling documents, escalating as the document submission deadline drew closer.

The first stage was communicative and corrective in essence. Previously, RSMs were duly notified by email the details of what cash memos needed to be submitted and the criteria for each cash memo. However, some RSMs had not submitted or had submitted documents that were not meeting stated requirements. I contacted non-submitting RSMs and shared with them the proper submission procedure and compliance requirements. This stage is about the aspect of information dissemination and enforcement of the protocol in an organizational process, where defined information standards are learned and observed by the concerned stakeholders.

With the audit deadline approaching, I was given the task to personally retrieve the outstanding cash memo images from the remaining RSMs, and do the documentation on their behalf. I manually verified each cash memo received as to its compliance with the defined criteria. The ones that fulfilled the requirements were scanned, and were renamed one by one according to the corresponding distributor (DB) name. Digital files were then arranged in a hierarchical folder structure (by region) and given full traceability for submission to the supervisor for audit.

In an MIS context, this is the real-world implementation of information lifecycle management, with the intake, validation, classification and organized storage phases of a document management process being followed. The principles of records management and data integrity were learned during the MIS study and directly applied through the systems of criteria-based checking and taxonomy-driven filing that resulted in a complete, traceable and consistently structured final submission for audit.

Responsibility 6: Competitor Pricing Analysis

During my internship, I also assisted in the ongoing competitor analysis process and learned my way around the process. This involved contacting Square Toiletries Limited’s Sales Officers by phone to collect accurate Trade Price (TP) and Maximum Retail Price (MRP) data for competing products, particularly soaps such as Lifebuoy, Lux, Dove, Dettol, Savlon, Septex, Tibet, and Bactrol, from major FMCG companies, including Unilever, Reckitt Benckiser, ACI Consumer Brands, and Kohinoor Chemical, among others.

I calculated the slabs (the spread between TP and MRP) for each competitor product using the field data collected and calculated the Effective Trade Price (ETP) for each competitor product to facilitate the comparison of competitor pricing structures. This analysis gave the Trade Marketing team a systematic and quantitative competitive price perspective, and assisted in determining where STL's product offerings were competitively positioned, where there were opportunities, and where STL's trade program pricing structures may be worth reviewing.

This competitor intelligence task is a direct translate of the external information sourcing and competitor analysis concepts of MIS and the applied use of market information systems and structured data collection processes to generate strategic pricing intelligence. Systematically collected, standardized, calculated and interpreted pricing data from competitors will shift their field observations to organizational-level competitive intelligence.

3.2 Contribution to Organization / Operations

Contributions during the internship, primarily in a junior role, were applied to real life processes and had direct impact in trade program management and direction of the field-force.

The tracker implementation in the IMS system based on maintenance and performance allowed the Trade Marketing team to view program attainment different levels of detail and to effectively explain program intent to their various field teammates based on how they were positioned on the team. This helped to shape a more effective and targeted field engagement strategy, aligned with the data-driven departmental management approach.

Building Excel trackers for the active programs enhanced the team's ability to reliably and systematically manage program data, eliminating the need for manual computation and ensuring consistent performance calculation. Using advanced Excel functions allowed to automate processes that would have taken a lot of manual time, thereby allowing the team to spend more time interpreting and taking action and less time in the data assembly stage.

The internship involved the creation of Power BI dashboards, which visually layer analytical insights on product performance by geography, allowing team supervisors to see at a glance the areas of strong and weak performance without having to work with more complicated raw data files. This resulted in more readily communicable and more decision-ready form of market intelligence within the team.

An audit was conducted for the cash memo documentation in the "Nababarsha'r Mistimukh" filing system, which was adopted and structured in a manner that was both fully traceable and meets the audit criteria, thereby minimizing the paperwork for the supervisors, and making the audit process smooth.

3.3 Evaluation

The There were some difficulties while working on the internship. Below is a description of several of the most notable challenges faced and how they were overcome with the academic and analytical knowledge.

Challenge 1: Managing Large, Structurally Inconsistent Datasets

The data of products available for the product performance analysis and IMS tracking was often inconsistent, with columns that were not in the same format throughout the data file, with mixed data types and values, incomplete data and duplicate data, which made data analysis unreliable.

Resolution: I was able to incorporate a systematic data cleaning procedure, as something I had learned in MIS regarding Data Quality and Database Management. This included the usage of IFERROR, nested IFS, the data validation tool, the text to column tool in Excel, and XLOOKUP to reconcile data from multiple source files and to handle missing and incorrect data. The direct implication of data normalization and data integrity principles discussed in the MIS coursework was the fact that this type of preprocessing ensured that all subsequent analysis was done with a firm basis.

Challenge 2: Translating Dense Analytical Outputs into Accessible Formats

The problem that arose in the product performance investigation is that the performance data obtained were dense, analytical with difficult interpretation to digest quickly from the Excel outputs. Large multi-dimensional tables would require the reader to have a lot of contexts in his mind to draw conclusions and thus would not be really useful to anybody not familiar with the data structure.

Resolution: This directly resulted in the Power BI work self-initiated. Using principles of data visualization from MIS such as user-centred information design, I re-wrote the same results onto a dashboard using high-level KPI summaries, colour coded performance thresholds, and geographic breakdowns which revealed the key trends without the need for navigation through raw numbers. The process highlighted one of the fundamental principles of MIS, that the same data can be extremely useful for decision making when organized and presented in a particular way, and not so useful when structured (and maybe even harmful) in another way.

Challenge 3: Non-Compliance and Incomplete Submission in Audit Documentation

The Nababarsha'r Mistimukh audit process was a challenge that was due to the lack of information governance; RSMs were provided with certain guidelines for submission of documents via email but most of the RSMs failed to submit the documents or submitted the document in non-conformable way with the specified guidelines. This introduced a potential challenge of having an incomplete and non-auditable documentation package when the deadline to submit approached.

Resolution: The problem was addressed in two stages. Firstly, I was able to identify non-compliant RSMs and non-submitting RSMs and was able to come in contact with them directly and disseminate the information again, most of which was structured, since there was a breakdown in the protocol adherence. By the time the deadline approached, the outstanding documentation process had to be taken up by me and the same was done: collection of the rest of the Cash Memo images, individually checking them against defined criteria, scanning compliant documents, naming each file by the name of the distributor and arranging them in the desired region wise folder structure. This utilized the MIS principles of data validation, classification of records and information lifecycle management (ILM), while doing so under time-critical conditions, with the final submission being traceable, complete, and audit ready.

Challenge 4: Performance Heterogeneity Across Territories in IMS Tracking

The IMS data across territories demonstrated a very variable achievement across the territorial groupings and it was time consuming for the authority to determine which territories needed urgent action, without having to look at each individual child.

Resolution: The tracker was visually segmented with the use of advanced Excel sort, filter and conditional formatting functions, and automatically updated such that under-performing territories (those under 70% achievement) were presented visually differently from the rest of the tracker, allowing for quick identification and prioritisation of follow-up actions. It is an exception reporting system based on a threshold value and is a direct application of decision rule logic in the operational management information system, in practice, in field management.

3.4 Skills Applied

The internship provided an opportunity to apply a large skillset acquired during the course of the program and the experience itself. Below are the detailed principal skills that are applied.

Advanced Data Analytics (Microsoft Excel): The use of multiple SUMIFS, COUNTIFS, VLOOKUP, XLOOKUP, the use of nested IF/IFERROR functions, Pivot Tables and Conditional Formatting in a wide range of real-world commercial datasets including IMS trackers, product performance files, trade program trackers, and competitor analysis models.

Business Intelligence and Data Visualization (Microsoft Power BI): Real-life use of Power BI to create structured data models, define performance calculations, and create multi-filter interactive dashboards to report on performance at product, market, regional, and divisional levels. The design of the dashboard was focused on the information and decision needs of non-technical stakeholders.

Information Management and Document Classification: The design and implementation of a structured digital document system for audit purposes, such as taxonomy design, compliance validation, document digitisation and document hierarchy/folder structure (if applicable), applying information lifecycle management principles from MIS.

Data-Driven Decision-Support Communication: Communication based on quantitative IMS performance data, using techniques of differentiation and purposeful field communication, directly applied in a commercial field management environment; decision-rule logic and exception reporting concepts.

Professional Organizational Communication: Structured coordination through a geographically heterogeneous, hierarchically organized field force, software of practical competence in clarity, follow through and information-based professional involvement.

Analytical Problem-Solving: Reoccurring data quality, performance monitoring and information communication issues were identified and resolved in a systematic manner with support from MIS, building a practical skill-set for problem solving in an evidence-based manner in a real business context.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS AND KEY FACTS

4.1 Recommendations

Given the tasks performed and the internship scope, here are the recommendations for STL's Trade Marketing function.

1. <u>Transition from Reactive to Predictive IMS Monitoring</u>

Current tracking of IMS is descriptive. It is a frame of mind that is retrospective. STL needs to consider innovative methods of predicting performance for territories that don't meet expectations early in a cycle, such as using an excel-based trend analysis tool. This would help to change field force communication from a Catchup intervention to a proactive one and positively influence the program level of achievement.

2. <u>Create a Shared Excel Template for All Trade Program Trackers</u>

Currently, they track each trade program in its own Excel workbook where the structure, column names and formula logic vary across programs. This makes program comparison more complex, and increases the possibility of formula mistakes when a new tracker is created from scratch. One easy solution is to create one master template that would have all the consistent information as column titles, formulas, etc., and the team would adjust it as needed each time a new program is created. This decreases upfront time, guarantees analytical consistency and is an immediate application of data standardization for MIS.

3. <u>Consider Visual Reporting Tools as a Long-Term Investment</u>

Excel still is the key analytics tool in the department, and it is adequate for the present level of trade marketing analysis. But, as performance data becomes more complex and the volume of data increases, a visual reporting layer like Power BI Desktop, which is available for free, may make it easier and quicker for managers to spot trends across markets and divisions without needing to open up large spreadsheets. Again, this is not a quick recommendation due to the licensing cost for organizational deployment, but a proper structured cost benefit evaluation at the right time will help to determine the benefit of the time saved and clarity provided by the analyses against the cost of licensing.

4. <u>Formalize Audit Documentation Through a Structured Digital System</u>

The cash memo collection process of the Nababarsha'r Mistimukh program showed that the audit compliance is much dependent on informal manual coordination. STL should create a common electronic environment with a standard way of organizing folders, naming files and a checklist of what should be submitted to make audit ready documentation which allows RSMs to upload in a systematic manner thus minimizing the bouncing around needed to arrive at an audit ready documentation.

4.2 Key understanding

The following are some of the most valuable things learned, both professionally and personally over the course of this internship.

Data only matters if someone can act on it. If you don't have the right person able to view your Excel tracker or clean data set, the rest is all moot. Part of this internship was not only about analyzing the data, but also displaying the data in a useful manner; whether it was using the IMS tracker to sort out the data to see exactly who to follow-up with, or creating a dashboard to easily view performance trends without getting lost in a sea of numbers.

Classroom knowledge and real work feel very different. Although the Excel formulas that were part of the University curriculum were very useful in well-structured datasets. At STL, data was messy, with inconsistent data formats, missing data, and data not matching between files. But, going through those problems in an actual organisation, special because there were real stakes, made all of the academic notions of the material seem much more meaningful.

Following up is as important as analyzing. One thing was to identify which of the TSOs were not doing well towards their IMS targets. The real "magic" was in the follow up by calling them, explaining the gap, and modifying the message dependent upon where they were at. If analysis is not done in a way that includes communicating, then it is incomplete. Actual impact comes from the mutual communication and comprehension of both parties.

Processes only work if people follow them. The cash memo situation of the program 'Nababarsha's Mistimukh was a clear case in hand. Many the submission guidelines were not always fully adhered to in practice although a written submission process has been communicated. It was realised that mere documentation of the well-designed process is not sufficient, compliance has to be monitored, reinforced and in some cases, personally checked up on.

Initiative matters more than the job description. The Power BI dashboards were not a part of the assigned task. The reason for taking the initiative was that although the analysis was accurate in Excel, it was difficult to quickly interpret if they wanted to take another look at the problem. Even if it wasn't necessary, that little extra bit was one of the most educational components of the internship.

4.3 Conclusion

This report has explored the contribution of data-driven trade marketing performance to driving sales in Square Toiletries Limited during a three-month internship period from 1st March to 2nd June 2026 in the Trade Marketing function. The central argument, that data-driven approaches are not supplementary but essential to effective sales direction in a competitive FMCG environment, has been substantiated through the responsibilities undertaken, the analytical processes applied, and the challenges resolved during this period.

This experience proved STL's ability to track field performance, program achievement, analyze product positioning, ensure audit compliance, and react to competitive dynamics hinges on their data infrastructure and information processes. There was also a high level of practical relevance of MIS in the context of a commercial organization; each of them displayed aspects of decision-support systems, data quality management, business intelligence and information lifecycle management.

To sum up, sustainable performance of trade marketing in the FMCG industry in Bangladesh demands investment in quality field forces, high-quality brands, and in the information system and analytical skills that will help direct those investments. Given Square Toiletries Limited's experience in the market and increasing focus on data-driven strategies, the company has the potential to further strengthen its data capabilities and leverage them to establish a sustainable competitive edge.

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