



STAGE 2 PROJECT

MAY 2010

Marketing of the Co-operative Sector in Ireland

Introduction

On the 6 December 2007 Forfás published a profile of the co-operative enterprise sector in Ireland and internationally. Speaking at the launch of the report, the then Minister for Trade and Commerce, Mr John McGuinness, TD commented: “the co-operative movement has played an important role in key areas of economic and social development in Ireland to date, most notably in the development of the agricultural sector and the credit union movement. Internationally, co-operatives operate very successfully in a wide range of sectors including banking, insurance, retailing and agriculture. International evidence suggests that there is further potential for the development of the co-operative approach in Ireland based on an up-to-date and supportive regulatory framework”. McGuinness (2007) goes on to state that “co-operatives are the expression of the idea that people can agree to work together on an equal basis and share equally in the results of their work.

This concept fits well with wider societal objectives, such as those of social cohesion and of increasing the stock of social capital. The continued development of the co-operative model could be valuable in providing an additional dimension to social partnership in Ireland. For example, co-operatives may have the potential to play a role in addressing social policy and quality of life issues such as those arising from long working days, commuting, isolation and lack of community facilities, by filling market gaps, providing public and community services, and developing community assets.”

Irish co-operatives vary in size, structure and range of activities. In 2006, there were 1,040 co-operatives registered in Ireland with over 270,000 members. The sector generated approximately €3.8 billion in sales revenue and employed over 38,000 people. The vast majority of co-operatives in Ireland are agricultural and account for 98% of the total turnover of co-operative sector. Globally, it is estimated that there are over 800 million members of co-operatives, with co-operatives providing jobs for over 100 million people.

See: <http://icos.ie> & <http://www.creditunion.ie>

The Project

- Select a Co-operative organisation with which you are familiar. Outline any assumptions you have made regarding your selection.
- Provide a summary of the background to the organisation. The objective of this summary is to give the examiner a clear understanding of the chosen company. **(15%)**
- Paying particular attention to the marketing activities of the company you have chosen, describe in detail the key present or planned marketing strategies. **(35%)**
- Based firmly on your secondary (desk based) research, make recommendations to other companies within the same business arena **(35%)**
- Your project must be presented in a professional manner, therefore 15% of total marks are awarded for:
 - Appropriate use of citations & bibliography **(6%)**
 - Effective presentation/structure **(6%)**
 - Accurate syntax, grammar and spelling **(3%)**

Additional Briefing Notes

- (a) You are to include a soft copy (on disc or memory stick) of your finished work, this can be attached to the final submission, making sure you have your Student ID clearly marked on the disc.
- (b) In your soft copy, do not present several files with different chapters/sections of your project in each. One file with full project is required. Please remember to place your student number on your disc/memory stick, or what ever means you use to store your material.
- (c) Candidates are strongly advised to read previous Examiners' reports prior to embarking on this project.

PLEASE READ THESE RULES CAREFULLY

1. This project is an exercise in investigative study. Because it is not being prepared under examination conditions, style and presentation will be taken into account as well as content.
2. The primary purpose of this project is to assess the candidate's ability to apply marketing principles to the topic under investigation and to structure research findings using the marketing concepts available.
3. Candidates are strongly advised to review past Examiners' Reports prior to embarking on this project – www.mii.ie/exampapers
4. The project must be typed on A4 paper. It should be presented in a folder or loose binder. Your name, Student ID and your project title must appear on the title page. The pages should be numbered and there should be a Table of Contents. Candidates are **NOT** to submit their projects in individual page plastic covers.
Such projects will be automatically awarded a mark of zero by the examiner.
5. A one-page abstract forms part of the completed project. This abstract should be a brief description of the **objective** to be achieved by the project, the **methods** used and the **conclusions** reached.
6. We would envisage that you would not be able to do justice to the topic in less than 5,000 words. On the other hand you should not exceed 7,000 words. A word count **MUST** be included as part of your Contents Page.
7. You must acknowledge all your sources; not to do so is **plagiarism**. Acknowledgement involves naming your source (report, textbook, website) in brackets at the relevant point in the text, and appending a bibliography at the end of your text. This should be in alphabetical order and should include the author's name, the title, the publisher and the city and date of publication. Web references should be as detailed as possible, not just the home page. The examiner will conduct a systematic phrase search to ensure the integrity of information downloaded from the internet. The quality of your bibliography is an important element in the overall assessment of your project.
See section on plagiarism on website – www.mii.ie/projects.
8. This project will be assessed and marked like the other subjects in **Stage 2**. You will not have passed **Stage 2** until you have passed the project.
9. The project is due by **FEBRUARY 25, 2010**. As time management is a major feature of the discipline of report writing, projects submitted after the due date will not be accepted. *Students should, therefore, start work on the project immediately as excuses relating to mishaps (poor health, computer failure, typing) in the final week will not be accepted.*
10. Since the project is treated as an examination subject, The Marketing Institute staff **cannot** assist you with the interpretation of the brief or sources of information.
11. The same sanction applies to copying and to plagiarism: all subjects in the sitting are deemed to have been failed and the candidate may not register as a student with The Marketing Institute thereafter.
12. The attached statement must be signed and incorporated it into your project after the bibliography.



STATEMENT

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I hereby certify that:

- I have read and understood the rules on the back of the project outline.
- This project is my own work prepared as part of my marketing examination.
- I have not made this project available to another student.
- I have fully acknowledged all my sources and I have read the section on plagiarism on The Marketing Institute website - www.mii.ie/projects - and understand the consequences as outlined.

Signature _____ **Date** _____