

UOB-SMU

Asian Enterprise Institute

Live Safe, Love Life: Loyal LLP



Loyal LLP specialises in the retail of electronic insect killers (EIKs) and lifestyle desktop aquariums.

For more than a decade, it has been importing a wide range of electronic insect traps to Singapore. Today, it has a large product portfolio of EIKs catering to every market segment including domestic, industrial, commercial, and food & beverage; the products are also suitable for use in open-air spaces.

Over the years, the SME has strengthened its ties with its manufacturers. This close association enables the SME to oversee the production process, thus maintaining the quality of its products. Since 2012, it had begun to market the EIKs under the “Loyal” brand. Last year, it changed the brand name to “iZap”, a snappy, easy-to-remember name which captures the essence (and sound!) of an EIK. The company’s EIKs are safe to use as they are environmentally-friendly and contain no toxic chemicals. They are also economical as they require low levels of energy to operate.

In a tropical environment where mosquitoes are a nuisance and a danger, the EIK segment presents good potential as it is relatively under-developed. Whether it is an alternative or complement to existing anti-bug deterrents like insect sprays, anti-mosquito patches and repellent granules, the fact remains that “a mosquito killer is a necessity, not a luxury,” said Shalini Shroff, Partner, Loyal LLP.

Get out of my face!

Bzzz... bzzz... bzzz. Smack. Thwap. Clap. “Ai yah!” Sounds familiar? It’s the sound of a mosquito buzzing, the failed attempts to kill it, and the resulting verbal expression of frustration. At best, a mosquito, or any other insect, is considered an irritant that one merely tolerates; at worst, a bite from an Aedes mosquito can mean the nerve-wrecking pain of dengue fever, or even death.

In Singapore, there are few truly harmful or dangerous insects that compromise the health and well-being of a person, or pose a health threat of massive proportions. This could explain why the consumer sector for EIKs is relatively small. People just do not seem to see the need for EIKs at home, given that there are a variety of alternatives to choose from. Also, at the height of the chikungunya and dengue outbreaks, the public education campaigns which urged people to protect themselves typically promoted the use of insect repellents, insecticides and proactive actions to snuff out mosquito breeding grounds; EIKs did not feature prominently in these campaigns, if at all

This poses a problem – and an opportunity – for Loyal. A relatively underdeveloped residential EIK segment also means potential upside. The question, then, is how to address this state, and grow Loyal’s market share.

Unlike most other SMEs which turned to the UOB-SMU Asian Enterprise Institute (AEI)’s flagship Consulting Programme because they had specific goals or issues, Ms Shalini had chanced upon it and

UOB-SMU

Asian Enterprise Institute

“instantaneously felt positive vibes,” she said. So she signed on to get a different perspective on how to improve the company’s EIK marketing and outreach efforts in the consumer industry.

Shield and protect

The student-consultants applied a scientific and methodological approach to the project. Using techniques learnt in the classroom, they undertook a mix of primary and secondary research methods which included a survey, focus group session and one-on-one interviews. With the desktop research and qualitative and quantitative data, the team was able to determine the strengths of the Loyal brand, the market sentiment vis-à-vis EIKs, and where the company and its products stood among its competitors.

Through the in-depth analysis, the team was able to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of the SME’s current marketing and outreach efforts, and where the gaps lay. Armed with the facts, they drew up a set of recommendations aimed at enhancing awareness of the Loyal brand, and growing the market share of loyal customers.

Mindful of the limited sources that SMEs typically have, the team proposed ideas to stretch the value of the current marketing channels, as well as leverage on the extensive reach of social media platforms.

Clearing the air

“My expectations were more than met,” said Ms Shalini. “Even though I knew the students could perform, I feel the work produced was of high quality. I was particularly impressed with the surveys they conducted and the results they produced.” She credited the team for providing her with “clarity” and “a line of thinking” as her thoughts were somewhat “murky” before. She also realised she was engaging in practices which went counter to the company’s image.

“We are making the changes the team recommended, and look forward to seeing positive reaction from people,” she added.

Project Adviser

Chua Cheng Kwee

Student-consultants

Kamini Devi Naidu D/o Devadass

Lai Pollyna

Bernadette Therese Silva