**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[1 INTRODUCTION AND THESIS STATEMENT 1](#_Toc243676489)

[2 METHODOLOGY AND DATA 5](#_Toc243676490)

[2.1 THESIS FOCUS AND LIMITATIOn 5](#_Toc243676491)

[2.2 THEORETICAL APPROACH 9](#_Toc243676492)

[2.3 SCIENTIFIC APPROACH AND REASONING 12](#_Toc243676493)

[2.3.1 Hermeneutics 13](#_Toc243676494)

[2.3.2 The Hermeneutic Circle 14](#_Toc243676495)

[2.3.3 Critical Considerations 14](#_Toc243676496)

[2.4 DATA 15](#_Toc243676497)

[2.5 OVERALL STRUCTURE 18](#_Toc243676498)

THEORY

[3THE IMPORTANCE OF AUTHENTICITY 20](#_Toc243676499)

[3.1 WHY AUTHENTCITY HAS BECOME IMPORTANT 20](#_Toc243676500)

[3.2 DEFINING AUTHENTICITY 21](#_Toc243676501)

[3.2.1 Natural Authenticity 22](#_Toc243676502)

[3.2.2 Original Authenticity 22](#_Toc243676503)

[3.2.3 Exceptional Authenticity 22](#_Toc243676504)

[3.2.4 Referential Authenticity 23](#_Toc243676505)

[3.2.5 Influential Authenticity 23](#_Toc243676506)

[3.3 COMMUNICATING AUTHENTICITY 23](#_Toc243676507)

[4STRATEGIC ADVERTISING MANAGEMENT 26](#_Toc243676508)

[4.1 REVIEWING THE SITUATION 27](#_Toc243676510)

[4.1.1 Product Description 28](#_Toc243676511)

[4.1.2 Market Assessments 28](#_Toc243676512)

[4.1.3 Source of Business 28](#_Toc243676513)

[4.1.4 Competitive Evaluation 28](#_Toc243676514)

[4.1.5 Marketing Objectives 28](#_Toc243676515)

[4.1.6 SWOT Analysis 29](#_Toc243676516)

[4.2 SELECTING THE TARGET AUDIENCE 30](#_Toc243676517)

[4.2.1 Minerva 31](#_Toc243676518)

[4.2.1.1 The blue segment 33](#_Toc243676519)

[4.2.1.2 The green segment 33](#_Toc243676520)

[4.2.1.3 The rose segment 34](#_Toc243676521)

[4.2.1.4 The violet segment 35](#_Toc243676522)

[4.2.2 Objective Characteristics 35](#_Toc243676523)

[4.2.2.1 Demographics 35](#_Toc243676524)

[4.2.2.2 Geographics 36](#_Toc243676525)

[4.2.2.3 Geodemographics 36](#_Toc243676526)

[4.2.2.4 Social Class 36](#_Toc243676527)

[4.3 UNDERSTANDING TARGET AUDIENCE DECISION MAKING 37](#_Toc243676528)

[4.3.1 The Decision-Making Process 37](#_Toc243676529)

[4.3.2 High or Low Involvement 38](#_Toc243676530)

[4.3.3 Decision Participants and Communication Objectives 39](#_Toc243676531)

[4.4 DETERMINING THE BEST POSITIONING 41](#_Toc243676532)

[4.4.1 Defining the Market 41](#_Toc243676533)

[4.4.2 Making Initial Positioning Decisions and Selecting Appropriate Benefits 44](#_Toc243676534)

[4.4.3 Understanding Consumer Motivation and Selecting Benefit Focus 44](#_Toc243676535)

[4.5 DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 47](#_Toc243676536)

[4.5.1 Brand Awareness Strategies 47](#_Toc243676537)

[4.5.2 Brand Attitude Strategies 48](#_Toc243676538)

[5 GREEN MARKETING 52](#_Toc243676539)

[5.1 THE GREEN MARKETING GRID 52](#_Toc243676540)

[5.1.1 Green 53](#_Toc243676541)

[5.1.2 Greener 54](#_Toc243676542)

[5.1.3 Greenest 55](#_Toc243676543)

[5.1.4 Public 56](#_Toc243676544)

[5.1.5 Social 56](#_Toc243676545)

[5.1.6 Personal 57](#_Toc243676546)

[5.2 THE NINE GREEN STRATEGIES 57](#_Toc243676547)

[5.2.1 Setting an Example (A1) 57](#_Toc243676548)

[5.2.2 Credible Partners (A2) 59](#_Toc243676549)

[5.2.3 Marketing a Benefit (A3) 60](#_Toc243676550)

[5.2.4 Sharing Responsibility (B1) 60](#_Toc243676551)

[5.2.5 Social and Tribal Brands (B2) 61](#_Toc243676552)

[5.2.6 Changing Usage (B3) 63](#_Toc243676553)

[5.2.7 Supporting Innovation (C1) 64](#_Toc243676554)

[5.2.8 The Trojan Horse Idea (C2) 65](#_Toc243676555)

[5.2.9 Challenging Consuming (C3) 65](#_Toc243676556)

ANALYSIS

[6 STRATEGIC APPROACH TO GREEN ADVERTISING MANAGEMENT 67](#_Toc243676557)

[6.1 STEP 1: REVIEWING THE SITUATION 67](#_Toc243676558)

[6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description 67](#_Toc243676559)

[6.1.2 SWOT Analysis - Vance Kitira Seen in Context 72](#_Toc243676560)

[6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market (O/T) 72](#_Toc243676561)

[6.1.2.2 A Lack of Interest in Quality? (T/O) 74](#_Toc243676562)

[6.1.2.3 Focus on Fire Hazard (T) 75](#_Toc243676563)

[6.1.2.4 Negative Attitude towards the Natural Authenticity of Vegetable Waxes (T/O) 75](#_Toc243676564)

[6.1.2.5 The Green Wave and the Media (O/T) 78](#_Toc243676565)

[6.1.2.6 A Market inspired by Allergies and Disease (Cancer)(O) 80](#_Toc243676566)

[6.1.2.7 Lübech Living as Authentic Suppliers? (T) 80](#_Toc243676567)

[6.2 STEP 2: SELECTING THE TARGET AUDIENCE 81](#_Toc243676568)

[6.2.1 Minerva Value Segmentation 82](#_Toc243676569)

[6.2.2 Objective Characteristics of the Target Audience 85](#_Toc243676570)

[6.3 STEP 3: UNDERSTANDING TARGET AUDIENCE DECISION MAKING 87](#_Toc243676571)

[6.3.1 Candles as a High or Low Involvement Product Category? 88](#_Toc243676572)

[6.3.2 The Purchase of Candles - Defining Communication Objectives 90](#_Toc243676573)

[6.4 STEP 4: DETERMINING THE BEST POSITIONING 92](#_Toc243676574)

[6.4.1 Partitioning the UK Candle Market 92](#_Toc243676575)

[6.4.1.1 Product Type 93](#_Toc243676576)

[6.4.1.2 End Benefits 94](#_Toc243676577)

[6.4.1.3 Usage Situation 95](#_Toc243676578)

[6.4.1.4 Brand Name 95](#_Toc243676579)

[6.4.2 Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market – Product Type and End Benefit 96](#_Toc243676580)

[6.4.2.1 Unscented Candles 97](#_Toc243676581)

[6.4.2.2 Design Pillars 98](#_Toc243676582)

[6.4.2.3 Vegetable Wax and Recycled Wax 99](#_Toc243676583)

[6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits 101](#_Toc243676584)

[6.4.4 Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market – Usage Situation 104](#_Toc243676585)

[6.4.5 Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market – Overview 104](#_Toc243676586)

[6.4.6 Motivation and Benefit Focus 107](#_Toc243676587)

[6.5 STEP 5: DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 109](#_Toc243676588)

[6.5.1 A Strategy for Establishing Awareness of the Brand Vance Kitira 110](#_Toc243676589)

[6.5.2 A Strategy for Establishing Favourable Attitudes towards the Brand Vance Kitira 112](#_Toc243676590)

[6.5.3 Green Strategies in Advertising the Brand Vance Kitira 115](#_Toc243676591)

[6.5.3.1 Vance Kitira as a Social or a Tribal Brand? 117](#_Toc243676592)

[7CONCLUSION 119](#_Toc243676593)

[7.1 PUTTING THE THESIS INTO PERSPECTIVE 122](#_Toc243676594)

[8BIBLIOGRAPHY 124](#_Toc243676595)

[9LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES 128](#_Toc243676596)

[10EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – SPECIALE RESUMÉ 129](#_Toc243676597)

# INTRODUCTION AND THESIS STATEMENT

**“[…] green marketing is a big wave that everyone gets a chance to surf. Some will surf it beautifully (authentically), while others will eat sand, and the majority of those in the latter category probably had no business surfing it in the first place.”**
- Barton 2008, (website 1)

Barton’s wave-metaphor, quoted above, beautifully ties together the key most interesting aspects of green marketing and why we - along with a keen personal interest in paving the way for green products - have found it a both relevant and intriguing challenge to work with the strategic management of green marketing.

Barton hints at the current popularity of green products - ***the big wave***. He also hints at the increasingly critical and clever green consumers, who hold the authenticity of both the product and the company behind the product as an important preference when buying green - they look to buy from the ones that ***surf the wave authentically***. And last but not least, he hints at the somewhat chequered past of green marketing which has played a part in leading the consumers to that preference; the many companies who have attempted, and still is attempting, to sell green when they are not (fully) green - and therefore have ***no business surfing the green wave***. However, before we get ahead of ourselves and make too many uncredited claims, we had better start at the beginning, or what is considered the real beginning of green marketing; the early 90s.

The early 90s saw a strand of green products sprout up. This was partially a result of Earth Day[[1]](#footnote-1) celebrating its 20th anniversary in 1990, saving no resources in promoting its anniversary and heavily advertising its theme for the year - the importance of buying green (Makower 2009: 2). Additionally, a year earlier in August 1989, a more than groundbreaking research report was issued by the London and New York based consulting firm Michael Peters Group, showing that a surprising 89 percent of American shoppers said they were “concerned about the environmental impact of the products they purchased” (Ibid: 1). What is more, 78 percent of the shoppers who participated in the survey were willing to pay as much as five percent more for a green product with recyclable or biodegradable materials (Ibid: 1). These two events played a key role in the business world discovering the financial possibilities of green consumerism; *selling green products was a golden opportunity to make money*.

 Not many with an eye for business let an opportunity like that pass them by, and as a result the market was overflowed with a wave of green and earth-friendly products (Ibid: 3). However, it quickly turned out that a lot of these products were only green around the edges and not at the core, so to speak. More directly put, the majority of the green labels were fakes (Ibid: 5). They were sold as green, but the green aspects were mainly created in the marketing process and not in the production process; marketing trickery that would later become widely known under the term Greenwashing[[2]](#footnote-2) (website 2).

With Earth Day celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2010, the green wave is still on us. Greenwashing still exists, but the last 20 years have carried with them a lot of environmental restrictions and surveillance from governments and green organisations, forcing any company wanting to make up or exaggerate the level of their greenness to be extremely careful and clever (Ibid). Also, since the boom in the 90s, the modern green consumer has grown so fed up with greenwashed fakes that the development in this area has taken quite a turn. Companies are now so afraid of the death sentence of the greenwashing label that some choose to actually downplay their green involvement. An approach referred to as Greenhushing, created as an antipole to Greenwashing (website 3).

More importantly, Greenhushing is also a direct result of the complexity surrounding the term “being green”. Being green is originally about stopping climate change, but in the minds of the consumers it spans over associations from organic to ethically correct (Ibid). It is harder to believe that a green company has child workers, treats its staff poorly, or does not behave ethically in all other aspects (Ibid). Therefore, the expectations to green companies tend to be higher, and the tolerance bar lower. If a company fails on aspects unrelated to its green initiatives, the consumers will more than likely also judge and distrust them on their level of greenness, and the company’s green marketing will backfire and leave a bad taste of betrayal in the mouth of the consumer, who thought the company was “one of the good guys” (Ibid).

To say the least, based on the described historical context, surfing the green wave is a delicate and somewhat daring endeavour and adding to this remains the claim that “the green wave has to be surfed authentically”. Research shows that the identity and the image of the *product* in question are no longer the only criteria being weighed when the modern consumer makes purchase decisions. The organisation or company *behind* the product is also, subconsciously, up for evaluation (website 4). What is more, research also shows that consumers are surprisingly skilled in seeing and reviewing the big picture behind the product, and that the picture they see is of key importance, when it comes to establishing a preference for a product (website 5). In terms of green products, this means that the consumer looking to buy green will have a preference for buying products made by manufacturers and sold by companies which show signs of actually caring about the environment, as opposed to those selling green primarily because they are looking to make an easy profit on a trendy product. It is no longer enough that the product itself is green and not a greenwashed fake. The product has to be authentically green, and it is only authentic, if the roots of the product are green too. Yet another important thing to keep in mind is that people might be interested in a product’s greenness; however, this will not be the sole criterion for evaluating the product. The value and benefit of the product itself must not be disregarded, because they are still important to the consumers (website 6), and therefore focus needs to somewhat remain on traditional marketing.

With the above context in mind and the possibilities and challenges it all represents, we began our search for a (green) company with a green product to market. In this process, we came into contact with the small Aalborg-based distribution company Lübech Living, which is looking to enter the British market as European distributors for a green product range of handcrafted candles and home décor from the Thai, but American-based, wholesale distributor Vance Kitira International. We found this an intriguing project. Firstly, because of Lübech Livings limited size and resources, representing some interesting challenges. Secondly, because of the market being a market of distribution and business to business dealing with both the potential business customers, but also having an end user to consider. Thirdly, because of the complexity of the roles of the parties involved seeing that Lübech Living has a contract to be the European distributor for another manufacturer, wholesale distributor and brand, representing the question of Lübech Livings own visibility, image and decision-making rights in the marketing and sales process. And last, but not least, because it is interesting to see how this manufacturing and sales structure corresponds with the market demands for green authenticity as described above.

As made clear in the above, entering a new market involves many considerations. In 1960 the marketer McCarthy classified these considerations as a marketing mix consisting of four components; product, price, promotion and place (Kotler 2003: 16). These four components are considered the four main tool sets or parameters which can be strategically controlled and adjusted to achieve marketing objectives in a target market (Ibid). With our thesis focus of entering the British market in mind, we have therefore decided to set out with these components as our starting point and underlying basis. The components are somewhat interdependent and they cannot be completely separated from one another as decisions made in each area will have great influence on the other respective areas - e.g. decisions to lower the price (adjusting the price parameter) or develop a new feature on a product (adjusting the product parameter) will equally require decisions and adjustments to be made in the area of promotion and place to target and reach the *existing* audience, as well as a possible *new* audience arising from the changes in the price and product parameter.

However, as students of International Business Communication, our main area of interest is the promotion component, and therefore this component will also hold our main focus in this thesis. One could also argue that the promotion component in its purpose is naturally separated from the others because the components of product, price and place together are adjusted to *meet customer needs* and the component of promotion has the purpose of *communicating* *the fulfilment of those needs* as effectively as possible.

Summing up and narrowing down the above, we will therefore aim to answer the following question: **Taking into consideration the green nature of the products as well as the new consumer sensibility and demand for authenticity, how could the Danish distribution company Lübech Living *strategically manage the promotion component* in entering the British market with a green product range of handcrafted candles and home décor produced by the Thai, American-based wholesale distributor Vance Kitira International?**

# METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Under this heading, we will describe and explain our ***method*** and our approach in answering the question stated in the Introduction on the previous page. Also, in being true to scientific research, we will explain ***our reasoning*** for using these methods and hereby prove the scientific value of our findings.

Choosing a method is not merely choosing a technique for gathering, analysing and structuring data. It is also being aware of and considering one’s views on the field of research at hand and on science in general (website 7). The nature of science – obtaining knowledge – dictates that such a ***scientific reasoning*** must be present to prove that any obtained knowledge is in fact scientific and therefore “true” knowledge, and not merely opinions and feelings (Ibid).

## THESIS FOCUS AND LIMITATION

**READER NOTE**

***Before reading on, we suggest the reader examines appendix A1 and A2 for a description of the two companies involved in this case; Lübech Living and Vance Kitira International. An actual understanding of the companies and the product range will be provided in the analysis, beginning with chapter 6 Analysis.***

As outlined in the thesis statement on the previous page, the main focus of this thesis is that of the promotion component in entering a new market. Therefore, we find it the most natural course of action to start by shortly clarifying the make-up of this component.

As described in the Introduction, the promotion component is one of four components making up the tool set of the marketing mix. However, the promotion component itself also consists of a set of tools or components referred to as the promotion mix (Kotler 2003: 16). The main components in the promotion mix are, firstly, the component of advertising, and, secondly, the component of promotion(Percy et al 2009: 5) in its original and actual form, as opposed to the umbrella use of the word in “*promotion* mix” covering basically all marketing communication efforts. The Latin root of promotion - *promovere* - means “to move forward”, whereas the Latin root of advertising - *advertere* – means “to turn towards” (Percy et al 2009: 4). If we compare these meanings from a marketing point of view, advertising has the function, and focus, of “turning the consumer towards the brand”, also known in a technical term as building positive brand attitude on a long-term basis. Oppositely, promotion has the function, and focus, of “moving sales forward now” on a more short-term tactical basis (Ibid).

In spite of Lübech Living’s likely wish to move sales forward *now* on the British market, *immediate* purchase action is unrealistic without first having established a favourable or positive brand attitude which turns the consumer towards the product (Percy et al 2009: 11) , precisely as described above as being the focus of advertising. Therefore, in order to conduct a focused investigation yet reach an overall overview and results, we will limit our main focus in this thesis to the promotion-component of advertising, as the *first* step for Lübech Living in entering the British market.In other words, supporting the question stated in the thesis introduction, our specific sub-focus will be as follows:

**SPECIFIED FOCUS**

**Taking into consideration the green nature of the Vance Kitira products as well as the new consumer sensibility and demand for authenticity, how could the Danish distribution company Lübech Living *strategically establish a positive brand attitude and turn the consumer towards the products?***

We would like to make it clear that this choice of focus is not to disregard the importance of promotion which is an equally important tool on the same level as advertising, especially in business-to-business trade which is the market of Lübech Living, where promotion is often used to accelerate a purchase decision (Percy et al 2009: 12). However, promotion executions must be consistent with the strategic key benefits and messages used as persuasion in advertising (Percy et al 2009: 11), and therefore the advertising message(s) must be established first.

Based on this same argument, we have also chosen to disregard the other two components of the promotion mix, personal selling and public relations (Percy et al 2009: 5). Personal selling, in the case of business-to-business, is of key importance in establishing relations through personal contact and trade shows (Percy et al 2009: 362) and is therefore likely to be one of the key communication forms for Lübech Living in entering the British market. However, again, it will have to be based on the strategic advertising message and positioning which we will focus on establishing in this thesis. With regard to public relations, it also has to be consistent with the overall message and positioning, and what is more, public relations is a quite different character in communication as it is of a more uncontrollable nature and deals with a broader and more complex target group, and therefore often has a completely separate strategy (Percy et al 2009: 359f). On a final note, it is important to make clear that all of the components in the promotion mix - advertising, promotion, personal selling and public relations - work most effectively in a combined effort (Percy et al 2009: 11). We are aware that advertising only plays a part in effective marketing planning, though we believe it is a vital part. Below, we have illustrated how the component of advertising fits into the larger scheme of things as described above.

advertising

promotion

personal selling

public relations

**Fig. 1** - A*dvertising’s relative part as component in the marketing and promotion mix (own illustration)*

Having determined where in the overall field of marketing we find ourselves, we must also specify where in the market we are operating. What we mean by this is that:

 ***Our primary focus will be on the end consumer. The European distributors Lübech Living naturally has the desire of selling to their own business consumers. However, we claim that sales in the business sector require that there is a market among the end consumers. Therefore, it is also the responsibility of Lübech Living to market the Vance Kitira brand to the European and in this case British market.***

**SPECIFIED FOCUS**

Therefore, we will focus on how Lübech Living, in the name of Vance Kitira, could establish a positive brand attitude and turning the *end consumer* towards the product. This does not mean a complete disregard of the role of Lübech Living and the company’s own market objectives. Please note that, in order to avoid confusion, this thesis will use the name Vance Kitira broadly, even when the suggestions and conclusions are to be *carried out* by Lübech Living. The only exception to this is where we make suggestions and conclusion specifically regarding Lübech Living’s role.

As described in the previous, we will limit our focus to the *strategic* planning of advertising. This means that we will focus on the preparative work which lies before any specific plan of action and any creative communication execution. Therefore we expect the conclusion of this thesis to be similar - in nature and information value - to the work briefings given to creative design teams before developing and executing a campaign. This means that the thesis will focus on understanding and developing a strategic planning process containing: An understanding of the starting point and current situation and on the basis of this a determination of a realistic communication objective; A determination and understanding of the market as well as the target group and its decision making, and on the basis of this a determination of the most effective positioning; And finally a development of a communication strategy including a brand attitude strategy.

As the headline of this thesis states, we are dealing with a focus on *green* marketing, and in this methodology so far, we have described and used general marketing terms and methods. This is because, at the core, green marketing is not in any way different from normal marketing. Strategically, we find, one will still have to go through the same steps whether the product, company or brand is green or orange. However, this does not mean that there are not special and unique considerations to be made with regard to green products, involving understanding the green market and the green consumer. For this purpose, supporting the step of developing a communication strategy, we will explore strategies and considerations specific to green products in marketing the green aspect.

***However, as seen in chapter 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement, the greenness will always only be an addition to other aspects and benefits of a product or brand, and therefore it will be interesting to see if the green strategies correspond with and support the traditional marketing strategies.***

**SPECIFIED FOCUS**

Looking at the applicability of authenticity, the theory section on authenticity will function as a sort of staff function (to make use of a metaphor from the field of organisational structures containing specialised knowledge which can be drawn upon in the analysis. This is illustrated in section 2.5 Overall Structure. Authenticity generally casts it light on the entire thesis (analysis). Authenticity is a fairly new term in marketing, and it is still discussed, whether this demand for authenticity, described in the introduction, is part of a new world economy (the experience economy) and in this case is in fact a unified demand added to the demands of availability, cost and quality made by *all* consumers, as suggested by Gilmore and Pine (Gilmore et al 2007: 5f). Or, whether this is only true for one segment of the population as suggested, among many, by Boyle (Boyle 2003), who calls this segment *the new realists* and believes thatthis segment size-wise represents a little less than half the British population and just under a quarter of the American population (Ibid). However, everybody seems to agree that the demand for authenticity is in fact present within a large segment, if not all, of the population. So it is not within our aim to participate in this debate. We will, however, on the basis of this and the rugged history and context of green marketing described in chapter 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement, presume that green consumers must be part of any segment looking for authenticity, clarity and purity; And therefore, we will not ask the question *if*, but work on the basis of the matter of fact of this demand – believing that the green consumers demand authenticity. This is also supported, as we shall see, by the theory on green marketing which directly or indirectly deals significantly with authenticity throughout. However to clarify matters, we will open this thesis with an introduction to the concept.

It could be argued that cultural aspects would also play a significant role in the investigation of foreign markets and how consumers behave. However, we have not chosen to include a specific culture analysis as a separate part of this thesis. Firstly, because such an analysis would require extensive work removing focus from other important matters in this context. Secondly, because we already in our world view (see section 2.3.1 Hermeneutics) have a good understanding of British culture which also can be argued is quite similar to our own. And thirdly, because we are only interested in the cultural aspects which might influence the attitudes towards and finally the purchase of the product type presented. Therefore, we have chosen to only include elements of culture when needed in the analysis, e.g. how the British consumer uses candles.

**RESEARCH LIMITATION**

***On a final but very important note, it is our aim to answer the posed thesis statement by pointing Lübech Living in the right direction.******The focus here is on* direction*, meaning that it is our aim to acquire tendencies which points towards a certain set of actions for Lübech Living in their strategic management of green advertising. Also, our results will provide a foundation in the further work with strategic green advertising management* in general*.***

## THEORETICAL APPROACH

As our main theory, we have chosen to make use of Larry Percy and Richard Elliot’s book on Strategic Advertising Management, published by Oxford University Press in 2009. First of all, it is one of the newest and most up-to-date books on the market covering the topic. Secondly, without going into biographical details, Percy and Elliot are both well-renowned academics (professors) and practitioners within their field and are, with their book, backed by a reputable publishing house. More importantly, we find their clear definition of the promotion mix and their clear definition of what is considered advertising (creating favourable brand attitude) and what is considered promotion (sales incentives), very straightforward to work with – as opposed to for instance the well-known marketer Philip Kotler, who defines promotion as consisting of five components – sales promotion, advertising, sales force, public relations as well as direct mail, telemarketing, and Internet (Kotler 2003: 16), and in that way separates the components more based on form than on purpose.

Percy and Elliot’s model for strategic advertising management originally consists of five steps. However, we have altered these steps to fit our focus more specifically, as we have illustrated below.

**Fig. 2** - *Amendments to the five-step Model for Strategic Advertising*

Firstly, we have included a first step of reviewing the situation. We have done this for two reasons. We have deemed a situation analysis important on the same levels as the other steps in the model as it forms the basis and is a requirement or any proceeding work. Also, we see this step as a help to the reader in the analysis in that it provides an excellent overview of the situation and the framework. Secondly, we have also chosen to eliminate the step of setting a media strategy, thus concluding the use of this model with setting a communication or advertising strategy, or in other words a brand attitude strategy which, as described in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation, is the main focus in advertising. The shape and size this will take in media, we will leave open for later investigation. As described in the same section, personal sales will more than likely be dominant for Lübech Living on the business-to-business market, and as such a thorough investigation of advantages and disadvantages of different media will not hold as much value as determining the strategic message itself.

In choosing this model, we have found it an interesting and relevant fact that the book and model is of British origin, since we are working on the British market. It can be discussed if views on market communication are identical in all cultures and if the same areas are given equal attention as a result of cultural differences in consumer behaviour. In any given case, we suspect that a Chinese communication model will look somewhat different from one of European or American origin. Therefore, we find some security in the fact that our chosen model, culture-wise, matches the target market.

The structure of Percy and Elliot’s model is very comprehensive and fits our purpose and aim; however, we have in few cases felt the need for more specific tools within the steps which fit our particular purpose. The first addition is the SWOT analysis as described in section 4.1.6 SWOT analysis, which we have chosen to include this tool in the first step of reviewing the situation. We will use the SWOT analysis as a tool for structuring this review. With its division of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats it provides a good framework for structuring the examination points listed in this step, and makes room for possible additions. One could argue that a SWOT analysis lacks specific guidelines in having so open analysis headings as described above, however we have an underlying structure provided by the examination points.

On the step of selecting the target audience, we have chosen to limit our focus to *general level characteristics*of the target audience as it is outside the scope of this thesis to carry out an extensive consumer or market survey based on loyalty groups and buyer behaviour as Percy and Elliot suggest. This is not to say that buyer behaviour is not relevant in defining a market and defining who to target, however it is *our aim* to establish an understanding of *tendencies* in the market and personality types who might be interested in buying the Vance Kitira products. Also, our aim is to create basis for the execution of communication, and therefore we find it more important to focus our efforts on consumer characteristics with the aim of developing a message rather than understanding consumers’ loyalty levels to existing brands. Naturally, it is not optimal to target customers who are loyal to other brands to the extent where they will not switch, however with a low-involvement, low-risk product such as candles, and with the *broad* level characteristics, which is defined in the use of the Minerva model below, we do not believe that efforts will be wasted in the segmentation.

We have chosen to replace Percy and Elliot’s descriptions of various lifestyle segmentations with a model for segmentation, Minerva, which will be described in section 4.2.1 Minerva. We find the Minerva model a relevant tool for understanding various consumer types as it divides a population into our broad consumer groups based on general level characteristics. We understand that the model has been criticised of being *too* broad; however in this thesis we find it an advantage, as we do not wish to define narrow target groups, but understand overall tendencies and characteristics.

Another point which we would like to comment on is the fact that the model is of Danish origin and describes Danish and Scandinavian market and population characteristics. As will also be discussed in section 2.3 Scientific Approach, we believe the two cultures are fairly similar and, as long as one looks at matters with a critical eye, we do not believe the use of the Danish market model on the British market to provide any insecurities in this thesis context. What is more, we have found evidence in the form of a British textbook on European Consumer Behaviour - including the Minerva model - that the model is internationally recognised (Solomon et al 2006: 569). Furthermore, to make the model applicable, we have chosen to disregard the demographic specifics of the Danish market, as we believe they will differ on the British market. We will include demographics, where we find relevant applicable data; however we are mostly interested in consumer *types*, not consumer group *sizes*.

Another change from Percy and Elliot’s original model is our choice to exclude their model for selecting appropriate benefits. Percy and Elliot suggest contacting a sizeable part of the target audience and in that make use of a multi-attribute model presenting various attributes of the brand, product or company which the consumers then can rank in order on the basis of valued importance. As will be elaborated on in section 2.4 Data, we have found it a better use of our resources to make an in-depth interview with a representative of the candle maker industry because he has an up-date insight into the general market and also what consumers value, e.g. what candle makers have to live up to. It is not likely that we would have been able to get enough replies from our selected target audience to make a survey representative. Therefore, we will base our selection of benefits on our gathered in-depth and statistical data, and encourage later conformational research.

With regard to the focus on green marketing, we have chosen British author, businessman and consultant within the field of green marketing John Grant’s green marketing grid. His grid provides us with nine green marketing and communication strategies. However, he *only* focuses on the green benefits and aspects of the products and he also only focuses on the end strategies and therefore does not provide approaches to all the basic legwork and market examination such as the traditional marketing model. This is why we only use this theory as a support to a more traditional marketing model.

With regard to the introduction to authenticity which is the framework of this thesis, we have attempted to make use of some of the newest and most credible literature on the market, as well as searched online for both scientific and popular articles and discussions as the topic is fairly new in marketing terms. The introduction of authenticity will in itself contain some level of methodology discussion on how the various theories can be used in relation to our thesis focus.

## SCIENTIFIC APPROACH AND REASONING

As students of International Business Communication we study at the faculty of humanities, thus focusing on obtaining an understanding of human behaviour and culture - as opposed to social science dealing with society and the structures and processes herein, and natural science dealing with objective observations and measurements of nature. The objectiveness in natural science leads one to raise the question if there is one objective truth when studying human behaviour? We do not believe that to be the case. We find that results will differ depending on the eyes that see - that the choices made, theoretical and otherwise, and experiences held by the analysts, in this case us, will influence the results to a degree, thus making it difficult to present an “absolute truth”, but only degrees of truthful results. However, this does not mean that we are relativists and believe there is no such thing as “truth” (Thurén 2008: 13), we agree with Torsten Thurén who believes it is possible to reach results which are more or less plausible. Therefore, we have chosen to carry out our analysis within the hermeneutic paradigm which, as we shall see in the following, supports this view on humanities.

### Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is the scientific study of **interpretation** and regards empathy as an important source for interpretation on the same level as the five senses and purely *logical* analysis (Thurén 2008: 106). In other words, hermeneutics is about understanding and not merely *rationally* comprehending (Ibid).

This view is based on an understanding of human beings as more than a subject confronted with an object; as humans we are involved in and part of the world (Pahuus 2006: 150), and therefore as analysts, when confronted with a text, we are involved in the world which the text represents and is part of it, and therefore we bring our own experiences into our understanding of it.

There are two things in the above which must be clarified. Firstly the term text is not to be understood in the literal sense. Though hermeneutics traditionally focused on the interpretation of texts in the area of religion and literature, today it includes everything which can be the focus of interpretation. Our “texts” in this case is thus our gathered empirical data and our chosen theories. The reason why we also view our theories as part of our “texts” is because also *they* can be interpreted and applied differently according to world view.

Secondly, the more the world view of the originator of a given “text” and the world view of the analyst overlap, the more accurate the results will be, meaning that an understanding will be closer to accurate if the originator and the analyst share the same understanding of values and the world (Pahuus 2006: 151). In our case, this means that we have a basis for achieving a plausible answer to our thesis statement because, culturally, we have world views similar to the British, and therefore in our analysis will have empathy and ability to understand that market. This would not be the case if for instance we were working with a Somalian market where, due to the differences, our best bet would be to *rationally* comprehend the culture.

### The Hermeneutic Circle

Working within the framework of hermeneutics also means believing that neither a whole text nor any individual part can be understood without reference to one another, and therefore the interpretation of a given text will move circularly (Pahuus 2006: 145). This movement in the analysis and interpretation is referred to as the hermeneutic circle.

What this means is that to understand a text, one will have to see everything in its correct context, and this requires a movement back and forth between partial elements of a text seen in relation to the entire text, and the entire text seen in relation to the author/originator and a cultural or historical context (Pahuus 2006: 153). In implementing the hermeneutic circle this will mean that we analyse the data, the “text”, with our own prejudgements and world view. We then proceed through the individual steps of the strategic management process, seeing it all in the context described in the Introduction to the thesis, see chapter 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement. In the analysis, one step will be the basis for understanding the next, and what is more, the further we get in the process and analysis, the better our understanding will be of both the overall and the individual parts, making it possible to go through the circle once more and see previous results in a new light.

### Critical Considerations

Interpreting the emotions and feelings of others based on one’s own emotions and feelings (world view) can be somewhat risky. When unreflectively assuming that others view the world in the same way as you, it can cause you to ascribe them emotions they do not possess and as such cause imprecise results (Thurén 2008: 109). Also, when analysing and interpreting, you risk seeing a text or actions in the wrong realm of understanding and the wrong cultural context, thus leading to misunderstanding. As described above, however, we are looking at a culture which has similar features to ours, and in addition our view is not unreflective as we do not just *assume* that the British e.g. use candles in the same way we do.

Because hermeneutics present some insecurity with regard to objective results, it is often used to reach results in the shape of one or more hypothesises which can then be confirmed or disproved by more extensive quantitative research (Thurén 2008: 110). As described in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation on page 9, we strive to achieve results which in their nature will reveal market *tendencies* and not confirmed *truths*, therefore, we feel that the hermeneutic framework is applicable in this thesis.

## DATA

Our data consists of a mix of both primary and secondary data. Our initial approach was to gather as much secondary information as possible. Theory on the nature of data suggests that “*secondary data may actually provide a solution to the problem*” (McDaniel et al 2007: 92). Therefore, to be more specific in our allocation of resources, we found it more optimal to start by getting an overview of what was already established on the topic, and what was already accessible. Based on this our primary data is used to shed light on topics where we found more in depth information was needed.

Examining our secondary data, it consists exclusively of *external* databases. Unfortunately, we have not had access to neither Vance Kitira’s internal databases and communication research nor *internal* information from Lübech Living.

In appendix A1, the reader will find all secondary data gathered about Vance Kitira. This set of appendices contains all accessible information on the Vance Kitira website, extractions from two business-to-business product brochures, and an article from the American trade magazine, Home Accents Today, providing an interview with the man behind the Vance Kitira brand Vance Kitira himself. In appendix A2, the reader will find all accessible information from Lübech Living’s website. The level of trustworthiness of these data, we gather is fairly high as they stem directly from the companies in question. However, we have been very critical in regard to marketing lingo and flowery language as this could indicate exaggerations. With regard to the article from the trade magazine, the “trade” covers the furniture and accessories business. We have no way of knowing if there is a hidden agenda in relation to trade or if the journalist is fully objective, but the article appears to be fairly serious journalism.

In appendix B3, we have gained access to a report on “*the safety and use of tea lights and candles*” carried out by Consumers Association Research and Testing Centre commissioned by Consumer Affairs Directorate, DTI, Home Office. Since this research is of governmental character, we find it to be highly trustworthy. We might question if the data is up-to-date and provides and accurate image of the UK candle market and consumer behaviour since the research was carried out in the year 2000. However, we use the report as a foundation for further research and we have managed to collect additional confirmation on almost all data used from the report.

In appendix B4, B5 and B6, we have gathered statistics on how important the environment is to the British population; how concerned the British population is about climate change and how individuals see their own responsibility in relation to climate change; and finally, what issues the home and lifestyle industry is facing over the next few years. These statistics are provided by Ipsos MORI, a market research company in the UK and Ireland. We have no reason to believe that their market research is less than credible. Adding to this trust, they also have descriptions on their website on how they carry out their research.

In appendix B7, we have drawn upon data from a report on gender in contemporary UK society provided by the Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom. They state to be produced free from political influence and we have no reason to believe otherwise.

 Our last piece of secondary Data, found in appendix B8, is an article from the British newspaper The Telegraph on the British candle culture. Political agendas of various newspapers can always be discussed. However, in its nature of a newspaper article, we find it to be fairly serious journalism and in its nature of being a *British* newspaper, it is safe to say that it keeps track of what is going on in British society.

The above secondary data is primarily quantitative data. What this means is that it covers a significant sample size of the British population and thus tends to be very accurate. This type of research often comes in the shape of statistics which means that it is easy to make comparisons and generalisations. Quantitative research is seen to be very objective and scientific; however it lacks in-depth understanding of the why and the how. Therefore, it will often be combined with qualitative research which in its nature deals with in-depth motivations and feelings (of consumers). The criticism of qualitative research is exactly the opposite of that of quantitative – it tends to be subjective and interpretive (McDaniel et al 2007: 128-29).

As our primary data, we have chosen to firstly put forward some questions/topics for the British Candlemakers’ Federation which would provide us with a frame for a later in-depth interview. This was done in order to improve the efficiency of the quantitative data and in order to get in-depth research tailored for our purpose. We regard the British Candlemakers’ Federation a reliable source for information on the candle market since they have contact with a wide range of members of the Federation, including manufacturers and candle/scent/fire safety laboratories. Roy Wilde, the Honorary Secretary of the Federation with whom we conducted the interview, is not a candle maker himself meaning that he had no personal business interest in mind when answering the posed questions. However, naturally his answers will be influenced by his role in the Federation and the interests of the Federation to some degree. In the aim of gaining in-depth market knowledge, we found Roy Wilde to be a very valuable source, and chose to focus our resources here rather than performing interviews with a small sample of the British population. This is not to say that the latter could not provide any additional helpful information, but it was not our first priority.

The five questions put forward (appendix B1) were shaped as topics including multiple similar questions with the guideline: “*The questions below are divided into five groups and are within the groups very similar. All questions do not have to be answered if they appear repetitive and already have been covered in your opinion. I am simply trying to shed light on five areas of interest*”. This was done to avoid leading questions tailored to obtain pre-determined “certain” answers. In that way we have strived to avoid any personal influence on the answers and achieve objectivity to the extent possible in using qualitative data.

The in-depth follow-up interview (appendix B2) is a relatively unstructured one-on-one interview (McDaniel et al 2007: 149). Though based on the framework of the questions and answers provided in the initial qualitative questionnaire-type correspondence, the interview was guided by the responses of the interviewee Roy Wilde. This type of research supports our methodological approach of hermeneutics, firstly because it focuses on *interpretation* and *understanding* through conversation. Secondly, because the framework of the interview is fairly lose and offers a circle approach in a similar style of the hermeneutic circle where the interview may travel back and forth through topics increasingly building in-depth knowledge.

As a final note, the reader will also find a short e-mail correspondence with Vance Kitira regarding the make-up of their candles. (This is presented in appendix A1 with the other appendices concerning Vance Kitira). Unfortunately, this has been the only information we have been able to gather directly from the company.

## OVERALL STRUCTURE

 **Fig. 2** - *Illustration of Overall Thesis Structure* To guide the reader, we have illustrated the overall thesis structure above. In the following, we will clarify this structure.

**WORLD**

**V
I
EW**

**DATA**

**AUTHENTICITY**

Following chapters 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement and 2 Methodology and Data, we will start the thesis off by introducing, in more detail, the concept of authenticity and clarify *why* and *how* it is important in marketing communications, as we have argued that there is a demand for authenticity among green consumers and that authenticity plays a vital role. This will be done in chapter 3 The Importance of Authenticity.

 Thereafter, in chapter 4 Strategic Advertising Management, we will introduce a five-step model for strategic advertising management as a tool in answering the question posed of how Lübech Living best would manage the promotion component (advertising) in entering the British market.

To support this five-step model and to take into account the level of greenness of the product, we will introduce a marketing grid in chapter 5 Green Marketing, presenting us with nine green marketing strategies to be applied depending on product type.

In the analysis, starting with chapter 6 Analysing the Strategic Approach to Green Advertising Management, we will follow the five-step structure provided in chapter 4 and apply the theories described within these five steps. In doing this, we will take into consideration the strategies presented in the supporting green marketing grid in chapter 5 and apply what we know from the introductory chapter on authenticity. As described in the above, we find it interesting to see if the focus of the applied green marketing strategy turns out to complement or rather conflict with the focus determined through the traditional advertising management and we will comment on this as the green marketing analysis is carried out.

At the end, in chapter 8 Conclusion, we will conclude on our findings, presenting our results on how the Danish distribution company Lübech Living could strategically manage the promotion component - or as specified in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation the advertising component - in entering the British market with a green product range of handcrafted candles and home décor produced by the Thai, American-based wholesale distributor Vance Kitira International. We will also include concluding thoughts from the discussion carried out in chapter 7. As a finishing note, in section 8.1 Putting the Thesis into Perspective, we will conclude on how our thesis results are applicable in the light of our aim of reaching *tendencies* whichrequire further research and examination, as described previously in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation. Also, we will look back at the process and discuss if the models used have been applicable in practice and/or if limitations have been revealed in relation to our work.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF AUTHENTICITY

In the Introduction to this thesis, we proclaimed the importance of authenticity in selling green products, and defined the term in a limited context as an expression of *real* values – of the company *actually* caring about being green - and how the product, to that end, becomes a symbol of the company behind it; the link between company and product thus defining the brand.

Basing this thesis on a fact-like approach to the importance of authenticity, as described in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation, we have found it important to elaborate on this importance and more thoroughly define the term authenticity, extending from the above notions of *reality* and *actuality*. This will provide us with an understanding of how authenticity can, or should, be incorporated into strategic advertising and communication planning.

## WHY AUTHENTCITY HAS BECOME IMPORTANT

In defining authenticity, it proves helpful to first understand why the described need for authenticity has developed. The need is a response, a reaction to a current commercial and artificial world (Boyle 2004: 1ff). Therefore, the definition of authenticity will take its shape as the opposite of commercial and artificial. The longing for reality is provoked by a feeling that reality is endangered or actually up for sale (Boyle 2004: 12) - that the world is spinning out of control becoming increasingly globalised and difficult to relate to; that marketers control the world with inscrutable marketing; and that the world is becoming increasingly virtual and technological[[3]](#footnote-3):

* We are tired of being (mis)led by the nose by people who do it for the money alone (website 8); Therefore, we want commitment and honourable intentions
* We are tired of dishonesty and we are tired of fakes (website 8);

Therefore, we want real, see-through messages and organisations

* We miss clarity in our own heritage (website 8);

Therefore, we like what is original and what has roots and history

* We are fed up with mass marketing, we want to be individuals (Boyle 2004: 13)
Therefore, we love new innovations and uniqueness
* We do not like globalised big corporations (Boyle 2004: 13)

Therefore, we want locally produced products

* We are afraid of an all virtual reality (Boyle 2004: 9)

Therefore, we want real experiences and real contact

## DEFINING AUTHENTICITY

 Asking Google to define authenticity[[4]](#footnote-4), one of the definitions which appear is as follows: “*The quality of being genuine or not corrupted from the original; Truthfulness of origins, attributions, commitments, sincerity, and intentions; The quality of being authentic (of established authority)*”. Gilmore and Pine, co-founders of the consultancy firm Strategic Horizons LLP and prominent theorists within experience economy (reference 2), point out that there is no defined checklist or true definition when working with authenticity (Gilmore et al 2007: xiii). However, when looking at the list provided in the previous section, the definition comes pretty close.

What Gilmore and Pine mean when they say there is no checklist for defining authenticity, is that what is considered authentic, what is considered real, is in the eye of the individual. Defining authenticity as what is considered *real* must therefore never be confused with what is *true* (Gilmore et al 2007: xiii). Extending on that thought, the strategic aim of any brand must be to match their *individual* beliefs, their own authentic identity, with individual consumers who value that identity as authentic.

The above conclusion also matches the view Gilmore and Pine have on authenticity as a new consumer sensibility on the same level as availability, cost and quality. Where products and brands are purchased on the basis of reliable supply, affordable price and product excellence, they are now also purchased on the basis of how they conform to self-image (Gilmore et al 2007: 5). The brand or product must reflect “*who they [the consumers] are and who they aspire to be in relation to how they perceive the world*” (Ibid). This also fits the above focus on the individual in authenticity.

The described consumer sensibilities of availability, cost and quality fall into the parameters place, price and product in the marketing mix, as described in chapter 1 Introduction and thesis Statement, and that raises the question which marketing parameter authenticity falls under, or if a new way of looking at marketing is required with authenticity as a new separate parameter making the marketing mix consist of five parameters. We will not examine this in detail here; however we will on the basis of this conclude that authenticity is manageable and thus can be communicated through the promotion parameter, as can be seen in section 3.3 Communicating Authenticity.

 Authenticity Consultant Nikolaj Stagis defines the management, and thus the definition of authenticity, as based on the view that authenticity goes beyond having consistency between what is said and what is done, but that authenticity is about how a company relates to itself, how a company embraces and combines its existence in the past, present and future - that being authentic is about “being at peace” with one’s identity throughout, about standing by one’s values no matter how the surrounding world changes (website 5).

The above definition is clearly important in relation to authenticity dealing with genuineness, integrity, transparency, commitment and sincerity of intentions. Authenticity-writer David Boyle defines it from a different angle: “*Authenticity is all about being 3-D. It’s about having real human experiences which are more than just surface. Real life is three-dimensional, McDonald’s is not*” (Boyle 2004: 4). In saying that authenticity means being three-dimensional, he means that consumers are fed up with superficial engagement with a brand, and that they want complex experiences which are not perfect and standardised (Boyle 2004: 21). Consumers want to interact with human beings. In addition to 3-D, he also describes nine additional ways in which we wish to live with authenticity, covering the keywords ethical, honest, simple, sustainable, beautiful, rooted, and human. However, we will leave these authenticity keywords open for interpretation, and instead explore Gilmore and Pine’s five types of authenticity defining the landscape of authenticity which more or less cover the same bases as Boyle. The landscape of authenticity will be described in the following sections.

### Natural Authenticity

Natural authenticity is found when dealing with commodities and is based on a consumer perception that what exists in its natural state, in or of the earth, is authentic. Especially if it remains, fully or partially, untouched by human hands (Gilmore et al 2007: 49). It is the opposite of artificial and synthetic.

### Original Authenticity

Original authenticity is found when dealing with goods and is based on a consumer perception that what possess originality in design is authentic. Especially if it is “first of its kind” (Gilmore et al 2007: 49). It is the opposite of copied or imitated goods.

### Exceptional Authenticity

Exceptional authenticity is found when dealing with services and is based on a consumer perception that what is done exceptionally well is authentic. Providing exceptional and authentic service means providing people-based two-way communication with representatives who genuinely care about the customers and who respond to individual needs (Gilmore et al 2007: 49). It is the opposite of customer service filled with obstacles and waiting time to reach an anonymous and standardised service.

### Referential Authenticity

Referential authenticity is found when dealing with experiences and is based on a consumer perception that what has reference to or draws inspiration from culture or history is authentic (Gilmore et al 2007: 50). It is iconic experiences such as drinking beer in England or eating pizza in Italy. It is the opposite of e.g. a standardised shopping experience in a grey, anonymous shopping centre.

### Influential Authenticity

Influential authenticity is found when dealing with transformations - meaning that companies want to “transform the world” in some way. It is based on a consumer perception that having a purpose which goes beyond making a profit is authentic (Gilmore et al 2007: 50). It could for instance be fair trade companies. It is the opposite of large globalised “super tanker” corporations.

## COMMUNICATING AUTHENTICITY

Because the focus on authenticity is rather new in marketing terms there appear to be no theories dedicated to the communication of authenticity. However, in the many descriptions on how to manage authenticity *in general*, we have been able to detect some guidelines on how to manage the communication as well – or at least some guidelines which can be figuratively *translated* to fit communication.

There are two main guidelines which should be followed: If you deem yourself authentic, then you do not have to *say* that you are. If you *say* you are authentic, then you better *be* authentic (Gilmore et al 2007: 90). These guidelines are part of a management tool for authenticity, but they apply as the perfect basic guidelines when communicating authenticity.

Basing communication on the authenticity landscape and the five authenticity types described above, it could be suggested that a company’s strengths and weaknesses in each area are analysed and thus used in the communication. Gilmore and Pine go through all five types with the aim of defining some principles for the assessment and management of a brand’s authenticity level. Some of these principles can be translated into *communicating* authenticity.

If a company pr brand is strong in providing natural authenticity, then that is what should be communicated. The described management principles for reaching natural authenticity are to stress materiality, to leave it raw, to reek rusticity, to be bare, and to go green (Gilmore et al 2007: 56). If this is reached, the communication could represent that and could stress the natural materials used and the product’s “rawness”. The communication could *visually* be rustic and bare, and with regard to *contents* it should be natural and honest. The point of going green is an interesting one in this context of green marketing. Pine and Gilmore supports this management principle with the questions “*how could you help sustain the world?”* (Gilmore et al 2007: 56). The reason for the chosen phrasing of this question must be because there is an interest in this among the audience. Therefore, communication should focus on the *how ­–* how is the green product sustaining the world?

If accompany or brand is strong in providing original authenticity, then that is what should be communicated. Just as exceptional authenticity, referential or influential authenticity should be emphasised in any communication if these are areas where a brand finds its strength. Three of the management principles for original authenticity are to stress your firsts, to revive the past and to look old (Gilmore et al 2007: 62). In communication this could e.g. be to stress originality if being first on the market with an idea, or to celebrate anniversaries and special dates. In reviving the past, Gilmore and Pine ask the questions “*What brand, advertising slogan, material, or memory from the past could provide a new source of information?”* (Gilmore et al 2007: 62). If this principle is used in communication matters by e.g. making inter-textual references to old ads it should be done openly, otherwise it could be perceived as stealing and thus be the opposite of authenticity. Especially if the old material referred to or used did not originate from the brand itself. In relation to looking old, if it fits the style of the product, communication could be designed to *visually* appear old.

With regard to exceptional authenticity, this type is in itself partially a communication matter because this type of authenticity deals with providing services as described in section 3.2.3 Exceptional Authenticity. The main management principles also deal directly with communication, though not in the sense of advertising but in the sense of service. The two key principles are here to be direct and frank and to focus on uniqueness (Gilmore et al 2007: 67). The first principle is fairly obvious and suggests establishing open and direct lines of communication with one’s audience. The “directness” could also be translated into the fact that communication must be see-through and “to the point” and in that way not appear as spin. These principles can also easily be applied to advertising. The second principle has to do with the uniqueness of the customers and not the product. In communication efforts, the company must show the customers that it cares, and that it, or more importantly the *people* in it, is dealing with them as individuals and not with a customer mass.

With regard to referential authenticity, the management principles cover paying personal tribute, evoking a time, or picking a place (Gilmore et al 2007: 71). In communication this deals with the physical and emotional context of the brand. It is beneficial if the brand can pay tribute to a famous person or it could be put into context of a specific historic time or place. This naturally has to be done carefully and advertising something as e.g. “Pure Italian” or “Worthy of a Rock-legend like Jimmy Hendrix”, it has to *be* exactly that.

Influential authenticity principles basically cover appealing to personal or collective aspirations (Gilmore et al 2007: 77). Naturally, this appeal should only be used if a brand has an integrated value set and aim to influence the world into changing in some way as described in section 3.2.5 Influential Authenticity.

Speaking of appeals, one last topic we would like to touch upon in communicating authenticity is that of message appeal. As found in the opening definition, authenticity is also “*of established authority*”. This brings to mind the message appeal of ethos, dealing with the character of the sender of a given message (Jørgensen et al 2002: 62), e.g. a character’s trustworthiness or authority. The focus authenticity has on honesty, noble intentions, the presence of historical roots etc. are all characteristics which describe the character of a brand. Therefore those characteristics also define the brand as the sender and the sender’s ethos. As a result, it can be said that in being authentic one automatically has high ethos appeal and thus has an advantage in reaching a target audience. Message appeals will be described further in section 6.5.2 Brand Attitude Strategy.

# STRATEGIC ADVERTISING MANAGEMENT

This chapter will present an account of our chosen theoretical approach to strategic advertising management. The management process consists of five steps as illustrated below. The individual purpose of each step – as well as being the underlying basis of the succeeding step - is also briefly explained below. In the following, this chapter will devote a section to each step, further elaborating on its purpose as well as explaining the theoretical approach contained within each step.

## Fig. 3 *- The five steps of Strategic Advertising Management[[5]](#footnote-5)*

**Step 1** - The aim of any strategy will always be to reach a final objective. However, in reaching an objective it is very useful to understand the *current* situation and the starting point from which this objective has to be reached. This is why a situation analysis has been included as an integrated first step of strategic advertising management.

**Step 2** - As described in chapter 2 Methodology and Data, advertising is defined as any communication with the aim of “moving the consumer towards the brand”. Knowing the context and the starting point for the communication from step one, step two will determine the target audience for the communication - the consumers who, with the best success rate, can be moved towards the brand.

**Step 3 -** In order to move the target audience towards the brand, one must understand more about how they make their decisions. Step three will therefore break down the decision-making process into various targetable stages, providing guidelines on which stage to target and where to focus the efforts.

**Step 4 -** On this step, it is determined how the target audience views the market; providing an understanding of who the perceived competition is and thus which competitive advantage and which benefits should be used to achieve an optimal positioning.

**Step 5 -** Subsequently, understanding the situation, understanding the target audience, understanding the competition, and understanding how the brand is perceived should make it possible to determine the best communication strategy in entering a new market.

## REVIEWING THE SITUATION

Prior to exploring the various steps involved in developing a strategic plan for a brand’s marketing communication, it is essential to know and understand the current situation; the brand’s opportunities and challenges on a market and the resources or lack hereof in facing this new market. The information gathered on this initial step is only meant as background information for a sort of brain storm, and the brain storm is in no way static. The specific approaches will be decided on the individual steps, and results might change from what appeared most optimal in this initial situation analysis.

There are five key areas from which it would be beneficial to retrieve information (look at table below), in order to ensure the development of an effective communication strategy. The gathered information will provide valuable insight into the particular market in question and the specific objectives and goals for the brand. Furthermore (Percy et al 2009: 83):

**“This sort of information often has a significant bearing upon what it is that we will want to communicate to the target audience, and it provides important background information for those charged with creating the message”**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| KEY AREAS | ISSUES |
| Product Description | *What are you marketing?* |
| Market Assessment | *What is your overall assessment of the market where you compete?* |
| Source of Business | *Where do you expect business to come from?* |
| Competitive Evaluation | *What is your competition and how does it position itself?* |
| Marketing Objectives | *What are the marketing objectives for the brand?* |

 **Fig. 4** - *Marketing Background Issues in Strategic Planning (Percy et al 2009: 83)*

### Product Description

What might appear obvious and simple to the people working with the brand might not be so obvious to the target market. Thus, it is fundamental to work out a description of the product or service that is supposed to be advertised or promoted, and this should be done in such a way that someone completely unfamiliar with the product will be able to understand it. This description will be very valuable for the creative staff whose job it is to execute the brand’s marketing communication (Percy et al 2009: 83-84)

### Market Assessments

In order to increase the chances of successfully positioning a brand, it is essential to gain knowledge of the particular market in which the brand competes. The actual positioning decisions in relation to the communication are made later on step 4 in section 4.4 Determining the best Positioning. The information gathered now is used to uncover factors that might have an influence on a brand’s performance (Percy et al 2009:84).

### Source of Business

The third important element to consider is where the business is expected to come from. Basically, there is the choice of attempting to attract non-customers - customers of competing brands or customers new to the product category - or endeavour to *increase* usage among existing customers of the brand. However, in the case of entering a new market, there probably will be no existing customers (Percy et al 2009: 85).

### Competitive Evaluation

It is fundamental to examine the competition and how they position themselves, given that such information can be of assistance in defining the most advantageous strategy for a brand. Furthermore, it might prove valuable to look into the media and communication strategy of the competitors, as that will offer information regarding what benefits *they* emphasise in their executional approach, which will provide some understanding of how they would like to position themselves in the mind of the consumers (Percy et al 2009: 85).

### Marketing Objectives

Determining the marketing objectives for the brand is the final area to explore before throwing oneself into the strategic planning process. At this point the most important aspect is to determine the specific market share or sales goals. These numbers are essential in defining the frame of success and in establishing the marketing communication budget (Percy et al 2009: 86). However with this thesis, it is only our aim to determine relevant aspects in relation to the communication and determine a fundamental strategy and message – not to develop a communication campaign within a budget.

### SWOT Analysis

Having gathered information in the previous sections, a SWOT analysis will be used, as illustrated below, as a framework to structure a brain storm and clarify the starting point and situation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | STRENGHTS (S) | WEAKNESSES (W) |
| OPPORTUNITIES (O) |  |  |
| THREATS (T) |  |  |

**Fig. 5** - *SWOT Analysis Framework (Hollensen 2006: 77)*

SWOT stands for, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The purpose of this framework is to reveal a company’s internal resources, capabilities and competencies which should be matched with the external opportunities. The latter is strongly related to a company’s competitive abilities (Hollensen 2006: 9). In other words (Ibid: 70):

**“Successful SWOT analysis is fundamentally a process of finding the optimum fit between the firm’s controllable strengths and weaknesses and the uncontrollable opportunities and threats posed by the environment in which the firm operates (not just the current environment, but also that of the foreseeable future).“**

**Strengths** essentially deal with the strong points of a company or brand from an internal perspective and, in this case, include the resources available in setting a communication strategy. In determining strengths, it would be beneficial to focus on any unique or distinct advantages that separate the company from the competition. Furthermore, it could prove beneficial to discuss the easiness with which the product or service can be imitated (Ibid: 72).

**Weaknesses** deal with the weak points of a company or brand from an internal perspective (Ibid: 72) and could also focus on the limits provided by the resources available.

**Opportunities** can spring from anywhere in the market. The task is to identify those that may secure continuous growth in the marketplace. Changes in technology, government policies, social patterns, and so on, might constitute an opportunity. In addition, it is always worthwhile to track emerging trends in the market which can be used in a communication strategy (Hollensen 2006: 72).

**Threats** are external factors that lie outside the control of the company. Discussing possible threats may be pushed in the background due to its gloomy nature; however, it is always essential to be prepared by attempting to predict possible factors that could threaten the company and the focus of the communication strategy (Ibid: 72).

One of the great advantages of the SWOT analysis is its ability to guide the creation of marketing strategies, and in doing so increase the likelihood of achieving the desired result(s). Working with this analytical tool brings information to light regarding *“… the difference between where it [the company] thinks it is, where others see it as being and where it hopes to be”* (Ibid: 72). The SWOT analysis is structured in a SWOT matrix with a focus on the following actions (Ibid: 73):

* *Make a match between strengths and opportunities*
* *Convert weaknesses to strengths*
* *Convert threats to opportunities*
* *Minimise, if not avoid, weaknesses and threats*

## SELECTING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Percy and Elliot point out that defining target audience groups is a subject that can be approached in a number of different ways. Dividing the target audience into customers and non-customers, as done in the previous section, is not sufficient as a basis for developing a communication strategy. A more thorough description of the target audience is needed, and this section will be devoted to an exploration of how this can be done. It is important for the communication strategy that significant information about the target audience is retrieved (Percy and Elliott, 2009: p. 109-110).

One way to approach this, as suggested by Antonides and van Raaij, is through the combination of **subjective characteristics** – i.e. lifestyle, personality and values – and **objective characteristics** – i.e. demographics and geographics (Percy and Elliot, 2009: p. 118). These constitute general level characteristics, and are considered more or less permanent characteristics of people. For that reason, they can be employed when seeking a *broad* description of a target audience group, which is the aim of this thesis, as described in section 2.2 Theoretical Approach.

There are a number of tools that can be drawn upon in achieving a more structured management of the segmentation process. As described in section 2.2 Theoretical Approach, we have chosen to focus on the Minerva model, which is a segmentation tool that builds on the notion that lifestyle and attitude increasingly influence consumer behaviour, as opposed to demographic characteristics (ACNielsen 2005: 3). However, demographics can be used in further defining the chosen target group, and will therefore be given some attention, subsequent to a presentation of the Minerva model.

### Minerva

The Minerva model was developed by the Danish sociologist Henrik Dahl in 1996, and, as mentioned above, the model operates with social fields as a means of grouping people – i.e. lifestyle and attitude. The formation of attitude is often based on a person’s **life values**, which are deep-rooted and therefore rarely change. As a result, life values have a great impact on consumer behaviour, in the sense that when a person is confronted with a product that he/she needs to develop an attitude towards, the person will unconsciously turn to existing life values. Thus, grouping a target audience according to their life values will provide more useful information and in-depth knowledge with regard to a communication strategy (ACNielsen 2005: 3). For clarifying purposes the model is illustrated below, before explaining its basis and the segments of which it consists.

MODERN

TRADITIONAL

IDEALISTIC

PRAGMATIC

**Fig. 6** - *The Minerva Model (Own Illustration based on MINERVA Snap\*Shot Monitor, AC Nielsen, website 10)*

Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies has developed their own text-based model, which provides an easy overview of the *content* and therefore have chosen to include here. However, please note that their illustration does not take into account the axes of modern/traditional and pragmatic /idealistic and therefore presents the segments in a random order which is not equal to the correct order shown in our illustration above.

**Fig. 7** - *The Minerva Model (Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies, website 12)*

As can be deduced from the above model, the idea of Minerva is that an individual will fall into one of four main segments in the Minerva value map; *blue*, *green*, *pink* or *violet*. The middle *grey* segment merely functions as a neutral segment who encompasses a certain share of all value sets. Seeing that this segment covers a very small and diffuse group, it will not be explored in any depth (website 10).

On a basic level the model has four value parameters: **modern** vs. **traditional**, and **pragmatic** vs. **idealistic**. It can generally be said about the modern value sets that they are reflexive in the sense that the modern segments looks at their own performances on the basis of their surroundings, and that the value sets they have thus can be changed to “fit the times” with less hardship than the traditional segments. In a modern culture, this entails that one has to be able to argue behaviour from a rational perspective (website 10). About the traditional value sets, it can be said that they are non-reflexive. These values are secured in reasoning that cannot be queried and discussed. This is the reason why change in the traditional lifestyles is met with resistance as opposed to adaption (website 10). Idealists have strong beliefs and perfect standards and aspire to be part of a world which lives up to these standards, even if it is not always realistic or practically obtainable. The pragmatics, on the other hand, is looking to live in a practical world, facing one issue at a time without idealistic standards or fixed ideas.

Before explaining the four segments in more detail in the following sections, it is important to emphasise that the description of the segments are based on extremities and that individual persons will not always fulfil all characteristics to the described degree. As Dahl clarifies, they have to be regarded as *types* of people and merely as *constructions* aiming to provide a better understanding of the world. Not as real physical people one would run into in the street. To explain this he compares the model´s constructions and measuring tools to longitude and latitude:

**”Nobody expects to bump into a longitude or latitude when travelling either. They are also just helpful measuring constructions. The segments should primarily be seen as tools to assist in thinking more clearly.”**(Henrik Dahl, website 11, own translation)

He also stresses that it is a wrong assumption to see the lifestyle segmentation as psychology. The descriptions are merely limited to express *tendencies* within “the social field” (website 11).

#### The blue segment

The blue segment can be categorised by a *modern, pragmatic* and also a very *individualistic* set of values. What this means is that the blue consumer will reflect upon in which direction trends are moving. They will also strive to achieve visible and socially accepted goals such as being highly regarded personalities and being successful in their career and are therefore also likely to be more prone to buy trendy high-end products. They enjoy life according to the rule that life must be enjoyed right here right now and not postponed and saved for later. In the individualistic sense, they have somewhat low empathy towards other groups. In social connections, they look for networking and beneficial relations not a sense of solidarity. With regard to the pragmatic, the segment has practical sense focusing on what is practically doable, and not what is “the right thing” to do. They are not interested in the process, but in the solution. A key outlook for the blue segment is that they see society as a relatively fair system rewarding those that make an effort in life based on personal achievements and accountability for one’s actions (website 9 and 10).

#### The green segment

The green segment can be categorised by a *modern* and *idealistic* set of values. They are also *group-oriented* in the sense that they have great solidarity with other people who have the same educational background and same value-set (website 9). It is important to the green segment to be intellectual and well-educated especially within culture and the arts. With regard to the modern elements they analyse the society around them and are willing to follow trends and tendencies, but only as long as they fit their ideals.

In striving for ideals, they have a similar outlook as the blue segment that “if there is a will there is a way”. However - where the blue segment uses this argument in relation to justify personal achievements as the optimal goal - the green segments use this argument of achieving personal power, money and knowledge to strive for political or other *ideals*. They do not focus on achieving ideals, goals (and purchases) right here right now as the blue segment. They also focus on the process and not an immediate need satisfaction or solution like the blues.

A key outlook on the world for the green segment is that, depending on the current state of affairs (politically, socially, financially), they will feel either better than the society which surrounds them or besieged by it. Easy solutions and easily acquired meanings are not well received by the green person, who believes that one should not be deceived by appearance, but look beneath the surface (website 10). Based on the above, they are often active members of *idealistic* unions, such as environmental organisations (website 9).

#### The rose segment

The rose segment can be categorised by a *traditional* and *idealistic* set of values. Therefore they aim to achieve *traditional* and socially accepted goals such as having a good family life, having close friends, and being part of the local environment (website 10). They achieve and define their identity through the relation to local groups, and therefore they are often members of sports clubs and other local associations. The pinks are traditional and formal people, and they often lead their work and social lives according to structure, rules and regulations. They do not care for changes. They are also characterised by an absence of the desire for power, knowledge and money which characterised the blue and green segments.

The rose segment has an outlook on the surrounding world seen in relation to its own immediate environment dictating that the world becomes increasingly scary the more unfamiliar it gets. The rose segment is not focused on enjoyment right here right now like the blues, instead they save and use money with more care and consideration; in a similar way to the green, they focus on the process as well as the goal.

A main field of interest for the rose segment is nutrition, disease and health as well as a care for nature and the environment - as an example this segment is often, in spite of a tight financial situation, willing to pay more for organic food (website 9).

#### The violet segment

The violet segment can be categorised by a *traditional* and *pragmatic* set of values. Looking at traditionalism, the violets have a very traditional approach to work and management structures/authority. They often see work as a means to get money, material goods and time off (website 10), and they often do not have much to spend.

The violets strive for independence financially and socially and do not feel connected in particular to any group. Therefore none of the social or work relations contribute to formation of personality (website 9). This can be explained by a feeling of being rootless and not connected to today’s society and development, and often the violets are found in positions such as craftsmen and workers which are about to die out due to streamlining and technological development. The violet segment is practical, true handymen and look for physical experiences contrary to the greens who look for intellectual experiences through the mind. They believe in saving money by bartering and fixing the garage himself, moonlighting and dodging the tax system (website 9).

Furthermore, the violet segment can be characterised by scepticism with relation to everything that appears unfamiliar and foreign. They have a very deep-rooted belief that no one can be trusted till they have proven otherwise, and that most people are looking to deceive you, if they are given the chance. As a result, a negative attitude towards immigrates and refugees is a widespread opinion among this segment (website 9).

### Objective Characteristics

As described in section 4.2 Selecting the Target Audience, the following will provide a description of objective target group characteristics, which will function as an elaboration and further definition of the target audience. Gaining detailed knowledge of your target audience will be of great help during the later steps of the strategic planning process.

#### Demographics

Using demographic factors to select your target audience is not beneficial. They define the target market and not the target audience. However, it might be valuable to look into the demographic characteristics, as they could be helpful in further refining a chosen target audience (Percy et al 2009: 118-119).

If choosing to make use of these characteristics, there are pitfalls to watch out for. It is essential to understand that just because people are from a particular social class they do not necessarily act the same way. The same issue goes for grouping people according to age. Thus, demographics can be valuable if used in the correct way (Ibid: 118-119). They must *“… never be used as the primary selection criteria for a target audience, but they can often prove helpful in profiling the brand loyalty […] groupings for particular campaigns”* (Ibid: 119).

#### Geographics

As is the case for demographics, the geographics of the target audience might reveal interesting information which could be used in developing a communication strategy. Geographics is mostly tied to the target *market* descriptions clarifying whether dealing with communication aimed at more than one country, a small group of countries or just one particular country. Even if dealing with regional or local products it is most often worthwhile looking into the characteristics of these areas. The characteristics of specific locations might help define target audience preferences and attitudes which could be used in a communication strategy.

Nevertheless, geographics should never be used as the primary criteria for selecting a target audience, but merely assist in a more detailed understanding and description of the already established target audience. However, caution must be exercised when dealing with geographics in order to avoid the delusion that people who live in the same country or region always behave in the same way and hold the same attitudes (Percy et al 2009: 119-120).

#### Geodemographics

Geodemographics is basically the combination of geographic and demographic information which essentially means that neighbourhoods are classified on the basis of postal codes and certain demographic information - such as income and social class. It is assumed that *“… people who live in a particular neighbourhood will have similar buyer behaviour patterns*” (Percy et al 2009: 120). However, this is an extremely risky statement and a very weak foundation for a communication strategy, as there is nothing to support the claim that a connection exists between where a person lives and her/his attitude towards a specific brand or whether he/she will be more or less vulnerable or frustrated in a particular product category (Ibid: 120). Thus, geodemographics should never be used as a primary criterion for selecting a target audience, and should only be included in the communication strategy if a link between an already established target audience and geodemographic classifications is determined.

#### Social Class

In principle, social class is a demographic variable. Nevertheless, in some cases it could be viewed as a lifestyle variable, based on the statement that people from certain social classes tend to have similar lifestyles. However, as with all the above cases, the selection of a target audience should never be

based upon a social class variable. Doing so *“… can be misleading and prone to excessive generalisation*” (Percy et al 2009: 122).

## UNDERSTANDING TARGET AUDIENCE DECISION MAKING

Having examined how to determine *which* audience to target on the previous step, it is now necessary to learn how to understand this audience better[[6]](#footnote-6). Understanding how the target audience makes decisions when purchasing a product - within the specific product group in question – will enable the communicator to influence them positively with the most effective message on the most effective stage in the purchase process (Percy et al 2009: 148).

### The Decision-Making Process

The decision-making process consists of various stages which is why it is referred to as a *process*. The first stage is that of **need arousal** (Percy et al 2009: 147). After a need has been aroused in the heart or mind of the consumer, the next logical stage is for the consumer to research how to fulfil that need, a stage called **brand consideration** (Ibid), or, with a better term, **pre-purchase search** (Schiffman et al 2007: 531). Following that stage, the **action of purchase** is carried out (Percy et al 2009: 147). The fourth and final stage, Percy and Elliot refer to as **usage** and include this as a stage in the actual decision- making process (Ibid), as opposed to other descriptions where the usage is referred to as trial and is featured as a post-decision behaviour (Schiffman et al 2007: 531). The argument for including the usage as part of the decision-making is that the usage can be considered the first step towards deciding on repeating a purchase, and as such is both the beginning and the ending of the purchase decision process (Percy et al 2009: 142). We therefore choose to illustrate the decision process as below with an open arrow in front and an arrow pointing onwards from the stage of usage.

**Fig. 8** - *Generic Consumer Decision-Making Model (own illustration based on Percy et al 2009: 147)*

Knowing the stages which occur in the consumer decision-making process reveals that it is possible to influence the target audience at different stages. They can be influenced by creating need arousal, by providing information in the pre-purchase search that tips the balance towards a favourable attitude towards the specific brand, or they can be influenced by ensuring they get a good experience in the usage process by offering a product which (more than) satisfies their initial need (Percy et al 2009: 138ff), and reinforce this positive experience by follow-up communication, building a stronger brand attitude (Percy et al 2009: 148).

It is important to realise that the decision process is influenced by many factors, such as the targeted consumer’s social and cultural relations and environment as well as his or her personality and other psychological factors (Schiffman et al 2007: 531). Clearly a brand’s marketing efforts only represent part of the input leading to the decision making. A brand’s marketing efforts consist, as mentioned in chapter 2 Methodology and Data,of the marketing mix: product, price, place and promotion. Emphasising the focus of this thesis, the theory is in this context dealing with the influence of the promotion parameter, and specifically advertising, on the decision-making process.

### High or Low Involvement

If looking to influence the stage of pre-purchase search, it is important to consider the specific product category communicated and attempted advertised. Some product categories will be perceived by the consumer as having a high risk factor, and therefore the consumer will go through a more detailed search process before he or she is convinced enough to make a purchase (Percy et al 2009: 143). In other words, the consumer will be very involved in the purchase process, and therefore the product groups in question are defined as having high or low involvement (Percy et al 2009: 9).

There are two types of perceived consumer risk to be aware of in working with advertising. The first one is fiscal risk, which is present when a lot of money is involved in the purchase (Percy et al 2009: 142). The second risk factor is psychological risk, which becomes effective when there is high personal or social risk involved for the consumer in purchasing the product (Ibid). A situation with high psychological risk factor could e.g. be a consumer deciding to buy a product which is not accepted within the consumer’s social group or deciding to buy a brand which is not the socially favoured brand. In costly business-to-business purchases, the pre-purchase search can be very lengthy and consist of several product assessments and evaluations against potential demand (Percy et al 2009: 150), and it may therefore require additional effort and patience. In dealing with low-involvement products - posing low financial and psychological risk - consumers are more likely to switch when introduced to something new and interesting, depending on their level of satisfaction with their current brand use. When dealing with high-involvement products consumers tend to be more loyal, however the loyalty level also always requires a certain level of satisfaction (Percy et al 2009: 115f).

Apart from the considerations to be made when targeting the pre-purchase search, it is also worth considering that it will be more difficult to create a need at the stage of need arousal for something that is very costly and that the benefits already on this stage must be perceived as outweighing the costs/risk.

### Decision Participants and Communication Objectives

Understanding the decision-making process for the target audience also involves understanding that the target audience, though perceived as a group, consists of “individuals in a role” (Percy et al 2009: 141). This label of “individuals in a role” simply means that five different roles (potentially) are played out in the stages of the decision-making process by individuals in the target group (Percy et al 2009: 141). The **initiator**, who suggests the purchase, is found at the stage of need arousal. The **influencer**, who recommends or discourages the purchase, is found at the stage of pre-purchase search. The **decider**, who makes the actual choice of whether to purchase or not, also plays his or her part at the stage of pre-purchase search. The **purchaser**, who does the actual purchasing, is naturally found at the stage of purchase, and finally at the stage of usage, the **user** consumes or uses the product.

All of the above roles in the decision-making process can be carried out by one single consumer or they can be filled by several individuals (Percy et al 2009: 143). In a low involvement purchase, described above in section 4.3.2 High or Low Involvement, the role of the decider, who decides whether to purchase a product or not, will often be filled by one single individual. In high-involvement purchases, such as large and costly household purchases or major business purchases, the actual decision will, more often than not, be a joint decision carried out by a group of people of so-called deciders (Percy et al 2009: 142). It could for instance be both “mum and dad” as deciders in a family or a group of purchase managers as deciders in a business.

What is important to understand here is that it is these “individuals in a role at the stages in the decision-making process” who can be targeted with various types of communication efforts.

Elaborating on the description above in section 4.3.1 The Decision-Making Process, the decider can be targeted by creating or enforcing need arousal, or the influencer can be targeted to influence the decider positively and push for a purchase. In another scenario, the purchaser can be targeted in an attempt to convince him or her to make a different purchase than that guided by the decider, using communication efforts such as special promotional offerings or a point-of-sale message, swaying the purchaser at the critical moment (Percy et al 2009: 142). Finally, it is also possible to target the user and increase chances that he or she will become an initiator for a re-purchase.

The above targeting tactics is an aim to reach different communication objectives. There are three objectives which can be reached by communication and which can affect the decision-making process at different stages. The first objective is that of creating **brand awareness**. Brand awareness is to make the potential consumer aware of a brand or product (Percy et al 2009: 142). Or to put it in other terms, it is to create a memory link between the need that arises in the heart of the consumer and the feeling or knowledge that this particular brand or product can fulfil that need (Percy et al 2009: 411). The second communication objective is that of creating **brand attitude**. Creating brand attitude means to create favourable feelings in the heart of the consumer making him or her predisposed to act in a favourable manner regarding the brand (Schiffman et al 2007: G1). It could be to become a favourable influencer or to become the decider who favourably decides to purchase the brand. In other words, creating favourable attitude is “turning the consumer towards the brand” just as was defined to be the main objective of advertising in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation. The third, and last, objective is to create **brand purchase intention**. Just as creating brand awareness equals the objective of advertising, creating brand purchase intention equals the objective of promotion “to move forward sales now” which was also described in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation. Purchase intention is defined by having a positive disposition to purchase (Percy et al 2009: 411). This positive disposition to purchase is a result of a favourable brand attitude, and this is also in perfect accordance with prior descriptions of how advertising must be established before promotion.

Though all communication objectives are a priority for long-term market success, initial efforts, when entering a new market, should be focused on raising awareness, stimulating curiosity in the new product and creating an initial favourable brand attitude (Percy et al 2009: 141). Later messages can then begin to build a more substantial understanding of the product and address consumers in their roles as influencers and deciders (Ibid).

Summing up the main parts of this chapter, a schematic of the decision-making process, the individual roles carried out at each stage and the communication objectives which can be reached when targeting each stage, is laid out below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DECISION STAGE | DECISION ROLE | COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE |
| Need Arousal | Initiator | Brand Awareness andInitial Brand Attitude |
| Pre-purchase Search andBrand Consideration | Influencer | Brand Attitude |
| Pre-purchase Search andBrand Consideration | Decider | Brand Attitude andBrand Purchase Intention |
| Purchase | Purchaser | Brand purchase Intention |
| Usage | User | Brand Attitude |

**Fig. 9** - *Schematic of Decision Stages, Roles and Communication Objectives
(own illustration based on Percy et al 2009: 147)*

Thoroughly analysing the decision-making process should provide the answer to the question: *which individuals within the defined target audience should be targeted, at what stage should they be targeted, and with which communication objective?* [[7]](#footnote-7). If choosing to target at the stage of pre-purchase search, the gained knowledge of the decision-making process should also provide an insight into how much effort and information is needed in order to target that specific stage, depending on the product type and the involvement of the consumer.

## DETERMINING THE BEST POSITIONING

At the previous step, it was examined how a target audience makes decisions. At this step, understanding the audience is also the key. Determining the best positioning is defined as creating a differential advantage or competitive edge which will ensure the ability to serve a target market more effectively than any competitors (Percy et al 2009: 162). In this process, it does not matter how *we* as communicators define the market, the key is how *the consumer* sees the market (Percy et al 2009: 167). The competitors and the competing market are defined by how the consumer sees a group of products or brands compete in his or her mind as delivering the same **end benefit** and/or being usable in the same **usage situation** (Percy et al 2009: 166ff). In determining the best positioning, two very critical questions about the brand are answered: *What is it? And what does it offer?*  (Percy et al 2009: 161).

###  Defining the Market

To define this mentioned group of products or brands competing for the same usage situation or competing on delivering the same end benefit, Percy and Elliot advocate what is referred to as a hierarchical approach[[8]](#footnote-8). The hierarchical approach is based on the knowledge that when a consumer makes a purchase decision regarding a brand or product, it is always based on a prior *partitioning* of the product category (Percy et al 2009: 170). Partitioning a product category means that, in the mind of the consumer, the overall product category gets divided into competing subcategories and then further subdivided into even narrower competing subcategories (Percy et al 2009: 171), finally providing a set of somewhat substitutable brands from which to make a choice.

There are four bases for this partitioning process (Percy et al 2009: 171). The first one is a partitioning based on **product type**(Ibid), e.g. dividing an overall product category of sweets into liquorice, jellies, chocolate, and for some maybe also crisps or more snack-like products. The latter is the interesting part here because it depends on what the consumer desires from the product and which situation the product will be used in. In other words, it depends on the category need. This leads to the second and third base for partitioning which is exactly the previously mentioned **end benefit** and **usage****situation**(Ibid). Partitioning on the basis of these two factors, gives room for comparing brands and products which might not, category-wise, be obvious competitors, but which after all competes in the mind of the consumer to be used in the same situation. It could e.g. be crisps and popcorn competing in the sweets category in the usage situation of watching a movie. It could also be a luxury brand of chocolate competing with healthy luxury snacks to achieve the end benefit of impressing guests at a party, or various unrelated snacks competing to mainly just fulfil the end need of satisfying a mid-day hunger. As such the base of end benefit and usage situation provide a much broader and better understanding of the competing market, as opposed to that of just looking at product types. The fourth base for partitioning, dividing a product category by associations related to the **brand name***,* such as associations of high-quality or low-price(Ibid), is found to be more helpful in later considerations of positioning and defining attributes and benefits, than it is helpful in defining the market. Percy and Elliot illustrate a hierarchical positioning of the drinks market driven by end benefit and usage situation. Their example is copied below, as it presents a visual model-shaped example of the hierarchical approach and therefore provides a better understanding of this.

 **Fig. 10** – *Hierarchical Partitioning of the Drinks Market Driven by End Benefit and Usage Situation.*

The information and data needed to understand the target audience’s hierarchical partitioning of a product category, and thus understand the market in which a brand is competing, may vary. No matter how one obtains the information, it will have to include answers to questions such as **how** the target audience perceives the product (what kind of product is coffee?), **why** they use the product (why do you drink coffee?), **when** they use the product(when do you drink coffee?) and, finally*,* how they see **different brands** **in relation to each other** (what are the differences among various brands of coffee?) (Percy et al 2009: 172).

### Making Initial Positioning Decisions and Selecting Appropriate Benefits

Having defined a brand’s competitors and competing market by end benefit and usage situation, it is now possible to seek out a differential advantage with which the brand can be positioned on that market. Section 4.3.3 Decision Participants and Communication Objectives established that the first stage in any purchase decision process was need arousal and that the communication objective here would be to create brand awareness - to create a memory link between the category need and the brand as being in that category. It was also established that the secondary communication objective would be to create a favourable brand attitude supporting a favourable purchase decision - to create a memory link between a positive benefit and the brand as delivering that benefit. An effective brand positioning ensures those objectives (Percy et al 2009: 178).

A brand can be positioned either **centrally** or **differentially** (Percy et al 2009: 176). Choosing a central positioning means that the brand will take a leading position within its product category and type, and therefore it will also have to deliver on *all* the main benefits of the category (Ibid). Normally, this can only be done successfully by a strong market leader; the advantage is that the memory link and the brand awareness and attitude in the mind of the consumer will be quite strong as long as the perception of the brand - as living up to the category need and delivering on all benefits - is constantly confirmed (Ibid). However, therefore this positioning is also quite demanding in resource.

To make use of a differentiated positioning, **a key benefit or a number of key benefit*s* must be determined** **which *differ* from the primary category benefits and, more importantly, are *important* to the target audience and which the target audience can be persuaded that the brand delivers *better* than other brands on the market** (Percy et al 2009: 176-78).

### Understanding Consumer Motivation and Selecting Benefit Focus

Having selected a set of appropriate benefits, the final consideration to make in benefit positioning is deciding how to emphasise the determined benefit in any communication, or in other words, deciding on a benefit *focus* (Percy et al 2009: 183). To decide on a benefit focus, it is necessary to understand what motivates the selected target audience to purchase. The decision-making process has already been examined in section 4.3 Understanding Target Audience Decision Making, and revealed that a purchase is motivated by firstly a category need and secondly a brand need. However, the motivation for this need can be either **positively** or **negatively** oriented (Ibid).

 A negative purchase motivation is when a need arises as a result of the consumer facing a problem (Percy et al 2009: 208) or even a fear (Schiffman et al 2007: 87). The product or brand will in this case be the problem *solution* or even problem *avoidance* (Percy et al 2009: 208). An example of product categories which would normally be driven by a negative purchase motivation could be pain relievers or alarm systems. A positive purchase motivation on the other hand is when a need arises as a result of the consumer seeking more personal satisfaction (Ibid), and is driven by a need for *achievement* rather than avoidance. The purchase motivation will therefore be some variant of wish, want or hope to achieve a desirable positive end benefit.

Determining the nature of the motivation makes it possible to also determine a specific benefit focus. Deciding on a benefit focus presents various options because a benefit can be presented and experienced in different ways (Percy et al 2009: 183). A benefit can be **an objective attribute**, a component or characteristic of a product or brand such as the fact that it “contains 15% fibre” or “has no artificial colours”. Another benefit type is **the subjective characteristic**, which is a *claim* about the product, for example that it is “has never been easier to use” or that it “tastes like a piece of heaven”. A third type of benefit, which is even more subjective, is the benefit presented in the shape of **an emotion**, a feeling associated with the purchase and use of the product such as a promise that the product makes the consumer feel “happy” or “successful”.

Linking these benefit types with positive and negative purchase motivations reveals that a different focus and benefit type is required in each case (Percy et al 2009: 183). When the motivation is negative, *providing* *information*, thus *explaining* the solution to the problem is most effective. When the motivation is positive, the benefit focus is most effective in *addressing feelings* and suggesting what the consumer will *achieve emotionally* (Ibid).

In positioning a product which is dominated by a negative purchase motivation four information-based focuses are presented. The first information-based possibility is to focus purely and directly on objective attributes. This somewhat “dry” focus is most effective when dealing with an expert audience looking for specific data only (Percy et al 2009: 183). Choosing to draw attention to subjective informational claims which it has been determined that the audience is looking for in the product - and maybe even support this claim with an objective attribute - is another possibility which has the advantage of making the benefits more believable and convincing (Ibid). Lastly, it is a possibility to focus on a negative emotion or a problem which will fade away or be solved by a subjective characteristic of the brand (Ibid).

Positioning a product which is dominated by a positive purchase motivation presents two emotion-heavy focuses. Specifically, it will prove effective to either focus on a subjective characteristic which will lead to an emotion, or to focus directly on creating pure emotion (Percy et al 2009: 183).

Percy and Elliot’s schematic of benefit focus in positioning is shown below. However, we have provided our own examples to illustrate the various focuses.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Motivation | Benefit Focus | Example |
| Negative | 1. **Objective Attribute** *only*
 | “Contains **no allergenic ingredients**” (avoids problem) |
| 1. **Subjective Characteristic** without support
 | “Now even **easier** to use - just spray and keep the bugs way!”(avoids problem)  |
| 1. **Subjective Characteristic** supported by **Objective Attribute**
 | “Chosen **best** anti-wrinkle cream on the market in a **poll** of 9.000 consumers”(avoids problem) |
| 1. **Negative Emotion** solved by **Subjective Characteristic**
 |  “Hate **being late**? xxx is **more precise** than any other watch on the market” (avoids problem)   |
| Positive | 1. **Subjective Characteristic** leading to **Emotion**
 | Xxx ice cream – “pure **taste**, pure **joy**!” (achieves joy) |
| 1. Pure **Emotion** Focus
 | “Eat pasta **the Italian way**!”(achieves a feeling of Italy, excitement, difference from everyday boring life, etc.) |

 **Fig. 11** – *Benefit Focus in Positioning (Percy et al 2009: 184) - own examples*

## DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The previous sections have described the initial planning stages - how to select a target audience, how to understand how this target audience makes their purchase decisions, and how to position a brand to this audience. This section will on the basis of the previous steps explore how to decide on a communication strategy.

In section4.3.3 Decision Participants and Communication Objectives, it was established that there are three communication objectives which can be reached by targeting individuals in roles on the various stages of the decision-making process. In laying out a communication strategy to achieve those communication objectives, this thesis limits its focus to communication strategies of **brand awareness** and **brand attitude**, as the third objective, brand purchase intention, is primarily an objective of promotion (Percy et al 2009: 198). This thesis, as clarified in section 2.1 Thesis focus and Limitation, focuses on the component of advertising and “moving the consumer towards the product”, and therefore does not focus on how to create purchase intention in any other form or shape than as a direct result of brand awareness and attitude.

### Brand Awareness Strategies

Establishing brand awareness requires the existence of a category need, so that a link, as mentioned, can be established between the category need and the brand as fulfilling that need. In some cases, when entering a new market or targeting new consumers, a category need must be established along with the brand awareness (Percy et al 2009: 196). However, when establishing a category need it also establishes a need for the competitors, therefore it is important to *also* establish brand awareness. It could for example be to establish a need for a new kind of technology, for example mp3 players, and then establish a brand awareness; that Samsung delivers in that category. All communication objectives are actually valid on a category level, much like on the brand level (Percy et al 2009: 196). A category awareness that mp3 players exist, or an attitude to the technology in itself may exist and may influence the communication strategy on a brand level. However, when entering a market with a new brand in a known product category, it is more than likely that the chosen targeted audience will be existing users of the product, and efforts can therefore be focused on communication strategies on brand level.

The importance of creating brand awareness lies in the fact that consumers *will not* buy if they do not have a category need, but they *cannot* buy if they do not know - have awareness - of the brand (Percy et al 2009: 196). Therefore creating brand awareness is essential to entering a new market. There are three communication strategies for brand awareness - to create **brand recognition** or **brand recall** or, in limited cases, to use a combined focus on the two(Percy et al 2009: 199).

The fundamental difference between brand recognition and brand recall is that it depends on which communication effect occurs *first* in the mind of the consumer (Percy et al 2009: 199). Planning market communication according to a recognition strategy, the aim is to remind the consumer of the category need and the brand need at the point of purchase (Percy et al 2009: 192). In effect the consumer will *recognise* the brand when shopping, be reminded that he or she needs “one of those”, and then be favourable towards that particular brand – partially because of recognition, partially because of a favourable brand attitude which will be adjusted to fit this awareness strategy. With this strategy communication efforts should aim to create attention and recognition through *visual* branding, recognisable brand features, slogans or brand names[[9]](#footnote-9).

In planning market communication according to a market recall strategy, the need occurs first, and the recognition of the brand as fulfilling that need will appear in the mind of the consumer as a result (Percy et al 2009: 192). To clarify with an example (of our own), the consumer will realise a need that has to be fulfilled, such as the need for something sweet, decides on chocolate among the competing categories, weigh which benefits of the chocolate he or she is looking for (e.g. creamy or nutty) and then *recall* the brand, e.g. marabou, as fulfilling that need. Naturally, communication efforts here should be aimed at creating or fortifying that memory link and linking the brand *name* with the product *category*. It is worth noticing that a strong memory link as the brand fulfilling the need naturally would require a favourable brand attitude.

### Brand Attitude Strategies

The preferred strategy for creating a favourable attitude depends on the objective. A strategy may focus on *increasing* or *maintaining* favourable attitudes, *modifying* or even *changing* less favourable attitudes towards a product or brand (Percy et al 2009: 201). However, in the specific situation when entering a new market, introducing a new brand, the focus need only be on *creating* brand attitude (Percy et al 2009: 202), as there is no existing attitudes towards the brand to alter.

To understand how to create brand attitude, it is important to first understand what an attitude actually consists of in more detail. An attitude is made up of three components, a cognitive component, an affective component and a conative component (Schiffman et al 2007: 242). The cognitive component is the part of the attitude which is made up of *knowledge* and perceptions about the brand based on personal experience (in cases of re-purchase) or based on information from various sources (Ibid). In an attitude strategy targeting the cognitive component, the communicators/advertisers would naturally aim to be one of those “various sources”. The cognitive component is based on various beliefs, and as such the cognitive component also represents the strength of the link between the category need and the belief that the brand fulfils that need (Percy et al 2009: 206).

The affective component is the part of the attitude based on *emotions* and *feelings* towards the product or brand (Ibid). It is another possibility to influence this component and thus aim to create favourable emotions. The conative component is concerned with behaviour as a result of the other two components and as such represents the intention to buy (Ibid). This has, however, more to do with the focus of promotion as described earlier, and therefore this attitude component will not be considered in the further work.

Choosing which strategy to use in building attitude, it is necessary to go back to the previous examinations of involvement in section 4.3.2 High or Low Involvement and motivation in section 4.4.4 Understanding Consumer Motivation and Selecting Benefit Focus. It is the level of involvement and the underlying positive or negative motivation which defines which attitude strategy will be most effective. With low-involvement purchase decisions, it is only necessary for the target audience to notice the message and derive something positive from it to be persuaded to try the brand (Percy et al 2009: 209). Because the risk is low, curiosity will often be a factor and with trial the foundation for a positive attitude is formed. With high- involvement purchase decisions on the other hand, because the risk and personal or financial investment is high, the target audience must first accept that the message and the benefits are true (Ibid). So here the cognitive component and the underlying beliefs come into play, and providing information, *knowledge*, and building beliefs must be in focus.

Motivation is, as described, linked to emotion. However, this does not mean that it is the affective component which is central to a strategy affecting negatively motivated purchase decisions. When targeting negative motivations, *information* and knowledge must be provided to help solve the (negative) problem (Percy et al 2009: 209). When targeting purchase decisions which are motivated by a positive desire for achievement, positive *feelings* or a positive mood must be established (Ibid).

The Rossiter-Percy Grid below provides an overview of the four attitude strategies available for products with respectively high or low involvement and positive or negative motivation.

* Information must be provided to solve the problem
* The target audience must be convinced
* We need to persuade them
* Focus on benefit claim(s)
* Present problem first, *then* the solution (the brand)
* Present the benefit claim in the extreme
* Emotional portrayal of the benefit
* Offer the benefit as a reward for using the product
* The benefit must “ring true” and have emotional authenticity
* Must satisfy an underlying motivation
* Information must be provided to overcome risk
* Must have emotional authenticity AND personal identification

INVOLVEMENT

High

Low

MOTIVATION

Informational
(negative)

**Transformational**(positive)

**Fig. 12** - *Brand Attitude Strategy Quadrants
(own illustration based on Percy et al 2009: 210)*

In the quadrants above, key strategic considerations have been added which are crucial to the four different approaches. When dealing with a **low involvement informational brand attitude strategy**, the message should be concerned with claiming the benefit as the solution to the problem (Percy et al 2009: 210). The format to do this is to focus on the problem not the brand, to present the problem *first* and *then* the benefit (the brand) as the solution. Also the benefit may here be presented in an exaggerated way, as it, because of the low risk, does not matter if the benefit is believed to be fully true, only that it might be true (Ibid).

Implementing a **low-involvement transformational brand attitude strategy**, due to the positive motivation and the desire to achieve an end benefit, the benefit must be presented as a reward for using the product and brand (Percy et al 2009: 211). The benefit must be described in a layer of emotion, the joyful emotions from achieving the end benefit. In this case it is important that the message has emotional authenticity. The authenticity of the emotion means that the audience has to feel it as real and should be able to imagine it as real for him or herself, not that it is “real” in the technical sense of the word (Ibid). **The fact that Percy and Elliot use a term such as authenticity in their theory as part of a “traditional” advertising strategy indicates to us that the need for authenticity is becoming generally accepted, and that our initial thesis framework is accurate.**

Marketing a product with high risk where a purchase is negatively motivated, the most effective strategy will be a **high-involvement informational brand attitude strategy**. Due to the problem oriented message, information must be provided on *how* to solve the problem where the brand or the benefit from the brand naturally is the solution. However, due to the high risk, the benefit claim needs to be very convincing and must therefore be supported with a high level of information (Percy et al 2009: 214). In other words, the target audience must be convinced of the factual authenticity of the benefits.

The last attitude strategy in the quadrant is the **high-involvement transformational brand attitude strategy**. Here the message must also be perceived as “being true” because of the high risk level, and therefore information must be provided to convince the target audience and to overcome potential problems related to the risk. What is more, because the motivation is a personably desirable benefit, the message must truly arouse the feelings related to that desire. In this process the consumer must be able to personally identify with the brand and the values represented (Percy et al 2009: 217). This will also make them more willing to run the risks involved in the purchase.

In closing it can be seen that with regard to message appeal, negatively motivated purchases are best influenced by what, in rhetorical theories, is referred to as logos (Percy et al 2009: 10). To make use of logos is to appeal to the rational mind and to make use of a presentation of evidence in a sober tone (Jørgensen et al 2002: 62). Positive motivated purchases are on the contrary best influenced by a pathos appeal, involving the target audience on a personal level and provoking emotions (Jørgensen et al 2002: 64). Expanding on this thought, because of the need for persuasion, high involvement purchases could be argued to require an ethos appeal which deals with the character of the sender of the message or, in marketing aspects, with the company behind the brand (Jørgensen et al 2002: 62). In forming beliefs as part of the cognitive component of an attitude, this could include a forming a belief of the trust-worthiness and authenticity of the company, the benefits and the overall message put forward.

# GREEN MARKETING

Communicating a company’s green credentials is essential in order to inform the public of *“… what you are doing and what the value is to the buyer”* (website 6). However, this is far from an easy task**. One thing to keep in mind is that people might be interested in a product’s greenness; however, this will not be the sole criterion for evaluating the product. The quality and value of the product must not be disregarded, because they are still important to the consumers** (website 6). As described in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation, this theory section is intended to form strategies on communicating a product’s greenness supporting the traditional communication strategies on advertising traditional quality and value (benefits), as explored in chapter 4 Strategic Advertising Management.

John Grant’s green marketing grid, which will be explored below, is based on the belief that green marketing can be combined with traditional marketing ideas and aims and that marketing as a profit-focused genre, with effort, can be combined with communicating green, which is perceived as driven by more noble intentions, without backfiring into accusations of greenspin and greenwashing as described in the introduction.

His grid is based on an understanding that in order to effectively communicate green credentials, it is necessary to leave **Traditional Image Marketing** and embrace a **New Marketing** concept. Basically, the New Marketing concept means turning away from selling an image *to* people and turning to a new communication approach which encourages consumer *engagement* (Grant 2008: 1-11), and involving people in the brand. New Marketing is about engaging and educating consumers rather than seducing them with empty promises and fake images (Ibid: pp. 47-48). As a direct opposite to fake imagery, and as a prerequisite for brand involvement, a new concept of authenticity has appeared, as introduced in chapter 3 Authenticity. This concept has great significance in New Marketing, and will be referenced continuously in the model below.

## THE GREEN MARKETING GRID

The green marketing grid presents nine green marketing strategies. This is done on the basis of a grid presenting three levels of greenness defining the product type - **green**, **greener and greenest** - and three layers of operation defining which level marketing initiatives operate on – **public**, **social and personal** - resulting in the nine strategies, as seen below. The three levels of greenness individually have three different objectives indicated at the lowest level of the model – to **set new standards** (including only traditional commercial objectives), **to share responsibility** (extended to include green objectives and involve people in a shared responsibility of being green) or to **support innovation** (includes an objective of making green alternatives socially accepted) (Grant 2008: 47-48).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level of greennessLayers of operation | **A: GREEN** | **B: GREENER** | **C: GREENEST** |
| **1: PUBLIC**Company and Markets | ***Set an Example****Framing vs. Pointing* | ***Develop the Market****Educate vs. Evangelise* | ***New Business Concepts****Social production vs. Property* |
| **2: SOCIAL**Brands and Belonging | ***Credible Partners****Eco-Labels vs. Cause-Related* | ***Tribal Brands****Exclusive vs. Inclusive* | ***Trojan Horse Ideas****Tradition vs. New cool* |
| **3: PERSONAL**Products and Habits | ***Market a Benefit****Less vs. more* | ***Change Usage****Switch vs. Cut* | ***Challenge Consuming****Treasure vs. Share* |
| Objective of greenness | Set New StandardsCommunicate | Share ResponsibilityCollaborate | Support InnovationReshape Culture |

**Fig. 13** - *Green Marketing Grid (Grant 2008: 69)*

### Green

The level green covers products that are *“… greener than the substitutes and competitors rather than measured against an absolute ideal*” (Ibid: 61). What is indicated by this quote is that products that fall under this heading are green, however, only to a certain degree. The marketing objective pursued within this category only addresses **commercial** outcomes, which means that the goal is to generate brand awareness and a perceived superiority compared to competing brands. There is no or little consumer brand engagement or involvement as described as the objective in New Marketing above. The largest concern at play here is convincing the consumers that the brand lives up to the standards expressed, and avoid being accused of greenwashing or greenspin.

Traditional image marketing, *forcing* through an image as described in the beginning of this chapter, should be avoided in selling green products, due to its selective nature and its tendency to exaggerate – selecting a small green effort and on the basis of that branding the entire company as green. Giving something a green image is equal to claiming virtue, and virtue is not something that can be proclaimed, it is what others deduce from your actions (Ibid: 78). Besides from this, claiming virtue can *“… lead to a crucifixion*” (Ibid: 81). In today’s society information moves fast and there are a number of ways to reveal whether or not a company lives up to the standards they themselves have set. As described in the Introduction, the revelation of a dishonest claim can result in serious damage to a company’s reputation (Ibid: 81).

To clarify with an example (of our own), the cleaning brand Ajax might take measures to make their cleaning products more environmentally friendly, as a result of the way the market is moving. However, their brand is not known as an overall green brand and their production might not be entirely green. Therefore, they could focus on the new initiatives, but proclaiming an interest in saving the environment which is more than commercial and branding themselves as a green company could backfire and be damaging to the brand.

### Greener

On the product level greener the focus is expanded to the inclusion of consumers and the key words on this level are *collaboration* and *participation.* The strategy strived for within this category is in support of the new marketing concept, engaging the consumers in the green brand, as described in the beginning of this chapter, and *“it embraces such developments as word of mouth, brand experiences and events, education and community*” (Ibid: 63). With reference to the three marketing objectives introduced earlier, this category strives to achieve both **commercial** and **green** outcomes – make a profit while also taking responsibility for bettering the environment by being green. Opposed to the products which are at the level of green, advertising of greener products is considered a useful tool, seeing that the objective is not to sell a brand’s or company’s greenness, but more an attempt to involve people in a public scheme, community or activity. However, a noticeable change of consumer behaviour or a change in lifestyle is not the main intention of this marketing strategy (Ibid: 63-64). It is merely to convince consumers to replace a traditional product with a green alternative and not to introduce an entirely new product group or lifestyle as can be seen at the next level.

Basically, the objective on this level, the level greener, deals with a shift from *selling* to *sharing* enthusiasm, and as such represents three essential features (Ibid: 134):

1. *A bigger enthusiasm, clearly separate from just “buy my brand”*
2. *Ways the audience can contribute and participate*
3. *A bigger outcome, the commercial results being a by-product of this*

To clarify with an example (of our own) which stays within the cleaning category, a product which belongs on this level could be the cleaning brand Froggy which is an overall green product based on green values and ideals. However, it is not a product type which revolutionises the world or provides a changed lifestyle.

### Greenest

Jumping to the greenestproduct category, the expression *green innovation revolution* covers the main focus. What this means is that this category involves revolutionary new ideas which could bring about a dramatically greener way of life. For that reason a huge challenge lies in combining *“radical new products, services and daily habits with utterly normal and acceptable cultural codes*” (Ibid: 64). In other words, the objective is to make new greener products and new green lifestyles seem normal, in order for it to gain wide social acceptance. Thus, this last category deals with all three marketing objectives in the grid – **commercial objectives, green encouragement** and **social change.**

The grounds for achieving these objectives are that it is not enough to merely replace traditional products with green alternatives to save the world. More extensive measures need to be taken and we need a change in attitude and ways of doing things. As John Grant puts it (Ibid: 189):

**“We consumed our way into this mess and I think there are grounds for doubt that we can entirely consumerise our way out of it”**

This leads back to the innovative nature of this category, because ***“…*** *with big changes come big entrepreneurial opportunities”* (Ibid: p. 189). A change needs to happen in how people view green lifestyle products, because up until now it has been widely characterised by **greenophobia** – a number of relatively unfounded beliefs and attitudes about green products (Ibid: 200):

* *They are primitive, dirty, rough, smelly, unpleasant*
* *They are a step back from modern living standards*
* *They are inconvenient, time-consuming*
* *They represent a sacrifice, the loss of benefits and satisfaction*
* *They can be uncomfortable*
* *With no compensating positive benefits other than “virtue”*
* *They are weird, for weird people, hippy*
* *They are part of a fixed lifestyle, you’d have to conform*
* *They are more expensive and less effective*

On this level, it is crucial to focus on consumers’ fear that green products will force them to make compromises on living standards and product standards. Green products must add fun, style and forms of enjoyment as well as meeting the same needs as less green alternatives do. Therefore, a huge challenge lies in developing products/brands that are innovative – radically different and better – and then framing them in a way that makes usage feel intuitive, familiar and easy to adopt (Ibid: 201-211).

To illustrate with an example (of our own), the change from gasoline fuelled cars to first hybrid cars and now fully electrical alternatives, are innovations which requires a change in lifestyle and acceptance. The use of hybrid and electrical cars has slowly undergone a development from being hippie to hip, but is still facing commercial challenges because the use represents physical changes from refuelling to recharging, and carries with it a change in driving behaviour. Also, electrical cars still have a somewhat negative image when it comes to driving power and ease.

### Public

The next three sections, including this one moves onto explain the three vertical layers in the grid. The layers of public, social and personal indicates the level of operation, the level which marketing initiatives operate on. These concepts belong in the world of sociology which sees *“… society as operating simultaneously on these three (partially) independent levels”* (Ibid: 65). The public level of marketing operations deals with a general approach representing the entire company story as the brand – the corporate brand (Grant 2008: 66). Also, the level covers dealing on a broad public scale with a broad target market, marketing products which are accessible to the public as a whole and can be found in every home.

Due to a rise in marketing literacy and cynicism, people are increasingly seeing through brands, and uncovering the true story behind them, just as described in the introduction of this thesis. Also, companies and marketers might feel that brands are losing their mystique, and consumers increasingly doubt that companies have any interest but their own at heart.

Therefore, when operating at the public level, appealing broadly with a corporate brand, a new framework for the appraisal of brands based on creating general trustworthiness of the brand as a whole is applied (Ibid: 67). Operating on this level it is not possible for a company to hide behind a brand or product, the company is extended to be the brand.

An example (of our own) to illustrate a brand operating on the public level would be the company and the brand Apple which, today, is embraced by almost everybody in the younger generation and is not necessarily a brand representing a specific social identity as can be seen below.

### Social

The social level of marketing operations is dealing with the notion that a product or service can have social meanings – e.g. reinforce a person’s identity. The brand appeals to the consumer in a social context and includes them in a community or group (Grant 2008: 67).

As mentioned above, people are increasingly seeing through brands, and are thereby less likely to confuse a cool ad with a cool brand. In addition, it has become harder to market social meanings, because people are more reluctant to being labelled. Therefore, a key word on the social level is yet again authenticity.

An example here (of our own) would be high-end fashion brands such as Louis Vuitton positioning themselves as a brand of high social class and social status or the fashion brand Billabong positioning themselves as a surfer brand.

### Personal

The personal level of marketing operations deals with purchases that others are not expected to know of, and which spring from own personal needs, tastes, habits and experiences (Grant 2008: 68-69).

Much consumption at the personal level is **inconspicuous consumption**, meaning that it is done by habit or passivity. In a green context this could e.g. be recycling, changing light bulbs, taking public transport and the like. It is not something which is thought about, and it is not something which is shared with the world. Therefore, also when people do *not* buy environmentally friendly products, it may very well be due to habit rather than a reluctance to “let go of life’s luxuries” (Ibid: 68-69).

## THE NINE GREEN STRATEGIES

Based on the three levels of greenness and the three levels of operation described above, nine different communication strategies will be reached. As such having a product which belongs at the level of green (A) and operates on the marketing level of social status (2) will be the communication strategy A2. Each of these strategies will be explored and explained in its own section below.

### Setting an Example (A1)

This strategy deals with products which are **green** as defined in section 5.1.1 Green. These green products are operating on a **public** marketing level as described in section 5.1.4 Public. The objectives of this strategy are purely commercial as is also described in section 5.1.1 Green.

Keeping the pitfalls related to having a commercial objective for a green product in mind; how is it then possible to convey messages concerning a company’s values, principles and activities without it appearing as greenspin? The way to successful communication, in this case, is making it very clear *why* the company is letting people know about its green initiatives (Grant 2008: 70-71). The recipe for this is seven steps that must be taking into consideration (Ibid: 101-102) as listed below:

1. *Acknowledge that the situation is new, explain why and how you are changing*
2. *Get the substance right, and be very concrete and transparent about how you report it*
3. *Make sure your own people are involved first, enthused, and on board*
4. *Report humbly on progress (rather than claiming to be instantly perfect)*
5. *Speak when asked questions, be interviewed, get into dialogues*
6. *Set out some ambitious tough standards; ones that are hard for others to follow*
7. *Let others (media, NGO’s) tell the story*

Having reflected on the above, it is time to consider which *specific* commercial strategy to follow. In doing so, two specific strategies can be applied named **framing** and **pointing.**

**The framing approach** is the idea that any communication has to be appropriately framed according to the accepted perceptions on the market in which a brand competes. It is an accepted fact that all aspects of life are framed, creating meaning and significance. Thus, if facts do not fit the commonplace and accepted frames existing in society, they will bounce off and fall through (Grant, 2008: 103). Basically, there are two strategies for framing:

* Framing the use of the product as familiar, intuitive and applying accessible frames; or
* Frame the opposing situation (not using the product) as alienating, scary and threatening (However this does not mean to use scapegoats to enhance your own good example, as that will merely backfire as claiming your own virtue)

The essence here is not to treat company branding as product branding. “The consumers were not born yesterday, and neither was your company” (Grant 2008: 104). Therefore, it is important in the framing that it is the entire story which is told. A popular company story in this context is that of the company being born as a true environmental believer, which is a very attractive story of redemption (Ibid: 104-105).

**The Pointing Approach** basically involves pointing to good examples; e.g. concrete products and previous green initiatives increasing trustworthiness. If a company has previously proven their good will to become green, it makes it more believable. The pointing approach also involves focusing on facts, pointing out proof.

In most cases people think in both broadly framed categories and world views and also in specific examples, which mean that it would probably be wise to draw on both the framing and the pointing approach with a green level product on a public scale. More specifically, it could be beneficial to both draw attention to the general quality of being green, but also to direct attention to a list of unique special features (Grant 2008: 110).

### Credible Partners (A2)

This strategy is applicable to products which are **green** as defined in section 5.1.1 Green. These green products are operating on a **social** marketing level as described in section 5.1.5 Social. The objectives of this strategy are purely commercial as is also described in section 5.1.1 Green.

Choosing this strategy is choosing a communication strategy which appeals to people on a more social and emotional level. What is meant by this is that people identify with the image, values, identity, personality of the product/brand being marketed much as characterised by operating on the social level described on section 5.1.5 Social.

This might seem easy, however with a nature of products which is only green (not greener or greenest), one has to be extremely careful not to end up being labelled as a greenwashed brand. The road to success in this case is to partner with a brand that already enjoys wide acceptance and credibility. In that way a company avoids claiming green credentials and instead shines in the light of another brand’s success. Thereby, it is possible to build a brand image, while at the same time staying credible (Grant 2008: 110-111). Working on this level with a partnership strategy, two different approaches are often chosen named the **accreditation** approachand the **cause-related** approach.

**The accreditation approach** focuses on obtaining one or more eco-labels. Eco-labels are brands that are separated from any commercial objectives and are issued to products by political and green institutions based on clear guidelines and standards for what is considered “eco”. In other words, these labels set different green standards, and if companies fulfil these, they are rewarded by being allowed to use a specific label in their communication strategy.

The upside of labelling is that it can increase the credibility and transparency of the product/brand and in that way help people in their purchase decisions. The drawback of eco-labels is that it could lull the company into a false sense of greenness and be a pretext for inaction. Take for example a product using an eco-label that proves a company has fulfilled certain green restrictions in the production phase, however, what about the miles that the product has been transported before ending up in a store? What if the consumers suddenly decide to focus on that? In this way, it is important to bear in mind that eco-labels can be selective (Grant 2008: 111-115).

**The cause-related approach** is a very commonly used partnership strategy. As the term indicates, the core idea of this strategy is relating a brand/product to a well respected good cause. Making use of a good cause in a communication strategy can produce great results for a company’s brand; however, often it does little good for the actual cause or charity. Take for example a situation where a company donates a few pence to a charity each time people buy a certain product, but compared to the company profit, the donated amount may appear kind of insignificant. Using this tactic might give people the impression that they are doing more than they actually are (Grant 2008: 115-120). And I revealed, it can be problematic if the company are self-proclaimed “rescuers”.

### Marketing a Benefit (A3)

This strategy deals with products which are **green** as defined in section 5.1.1 Green. These green products are operating on an **individual** marketing level as described in section 5.1.6 Personal. The objectives of this strategy are purely commercial as is also described in section 5.1.1 Green.

The strategy of marketing a benefit is in other words determining a unique selling proposition based on unique features and benefits. Green products are often positioned in one of two ways*“… by being stripped down and cheap or by being niche and premium”* (Grant 2008: 125), also referred to as the **less** approach and the **more** approach.

**The less Approach** is about value for money, convenience and other such basic benefits. Value for money is not necessarily limited to negative associations such as cheap and stripped-down, it could also mean longer-lasting (Grant 2008: 126). In addition, eco-design is also associated with clever design (Ibid: 127).

**The more approach** isconcerned with added benefits which spring directly from the environmental credentials. These benefits could be naturalness, taste, health or even luxury. These products may be more expensive compared to the competition, but if the product both have green credentials as well as added value, people may be willing to pay the price (Ibid: 127-131). Functionality and simplicity are key words in the less approach. In contrast, the more approach focuses on luxury, nuance, and a more personal and indulgent vision of brands as part of a certain quality of life.

### Sharing Responsibility (B1)

This strategy deals with products which are **greener** as defined in section 5.1.2 Greener. These greener products are operating on a **public** marketing level as described in section 5.1.4 Public. The objectives of this strategy are both commercial and green as is also described in section 5.1.2 Greener.

Keeping the green objectives in mind, companies have a great chance at influencing the public to support a sustainable way of life. This is most easily done if the target public is made up of ethical consumers. The ethical consumer is a person who has sufficient knowledge of green issues to make informed judgements of products, brands and companies. A well informed consumer will find it more interesting to *actively* participate in green debates and make an effort to make the world a better place to live. On that basis, there are two main approaches which can be applied when dealing with greener products for the broad masses; the **education** approach and the **evangelising** approach (Ibid: 139-140).

**The education approach** is a communication strategy which basically builds knowledge rather than building an image. By educating people in ethical consumerism, and encouraging them by pointing to the fact that they are *already* green consumers, it will become a smaller psychological step to do more and do more with their brand. Due to its educational nature, this strategy often keeps the accusation of greenwashing at bay (Grant 2008: 141-145).

**The Evangelising Approach** integrates political values into all activities of a company such as done by Body Shop or the Jamie Oliver brand and encourages supportive behaviour in the public. It may be easier to encourage people to save the world by buying a political statement product or signing a partition than encouraging individual initiative and radical behaviour change (Grant 2008: 149).

The upside of this strategy is that the extensiveness and the political nature of the approach make the effort appear serious and authentic. The downside is that the consumers may ask themselves; *will the company stick to the policies*? Some may doubt the real motives for promoting these political policies and whether the company will abandon these policies the moment they cease to add positively to the commercial return (Ibid: 146-149).

### Social and Tribal Brands (B2)

This strategy deals with products which are **greener** as defined in section 5.1.2 Greener. These greener products are operating on a **social** marketing level as described in section 5.1.4 Public. The objectives of this strategy are both commercial and green as is also described in section 5.1.2 Greener.

This particular strategy is targeting the desire to belong to a tribe or community - sharing an identity.
The challenge here is the online nature of many communities formed today. They differ from communities in old times in being more *“… fluid networks of inclusion, rather than static, exclusive sets”* (Grant 2008: 153). What this means is that one might be part of a group - share interests, tastes, passions and ideologies - although this is not equivalent to stating that these people are characterised by similar professions, social class, voting intentions and so on. People can share similar interests and tastes without sharing many other resemblances (Grant 2008: 153).

With regard to being green and belonging to a green community, it was traditionally viewed as a style tribe *“… associated with niche identities such as vegan, anti-vivisectionist, conservationist, activist, NGO worker or hippy”* (Ibid: p. 154). Thus, green was equal to a certain style. Furthermore, there was an exclusion effect on those outside this “style”. This attitude needs to change for society to change. Green needs to be made more fun and sexy, especially since civil society does not respond well to scolding as the basis for behaviour change. The old green images needs to be exchanged with a new more seductive, mediated, glamorous green (Ibid: 154-155). This could be a core green objective for this strategy.

In creating identity and social belonging two approaches can be used - the **envy (exclusive) iconic** approachand the **empathy (inclusive) iconic** approach. Basically, the choice is based on the question whether a brand is exclusive – *does it offer to make you better than others? –* or inclusive – *does it make you feel at one with other people?* (Ibid: 156)

**The Envy (Exclusive) Iconic Approach** deals, as the name states, with envy. The point is to make the green products superior/elitist and attractive both in design and functionality according to the principle that *“… humans learn what to desire by taking other people as models to imitate”* (Grant 2008: 163). Many people might for instance desire a green product merely because they see a celebrity use it, and want to be associated with the particular identity this person symbolises – it adds some superior value to the product. The road to success for marketing products in the greener category, when dealing with envy, is to take something that is already “cool” and then add a green “twist” to it. One thing to remember in the communication is that dealing with envy is dealing with negative emotions (Ibid: 156-164).

**The Empathy (Inclusive) Iconic Approach**, as opposed to the envy approach, deals with empathy and attempts to create social cohesion. Social cohesion needs to exist or otherwise no community would be able to subsist. With that focus, empathy deals in positive emotions of inclusion and coexistence. Products will be accessible, and companies engage in the attempt to get the public to actively cooperate on developing a sustainable society (Grant 2008: 165-169).

It can be questioned whether the envy approach is advantageous with regard to establishing sustainability and other greener objectives in a world with great wealth gaps. It has the ability to successfully create attractive and “cool” brands; however, because this strategy targets limited social groups with limited accessibility, it will often leave the society at large as it were, and with the same assumptions on sustainability (Ibid: 171).

Additionally, it would be worth targeting more specifically than is done in mass marketing, seeing that the adoption and survival potential of a brand depends on adoption by a tribe or community. It is *“… their brand and they manufacture much of the meaning and folklore”* (Ibid: 172). Nevertheless, mass marketing can become a valuable marketing tool subsequent to adoption, after the brand has been created and established within a community, using e.g. the envy approach to market a desire to the masses of being included in the brand and community.

### Changing Usage (B3)

This strategy deals with products which are **greener** as defined in section 5.1.2 Greener. These greener products are operating on a **personal** marketing level as described in section 5.1.6 Personal. The objectives of this strategy are both commercial and green as is also described in section 5.1.2 Greener.

The essence of this strategy is to get consumers to “do their bit” and become responsible green consumers. This requires a great deal of company involvement and cooperation with consumers, in order to determine what sort of behaviour consumers can reasonably contribute with. In accordance with the objectives described in section 5.1.2 Greener, *lifestyle* changes are not the green objective, so the changes proposed will have to be minor and will have to be “reasonable”. E.g. **switch** a product with a green alternative or **cut** down usage of non-green products, using less toilet roll or make minimum use of the tumbler (Grant 2008: 173).

**The switch approach** is attempting to break with the traditional perception that a greener and more ecological lifestyle requires compromise and sacrifice. The switch strategy addresses the issue of developing green products which make *“… sure that changing to a better behaviour involves a minimum of cost, effort or sacrifice”* (Grant 2008: 179). Thus, seeing that these products will be near identical to the less green alternatives and offered at the same price or a small price premium, they will be highly competitive in marketing terms, in addition to setting a good example. This will be a significant point of differentiation, in comparison with competing brands (Ibid: 179-182).

**The cut approach** is concerned with reducing purchases or limit use of a product once bought. It is relatively uncomplicated to get people to *use responsibly,* whereas it is less simple to make them *reduce purchase* since that would require interfering with consumer behaviour to a greater extent (Grant 2008: 182-184). The question might be how this could also benefit in a commercial way for a brand. An example could be to mention that the company behind a low-energy-class tumble dryer attaches a pamphlet explaining how to reduce usage for the good of the environment. The effort put into producing such a pamphlet would in effect make the company seem more authentic and trustworthy, and the resulting reduced use would, in addition, guarantee a reduced electricity bill confirming the consumer’s happiness with the product.

### Supporting Innovation (C1)

This strategy deals with products which are **greenest** as defined in section 5.1.3 Greenest. These greenest products are operating on a **public** marketing level as described in section 5.1.4 Public. The objectives of this strategy are commercial, but also includes green encouragement and social change as is also described in section 5.1.3 Greenest.

This strategy feeds on the opportunities presented by web 2.0[[10]](#footnote-10), creating fast growing networks and spreading knowledge within these networks. Traditionally, the mass media was considered the public’s window to the world, which gave marketing managers a huge opportunity to influence people, *through media*, to buy a certain product. With today’s more marketing literate consumers and the online networks, this approach to selling has become highly problematic. Nowadays, consumers can go online and become part of social networks from which they can receive inspiration on how to live and who to be, originating from other consumers (Ibid: 212). This strategy is based on this new approach, influencing people *through fast-growing networks*. There are two approaches which can be used here, the **social production** approachand the **money** approach.

**The social production approach** focuses on the fast spreading of an initiative through a network. This means that a company or an individual takes a green initiative and then it spreads and builds socially achieving increasingly more support through social spreading. So this strategy focuses on getting a great idea which can encourage citizenship. Internet is perfect as a media for this because *“… it doesn’t obey normal rules of ownership and exchange; but also because it requires little or no investment and has no “friction” – a little app can turn into a worldwide phenomenon within months”* (Grant 2008: 219).

A good example here is the one-man business freecycle.org which is a website build around the idea of giving away instead of throwing away what you cannot use. If a brand could make such an idea in relation to a product, it would increase brand value.

**The money approach** is based on the same principle, but requires money and more effort either from the beginning or because the original initiative has grown to require it to run. However, though involving money it must still remain the personal feel, the feeling of dealing with people. Also, if asking for a fee or a donation to participate in a social venture, it needs to be transparent where the profit ends up, in order to avoid public scrutiny (Grant 2008: 223-226).

### The Trojan Horse Idea (C2)

This strategy deals with products which are **greenest** as defined in section 5.1.3 Greenest. These greenest products are operating on a **social** marketing level as described in section 5.1.5 Social. The objectives of this strategy are commercial, but also includes green encouragement and social change as is also described in section 5.1.3 Greenest.

This strategy focuses on how branding or creating social identity helps to establish innovative new green products, services, companies, lifestyle habits and so on (Grant 2008: 231). There are two types of branding which are in play here – the **tradition** and the **fashion** approach. As shall be seen, these have nothing to do with the original industrial branding which builds on offering pretty lies and keeping it a secret how things are really made, i.e. selling an inscrutable image. As has been dealt with earlier, this is not an optimal solution in today’s society, and especially not with regard to green products.

**The traditional approach** gives radical new green products and lifestyles a traditional and familiar framing that will help the adoption rate. As has been reflected on earlier, in section 5.1.3 Greenest, the road to success is making green innovations appear as normal as possible (Grant 2008: 232-233). The green innovations get planted inside the barriers as a Trojan horse, accepted as “normal”.

**The fashion approach**, also referred to as the “New Cool” approach, is dealing with presenting green innovations as “the new cool thing” – as fashionable. This approach is used when *the latest thing*is given status, value or currency.

In positioning a brand as a fashion brand, it is essential to create *new* experiences, designs and standards compared to related products on the market, in order to achieve newsworthiness. Also, the communication of these features requires a twist, meaning that the creative element must be characterised by irony, provocation or edginess (Ibid: 239-243).

### Challenging Consuming (C3)

This strategy deals with products which are **greenest** as defined in section 5.1.3 Greenest. These greenest products are operating on a **personal** marketing level as described in section 5.1.6 Personal. The objectives of this strategy are commercial, but also includes green encouragement and social change as is also described in section 5.1.3 Greenest.

This strategy focuses on encouraging a better set of everyday lifestyle habits and doing so by making these habits culturally acceptable. There are two approaches for structural change in everyday habits, a **treasuring** approach which focuses on prolonging the lifetime of consumer products and a **sharing** approach which breaks with the belief that individual identity and status is reflected in ownership (Ibid: 247).

**The Treasuring Approach** deals with confronting and changing the notion that consumers must throw stuff away prematurely as a sign of prosperity. In order to implement a greener way of life, companies need to stop developing products only to be thrown away again quickly, just for the sake of change. One way to do this, is to make it fashionable to customise, alter and reuse thus achieving a longer product lifetime (Grant 2008: 248-250). An example would here be to focus on the components of personalisation in selling laptops (covers, etc.), selling upgrades and changes instead of discarding the entire computer, thus making it longer-lasting.

Another way of reaching this goal is to build iconic brands - such as Chanel which has changed very little over the years but remains fashionable (Ibid: 251) and therefore has a long product life.

Giving a product a longer life can be done by attaching the consumer emotionally to the product. E.g. by creating collection items; by creating stable fads; by creating mementos evoking personal life histories and sentimental feelings; by creating retro products evoking nostalgic feelings; by creating classic or luxurious and treasurable products of perfect form, function and materials; or by creating a DIY mentality (Do-It-Yourself) making it possible for the consumer to leave their own mark on the product (Ibid: 253-263).

**The sharing approach** focuses on sharing instead of owning. This could for example be sharing a car or renting garden tools. However some reject the idea of being interdependent and often consumers perceive *owning* and owning valuable items, as an expression of status and the status, which could become an obstacle in this approach (Grant 2008: 263-271).

# THE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO GREEN ADVERTISING MANAGEMENT

Having described the theoretical basis of this thesis, we will now embark on the analysis, applying the theories described to the case story of Lübech Living. As outlined in chapter 2 Methodology and Data, the analysis will follow the same structure of five steps as provided by the theory on strategic advertising management and draw upon elements of theories on green marketing and authenticity when applicable.

## STEP 1: REVIEWING THE SITUATION

As described in the theory, it is a good idea to survey the situation prior to any strategic planning because this ensures that one does not lose perspective of the communicative aims or misjudges what is actually possible in obtaining these objectives.

The objective of Lübech Living is to enter the British market with a product range of eco-friendly and handcrafted candles manufactured by Vance Kitira International. It is our aim to create the *basic marketing message* in entering this market – a message which draws the consumers towards the product and thus creates a favourable brand attitude. Therefore, we will not include financial or market share objectives.

In looking to enter a *new* market, it can be fairly concluded that there are no existing customers of the brand, and therefore no option to increase the usage among existing customers. The choice must then be to attract non-customers; either customers new to the products group - in this case non-users of candles in general - or to attract customers of competing brands. The first option here would require efforts in converting non-users to users *in general*, presenting the product categoryand then within this frame create focus on the brand. Choosing the second option, focus would primarily be on the use of *the brand* and not as much the product category, and therefore we consider this the best *first* option in entering a new market. In this choice, we are aware that our best hope is that customers of existing brands are not too loyal and unwilling to switch; however, as presented in the theory in section 4.3.2 High or Low Involvement, we have examined that when dealing with low-involvement products that pose low financial risk, consumers are more likely to switch when introduced to something new and interesting. As will be discussed later in section 6.3 Step 3: Understanding Target Audience Decision Making, we deem candles to be a low-involvement product category financially.

### Vance Kitira Product Description

With the objective of defining a basic brand message or appeal, part of our underlying basis must be to understand the product we wish to communicate. We also need to understand the two companies involved in the case story, Lübech Living and Vance Kitira and the relation between the two; however, we will return to this later in the analysis as this has influence on the situational overview provided by the SWOT structure. For now, we will refer the reader to appendices A1 and A2 which, as described in chapter 2 Methodology and Data, contain company descriptions.

To understand the Vance Kitira Products, we must understand the man behind brand - Vance Kitira himself - as he *is* the brand. As described in both the introduction to this thesis as well as the chapter on authenticity, today’s consumers see and evaluate the link between the product and the company and in this connection define the brand. In this they search for authenticity, among other things, they look for historical consistency and cultural affiliation, defined as **referential authenticity** in section 3.2.4. Therefore, we will start by examining the man and the company Vance Kitira’s background to decipher what is at the core of the products.

**All Vance Kitira candles and home décor are produced in Thailand**, either at the Vance Kitira Factory outside of Bangkok or by craftsmen and artisans throughout Thailand, and then sold on from the US headquarters. The man Vance Kitira grew up in an underprivileged family in Thailand as one of eight children and as the brand claims to be “proud to help families who depend upon the additional income to subsidise their farms and villages, preserve tradition and encourage their participation in the outside world”, it is important - in seeming trustworthy, genuine and historically authentic - that Vance Kitira himself grew up in Thailand under the same conditions and has a strong connection with Thailand. This is enforced by his continuous visits to the country and his plantations, and stories of him *personally* helping workers with ideas and support for *sustainable* development in e.g. helping the caretaker of the plantation extending his business with free-range chickens, not just donating something to look good. In other words, the interest in Thailand and sustainable development is not just empty words; they have actions to support them. The value of referential authenticity through the cultural and continuous connection with Thailand will be dealt with later from section 6.4 Step 4: Determining the Best Positioning, and in the following analysis.

**All Vance Kitira’s products are sold through the US headquarters** and showroom, and this is also where Lübech Living purchases their share for the European market. Vance Kitira’s connection with the US could be interpreted as an escape from Thailand going against the above principles. However, he was awarded a government scholarship to study in the US, and the connections and the business possibilities in the US were established in this period. Also, it is *our understanding* that the connection with a western culture, like the US, will symbolise more trustworthiness in business matters when dealing with other western distributors because of the possibility that negative attitudes based on unfortunate experiences and a general bad reputation (e.g. another cultural view on the importance of delivery times, agreements, etc.) might be present in dealing directly with Thai companies. Therefore, the US base can be considered fair and not fake.

What is more, it is also our understanding that commodities made in Thailand might suffer under the same attitudes connected with a “made in China” stamp. That it will be perceived as cheap, unoriginal and fake. The connection with the US could help counterbalance such attitudes. On the other hand, the Thai roots could also be perceived as authentic in being “foreign” and “basic”. On the US market, Vance Kitira has used the latter in obtaining a high-end profile, obtaining a B2B customer base consisting of upscale specialty stores and larger chains such as Pottery Barn.

**Having examined the company and the products, it is our view that** **Vance Kitira is based on three authentic core values:** a passion for wood, an appreciation of the beauty of nature, and an aim to create a sustainable Thailand through a connection with the outside world. Turning to look at the passion for wood, Vance Kitira has a B.Sc. in forestry from Thailand’s Kasetsart University, and was short of completing the same university’s master program in environmental management when he was accepted at the State University of New York on a government scholarship to study wood product engineering. Also, in 1992, before having a commercial interest in connection with the Vance Kitira brand, he purchased 40 acres of land and planted over 400,000 teak seedlings intended for family use in future years. The interest in wood must be said to be authentic and true.

The core value “appreciation of the beauty of nature” is something which runs back to the man Vance Kitira’s childhood which he has brought with him into the company and its designs. In this referential authenticity can be found; the focus on nature is not just a *sudden* money-making idea to fit a current trend, but it is authentically rooted. Vance Kitira grew up in close proximity to nature and it has always been a set part of his life in play and work as he was growing up. He is fascinated by **nature’s** **beauty** and **simplicity** and that is the expression which he is bringing into the Vance Kitira products. As an example, he got his idea to make nature-inspired candles by filling a hollow stem with some riverbed clay and letting it dry overnight as an experiment. The result was a sculpture which had traces of the texture of the stem, thus inspiring him to make candles with that same texture. Also, he has increased his focus on *natural* ingredients as his battle with cancer has made him increasingly aware of the air we breathe and the chemicals we are exposed to on a daily basis, and it has made him realise especially how hard that is for people with allergies. His own struggle with breathing heavy smells has made him focus on developing natural, calming scents as well as completely scentless candles.

**The Vance Kitira products are a range of handcrafted candles** as well as accessories, tabletop, potpourri, incense, home decor, permanent botanicals and objects d'art. All products are divided into nine main category groups: garden, ocean breezes, spa retreat, table top, marble candles, holders/trays, classics, timber candles and ecofriendly. Though all products are inspired by the three core values, we find that the **ecofriendly** product group is the one which appear more *distinctly* inspired by them, and as such is it described on the website as focusing on nature/wood, sustainability and helping the Thai people:

**“Ecofriendly – defined as “intended or perceived to have no harmful effect on the natural environment and its habitants (…) the use of soy and palm waxes, in concert with natural clay and handmade Saa Paper, confirms our commitment not only to nature, but to the earth and its people. Through these products, the talents of Thai artisans can now be recognized by the Western World, thus assuring them stability in their lives and commerce.”** (App A1)

Considering our chosen focus on green marketing and our chosen theories, as described in chapter 2 Methodology and Data, we find it most interesting to focus on Vance Kitira’s specific ecofriendly range as a first entry to the market as we find that it, in its essence, reflects the Vance Kitira brand.
Though the Vance Kitira Ecofriendly range consists of various teak and clay items, e.g. candleholders, and we agree with Vance Kitira when they encourage their business customers to purchase candleholders as functional yet attractive supporting items to candles in adding interest and appeal in display, **we choose to focus our analysis on what we consider to be the core of the Ecofriendly range - the Renewal Candles and the Palm Wax Pillars** (App A1). A passion for teak is also at the centre of the Ecofriendly range; however the teak plantation is still not large enough by industry standards to be used for any considerable production. Nevertheless, it is our suspicion that teak products will acquire a more sizeable role in the brand in future years, but for now, we will focus on the candles.

Renewal candles (App A1) are created from the excess wax which accumulates in the candle making process. This excess wax is recycled and with an outer coating of palm wax becomes the Renewal candles. The candle resembles its counterpart in Nature, a “nurse log” (in Forestry terms) which lies on the forest floor. The symbolism in this is very strong as this log degrades and returns essential nutrients to the soil, providing nourishment and encouraging regeneration of the forest - hence the name “Renewal” in their name. Because they are made from recycled wax they may carry traces of fragrance, though none is added. The Palm Wax Pillars (App A1) on the other hand are completely scentless. The palm wax may, as it melts, form an abstract sculpture making the candle which was initially traditional in design appear more distinctive.

As mentioned the Renewal Candles are made from recycled wax, gathered from any production spillage. The Palm Wax Pillars are made from approximately 40% palm wax and 60% paraffin to stabilise the vegetable wax. With regard to height, the candles range from 3 to 12 inches (7.5 cm – 30.5 cm). They are all around 3 inch wide (App A1).

The Palm Wax Pillars are, in our words, sleeker in design compared to the Renewal candles which are more rustic in their design. Therefore, Vance Kitira suggests that the two product types could support each other decoratively. They are also either greenish or brownish in style, in our opinion, representing the colours of nature.

We are aware that as our analysis unfolds, we might discover that our choice of product focus turns out not to be the *optimal* choice. What we mean by this is that the Ecofriendly product range is the most hardcore green product range. Because it is more hardcore, it might be too green in design and taste for some candle users. Therefore, it might be a better approach to ease Vance Kitira’s way in to the market, introducing some traditionally looking candles which are merely a green alternative and then later push the heavier green product range Ecofriendly. Taste in style will be different in different markets, meaning that the British population might prefer other Vance Kitira category groups. However, the products hold an advantage because they are so unique and in general different from everything else one might expect to be on the market. Exploring preferences within the Vance Kitira product range is not within the scope of this thesis. **Also, it is our belief that - since the ecofriendly range represents the essence of Vance Kitira - an interest in this range will reflect a fundamental interest in the Vance Kitira brand.**

**Based on the above, it is our view that the products represent the man behind them, and that Vance Kitira’s link between product, company, and man is strong**. When consumers purchase any Vance Kitira product, they purchase a piece of the value-set; they purchase an appreciation of nature and its simplicity. As described in the introduction to this thesis, chapter 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement, claiming to be green, or ecofriendly, brings with it some requirements. The world of green has many associations and ecofriendly and green brings with it the key association that the company and brand is “one of the good guys” and that the people behind it are “friendly” in other areas than just ecofriendly. In the light of this, it is interesting to realise that the man Vance Kitira actually appears to be “one of the good guys”. He donates tables to orphanages; he is a creative, sensitive artist who draws nature as well as appreciating its handcrafts; he has won the fight over cancer; and he has even spent some time as a Buddhist monk. This might seem “over-the-top” to some consumer groups, however in the context of green, we can only say that - in referring to ethos appeal, described in chapter 3 Authenticity - Vance Kitira seems balanced, trustworthy and unique. And the brand therefore also holds this uniqueness and *balance* with nature.

The above should only be regarded as a preliminary understanding of the product and the brand to give the reader an insight into the product and to aid us in the further analysis. However, a discussion and analysis of the values and benefits of the products will be carried out later in chapter 6.4 Step 4: Determining the Best Positioning.

### SWOT Analysis - Vance Kitira Seen in Context

The opening of this step specified the marketing objectives and defined the source of business. It also provided us with an understanding of the product through the above product description. Now, a market assessments and competitive evaluation will be carried out, according to a SWOT structure as described in section 4.1.6 SWOT Analysis. We will primarily focus on opportunities and threats in the general market place and then include how Lübech Living might face these in their product communication of Vance Kitira. This limitation and choice of focus is based on our view that market assessment and competitive evaluation is seen in the light of *external* factors presenting themselves as threats and opportunities as well as the fact that we do not have much data on the workings of specific market competitors for Vance Kitira. Neither do we have access to data reviewing Lübech Living’s *internal* resources.

In the following sections we will analyse certain chosen topics (external opportunities or threats) which might have an influence on Vance Kitira. In the headlines below, the brackets following the headlines indicate if we are dealing with an Opportunity, Threat or both. If dealing with both an opportunity and a threat, the order in which T and O are listed represents how we view their significance in this context.

#### Growth in the UK Candle Market (O/T)

The first questions put forward to Brigadier Roy Wilde, Honorary Secretary of the British Candlemakers’ Federation, was intended to shed light on the British population’s use of candles and in turn shed light on an interesting market development and opportunity. “*Over the past 50 years candle use has moved from a utility purpose of lighting to become a statement of fashion and lifestyle. Today candles are bought to either have a visual impact upon the quality of the home, or, via their aroma to enhance its atmosphere*” (App B1, Q1). In the follow-up interview he elaborates: “*…the relationship between the two* [the visual impact and the aroma] *has changed, and is still changing (…). I think ten years ago, or maybe fifteen years ago, I would have said it was entirely visual impact, style (…), colour, shape, design of candles and they were something to be seen…over the last ten years the aroma they produce has become more important (…) several of our members put a great deal of thought into the variety of aromas*” (App B2, ll. 30-37). This is supported by a report on candle safety carried out by Consumers Association Research and Testing Centre commissioned by Consumer Affairs Directorate, United Kingdom. The report states that candle use in the UK has now become a lifestyle rather than just a passing fad: “*There was a perceived move towards using candles for relaxation and self-awareness – as part of personal rituals and personal space (‘chilling-out’). In practical terms this creates a shift in candle image and associations from an old fashioned commodity to an aesthetic lifestyle item*” (App B3: 23). From this two things can be deduced.

Firstly, the use of candles has changed to become more of a lifestyle product rather than a commodity used for pure practical reasons. The mentioned report on candle safety explains that “*It* [the candles] *has moved to all rooms in the house (…)*” (App. B3: 8), and at the same time the report also describes candles as a “luxury product” (App. B3:29) in relation to the lifestyle it signals. **This new use of candles as a lifestyle product presents a great opportunity in framing candles in communication presented in various rooms and situations.** In the case of Vance Kitira the perception of candles as symbolising a *luxurious* lifestyle or as part of creating *relaxation and atmosphere* could also be exploited in any marketing communication.

Secondly, it can be concluded that there is an increasing market (see quote: it is *still* changing) for scented candles. Roy Wilde continues: “*Whilst the early expansion was in the health and ‘body shop’ establishment, in the past ten years the aromatic quality has become a major selling motivation across the commercial scene. To the British population, scented candles are far more an element of the home rather than the specialist spa*” (App. B1, Q4). This is also supported by the report on candle safety mentioned above, stating that: “*The scented candles sector has shown the most growth recently - accounting for 40% of the market - and is likely to be the major growth area over the next few years*” (App. B3: 8). **This increasing market growth and interest in scented candles presents a great opportunity for Vance Kitira when looking to sell their scented candles**, especially their scented Spa Retreat range. However, the candles we are focusing on in this thesis, the Renewal Candles and the Palm Wax Pillars, are unscented, and therefore it is not an opportunity which can be explored with these types of candles.

This new focus on lifestyle and a “new” use of candles have presented **a general growth in the overall UK market - something which presents a major opportunity for any candle manufacturer**. The report on candle safety states that the UK candle market “*has virtually doubled in the last 5 years as their use as enhancement products expands*” (App. B3: 9). It is worth noting that the import market has also grown exponentially, knowing that Vance Kitira is Thai produced and US based and an imported candle in the eye of the British consumer. “Imports have been increasing at a similar rate to overall sales and now account for approximately 30% of UK sales”, states the candle safety report (App B3: 8). This is valuable information as it would have been a major threat had the British consumers only been interested in locally produced candles (and commodities).

**What is more, this increase in the market has opened an opportunity in sales points**: “*Over the past four decades the place of candle purchase has transferred from the utility hardware store to the boutique, life-style shop and higher-quality supermarkets*”, Roy Wilde explains (App B1, Q3). He continues: “*(…) what I call the larger supermarkets…have stolen from the style people, the design specialists, and produced…mass produced quite attractive candles. They’re available there in the furniture and home departments of all these large food supermarkets (…) they are a mass buying opportunity… they’re becoming very available*”. Again, this is supported by the report on candle safety (App B3: 8). Naturally, this means that Vance Kitira, and in turn Lübech Living, have a further range of business customers which could be interested in selling on the brand to end consumers. However, this naturally also means that competition has increased greatly. The report on candle safety describes the market as diverse and competitive (App B3: 9): “*there are over 100 candle manufacturers/distributors in the UK, ranging from the major automated manufacturing companies like Price's to the very small cottage industry businesses producing handmade candles on a very small scale*” (App B3: 8). **The fact that competition is increasing and that the larger supermarkets are copying designer candles could also represent a threat**. This leads us to the following discussion of a lack of interest in quality.

#### A Lack of Interest in Quality? (T/O)

“*Candles are now sold in almost every type of retail outlet. Major supermarkets now stock a much wider range of candles and have pushed for lower priced products. Many retailers are only interested in obtaining the cheapest product, frequently sourcing poor quality products from countries such as China. However, the market has become divided with some retailers still more concerned with quality rather than price*” (App B3: 8). The opening quote from the report on candle safety embraces an important market tendency which can present a significant threat to Vance Kitira and in turn Lübech Living. **If retailers are only interested in stocking cheap, poor quality candles, a brand such as Vance Kitira being more “high-end”, as defined in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, will face some serious challenges in selling their products.** Roy Wilde enhances this threat level by explaining that it is as if the consumers both expect and except low quality: “*Well funnily enough consumers seem to sort of except the fact that it doesn’t make a very good burning candle but it looks nice in their living room*” (App B2, ll. 103-04). This happens because designers have good ideas for visual impact but do not care to put in the required technical research resulting in a lopsided candle, wicks drowning in wax or fire hazardous candle (App. B2, ll. 74-97).

However, looking at the opening quote, the fire report also states that some retailers grow more concerned with quality rather than price. It is our suspicion that with England growing increasingly more accustomed to using candles, integrating them into their daily lives, they will in turn also become fed up with low quality. The report on candle safety supports this tendency, defining two groups of candle users, light and heavy users, looking for respectively price and quality. Heavy users make up the consumer group which uses candles several times a week or more and looks for quality over price: “*Consumers who are using candles this frequently tend to have quite extensive knowledge. They are lighting them more frequently, but also more are lit at one time. They probably have a wider repertoire, but also more fixed ideas/tastes. Their choice is likely to be more discerning altogether (avoiding cheap candles)*” (App B3: 28). **This quality conscious consumer group presents a significant opportunity for the Vance Kitira brand**. Light users use candles less frequently in a smaller range of occasion types and therefore do not have the same knowledge of quality’s influence on the products (App B3: 28).

#### Focus on Fire Hazard (T)

As one of our primary sources is a report on candle safety carried out by Consumers Association Research and Testing Centre, commissioned by Consumer Affairs Directorate, United Kingdom, we have found it interesting to examine if fire hazard is something which affects the British Consumers’ purchase behaviour and therefore influences the market. The existence of the report in itself and its content explaining the importance of fire danger labelling suggests that there is a focus on fire hazard in the United Kingdom. However, the report also states that “*Consumers very rarely look for safety information on candles/candle packaging or at point of sale*” (App B3: 24). Therefore, fire hazard does not appear to present a significant threat in this context, though it might still be a good idea for Vance Kitira to apply to rules and regulations for UK safety labelling.

#### Negative Attitude towards the Natural Authenticity of Vegetable Waxes (T/O)

In the questions put forward to Brigadier Roy Wilde, Honorary Secretary of the British Candlemakers’ Federation, a somewhat negative attitude towards green candles revealed itself. He refers to them as “*so-called* green candles” and calls the consumers “naïve and poorly informed”. He does not believe that there is any difference between the various waxes - be it paraffin wax, stearines, beeswax or vegetable waxes like soy wax – when looking at the range of particles and chemicals they emit when burning (App B1, Q5). In the follow-up interview, he elaborates: *“As long as they are in a reasonably ventilated room there is not one jot of health danger to any of them (…) they are all within the safety margins”* (App B2, ll. 155-57, 167-68). He bases this partially on a trial funded by the European Candle Makers and the American National Candle Association, carried out in Germany, proving that they are all similar (App B2, ll. 162-68). He argues this in relation to what he refers to as “*a huge presence across the other side of the Atlantic* [in the home country of the Vance Kitira headquarters] *that for some reason favours candles made of vegetable waxes…it is in some way dramatically different and more ecologically acceptable than a candle that’s made perhaps of paraffin wax*” (App. B2, ll. 150-52). In that way, he sees the natural nature of vegetable waxes in relation to paraffin as a matter of perspective: “*pure paraffin wax is probably the easiest to manufacture…and at the end of the day a mineral oil person would say well of course paraffin wax is a natural product. Mineral oil is produced by nature…it comes out of the ground*… [paraffin wax is made from mineral oil]” (App B2, ll. 204-06). He defines the green labelling as a “marketing pitch” (App B1, Q5) and says: “…it’s the marketers that very often are portraying so-called green candles as something particular (…) and they’re not” (App B2, ll. 170-73).
**All in all, it can be concluded that he sees any proclaimed greenness as a marketing scheme when any brand claims their wax to be more natural or to emit less particulates and chemicals than others when burning.**

Continuing down the road of greenness, he also does not see any difference which could make the production process more or less green. When asked “*So you wouldn’t say that unless you make something by hand as you suggest* [prior to this he suggests that the only way in a production you can make 100% use of vegetable waxes without use of paraffin or other stabilisers is to make vegetable wax candles by hand, because they are so brittle] *that any of the production processes are more green than others or…?*”, he says “No, no not at all” (App B2, ll. 183-98). He continues: “*They all* [waxes] *take a bit of research, a bit of trial and error…and the important thing for most manufacturers is that you can’t say that any is better or worse than the other…they’re all much of a muchness[[11]](#footnote-11)…”* (App B2, ll. 200-02). **Therefore, it can be deduced that he does not see any production to be greener than others if they are mass produced, unless the manufacturing is carried out by hand.**

As described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, the Vance Kitira Ecofriendly range of candles is made from palm wax. *If* the unfavourable attitude towards green candles in relation to the particulates and chemicals they emit reaches, firstly the business customers and secondly, the end consumers, it could pose a huge threat. If it becomes a recognised fact that the vegetable waxes do *not* contain the level of **natural authenticity** suggested (as defined in section 3.2.1 Natural Authenticity) - that the natural waxes are not more natural or healthy than for instance paraffin - it might make consumers choose cheaper wax type candles like paraffin candles. With regard to the production, as also described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, Vance Kitira’s candles are all hand-poured and finished at their factory two hours outside of Bangkok. On the basis of Roy Wilde’s statements above, the hand-made aspect means that part of the production process is greener than mass-produced candles manufactured through a fully automated process. In the light of this, Vance Kitira could face such a threat as the above by focusing on the greener aspect of the production, including the recycling of wax.

Doing basic research online Googling “vegetable wax vs. paraffin”, we can see that the debate is already developing with a significant amount of hits on the topic. Funnily enough, the two top results advocate each their own angle. Organic.com presents paraffin as something fundamentally bad: “*Paraffin candles are a huge cause of indoor air pollution. Studies have shown that lighting a paraffin candle is like starting a diesel engine in your home*” (App C1). Whereas purescentsations.com, an American company selling cheap candle alternatives, argues in the same style as Roy Wilde: “*There have been several misconceptions floating around (especially on the internet) regarding paraffin waxes vs. vegetable-based waxes. Many proponents of vegetable waxes are making extravagant claims about their superiority to paraffin. It is important to realize that both are safe, viable “natural” raw materials with differing chemical compositions…”* (App C2)*.* Though this argument is of American and not British origin, it is taking place in an online forum and therefore accessible by consumers worldwide, including British consumers. Also, it is interesting to notice that the latter example of the debate is a company using the argument as part of *their* own advertising message to increase sales of paraffin candles. If this sales message gets adopted by paraffin candle manufacturers and sales people in Britain, it could pose a significant threat. In Vance Kitira’s favour lies the possibility that there seem to be arguments of “scientific” proof on both sides. **Therefore, people might “take sides”, and they could target and create loyalty to “their side”, so to speak,** **and this could represent a small opportunity.** What is meant by this is that consumers might belong to one of two groups, those who think it is a waste to spend money on hyped and expensive nature wax candles; and those loyal to the greenness of vegetable wax candles thinking that “the other side” is ignorant and that the so-called evidence against them is made up by the paraffin candle manufacturers. If the discussion really flared up, Vance Kitira could communicate a sort of “Vote for Green” message.

As has also been described above in the product description, the Vance Kitira brand’s greenness does not boil down to the greenness of the candles, but spans across the entirety of the range from recycling of wax, forest conservation in only using teak from the thinning process and not chopping down trees *only* for the purpose of manufacturing, using natural clay, hand-woven paper and silk, local workforce and the list is extensive. **It is our argument that when Vance Kitira claims to be green, it covers much more than the choice of vegetable waxes**, and therefore the threat of lacking natural authenticity in wax choice might not be so extensive.

#### The Green Wave and the Media (O/T)

We opened this thesis by referring to “the green wave”. However, we find it important to include some statistics on how the British population and the British consumer see the importance of green and environmental issues in general to get a feeling of how big the green market interest actually is in Britain. When asked which was the *most* important issue facing Britain today (2007), Pollution and the Environment was granted a seventh place after Crime and Violence as the most important, Immigration issues as the second most important, followed by National Health service, Defence and Foreign Affairs, Education, and Housing. This does not mean that Environment and Pollution is not considered important, as it is among such heavy issues as the above, and it ranked in front of e.g. the Economic Situation. It is worth noting that in spite of the heavy company, 10% actually valued Pollution and the Environment as the *most* important issue out of all of the above (App B4). What is more, when asked how concerned the population was with climate change (2008), 47% said they were *fairly* concerned and 30% said they were *very* concerned. Only 9% said they were not concerned at all (App B5). **Therefore, it can be concluded that Pollution and the Environment is a topic which is in the minds and hearts of the British population, and therefore this focus can be used as a commercial opportunity.**

Looking at the home and lifestyle industry in which candles are represented, 63% believe that sustainability, fair trade and the environment will be the most important issue in the next few years (2007). It is actually considered more important than keeping ahead of trends and in tune with customer demands (App B6). This is quite interesting, because we also see offering sustainability, fair trade, and environmentally friendly products as a way of meeting consumer demands because there is an increasing demand for these product types. Reading the clarifying comment on the statistics, it is interesting to note that Vance Kitira’s green focus (see section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description) seems to match the market tendencies down to specifics: “*In the home sector this* [the sustainable manufacturing] *ranges from sourcing of timber to the use of sustainable materials including organic cotton and bamboo*” (App B6). **It is definitely an opportunity that Vance Kitira manages to match exact market trends without having to make changes or adjustments to “fit a trend” thus seeming inauthentic**.

In dealing with green interest and social norms, surveys (2008) show that 77% of the British population agrees with the statement that “*People say they’re concerned but at the end of the day they’re not prepared to make big sacrifices for the environment*” (App B5). This is supported by the fact that only 13% find it reasonable that individuals should be expected to make “***significant*** *and* ***radical*** *changes in their lifestyle in terms of the products they buy, how much they pay for things and how much they drive and fly*.” In comparison 47% believes that it can be expected from them to “*do things like recycling and turning lights off at home as well as bigger actions e.g. in terms of what products they buy, how much they pay for things and how much they drive and fly*” (App B5). This tells us that the 47% agreeing to make shopping changes might be willing to replace ordinary candles with a green alternative *if* they are candle users. Also the 13% of the British population who believes in *significant* and *radical* changes as part of their own responsibility might be attracted to the Vance Kitira brand and buy into the green lifestyle the brand represents. Also, only a minor proportion of the population (4%) believes that “*individuals should not be expected to do anything* [at all], *it is not their responsibility*” (App B5). **On the basis of this it can be concluded that there is a significant market potential for green candles and the Vance Kitira brand**. In the interview with Roy Wilde from the British Candlemakers’ Federation he frames the market opportunity in the following way: “They like to think that they’re playing their little part” [in saving the world] (App B2, ll. 217).

The Introduction to this thesis also included one of the biggest threats for any proclaimed green company: the media interest in greenwashing and the increasingly clever consumer. However, in the case discussed earlier on the use of vegetable waxes, Roy Wilde inclines that consumers are naïve and uninformed: “*There has been a slight, if naïve, and certainly poorly informed, trend towards so-called ‘green’ produced products*” (App B1, Q5). He also states that the discussion of the greenwashing - the presentation of natural authenticity in vegetable waxes in comparison with other waxes is not something the media have any interest in: ”…but that of course doesn’t get through to…and it’s not a particular point of media interest” (App B2: ll. 159-60). It would be interesting to find out why this is the case, but this is not something which will be examined in depth here. **As described above, it would definitely present a threat if debate suddenly flared in the media, and as a result among the consumers**. However, we have already argued that Vance Kitira is green in more ways than using vegetable wax, and it is our belief that the brand could handle such accusations of greenwashing by standing by their liking for the nature inspired products in using the wax and either bring into focus the many other benefits of the wax (shape and form), or support their greenness by focusing on other green initiatives.

#### A Market inspired by Allergies and Disease (Cancer)(O)

As described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, Vance Kitira has faced cancer and has reached a higher understanding for people with allergies having difficulty breathing heavy smells, and has brought these thoughts with him into the production which is one of the reasons why the Renewal Candles and the Palm Wax Pillars are unscented. **These considerations could present an opportunity in the market communication and in a positioning towards a group of consumers dealing with e.g. allergies.** In framing vegetable wax to be better than other waxes, emitting less chemicals, and thereby targeting a consumer group who are either fearing or facing diseases such as cancer could be risky business, if the tides would turn and the media would focus on the greenwashing of vegetable waxes such as described above. Therefore, it is not recommendable that Vance Kitira uses this approach. Though any concerns could be considered authentic and real because of Vance Kitira’s own scare with cancer, it might also offend many consumers using this commercially.

#### Lübech Living as Authentic Suppliers? (T)

One last threat we would like to approach is the role of Lübech Living in representing the brand. Lübech Living is the official European distributor for Vance Kitira and this raises the questions of how Lübech Living influences the authenticity - the genuineness - of Vance Kitira’s greenness. Lübech Living does not appear to have any green ideals represented on their website as part of their foundation. Based on that and the visual signals on their website, it is our view that they focus more on uniqueness, quality and trend. What is more, as well as being distributors for Vance Kitira, they are also distributors for Zodax, a “*leader in the development, design and distribution of home decorative accessories*” (App A2). Looking at the Zodax website, they appear to be environmentally conscious presenting an environmental statement and presenting their design in a green light based on “*a basic respect for nature’s ability to balance color, shape, and stimulate the senses*”(App A2). However the green does not appear to be running in the veins of the company to the same extent as Vance Kitira, who presents deep-rooted green core values and green considerations throughout every product and company description. It is our view that a company like Zodax is more motivated by the increasing demands for greenness and that their environmental statements and the like are an answer to such a market demand. The greenness is not incorporated into their history description or their company mission.

On the basis of all of the above, because Lübech Living does not appear to have any green desires or high green standards in their choice of distribution brands, it can therefore be debated whether the choice of Lübech Living as distributors could reflect badly on Vance Kitira in the light of the demand for authenticity? To answer this, Lübech Living will not be visible to the end consumers so in the eye of the end consumer, the authenticity, the genuineness in that regard, is still intact. The exception here is when dealing with a very informed and critical consumer, who examines products in depth and then **sees the mere fact of Vance Kitira choosing Lübech Living in the distribution chain as a sign of a lack of authenticity - the caring for the greenness stops as soon as the product is out of Vance Kitira’s own hands.** If this caught the media’s attention and became an opinion in the public mind it could pose a threat.

Looking at the business-to-business link, we have no way of determining whether the business customers - the shops, boutiques or supermarkets selling to the end consumers - will care about Lübech Living’s role in creating natural (green focus) and referential (Thai focus) authenticity. However, we do know that Lübech Living must be able to sell on Vance Kitira’s *real* brand values so they do not disappear down the line. We do not know how much service and exceptional authenticity, as described in section 3.2.3 Exceptional Authenticity, means to Vance Kitira - If the service level, the feeling that Vance Kitira actually cares about their customers, is important. However, the intermediary Lübech Living is a break in any direct communication, between the European customers and Vance Kitira, and it could present an obstacle if Lübech Living does not represent the same warm values as Vance Kitira in reflecting and presenting the brand values.

## STEP 2: SELECTING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Having obtained a basic understanding of the situational aspects and the context within which Lübech Living and Vance Kitira are working, we will now move on to a more concrete approach and define the specific target audience. As covered in section 4.2 Selecting the Target Audience, we will make use of a combination of the Minerva approach - determining a target group according to lifestyle - and various demographics.

We have decided in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description that we will be focusing on the Ecofriendly range, more specifically the Renewal Candles and the Palm Wax Pillars, and defined their characteristics. The focus on this defined “hardcore” green product range means that our initial focus will also be on the consumers most likely to purchase from such a product category. Though we have defined the product category as hardcore, it is not hardcore or extreme in comparison to other product types, only as an alternative within candles, candlesticks and related commodities. Therefore, the consumer group must be green, looking for, or persuadable to choose, a green alternative within *candles*, but not necessarily green to the extent where it is at the core of *all* their purchases. It is *our view* that the purchase of a product group of ecofriendly candles does not necessarily require the consumer to be *fundamentally* green, because it is not a big decision and it could be driven by minor green or non-green motivations such as allergies or design-symbolism, image, etc. because it is not a costly product category. This will be discussed in more detail later in the analysis when returning to high and low involvement aspects in section 6.3 Step 3: Understanding Target Audience Decision Making.

Based on the above, we will define an *overall* target group, based on two criteria: firstly, an interest in **candles**, and secondly, an interest in **green** candles.

As deduced in the SWOT analysis, in section 6.1.2.2 A Lack of Interest in Quality, there are two overall types of candle users, heavy users and light users. The heavy users value quality and this is an interesting piece of information in finding a segment for Vance Kitira’s high quality candles. Knowing Vance Kitira’s focus on quality, it appears most relevant to target heavy users because light users would choose cheaper alternatives, as learned in the above mentioned section.

### Minerva Value Segmentation

Examining which segment might be interested in candles, it *could* in general be all segments. As we have learned in section 6.1.2 SWOT Analysis - Vance Kitira Seen in Context, England has undergone a development in the candle market away from candle use being limited to traditional holidays and events to become a somewhat trendy lifestyle product. In relation to Minerva this means that means that the modern segments come into play. The green and the blue segments both pay attention to developments and care about trends and tendencies as identity and status symbols, and therefore they will be likely to buy into the lifestyle candles represent:

**"Candles are perhaps the easiest and most attractive way of buying into a designer lifestyle in the same way that we accessorise with designer sunglasses and scents”.**  (App. B8)

Looking at the rose segment, Copenhagen’s Institute for Futures Studies’ model in section 4.2.1 Minerva, shows that the rose segment loves romance. With the ambience and mellow light provided by candles, we believe that candles also have romantic associations in Britain which also shares the term “candle light dinner”. The rose segment may thus be interested in candles for their romantic qualities.

With regard to the violet segment, an interest in candles cannot be excluded; however their use will not be associated with any romance or any relaxing inner journey or ambience. They are very practical, and will most likely use candles if they have any practical use, or make use of them in the traditional sense of use for holidays, birthdays and religious purposes. On the basis of this, the violet segment can hereby be excluded as they do not live up to the first criteria of having an interest in candles. It would require too many resources to initially enter the market focusing on changing the violet segment’s attitudes about candles, knowing that they are traditionalists and very set on their beliefs.

 This leaves us with the blue, green and rose segment for further examination. Still putting the green elements aside, it seems logical to first take a look at quality and price and look at how that affects the different segments in our case. The information provided in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, defined that Vance Kitira, in the US, has marketed their brand as high end candles and that they are fairly costly in relation to other brands of candles. As we do not know the production cost or the profit margin on Vance Kitira candles, we do not know if it would be possible for Vance Kitira to position their brand with a lower price in Britain. However, a high price is often associated with high quality and we can only assume that, being sold internationally, they wish to stay within somewhat the same positioning, meaning that they will still remain ecofriendly and high-end/high quality, however the focus might need to be on other specific benefits on the UK market than in the US, as shall be discussed later from section 6.4 Determining the Best Positioning and onwards. However, it is worth keeping in mind that the price cannot just be adopted from the US, as the price needs to be set in relation to the market standards. Candles, home accessories or commodities in general might be more expensive in the UK than in the US; however price determination is not a topic which is within the scope of this thesis.

Assuming that the price will be in the high end in relation to other candles, both the blue and the green segment would have the money to purchase a high end range. However, would they be willing to pay extra? In relation to the characteristics of the blue segment and their focus on need fulfilment here and now, disregarding the cost or process, they would. The green segment would likely be more hesitant as they do not just spend without thinking about the consequences. So here the purchase has to be important to them in some way by for instance living up to or symbolising their ideals. As defined, the rose segment normally has less money to spend, however they do tend to spend extra money on valued items such as organic foods and probably also in the event of special occasions and celebrations. As was revealed in the SWOT analysis, section 6.1.2.2 A Lack of Interest in Quality, light users tend to be the “special occasion users” and tend to choose cheaper alternatives. Therefore our only option would be to communicate candles in a way which would make them willing to pay extra as they do for organic food. This requires a significant amount of effort for initial market entry, and therefore we do not evaluate this to be the best option as the main target group.

 **However the motivation to pay extra for organic food leads us to our second criteria for selecting a target group - that they must be interested in *green* candles.** Though the rose segment has been dismissed as a main target group, there are a few interesting aspects which we could examine, making the rose segment a possible bi-segment. Will they be willing to pay extra for the fact that the candles are *green*, in spite of being a low-income group? The rose segment are interested in nutrition, disease and health and also care for nature and the environment which we can safely assume is the reasons for the willingness to pay extra for organic foods. Looking at their willingness to also pay extra for the “greenness” - the ecofriendly aspects - in the Vance Kitira candles, we can assume that, if presented correctly, they could be motivated by the same factors. Knowing that the rose segment is idealistic, the natural design could present a symbolic value in an ideal to save the environment, and the design might for that same symbolic value be to their liking. Also, knowing from section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description that the Vance Kitira brand focuses on minimising chemicals and sickly odours, partly as a result of Vance Kitira’s experience with cancer, they could also be willing to pay the extra costs motivated by the interest in health and disease. This market is a possibility, but we do not regard it a sizeable enough target group and furthermore the possibilities are quite uncertain as of yet.

Moving on to the blue segment, they are mainly concerned with design and status and are not likely to have any green ideals. However, as seen in section 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement, green is becoming increasingly trendy, and they might be willing to embrace that trend. We can assume that, in this, they will be motivated by design and the lifestyle going green represents. However, they will not be likely to care about the deep authentic roots of the greenness.

**The green segment, however, being an idealistic segment and aspiring to look beneath the surface and not be fooled by appearances, could be interested in both the green *ideal* and the authenticity – the historic roots, truthfulness and sincerity.** Knowing that the green segment are an intellectual segment with ideals, they would probably be found within the 13% defined in the SWOT analysis, section 6.1.2.5 The Green Wave and the Media, stating that they have responsibility for the world’s health and can be expected to make significant and radical changes in their lifestyle in terms of the products they buy, how much they pay for things and how much they drive and fly. Therefore they might be easily targeted to buy into the whole Vance Kitira package of ideals and values. They might also have an interest in the natural design as they have an interest in the arts and thereby an appreciation for beauty and creativity. Having decided on a specific target group, we will return to discuss motivation and concrete benefit focus from section 6.4 Step 4: Determining the Best Positioning.

In conclusion, it can be said that all three segments - the rose, the blue and the green - could be possible target groups. Therefore, we must ask ourselves which group would be most beneficial as an initial main target group in entering the British market. It is our view that that the rose segment would require the most convincing in relation to their financial situation, because the product represents a somewhat high involvement and financial risk seen in relation to other market alternatives. The rose segment, *if convinced*, would also not be likely to consume to the same extent as other groups, meaning that they would probably be more careful and more irregular buyers, only choosing Vance Kitira when they found it affordable and being prone to being influenced to choose cheaper alternatives in the decision-making process, described in section 4.3 Understanding Target Audience Decision Making.

**The blue segment could be a possibility financially as long as they regard it a trendy status product.** However, in comparison to the green segment, the latter will be a more viable option as the green segment has the financial prowess, the willingness to pay extra, and the green ideals. Therefore, we conclude that **the green segment, in entering the British market for the first time, will represent the largest buyer group potential**. Though we are aware that not all consumers in the green segment will have strong *green* ideals, but might focus on other idealisms, the ones that *do* idealise green will constitute a significant purchasing power. Also, with today’s great focus on the environment, we can assume that a large percentage of the green consumer segment will idealise green.

In choosing the green segment as the main target group, it does not mean that the blue segment will be completely disregarded. We find it interesting in the analysis to continuously keep an eye out for messages which might cover the green, but *also* appeal to the blue segment in the periphery.

### Objective Characteristics of the Target Audience

Among the objective characteristics which influence the purchase of candles and in turn the definition of the target group, we have narrowed down Demographics and Social Class to be of importance, as has been defined in section 4.2.2.1 and section 4.2.2.4.

With regard to demographics, looking at the men to women ratio within the target group, **it will make most sense to predominantly target women**. Research from a report on candle safety carried out by Consumers Association Research and Testing Centre commissioned by Consumer Affairs Directorate in the United Kingdom in 2000, showed that women make over 95% of all candle purchases (App B3: 8). There has been a change, however, in the way men look at candles. “*Today men in their 20s and 30s will purchase candles as gifts for their life statement quality, something men over 50 would rarely think of*” (App B1, Q3). This means that younger men, today, will consider candles as a gift option making a lifestyle statement. Something which men would never have considered in the past and men of the older generation still do not consider (App B2: 60-63). Without questioning the significance of the gift market and knowing that Vance Kitira’s catalogues presents various gift sets, this market is not likely to be a good *primary* source of business, because of its limited size. As already determined, the focus is on heavy users. If deciding on a primary positioning on the gift market, it is more likely that the main target group focus would be that of light users such as the rose segment. Naturally, the gift market is not exclusive to the rose segment because other segments, including men and women, will also have the need to buy seasonal gifts and the like.

Examining the women’s role in purchasing candles, Roy Wide tells us that women of a certain age have always been quietly aware of style and visual impact (App B2: ll. 62-63). With regard to the lifestyle element explained in section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market, he defines this as a change in the market and from this it can be deduced that this element must be valued most by the younger generation of women - a sort of addition to visual impact. Knowing that the Vance Kitira brand represents certain values, it can be concluded that it would be beneficial to include a lifestyle and value focus in our communication matching the new market tendencies and opportunities, and therefore the target group is mostly consisting of younger women in their 20s and 30s and certain types of trendy women from the slightly older generation. Comparing that with statistics at the level of interest in the environment according to age group, it can be seen that the largest interest in the environment is found in the UK population in ages 25-45 with a peak around 35 (App B4). **Therefore, it can be concluded that the “perfect” target group for green candles, living up to the criteria of being interested in candles *and/or* in green, will be likely to be women from 25-40**.

With regard to social class, Roy Wilde defines consumers of candles to be middle class - people in the socioeconomic range (App B2: ll. 225-26). He continues: “…*middleclass people with some money will pay (…) ten percent more or something like that for something they think is quotable organic or green*” (App B2: ll. 228-30). **From this it can be added to the above results that the women ranging from 25-40 will be on the middle of the social and economic ladder.**

We do not have any specific knowledge regarding the size of this segment. However based on the increasing interest in green, the fact that women make up more than half the British population (App B7), and the fact that the age gap 25-40 leaves us with a significant group of people, we consider the segment to be of sizeable significance. The value sets we have examined in the blue and green segment above are very broad and thus we argue that they are applicable to a broad audience.
**Our primary segment is therefore as follows: women in the age group 25-40, finding themselves in the middle of the socioeconomic range, and who adopt a modern and idealistic view on life.**

 On a final note, looking at the target audience of Lübech Living, it will consist of retailers, boutiques and up-scale supermarkets where the green and blue segments are likely to make their purchases for the home. Unfortunately, we do not have any details on the sales agreement between Vance Kitira International and Lübech Living; however it is safe to assume that Vance Kitira only wishes to sell to retailers which support a certain image of high quality. Based on acquired knowledge about the green and blue segment, they would be likely to go to specialised shops for decorative and trendy items for their homes. The green segment (if green) would be likely to go to specialised environmental shops and boutiques and the blue segment would likely shop in designer stores.

In this respect, it is worth examining how the British regard candles as a shopping item – if they would purchase it as part of their everyday shopping or specifically when they are looking for decorative items for the home. In the questions posed to Candle Maker’s Federation, Roy Wilde says about candle shopping: “Over *the past four decades the place of candle purchase has transferred from the utility hardware store to the boutique, life-style shop and higher-quality supermarkets*” (App A1, Q3). So it can be concluded that it is a little bit of both. If shopping everyday groceries in high end supermarkets, the green or blue segment might purchase the candles there along with their normal groceries. However, if shopping groceries in the average supermarket, they might go to lifestyle shops or boutiques for decorative fashion items for themselves or the home.

Without providing an extensive list, **it can be recommended to target high-end supermarket chains such as Marks and Spencer; high-end fashion and furnishing retailers like Laura Ashley; green boutiques and online websites** such as Ethics Girls selling green and ethical fashion and lifestyle products (to see their website go to www.ethicsgirls.co.uk). This specific example is especially interesting in relation to the female audience in the younger part of the age group 25-40.

## STEP 3: UNDERSTANDING TARGET AUDIENCE DECISION MAKING

At this third step of the analysis, having determined who the target audience is, we will now examine how they make their purchase decisions in order to understand how they might be targeted with any type of communication. As outlined in the theory describing this third step, section 4.3 Understanding Target Audience Decision Making, this will include analysing how a decision within the product category is likely to be made; who and how many participants there might be in any purchase decision of the product category and brand; and finally what the communication objective must be - brand awareness, brand attitude and/or brand purchase intention - in relation to the situational aspects learned at the previous steps and the reached understanding of the decision-making process. Also, the decision-making process needs to be seen in relation to the product category and type, meaning that the process will be influenced by whether the product presents any financial or social risk, making the decision more or less complicated.

### Candles as a High or Low Involvement Product Category?

As hinted already in the beginning of the analysis, in section 6.1 Step 1: Reviewing the Situation, **we deem candles to be a product category presenting low financial risk**. In spite of the Vance Kitira brand being a high-end brand within the product category of candles, candles in general terms are fairly low priced and it does not have any significant effect on a household economy as e.g. the purchase of a car. Purchasing candles should not financially knock down a household. When a household purchases candles it will most likely be driven by a set of priorities – candles or not? tea lights or pillars? expensive or cheap candles? - rather than a financial *risk* evaluation. In other words, there will be a financial evaluation in some cases, but it will not be on the basis of risk per se. As seen at the previous step, this also supports the choice to initially deselect the rose segment (light users), as their set of priorities would likely involve cheap and low-quality over expensive and high-quality candles.

The previously mentioned report on candle safety - carried out by Consumers Association Research and Testing Centre commissioned by Consumer Affairs Directorate, United Kingdom - supports our evaluation of candles as a low involvement product category and states that “*candle users have a very wide repertoire, rather than one or two favourites*” (App B3: 23). As described in the theory, when consumers have low involvement in a product category it means that they are more likely to switch between brands within that category depending on their level of satisfaction. This is what is indicated by candle users having a wide repertoire. **What this means is that one of the ways to success in the candle industry for Vance Kitira must be to create as high a level of satisfaction as possible.** The more satisfied the consumers are, the more likely they are to repurchase their brand and refrain from switching.

**Looking at personal and psychological risk, the product category of candles is also likely to present low risk and, in turn, low involvement**. Candles are not associated with any sort of taboo topic, and to our knowledge the candle industry do not present world recognised brands on the same level as Apple’s iPod could be considered the only “real” mp3 player. The above statement about candle users having a wide repertoire tells us that the likeliness of the existence of a discussed and specific favoured candle make within a social group is fairly low. Also, in the case of having one or more favoured brands, it is doubtful that a favourable brand attitude should exist at the level where a choice of another candle brand than the favoured brand would be frowned upon or result in emotional exclusion. That being said, we are aware that some people think that buying green and even paying *more* for green is unnecessary and maybe even “silly”. However, our statistics from the previous sections shows us that this part of the population is quite insignificant in this context. Whether these opinions will be aired to the degree where they influence social relations can be questioned. If any form of high psychological involvement is present, it is most likely to take place in the violet segment where money is tight, where decisions are not determined by ideals but practical matters, and where spending extra on ideals and high quality/luxury might be considered a waste or even seen as unnecessary boasting.

**On the business-to-business market we see social risk as risks influencing a business’ reputation or good name.** In order to avoid social risk, a business will need a lot of information to make sure that the product or brand is right for their business assortment. Therefore, Lübech Living will have to present the Vance Kitira brand in a professional and credible way which ensures a trust in the brand’s benefits and popularity - that the greenness and the quality is real and authentic - and ensure that there are no hidden elements which can backfire and hit the business in the face with complaints or a decline in customers.
To clarify, let us illustrate with an example. Imagine that a small boutique selling green household items and organic foods bought a load of Vance Kitira candles to sell on to its end consumers. Suddenly, it is revealed in the news that Vance Kitira is in fact not as green as assumed, that they are leaking chemicals. This might reflect badly on the boutiques *own* image as a green shop because some consumers will regard it as their responsibility that the products they sell are in fact green. Therefore, the boutiques owner will evaluate the social risk. Another hypothetical example on a larger scale is that of e.g. the furniture designers, manufacturers and warehouse IKEA which uses presumably sustainable and green wood, and then later finds out that way down the line of production and delivery - outside of their control - someone has been using child workers or wrong chemicals to produce the wood which later ends up in IKEA’s green or child friendly furniture. It can be difficult to get a full and easy overview of a production and sales process and even a small chain of delivery like that of Vance Kitira, Lübech Living, one or two retailers, and finally the end consumer, can present invisible risk factors.

In conclusion, **some retailers, especially if looking to be authentically green, might consider a purchase of candles as presenting risk and thereby be highly involved in the purchase.** On a final note, we are aware that the described psychological risk amounts to high financial risk, because we are talking business and bottom lines. In business-to-business purchases more money is involved, and therefore they are more likely to represent high financial risk and involvement.

### The Purchase of Candles - Defining Communication Objectives

The way a decision-making process is carried out helps us shed light on which communication objective is realistic in our specific situation, be it brand awareness, brand attitude or brand purchase intention. We do not know exactly how a decision to purchase candles is carried out. However, two important facts can help us in understanding the process. The end target audience is British women at the age of 25-40 as determined in section 6.2.2 Objective Characteristics of the Target Audience, and the product category does not require any high involvement in the purchase decision.

With Vance Kitira being new to the market it will prove difficult to create purchase intention. As described in section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation, brand purchase intention is normally also the objective of promotion and not advertising and it is not within the focus of this thesis, though it definitely need to be the focus of Lübech Living in later stages. Being new to the market, Lübech Living and Vance Kitira are operating on the first two stages of the decision-making process – need arousal and pre-purchase search, described in section 4.3.1 The Decision-Making Process.

Before any purchase can be made, the consumers need to be made aware of Vance Kitira’s existence. It is necessary to create a need for their brand. Since it has already been determined - in section 6.2 Step 2: Selecting the Target Audience - that heavy users make up the primary target audience, we know that a need for the product category candles is already established. Therefore, a need for the brand must be created - or to put it in other words, as described in the theory, a link between the need for the product category and Vance Kitira must be established. At this stage, an initiator must be targeted - a person who initiates the purchase of candles and in doing so may choose Vance Kitira. Looking at decisions made within the target group, it is only logical that this group matches the role of initiators in the candle purchase process. Having determined to target women in the age group 25-40, because they are the ones most likely to represent an interest in candles (and in turn the Vance Kitira brand of candles), they will also be the ones most likely to initiate any purchase. To put this in specific terms, it is crucial to establish brand awareness as the basic communication objective. **The target audience, the initiators, needs to be made aware that Vance Kitira exists within the product category**.

Being aware of Vance Kitira’s existence, consumers also need to be *positively* aware to move further in the purchase process. When our female consumer decides that she has a need for candles, she will find out *which* candle to purchase and this is our opportunity to introduce Vance Kitira. This opportunity presents itself at the stage of pre-purchase search where she compares different brands of candles and weighs them against each other. As has been defined candles fall into a low-involvement product category both financially and psychologically, and therefore this step does not require that heavy an information load and consumers are more likely to switch between products, as described in section 4.3.2 High or Low Involvement. This means that the mentioned comparison and evaluation will not be so extensive.

First of all, Vance Kitira is new to the market, and therefore it is unlikely that any *existing* attitudes are present in the mind of an influencer. What is more, candles are not a product category which is widely discussed. It is doubtful that any green non-governmental organisations would be interested in endorsing this “non-media-focused” product category and brand. Our consumer can of course be influenced by friends, family or colleagues who “have just tried this really great (or horrible) new candle”, but it is not likely to pop up in conversation. It is more likely that she will *see* the candles at e.g. a friend’s house, notice that they are trendy and unconventional and think “I would like to try them” which *then* might trigger a conversation. However, if another person has purchased the Vance Kitira candles, she will likely *already* be within the defined target audience and will not need specially targeted communication for her role as influencer. Therefore, there is no apparent need to target any specified *extra* target group of influencers. To conclude, **it is likely that we, as communicators, because Vance Kitira is new to the market,** **just need to introduce Vance Kitira - possessing some or most of the benefits the consumer is looking for - to create a sense of curiosity or liking, making her think “I might try that”.** This is what theory refers to as establishing initial positive brand attitude.

To put the above into perspective, if a consumer was looking to buy a car, she would *actively* gather information and approach dealerships for offers in order to make a secure decision. In our case with the candles, she will not actively approach the retailer to examine offers and information. Buying candles is more likely to be influenced by impulse and a fast decision-making process. Vance Kitira needs to approach *her* through advertising “moving her towards the brand”. Therefore, we find it our best bet to communicate and create curiosity, presenting Vance Kitira in an eye-catching kind of way and thereby influence her decision. If looking for an influencer one could say that Lübech Living can be seen as the strongest influencer in this situation. Lübech Living, in their role as European distributors of Vance Kitira, will be in charge of any communication on the European market which is not distributed internationally from the headquarters. Hence this strategic planning is for their use in targeting the end consumers and not business consumers. Please see section 2.1 Thesis Focus and Limitation.

## STEP 4: DETERMINING THE BEST POSITIONING

Turning to the fourth step of the analysis, we have now reached an understanding of the situational aspects; we have defined the target audience; and we have reached an understanding of how that target audience makes its decisions in order to establish what the objectives should be in any communication. Now we need to examine how the target audience partitions the market – how women between 25-40 years of age evaluate various candle alternatives in the purchase process. This understanding of how they regard the market, should aid us in determining a set of benefits which *differ* from the primary category benefits, which are *important* to the target audience, and which the target audience can be persuaded that Vance Kitira delivers *better* than other brands on the market, as described in section 4.2.2 Making Initial Positioning Decisions and Selecting Appropriate Benefits. Finally, in order to shape the chosen benefits in any communication, we need to understand more about what motivates the target audience to purchase candles, as described in section 4.4.4 Understanding Consumer Motivation and Selecting Benefit Focus. As pinpointed in the theory, the aim of this step is to answer the two critical questions about the product to be put forward in any communication: *What is it? And what does it offer?*

### Partitioning the UK Candle Market

To understand how Vance Kitira should be positioned on the British Candle market, we need to understand the market. Therefore, this first section will analyse the market in general terms, as it is viewed in the eyes of the target audience. In other words the conclusions below will create the context in which Vance Kitira will operate. In the following section, 6.4.2 Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market - Product Type and End Benefit, we will examine how Vance Kitira can position itself in relation to the market and the target audience.

Firstly, a discussion on how the market might be divided according to product type will be carried out. Logically, the market is defined as the market for candles, but it might not be as simple as just that. Candles might be competing with other lifestyle or home décor products depending on the usage situation or end benefit the consumer has in mind.

If imagining some scenarios outside of *the candle product category*, it could e.g. be:
- Scented candles competing with incense about the end benefit of creating an atmospheric scent or removing bad smells;
- Decorative candles competing with other minor decorations such as a vase with artificial flowers or a small decorative figurine with the end benefit of decorating a furniture piece;
- Candles competing with a small lamp or a chain of decorative lights in creating a cosy atmosphere with soft lighting;
- And finally, looking at usage situation; candles competing with other product categories in a gift situation, where the consumer looks to find a lifestyle gift for a girlfriend and considers candles, perfume or flowers.

However, that being said, it is our aim to gain an understanding of the partitioning *within* the candle product category. It is worth being aware of other product categories which one might be in direct competition with, but because Vance Kitira is new to the market, it seems to be most beneficial to begin with obtaining an understanding of the partitioning of the candle market itself, in order to be able to compete with other *candle* brands in the communication. Also, because the target audience is heavy users, it can be assumed that they already have a favourable attitude towards candles in relation to other product categories which might provide similar benefits.

#### Product Type

Looking at the **product type** of candles, various types of candles can be identified on the market. The overall impression is that the market is divided into *scented* and *unscented* candles, where scented has grown radically in later years, see section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market. As an example of the demand for scented candles, the Honorary Secretary of the British Candlemakers’ Federation, Roy Wilde, tells us that one of the members of the federation produces “*something like thirty-eight different aroma candles*” (App A2, ll. 39-40). He goes on: “*well, they all look the same…slightly different colour some of them (…) but it’s the smells that are different*” (App A2, ll. 42-44). Scented candles represent a large market as there is room for one manufacturer alone to have a range of thirty-eight similar candles only varying in scent.

Above, the market was divided into scented and unscented candles. In addition, candles come in all shapes and sizes, so a logical way to divide candles according to product type could be a division according to *shape* and *size*. Looking at shape, candles can be shaped as various sculptures, have three or more wicks/flames, have other items embedded in them, leaves, shells, etc. or the candles can be embedded into things such as clay or metal container. They can be slim and smooth or chunky and rough-looking. Size-wise, the candle category covers tea lights, tapers, standard dinner candles, pillars of various sizes and large chunky church candles (App B3: 27). Apart from shape and size, another feature which Roy Wilde stresses as a priority is the *type of wax* which candles are made from, see section 6.1.2.4 Negative Attitude towards the Natural Authenticity of Vegetable Waxes. He lists paraffin wax, beeswax and stearines (App. B1, Q5), but also vegetable waxes like soy and palm wax. These four types appear to be the significant types of wax in which the market is divided: vegetable wax, beeswax, stearines and paraffin.

#### End Benefits

We find it more than likely that the consumers partition and evaluate the market on more than *product type*. This leads us to consider **end benefit** and usage situation as a base for partitioning. In the interview with Roy Wilde, he tells us that with regard to end benefit, the use of candles has become more focused on lifestyle rather than practical end benefits in the target segment of women between 25-40: “*Over the past 50 years candle use has moved from a utility purpose of lighting to become a statement of fashion and lifestyle. Today candles are bought to either have a visual impact upon the quality of the home, or, via their aroma to enhance its atmosphere*”. Please see section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market to learn more about the lifestyle aspect and change within the candle market. **This quote provides us with the three overall end benefits of a) *functional benefits* (heat/keeping warm and light), b) *visual impact upon the quality of the home* and b) *enhancement of a home’s atmosphere.***

Hiding underneath these overall benefits is another layer of specific benefits. The heading functional benefits go deeper than “keeping warm” or “providing light”. If looking at the market of allergies and disease, defined in section 6.1.2.6 A Market Inspired by Allergies and Disease (Cancer), a specific benefit of avoiding chemicals, heavy fragrances etc. could be revealed. Speaking of fragrances, a functional benefit of aroma candles could be to avoid bad smells in the bathroom or home. Also, knowing that there are different types of wax on the market and that these are known to have various benefits, see section 6.1.2.4 Negative Attitude towards the Natural Authenticity of Vegetable Waxes, some waxes might be considered healthier than others providing a benefit of *avoiding disease or keeping healthy*. What is more, in examining functional benefits, the issue of quality presents itself.

Where low quality often provides the concrete benefit of saving money, high quality provides other benefits such as:*The avoidance of drowning wicks and lopsided candles***,** as described in section 6.1.2.2 A Lack of Interest in Quality?, which in turn provides prettier candles, longer burning time and no annoyance. The function benefit of *longer burning time* means that the consumer can enjoy the candle for longer, avoid having to stock up on candles often, maybe save money as a result, or in the long run get better candles for the same price as low-quality. One last thing about quality which has a functional character is the fact that quality candles *emit less soot* which in turns helps avoid black walls.

Looking at the heading of visual impact upon the quality of the home – additional specific benefits could be that the visual style of the candles could *provide or support a certain image*, the candles could make *a fashion/lifestyle statement* and maybe in turn *create admiration* among friends and guests in the home.

Looking at the heading, the enhancement of a home’s atmosphere - candles could provide specific benefits such as *setting the mood*, be it in relation to romance, entertaining friends, relaxation or relieving stress which in turn could provide scenarios like success with dating, success with hosting a party, or being rested for work.

#### Usage Situation

Looking at **usage situations** based on the end benefits defined above, it can be assumed that candles are used in practical situations where the lights go out as a result of e.g. a lightning strike or in practical situations where additional heat is needed such as the winter season. Speaking of the winter season, it is also likely that candles could be used as Christmas gifts and the like or to put it in other words “in a situation where a gift is needed”. They could also be used for seasonal purposes in the home or church. Looking at the lifestyle elements, they could be used for candle light dinners, be it a romantic dinner or a dinner with friends. They could be used for meditation, when in the bath or after a visit to the toilet (aroma candles). The latter leads us back to end benefits because various benefits might be relevant in different situations. All in all the example with the aroma candles shows us that most benefits overlap and might represent a touch of all three defined overall benefits.

#### Brand Name

A final way of partitioning the market is for consumers to view the market as consisting of brand names, as opposed to going through the process of defining product types which provide end benefits in certain usage situations. In a market division based on **brand name** the consumers quickly weigh brands and the associations they have stored in memory against each other in order to make a decision.

Based on the knowledge gathered about the candle market - that it is flooded with cheap alternatives without brand names (e.g. just called China Tea Lights or Purple Dinner Candles) as described in section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market - choosing a strong *brand* positioning might not be an approach which is widely applied. However, when dealing with high quality/high end candles, maintaining a brand name which would be a recognised brand name in such an evaluation, is an opportunity which should be considered as a *long-term communication objective*. If a candle brand is strong enough - in spite of being a low involvement product and in spite of the purchase process of candles being fast and influenced by impulse as described in section 6.3.2 The Purchase of Candles -Defining Communication Objectives - it will be possible to create some level of brand recognition and loyalty.

### Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market – Product Type and End Benefit

Within the above context, it can be suggested that the long-term aim of Vance Kitira is to position itself on the market according to brand name. To create a strong link between the category need for candles in the target audience and the brand as a solution. Because Vance Kitira has so strong associated values, as shall be discussed later in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits, and *also* lives up to a high level of quality and design as described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, **a positioning according to brand name is a possibility**.

However, since this is a long process, they should focus on establishing initial positioning and communication focusing on *entering* the market, and therefore the focus here will be on product type, usage situation and end benefits, as the foundation for a strong positioning.

Examining Vance Kitira’s positioning in relation to product type, the brand embraces both scented and unscented candles. It also covers a full range of candle types from tea lights to large pillars, in various shapes and styles, though the general theme is inspired by nature. As described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, the focus of this thesis is on the range of Ecofriendly Candles and more specifically Palm Wax Pillars and Renewal Candles. These fall within the category **unscented candles**. ( Though the Renewal Candle may contain traces of fragrance, since it is made from recycled wax). With regard to size and shape, both candle types are **pillars of various sizes**, from 3 to 12 inch tall (7.5 cm – 30.5 cm) as described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description. As also described, the shape of the Palm Wax Candle is a **classic smooth** pillar which, when lit, burns into a sculpture-like figure. The Renewal candle is shaped like a **forest log**. And they are both in nature-like green and brownish colours. Looking at wax type, these candles are **made from vegetable and recyclable wax**. More specifically the Palm Wax Pillars are made from approximately 60% paraffin and 40% palm wax. The renewal candle is made from recycled wax with a coat of palm wax.

On the basis of the above, it can be determined that the two types of Vance Kitira candles will fall into the product category of firstly *unscented candles* and secondly *design pillars* in respectively the “classic pillar” and “unique pillar” category, and finally, *vegetable and recyclable wax* c*andles*. This partitioning of the market presents us with a frame – some limitations and opportunities – in the further positioning. The following will examine how these product types represent various end benefits.

For clarifying purposes, we would like to remind the reader that three overall end benefits for the UK candle market was determined above:a) functional benefits (heat/keeping warm and light), b) visual impact upon the quality of the home and b) enhancement of a home’s atmosphere. In determining Vance Kitira’s end benefits, these will be used as reference points in determining a set of benefits which *differ* from the primary category benefits, which are *important* to the target audience, and which the target audience can be persuaded that Vance Kitira delivers *better* than other brands on the market, as described in section 4.4.2 Making Initial Positioning Decisions and Selecting Appropriate Benefits.

#### Unscented Candles

Looking at *functional benefits* in unscented candles, the area of allergies has already been touched upon. It is a possibility that some consumers would look to avoid scents due to allergies or difficulty breathing heavy fragrances. However, the idea that there should be a significant amount of consumers suffering from allergies within the target audience, the green (and the blue) segment, is unlikely. Also, as described in section 6.2.1 Minerva Value Segmentation, the rose segment, who could be motivated by fear of disease to avoid fragrances, has already been deselected.

The fact that the Vance Kitira candles are unscented eliminates the option of a strong positioning in relation to *enhancing the home’s atmosphere as an end benefit.* Though candles are sure to enhance a home’s atmosphere, having scent or not, this will not be something which is *specifically* associated with Vance Kitira and therefore creating atmosphere is not something which *differs* from other candles or which they can deliver *better* than other brands on the market.

This raises the question if the fact that they are unscented can be used for anything in the positioning and the communication? One could imagine that a heavy user of candles (as our target audience is) might have other scented candles in order to reach some of the benefits described in section 6.4.1 Partitioning the UK Candle Market. **It is highly likely that a heavy user of candles, if having many candles in the same room, does not wish *all of them* to add fragrance to the room as it would create either a very heavy or mixed scent.** This is not something which would be an ideal benefit in carrying the entire communication; however it is important to understand that it might be a benefit which heavy users could be looking for.

The fact that the candles are unscented could also represent a possibility as an *enhancer* of the design inspired by nature and simplicity, discussed below in section 6.4.2.2 Design Pillars, and the green aspects described in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits. **Added fragrances could be considered a step towards making the candle more artificial and less natural. Adding fragrance also adds another layer to the candle making it less simplistic**.

#### Design Pillars

Determining any *functional* benefits based on the fact that the candles are pillars could be the fact that these types of candles are more stable. The stability is one of the key arguments presented in the previously mentioned report on candle safety issued by Consumer Affairs Directorate (Government Consumer Safety Research) for why the British consumers are increasingly using these broader based types of candles in (App B3: 27). However, this is not something the Vance Kitira brand offers differently than other pillars on the market to the extent where it would be a suitable benefit to focus on. The same goes for the functional benefit of pillars having a longer burning time than dinner candles and tea lights. That would be the same for *all* pillars.

Looking at the *visual* *impact upon the quality of the home*, evidence points to the fact that pillar candles can be regarded as new and trendy: “*There appeared to be a shift in taste away from classic, slim dinner candle design towards more chunky church candles. This is because they are more stable and less formal (less old fashioned). There is also an apparent trend towards very broad based candles (possibly with multiple wicks)*”, states the previously mentioned report on candle safety (App B3: 27). In addition to pillars in themselves being regarded new and trendy, the Renewal Candle’s design is a log-like shape, and the Palm Wax Pillars, though classical in appearance, burns into a sculpture due to the use of palm wax. (The wax type will be discussed further in section 6.4.2.3 Vegetable Wax and Recycled Wax). The design is something which is somewhat *unique* to Vance Kitira, which *differs* from the primary category benefits and which the target audience can be persuaded that Vance Kitira deliver *better* than other brands on the market, but is it *important* to the target audience? We find that it is. Section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market established that candles, in general, are becoming a lifestyle and fashion product. **The benefit of candles and especially design pillars signalling a certain fashionable lifestyle is a benefit which in particular the blue segment might look for.** As was defined in sections 4.2.2.1 The Blue Segment and 6.2.1 Minerva Value Segmentation, the blue segment is a modern segment who strives to achieve visible and socially accepted goals such as being highly regarded personalities and being successful in their career. They are therefore also likely to be more prone to buy trendy high-end products confirming their lifestyle and achievements.

Having determined the green segment to be the primary target audience, would they be interested in pillar candles being new and trendy, and in Vance Kitira’s particular design? Because the green segment is modern they would be likely to desire trends and lifestyle products, but not to the same extent as the blue segment. **However, being idealists and intellectualists, they will be more likely to appreciate the arty symbolism in the log design/renewal design as described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira** **Product Description.** Especially, if their ideals are of a green nature, which is a topic section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits will return to. Also, because the green segment is somewhat into “the arts”, they might also appreciate the sculpture-like shape which the Palm Wax Pillars reveals when burned. Furthermore, the green segment likes to peel off the layers (of society and people) and look beneath the surface. Therefore, they might also be drawn to the *simplistic* design of Vance Kitira.

Summing up, the design and lifestyle benefits (the visual impact upon the quality of the home)- more specifically the simplistic and somewhat arty and symbolic design of the Vance Kitira candles - seem to live up to all three requirements of an optimal benefit. It is somewhat *different* from the competitors, Vance Kitira has the foundation to deliver it somewhat *better* than other brands, and the green segment of young women between 25 and 40 find it *important*. **What is more, with the difference between the unique design of the Renewal Candle and the more classic design of the Palm Wax candle, they are likely to target a diverse group in taste and style.** Looking at lifestyle in candles, they are generally perceived as a fashion item as was explored above. However, this is general to *all* candles and high-end candles in particular. However, it may differ how various candles support lifestyle and *which* lifestyle they support, apart from the lifestyle of being “fashionable”. The specific lifestyle which Vance Kitira represents is something section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits will comment further on.

The last thing within design which will be touched upon is the aspect of quality. Though some might associate high-end design with quality, this is not always the case. Roy Wilde from the British Candlemakers’ Federation explains that, to an increasing degree, supermarkets are copying and mass producing “quite attractive” candles (App B1, Q3), but that these candles tend to lack quality. Therefore, equating design with quality is not *always* the right conclusion. The type of candle wax used in the Vance Kitira candles in relation in the following section.

#### Vegetable Wax and Recycled Wax

Staying within the realm of quality, we argue that if design is not the sole indicator of quality, then another attribute influencing quality must be the wax factor. The wax type presents us with some *functional* benefits which, having learned that the target audience is heavy users, this is important in the positioning. Heavy users care about quality because, as described in section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market, they will be fed up with drowning wicks, lopsidedness, soot, and a short burning time. Therefore, **it is important - in the positioning of Vance Kitira as an alternative for heavy users - to market the brand as high quality/high-end candles** which also fits the American positioning as described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description. It is fortunate that it was determined that there is a market for high quality candles in the UK, as it is important for Vance Kitira to stay somewhat close to their original core which, as was also described, revolves around various quality aspects. As described in section 6.1.2 SWOT Analysis - Vance Kitira Seen in Context, had there not been a market for high-end/high quality candles in the UK, it would not be recommendable that Vance Kitira even attempt to enter. It would require that they either marketed *too* far away from their ideals or spent a significant amount of resources in changing attitudes in the use of the product category creating favourable attitudes towards paying more for quality candles.

Knowing that there is a market for high-quality candles, **it is important to emphasise in any communication that the Vance Kitira candle constitute a good burning candle** and that the quality therefore makes up for the more expensive price tag. Based on our own understanding of market tendencies, we know that price may also reinforce the impression of quality as “expensive” is often associated with “high quality” in the mind of many consumers.

A specific attribute which could be emphasised in the positioning and in any correlating communication could be the long burning time of the Vance Kitira candles. The Palm Wax Pillars have 30 to 140 hours depending on their height, as was defined in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description. The renewal Candles range from 140 to 195 total burning hours (App A1). As clarified, this is something our heavy users are looking for; it is *important* to them. We know it is something which *differs* in relation to cheaper alternatives. In finding out how the burning time competes with other high quality candles on the market, we have examined the burning time of similar quality candles made by manufacturers listed as members on the British Candlemakers’ Federation website. To provide an example, comparing the Vance Kitira Palm Wax Pillars with Carberry Candle’s St Eval Classic Church Candle (“handmade to the finest quality and blended with a pure beeswax”), Vance Kitira’s 9 inch candle (23 cm) has a burning time of 140 hours, where the Carberry’s 8 inch candle (20 cm) has a burning time of 100 hours. In conclusion, Vance Kitira is able to compete in the high end regarding quality and the brand’s candles *do* constitute good burning candles. However, it will not be enough to grant them a unique market position if standing alone.

 As discussed above, the design has an influence on the benefit of *visual impact on the quality of the home*. Though quality, outside of design, cannot be *seen*, the wax ads to the candle’s texture and visual quality. However, the issue of Vance Kitira using palm wax and recycled wax as a benefit is something which will be examined further, in the light of the brand’s green values, in the following section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits.

### Green and Authenticity as Benefits

We did not define “green candles” above as a product category because we wanted to look at candles first in their own right. As defined in chapter 6.2 Step 2: Selecting the Target Audience, the target audience must first be interested in candles, and secondly be interested in *green* candles. In selecting the positioning and the benefits which could be in focus, this guideline is followed. It is unlikely that a significant part of the target audience would purchase the Vance Kitira candles *only* because they are green. The candles have to live up to the heavy user’s “fixed ideas/tastes” and standards as described in section 6.1.2.2 A Lack of Interest in Quality? However, having covered the basic candle benefits above, this section will now examine benefits in the light of the green nature of the brand Vance Kitira, which then *could* turn out to be the primary benefits in any communication focus.

Keeping to the same structure as in previous sections, this section will start by looking at *functional* benefits provided by greenness. Because authenticity provides the frame for this thesis and because that frame dictates that authenticity is increasingly important to consumers in general, any green benefits will be examined in the light of authenticity. In this, it will also be examined whether authenticity in itself is a worthy benefit to emphasise in any communication.

The green element does not provide many *functional* benefits per se. As shall be seen, **the green elements is more of a “behind the scenes” layer of benefits which has more to do with the brand and associated values than it has to do with the physical candle.** Looking at functional benefits, the only real benefit which can be discussed is the disputed fact that vegetable waxes emit less chemicals than other candles. However, based on the information provided in section 6.1.2.4 Negative Attitude towards the Natural Authenticity of Vegetable Waxes, it will not be a good idea to proclaim these disputed benefits *directly*. If the scenario described in the mentioned section occurs and the natural authenticity of vegetable waxes is disputed, it could backfire and damage Vance Kitira’s image if they can be directly quoted for making false promises. It is a possibility that a target audience interested in greenness already has favourable attitudes based on perceptions that vegetable waxes are more natural, and therefore it would be a good idea to emphasise that the candles are made from palm wax. However, **the associations of the waxes as more “natural” and “healthy” should be put forward *indirectly*.** This argument is supported by the fact the Vance Kitira Palm Wax Pillars are only made from approximately 40% palm wax and 60% paraffin. As has been discussed in the above mentioned section, it is rare to find any candles made purely from vegetable wax as they would not contain any stabilisers and might crumble. However, we do not consider it a good idea to focus on the paraffin amount as a benefit in creating stability. Firstly, because paraffin has a somewhat bad reputation in the eyes of any target audience which would be likely to have a favourable attitude towards vegetable waxes; Secondly, because Vance Kitira refers to their candles as Palm Wax Pillars, it would be unfortunate if a focus was created on the actual amount of paraffin in the candles. Though Vance Kitira would not be alone in stabilising vegetable wax candles with paraffin, they could fall out to be inauthentic and untrustworthy in the eyes of the consumers. Not many write on their candles exactly what they are made from, unless they are made from 100% stearines. Therefore, it will not appear odd not to mention in direct terms that the candles actually contain 60% paraffin. This is not to say that the consumers should be kept in the dark. As you may see in appendix A1, we were told the exact wax measurements when we approached Vance Kitira, and that shows us they have nothing to hide. This is a strategy which we would recommend sticking to.

Moving away from the *functional* benefits this section will now focus on the other defined benefit, the *visual impact upon the quality of the home*. Do the green elements have any impact here? In the section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, it was established that the Vance Kitira candles are more than just physical candles. The brand represents a set of values that a consumer can choose to buy into or not. It was defined thatVance Kitira is based on three authentic core values: a passion for wood (nature), an appreciation of the beauty of nature, and an aim to create a sustainable Thailand through a connection with the outside world.

Looking at the increasing concern for nature’s well-being, it has already been determined that green candles is an interesting and viable market in section 6.1.2.5 The Green Wave and the Media. In other words, green represents an important benefit.

To the defined blue segment consumers, it is likely that the interest in green is only skin-deep, and that they are followers of an apparent trend. However, when looking at the green segment consumers, it is likely that the green value-set is something which could be considered very important. It was previously determined that the green segment is an idealistic population and consumer group. Therefore, if having an ideal of saving the environment, they are, as mentioned, Vance Kitira’s perfect target audience. Examining the core values, it is highly likely that they could be passionate about nature and appreciate nature’s beauty. It was established that they enjoy experiences through the mind (as opposed to the body), and that they appreciate art, poetry and the like, therefore it is not farfetched to think that they also appreciate the beauty of nature. As has already been discussed in section 6.4.2.2 Design Pillars, **the green segment is likely to enjoy the symbolism and physical attributes of natural design, natural colours, and simplicity. It can now be concluded that this layer of green values provide the grounds for that appreciation of the design**.

The latter appreciation of simplicity, we argued was due to a tendency for the green segment to be looking for what is “real”, a tendency to peel off layers and see what is underneath. **This can be seen as a sign that the green segment, more than other segments, would appreciate the authenticity of the greenness**.

Firstly, they would appreciate authenticity in the shape of natural authenticity - that everything is *truly* natural, environmentally friendly and sustainable made from natural resources. Secondly, they might appreciate the determined referential authenticity - the connection with Thailand. Knowing that the green segment, in comparison with the blue segment, shows empathy, they might support empathic ideals of helping Thailand help themselves to create a sustainable Thailand. It was also previously established that the green segment has a tendency to feel better than the (political and moral) society which surrounds them, and in this lies a hint that they might be willing to morally and politically “help others in need”. Being the intellectual, well-read group they are, they might also appreciate the cultural and Thai origin of the products. This also indicates that the green segment would appreciate influential authenticity – that they would appreciate that Vance Kitira has some ideals and standards of their own and wants to influence the world to become a better (more green and environmentally friendly) place. Whether authenticity should be *communicated* directly as a benefit is another matter which will be finally evaluated in section 6.5 Step 5: Developing a Communication Strategy.

All in all, green is an important benefit on three levels. The gathered information point towards an emphasis of natural resources (vegetable wax, recycling, sustainability, raw materials) in the positioning. A benefit is also presented in telling people about the connection with Thailand, and finally a benefit is presented in emphasising the higher aims and goals behind the brand.

The blue segment would mostly care about the first level of greenness in creating a superficial fashion statement and image influencing *the visual impact upon the quality of the home*. The green segment, however, would be interested in all three layers equally. They would want to know in their own hearts and minds that the products are green in relation to personal ideals, and knowing their desire for influence in relation to ideals, they would like to use their power as political consumers, but they would also appreciate to be able to *visually express* their affiliation.

In conclusion, green is a benefit which is *important* to the green segment consumers and which furthermore hugely *differs* from the primary category benefits of normal candles and which Vance Kitira in many ways can deliver *better* than other brands on the market. There are other *green* candles on the market; however **Vance Kitira’s ideals are very specific, strong and authentic.** On top of that, strengths have also been defined within their candle-making skills which could help them in gaining a strong positioning. **Vance Kitira can prove that they are both green *and* high quality**.

### Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market – Usage Situation

The third and last basis for partitioning is usage situation. In general terms, it was defined that candles could be used in various scenarios in section 6.4.1.3 Usage Situation. Also, in section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market, it was described how candles in general had moved to all rooms in the house presenting us with options for framing candles in communication presented in various rooms and situations.

However, if moving away from general terms and looking at Vance Kitira, they do not have any usage situation which is specific to them and creates an advantage in the market. They are not seasonal candles or candles made specifically for meditation. This could be perceived as a good thing, because this means they can target a wide group of users. Therefore **they should not attempt to find strength in a unique usage situation** when they already have the green aspects to create a strong and unique position. In fact the definition of a specific usage situation could be seen as a limitation, because it would add additional criteria to the target audience; they would have to e.g. both meditate and be green.

### Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market – Overview

Before moving on to looking at the motivations behind the benefits discussed above, we would like to provide the reader with an overview of how the positioning of Vance Kitira on the UK Market can be seen. Having examined *what Vance Kitira is and has to offer*, we can now determine that they should aim for a differentiated approach due to their very specific set of strengths. It does not make sense for them to strive for a central positioning as a market leader delivering on *all* benefits in the category as described in section 4.4.2 Making Initial Positioning Decisions and Selecting Appropriate Benefits.

As described in the previous section, there is no reason for Vance Kitira to aim for a positioning according to usage situation with the two candles, the Palm Wax Pillar Candle and the Renewal Candle. As discussed above, three different ways in which the British consumer views and partitions the market according to end benefits was reached: a) *functional benefits* (heat/keeping warm and light), b) *visual impact upon the quality of the home* and b) *enhancement of a home’s atmosphere.*

There is no evidence that Vance Kitira could differ from the candle market in enhancing a home’s atmosphere. Also, no evidence was found pointing towards the notion that Vance Kitira could present functional benefits which significantly made them stand out from other candle brands. Therefore, their strongest position is concluded to revolve around *visual impact benefits*.

The focus on *visual* aspects does not mean that values and the elements which were defined as underlying the design decisions are disregarded. On the contrary, this is where we find that Vance Kitira has a unique strength. They are both visually noticeable candles, they are value-based, have thoughts and symbolism behind their design, *and* they are of high quality.

Below, a very simplistic structural overview of the market is provided, seen in the light of how Vance Kitira finds itself based on end benefits. The overview has been created on the basis of the theory provided in section 4.4.1 Defining the Market. Considering the gathered information, there are two ways in which the consumers may look at and partition the market. If belonging to the blue segment, they might consider quality aspects and design prior to any values which the brand or design might represent. However, if dealing with the green segment, they might, *prior to all other decisions*, decide that they want a candle which is a green candle, and *then* among the green candle product category look for other benefits such as quality and design. However, it can be discussed if any heavy users, green or not, would compromise on quality.

**Fig. 14** – *Hierarchical Partitioning of the Candle Market Driven by End Benefit for the Blue Segment.*

**Fig. 15** – *Hierarchical Partitioning of the Candle Market Driven by End Benefit for the Green Segment.*

### Motivation and Benefit Focus

Section 4.4.4 Understanding Consumer Motivation and Selecting Benefit Focus established that any purchase can either be negatively or positively motivated, which in turn means that any benefits either represent a solution to a problem - something the consumer wants to avoid - or present a solution for something the consumer wishes to achieve.

In the previous, it was defined the end benefit of *achieving visual impact upon the quality of the home* is in focus. This must be said to be a benefit which on an overall basis is motivated by positive factors. **First of all because it can help to *reinforce* a lifestyle statement which is already there**, and secondly because it can help you feel you *do your bit* in helping the environment.

One could argue that the latter could be represented by the antipole of *avoiding environmental disaster*, however candles are not yet framed in society as one of the points where people specifically have to be aware, like e.g*. avoiding plastic bags to save the environment*. Therefore, **the purchase of green candles would likely be motivated by the positive outlook that the consumer is willing to do a little bit extra and out of the ordinary, achieving a positive feeling**.

It is not likely that negative purchase motivations dominate the purchase of The Palm Wax Pillar and The Renewal Candle. They are unscented so they provide no relief of bad odours. The rose segment, who could be negatively motivated or an interest in the natural elements as a way of *avoiding* disease, has previously been deselected. The only argument towards a negative motivation would be the quality aspect. It is likely that heavy users buying quality are motivated by the annoyance of cheap candle’s poor quality and wish to avoid lopsided candles, drowning wicks and the like. The importance of Vance Kitira’s positioning as a quality brand has previously been emphasised. However, it will give room in any textual communication to focus on other, more important aspects - like design and values - if they limit the focus on quality to be mainly visual, *signalling* quality instead of incorporating it in the message.

According to theory, this focus on positive motivations provides two approaches which will prove beneficial in selecting a benefit focus. The approaches are to either focus on a subjective characteristic which then leads to an emotion or a focus on pure emotion alone.

Vance Kitira currently runs with the pitch “Celebrate Life…Light a Candle” as the underlying basis for all their communication. This tells us that they currently operate mainly with creating pure emotion. The slogan does not refer to any specific benefits – neither subjective nor objective - but attempts to create a positive emotional state juxtaposing their green candle with the celebration of life providing associations of sustainability, celebrating Mother Nature, helping the Thai people live better lives, etc.

We do not know how Vance Kitira has come up with this pitch; however it appears to fit with our conclusions on how they could achieve a market position on the British market. Apart from targeting the green segment with the associations of Mother Nature and ideals, the blue segment is also targeted because they would be attracted to the happy idea of “living life in the moment”, as has been defined as their life motto.

**If anything could be adapted to better fit the British market; it might be a more direct approach in explaining the relationship with Nature.** The British people have no knowledge of the Vance Kitira brand and its ideals - and therefore, it can be argued that Nature should be included in a more direct way. We have made a few attempts to include nature. However this is in reality a job for the creative team, in any work following this thesis.

Our first suggestion is the phrase *“Invite Nature Inside”*. This is a purely emotional appeal aiming to associate the brand with Nature. Also the appeal attempts to live up to referential authenticity and making an effort to help the environment providing associations of getting involved in nature. Inviting Nature inside does not say anything about whether it is inside your home, your mind, or your heart.

Our second suggestion runs along the lines of *“Enjoy Nature’s own Design”* or *“A Simple Design for a Naturally Beautiful Home”*. This is more of a design statement, although also involving nature. The statements present two subjective characteristics leading to emotional states. Firstly nature’s own design (the enjoyment implicitly stating the subjective characteristic that the design is beautiful and enjoyable) leading to an emotional state of enjoyment. Secondly, a simple design leading to a naturally beautiful home which indicates a feeling of having good taste without effort. These statements both indicate that nature should be valued, and that it can be used as an inspiration for great design – something which is at the core of the Vance Kitira brand.

Our third suggestion is “Pure Design - Pure Nature”. This statement represents two subjective characteristics and leaves the emotional response unsaid. However, the associations of purity (authenticity) in relation to green are important in this context. They give the consumer the feeling of the candle being truly green and natural – and at the same time it is also pure design. Pure in this context brings associations of true and fully and “no compromises has been made” in the design area.

 A final suggestion could be “Design by Nature”. This statement is effective in the way that, in its phrasing, it juxtaposes nature with Vance Kitira. The design is made by Vance Kitira, but it is also made by nature, providing associations that the product is so natural that it is nature’s own design. It oozes natural authenticity because it has not been through any artificial processes – it is made by nature, and therefore it provides an emotion of “living with nature/being at one with nature”. At the same time, it contains the benefit of design.

Compared to “Celebrate Life…Light a Candle”, none of our suggestions include Thailand as a possible association, but it has put their pitch into a new light and has opened up for an inclusion of the blue segment with an increased focus on design.

We do not expect Vance Kitira to move away from using their original pitch, however they might benefit from a more design-based and specifically nature-based pitch in a new market entry. It does not mean that they cannot change back to the original once the consumers have become more familiar with the brand or run several campaigns at the same time targeted towards different target audiences (e.g. the blue and green segment), as long as the pitches are similar and do not contradict one and another. **It is important they stay true to the brand identity. The Vance Kitira candles may both be regarded a design trend, but also a lifestyle statement in relation to ideals depending on the target audience.**

In their original pitch, the consumers need to know more about the candles to understand any underlying associations to Nature. We would like to make clear that we are aware that the design of the pitch also depends on the marketing material in which this pitch is presented to the end consumer. Its design depends entirely on which visuals accompany it and how much extra text is provided. If the pitch is seen by the consumer on the tag of the candle *alone*, then the pitch needs to be very clear. If it is part of an advert describing the candles in more detail, then it does not need to be clear to the same extent.

## STEP 5: DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Now we have reached the final and concluding step where we must decide which specific strategy to follow in creating brand awareness and initial brand attitude as is the communication objective determined initially in chapter 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement and confirmed in section 6.3.2 Buying Candles - Defining Communication Objectives. This step in the analysis will consist of three parts. Firstly, it will determine the most optimal brand awareness strategy, secondly it will determine a strategy for creating initial brand attitude, and finally it will examine green marketing strategies presented in chapter 5 Green Marketing, and determine if any strategy would be beneficial for our purpose.

### A Strategy for Establishing Awareness of the Brand Vance Kitira

In establishing brand awareness, we need to choose whether we are aiming to create brand recognition or brand recall, as described in section 4.5.1 Brand Awareness Strategies. As previously defined, establishing brand awareness requires the existence of a category need, so that a link, as mentioned, can be established between the category need and the brand as fulfilling that need. **Because it has been established that the target audience is heavy users, we know that the prerequisite of a category need is present**.

Percy and Elliot use a great visualisation to emphasise why brand awareness is so important and why decision on this strategic level must be carried out correctly: The importance of creating brand awareness lies in the fact that consumers *will not* buy if they do not have a category need, but they *cannot* buy if they do not know - have awareness - of the brand.

The choice of strategy depends on which communication effect occurs *first* in the mind of the consumer. If the consumer already at the point of category need *recalls* the brand in her mind, then the need precedes the brand recall. If the consumer *recognises* the brand and then realises a category need, then the recognition precedes the need.

Examining the decision-making process in section 6.3 Step 3: Understanding Target Audience Decision Making revealed that any decision-making regarding candles is low involvement and likely to be influenced by impulse decisions. What is more, previous sections have also revealed that Vance Kitira should be positioned as high-end and/or green candles and likely to be sold in equivalently high-end supermarkets, furniture and home accessory retailers, fashionable boutiques or retailers with a focus on green, as described in section 6.2 Step 2: Selecting the Target Audience. This is knowledge which will be helpful in deciding on a recall or recognition strategy. We believe it would help us to imagine respectively a recall and a recognition scenario in order to make an optimal decision.

Our young female consumer sits at home drinking a cup of tea, lighting some candles around the living room. As we are dealing with a heavy user, she then realises she has run out of candles and reminds herself that she needs to stock up. Then she recalls an ad she just read in a magazine while drinking her tea and decides she wants to try Vance Kitira, and she juts down Vance Kitira on her (mental) shopping list. The need occurs first and she then recalls Vance Kitira as fulfilling her need. In this scenario she remembers that her curiosity was peaked when seeing the ad, but it could be other factors ensuring recall.

We find it likely that this scenario could occur, however the disadvantage is that this strategy requires a very strong link between the category need and the brand, and furthermore it requires a very favourable attitude or, as a minimum, “favourable curiosity” in our case of entering a new market, as was determined in section 6.3.2 The Purchase of Candles – Defining Communication Objectives). It is difficult to initially create a strong link between category need and brand fulfilment. **The reason the idea of a recall strategy is not rejected is that Vance Kitira has a very unique brand** as described in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits. **It would be a possibility to create recall based on ads in lifestyle magazines and the like.**

Also, due to the green benefits and the type of stores in which it is recommended that the Vance Kitira candles are to be sold, green candles need to be marketed as something worth shopping specifically for. Knowing that candles are a low involvement product type, it is likely that they will still be bought when out shopping for *other things* anyways. In our example we have therefore made our female shopper add the brand to a shopping list. **The type of retailers indicates that the consumer needs to have a specific purpose to find herself in a store for e.g. upscale or trendy furniture.** This is not to say that she cannot have a different purpose in such a store and then also *recognise* the need for candles, as we will describe below; however to assume that our consumer finds herself in the shops and stumbles upon our brand might be too insecure a bet to stand alone.

Though, close to discarding a recognition strategy above, **there is a need for a brand recognition strategy in the case of the consumer doing their daily shopping in green shops or upscale supermarkets**. A scenario would here be that our young female consumer is out shopping for cereal, free-range eggs and organic bread; she then walks through the home accessories section of the store, *recognises* the Vance Kitira candles and realises “oh yeah I need candles!”. The reason our consumer recognises Vance Kitira might still be due to an ad in a lifestyle magazine which peaked her curiosity.

We realise that the above scenarios are very clean cut, and that a lot of noise will interfere with the decision process. Worst case scenario is that, due to the low involvement of the product category, our young female consumer gets distracted by another shiny candle brand in the store which attracts her attention instead of Vance Kitira. **This is where recognition is important in using a strong *visual* branding, recognisable brand features, slogans or brand names at the point of purchase (in the store) to trigger the consumer’s recognition and hold the consumer’s attention.** Referring back to section 6.4.6 Motivation and Benefit Focus, the strength of their existing slogan was examined and ideas for a slogan designed specifically to the British market as a *new* market without brand awareness was joggled. We recommend that Lübech Living in selling the Vance Kitira brand is focused on the placement their business customers are willing to provide and maybe make specific agreements along the lines of “only to be placed in a green/brown colour zone” or to be placed “both in the section for candles *and* in the section for organic foods”. With the need for authenticity determined in section 6.3.5 Green and Authenticity as Benefits, we also see it as a possibility to have a somewhat large hanging poster with a picture of Vance Kitira in the nature of Thailand, working on his candles with his smiling employees. His character is significantly connected to the brand and the authenticity of the brand, as was determined in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description. In order to decide on other specific placement enhancers, we need to know the specific business customers and the possibilities they can offer.

In conclusion, **there is a need for both strategies to support each other.** The long-term goal must be to create as strong a link - between the product category need and the brand as fulfilling that need - as possible. However, in the process of entering into the new market, it will be helpful to provide a large focus at the point of purchase aiming for a recognition strategy.

### A Strategy for Establishing Favourable Attitudes towards the Brand Vance Kitira

Having decided on a strategic approach in making our female consumer *aware* of the brand, we now need to determine how we make her *positively* aware of the brand. In other words, a strategy for establishing favourable brand attitudes in the target audience must be selected.

The theory on brand attitude strategies, section 4.5.2 Brand Attitude Strategies, showed that there were four different strategies for establishing brand attitude based on a combination of motivational and involvement factors. Section 6.3.1 Candles as a High or Low Involvement Product Category? showed that candles are a low involvement product type, and in section 6.4.6 Motivation and Benefit Focus, it was established that the benefits presented by Vance Kitira pointed towards the likeliness of positive purchase motivations. **This points towards a low-involvement transformational (positive) brand attitude strategy.**

The choice of strategy provides three strategic guidelines for any communication initiatives. Firstly, due to the positive purchase motivations and the low involvement, it is not necessary to provide the consumer with a vast amount of information. **Instead, the strategy must focus on targeting the affective component in establishing favourable attitudes - the part of any attitude which constitutes *emotions* and *feelings* towards the product or brand.** Specifically, the communication must focus on the joyful emotions as a result of using the brand. This leads us to the second guideline that any communication must present benefit(s) as a *reward* for using the product. The benefits established in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits should be used to establish a positive feeling of “helping the good of nature and mankind” (directed at the green segment) and/ or “improving the visual design of one’s home” (directed at the blue segment) or “bringing nature into the home” (directed at blue and green).

The third strategic guideline is something which we, in working with authenticity, find very interesting: that any communicated benefit must “ring true” and have emotional authenticity. We evaluate that this has to do with the cognitive component of an attitude – that **the consumer must have or acquire a set of beliefs/knowledge about the brand which indicates that the emotions and benefits communicated are credible.** As mentioned in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits, this guideline is especially important in relation to the chosen green segment who has a tendency to look for any hidden truth beneath the surface.

We determined in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits that authenticity is an important benefit for the Vance Kitira brand. This strategic guideline provides us with a confirmation on the importance of authenticity in this case. **We argue that the more emotionally founded communication will be, as in the case of Vance Kitira, the more important authenticity is in the sense of being “true”.** Because there is no heavy information load, objective information or statistics providing a feeling of certainty, the more important it is that our consumer believes the truthfulness of any statements put forward. Therefore, the role of the man Vance Kitira and his roots in the Thailand community, his history with forest work and his many charitable actions add up to a tremendous strength in making his passion for nature and “green” believable.

In the light of this, let us proceed to look at the guidelines for communicating authenticity, as provided in section 3.3 Communicating Authenticity in relation to the three types of authenticity, it was determined that Vance Kitira represents in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits – Natural and Referential, and Influential Authenticity.

The theory on authenticity showed us that if you deem yourself authentic, then you do not have to *say* that you are. If you *say* you are authentic, then you better *be* authentic. This tells us that, though authenticity was determined to be an important benefit for Vance Kitira, applying it to any communication needs to be done carefully. What is meant by “if you *say* you are authentic, then you better *be* authentic” is that if an authenticity claim backfires, it will be doubly shameful and damaging compared to someone not claiming to be a saint getting caught doing something bad. Therefore, it is suggested that Vance Kitira uses authenticity as an underlying foundation and that authenticity is something which is *expressed* but not directly said. **In other words, as described in section 3.3 Communicating Authenticity, the authenticity is a representation of Vance Kitira’s character, resulting in an ethos appeal.**

The theory on communicating natural authenticity suggests that communication should stress the natural materials used and the product’s “rawness” and that any visual communication should appear rustic and bare. The visual expression of Vance Kitira’s design is in itself very rustic and bare and therefore this strategy fits a rustic communication type perfectly. In specific terms, **it is suggested that Vance Kitira in their communication enhances the “simplicity of nature”** as described in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, creating associations to rusticity and bareness.

With regard to referential authenticity, our theory suggests paying tribute to a famous person or framing the brand within a specific historic time or place. In the case of Vance Kitira, it was determined in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits that the target audience, the green segment, might appreciate the reference to reference to Thailand. Therefore, **it is suggested that any framing of Vance Kitira is firstly cultural and secondly historical in the sense of his past and upbringing in Thailand**.

In communicating influential authenticity, theory suggests appealing to personal or collective aspirations. Naturally, this appeal should only be used if you have an integrated value set and aim to influence the world into changing in some way as described in section 3.2.5 Influential Authenticity. Based on the information collected in section 6.1.1 Vance Kitira Product Description, it can be argued that Vance Kitira is authentic in wanting influence. He makes an effort to aid a sustainable Thailand and the previous analysis shows that he generally *does* value nature. In Vance Kitira’s business-to-business catalogue, Vance Kitira states that “*At the end of the day, when we are finished saving the world, haven’t we indeed also saved ourselves?*” (App A1). **This tells us of a desire to change the world and have influential authenticity**.

However, one could ask if this somewhat exaggerated appeal would work in a British culture? We see no reason to change this approach or adopt it to British culture. In the interview with Roy Wilde, Honorary Secretary of the British Candlemakers’ Federation, he says that *“…they [the British consumers] like to think that they’re playing their little part. The fact that they’re being sold something that makes no difference whatsoever is…in most cases scientifically beyond them.*” (App A1, l. 217). We interpret this quote as a sign that an exaggerated statement would not put off the British consumers. Though we know that buying green candles does not solely help saving the planet and that it can be discussed to what degree it actually helps at all - as described in section 6.1.2.4 Negative Attitude towards the Natural Authenticity of Vegetable Waxes - the **motivation is based on a feeling that every little bit helps and that people like to feel good about themselves** in doing something. This supports our previous notion of strategically targeting positive motivations with emotional communication.

### Green Strategies in Advertising the Brand Vance Kitira

Having determined green as a benefit worth emphasising in communication, in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits, this section will now move on to examine any strategies applicable in the light of the level of greenness represented in the Vance Kitira brand and the layer of operation in which the brand operates in society, as described in section 5 Green Marketing. The combination of the level of greenness and the layer of operation will grant us the most effective strategy for communicating green.

We can choose to operate within three levels of greenness. Looking at which level fits the Vance Kitira brand; let us start by excluding the highest level – *greenest*. This level is defined to include radical and innovative green products which bring with them a change in lifestyle and habits. **The Vance Kitira product category is candles and in itself this category does not bring about any radical or innovative lifestyle changes, though changing to a green alternative**.

If weighing the level of green and greener against each other, we incline to the view that Vance Kitira belongs in the mid-range level of greener. The reason we do *not* believe it to be in basic the level of green is that green only dictates that the brand must be green*er* than substitutes and competitors, rather than measured against an absolute ideal. A brand operating on this level also *only* has commercial aims. Vance Kitira *does* provide a green alternative within a normal product category and is not necessarily measured against an ideal. The Vance Kitira candles do not live fully up to an ideal of a green candle since it is only 40% vegetable wax and contains 60% paraffin. **It is not meant to be measured against some ideal of Vance Kitira trying their hardest to deliver the perfect green candle.** It can be discussed whether the candle in itself is even greener than other candles as described in section 6.1.2.4 Negative Attitudes towards the Natural Authenticity of Vegetable Waxes, and this is probably also why they are not currently making use of an idealised approach on the American market. In that regard, Vance Kitira fits perfectly with the criteria or being on the lowest level of green.

Taking into consideration the information provided in chapter 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement - that the modern consumer sees behind the product and evaluates the company (or people) as an extended vital part of the product – we would argue that the Vance Kitira brand falls into the greener category. As described in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits, the man behind the brand, Vance Kitira himself, his work methods and his personal values represents a main benefit. Also, as established above in section 6.5.2 A Strategy for Establishing Favourable Attitudes towards the Brand Vance Kitira, it was established that Vance Kitira expressed a desire to change the world and have influential authenticity. This desire fits with the communication objective of the level greener which aims to achieve both *commercial*and *green* outcomes – make a profit while also taking responsibility for bettering the environment by being green. **The Vance Kitira brand shows “*A bigger enthusiasm, clearly separated from just “buy my brand”.***

Having said that, we see the Vance Kitira brand as fitting somewhere in between green and greener, because they do not fully represent the more keen attitude in the greener level of involving the consumers in two-way communication. They do not approach the consumers on an eye-to-eye level making them involved in their cause. In other words, it could be said that they do not have exceptional authenticity, as defined in section 3.2.3 Exceptional Authenticity. What is more, the green objectives do not appear to outweigh the commercial objectives which on the greener level are often viewed as a by-product or a necessity to keep running. For strategic purposes, we do however need to select the level in which we believe Vance Kitira belongs as it is not possible to operate in between levels. **It would be a shame to completely disregard the deep-rooted value-set of Vance Kitira as this does define the brand. With Vance Kitira, we are not only communicating a product, we are communicating a brand.** Therefore, the level of greener is found to be the most accurate.

Having determined that the Vance Kitira brand operates at the level of greener, it must now be decided at what layer of society the brand finds itself – public, social or personal. Though candles are a *personal* item for the home, and it is becoming increasingly part of everyday shopping for heavy users as is the target audience (described in section 6.1.2.1 Growth in the UK Candle Market), it was established in section 6.5.1 A Strategy for Establishing Awareness of the Brand Vance Kitira, that the brand should not be positioned to be found in the average grocery shop, and therefore it would have to be a product which the consumer to some extend had to “go directly for”, if not shopping every day groceries in a green and/or up-scale store. In other words, **it is unlikely that Vance Kitira candles will be bought within the framework of so-called inconspicuous consumption,** meaning that it is done by habit or passivity - as is characteristic of the personal level.

We can also exclude the general broad based public layer. Though the product category of candles is argued to be public property - that a significant part of the British population is using candles - the *brand* Vance Kitira is not publically or widely known. The brand is more specifically targeted towards a certain segment of the population which was previously defined as the green segment and partially the blue segment in section 6.2.1 Minerva Value Segmentation instead of being centrally positioned.

This leaves us with the social level. The social level of marketing operations **deals with the notion that a product or service can have social meanings – e.g. reinforce a person’s identity**. This fits previously determined benefits of Vance Kitira’s Palm Wax Pillar and Renewal Candle visually improving the quality of the consumer’s home, which in turn reflects on her image, as described in section 6.4.2.2 Design Pillars. It also fits the need to express green values in one’s identity as described in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits.

Combining the level greener with the layer of operation social provides us with two strategic options - framing the brand as a social or a tribal brand. These two options will be examined in the following section.

#### Vance Kitira as a Social or a Tribal Brand?

In choosing either to market Vance Kitira as a social brand or a tribal brand, it is important to keep in mind that the objectives of either strategy are both commercial and green. They are also bothtargeting a *desire* to belong to a tribe or community – to share an identity. **The shape these strategies take of targeting a *desire* – targeting something the consumer would like to achieve – fits perfectly with the fact that it was determined in the previous section that any green motivational factor in buying candles would be positively motivated.** John Grant argues: “*We need to make green more fun and sexy, especially since civil society does not respond well to scolding as the basis for behaviour change*” – scolding here meaning negative motivation. Though both strategies are based on these key considerations, there are a few fundamental differences in the way the strategies frame the brand as something inclusive and social or something exclusive and tribal.

To create a social brand, we would make use of the Empathy (Inclusive) Iconic approach as described in section 5.2.5 Social and Tribal Brands. The key here lies within the words empathy and inclusive. The aim in this strategy is to present the use of the Vance Kitira product as providing a *reward* - exactly as defined in the section above 6.5.2 A Strategy for Establishing Favourable Attitudes towards the Brand Vance Kitira - that the use of the product grant the consumer the positive feeling that they are included in a (consumer) group and feel at one with other people. Though Vance Kitira expresses warm feelings of empathy in helping the Thai community, it has already been determined in the section above that he does not put forward any initiatives towards establishing a community (online or physical) that share experiences with green and/or the Vance Kitira products.

To create a tribal brand, we would make use of an Envy (Exclusive) Iconic approach as is also described in section 5.2.5 Social and Tribal Brands. The aim in this strategy is in the same way as the inclusive approach to present the use of the Vance Kitira product as a *reward*. However, in this case the reward is a feeling of being *better* than other people in using the product. **As the name indicates the aim is to make the green products appear superior/elitist and attractive both in design and functionality**. We find that this fits the Vance Kitira brand and the benefits which were established in sections 6.4.2.2 Design Pillars and 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits.

In section 6.4.5 Vance Kitira’s Position on the UK Candle Market - Overview, it was established that **the Vance Kitira brand must be a green brand *at the same time* as they are a quality brand and *then* they must be a design brand.** This means that the target audience must have a category need for candles *first* before they will consider buying a *green* candle. Because the target audience consist of heavy users they will value quality in the light of the greenness. It is doubtful they will accept a low-quality candle just because it is green. They are quality minded and they want both.

We have established in section 6.4.3 Green and Authenticity as Benefits that the primary target audience, the green segment, likes to feel (morally) better than the society surrounding them - something which is greatly targeted in the use of the exclusive approach. The secondary segment, the blue segment, also likes to be trendy and elitist; therefore the exclusive approach also fits their *desires*. The only important difference between the targeting of the two segments is that the **blue segment would require Vance Kitira to be a design brand first, a quality brand second and a green brand third**.

In the light of the above, **the road to success for the Vance Kitira brand on the British market is to present the candles as the trendy lifestyle products they are, focusing on the Brand’s *exclusiveness* in both quality and greenness**. In doing so, they are fortunate that their designs in themselves symbolise both quality and green.

# CONCLUSION

With this thesis we ventured to answer the question posed:
**Taking into consideration the green nature of the products as well as the new consumer sensibility and demand for authenticity, how could the Danish distribution company Lübech Living *strategically manage the promotion component* in entering the British market with a green product range of handcrafted candles and home décor produced by the Thai, American-based wholesale distributor Vance Kitira International?**

In answering this, we defined that it would prove beneficial to mainly focus on advertising - defined as “moving the consumer towards the brand”, because a favourable attitude towards the brand must exist prior to any purchase - the consumers *will not* buy if they do not *like* the product.

In order to strategically plan advertising, we examined Vance Kitira’s background (the man and the company), the products and any situational aspects which could prove valuable or disadvantageous in entering the British market. In this, we defined that it would be most relevant to examine Vance Kitira’s Ecofriendly range - and more specifically the two candle types Renewal Candles and the Palm Wax Pillars made from recycled wax and vegetable wax – because the Ecofriendly range represents what we define as the essence of the Vance Kitira brand.

We defined three essential core brand values: a passion for wood, an appreciation of the beauty of nature, and an aim to create a sustainable Thailand through a connection with the outside world. Also, we established that there was a strong authentic link between the man, the values, the products, the company and the brand as representing that link.

Furthermore, we concluded that there is an interesting market growth in the UK candle market, based on an attitude that candles are a trendy lifestyle product. What is more, we determined that there is some lack of interest in candle quality on the British market but that quality is becoming increasingly important to what is defined as “heavy users” of candles.

On top of this, we found out that Pollution and the Environment is a topic which is in the minds and hearts of the British population, and that they like to feel that they “play their little part” as green consumers, and that this focus therefore can be used as a commercial opportunity. We also discovered that there was a sprouting debate about the natural authenticity of vegetable waxes. However, based on the determined core values, when Vance Kitira claims to be green, it covers much more than the choice of vegetable waxes and therefore the brand’s natural authentic image should not suffer.

Subsequent to examining any relevant situational aspects, we moved on to determine *who* within the market Lübech Living, and in turn Vance Kitira, should target. Using the Minerva Value segmentation, we determined that the green segment - intellectual, modern consumers with strong ideals - will be most likely to show an interest in the trendiness of the products while also matching Vance Kitira’s idealistic values. In the periphery, the blue segment - pragmatic, modern, career-focused consumers - could present a possible target audience showing interest in the trendiness of candles as a lifestyle statement and the trendiness of being green. We have also learned that the purchase of candles as a lifestyle product is dominated greatly by women in the age group 25-40 in the middle of the social and economic range.

Following the determination of the target audience, we moved on to examine how this target audience made their decisions when purchasing candles. We determined that the target audience does not evaluate any significant financial or psychological risk when purchasing candles, and therefore we categorised candles as a low-involvement product category. This meant that consumers are more likely to switch between brands, presenting both a threat and an opportunity for Vance Kitira in entering the market.

On the basis of this willingness to switch, we determined that it is likely that Lübech Living, as communicators, because they are new to the market, just need to introduce Vance Kitira - possessing some or most of the benefits our consumer is looking for - to create a sense of curiosity or liking, making her think “I might try that”. However, we also learned that consumers *will not* buy if they do not have a need for candles, but that they *cannot* buy if they do not know about the brand. Therefore, we need to establish brand awareness prior to any establishment of curiosity founded in initial favourable brand attitude.

In presenting some or most of the benefits the consumer is looking for, we needed to establish what that was. We concluded that the target audience measures candles according to a combination of a desire for green candles and, as heavy users, a desire for quality candles and *then* lastly a desire for design. We found it significant here that Vance Kitira’s designs express nature/greenness and quality.

We also determined that authenticity is a valued benefit in the segment who likes to look beneath the surface and understand the “truth”. We determined that Vance Kitira offers natural authenticity - the product is made from natural and recycled materials. Also, with Vance Kitira’s cultural and historical roots in Thailand, the brand offers referential authenticity – offering the candles as a way to live with something culturally authentic. What is more, the brand offers the benefit of influential authenticity – when buying the products our consumer buys into the value-set and an aim to save the environment. In the light of this latter objective, we established that our consumers were motivated by positive feelings of helping and feeling good about themselves. In wanting quality and design they were also motivated by positive emotions in achieving a visually nicer home.

Examining what Vance Kitira is doing on the American market with their communication, we found the need for a more direct approach in explaining the relationship between product and nature to the new British Consumers with no or limited brand awareness.

This led us to determine a final overall strategy for establishing brand awareness and brand attitude.
In establishing brand awareness, we suggest that a recognition strategy and a recall strategy support each other. We suggest a recall strategy because we see Vance Kitira as a brand with a strong and unique set of benefits (green, quality, design) with the ability to create as strong a link between the product category need and the brand as fulfilling that need. However, in the process of entering into the new market, it will be helpful to provide a large focus at the point of purchase, aiming for a purchase to be triggered by recognition.

With regard to establishing favourable brand attitude, which was the initial question we set out to answer, we determined that Lübech Living and, in turn, Vance Kitira will benefit from a strategy based on the low-involvement of the target audience and the positive motivation(s) which drive them. Because they are positively motivated, we suggest targeting the affective component of an attitude - the part of any attitude which constitutes *emotions* and *feelings* towards the product or brand. Specifically, we suggest framing the Vance Kitira candles in a layer of positive emotions and associations, presenting the defined benefits as a *reward* for using the product. Granting the consumer the feeling of playing her part, making her feel good about herself or even feel better than the society which surrounds her and/or granting her the feeling of improving the visual impact of the home, feeling secure in the identity she signals.

What is more, we also suggest targeting the cognitive component of an attitude – help establish a set of beliefs/knowledge about the brand. It is important that the consumers believe that what Vance Kitira tells them/offers them is authentic as in true and genuine. Especially, as we have established an emotional pathos appeal, which can seem untrustworthy without hard data. It is in this connection, we especially see the importance of authenticity. However, because claiming to be authentic could be the same as claiming virtue, we suggest that Vance Kitira uses authenticity as an underlying foundation and that authenticity is something which is *expressed* but not directly said. In specific terms, we suggest that Vance Kitira in their communication enhances the “simplicity of nature” creating associations to rusticity and bareness.

Having determined a brand strategy, we measured our results in relation to strategies specifically on *green* marketing, and found that a tribal marketing approach was a match for Vance Kitira. A tribal approach aims to target a *desire* to belong to a tribe or community and to make the Vance Kitira candles appear superior/elitist and attractive both in design and functionality. In targeting a *desire* – something which the consumer wishes to achieve - this strategy fits with previous establishments of positive motivation factors. Also, framing the Vance Kitira brand as something exclusive corresponds with the benefits of design and quality and finally, it corresponds with the desires of the green segment to be superior or (morally/intellectually) better than the society which surrounds them.

## PUTTING THE THESIS INTO PERSPECTIVE

Rounding off this thesis, we would like to comment on the thesis writing process and discuss if the models used have been applicable in practice and/or if limitations have been revealed in relation to our work.

We have found that the hermeneutic approach was very applicable in working with this topic as it gave use the option of including our general knowledge from our studies of Language and International Business Communication. More specifically, where there has been room for interpretation, we have applied our own knowledge of marketing, candles and the British culture. Furthermore, the specific choice of applying the hermeneutic circle as a framework for our analysis has worked to our satisfaction because the steps within the model for strategic advertising management provided by Percy and Elliot tended to overlap forcing us to continuously travel back and forth in the model. This is not necessarily a point of critique; we believe it is only natural within marketing planning that one has to travel back and forth between information and data.

We see our greatest limitation represented in our limited access to resources, specifically in obtaining internal data from Vance Kitira and Lübech Living. We would also like to have gathered some more data on consumer behaviour. Though we were fortunate that Brigadier Roy Wilde, Honorary Secretary of the British Candlemakers’ Federation, was extremely helpful in providing us with market and consumer information, it would prove beneficial to learn *more* about how the individual consumer views the purchase process when buying candles and, in their own words, clarify what benefits they value.

It is our opinion that we have reached what we set out to do - that we have managed to define some *tendencies* within the British market for green candles (and green products in general) which can be confirmed through further research and examination. Also, we believe that in answering the posed thesis statement, we have managed to come up with a strategic plan for Lübech Living in advertising Vance Kitira, which can be used as a basis for execution.

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# LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

**Fig. 1** - Advertising’s relative part as component in the marketing and promotion mix: Page 7

**Fig. 2** - Illustration of Overall Thesis Structure: Page 10

**Fig. 3** **-** The five steps of Strategic Advertising Management: Page 26

**Fig. 4** - Marketing Background Issues in Strategic Planning: Page 27

**Fig. 5** - SWOT Analysis Framework: Page 29

**Fig. 6** - The Minerva Model (Own Illustration): Page 31

**Fig. 7** - The Minerva Model (Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies): Page 32

**Fig. 8** - Generic Consumer Decision-Making Model: Page 37

**Fig. 9** - Schematic of Decision Stages, Roles and Communication Objectives: Page 40

Page 43

**Fig. 10** - Hierarchical Partitioning of the Drinks Market Driven by End Benefit and Usage Situation:

**Fig. 11** - Benefit Focus in Positioning: Page 46

**Fig. 12** - Brand Attitude Strategy Quadrants: Page 50

**Fig. 13** - Green Marketing Grid: Page 53

Page 106

**Fig. 14** - Hierarchical Partitioning of the Candle Market Driven by End Benefit for the Blue Segment:

Page 106

**Fig. 15** - Hierarchical Partitioning of the Candle Market Driven by End Benefit for the Green Segment:

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – SPECIALE RESUMÉ

Dette speciale forsøger at undersøge, hvorledes et grønt brand skal markedsføre sig i en verden, der er hærget af greenwashing og som resultat har fremelsket begreber som greenhushing og resulteret i en stigende søgen blandt nutidens forbrugere efter noget der er sandt og autentisk.

For at belyse dette, tager specialet fat i en case story, der fokuserer på det thailandske, men amerikansk-baserede en gros firma Vance Kitira, der blandt andet producerer stearinlys af genbrugsvoks og palmevoks. Vance Kitira’s europæiske distributør, det Aalborg-baserede tomandsfirma Lübech Living, ønsker at trænge ind på det britiske marked med Vance Kitira brandet. I lyset af denne case story kan læseren i dette speciale finde svar på følgende fremsatte spørgsmål:

”Med hensyntagen til produkternes grønne natur og den stigende efterspørgsel efter autenticitet, hvordan kunne det danske distributionsfirma Lübech Living strategisk planlægge deres markedskommunikation i deres indtrængen på det britiske marked med brandet Vance Kitira og dettes produktportefølje af håndlavede lys af naturvoks?”

For at finde svaret på dette gør specialet brug af en femtrins model til strategisk ”advertising” planlægning. Vi gør brug af den engelske term advertising, fordi det ikke kan oversættes direkte til dansk uden at miste noget af sin betydning. Vi benytter termen i dens oprindelige indholdsmæssige latinske form ”advertere”, som betyder at man ”skubber nogen hen imod noget”. Med andre ord er det vores mål at ”skubbe” de engelske forbrugere, eller et udsnit af de engelske forbrugere ”hen imod” Vance Kitira brandet, og det er i denne proces at vi gør brug af en strategisk model til planlægning af ”advertising” udviklet af to britiske professorer og specialister indenfor marketing, Larry Percy og Richard Elliott. For at støtte specialets specifikke fokus inkluderes også en grøn strategisk marketingsmodel udviklet af britiske John Grant, som er konsulent i grøn forretningsdrivelse. Derudover inkluderes også teorier om autenticitetsbehovets indflydelse på marketing. Ved hjælp af disse modeller og teorier præsenterer specialet fem overordnede analysekapitler, der hvert afdækker et trin i den fremsatte planlægningsmodel.

Det første analysekapitel belyser således situationsmæssige interne og eksterne forhold, der eventuelt måtte have indflydelse på at opnå det ønskede mål. Kapitlet afslører en markant vækst i det engelske marked for stearinlys og afslører et stigende marked for såkaldte livsstils- og designstearinlys. Ligeledes afslører kapitlet, at den britiske stearinlysbruger ikke bekymrer sig om kvalitet. Dog gælder dette ikke den gruppe af brugere, der defineres som storforbrugere. Denne gruppe har kvalitet højt på prioritetslisten.

Herudover afslører det indledende analysekapitel også, at miljø og grønt ansvar er noget der ligger den Britiske borger (og forbruger) på sinde. De vil gerne føle, at deres grønne forbrug har betydning.

Kapitlet afdækker ligeledes en spirende debat om sandfærdigheden af den naturlige autenticitet i naturvoks. Noget der kunne true Vance Kitira brandets muligheder på det britiske marked. Dog afdækker kapitlet endeligt at brandet har tre kerneværdier bestående af en passion for træ, en påskønnelse af naturens eget design og skønhed og et mål om at skabe et bæredygtigt Thailand igennem en skabelse af (forretnings)forbindelser med den vestlige verden. Ligeledes påviser kapitlet en stærk autentisk forbindelse imellem værdierne, manden Vance Kitira bag virksomheden (hans rødder, historie og interesser) og virksomhedsdrivelsen.

Analysekapitel to definerer, hvilket segment i den britiske befolkning det vil være mest hensigtsmæssigt at henvende sig til med henblik på at opnå det tidligere etablerede mål. I dette gør specialet brug af en værdibaseret segmentering i henhold til den danske sociolog Henrik Dahls Minerva model. Set i forhold til Vance Kitira brandets værdier konkluderes det at det grønne segment - det moderne, idealistiske og intellektuelle segment - vil være mest modtagelig overfor brandet. Det fastsættes også, at det blå segment - det moderne, pragmatiske og karriereorienterede segment – kunne være en perifer mulighed. Derudover indsnævrer kapitlet brugen af livsstils- og designstearinlys til unge kvinder i aldersgruppen 25-40 år fra den sociale og økonomiske middelklasse.

Analysekapitel tre afdækker, hvorledes det definerede segment træffer sine købsbeslutninger i forbindelse med køb af stearinlys. Således står det frem at forbrugerne ikke vurderer købet af stearinlys til at repræsentere nogen høj økonomisk eller psykologisk risiko, og at købsbeslutninger derfor er præget af impulskøb, nysgerrighed og illoyalitet overfor stearinlysbrands.

Det fjerde analysekapitel fremsætter på baggrund af ovennævnte konklusioner muligheden for, at det vil være tilstrækkeligt for Vance Kitira i brandets indtrængen på det britiske marked, at skabe nysgerrighed, så længe brandet lever op til forbrugernes krav til hvilke karakteristika et stearinlys skal have. I lyset af dette definerer kapitlet en række karakteristika som forbrugerne finder vigtige og som Vance Kitira kan levere. Kapitlet konkluderer, at det grønne segment afgør værdien af et stearinlys på baggrund af en kombination af grønne elementer og kvalitet. Derefter afgøres værdien også på baggrund af design set i forhold til personlig smag. I dette er det væsentligt at Vance Kitira brandet i sine stearinlysdesigns udtrykker referencer til naturen og en stærk kvalitet.

Med henblik på det definerede forbrugerbehov for autenticitet, belyser kapitlet også hvilke tre former for autenticitet Vance Kitira brandet kan tilbyde, naturlig autenticitet idet produkterne er lavet af naturens egne (uforarbejdede) materialer; referentiel eller nærmere betegnet kulturel autenticitet grundet i manden og brandets rødder i Thailand; og indflydelsesautenticitet idet brandet ønsker at have indflydelse på omverdenen og gøre en grøn forskel – med andre ord køber forbrugeren ikke kun et produkt, men et værdisæt.

Med henblik på det sidstnævnte værdisæt og de grønne elementer i Vance Kitira brandet fastslår kapitlet, at forbrugerne er motiveret af positive følelser i købsbeslutningen – de ønsker enten at opnå en følelse af selvtilfredshed med egen indsats eller af glæde over et mere fashionabelt hjem.

Det femte og sidste analysekapitel præsenterer således en ”advertising” strategi baseret på den viden som er etableret i de foregående fire kapitler. Som udgangspunkt fastslår kapitlet, at Vance Kitira brandet i dets indtrængen på det britiske marked først må etablere en grad af kendskab, da det ikke er muligt at ”skubbe nogen hen imod noget” som de ikke kender til. I dette forslås det, at Vance Kitira benytter en kombination af en såkaldt recall/hukommelsesbaseret og en recognition/genkendelsesbaseret strategi, hvor forbrugeren henholdsvist husker Vance Kitira brandet som løsningen på et behov for stearinlys eller genkender Vance Kitira brandet i en købssituation og derved beslutter sig for et køb.

Baseret på forudgående konklusioner med hensyn til forbrugernes involvering i købsbeslutningen og de motivationsfaktorer, der driver dem, definerer kapitlet, at Lübech Living på vegne af Vance Kitira brandet bør gøre brug af en strategi hvor positive følelser sættes i centrum. Brandet bør kommunikeres med fokus på de belønninger brugen af brandet bærer med sig. Ligeledes bør autenticiteten af belønningerne sikres idet en troværdighed til rigtigheden af belønningerne etableres. Dette aspekt i kommunikationen findes yderst vigtigt da der netop ikke gøres brug af logik eller fakta i kommunikationen. I brugen af en term fra retorikkens verden drejer det sig om at etablere en patos appel, som støttes af en skarp etos appel.

I kommunikationen af autenticitet og etos fremhæver kapitlet vigtigheden af, at autenticiteten ikke må udtrykkes direkte, men skal være en bagvedliggende faktor som kaster et troværdigt lys over kommunikationen.

Med hensyn til naturlig autenticitet fremhæver kapitlet også specifikke retningslinjer for et mere direkte fokus på referencen til naturen i form af et rustiks eller bart udtryk, end det er gjort i den amerikanske markedskommunikation. Dette bunder i at et nyt marked som det britiske marked har ringe eller ingen kendskab til brandet og dets tilhørsforhold.

Udover dette, fastsætter kapitlet, og dermed specialet, at Vance Kitira brandet bør gøre brug af en såkaldt tribal (stamme) strategi, hvor brandet kommunikeres som et eksklusivt brand, der fremstiller lysene som noget højerestående/elitært, og som er tiltrækkende både i deres design og funktionalitet.

1. Earth Day was founded in 1970 by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson to, in his own words, “force this issue [the environment] onto the national agenda” (http://www.earthday.net/node/77).
However, today Earth Day has made its way far beyond national recognition and is celebrated in many countries every year, forcing the environmental issue onto not just the national, but the international agenda. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Greenwashing is derived from the term whitewashing, where illegally obtained black market money is being washed white to appear legal - better known as money laundry.
Greenwashing is where polluting companies with a (somewhat) guilty conscience and non-green products are being put through the marketing machine to appear green. (website 2).

 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The list below might appear simple, but it is in fact a paradox. To mention an example, the two biggest markets in the $8 trillion-year economy of the United States, are 1) consumer technology and 2) the escape from consumer technology (Boyle 2004: 12). We want to experience things instead of only seeing things on TV, and at the same time TVs get bigger and better (Ibid: 2-3). This paradox opens an interesting discussion; however it is not within the scope of this thesis to carry it out. David Boyle offers the solution that consumers are not longing for the past; they are merely learning from it what they want and not accepting a force-fed future (Boyle 2004: 4). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Define: Authenticity = (Reference 1) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The illustration is based on Larry and Percy’s illustrations (Percy et al 2009: 85 and 192), however it is adjusted to fit our approach as described in chapter 2.Methodology and Data – including a situation analysis as the first step and excluding a media plan as the last step. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Knowledge of consumer behaviour, including how consumers behave when making purchase decisions, is something that can never truly be too detailed in marketing. However, it is a very extensive topic, and it is not within the scope of this thesis to examine it fully. Therefore, we will follow the example of Percy and Elliot and limit our focus to a simplified *practical* approach as a helpful tool in understanding the decision-making process in order to shape and target a message accordingly.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Under other circumstances, an analysis of the decision-making process would also give an understanding of *where* to target and *when* to target and thereby lay the foundation for a later choice of media. However, our focus in this thesis is limited to establishing only the *message* and not *the shape* of the advertising and therefore, this focus is excluded here. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. There are several ways to define a market – ranging from an overall breakdown into main brand characteristics and similarities to a very financial definition based on price elasticity and how the increase in the price of one brand carries with it an increase in the sales of another brand, thus defining that they are substitutable and belongs to the same market as competing brands (Percy et al 2009: 167ff).

However, the discussion of advantages and disadvantages with various positioning approaches is not within the scope of this thesis. We choose to make use of the same approach as Percy and Elliot as this approach, to our knowledge, is the only approach which defines the market directly based on the *consumer’s* market view of *usage situation* and *end benefit*, and therefore also supports our initial definition of a competing market as defined by exactly these characteristics. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Different creative tactics exist for creating both recognition and recall, however we will not examine those in depth as it is not the focus of this thesis. Our understanding of brand awareness is limited to the understanding required to set an appropriate – and matching - brand attitude strategy. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Web 2.0 is about creating relationships online between people, **not** computers. This is done through social software such as blogs, forums for debate, chats etc. (http://www.kommunikationsforum.dk/default.asp?articleid=12269 20/09-09) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [**much**](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/much)[**of**](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/of)[**a**](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/a)[**muchness**](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/muchness)([idiomatic](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Appendix%3AGlossary#I)) Of two or more things, having little difference of any significance between them.

*I don't know which car to buy - they are all* ***much of a muchness****.*(Reference 3) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)