

N.I.M.B.Y. - Not In My BackYard

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The FunTime Bar & Grill operated for many years as a neighbourhood bar, catering to those who wanted to socialize, to watch sports events on large television sets, and/or to play video games. The bar was one of a number of businesses operating in a small neighbourhood shopping plaza. One day, a fire devastated the business. More than a year past before the business was refurbished and ready to re-open.

The owner of FunTime decided to open for business even though a new liquor licence had yet to be acquired, but the application had been initiated. Upon its opening, business was slow; the owner was finding it difficult to attract its former clientele. The inability to sell liquor was clearly a reason for this state of affairs. Another reason for the lack of business was the fact that two national franchise restaurants had opened within a few blocks of FunTime during the period of refurbishment. Both of these outlets sold liquor, attracted a social crowd, and offered a wider choice of food. Neither place, however, allowed for the viewing of sports events.

In order to generate revenue, the owner invited the students from a local Junior High School to use the video games on the premises. These students patronized a number of the businesses in the plaza on a regular basis, as did their parents. Since no liquor was being sold at the bar, there was no age restriction with respect to who could patronize the business. However, upon hearing what was taking place, the principal at the local school took exception to such activity. He and the vice-principal visited the establishment to voice their concerns. A heated argument ensued. Following this meeting, the school principal issued a letter to his students outlining his concerns. The letter was to be delivered to the parents. In the letter, the principal advised the parents not to allow their children to patronize the bar.

The owner became aware of the letters through visits by parents, some who supported the principal's position, and some who supported the owner's position. Upon learning of this letter, the bar owner posted notices all around the outside of his business stating his position and adamantly opposing the principal's position. The signs also included claims about racial and ethnic discrimination by the administration at the school.

At this point, the owner and his wife decided to visit the school to voice their concerns about the actions of the principal. During this visit, another heated argument ensued. This time, however, the owner and his wife made physical threats to the principal. Other office staff members were present during this encounter. The principal called the police and had charges laid against the bar owner.

Because of the charges against the owner, the owner's liquor licence application was suspended. The bar shut down a short while later, since hardly anyone was patronizing the bar. The business was put up for sale.

A potential, new owner wanted to turn the bar into a Scottish Fish & Chips neighbourhood pub. In order to gain support of the local community, he posted signs all around the outside of the business inviting the local residents to discuss his proposed business. The meeting was held one evening at a local restaurant.

The new owner would only agree to buy the business if he could acquire the previous owner's liquor licence for the premises. In order to have any chance of acquiring the licence, the new owner needed the support of the local residents. To accomplish this task, he asked the local residents at the above meeting to sign a petition offering their support. Since he did not get the minimum required 400 signatures at the meeting, he held an "open house" at the pub, inviting the local residents to come and talk to him about the proposed business. Signs were posted all around the outside of the pub requesting the support of the local residents. Copies of signed petitions were also posted. Tables were set up outside of the pub where the residents could sign the petition. Four days before the petition deadline, the owner was 136 signatures short.

Focus: Target market, Social Marketing, External Environment.

Questions

1. Define the initial target market for FunTime Bar & Grill.
2. Upon re-opening, but before the acquisition of the liquor licence, describe the target market for FunTime.
3. How does the situation described in Question 2 relate to the Ansoff's Product-Market Strategy approach (a.k.a. Marketing Opportunities Matrix, Strategic Opportunities Matrix) - i.e., market penetration, product development, market development, diversification?
4. In what way does this case deal with Social Marketing?
5. Evaluate the actions of the owner. Was his marketing planning appropriate or inappropriate? Was his behaviour appropriate or inappropriate? In each case, explain your answer.
6. Explain the actions of the school administration. Were the actions appropriate or inappropriate? Explain. Does a school principal have the authority and/or responsibility to get involved with a community issue of this nature?
7. Why should marketers be aware of the response of those who are not within the target market of the proposed market offering?

8. Conceptually analyze the new competition faced by FunTime, upon its attempted re-opening.
9. Relate the situation described in the case to an analysis of the external environment [i.e., CERTS: Competition, Economic, Regulatory, Technological, Social (culture, political, etc.)].

For all questions, use the appropriate theories and concepts, when necessary. Do not just present case facts.