

# National University of Science and Technology Zimbabwe

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

DISSERTATION TITLE

## AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE MARKETING SUCCESS OF INGWEBU BREWRIES' SPORTS BAR RESPONSE TO CHANGING ENTERTAINMENT-SEEKER PREFERENCES

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this research project was to evaluate the marketing success of Ingwebu Breweries upgrade, rebranding and repositioning of two of its taverns into the more modern sports bar outlet format. The research was centred on Pata Pata Sports Bar, officially opened in February 2007, and Masina Sports Bar, officially opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2008. What prompted the research were concerns that Pata Pata Sports Bar, in particular, had declined over a short space of time – with patron traffic plummeting, patrons complaints on service standards also prevalent, insinuations by patrons that these two sports bars were no more than glorified beer gardens widespread, and following observations by the researcher that each outlet's catchment area was largely local.

Thus the researcher sought to find out how *robust* these two were from a branding point of view, how precisely they were *positioned* in the minds of their and competitors' patrons, how they were rated in terms of *performance on key attributes*, what *service gaps* existed that needed plugging and what *strategic service issues* needed to be addressed in order to make future upgrades, such as that of Neighbourhood Tavern in Nketha, truly successful from a marketing point of view.

Initial insights on issues requiring investigation were obtained through informal chats with individuals at the sports bars as well as in competing outlets. Properly structured focus group interviews would have been the best for that purpose, but could not be carried out because of resource constraints. Views were solicited from a total of 150 patrons of the sports bars as well as those of competing outlets in the Bulawayo City centre, but the researcher was mindful to screen out respondents who were not properly conversant with these two sports bars and could not therefore comment perceptively on issues raised.

It emerged that in terms of equity, both brands, if one may call them that at this stage, are still *scantily known*. Many prospective respondents did not show top-of-the-mind recall of either sports bar nor could they articulate the simple brand elements of the bars. Masina though seems to have achieved higher levels of differentiation, relevance and esteem – a positive historical show and better potential – than Pata Pata.

Key attributes found to influence patron choice of bar to regularly visit were 'people factors' – including gender of other patrons, gender of service staff and their friendliness. However, adding a touch of prestige, broadening the offer and introducing an element of royal treatment, e.g., through table service, could then

be determinant factors for patrons wanting to make a final choice. In terms of perceived performance of the Ingwebu leisure and entertainment brands on the important and determinant attributes, Pata Pata performed fairly satisfactorily at the basic/expected level of the imbibers' value model, which unfortunately can only result in little delight for the patron. Masina performed well on both expected factors (e.g., entertainment quantity) and the desired factors (like the prestige of the bar).

Similarly, Masina seems to communicate a better benefit and value proposition than Pata Pata especially from the point of view of being upmarket. Thus Masina was rated as being similar to acknowledged upmarket entertainment centres like Café Baku and La Gondola, while Pata Pata was in the league of the lowly, including Snappy's and Gijima. The most preferred bars turned out to be three night spots - Hustler's, Visions, Crash and Café Baku mainly because of top-notch entertainment and a good flavour of the fairer sex. Major service gaps in Ingwebu Breweries' sports bars from imbibers' points of view were the dearth of the fairer sex and the inconvenient operating hours (the latter in specific reference to the 'night' clubs).

Psychographically, the majority love partying, high levels of arousal, the presence of the opposite sex, change and novelty and are team idolisers. Demographically, the vast majority live either in the vicinity of the sports bars or in adjacent suburbs, are middle aged and in the lower occupational rungs. Masina though, it turns out, has a sizeable proportion of the younger 18-30 year-old age cohort.

Major recommendations made revolve around the following

- More aggressive brand building-communications initiatives to increase awareness of the two bars
- Widening the product and service offering
- Widen the entertainment menu to cater for different market segment tastes
- Harnessing fairer sex power in order to increase male patron interest in the two bars
- Improving the physical evidence of two bars to communicate a sports bar feel and modernity
- Extend nite club operating hours in order to practice the spirit of the so-called dark houses
- Initiatives of an 'extra-mile' nature to inject an element of surprise in both bars' service culture
- Keeping a tab on the pulse of the market through a comprehensive service quality information system.