

## ORTHO GEMASIA

Smile\* Sparkle\* Shine\*

### Smile, Sparkle, Shine: Orthogem-Asia Pte Ltd

Orthogem-Asia is a Singapore-based company specialising in cutting-edge solutions for health optimisation and improvement. Catering to all age groups, its products are invented by passionate and innovative experts with pioneering concepts in their respective fields. The company aims to offer new, genuine and unique solutions to customers while continually enhancing its existing product range.

Currently, Orthogem-Asia is focusing on expanding its market presence in the oral care market in Singapore. In particular, it is looking at increasing public awareness of OraBrush, with the aim to build a customer base for longer-term sustainability. As there are already a few established players in the local market for oral care products, strong marketing strategies are vital to enable the company to stand out from the competition.

Orthogem-Asia approached the UOB-SMU Asian Enterprise Institute (AEI) as it wanted to gain a better understanding of customer preferences and receptiveness towards oral care. This knowledge would form the basis of the strategies to increase awareness of the need for such care among its target customers. A team of three student-consultants, supervised by an industry veteran and supported by the Institute, undertook the project under the Institute's flagship SME Consulting Programme.

#### A "Hollywood" smile

Everyone loves a dazzling Hollywood smile – one that flashes the beautifully-even and brilliantly-white teeth of celebrities on the red carpet. But an engaging smile should not be equated with a healthy oral cavity. Clark Gable, the pin-up actor and star of the epic American historical romance "Gone with the Wind" (1939), was known for his persistent halitosis (bad breath). His co-star, Vivien Leigh, who had to exchange sweet nothings and lock lips with him numerous times, had complained about his breath on more than one occasion during filming. Although his condition was caused by health problems, it was nonetheless an unpleasant encounter for the people around him.

Halitosis is symptomatic of a range of health conditions including diabetes, lactose intolerance, gum disease and more, though the most common cause is poor oral hygiene. Health conditions aside, people are aware of the social embarrassment related to foul breath, and have as their response the range of breath mints, breath-freshening sprays, mouth washes/rinses and the trustworthy toothbrush-toothpaste combo.

The local oral care industry is growing. A recent Euromonitor International report titled "Oral Care in Singapore" revealed that the value of adult mouth care here expanded by 4% in 2015 to reach S\$103 million.

Given that lifestyle choices and habits can lead to higher incidences of foul breath, such as stomatitis arising from burning when consuming hot food/drink, wearing of braces, hypersensitivity to medication/food, consumption of medicine/drugs, to name a few, and an ageing population (older folk are more prone to dry mouth and diseases that can cause foul breath), there is potential in the local oral care market. The national push for better health, including oral health, will also heighten awareness – and fuel expansion – of the industry. Currently, the Health Promotion Board provides free basic dental healthcare to all Singaporean children aged seven to 18 years of age. These dental health checks are usually performed at the school clinics or mobile dental clinics, making it very convenient. From a young age, pupils are already exposed to the importance of oral health.

### **Smile and the world smiles with you**

“Smile and the world smiles with you” has long been part of an old saying. However, there is now [scientific evidence](#) that when we see someone smiling, it triggers our happy memories which can in turn make us smile. But our reaction to the visual stimulus may be quite different if a whiff of foul air assaulted our olfactory system at the same time; OraBrush has the potential to eliminate this “threat” with its truly unique, one-of-a-kind, proposition.

To determine the marketing strategies that would best fulfil Orthogem-Asia’s objectives, the student-consultants employed a host of scientific research methodologies. An online survey and focus group discussion were conducted among the target group of 20- to 29-year-old consumers. The findings provided critical information about the marketing channels that resonated with them; their knowledge and receptivity to DenTek (the brand behind OraBrush) and its oral care products; their views about oral hygiene, and purchase patterns of oral care products. An industry analysis and SWOT analysis were also conducted to gain essential insights.

Using the segmentation, targeting and positioning model, the student-consultants developed strong marketing strategies and recommendations to further the client’s objectives. The four progressive phases are aimed at escalating brand awareness through a combination of education, information and partnerships; push sales via various distribution channels; sustain and deepen customer interest and loyalty, and later, in phase four, to elevate the reach to a national level by engaging a wider audience.

### **A breath of fresh air**

A key benefit of the SME Consulting Programme is the use of methodological and scientific approaches to address business issues. These qualitative and quantitative methods provided useful insights about “customer preferences and receptiveness towards oral care”, according to Ms Maya Mitsis, Business Development Manager of Orthogem-Asia. She complimented the consulting team for being “very diligent and dedicated”, and said that “their recommendations have been taken on board”. The company has “devised a marketing strategy based on their findings, which is in the process of execution”.

Working on this project, the student-consultants said they were able to “apply what we learnt in class for primary and secondary research, and ultimately produce positive outcomes for the company”. This met their goal of leveraging their knowledge and experience to provide creative solutions in a real-life situation. They appreciated the opportunity to go beyond the limitations of an academic project – which tends to be more “theoretical”; also, “strategies do not have to be actionable” – to a project that “requires an actionable strategy that the SME can execute, with the budget and time that it has”.

The student-consultants credited Project Advisor Mr Paul Teo for “guiding us every step of the way, often providing valuable lessons learnt from his illustrious career”. Even when the team was confident of its proposals, they would seek him out for a “second opinion” and “any value-added input”. On his part, Mr Teo remarked that once the students confirmed that social media was the most appropriate tool to be used for the company’s market penetration, they were able to focus their research on what was “most relevant” and proceeded “very fast” to meet the client’s requirements.

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