



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

Integrated Marketing Communications: suitability in B2B markets

The case of the brand DaTerra

Final paper in the form of Internship Report
presented to Universidade Católica Portuguesa
for the attainment of master degree in Marketing

by

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June 2016

Acknowledgments

To my parents.

Abstract

As it is often said: *“If you don't see it, it doesn't exist”*. In this sense, the relevant choice of promotion tools has gained importance as a differentiating instrument for companies, in order to become popular and acquire a solid degree of reputation and status. Being the choice of more relational communication tools quite common among business markets, it is starting to be questioned if the use of those tools is sufficient alone or, if it is reasonable for business actors to reach out to other communication instruments typically used in consumer markets.

This dissertation focuses, firstly, on the specificities of business markets, the communication molds within this field and the changing views regarding this matter, based on studies of other authors. Secondly, there will be an analysis to the promotion practices of a business-to-business brand that operates within the homeware industry, in light of good practices studied. Thirdly, it is discussed the appropriateness of communication channels outside businesses comfort zone – namely public relations and interactive marketing – highlighting the relevance of an integrated marketing communications' approach. Finally, some suggestions regarding the brand's current promotion strategy are proposed, which overall manifest themselves in potential gains in terms of brand awareness.

The results show that there is a tendency to focus on somewhat more relational communication tools and, thus, facing the nature of the business, it is recommended to the company under study the continuous usage of those instruments. Nevertheless, there is also evidence of room for improvement, namely, the parallel (integrated) use of promotion tools characteristic of consumer markets.

Keywords: Business markets | Promotion | Strategy | Communication channels

“Find a job you love, and you won’t have to work a day in your life”

Confucius

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Abbreviations

AMA – American Marketing Association

B2B – Business to Business

B2C – Business to Consumer

DMU – Decision Making Unit

IBB – Industrial Buying Behavior

IMC – Integrated Marketing Communications

IT – Information Technology

PR – Public Relations

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1.Introduction

The present thesis assumes the form of Internship Report and represents the final assignment to obtain the master's degree within the Marketing course taught by Universidade Católica Portuguesa. The internship was executed from 14th September to the 29th of January in the multinational company Li & Fung Products, more specifically, in the brands department working closely with a single brand – DaTerra.

Ultimately, marketing is the art of attracting and keeping profitable customers – no matter if the business is developed in an exclusive business environment or in a typical consumer market (Kotler & Keller, 2011). Nevertheless, the whole marketing approach needs to adapt to the type of market and, consequently, marketing mix decisions should take under consideration the specificities of both business and consumer markets.

With regards to promotion, which is the marketing mix variable in focus throughout this thesis, it is commonly assumed that business actors are somewhat more relational in their approach when compared to companies selling directly to final consumers (Fill, 2002). Previous studies support this idea and elect some communication channels as the preferred by firms in B2B markets – namely personal selling, sales promotions and direct marketing. Yet, more recent research has been defending the right appropriateness of typical B2C communication tools in business markets, as a means to develop promotion strategies.

In this line of thought, and during the analysis of the communication activities carried out by DaTerra, it was possible to corroborate that there is indeed a tendency to focus on the preferred communication channels mentioned above. Still, there is an openness to go out of the comfort zone and try new promotion

tools in order to reach a wider audience and work on brand awareness. This challenge may be surpassed with suggestions from the intern's study, in accordance with intervenient working colleagues' feedback and academic theory available on this subject.

According to Fill (2002), there is no single promotion strategy by excellence, this means there are no generic principles nor golden rules blindly applicable to all types of business in time or space. Not all common practices produce the same effects or results between organizational businesses – each business' vision, capabilities and structure is unique and reflects the organization's (marketing) performance. Overall, the entire business structure (and naturally the external competitive environment) should be considered when weighing the best approach to promotion strategies.

The present report has as its main objective to address the importance of an integrated communications approach in B2B markets – and demonstrate the accomplishments coming from the changes made within DaTerra's promotion *strategy*.

The structure is divided in different parts, beginning with a literature review where the main concepts and perspectives of relevant academics are explored. The next section presents an explication regarding the used methodology and the associated limitations, followed by a brief business contextualization of the brand DaTerra. In the chapter regarding the case study, the evolution of marketing communications is addressed, followed by its importance with regards to brand building and its constrains due to budget limitation. Lastly, results, conclusions and ideas regarding the case study are discussed, and a suggestion of further studies is purposed.

It is important to highlight that DaTerra's management team is open to the idea of an integrated marketing communications approach to better promote the

brand and its business concept. However, it was decided that 2016 was not yet the year to increase budget in terms of communication, as there are other priorities with regards to internal matters' adjustments.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Business-to-Business market specifications

Traditionally marketing has always focused its attention in the last stage of the value chain, the one that deals closely with the final consumer. Nevertheless, long before the consumer actually acquires the product, it is subjected to a large set of alterations and actions performed by other actors in the value chain (Johansson *et al.*, 2006). All those activities prior to the actual sale – from raw materials selection to manufacturing, packaging and so on – concern business transactions amongst companies carried out in the business markets (B2B).

According to Andersen *et al* (2009), business markets are constituted by “firms, institutions, or governments that acquire goods and services either for their own use, to incorporate into the products or services that they produce, or for resale along with other products or services to other firms, institutions, or governments.” If there is a market, one that is different from consumer markets, then there is the need for marketing – in this case B2B Marketing which consists in a set of activities that include the selection, development and management of customer relationships in a beneficial way for both parties, regarding their capabilities, resources, strategies, objectives and technological progress (Ford *et al.*, 2006).

As marketing has evolved in the two markets it has broken up into two main sectors, logically B2B and B2C marketing. Most attention has been paid to B2C marketing, but in recent years the importance of B2B marketing has also been recognized (Johansson *et al.*, 2006).

The differences between B2B and B2C markets have long been discussed in the literature and relevant findings can be found since the 70's decade. For instances, Lilien (1987) defends that B2B markets must be handled differently than B2C

markets because of their uniqueness due to a derived demand, long purchase cycles, and a market structure that is shifting and fragmented. More recently Coviello and Brodie (2001) claim that the aspects that differ between B2B markets and B2C are the influences, buyer decision processes, and specially the buyer-seller relationship which by nature is more complex, symmetric and formal. Close to these perceptions, despite the recognition of some similarities between B2B and B2C markets, Kotler and Armstrong (2011) highlight three fundamental aspects in which they differ: market's structure and demand, the nature of the decision unit, and the decision buying process – see table below.

Table 1: Characteristics of Business Markets

Market Structure and Demand
Business markets contain <i>fewer but larger buyers</i> .
Business buyer demand is <i>derived</i> from final consumer demand.
Demand in many business markets is <i>more inelastic</i> —not affected as much in the short run by price changes.
Demand in business markets <i>fluctuates more</i> and more quickly.
Nature of the Buying Unit
Business purchases involve <i>more buyers</i> .
Business buying involves a <i>more professional purchasing effort</i> .
Types of Decisions and the Decision Process
Business buyers usually face <i>more complex buying decisions</i> .
The business buying process is <i>more formalized</i> .
In business buying, buyers and sellers work more closely together and build close long-term <i>relationships</i> .

Source: Kotler and Armstrong, 2011.

Theoretically the basic principles of Marketing are the same in both markets, however, there is a certain level of complexity attached to the B2B world that distinguishes it from the consumer market.

The following paragraphs elaborate on some of the main aspects that draw the border between B2B and B2C markets.

2.1.1 The complexity of the market

The business market is huge and it involves more money and products than consumer markets (Kotler & Armstrong 2007). In the business world, as mentioned above, companies and other organizations search for products for their own use, to incorporate in the products they sell and/or to resale to another party. As soon as the products enter the client's production system they acquire a certain strategic relevance, and despite the objective of the sale, there is one thing common: the attention to technical details (Lambin, 2000).

Consumers in B2C markets generally do not pay much attention to product technical features, they are often derived by feelings and emotions and don't always have a great understanding of the products they buy (Johansson *et al.*, 2006). In the B2B world things happen a lot differently as technical details are of major importance. Industrial buyers' expectations are very specific, technical and sometimes quite complex, therefore there is a need for the industrial seller to be able to communicate and clarify this sort of information to potential clients (Lambin, 2000). This exchange in information determines the buyer-seller relationship to be interactive and even educational to a certain level. Consequently, negotiating in this environment, stresses B2B companies to effectively communicate their value proposition (Peppers *et al.*, *cit in* Cruz, 2013).

Given the extremely competitive environment of business markets, the main danger to marketers is commoditization¹. Commoditization consumes margins and weakens customer loyalty. It can only be overcome if target customers are convinced that significant differences exist in the marketplace, and that the distinctive benefits of the company's offerings justify the added expense. Hence,

¹Commoditization represents a movement toward undifferentiated competition between companies offering the same product or service. There is an almost total lack of meaningful differences of the manufactured products, and the products are sold on the basis of price and not brand.

an important move in business marketing is to create and communicate significant differentiation from competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

2.1.1.1 Structure

Concerning its structure, in comparison with consumer markets, the business market relies on **less buyers but greater ones**. This means a company may have few clients, but some of those will purchase in large scale frequently – they are considered buyers in the long run, hence they're more valuable when considered individually (Kotler & Armstrong 2007). A great part of B2B markets acts in accordance with Pareto principle regarding client's distribution. This means 80% of sales comes from only 20% of the clients – a small group of clients buys the most from a supplier (Harrison *et al.*, *cit in* Cruz, 2013).

This 'limitation' when it comes to the number of clients should not be seen as problematic, but rather as an opportunity to identify the most relevant costumers when it comes to profit. This sort of client information, allows a company to strategically manage its customer relationships (Peppers *et al.*, *cit in* Cruz, 2013). Because of the smaller customer base and the importance and power of the larger customers, suppliers are frequently expected to customize their offerings to individual business customer needs (Kotler & Keller, 2011). Bearing this in mind, it is most advisable for companies to develop tailored relationships with the most profitable clients and attend this way special considerations of product requests, price, terms of payment and personalized communications (Lindon *et al.*, 2009).

If sales volume can account as a segmentation criteria in B2B Marketing, then it is only expectable that companies treat differently small and big clients (Cruz, 2013).

In B2B markets it is possible to distinguish three types of buyers: producers, resellers and organizations (Solomon *et al.*, *cit in* Cruz, 2013).

– Producers

Producers are companies that purchase goods and/or services to further transform them into other products. These businesses have to buy certain products to produce the goods and services they create, therefore they're clients of a large amount of products, from raw materials to prefabricated items. This category includes both manufacturers and service providers.

– Resellers

Resellers sell goods and services produced by other firms without materially changing them. They include wholesalers, brokers, and retailers. Large resellers may have a great deal of market power.

– Organizations

Governments are considered B2B entities and might even be the only client for certain products. Also, non-profit institutions fit this category with regards to educational and communitarian objectives. Public services like hospitals, universities, museums and other institutions when acting within the business market tend to operate with small budgets.

Within the business market, there is a general tendency for **geographically concentrated buyers**. The geographical concentration helps to reduce selling costs. At the same time, business marketers need to monitor regional shifts of certain industries (Kotler & Keller, 2011)

2.1.1.2 Demand

The demand for industrial products has the particularity of being derived, inelastic and wavering (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007).

– **Derived demand**

The demand is derived because it is expressed by a company that utilizes bought products in its own production system, in order to respond to the demand from other organizations or the final consumer (Lambin, 2000). In other words, B2B market's demand is ultimately derived from the demand for consumer goods. B2B clients look for products to satisfy, direct or indirectly, the final consumer needs. For this reason, the business marketer must closely monitor the buying patterns of ultimate consumers. Business buyers must also pay close attention to current and expected economic factors, such as the level of production, investment, and consumer spending and the interest rate. In a recession, they reduce their investment in plant, equipment, and inventories (Kotler & Keller, 2011). Understanding the nature of B2B market's demand, justifies the reason why some B2B companies promote their products directly to the final consumer – to increase organizational demand (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007)².

– **Inelastic Demand**

Several segments of the business market present an inelastic demand, this means the overall demand for numerous industrial goods is not drastically affected by variations in price, especially in a short run³ (Kotler & Armstrong 2007). Generally it doesn't really matter if the price of a certain good increases or decreases: facing a slight variation, industrial clients will continue to acquire the same product quantity.

² Intel Corporation promotes closely to computer consumers, disclosing the innumerable advantages of its microprocessors. An increase in the demand for Intel's chips stimulates the demand for computers that utilize those chips – example by Kotler & Armstrong in the book *Princípios de marketing* (12th ed.). São Paulo: Pearson Prentice Hall.

³ Demand is especially inelastic in the short run because producers cannot make quick changes in production methods (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

– **Fluctuating demand**

The demand for business goods and services tends to be more volatile than the demand for consumer goods and services. A given percentage increase in consumer demand can lead to a much larger percentage increase in the demand for plant and equipment necessary to produce the additional output. Economists refer to this as the *acceleration effect*⁴. Sometimes a rise of only 10% in consumer demand can cause as much as a 200% rise in business demand for products in the next period; a 10% fall in consumer demand may cause a complete collapse in business demand (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

2.1.1.3 The nature of the buying unit

When compared to a consumer purchase, business purchases usually involve more decision participants and a more professional purchasing effort.

– **Professional purchasing**

Often, business buying is carried out by trained purchasing agents who spend their working lives learning how to buy better. Therefore, companies must have well-trained marketers and salespeople to deal with these technically literate buyers – companies have to provide great technical information about their products and advantages compared with competitive products (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007).

⁴ The acceleration effect is an economic concept that draws a connection between production (output) and capital investment by companies. According to the acceleration principle, if demand for consumer goods increases, then the demand for machines and other investment necessary to make those goods will increase even more (and vice versa). In other words, if income increases, there will be a corresponding but magnified change in investment.

– More purchasing participants

The more complex the purchase is, the more likely it is that several people will participate in the decision making process. This group of people constitutes the decision making unit (DMU) and its composition depends upon the complexity of the purchase (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007). People with different backgrounds can be part of this sort of buying committees and all of them play roles accordingly – for instances, engineering personnel usually have a major influence in selecting product components, and purchasing agents dominate in selecting suppliers.

In any case, B2B marketers need well-trained sales representatives to deal with these well-trained buyers. Although advertising, sales promotions and direct marketing play an important role in the business promotional mix, personal selling is often the main marketing tool (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

2.1.1.4 The decision environment – types of decisions and decision process

Overall, business buyers deal with **more complex buying decisions** than do consumer buyers – their acquisitions involve large amounts of money, technical considerations and interaction with several people in different levels within the organization (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007). Also, the buying process tends to be **more formal** than the simple purchase of consumer goods – large industrial purchases usually require detailed and technical products specifications, official documents, a thorough research of potential suppliers and formal approval (Lambin, 2000).

A particular aspect of all the process is that generally the **seller and buyer are to a certain extent dependent on each other**. Companies in consumer markets

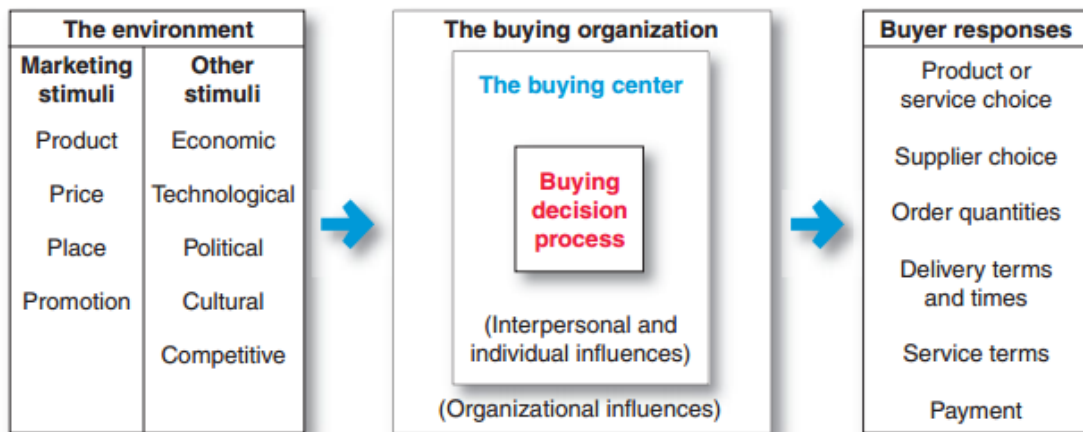
maintain a certain distance from its consumers, but B2B companies may have to work closely with prospect clients and partners throughout the entire negotiation – they need to help them define their problems, find a solution and offer support services after the sale. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007). In the short run, sales go to suppliers who meet the buyer's immediate product and service needs. In the long run, however, B2B marketers keep a customer's sales and create customer value by meeting current needs and by partnering with customers to help them solve their problems (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

Because a purchase in this context is naturally more intricate, it may take longer for buyers to reach a final decision (Johansson *et al.*, 2006). Also, industrial buying is guided by precise and technical specifications of what is requested and business buyers are professional and active customers who carefully evaluate alternatives. These characteristics and the market's complex environment indicate that **purchasing, based on impulse and emotions, should be very rare** as the buyers are assumed to focus on the offers' price, quality, quantity, timing, services and availability (Blombäck, 2005).

2.1.2 Business Buying Behavior

It is of major importance to understand how business buyers respond to marketing stimuli. Figure 1 presents a model of the business buying behavior in which marketing and other stimuli affect the buying company and produce certain reactions.

Figure 1: Model of Business Buyer Behavior



Source: Kotler and Armstrong, 2011

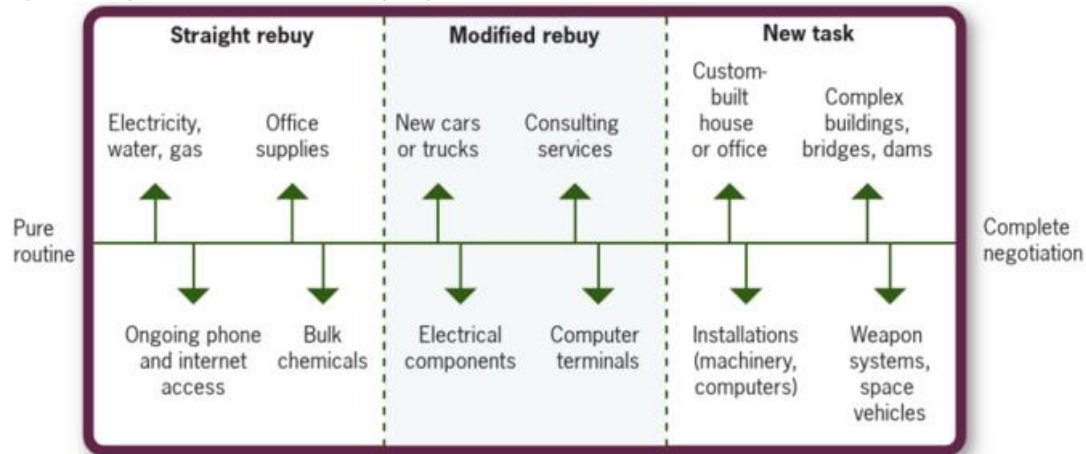
Similarly to consumer goods purchase, the stimuli for business buys consists in the 4 P's: Product, Price, Placement and Promotion. The other incitements are related to aspects within the economic, technological, political, cultural and competitive environments. Together, both types of stimuli permeate the organization, are processed by the buyer and eventually transformed into a response: the choice of product or service, selected supplier, order quantity, terms of payment, etcetera. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007).

To design effective marketing strategies, marketers must understand what happens within the organization to turn those stimulus into purchase responses.

2.1.2.1 Possible buying situations

The type of buying depends on the complexity of the problem being solved, the newness of the buying requirement, the number of people involved and the time required for the whole process (Lambin, 2000). Having these variables in consideration, there are three types of buying situations: straight rebuy (which is a routine decision), modified rebuy (which requires some research) and new task (calls for thorough research). Figure 2 exemplifies some of the possible purchasing situations.

Figure 2: Types of industrial buying situations



Source: Kotler et al., 2013

– **Straight rebuy**

A straight rebuy is the purchasing or reordering of supplies on a routine basis from a supplier – based on past buying satisfactions, the buyer simply chooses from the various suppliers on its list. For the supplier benefiting from the re-purchase this situation is ideal since the purchaser is not looking to evaluate other products. For competitors who are not getting the order it may require extensive marketing efforts to persuade the buyer to consider other product or service options (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007).

– **Modified rebuy**

Modified rebuy is a buying situation in which an individual or organization purchase goods that have been purchased previously but changes either the supplier or some other elements of the previous order. There are many reasons why a product is moved to the status of a modified re-purchase. Some of these reasons include: end of purchase contract period, change in who is involved in making the purchase, supplier is removed from an approved suppliers list, mandate from top level of organization to re-evaluate all purchasing, or strong marketing effort by competitors. In this case the “in supplier” has to protect his account whereas the “out supplier” sees it as an opportunity to make a better offer and gain some business. A modified rebuy is less critical and consumes less

time. A new product introduction from the earlier version always creates a modified rebuy situation (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007).

– **New task**

When buying a product or service for the first time, companies face great costs and risk. The buyer must decide on product specifications, suppliers, price, payment terms, order quantities, delivery terms and service terms. This demands a large number of decision participants and a greater need to collect information (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

Some business buyers prefer to buy a packaged solution to a problem from a single seller – **systems buying**. Buying a packaged solution to a specific problem avoids making all the separate decisions involved in buying each item or service separately. Systems selling is a key business marketing strategy for winning and holding accounts (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

2.1.2.2 Participants in the buying decision process

In B2B markets, a purchase is a collective decision and it is made by a selected group of people, which recognizes the importance of the task that concerns the whole firm, in addition their own career – the decision making unit (DMU) (Lambin, 2000). The size and composition of this team will vary according to the complexity of the purchase, and each member acts as an active problem solver and processes information so that organizational goals are accomplished (Johansson *et al.*, 2006).

The DMU may involve, besides the buyer itself, people who one way or another are connected to different levels of the purchase and people that somehow deal

with the consequences of the overall deal. This unit is generally composed by people with different responsibilities, acting according to different objectives and motivations (Lambin, 2000).

Generically the DMU is composed by individuals acting according to the following five functions (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007):

- 1) User – the members of the organization who will actually use the product. In many cases they are the first to present a proposal for the product purchase and help define some product specifications.
- 2) Influencer – generally help define product specifications and also provide relevant information for alternatives' evaluation. Technical experts are important influencers.
- 3) Buyers – people with the formal power to select the supplier and establish buying conditions. Buyers may also help in product specifications, but their main role is to select suppliers and negotiate all possible alternatives. In complex purchases they may request the top management team's support.
- 4) Decision maker – the person with the formal power to approve the selected and final supplier. In everyday purchasers the buyers usually are the decision makers.
- 5) Gatekeepers – control the information flow to others.

The DMU is not an established and formally identified unit within an organization; it is the sum of all buying roles assumed by different people for different purchases. Within a company, the size and constitution of the DMU

varies according to the product and purchase context. In everyday purchases, one individual may assume all the roles himself and be the only person involved in the decision. On the other hand, in a complex purchase, the DMU may include 20 to 30 people from different levels and departments of the organization (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007)

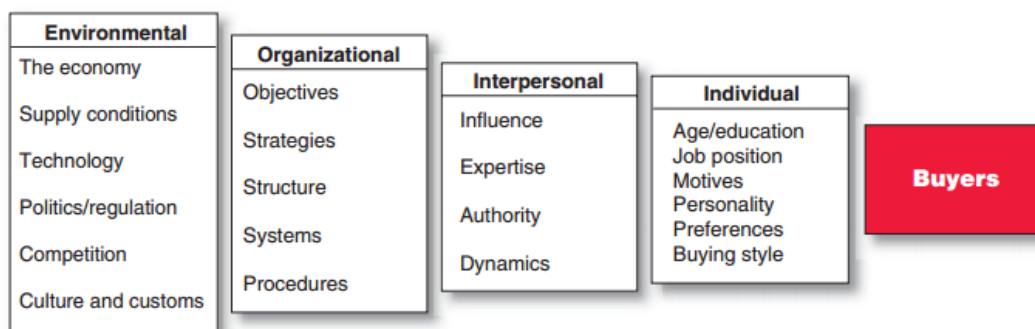
2.1.2.3 Main influences on Business Buyer Behavior

In regards to buying decisions, business buyers are subjected to many influences. Some companies believe the main influences are economical, and therefore they try to offer great economic benefits to potential buyers. Nevertheless, industrial buyers are human and react towards reason as well as emotion (Pickton and Broderick, 2001). For instances, when suppliers' offers are very similar, the business buyer choice is not strictly rational – if it is possible for the company to achieve its goals with either supplier, then the buyers allows for personal influences to intervene in his decision process (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007).

The buying activity itself consists of two parts: the people who influence the decision making and the buying decision process. Both are influenced by internal organizational, interpersonal and individual factors and additionally by external environmental factors

Kotler and Armstrong (2011) visualize the factors influencing business buyer behavior as seen below in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Main influences on Business Buyer Behavior



Source: Kotler and Armstrong, 2011

– Environmental factors

Business buyers are heavily influenced by factors in the current and expected economic environment. As economic uncertainty rises, business buyers tend to cut back on new investments and attempt to reduce their inventories. Alongside this issues, another concern is the level of primary demand due to its influence in B2B markets (Kotler & Armstrong 2007). An increasingly important factor is the supply of key materials. Many companies are now willing to hold larger inventories of scarce materials or to commit to long-term price contracts to ensure adequately supply. Also, business decisions are affected by technological and competitive developments as well as possible changes in the political conjecture. Lastly, culture and costumes can influence buyers' reactions, especially in an international environment.

– Organizational factors

Business marketers need to understand individual organizations objectives, policies, procedures, structure and systems, since these vary from company to company. Looking at the internal organizational factors of a specific company, marketers understand how many people, and who, are involved in decision making and based on what criteria do they buy (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

– Interpersonal factors

Since usually decisions are made by more than just one person, interpersonal factors are also present in business buying process, when these decision makers influence each other – these factors include authority, status, empathy and persuasiveness. Interpersonal factors and group dynamics are often subtle and difficult to evaluate. Some may influence a buying decision because they are well liked, have certain expertise, control rewards or have special relationship with key decision makers. Business marketers should try to design strategies that take interpersonal factors in account if possible. (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

– **Individual factors**

Each participant of the buying process has different motivations, perceptions and preferences that are affected by personal characteristics like age, income, level of education, job position, personality and attitudes towards risk (Kotler & Armstrong 2007). Also, buyers have different buying styles. Some may be technical types who make thorough analysis of competitive proposals before selecting a supplier, while others may be intuitive negotiators looking to find the best deal possible.

2.1.2.4 Decision buying process

Business to business buying decision process is more deliberate and differs from the consumer decision process (Kotler *et al.*, 2013) – table 2 summarizes its differences with regards to major buying situations.

Table 2: Comparison of business and consumer buying process in relation to major buying situations

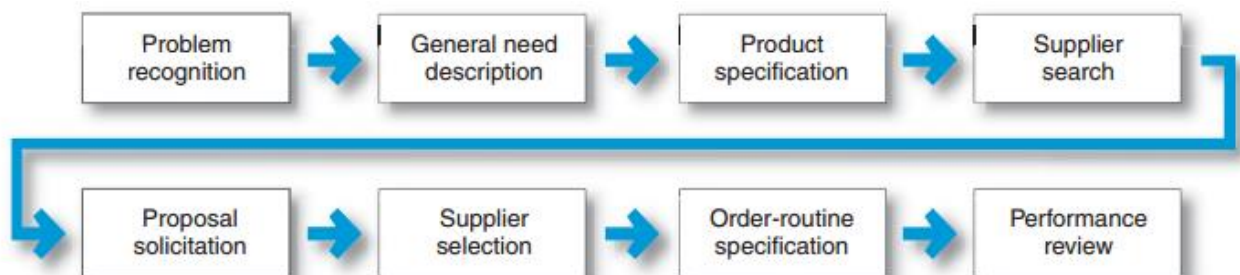
Buying Step	B2B	B2C
1. Problem recognition	Anticipates and plans for a purchase on a routine basis	Reacts to needs when they arise
2. General need description	Extensive, objective, cost-benefit analysis	Limited analysis of benefits Concern with total cost
3. Product specification	Precise Technical description	Description more in terms of benefits
4. Information and supplier research	May take a long time Thorough research Extensive Several possibilities are selected	Limited – geographically and in terms of sources (internet, WoM, magazines, etcetera)

5. Proposal solicitation	Generally follows a formal procedure	May be verbal
6. Supplier selection	Made after extensive analysis of objective information	Limited analysis, with subjective and circumstantial information influencing the decision
7. Order-routine specification	Routinized calculation of reorder points as well as time and place of delivery	It is not routinized
8. Post-purchase performance	Extensive comparison made and review feedback given Concern with quality of service	Little basis for comparison management at source

Source: Adapted from Kotler et al., 2013

Focusing on B2B markets, the buying process varies according to the importance of the buying decision and with the size of the business. Buyers who face a new-task buying situation usually go through all eight stages of the buying process, though the process may be less formal for small businesses. However, buyers in charge of modified or straight rebuys might skip some of the stages. The figure below illustrates the eight steps in the business buying process.

Figure 4: Stages of the Business Buying Process



Source: Kotler and Armstrong, 2011

1) Problem Recognition

Someone recognizes the organization has a need that can be solved by purchasing a good or service. Users often drive this stage and need identification may be a consequence of internal or external stimuli.

For instances, internally the company may decide to launch a new product that requires the acquisition of new equipment and materials for its production. Externally, the buyer may have new ideas after visiting a trade show or industrial exhibition (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

2) The need is described and quantified/ General need description

The buying center or DMU, work to put some parameters around what needs to be purchased. They describe what they believe is needed, the features it should have, how much of it is needed, where, and so on. For standard items this process is relatively simple. However, more technical or complex products probably require the buyer to work with other people and together define the product's technical specifications. Users and influencers come into play here.

In this stage, there is a good opportunity for marketing professionals to assist the potential buyer, provide relevant information regarding the company's services and specify the value and main characteristics of the product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

3) Product Specification

The potential buyer develops the item's technical product specifications, often with the help of experts. A value analysis is considered – it consists in an approach to cost reduction in which components are studied to determine whether they can be redesigned, standardized or made by cheaper methods of production (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

4) **Supplier search**

At this stage, the people involved in the buying process seek out information about the products they are looking for and the vendors that can supply them. Most buyers look online to find vendors and products, attend industry trade shows and conventions and telephone or e-mail the suppliers with whom they have relationships. For marketers, the internet has levelled the playing field – small suppliers now have many of the same advantages as larger competitors. The challenge for the suppliers is therefore to be listed in relevant directories and build a good reputation in the marketplace, so that they stand the best chance of coming to the attention of potential buyers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

5) **Proposal solicitation**

Suppliers are invited to submit proposals. In response, generally a catalog or a salesperson is sent. However, when the item is complex or expensive, the buyer usually requires detailed proposals or formal presentations. If the good is a physical product, the vendors generally provide the purchaser with samples, which are then inspected and sometimes tested. They might also ask satisfied customers to make testimonials or initiate a discussion with the buyer (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

Business marketers must be skilled in researching, writing and presenting proposals – these should be seen as marketing documents and not only technical forms (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

6) **Supplier selection**

The proposals are reviewed and some suppliers are selected. During this stage, the DMU will often draw up a list of the desired supplier attributes and their relative importance. Such attributes commonly include product

quality, service quality, reputation, on-time delivery, ethical corporate behavior, honest communication and competitive prices. The buying center will then rate suppliers against these attributes and identify the best traders (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

Buyers may attempt to negotiate with preferred suppliers for better prices and terms before making the final selection. In the end they may opt for a single or a few of the initial options. Many companies prefer multiple sources of supplies to avoid being totally dependent on one supplier and to allow comparisons of the prices and performance of several suppliers over time (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

7) Order-routine specification

This is the stage in which the actual order is put together. The order includes the agreed-upon price, quantities, expected time of delivery, return policies, warranties, and any other terms of negotiation. The order can be a one-time order or consist of multiple orders that are made periodically as a company needs a good or service. Some buyers order products continuously by having their vendors electronically monitor their inventory for them and ship replacement items as the buyer needs them – vendor managed inventory⁵ (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

8) Post-purchase performance review

The buyer reviews the supplier performance. Some buyers establish on-time performance, quality, customer satisfaction, and other measures for

⁵Many large buyers now practice *vendor-managed inventory* – a system through which they turn over ordering and inventory responsibilities to their suppliers. Under such systems, buyers share sales and inventory information directly with key suppliers. The suppliers then monitor inventories and replenish stock automatically as needed (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011). For example, most major suppliers to large retailers such as Walmart or Home Depot assume vendor-managed inventory responsibilities.

their vendors to meet, and provide those vendors with the information regularly, such as trend reports that show if their performance is improving, remaining the same, or worsening. This review may lead the buyer to continue, modify or drop the agreement. The seller's job is to monitor the same factors used by the buyer to make sure that the seller is delivering the expected level of performance. Companies need to collaborate with their suppliers to look for ways to improve their joint performance (Kotler *et al.*, 2013).

2.1.3 The importance of relationships in B2B markets

Cultivating the right relationships with business is paramount for any holistic marketing program. To improve effectiveness and efficiency, business suppliers and customers are exploring different ways to manage their relationships – more than ever, companies are using information about customers to enact precision marketing designed to build strong long-term relationships (Kotler & Keller, 2011). Customer relationship management (CRM) makes more sense than ever as a tool to carefully manage detailed information about individual customers and all customers encounters with the brand and product (Kotler and Keller refer to these encounters as “touch points”) in order to maximize loyalty. Reaching out to CRM companies assume the position of providing excellent real-time customer service through the effective use of individual account information. Based on what they know about each valued customer, companies can customize their market offerings, services or programs. Also, CRM is quite vital because a major driver of company profitability is the aggregate value of the company's customer base.

Throughout literature it is very common for authors to agree that relationships are particularly relevant in business markets – interaction and relationships can indeed add value to the simple product an industrial player is offering (Ahmad & Buttle, 2001). The underlying environment where business relationships may foster and the reasons for its relevance, however, are not strictly defined as there are many different opinions on the subject. The following section will address the main thoughts on this matter.

Looking at business relationships as something more than just a business deal, Hallén (*cit in* Blombäck, 2005) states that personal relationships are undeniably important for business. The author claims that developing relationships beyond the *business-tasks obligation* provides a groundwork on which business networks can be (*more safely*) established. Similarly, Dubois and Håkan (2002) defend solid relationships may not only be used to increase cost efficiency (business concern) but may also function as an important foundation for value creation (beyond business concerns). In the same way, acknowledging business relationships are built upon personal interactions Gross et al., (*cit in* Blombäck, 2005) stress the need for sellers to work on enthusiasm and awareness if they wish to keep the relationship positive and long-term – stagnation and routine might be hazardous.

Focusing on the purchase process, Håkansson and Gadde (1992) distinguish between simple and complex purchasing situations and suggest that the intricacy of a buying situation may engender lower or higher levels of uncertainty, which on their own might stress the need for trust between actors. The authors state uncertainty can never be entirely removed, but there is the possibility for its management. Reliable and close relationships can, therefore, work as a reassuring tool for the buyer. Similarly, Anderson and Narus (1998) argue trust and commitment are vital parts of working relationships on the industrial

market. Close to Håkansson and Gadde perspective, trust is one of the factors that reduces the perceived risk for actors when acting in a business relationship.

With a parallel view, Kotler and Keller (2011) defend that building trust is one prerequisite to healthy long-term relationships and a number of forces effect the improvement of a relationship between business partners. According to these authors, it is possible to name four relevant factors: availability of alternatives, importance of supply, complexity of supply, and supply market dynamism. Based on these influential factors, the authors further classify buyer–supplier relationships into eight categories:

- 1. Basic buying and selling:** simple, routine exchanges with moderate levels of cooperation and information exchange.
- 2. Bare bones:** relationships require more adaptation by the seller and less cooperation and information exchange.
- 3. Contractual transaction:** the exchanges are defined by formal contract and generally have low levels of trust, cooperation, and interaction.
- 4. Customer supply:** this traditional custom supply situation, competition rather than cooperation is the dominant form of governance.
- 5. Cooperative systems:** partners in cooperative systems are united in operational ways, but neither demonstrates structural commitment through legal means or adaptation.
- 6. Collaborative:** with regards to collaborative exchanges, much trust and commitment lead to true partnership.
- 7. Mutually adaptive:** buyers and sellers make many relationship-specific adaptations, but without necessarily achieving strong trust or cooperation.
- 8. Customer is king:** in this close, cooperative relationship, the seller adapts to meet the customer’s needs without expecting much adaptation or change in exchange.

Over time, though, relationship roles may change or be triggered under different circumstances. For instances, some needs can be satisfied with fairly basic supplier performance, and buyers then neither want nor require a close relationship with a supplier. Equally, some suppliers may not find it worth their while to invest in customers with limited growth potential. An interesting study regarding business relationships concludes that the closest relationships between customers and suppliers arise when the supply is important to the customer and there are procurement obstacles, such as complex purchase requirements and few alternate suppliers⁶.

Another perspective on relationships' relevance can be found in the change of the strategic focus from *purchasing* to *supply* management that occurred during the late years of the 20th century (Gadde & Snehota, 2000). This change relates to companies' growing understanding that competitive advantages do not rely solely on the purchasing power of a company but rather in the relationships and linkages it has with other actors – its business network. Bearing this in mind, supplier relationships represents a vital aspect of a company's success and, consequently, the choice of business partners and relationships must be wisely managed. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that establishing and handling close relationships incur costs, and therefore companies will not automatically invest their efforts in relationships with all suppliers – different relations are dealt with differently within a company, depending on the strategic importance of the supplier (Gadde & Snehota, 2000). Under these premises, it is then possible to address the depth of a relationship regarding three main aspects: *coordination of activities, adaptations of resources and interaction among individuals*.

⁶ In this matter it is recommended the reading of the 1999 article by Joseph P. Cannon and William D. Perreault Jr.: Buyer–Seller Relationships in Business Markets, **Journal of Marketing Research**, Volume 36 p. 439–460.

Depending on the involvement business actors have within these three aspects, the supplier relationship can be labeled as either *high* or *low involvement* – the potential cost and/or revenue benefits gained from a particular supplier, the buyer will work to reach either one or the other.

In their article “Assessing Relationship Quality”, Naudé and Buttle (2000) compile the varied discussions on value and quality of B2B relationships and categorize five attributes as the basis for a business relationship, namely *trust*, *needs fulfilment*, *supply chain integration*, *power* and *profit*. The authors further conclude that the qualified significance of those attributes will differ depending on what types of intervenients are included in the relationship. Under this note, even if it is not possible to consider all relationships as being defined by a general concept (Blombäck, 2005), all possible attributes go well with authors focusing on relationships and suggesting that marketing communications is a means to manage the necessary relationships which are the core of industrial markets (e.g. Fill, 2002).

2.2 B2B branding

It is common sense that a brand in the B2C market is important for a company as a source of sustainable competitive advantage and to capture consumer preferences and loyalty (Johansson, 2006). Therefore, firms need to work on awareness and knowledge about their brand (Kotler & Armstrong 2007). A question that arises is whether it is becoming equally important in B2B markets. The following sections elaborate on this issue.

2.2.1 Definition of brand

Brands have been for centuries means to distinguish the goods of one producer from those of another (Keller, 2013). To some extent we are all familiar with the

brand concept as we continuously run into brands in our daily lives – we all have a brand we like, a brand we cherish, a brand that inspires us and so on.

Nevertheless, defining the term *brand* is a quite complex task. So complex, an article written by Maurya & Mishra (2012) providing an overview of the existing academic literature regarding this subject, was the result of the analysis and synthesis of more than three dozen definitions of brand amongst academicians. In order to do the systematic analysis of those dozen definitions, the authors used a framework suggested by De Chernatony and Riley (1998), through which they classified definitions of brand into 12 themes, namely: (1) brand as a logo, (2) brand as a legal instrument, (3) brand as a company, (4) brand as a shorthand, (5) brand as a risk reducer, (6) brand as identity system, (7) brand as an image in consumer's mind, (8) brand as value system, (9) brand as a personality, (10) brand as relationship, (11) brand as adding value and (12) brand as an evolving entity.

Despite all the different perspectives on this subject, the definition of brand as a *logo* seems to be most commonly accepted and used in the literature. This definition was first presented by the American Marketing Association (AMA) in the 60's, and it has been analyzed by marketing gurus such as Phillip Kotler and Kevin Keller. To the AMA a brand is “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.”⁷ Keller takes this definition to another level by stating that practicing managers refer to a brand as something more than just that – as something that has actually created a certain amount of awareness, reputation, prominence, and so on in the marketplace (Keller, 2013). The name, logo, symbol, package design, or other

⁷ AMA (2016). Definition of Brand (AMA Dictionary) [Online] Available: http://www.marketingpower.com/_layouts/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B

characteristics are examples of different components of a brand that identify and differentiate it – they're what is called *brand elements*⁸.

The above-mentioned features, together with other elements make up the parts of a brand a company can manage. This view is based on the logic that brands, are important for the organization as a source for sustainable competitive advantage (Johansson *et al.*, 2006). The individual brand elements then function as a platform that can be used both to make audiences aware of the offer and to provide this audience with something they can attach perceptions and values in their minds. These perceptions are often called *brand's image*⁹ and represent the different values or ideas an individual attaches to a certain brand based on the degree of interaction he/she has developed with the brand (Blombäck, 2005).

Research papers throughout the 60s and 70s found that consumers were using a more thorough process than purely searching for product functions when selecting what products to buy. This research suggests that through the use of different communication efforts a company can make audiences perceive different trademarks as representing different types of attitude, behavior and lifestyles (Blombäck, 2005). Based on this thought, brands prove equivalent to more than a logotype that serves as a means for identifying a product's origin (Keller, 2013). From this perspective, companies tend to rely on their customers' ability to perceive and form beliefs and make choices accordingly. As a result the product (goods or service) and trademark (or other brand element) only

⁸ Keller (2013) offers the following definition of brand elements: "*Brand elements, sometimes called brand identities, are those trademarkable devices that serve to identify and differentiate the brand. The main ones are brand names, URLs, logos, symbols, characters, spokespeople, slogans, jingles, packages, and signage.*"

⁹ Kapferer (2012) defines brand image the following way: "*Image is on the receiver's side. Image centers upon the way a certain public imagines a product, brand, political figure or country, etc. The image refers to the manner in which this public decodes all the signals emitted by the brand through its products, services and communication program. It is a reception concept.*"

represent one part of the brand while impressions and surrounding values represent another. Not only are there many different types of associations to link to the brand, but there are many different means to create them—the entire marketing program can contribute to consumers’ understanding of the brand and how they value it as well as other factors outside the control of the marketer (Keller, 2013). This insight leads to the idea that a brand is dependent on an audience’s attention and attitude to exist and be of some value (Blombäck, 2005). Bearing this in mind, one can argue the AMA definition of brand can be completed with Keller’s vision of a brand being much more than just a mix of tangible brand elements. From a wider perspective, which includes the idea of audiences’ perceptions, the creation and management of a brand is about making customers notice, understand and foremost believe that one company’s offer is better suited for them and their needs. It is not enough for a brand to exist visually and graphically through its elements, it has to gradually be built up by the interactions a person has with its different symbols, both tangible and intangible (Kapferer ,2012).

Following Keller’s reasoning, it is important to understand that while a brand can be recognized by a name, logotype, symbol or perhaps a particular design, that is not what makes it remarkable for a company. Instead, it is the ideas consumers have about the brand and the added value it thereby brings which is worthwhile (Blombäck, 2005).

Brands are conditional, intangible and legal assets for a firm, and they act like a signal of perceived value to all the stakeholders – while offering added value to its customers, a brand can be seen as a source of value (brand equity)¹⁰ to the company (Blombäck, 2005).

¹⁰ Kotler and Armstrong (2007) state *brand equity* is the positive differential effect that knowing the brand name has on consumers’ response to the product or service. In the same direction, Keller (2013) argues *brand equity* occurs when the costumer has a high level of awareness and

The perceived value (benefits) may range from functional to psychological associations and it is influenced by the interaction between the firm and the various stakeholders through the several points of contact and interactions. The challenge for the organization lies in minimizing the gap between the brand identity and the generated perceptions (Maurya & Mishra, 2012).

Conclusively, it seems elements and perceptions are both necessary for discussing the existence of a brand. Thus, the brand concept in this thesis is understood and treated from the wider perspective.

2.2.2 The growing importance of brands in B2B markets

Based on its definition, either the AMA (1960) statement or the wider perspective, a brand is not unavoidably restricted to a particular type of company or market. Nevertheless, for a long time brand research and literature focused on consumer goods markets, and only recently a growing focus has been placed on the subject in connection to industrial markets (Low & Blois, 2002). This neither means that brands have not always been something characteristic and applicable to all types of businesses nor that the concept and ideas cannot be applied to B2B markets. According to Nilson (1998) the former consumer market attention was a result of the fact that brands and the process of branding were originally focused on consumer businesses. Consequently, most models and techniques suggested for branding were designed for the consumer goods market and the concept typically connected with this background.

During the end of the 19th century, as manufacturers gradually began using their name on industrial goods, the objective was not primarily to make people think

familiarity with the brand and it holds some strong, unique and favorable associations in memory.

something special as they saw it. Rather the use of the producer's name was a main feature to distinguish the offer – the use of brands was then limited to naming products, often by using the founder's, investor's or inventor's name (Rooney, 1995). In accordance, it is not very surprising that branding was not related to industrial markets as long as it was mainly considered to be a tool for identification. However, as the brand discussion developed into being about perceptions that relate to some type of value, it is possible that it has brought more attention to the potentials of branding for industrial companies. The wider description of the brand concept leaves more room for discussing brands related to different types of offers and purchasing. All in all, this suggests that the previous negligence of brands was not necessarily a result of branding's possible application to the market but rather that there might have been little understanding of the brand's construct (Blombäck, 2005).

In an intensive study regarding corporate branding, Blombäck (2005) presents several reasons why branding potential started being recognized in industrial markets. From all the possible reasons, we wish to highlight three:

- (1) the similarity between competing offers – just like in consumer markets, branding becomes a way to help differentiating a product from those offered by other actors;
- (2) B2B companies realized that the benefits which branding can yield in a competitive market are not exclusive of consumer markets and also apply to their context;
- (3) companies begin to recognize that there are differences between industrial branding and consumer branding that needed to be brought forward;

Since the 90's there has been an effort in regards to research in the branding field of B2B markets (Keller, 2013). Despite the fact that this research still isn't enough, there seems to be a general understanding that competition can be seen as one main reason why in industrial markets it becomes crucial for actors to differentiate their products to reach a competitive advantage. On a competitive market where customers are both experienced and selective, working with brands becomes necessary to create an impression that makes customers prefer a particular offer and thus might also willingly pay more to obtain it. One must understand, however, that brands are not strictly necessary in all markets. Even if a brand exists in the legal sense, it does not always play a role in the buying decision process – other factors may be more important (Keller, 2013).

Categorically, it is proposed that in order to maintain or gain client's interest a company needs to have suitable images both of the company and its products (Blombäck, 2005).

2.3 B2B Marketing communications

Marketing communications are the means by which firms attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers—directly or indirectly—about the products and brands they sell (Kotler & Keller, 2012). When communicating through marketing, the company can establish a dialogue and build relationships with consumers, strengthen customer loyalty, and ultimately contributing to customer equity. Marketing communications allow companies to link their brands to people, places, events, brands, experiences and feelings, establishing this way an idea of the brand in the memory of consumers (brand image).

Understandably, Marketing communication is of substantial importance in both B2B and B2C markets. It is essential for all firms to communicate its message to customers in order to drive their sales. To be able to communicate efficiently with

the customers, firms need to decide which marketing communication tools they will use.

Research in this field of study shows that B2B firms are more relational in their approach to the market, whereas consumer firms are somewhat more transactional (Johansson et al., 2006). Starting with what could be seen as traditional ideas, the next section continues by pointing at perception changes which have influenced the literature in the area.

2.3.1 The Communications Mix

To Kotler and Keller (2011) the marketing communications mix consists of eight major modes of communication:

1. Advertising: any paid form of nonpersonal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor via print media (newspapers and magazines), broadcast media (radio and television), network media (telephone, cable, satellite, wireless), electronic media (audiotape, videotape, videodisk, Web page), and display media (billboards, signs, posters).

2. Sales promotion: variety of short-term incentives to encourage trial or purchase of a product or service including consumer promotions (such as samples, coupons, and premiums), trade promotions (such as advertising and display allowances), and business and sales force promotions (contests for sales reps).

3. Events and experiences: company-sponsored activities and programs designed to create daily or special brand-related interactions with consumers, including sports, arts, entertainment, and cause events as well as less formal activities.

4. Public relations and publicity: variety of programs directed internally to employees of the company or externally to consumers, other firms, the government, and media to promote or protect a company's image or its individual product communications.

5. Direct marketing: use of mail, telephone, fax, e-mail, or Internet to communicate directly with or solicit response or dialogue from specific customers and prospects.

6. Interactive marketing: online activities and programs designed to engage customers or prospects and directly or indirectly raise awareness, improve image, or elicit sales of products and services.

7. Word-of-mouth marketing: people-to-people oral, written, or electronic communications that relate to the merits or experiences of purchasing or using products or services.

8. Personal selling: face-to-face interaction with one or more prospective purchasers for the purpose of making presentations, answering questions, and procuring orders.

The table below lists numerous communication platforms:

Table 3: Common communication platforms

Advertising	Sales Promotion	Events and Experiences	Public Relations and Publicity	Direct and Interactive Marketing	Word-of-Mouth Marketing	Personal Selling
Print and broadcast ads	Contests, games, sweepstakes, lotteries	Sports	Press kits	Catalogs	Person-to-person	Sales presentations
Packaging—outer	Premiums and gifts	Entertainment	Speeches	Mailings	Chat rooms	Sales meetings
Packaging inserts	Sampling	Festivals	Seminars	Telemarketing	Blogs	Incentive programs
Cinema	Fairs and trade shows	Arts	Annual reports	Electronic shopping		Samples
Brochures and booklets	Exhibits	Causes	Charitable donations	TV shopping		Fairs and trade shows
Posters and leaflets	Demonstrations	Factory tours	Publications	Fax		
Directories	Coupons	Company museums	Community relations	E-mail		
Reprints of ads	Rebates	Street activities	Lobbying	Voice mail		
Billboards	Low-interest financing		Identity media	Company blogs		
Display signs	Trade-in allowances		Company magazine	Web sites		
Point-of-purchase displays	Continuity programs					
DVDs	Tie-ins					

Source: Kotler and Keller, 2011.

A firm's marketing communication, however, goes beyond these platforms. The product's styling and price, the shape and color of the package, the salesperson's manner and dress, the store décor, the company's stationery — they all communicate something to buyers. Every brand contact delivers an impression that can strengthen or weaken a customer's view of a company (Kotler & Keller 2011).

2.3.2 The traditional view of communication in B2B

In general, business marketing communication theory has suggested that B2B clients should not be treated like private consumers and that only certain types of information and media are efficient. The reason for the difference lies in the nature of the environments, the tasks involved and the overall need of the recipients for particular types of information – information need, therefore, can be seen as a primary reason for the differences in which promotional mixes are configured (Fill, 2002). Following the same reasoning, authors advocating the relationship perspective of industrial marketing (e.g. Coviello & Brodie, 2001), unsurprisingly seem to emphasize the interaction part of communication.

Marketing in a B2C world is one-way communication to a passive buyer whereas in a B2B context the buyer is active and interactions take place (Johansson *et al.*, 2006). The idea of customers as active parties only makes it more important to understand what kind of information is necessary to exchange and how the buyer behaves in order to understand which marketing communication tools are reasonable to the product's provider (Blombäck, 2005).

The following table summarizes the main differences between B2C and B2B communications.

Table 4: Differences between consumer and business-to-business marketing communications

	Consumer-oriented markets	Business-to-business markets
Message reception	Informal	Formal
Number of decision-makers	Single or few	Many
Balance of the promotional mix	Advertising and sales promotions dominate	Personal selling dominates
Specificity and integration	Broad use of promotional mix with a move towards integrated mixes	Specific use of below-the-line tools but with a high level of integration
Message content	Greater use of emotions and imagery	Greater use of rational, logic- and information-based messages although there is evidence of a move towards the use of imagery
Length of decision time	Normally short	Longer and more involved
Negative communications	Limited to people close to the purchaser/user	Potentially an array of people in the organisation and beyond
Target marketing and research	Great use of sophisticated targeting and communication approaches	Limited but increasing use of targeting and segmentation approaches
Budget allocation	Majority of budget allocated to brand management	Majority of budget allocated to sales management
Evaluation and measurement	Great variety of techniques and approaches used	Limited number of techniques and approaches used

Source: Fill, 2005

Fill (2005) thus suggests some characteristics of industrial marketing communications:

- (1) usage of formal messages,
- (2) personal sales dominance,
- (3) below the line tools with high level of integration,
- (4) great use of financially rational, logic and information-based messages,
- (5) limited use of targeting and research although increasing usage of segmentation,
- (6) budgets focus on sales management,
- (7) and a limited number of alternative approaches for evaluation.

Analyzing this table, one can easily jump to the conclusion that B2B communication deeply relies on *below the line marketing strategies* (BTL), whereas

in consumer markets an *above the line strategy*¹¹ (ALT) is more common. In business markets, the greater need to provide thorough information is better fulfilled if the information flows directly between buyer and seller, in a formal environment where rational and economic logic have some weight.

Šehović et al., (2014) refer to *below the line*¹² communication as “non-media communication which is short-term incentive and mainly oriented at consumers.” The authors further discuss its advantages, highlighting the benefits of a narrow target, the direct and often personalized communication, the possibility for better control of the information flow and its measurability (return on investment can be measured) – benefits that suite the nature of business transactions.

A good advertisement can on its own create a buyer in B2C, but advertisement in B2B has a different role. Due to the smaller amount of customers in B2B, word-of-mouth has a greater effect than what it has in B2C. In B2B the brand tends to have a smaller influence on the buyers whereas in B2C, the power of brands can be a tremendous tool for influencing the buyers. (Ford *et al.*, 2006). Promotion in B2B markets is hence focused upon rational and economic concerns as well as performance and functionality (Andersen *et al.*, 2009).

Due to the outlined characteristics of the market and its buyers, B2B marketing theory consequently has focused on rational information, long-term contracts and personal relationships (Fill, 2002). In turn this has shaped assumptions of

¹¹ According to Šehović et al., (2014) *above the line* is a communication strategy based on all types of communication, which involves the use of mass media channels (television, cinema, radio, print, etc.) in order to promote brands. The objectives of ATL activities are to strengthen brand awareness, to build a brand identity and to improve the brand image about the company's product or service. This type of communication is conventional and impersonal to customers, and much more effective when the target group is very large and difficult to define.

¹² Most common examples of BTL tools are: sales promotions, personal selling, sampling (tastings), sweepstakes and contests, loyalty programs, direct mail, public relations and event marketing.

how marketing communications should be handled and what communication tools are is realistic in the B2B universe (Johansson *et al.*, 2006). Nevertheless, these conclusions are neither proof that these communications tools are more efficient in the industrial market, nor that others cannot be valuable. What they suggest is solely that business companies often act according to the communications mix conventionally presumed viable for the context (Blombäck, 2005).

2.3.3 The changing view

Recently perceptions have been changing and it is said that B2B and B2C markets, have more similarities than previously assumed (e.g. Ede *et al.*, 2004). In regards to communication, this might affect the decision about which marketing tools to implement. Acknowledge the differences between the two markets and comprehend their similarities may lead to a change in the old way of thinking, which states that B2C marketing tools can't be successfully used in a B2B market (Johansson *et al.*, 2006).

When studying most of the industrial marketing literature throughout the 20th century, some widespread ideas and business market's characteristics are constantly addressed (Blombäck, 2005). The basis for all assumptions can be summarized as follows:

- 1) business customers presumably act on behalf of a larger entity (their actions are guided by organizational and operational efficiency goals as well as budget limitations);
- 2) purchase decisions often involve many people and the buyers routinely have specific and technical specifications of what is requested (technical knowledge and experience is mandatory);

- 3) business buyers are seen as professional and active customers who wisely evaluate alternatives – purchases on impulse are very rare in the industrial market and that the buying process is more time consuming;
- 4) the number of customers is normally reasonably small, which means the individual buyer has more power and that the money spent and the size of orders is great;
- 5) industrial buyers are not passive actors but active experts who interact, build relationships and are part of business networks larger than the single seller-buyer duo.

Focusing solely on these market's specificities has, consequently, an influence on the assumptions made of how marketing communications should be handled (Blombäck, 2005). With no surprise, communication in B2B is mostly seen as rational, objective, formal, technical and deeply reliable on products' quality and performance.

One can, however, deviate the attention from the unique business market's characteristics and address the communication issue from another perspective – the industrial buying behavior (IBB).

Earlier academics on industrial buying behavior, suggest the industrial marketers challenge is to understand how to become increasingly effective and earn more money. In the early 90's Sherlock (1991) presents a slightly critical opinion on the general expectations for industrial buyers, proposing that the idea of entirely technical and objectively analytical buyers is not accurate. Following the author's view, the discussion on IBB indicates that marketers will only solve the communication issue by understanding buyers in terms of:

- what the purchase represents to the buying firm¹³;
- what persons are part of the decision-making unit¹⁴;
- what the decision process looks like¹⁵ ;
- lastly, but very important, what factors affect the buyers’ behavior¹⁶.

The underpinning idea of Sherlocks’s (1991) understanding is that once sellers comprehend the buying process exhaustively, they can become more and more proficient in adapting their actions in order to affect the buyer’s behavior, and hence be profitable.

More recently, (Clow & Baack, 2002) state that an understanding of *how* and *what* to communicate ought to be based on the buying process of the particular audience a company wishes to profit from.

Today, most academics and practicing marketers in the business world recognize that emotion plays an important role in the business buying process (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011)¹⁷¹⁸. Fill (2002) claims, for example, that instead of only concentrating on the traditional industrial communications mix (exhibitions, trade advertising, financially rational messages, technical texts), companies, are gradually turning their attention towards more emotional messages. The author further stresses the importance of *emotion and feelings in B2B advertising* as he

¹³ See point 2.1.2.1

¹⁴ See points 2.1.1.3 and 2.1.2.2

¹⁵ See points 2.1.1.4 and 2.1.2.4

¹⁶ See point 2.1.2.3

¹⁷ Kotler and Armstrong (2011), with regards to the role of emotions in business buying behavior, give as an example the campaign by premium heavyduty truck maker Peterbilt. The add does stress performance – its dealers and Web site provide plenty of information about factors such as maneuverability, productivity, reliability, comfort, and fuel efficiency – but also appeals to buyers’ emotions as well. They show the raw beauty of the trucks, and the Peterbilt slogan – “Class Pays” – suggests that owning a Peterbilt truck is a matter of pride as well as superior performance. Says the company, “Peterbilt . . . the class of the industry. On highways, construction sites, city streets, logging roads—everywhere customers earn their living – Peterbilt’s red oval is a familiar symbol of performance, reliability, and pride.”

¹⁸ Also, with regards to this matter, it recommended the reading of a case study of the Swedish company Volvo. The case study addresses the viral success of the advertising campaign “Volvo Trucks – the Epic Split ft. Van Dame” – available at: <http://www.best-marketing.eu/case-study-volvo-trucks-live-test-series/>

believes that a persons' level of involvement in a purchase affects their properness to be influenced by principal and/or secondary communication activities.

Within this reasoning, individuals with a high involvement in the purchasing process are likely to be affected by the traditionally supported, technical and instructive communications. On the other hand, once several people are frequently involved in the decision process and, possibly, people can differ in their involvement, also the secondary channels of communication might be important to gain awareness and interest.

Fill's (2002) assumption is that business marketing communications must be planned according to the situation – depending on the level of involvement among the purchasing parties, different promotional strategies should be adopted.

Recent studies regarding emotional influences within the business market give a picture of differentiated behavior and buyers that are affected by their emotions, and sometimes use a different logic than the strictly technical-informative one (Blombäck, 2005). Looking at this behavioral side of the industrial actors, it is possible to get a different understanding of which marketing practices and tools are feasible for a company on that market.

While the foundations for business marketing discussions in literature have so far been very much based on the initially mentioned characteristics (e.g. smaller number of customers, large purchased quantities, corporate responsibilities, financial risks and so on), recent literature and discussions have been highlighting the importance of relationships, networks and interactions (e.g. Fill, 2002). Once these features are somewhat related to emotions and trust issues, they gradually open the way towards the idea of a less technical and cold rational organizational buyer.

This type of discussion indicates that B2B marketing cannot be dismissed in marketing as relating simply to purchases based on finance, products, performance and technical features. Instead it proves more intriguing and other issues are relevant than those customarily considered (Pickton & Broderick, 2001).

Bearing this in mind and striving away from the traditional view of B2B communication, more attention should be paid to IBB – to cope with the attitude-behavior approach and to state something relevant about communications, it is necessary to have an in-depth understanding of buying process (Blombäck, 2005).

2.3.4 The Integrated Marketing Communications approach

Today marketers face two main dynamics which seem to be rapidly changing the communication's scenario: a shift away from mass marketing and improvements in digital technology accompanied by internet usage (Kotler & Armstron, 2007). First, as mass markets are fragmenting, companies tend to walk away from mass marketing – there is an obvious trend to create more elaborate and focused marketing programs. Secondly, once technology is a nonstop force, information technology (IT) has been changing the way companies and consumers communicate – more than ever companies have almost unlimited access to relevant data regarding their clients and consumer habits.

With regards to communication channels, organizations have a widespread of options to choose from, therefore the problem is not a quantity matter, but rather a quality issue – not all channels of communication suite all types of markets, nor there is a standardized management model across all them. Rather, communication goals should be set forward in order to delineate a proper

strategy for each business, which means communication decisions should be the result of reasoned objectives.

Regardless the type of market a firm develops its business, the possibility to select more than one communication channel accounts for greater responsibility as companies are expected to deliver coherent messages transversally. From the moment firms opt to communicate through various channels, they should use all available tools in an *integrated way*. This leads us to the concept of integrated marketing communications (IMC) which is defined by Pickton and Broderick (2001) as "...a process which involves the management and organization of all 'agents' in the analysis, planning, implementation and control of all marketing communications contacts, media, messages and promotional tools focused at selected target audiences in such a way as to derive the greatest economy, efficiency, effectiveness, enhancement and coherence of marketing communications effort in achieving predetermined product and corporate marketing communications objectives."

The underpinning idea behind this concept is that marketing communications, instead of focusing solely on one promotional instrument, such as advertising, personal sales, sales promotion etc., as individual parts, should treat them as parts of the same communication, fighting for the same objectives. The suggested reason for an extensive focus on the integration is that organizations on a highly competitive market need to co-ordinate all communications to convey a coherent brand or product image (Blombäck, 2005). It is essential for companies to communicate as clearly as possible with their consumers in order to disseminate a memorable message. Furthermore, once integration occurs at the consumer or perceiver level, there is a special need for coherence (Fill, 2002).

The major benefit of IMC is then to be able to communicate a clear message and keep a steady identity towards diverse publics independently of what communication tools are used.

Developing in an increasingly difficult environment (due to the fragmentation of the target audiences, rapid diffusion of Internet and/or the proliferation of media and entertainment options) there are still many reasons to integrate communication, namely:

- Loss of faith in mass media advertising
- Need for more cost-effectiveness and efficiency
- Media fragmentation
- Audience fragmentation
- Low levels of brand differentiation
- Availability of new marketing communication tools
- Need to build more customer loyalty
- Move towards relationship marketing
- Globalisation of marketing strategies

Bearing in mind integrated communication requires a holistic and coherent approach to *everything* that communicates the company's message, then it is only natural that packaging, sponsorship, corporate identity, word of mouth, merchandising, direct marketing and exhibitions all become plausible parts of an organization's marketing communication (Smith & Taylor, 2004).

IMC therefore accurately means that every message from an organization, no matter via what channel it is divulged, should be harmonized in order to make audiences perceive a consistent set of messages (Fill, 2002).

One of the foremost reasons for the growing significance of IMC is that this strategy plays a major role in the process of developing and sustaining brand identity and equity. With more and more products and services competing for attention by consumers who have less time and less patience to make choices, well-known brands have a major competitive advantage in today's marketplace. Building and maintaining brand identity and equity requires the creation of

brands that have favorable, strong, and unique associations in the mind of the consumer (Belch & Belch, 2004).

Despite its growing importance and usage amongst companies as main promotion strategy, IMC face some barriers:

- In some organizations the various tools of the communications mix are managed by different individuals or departments;
- Communications instruments within the mix have traditionally been managed by different organizational entities as discrete activities:
- The struggle for a better budget – there's a history of fighting between the departments of finances and marketing
- Lack of internal communication
- The perceived complexity of planning and co-ordination The functional specialization of external communications agencies

If some decades ago mass communication was the word of order, today its dominance is declining (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007). Balancing all out, we are witnessing the growing importance of a new communication model. Despite the difficulties, IMC has remain steady and research has shown that IMC is indeed a new paradigm and can be quite successfully deployed by all types of firms in the new millennium (Kim *et al.*, 2004).

3. Case study

3.1 Objectives and methodology

There are different ideas about what a case study is. If one tries to find a common denominator that case study researchers like Yin, Stake, Merriam¹⁹ and others who have wide experience in this methodology might agree on, it would be something like this: the case study should have a “case” which is the object of study. The “case”, on its own, should be a contemporary complex functioning unit, investigated in its natural context with a multitude of methods (Johansson, 2003).

Regardless the extensive definition of *case study*, all case study research starts from the same compelling feature: the aspiration to derive a close or otherwise in-depth understanding of a single or small number of “cases,” set in their real-world contexts. The main goal of a close approach is to produce a valuable and profound understanding of the case—hopefully resulting in new knowledge about real-world behavior and its meaning (Yin, 2011). Thus, among other features, case study research assumes that examining the context and other complex conditions related to the case being studied are integral to understanding the case. Additionally, the objective of a case study is to understand the event under study and, at the same time, develop generic theories related to the observed phenomenon.

Robert Yin and Robert Stake use different terms to describe a variety of case studies. Yin categorizes case studies as explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive and also differentiates between single, holistic case studies and multiple-case studies; Stake (1995) identifies case studies as intrinsic, instrumental, or collective

¹⁹ For further understanding of the authors’ perspectives on case study methodology read article “*Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake*” by Bedrettin Yazan which compares the three main influential views on this subject.

(Baxter & Jack, 2008). Table 5 summarizes the definitions of these types of case studies.

Table 5: Definition of types of case studies

Case Study Type	Definition
Explanatory	This type of case study would be used if you were seeking to answer a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies. In evaluation language, the explanations would link program implementation with program effects (Yin, 2003).
Exploratory	This type of case study is used to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2003).
Descriptive	This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Yin, 2003).
Multiple-case studies	A multiple case study enables the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases. Because comparisons will be drawn, it is imperative that the cases are chosen carefully so that the researcher can predict similar results across cases, or predict contrasting results based on a theory (Yin, 2003).
	Stake (1995) uses the term intrinsic and suggests that researchers who have a genuine interest in the case should use this approach when the intent is to better understand the case. It is not undertaken primarily

Intrinsic	because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest. The purpose is NOT to come to understand some abstract construct or generic phenomenon. The purpose is NOT to build theory (although that is an option; Stake, 1995).
Instrumental	Is used to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, and because it helps the researcher pursue the external interest. The case may or may not be seen as typical of other cases (Stake, 1995).
Collective	Collective case studies are similar in nature and description to multiple case studies (Yin, 2003)

Source: Adapted from Baxter and Jack, 2008

This thesis leans towards a *descriptive-exploratory* type of case study, once its objective is to explore the appropriateness of marketing communication instruments in a business environment. More specifically, this study wishes to comprehend if a company within the tableware industry should restrain to traditional B2B communication tools (which might be sufficient alone), or should reach out to other instruments typically used in consumer markets.

Based on an internship-context experience and reviewing relevant literature on this issue, the following section presents a realistic view of business communications of a national brand, describing the judgements made along the way, their foundations and the implications they had in the upcoming conclusions.

For this specific research, the data collection techniques and analysis was essentially:

- Direct and participatory observation of the events;
- Informal interviews to people involved in the main activities and with a degree of responsibility with regards to communication decisions;
- Documentation analysis, namely intern reports and documents, coupled with academic studies

The analysis of case study is one of the least developed aspects of the case study methodology. The researcher needs to rely on experience and the literature to present the evidence in various ways, using various interpretations (Tellis, 1997).

3.2 Brief history of DaTerra

DaTerra was born out of the passion for ceramics, through the hands of a seasoned team with more than 20 years of expertise in the design, development and distribution of home products all around the world. The experience with the development of stoneware products, allied to the expertise of the regional manufacturers, resulted in the creation of tableware products with distinctive traits.

The idea for the brand's creation was to retaliate the chronic decline in the lifespan of industrial goods within the Home Décor sector, through the development of continued collections with a perennial appeal. Reaching out to

the team's experience in travels, retail trips and contrasted concepts of style, the goal was then to create something unique with a touch of sophistication and artisanal expertise.

The pilot project took off in 2011 with the launch of five ceramic collections. Fully hand painted or decorated with reactive glazes, and using different biscuits, such as earthenware and fine stoneware, DaTerra presented at 2011 *Maison & Objet* Paris tradeshow five ranges of bowls, plates, mugs and serving platters.

The first launch was very successful and ever since the brand has been launching four new lines per year – two new collections for Autumn/Winter and two others for Spring/summer season)²⁰.

After the ceramics DaTerra wanted to try new materials to create useful tableware products that invoked elements of the earth, while appealing for the tradition and heritage of Portugal. The brand then risked the development of cutting and serving boards made of Oak, one of the most traditional elements of the Portuguese nature. The idea with this range complement was to produce new tableware items with colors and original shapes, to mix and match with the stoneware pieces or to be used individually to cut and serve.

Shortly after the Oak boards launch the brand decided to add another product to its current offer – table linen. Just like all previous products DaTerra remains faithful to the use of organic and natural materials.

DaTerra's ambition is to continue to produce unique tableware products with bold designs and with natural, yet noble materials experience has taught to work well. All the products are manufactured in Portugal by the hand of fellow ceramists, wood workers, textile technicians and other artists and craftsmen.

²⁰ The new lines are officially launched at *Maison & Objet* Paris twice each year in September and January editions.

3.3 The case: DaTerra

DaTerra is in the situation of being a small, young and successful business but facing the problem of having a non-existent brand. Dealing with changes in the market and the increased competition, DaTerra has recently come under the realization that a strong brand is necessary for its continued growth and success. Previously DaTerra did business and sold products without any specific marketing strategy. However, it has come to the conclusion that it needs to engage in marketing activities and to communicate its brand in order to develop its business in a solid and coherent way.

The present chapter will present an analysis of the DaTerra's marketing mix, with a special emphasis on the Promotion variable regarding the experience as public relations and communication intern assistant for the brand, plus the overall objective of this thesis. Right after, some ideas will be suggested in order to contribute, directly or indirectly, for the DaTerra's pursuit of brand recognition

3.3.1 Marketing mix

3.3.1.1 Product

As briefly mentioned above, DaTerra first started producing ceramic lines, then extended its offer to cutting boards and finally table linen. The brand is currently working on new developments within two of its product lines.

- **Ceramic Collections**

Combining the efforts of trendy designers and the expertise of Portuguese ceramists, DaTerra offers a product very difficult to produce and unlikely to find anywhere else. The raw material is fine stoneware, which is finished in a

way that makes it almost porcelain. The manual treatment each piece is submitted to allows it to be thinner than usual, while maintaining physical properties like mechanical resistance, oven, dishwasher and microwave safe. Despite the similarities to porcelain, the stoneware allows the brand to be creative with hand painted designs and decorations in reactive glazes. All ceramics lines are produced in factory in the center of Portugal and the country of origin has proved to be a relevant factor regarding product's quality and reliability.

Each collection is inspired in a natural or cultural feature of our planet, promising to entice one's wanderlust and bring culture to the table²¹. Also, all the lines display different designs and shapes while maintaining its structure²²: dinner plate, side plate, cereal bowl, pasta bowl, mug, salad bowl and platter.

– **Oak boards**

The cutting and serving boards represent the first range complement for the brand. All boards are 100% oak and food safe – this means the wood is submitted to a special treatment with kitchen oil (no polish is used). The wood pores are filled with kitchen oil that prevents food sediments/combinations to permeate the board - there is no inconvenience regarding health security.

The boards come in three different shapes (one of the shapes has two sizes) and three possible rim colors²³.

²¹ See appendix I to read about the inspiration for each collection. Since its beginning DaTerra has launched 22 collections.

²² Technical details of all collections: made of stoneware, hand painted, dishwasher safe, microwave safe, oven safe and freezer safe. To note that due to the handmade nature of the ceramic products', there will always be some variation in colour, texture, weight, dimensions or design between pieces.

²³ For details on size and material see appendix II

– Table linen

Table linen is the most recent development. There are four different collections based on the type of linen (natural or *fil à fil*). Each collection presents 4 pieces – coaster, napkin, placemat and runner – and has an overlock finish which is considered a valuable detail. For all the collections (Nile Natural, Nile Blue, Nile Black and Nile Red) there are two possible colors for the handmade fine points²⁴.

Being part of the homeware industry, more specifically the tableware sector, DaTerra wishes to develop a full offer of tableware products capable of conquering a space in the table of design eager hosts. Hence the need of a steady marketing strategy.

3.3.1.2 Price

In practice it is not possible to restrain DaTerra's pricing tactic to a single theoretical pricing strategy. Rather, DaTerra has come up with its own price scheme based on crucial aspects of widespread pricing strategies – competition, cost, demand and pricing objectives. Still, it is possible to explain DaTerra's price determination as a complex process able to be resumed in the following steps²⁵:

- 1) In a brainstorming session the creative team discusses what should be the next move in terms product development – a new line of product? a range complement? seasoned collections of existing items?

For this session prior research is required – the new development shall be analyzed with competitor's offer in in terms of attributes, quality and final

²⁴ See attachment n° III for further details about the linen.

²⁵ Economic values, markup value, margins and other percentages shall not be disclosed for business related reasons, as requested by the management department.

price. For instances, table 6 presented below exemplifies the overall research criteria for this step²⁶:

Table 6: Research for new development in the linen category

	Fog Linen Work	Williams Sonoma			The Blunt Roll		Zara Home		
Material	100% Linen	Cotton	100%Linen (yarn dyed) ³	Cotton (68%) + Linen (32%)	Leather	Cotton + leather details	Cotton (45%) + Linen (55%)	Cotton	100% Linen
Price	42€- 58€	17€ - 30€	36€	31€	210€ - 238€	95€ -105€	30€	16€ - 26€	26€
Dimensions	80W x 90L 92 W x 97 L 84 W x 85 L	Regular: 69W 91L Petite: 69 W 73 L	69Wx93L	69Wx93L	Depends on waist size (s 25-36" L 34-50"+)	Depends on waist size (s 25-36" L 34-50"+)	84 x 101	85 x 70	85 x 70
Characteristics	machine wash gentle dry cool or line-dry	Machine wash Made in India Made in India	Machine wash Made in India	Machine wash Made in China	Wash cold and tumble dry; Made in Canada	Wash cold and tumble dry; Made in Canada	Machine wash Dry Machine Dry Dry cleaning	Machine wash No dry Machine No dry cleaning	Machine wash Dry Machine Dry Dry cleaning
Apron offer	Large	Large	Small(1)	Small (1)	Large		Small (1)	Medium	Small (1)
Japanese Style	Yes	No		No	No		No		

- 2) Once it is determined which product to create, management defines the recommended retail price (RRP) – this decision is mostly based on positioning aspirations;
- 3) Once RRP is set, it is divided by a certain value to obtain retailer's markup;
- 4) Distributors' price has a discount over retailers' price;
- 5) Sourcing activity takes place in order to study potential manufacturing and production suppliers;
- 6) Once the supplier(s) is(are) chosen, management team verifies potential profit margin – should remain between a minimum and maximum percentage;
- 7) If the margin is not a value within the desired percentage then negotiation takes place;
- 8) In case the margin represents an inviable value than product strategy is reconsidered (attributes, RRP price, production process, etc.)

²⁶ The entire research regarding new developments in the linen category follows in appendix IV.

3.3.1.3 Placement

Today DaTerra has a presence in over 20 countries in all five continents, Europe representing the larger market²⁷. Regarding distribution, DaTerra relies on a multi-channel strategy that combines:

1. Agents and distributors in geographically strategic locations;
2. Direct sales to prospect leads (where it does not have an agent or distributor)




The majority of DaTerra’s clients are small boutiques and concept stores that value the modernity and design of homeware products, but also appreciate the artisanal appeal of handmade creations. Aside these independent retailers, the brand has been expanding its presence across well-known department stores and large retailers worldwide. Within this segment, however, DaTerra carries a careful strategy as it might be premature to reach the attention of potential clients at the present level of brand’s expansion – this decision results from the reasoning of a study conducted during the internship period. The main conclusions of this analysis were summarized in the table below²⁸.

Table 7 : Retailer Analysis

Brand	Obs.
Macy’s (USA) <i>Wide scope of tableware brands</i> Casual Well-known Popular Charismatic	Brand needs to mature
Bloomindale’s (USA) <i>Large scope of tableware brands</i> Concern to represent upscale and reference brands	Brand needs to mature

²⁷ Portugal, Spain, France, United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, Norway, Belgium, Lebanon , Italy, Russia, Greece, Reunion Island, Australia, United States of America (Texas), Japan, China, South Korea, Chile, Peru and Colombia.

²⁸ Further details and relevant findings of this study follow attached in appendix V.

Nordstrom (USA)		Brand needs to mature
<i>Medium scope of tableware brands Mostly Casual Introduction to some creative and fashion forward brands</i>		
John Lewis (UK)		Improve relationship
<i>Large scope of tableware brands Casual Well-known Popular Few Charismatic brands</i>		
Williams-Sonoma (USA)		Difficult match
<i>Narrow scope of tableware brands Essentially retailer's own brand Reference names</i>		
West Elm (USA)		Brand needs to mature
<i>Exclusive collaborations between West Elm and brands/designers</i>		
Hudson's Bay (Canada)		Costa Nova as precedent
<i>Large range of tableware brands Casual Well-known Popular Charismatic</i>		
Heal's (USA)		Improve relationship
<i>Narrow scope of tableware brands Interest for creativity and design forward brands</i>		
Crate and Barrel (USA)		Brand needs to mature
<i>Own brand Collaborations with artists and designers</i>		
El Corte Inglés (Spain)		Opportunity
<i>Retailer's own brand Small mix of premium and casual brands</i>		
Le Bon Marché (France)		Effort towards more sales
<i>Narrow scope of tableware brands Premium Design and Artistic</i>		

Lastly, DaTerra also serves the HoReCa channel with a small representation in small hotels and restaurants – generally this type of clients purchases a large quantity of items and therefore are offered special conditions.

Overall, with regards to distribution, DaTerra wishes to reinforce its presence in worldwide stores with a fashion sense of homeware, and simultaneously a taste for traditional processes of creation – the brand believes that the growth potential and attractiveness is highest in this segment and consequently has been focusing on product development within.

3.2.1.4 Promotion

Only recently DaTerra has been strategically investing (more time and money) in communication initiatives as they were not treated as a priority – the recognition of its importance for business was never disregarded, but only time and experience have urged the brand to take on further actions.

Just like the literature review has predicted, DaTerra as a B2B actor has relied essentially on typical business communication channels: personal selling, sales promotions and direct marketing. Within this channels, the brand places a special emphasis in tradeshows and exhibitions – management team believes it is a good way for the brand to grow organically and to achieve sales with little investment. The will to mature and develop business has, however, reinforced the necessity to implement a planned communication strategy.

During the internship, when considering the best approach to a promotion strategy, the student was asked to develop a competitor analysis - the manager believes learning about competitors and understand their actions, will enhance the development of the brand's own marketing strategies. This analysis

represents a strategic move in the design of the brand's communication tactics as it allows for promotion strategies to be aligned with competitors' behavior:

- DaTerra needs to know who is competing with;
- It is important to understand competitor's message;
- Knowing where the competitors are may help in terms of communication channels' selection (as well as distribution decisions and strategies);

The main results of competitors analysis are presented in the following table:

Table 7: Competitors's Analysis

<p>Brand ID</p>			<p>SERAX</p>		
<p>Origin</p>	<p>Sweden, 2010</p>	<p>France, 1857</p>	<p>Belgium, 1987</p>	<p>USA, 2001</p>	<p>Portugal, 2006</p>
<p>Brand's Presentation</p>	<p>All products are handmade in Portugal by skilled artisans, each lending a personal touch and uniqueness to each and every piece. The enduring quality of the design offers an endless range of combinations for creating the perfect setting for each occasion.</p>	<p>From its roots in horticultural pottery through to today's much sought-after contemporary tableware collections in glazed stoneware. Since it was founded the traditional craft of potters' skills passed down the generations still lives on today with the related making secrets of their forebears being closely guarded.</p>	<p>Serax stands for innovative and affordable design. The business' single-minded view of current trends clearly meets the needs of florists and interior stores. To guarantee innovation and creativity, Serax works with leading designers. Over the years, Serax has become an established name in the decoration sector.</p>	<p>Juliska makes hundreds of items in over a dozen categories for the table and home, all inspired by the joy of bringing people together and helping create a happy home. Above all else, their people and designs are guided by two stars: Love and The Art of Knowing How to Live Well.</p>	<p>Costa Nova presents a table concept, based on fine stoneware plates and accessories, together with cutlery, glasses and textile. It combines tradition, design, quality and durability to create fine stoneware unique pieces. Collections are inspired on the traditional know how of European handcraft, as well as on the region of Costa Nova.</p>

Brand Message		<i>"Its all about feelings"</i>	<i>Instinctive freedom Ecology The Luxury of time Material Handmade</i>	<i>"Innovative and affordable design"</i>	<i>L'Amour et Savoir Vivre</i>	
Price Spectrum		Medium – High	High – Premium	Medium – High	High – Premium	High - Premium
Where to find the brand?	Geographic Presence	Sweden Benelux Australia USA Canada Finland Japan Norway Switzerland	USA France Canada UK Switzerland Germany	Netherlands UK Italy Germany Portugal France	USA UK	Over 40 countries
	Distributers, Wholesalers, Retailers, E-commerce and Department Stores	B.I.A Cordon Blue Nordic Rooms	Bloomingdale's Crate&Barrel Williams-Sonoma Distinctive Décor ChinaSearch Terrestra Amazon UK Amazon Germany The fisherman's wife	Heal's Selfridges Polyvore (online retailer) Goodfellows Manor Home&Gifts Yoox.com	Manor Home&Gifts Bloomingdale's Amazon.Com Amara The fisherman's wife	Hudsons' Bay Amazon.de Amazon.ca

	Own Store	Online sale available in website	Online request n website	Online sale available in website	Juliska Flagship Store Juliska Island Store Online sale on website (ship outside the US)	No
	Boutiques Stores	Reiventare Zwaanzinning Temp Orling & Wu Home	The polished Plate A ma table Chintze & Company Didricks Aria Tondel	Mohed June's Mania Goodwood Mon Colonel	Over 100 stores across USA sell Juliska brand	Undisclosed information
Social Media Presence		Strong	Officially non existent	Strong and influential	Very Strong and influential	Officially non existent

3.3.2 The evolution of Marketing Communication

The present section will focus on the promotional changes and new communication initiatives DaTerra has been investing in.

Initially communication played a secondary role in the entire business strategy. The focus was on the product as it was truly differentiated and had conquered the attention of demanding customers. Communication was then limited to necessary actions to keep the business moving and was focused on business awareness – the main investment was in tradeshows and fairs and all the associated elements (catalogs, leaflets, merchandise). Occasionally DaTerra was featured in the press, both national and international, and started to realize the potential of this sort of channel – those mentions in the press were not the result of a planned communication initiative, but triggered the will to proactively search for this kind of publicity.

Today, with regards to promotion, things have been changing and the brand has fully committed to work on communication not only in the business market, but also trying to reach final consumers – the main objective is to improve brand awareness. In this sense, in the course of the internship, two communication plans were carefully designed. The first plan was implemented from September 2015 to February 2016, the second plan is currently active until the end of the present year.

With regards to **sales promotions** and **personal selling** no alterations nor new initiatives were introduced – both these channels are fully controlled by the management team as they are closely linked to business procedures.

When it comes to **direct marketing**, a quarterly newsletter was added as a tool to maintain relationships with costumers and contact new prospect leads. The newsletter was named *Ceramista* and has a list of over 300 subscribers.

Thinking about building a presence close to final consumers, **interactive marketing** initiatives were planned as a way to disclose the brand's lifestyle and simultaneously promote its products. Within this channel, DaTerra has opted by:

- an active and dynamic presence on facebook²⁹ – the page management focuses on sharing information and other news on a weekly, ideally, daily basis (press appearances, welcoming new stockists, sharing clients' facebook pages, photos, ceramic curiosities, promotional material, etc);
- creation of an instagram account – relies on fast speed promotion and disclosure of the brand and its lifestyle;
- presence on pinterest – this particular social media tool aims at reaching out to the public and professionals more involved with art and design;

Still with regards to the final consumer, DaTerra has been investing in partnerships with influential personalities who have manage to build a brand on their own through social media³⁰. Looking for some *publicity*, DaTerra has established some contacts with food bloggers and freelance photographers who identify themselves with the brand's concept. Aside from favorable *publicity* and positive associations DaTerra gains from these collaborations, the brand also has access to high quality content to use and share in accordance to the partnership agreements. This type of alliances has proved to be of relative importance in generating a solid network of people who represent the brand's concept – all those contacts, one way or another, help the brand to communicate its products and lifestyle and also may lead to other contacts in the business.

²⁹ https://www.facebook.com/daterrawithlove/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

³⁰ Official partners: Nos no Mundo (a young couple who travels the world with two mugs from DaTerra); Sweet Bigas (portuguese food blog written by Ana Chaves); The Food Joy (New York based blog written by Nina Joy) and Saliva.pt (Portuguese blog with recipes, restaurant reviews and product suggestions).

Also within **public relations**, the press has revealed to be a channel of major importance once prospect clients and final consumers tend to follow well-known publications regarding architecture, home décor, interior design, travels and lifestyle. Thus having a systematic presence in business magazines accounts for popularity and, most importantly, credibility. Bearing this in mind, DaTerra has been dedicating a substantial part of its promotion efforts to press requests and enquiries³¹. Generally the regular presence of DaTerra in business exhibitions is a great way to gather this sort of contacts, the problem before was not having a PR correspondent who would treat and process the contacts. Presently, as the relevance of this instrument is better acknowledged, no press contact is disregarded. Also, outside the fairs' season the brand actively pursues contacts within the press and works on product features in several media platforms (online and printed press, blogs, editorials, etc.).

Merchandise has existed since the beginning of the brand, essentially as a helpful tool for tradeshows and fairs. It used to resume to pencils and other useful material people could collect during the exhibitions. However, thinking about point of sale communications, DaTerra has developed an identity item to be placed next to DaTerra's products in store. The overall goal is to increase brand presence but this idea is still to be budgeted and tested. For this initiative five pilot stores will be selected and in due time this action will be activated.

³¹ Please see appendix VI for the latest DaTerra press appearances

3.3.3 The role of marketing communications in building a brand

A few months after the implementation of the first and second communication plans, it is already possible for DaTerra to observe relevant progresses in terms of brand promotion.

Overall, the communication efforts focused mainly on public relations initiatives. Of these, press appearances and the establishment of several partnerships required the most time and economic resources. Unsurprisingly, these represent the better results in terms of promotion, as it was possible to reach a large segment of consumers both nationally and internationally.

Also, social media has proved its potential to disclose brands. In less than six months the number of Facebook followers has almost tripled counting today with over 2500 likes (the original number of followers before the planned page management was 980). One of the major changes in regards to social media, is the dynamic relationships DaTerra has been establishing with current clients. It is now very frequent for DaTerra to receive requests from clients, asking to be mention in the brand's official page. Also, clients actively share pictures of DaTerra's products in store and production photoshoots where the pieces are featured. But this interaction surprisingly does not limit to clients, also final consumers have been interacting with the page and sending private messages asking where DaTerra's products are available in their home countries.

The newsletter has helped DaTerra to keep in touch with current clients, prospect leads and important connections. It allows for a regular contact, passing to all interested parts the right amount of information regarding new products, latest press appearances, product developments and other business topics, but also offering an entertainment component to make it light and pleasurable to read. It

has proven to be more effective right after the appearances in tradeshows and exhibitions – new contacts gathered during these fairs appreciate the reminder and tend to respond.

DaTerra’s official website has been dealing with more traffic than usual, probably as a consequence of all the previous mentioned communication activities. This is shown by the analysis tool ‘Google analytics’ which produces real time reports on trafficking and other data. Regardless the increase in visits to the website, DaTerra feels the need to better use it also as a communication platform – this has only not happened yet due to time constrains and focus on other channels.

The main improvements are summarized in the table below:

Table 9: DaTerra visibility evolution: before communication plan and after communication plans’ implementation

	Before Communication Plan	After Communication Plan
Partnerships (to help with publicity)	0	4
Press appearances ³²	3	13
Facebook Likes	980	> 2600
Instagram followers	-	> 290
Clients and partners’ social media mentions ³³	< 20	> 50

³² These numbers represent press features DaTerra has been informed about or discovered itself after research – there is a probability for other appearances the brand isn’t aware about. See appendix 7.

³³ Clients share DaTerra presentation video, products in store, promotional pictures, press appearances, etc. Even though it is not simple to keep a track on these mentions, it is possible to affirm they more current now than ever before.

Video features ³⁴	0	2
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To successfully promote a brand there is no magical formula or standard procedures, however, an adequate communication strategy proves to be a step further in building brand awareness. This means DaTerra must disclose its unique identity using the communication tools that better suite its brand concept and communication objectives in an integrated way.

3.3.4 The budget challenge

The conflict between the marketing and financial departments is no strange battle to any marketer trying to implement marketing initiatives within a company – unfortunately this criticism holds to be true.

The biggest challenge for DaTerra is to develop a long course promotion plan on a very tight budget. Again, management recognizes its importance but prefers to allocate the economic resources available for promotion in business exhibitions, which alone are very expensive – products shipment, booth rental price, booth design and construction, staff expenses, etcetera.

DaTerra participates at least in two international exhibitions, namely Maison & Objet Paris September edition and Maison & Objetc Paris January edition. This two fairs alone consume a great part of the total budget for promotional initiatives, which constrains the rest of the activities the brand can invest in.

³⁴ Olive show TV (Korean cooking show) and Cuisine Actuelle (online food magazine) – both videos available at https://www.facebook.com/daterrawithlove/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel.

4. Discussion

Presently, DaTerra is one relatively unknown company in its home market of Portugal. Although DaTerra supplies many strong branded and mainstream retailers worldwide, such as Heal's, Le Bon Marché and Tomorrowland Co., Ltd, its products are somewhat overlooked since no one associates the products with the brand. Until today, DaTerra has been satisfied with being unknown and paid little attention on marketing as the main focus relies on sales, which are going quite frankly well. However, the ambition to develop and the increased sense of competition has forced the brand to re-evaluate the promotion policy.

The market the company operates within is tough and it has become more competitive throughout recent years. There are many large, competent, and proficient brands competing for the existing customers who market themselves as being in the tableware industry. In order to cope with this increased competition, retain old customer relations and gain new ones, DaTerra needs to develop its current brand into a strong and highly recognized one.

In the third point of the case study it was possible to ascertain the evolution of the role of marketing communications within the brand. In the beginning promotion was not a primary concern but almost a merely consequence of the high quality and uniqueness of the products – there were no concrete efforts of brand communication, solely what the business would indirectly produce through good performance. Today, despite the recognition of the necessity of a planned promotion strategy, DaTerra struggles to find budget approval for some of the designed activities. With regards to promotion, in the planning stage, the leading assumption is that the majority of initiatives should constrain costs and spend as little as possible – a limitation of budget is to be expected in any

company, however, this kind of severe restrictions may hazard the potential of marketing communication strategies³⁵.

With regards to the original promotional instruments Daterra has been using since it was born – direct marketing, personal selling and sales promotion – they are in concordance with literature. Until very recently, DaTerra has opted for traditional business communication tools and those were sufficient alone to maintain business to a certain level. Within these tools, the greater attention and investment goes to the planning and organization of a few national and international business exhibitions throughout each year. Nevertheless, as soon as the ambition to develop in regards to product range and brand recognition started to grow, the wish to generate more brand awareness screamed for attention.

Even though DaTerra makes a good use of the above mentioned tools, focusing on clients and creating solid relationships, no relationship marketing tool can alone be seen as the most efficient tool in B2B markets (Johansson et al., 2006). Those tools have to be used as complements to others since they are used in different phases. Although these tools are useful, especially in the first contacts with a prospect lead (an introduction email, an agreed telephone call, etcetera), they are not sufficient to be independently employed in order to reach brand awareness. Further, research showed that professional buyers can become influenced outside work by everyday impressions – this implies that B2C marketing tools could be beneficial to use in B2B markets as a mean to reach the goal of brand awareness – hence the suggestion for integrated marketing communications.

³⁵ The second plan, which is supposed to last the entire year of 2016 had to obey severe budget constrictions and was only allow to spend almost the same as the previous plan which lasted only half year.

Theory coupled with field experience during the internship experience, have shown that increased competition is providing the industry with more similar products, which urges the importance of using subjective factors to influence a buyer's decision process. These subjected factors closely relate to the use of B2C marketing tools, such as online and printed press, advertising and social media, where emotions and brand associations are better explored and have greater potential to stand out – consequently they are growing in importance in B2B markets. A purchaser is not always consciously aware of how he/she is impacted by impressions, however these impressions still tend to affect the outcome of the suppliers marketing actions.

Having this in mind, DaTerra needs to place more authority in its own promotion strategy – modern marketing calls for more than developing a good product, pricing it attractively, and making it accessible. The brand must communicate with its present and potential stakeholders and the general public. Therefore, the question is no longer whether to communicate but rather what to say, how and when to say it, to whom, and how often (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Recently the competition has become harsher in the home decor market and it has become more important than ever to be visible in order to exist. Hence the importance of brand awareness in a B2B environment has increased and has now become similarly important as in B2C environments.

The internship period as PR and communications' assistant for DaTerra was, undoubtedly, an experience that allowed me to grow, both professionally and personally. During those five months I had the chance to work within various business fields, crossing information from financial, commercial, design and marketing departments.

I truly believe to have developed a better adaptation capability to different socio-economic and professional contexts, preparing myself for what the future holds.

All the team members I have been lucky to work with were fundamental elements, both in my integration in the company, as in the learning process of DaTerra's business and greater autonomy in performing tasks.

Even though the essential objective of this thesis has an academic character, I believe a greater challenge was accomplished: to work with great professionals and individuals within a growing and promising brand in an international environment.

5. Limitations and suggestions for further investigations

The analysis of the gathered data may be biased by the writer's own experience during the internship and overall marketing knowledge. There can also be an interpretation problem when dealing with the informal interviews performed next to DaTerra's associates, since words are more difficult to analyze – it can be hard to understand and grasp the exact meaning that the interviewed people wish to communicate.

Also, during the data collection period for the purpose of this dissertation, some adversities were felt in regards to access to some sorts of information, which were partially address by DaTerra's brand manager – the internship's advisor that lead to the present thesis.

The biggest limitation, or better said constrain, was time. Five months seem too much to wait for a lot of things, but when one' conducting a comprehensive study on communication performance by a company it's barely enough. Between the time to design, get approval and implement the promotion program, apart from all other internship daily tasks, little time is left for a post-implementation evaluation.

Lastly, there are some auxiliary studies' recommendations that might be useful to conduct, in order further explore the broad communication topic within the organization in question:

1. DaTerra's Customer Relationship Management program

2. Suppliers' relationship – does better brand awareness influence negotiation power?
3. DaTerra's branding – do clients' and final consumers' perceptions match?

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7. Appendices


7.1 Appendix I – Ceramics collections and inspiration



Year	Collection's Name	Inspiration
2011	<p data-bbox="421 510 584 544">Sugary Rio</p> 	<p data-bbox="676 510 1359 792">Sugary Rio is all about what happens between the sunrise to sunset in the second largest city in Brazil, but definitely the happiest one. Inspired by the famous Sugarloaf mountain's various facets, we hope this range also lights up your day.</p>
2011	<p data-bbox="421 840 584 873">Funky Rio</p> 	<p data-bbox="676 840 1359 1223">If Sugary Rio concerns the daytime of Brazil's previous capital, Funky Rio is about what happens when the moon lights up the 'Marvelous City'. Its nightlife is not only about preparing for the Carnival, improving Samba moves or looking for the best Caipirinha. Rather, the funkiness of Rio's night comes from a never-ending authentic desire for joy.</p>
2011	<p data-bbox="434 1288 571 1321">Samburo</p> 	<p data-bbox="676 1288 1359 1671">Samburu is a language and a tribe concealing one of the few remaining nomadic people in the world. The Samburu live in Kenya from their cattle, sheep, goats and camels, and express their culture through facial paintings and patterned dresses, necklaces, earrings and bracelets. We hope these decorations take you to their land if you are not able to go there yet.</p>
2011	<p data-bbox="453 1736 552 1769">Cuzco</p> 	<p data-bbox="676 1736 1359 1973">We love patterns from peculiar places of the earth. With Cuzco being both the original keystone and capital of the Inca Empire as well as a landmark of development for the Spanish exploration of Latin America we hope this</p>

		range is able to bring some good old awe to your everyday table.
2011	<p>Coral Sea</p> 	<p>Many know the colourful Great Barrier Reef in Australia, but the world's biggest single structure made by living organisms is not the only wonder of the Coral Sea, where it is located.</p> <p>Only one of its thousand of islands is still populated, by three people in a weather station. We wonder if they would let us visit it if we offered them this line...</p>
2014	<p>Rabbit Beach</p> 	<p>Many say Rabbit Beach, in the Mediterranean, is the best beach in the world. So this line has the same turquoise blue that characterizes its cherished waters, as well as a sandy rim to symbolize the little stretch of sand that pops up in between the rocky cliffs. Try it!</p>
2014	<p>New York</p> 	<p>Part of DaTerra's team has lived in New York for several years and feels that what makes the city what it is are the different moods, rhythms and movements. So, each piece in this range is decorated with a different geometric pattern that mimics those different pulses we feel in the Capital of the World.</p>
2014	<p>Pantanal</p> 	<p>The Pantanal in Brazil is Earth's biggest swamp. Surprise, surprise, it means swamp in Portuguese! Being larger than England, it reminded us that not all green is created equal, and that behind a great swamp there is always a great rain. A good place for your bucket list if you enjoy the aquatic wildlife.</p>

2014	<p style="text-align: center;">Falassarna</p> 	<p>After Rabbit Beach, we wanted to continue exploring the best beaches of the Mediterranean, and Falassarna is the next best place to go. Located in Cape Gramvousa, in Crete, it was also one of Greece's most powerful city-states, with its own laws and currency, due to its strategically located port that often hosted pirates.</p>
2014	<p style="text-align: center;">Cox's Bazar</p> 	<p>We all know that feeling of a crowded beach, elbows rubbing on other people while trying to find a small space in the sand. Well, in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, you get the opposite. The world's longest natural sandy beach spreads unbroken through 125 km (78 miles) so if you find it crowded you can surely keep on walking until the next deserted space.</p>
2014	<p style="text-align: center;">Vrindavan</p> 	<p>The Holi Festival is a millennial Hindu celebration of the victory of good over evil, of spring over winter, of light, or colour, over darkness. It is famous all around the world due to the famously vibrant dyes applied on one's beloved, but it is in Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh, that Holi is most passionately celebrated.</p>
2014	<p style="text-align: center;">Buñol</p> 	<p>You might have heard of Buñol even though you don't recognize the name. This Spanish city hosts one of the most famous festivals in this world: La Tomatina! A tomato fight of epic proportions that occurs each last Wednesday of August and is now replicated in other places too. But it is still in this Valencian city that the action truly takes place.</p>

2014	<p>Mariana Trench</p> 	<p>Concentric white circles in a submarinely profound blue decorate this DaTerra range and the more we look the deeper we feel submerged into this Earth's oceans most buried part: the Mariana Trench. Located east of the Philippines, with a depth of 'only' 11 km, this is perhaps the most difficult world wonder to visit! Lucky us that James Cameron has just filmed it!</p>
2014	<p>Industrial London</p> 	<p>This range honors the chimney sweeps, the hard-working breadwinners that painstakingly cleaned XVIII century's chimneys with the help of their 'Climbing Boys', trying against all odds to reach those narrow flues. Nonetheless, the revolution is still around. But now London is swarming with new creative industries instead providing a breath of fresh air.</p>
2015	<p>Douro Lágrima</p> 	<p>A very appreciated variant of white Port, so sweet that it flows slowly like tears through the walls of the glass.</p>
2015	<p>Douro Bastardo</p> 	<p>An old cast of red wine popular in the XVIII century which is getting recovered and trendy again. Tradition and mastery leading innovation of the palate.</p>
2015	<p>Amalfi Sirena</p>	<p>Characters of the Homer's Odyssey, the sirens were beautiful half-woman and half-fish singing for the sailors who would crash on the</p>

		rocks to their enchantment. Just let yourself go...
2015	Amalfi Limoncello 	A traditional liquor native from Amalfi made of lemon. Be careful, its sweetness and freshness may bring eternal summer to your home!
2015	Papua 	If you're looking for adventure, Papua New Guinea is the right place. More than 800 languages are spoken by the Papuan tribes, which can be as fascinating as dangerous. You may either be chased by poisonous spears or end up in the middle of an explosion of color, feathers, music and dance in the Goroka Show, a festival that gathers over 100 tribes coming from all parts of the island. Time to let the wild spirits take over your table.
2015	Galapagos 	Inspiration for Darwin's evolutionary theory, Galapagos islands lie isolated across the equator line. These volcanic islands are home to plenty of unique species, from an ancient giant tortoise emerging from a lava tunnel to a group of Flamingos occupying a lagoon. These islands breath nature, color and life, exactly what we wish your table breathes too.
2016	Uyuni	Earth's largest salt desert it's located in Bolivia, near the crest of the Andes Mountains. Covered by a few meters of salt crust, Salar de Uyuni has such an extraordinary flatness, it seems to meet the clear skies in the horizon. The way the salty

		<p>landscape reflects heaven's serenity is so perfect, you may find yourself wondering if the clouds are above your head or under your feet. Placed high above mean sea level, its closeness to heaven has inspired us.</p>
2016	<p>Blue Lagoon</p> 	<p>A shipwreck in the South Pacific doomed the life of two young children to the wilderness of a tropical Island. In a ravishing scenery, Richard and Emmeline grow up enchanted by the isle's alchemy, and eventually fall in love. This magical place we now know to be part of Fiji Islands, will eternally be remembered as The Blue Lagoon.</p>

Note: The inspiration story for the newest collections (Uyuni and Blue Lagoon) were written by the student as the result of a creative task carried out during the internship.

7.2 Appendix II – Oak boards technical file

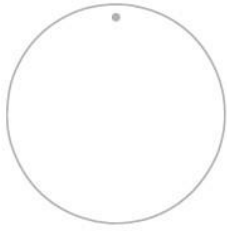
- 1) **Material:** 100% natural Oak
- 2) **Shapes:** Circular | Egg | Oval



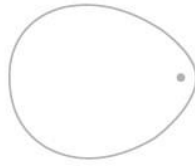
- 3) **Colors:** red | blue | green



3) Dimensions:



DTB001



DTB002



DTB003



DTB004

Oak circular board with green rim: $\varnothing 50$ cm . 20 in DIA

Oak egg board with red rim: 47 x 38 cm . 15 in x 18 ½ in

Oak oval board with blue rim: 24 x 50 cm . 9 ½ in x 19 ½ in

Oak oval board with red rim: 19 x 40 cm . 7 ½ in x 15 ¾ in

7.3 Appendix III – Textile collection details

1) Collections: Nile Blue | Nile Black | Nile Red | Nile Natural

2) Colors:

Nile Blue – Plum | Rose

Nile Black – Umber | Hot Pink

Nile Red – Ink | Azure

Nile Natural – Moss Green | Baby Blue

3) Pieces: Napkin | Placemat | Runner | Coaster

4) Material: 100% linen

5) Dimensions:

Napkin – 47 × 47 cm

Coaster – 10 × 10 cm

Runner – 180 × 40 cm

Placemat – 45 × 35 cm

7.4 Appendix IV – New Developments for linen category

// Apron Research

	Crate & Barrel	Anthropologie		Linum				
Material	Cotton	Cotton Cotton Chambray ³⁶ Cotton Poplin ³⁷	Linen	Leather	Cotton + leather details	Cotton (64%) + Linen (36%)	100%Linen	100%Cotton
Price	19€	36€ - 43€	62€	159€	75€	45€	59€	16€ - 35€
Dimensions	69 L× 91 W	79 L, 37.5 W 68.5 L, 81 W 76L, 79 W 71 L, 81 W 96.5 L, 86.5 W	109 × 102	70 × 90	70 × 90	80 × 105	70 × 90	70 × 90 80 × 105
Characteristics	Machine wash cold; tumble dry; low iron as needed; made in India	Machine wash	Machine wash	Country of Origin: India	Country of Origin: India	Country of Origin: India	Country of Origin: Lithuania	Country of Origin: India
Apron offer	Small	Large		Large				
Japanese Style	No	No		No				

³⁶ A lightweight cotton fabric that combines colored and white yarn.

³⁷ Poplin fabric is medium-weight, durable, and features a very fine ribbed texture. Perfect for creating shirts, dresses, lightweight jackets, and skirts. Poplin fabric is made with cotton or cotton and polyester blends for added comfort and ease.

	Fog Linen Work	Williams Sonoma			The Blunt Roll		Zara Home		
Material	100% Linen	Cotton	100%Linen (yarn dyed) ³⁸	Cotton (68%) + Linen (32%)	Leather	Cotton + leather details	Cotton (45%) + Linen (55%)	Cotton	100% Linen
Price	42€- 58€	17€ - 30€	36€	31€	210€ - 238€	95€ -105€	30€	16€ - 26€	26€
Dimensions	80W × 90L 92 W x 97 L 84 W x 85 L	Regular: 69W 91L Petite: 69 W 73 L	69W×93L	69W×93L	Depends on waist size (s 25-36" L 34-50"+)	Depends on waist size (s 25-36" L 34-50"+)	84 × 101	85 × 70	85 × 70
Characteristics	machine wash gentle dry cool or line dry	Machine wash Made in India Made in India	Machine wash Made in India	Machine wash Made in China	Wash cold and tumble dry; Made in Canada	Wash cold and tumble dry; Made in Canada	Machine wash Dry Machine Dry cleaning	Machine wash No dry Machine No dry cleaning	Machine wash Dry Machine Dry cleaning
Apron offer	Large	Large	Small(1)	Small (1)	Large		Small (1)	Medium	Small (1)
Japanese Style	Yes	No			No	No		No	

³⁸ When a fabric is yarn dyed the color is placed in the yarn or threads before weaving as opposed to the color being printed on the fabric after being woven.

	Marimekko	The Linen Works	MacKenzie- Childs	Made by Objective
Material	100% Cotton	100% Linen	100% Cotton	100% Linen
Price	42€	45€- 74€	25€ - 70€	65€
Dimensions	85 L × 84	-	-	Xs-L
Characteristics	Machine wash Made in Estonia	-	Machine wash Handmade	Machine wash cold, Line dry, Iron when slightly damp Made in Europe
Apron offer	Medium	Medium	Small	Small
Japanese Style/ Crossback	No	Yes	No	Yes

// Notes

- All measures in cm;
- Cotton is the most common fabric for textile aprons that are for sale on medium / large retailers;
- Linen begins to be an option for brands that are dedicated to the marketing of home goods;
- The 100% linen options are the most expensive;
- The mixture linen + cotton is not considered less noble than 100% linen and has a value in consideration;
- Colors always sober for linen (beige, gray variation, variations of blue, one or a different color);

- The Japanese style is very much associated with the brand Fog Linen Work and is more rare, even in the options 100% linen;
- Within some Japanese style itself are already variations (+ cuts straight, softer and circular cuts, details of pockets, some points, buttons, handles, size, etc ...) - crossback style

// DaTerra recommendations

Material	Cotton + Linen blend (45/55)
Price	40€
Dimensions	105 cm × 80 cm
Characteristics	Made in Portugal Hand finishing Machine wash (máx 30º) Low iron (máx 110C) Crossback/Japonesse style

Apron Offer	Small (2)
--------------------	-----------



7.5 Appendix V – Retailers’ analysis



Retailer analysis | Profile Draft | Recommendations

SUMMARY

Retailers’ spectrum of featured brands has an underpinning reasoning that somehow allows to understand their preferences. Drafting a profile of such preferences, may help brands to identify the right timing to reach out to the retailers, and move towards to a successful business relationship.




<p>Macy's (USA)</p> <p><i>Wide scope of tableware brands Casual Well-known Popular Charismatic</i></p>	<p>Obs. Brand needs to mature</p>
<p>Bloomindale's (USA)</p> <p><i>Large scope of tableware brands Concern to represent upscale and reference brands</i></p>	<p>Brand needs to mature</p>
<p>Nordstrom (USA)</p> <p><i>Medium scope of tableware brands Mostly Casual Introduction to some creative and fashion forward brands</i></p>	<p>Brand needs to mature</p>
<p>John Lewis (UK) </p> <p><i>Large scope of tableware brands Casual Well-known Popular Few Charismatic brands</i></p>	<p>Improve relationship</p>
<p>Williams-Sonoma (USA)</p> <p><i>Narrow scope of tableware brands Essentially retailer's own brand Reference names</i></p>	<p>Difficult match</p>
<p>West Elm (USA)</p> <p><i>Exclusive collaborations between West Elm and brands/designers</i></p>	<p>Brand needs to mature</p>
<p>Hudson's Bay (Canada)</p> <p><i>Large range of tableware brands Casual Well-known Popular Charismatic</i></p>	<p>Costa Nova as precedent</p>
<p>Heal's (USA) </p> <p><i>Narrow scope of tableware brands Interest for creativity and design forward brands</i></p>	<p>Improve relationship</p>
<p>Crate and Barrel (USA)</p> <p><i>Own brand Collaborations with artists and designers</i></p>	<p>Brand needs to mature</p>
<p>El Corte Inglés (Spain)</p> <p><i>Retailer's own brand Small mix of premium and casual brands</i></p>	<p>Opportunity</p>
<p>Le Bon Marché (France) </p> <p><i>Narrow scope of tableware brands Premium Design and Artistic</i></p>	<p>Effort towards more sales</p>

Table 1 Retailer's tableware brand spectrum

Heal's

Crate and Barrel

West Elm

The retailer is very selective and solely displays its own brand, reference brands within the tableware products' category or collections that result from its collaboration with artists/designers. There is also a tendency to present design and creativity forward brands, whose products have some distinct characteristic – the design itself, price-quality relation, ...

The requirements to be presented as part of these retailers' offer are strict. Becoming a displayed brand implies a solid brand image, product's premium quality and a certain degree of differentiation, preferably by product's uniqueness.

These retailers tend to focus more on brand's image and status and not only consider the products features – which in DaTerra's case are already a favorable point.

Having a premium quality product, the brand is one step closer to enter these retailer's doors, however DaTerra needs to put its name out there and work on becoming a relevant brand within the tableware products category in order to fuse C&B and West Elm attention.

El Corte Inglés

This retailer's tableware product category is relatively small when compared to other retail chains such as macy's or John Lewis, which justifies the smaller brand offer. This could mean there is interest and room to represent new brands and therefore expand the tableware category.

There is a good opportunity for DaTerra here – the products quality is recognized and the brand's image at this moment can be enough to initiate a partnership. In the long run DaTerra should reinforce its image and strengthen the business relationship.

Bloomingdale's

Le Bon Marché

Both these retailers have as a common denominator a legacy of luxury. This fact alone determines much of the retailers' brands representation, as only brands with a certain degree of status shall be selected.

Bloomingdale's offer of tableware brands, includes the most prominent ceramic makers – Jars Céramistes and Juliska – and mixes their names with well-known and established brands, such as Versace and Vera Wang, that might not be specialists in tableware designing, but certainly own a status and therefore confer a certain degree of prestige to the product category.

DaTerra should reinforce its brand image and work on achieving a certain status within the homeware product's category, prior to attempt to make part of Bloomingdale's offer – a premature contact could compromise the future of a possible successful partnership.

When it comes to Le Bon Marché...well done! DaTerra is considered by this retailer as a creativity and design forward brand, and therefore won a place in Le Bon Marché. The continuous effort to improve DaTerra's image and positioning shall lead to a closer and solid business relationship.

Hudson's Bay

This retailer represents a large n^o of brands within the tableware category and embraces all their different statuses – from casual/mid-market brands to relevant names in the fashion world.

Regarding this retailer there is a favorable precedent – it represents the Portuguese brand Costa Nova.

When compared to DaTerra, Costa Nova is more mature from a business' point of view – the age difference provides for better market knowledge that might help decision making. Nevertheless, what DaTerra may lack in experience, it makes up in market ambition.

DaTerra might have an opportunity here. This hypothesis should, however, be cautiously thought out, once there is some work to do regarding brand image.

John Lewis

This retailer represents a large n^o of brands within the tableware category, but curiously does not display reference ceramist names.

DaTerra caught this retailer's attention and was given an opportunity. There is, however, a remaining issue to be addressed: John Lewis attributes its own denomination to the brand's collections

Nordstom

Even though the brand spectrum is medium size, some attention is given to brands that somehow give their products a degree *personality* – poetic wanderlust is a good example.

DaTerra's products are very unique and for sure distinguish themselves regarding quality standards, this means that in terms of authenticity of product the brand might get some attention. Nevertheless, such as West Elm, Crate and Barrel and HomeGoods, this retailer tends to focus more on brand's image and status and not only consider the product's features – DaTerra needs to increase its degree of brand awareness in order to become attractive to this retailer's eyes .

Macy's

Macy's is well-known across the globe due to its long path in the retail business and variety of products offered – no matter what one is looking for, if it exists then Macy's sell it. This retailer has a wide target audience, therefore it is no surprise it represents smaller and premium brands simultaneously.

Being part of Macy's product spectrum allows a whole other level of exposure, which certainly contributes to increase brand awareness.

Regarding the possibility of entering Macy's world, DaTerra should be careful and prepare its entrance – the brand aims at Macy's upscale locations, as it wishes to be associated to a certain status. Once again, the need to work on brand's image appears as a xxx of opportunity timing

Williams-Sonoma

This retailer specializes in home products. Regarding the tableware category it presents only a few brands, and amongst these it's possible to find reference brands such as Jars Céramistes and Wedgwood.

It might be difficult to reach this retailer's attention as it is focused on its own brand products and reference brands.

Table 2: Retailers's profile analysis

3) September: Elle Decoration (France)

RENDEZ-VOUS CHEZ HENRI LE MENESTREL




Souveau Ouest. Dans l'annexe de l'appartement, des mousses sculptés de l'ancien appartement d'Henri Le Menestrel ont trouvé place sur un espace de travail d'un papier peint cinématique (Bello). Entièrement ouvert, l'ensemble s'oppose à une cuisine salie à manger, cuisine, salon et coin TV. Cassole (Moussis), lampe et néonisme (PH Collection), tout le Cadre Rouge.

« J'ai toujours rêvé de déco. Aujourd'hui, je vis mon rêve », affirme Henri Le Menestrel. Dans une vie antérieure, cet homme sympathique au début de sa carrière travaillait dans la communication... En 2009, ses affaires vendues, il décide de se lancer et rachète Le Cadre Rouge. Une belle entreprise, dotée d'un énorme potentiel, séparée pour son mobilier d'extérieur et sa déco de jardin. Si la notoriété est là, la marque est mal en point. Ne subsiste qu'un dernier point de vente à Paris. « En tant qu'entrepreneur, j'aime prendre des risques », affirme-t-il. J'ai repris Le Cadre Rouge avec un objectif : rassembler le meilleur des marques. » Kartell, Gervasoni, Fermob, Tolix, Artemide, Driade, Flaminio, Hoy... Toutes sont là, présentées de manière

décomplexée. Résultat : plus de 100 000 adhésions mois surtout un véritable conseil. « Les clients soulignent l'impression d'amorger un intérieur relié du parcouru du combattant », dit Henri Le Menestrel. Il a su créer l'occasion de la démarche, en aidant les clients à définir leur style, choisir leurs ambiances... et leur donner généralement plusieurs propositions d'aménagement. Et on peut, bien sûr, avoir recours à nos équipes pour réaliser le chantier dans sa totalité. « C'est d'ailleurs ce qu'il a fait dans son nouvel appartement de l'ouest parisien, un penthouse des années 60. Mené par Thomas Vieudot (interior Suite Architecture) avec les équipes du Cadre Rouge, ce duplex de 7^e ciel réunit esprit de famille et chic urbain avec ça et là des touches d'humour et de belles idées. All image de son propriétaire. »

L'effet marbre. Au cœur de la cuisine, il y a un marbre blanc, Stratos (le Cadre Rouge) mais une épave vue sur tout Paris, Suspensions (Boutis), chaises de bar (S2) pour le Cadre Rouge.

74 ELLEDECOR SEPTEMBRE 2018

4) October: Brigitte (Germany)



Brigitte

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Spart als Folie „See's Wrap“ - Becher aus Sonnenblumenöl, Bio- und Fair gelassen so die alle ein, sind wasch- und wieder- verwendbar. Sortiment ca. 27 Euro, z. B. über www.goodhaus.com

24 BRIGITTE DE 2018

7) December: Máxima – online edition (Portugal)

www.maxima.pt/lifestyle/novidades/detalhe/datterra_made_in_portugal.html

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DATERRA, MADE IN PORTUGAL

07/12/2015

< 27 / 87 >



DaTerra, é uma marca de fashion tableware que pretende ganhar um lugar à mesa de quem não deixa ao acaso o momento de receber bem. DaTerra tem presença por todo o mundo essencialmente em pequenas boutiques ou concept stores que valorizam técnicas artesanais de fabrico e ao mesmo tempo apreciam o design e modernidade. No entanto, à medida que crescem têm vindo a conquistar espaço de prateleira em alguns retalhistas e department stores como Le Bon Marché em Paris, Heal's no Reino Unido e Tomorrowland no Japão. Em Portugal estão no Porto (Serralves), Lisboa (A Vida Portuguesa), Loulé, Sesimbra e no centro-sul do país.

Apesar de terem lançado recentemente uma linha de textéis de mesa, as cerâmicas são sem dúvida a razão do seu sucesso. Os anfitriões de todo o mundo têm à disposição uma gama de acessórios original e arrojada no momento de receber famílias e amigos. Seja também um deles!

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A máxima SUGERE

				
NOVIDADES DATERRA, MADE IN PORTUGAL	NOVIDADES SUGESTÕES BULLDOG PARA O NATAL	NOVIDADES PROGRAMA ESPECIAL NATAL NOS HOTEIS REAL	CELEBRIDADES POR DENTRO DA PENTHOUSE DE TAYLOR SWIFT	NOVIDADES PORTO VINTAGE QUINTA DO VESÚVIO 1994 E CHRYSEIA DOURO 2012 NOS 50 MELHORES VINHOS DO ANO DA 'DECANTER'

8) December 2015: Daily Mail – online (United Kingdom)



9) January 2016: Weranda Country (Poland)

W STYLU COUNTRY

Niebieski, turkus, indygo...

1. Talerz gładki, Pip Studio, 59,89 zł, dutchhouse.pl 2. Talerz płaski, 29,90 zł, zarahome.com 3. Filiżanka ze spodem, Green Gate, ok. 79 zł, wonderhome.pl 4. Talerz, Pip Studio, 39,89 zł, dutchhouse.pl 5. Naczynia Bloomington, od ok. 50 zł, malabari.pl 6. Czajnik, 45-11 Filizalia do espresso, 20,64 zł, polish-pottery.com.pl 7. Ceramika Green Gate, od ok. 45 zł, wonderhome.pl 8. Talerz obrotowy, 88 zł, nap.com.pl 9. Zestaw fajansowy, od 35,90 zł, zarahome.com 10. Ceramika Marzanna Tenich, od 79 zł, nap.com.pl 11. Szklanka, Green Gate, ok. 29 zł, wonderhome.pl 12. Miska, 48,30 zł, ceramikabolslawiec.com.pl

76 | STYCZEŃ 2016

STYCZEŃ 2016 | 77

10) February 2016: Home Journal of Hong Kong (China)

BEAUTIFUL INTERIORS • INSPIRED LIVING

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FEBRUARY 2016

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PRIDE OF PLACE

Highlighting history and tradition at home
家居歷史與傳統

BEAUTIFUL INTERIORS • INSPIRED LIVING

VOLUME 96 NO. 4 FEBRUARY 2016

NOW SCENE

TIME & SPACE

Addressing the needs of urbanisation and the high density of living space, Dutch design duo Eline Lutzke and Heeser Stolk have created the Stackable collection as a vertical storage solution. Inspired by metropolitan skylines, these playfully retro 3D printed ceramic objects are coated with traditional glazing and fall under three themes: "sleep", "body care" and "eat". | 為因應城市化和高密度生活空間的需要，荷蘭設計組合Eline Lutzke和Heeser Stolk打造了可堆疊系列，以靈活的物件方便溝通。這系列由圓形大管疊成天橋般，並由具有傳統光澤的陶瓷工藝印製而成。這系列物件分為三大主題：「睡覺」、「身體護理」和「進食」。

Just in time for Valentine's Day, Dipoyque has released the Rosavio collection, its name a portmanteau of the flowers from which the scents originate - rose and viola. Housed in a pretty candleholder designed by fashion designer Olympia Le-Tan, these limited edition candles and solid perfume tablets are sure to bring out the romantic in you. | 農曆情人節，Dipoyque推出Rosavio系列，將浪漫情懷，濃烈結合玫瑰與紫羅蘭的香氣，並採用法蘭西特製設計師Olympia Le-Tan訂製美麗的燭台設計，綻放魅力。 | dipoyque.com

PRETTY IN PINK

30 | HOME JOURNAL FEBRUARY 2016

11) March 2016: P3 (Portugal)

Browser: p3.publico.pt/vicios/gula/19770/sweet-bigas-bolo-de-chocolate-facil

Aplicações | Bookmarks | Zara Marketing Plan | Outros marcadores

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Sweet Bigas: bolo de chocolate fácil

Semanalmente, ao sábado, Ana Chaves, autora do blogue Sweet Bigas sugere uma receita aos leitores do P3. Este bolo de chocolate nunca nos deixa ficar mal e até nos põe de bom humor

Texto de Ana Chaves • 26/02/2016 - 15:41

3400 // Leituras

Eu acho que

Iniciar sessão

+1 | 0

Pluiz

Tags: Vicios, Sweet Bigas, Receita, Culinária, Crónica, Chocolate, Ana Chaves

Vê também

- # Sweet Bigas: "pie pop" integral de morango e framboesa
- # Sweet Bigas: focaccia com tomate-cereja
- # Sweet Bigas: pizza integral de fambre e manjerico
- # Sweet Bigas: batatas hasselback com mel e gorgonzola

Um bom bolo de chocolate nunca no deixa ficar mal. Não dá insónias, não pede favores, não emite opiniões despropositadas, não fala alto em sitios publicos, não nos aponta defeitos nem repara nas nossas oitavas, não tem vergonha de andar de mãos dadas na rua. É precisamente o oposto de tudo isto: aumenta os níveis de serotonina e põe-nos de bom humor com o mais singelo garfo.

Sempre que olho para estas fatias, imagino-me a caminho da cozinha, às escondidas, para roubar só mais um pedaço. Trata-se de um reflexo estímulo-resposta, a Psicologia explica.

O cérebro coordena o corpo, os braços mexem-se, a faca corta. Há um sentimento de culpa associado se isto acontece após as onze da noite — embora esta receita até seja pouco calórica. Por outro lado, em minha defesa, deixem-me recordá-los [este texto](#) sobre os (números) benefícios da ingestão de chocolate durante a gravidez: há coisas que faço especial questão de não descurar.

Ora, o estado de graça está a poucos dias de deixar de o ser e eu queria despedir-me com o meu ingrediente favorito. Em breve estarei de volta — e prometo que não será com as recentes descobertas no mundo das papas de bebe ou com purés de fruta altamente nutritivos.

Do que precisas:

- 200 g de chocolate negro
- 70% de cacau
- 50 g de açúcar amarelo ou maecavado
- 100 g de manteiga magra sem sal
- 4 colheres de sopa de farinha super fina com fermento
- 3 ovos L
- 125 ml de água a ferver

Vamos a isto:

1. Pré-aquece o forno a 180° C.
2. Parte o chocolate em pequenos pedaços e derrete-o juntamente com a manteiga em banho-maria. Retira do lume e adiciona o açúcar, a farinha, os ovos e a água a ferver. Envolve bem com uma vara de arames (mas sem bater).
3. Unta uma forma pequena (18 cm de diâmetro) com manteiga, polvilha-a com farinha e verte a massa. Leva ao forno por 15 a 20 minutos (confere com o teste do palito). Quando arrefecer polvilha com cacau em pó.

Dica: acompanha com morangos frescos e iogurte natural.

1 comentário | Voltar ao topo | Corrigir

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Armanda Alves
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Gosto - Responder - 27 de Fevereiro de 2016 17:34

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Exposição
"O outro lado" das prisões

Para lá dos muros, há uma prisão desconhecida, onde habita gente com sonhos para lá dos enos do passado e as penas do presente. Para lá dos muros de quito.

O segredo da Serra da Estrela
Video #1 temos o video uma vez e o primeiro pensamento é isto existe mesmo? Vemos outra...

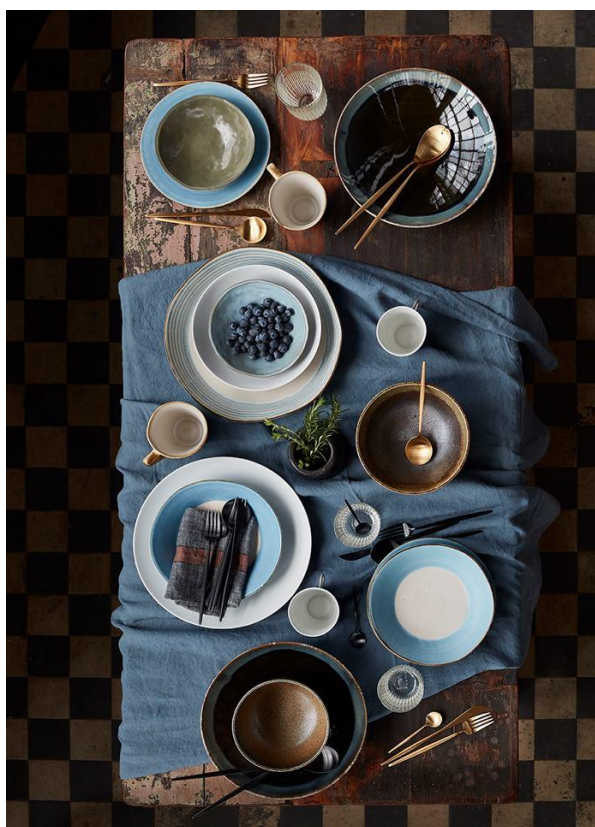
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COMPETE | 2020-2023 | 2014-2020 | 2007-2013 | 2000-2006

12) March 2016: Sale & Pepe Veg (Italy)



13) March 2016: Elle Decoration (Poland)



WHAT MY HOME MEANS TO ME



WORKING WITH MUM

Mother and daughter Gabrielle Bliss, 57, and Imogen, 29, are the successful team behind online lifestyle and interiors shop Unique & Unity



Gabrielle loves family time on Sundays when she serves up a roast. Left: Tropical Yellow Flower plate, £24, from Unique & Unity's collection

188 housebeautiful.co.uk



This iconic Cotswolds mill (above) is now home to Gabrielle. Da Terra pottery (left), from the Unique & Unity website. Daffodils are a favourite gift for Mothers' Day

WHERE I LIVE

Gabrielle I've recently moved with my husband, Mike, from our family home in Stratford-upon-Avon, where our daughters Imogen and Chloe grew up, to an apartment in an old tweed mill in the Cotswolds. It's an iconic building and we're on the top floor with amazing views. I look out onto green fields and people walking their dogs. It's so exciting and really good for creative thinking.

Imogen We had so much fun in our old home – it was a noisy, fun environment and my younger sister and I always showed our sense of style in our rooms. But Mum's new place is calm and airy with exposed brick in a lovely soft pink tone. I live with my boyfriend in a Victorian conversion flat in London. Like Mum's new apartment, it has an open-plan living/kitchen space, which I love, and lots of light from big sash windows. Chloe, who works in finance, and I go over to see Mum and Dad at least once a month for a get-together. We both have our own rooms – mine is a lovely pale grey with big canary yellow blinds and bedhead.

Gabrielle Our new apartment has a very large entrance hall, with bedrooms and the bathroom off either side and then through to the kitchen. We still have the original industrial pillars running up through the flat – they were bright red and very visible, but we've painted them dark charcoal now!

Imogen Mum and I both like Scandinavian and Japanese designs and are partial to anything ceramic, but Mum says we aren't allowed to buy her any more bowls!

OUR INSPIRATION

Imogen We do the buying for Unique & Unity between us – we're an entirely online shop and our range includes everyone from Oria Kiely and Joseph Joseph to new British

designers and Japanese artists. Mum is the director of the business, while I cover the marketing, styling and part of the customer service side of things. We have created roles for ourselves in our work and love the freedom that brings.

Gabrielle Imogen and I travel a lot together hunting out new designers and products, both abroad and here – we have a very popular Made In Britain section – and are always looking for clever, well-designed and interesting items. Our ethos is that they need to be things we'd want in our own homes.

Imogen I work in shared office space in London and Mum works in our main office in Warwickshire – we meet every couple of weeks and speak every day, and that works well for us. When we're out buying new products we have a lot of fun, but are very up for saying 'I don't like it', and we don't get offended if our ideas clash.

Gabrielle We have similar tastes but sometimes Imogen looks at me as if to say: 'Are you off your rocker?' She's a powerhouse and it's fantastic how we work together.

FAMILY LIFE

Gabrielle We love getting together and now we have the big open living area we can have friends over and they can mill around and have a glass of wine while I'm cooking. When the family come we always have a big full-on roast on Sunday and I just love that time.

Imogen I can cook but I'm not allowed in the kitchen if Mum's cooking – I make a lot of mess. As a family we tend to make an occasion out of everything and we're quite competitive about finding the best cards and wrapping paper! Mothers' Day is almost always the same weekend as Mum's birthday so Chloe and I take her out for dinner in London. We may even get her some daffodils, just as we did when we were little.

● Visit uniqueandunity.co.uk

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