Selling Overseas and Marketing in Another Country

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Course

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# **Memo of Transmittal**

MEMORANDUM.

To: The Chief Operation Officer, Airbnb

Brian Chesky

Here is the report you requested regarding the marketing of the company's services in Kenya, a country located in Africa. The report contains an analysis of the country, people who might benefit from the company's services, ways to introduce the services, location of a sales centre and some recommendations regarding the most appropriate marketing techniques that may be used. Since the report contains real data researched from online sources, it will be of benefit to the company in terms of penetrating the market. Thank you.

# **Introduction**

Among the most transformative innovations that the world has realized over the years is technology. Today, almost all aspects of life have been made easy by the inclusion of technology. For example, communication has been made easy by the establishment of networks and end devices that support the communication process. Similarly, learning in schools has been made easy by the development of online avenues which allow students to login into their school portals and learn remotely hence establishing convenience. Most notably, most of these technological innovations have largely been tied to the internet and the entire World Wide Web. As such, it has become hard to define some of these technological innovations without talking about the internet.

The internet has undoubtably enabled the provision of a pool of services online. For example, today, in case an individual visits a given country and intends to spend several days in that country, such an individual may just log in to the Airbnb.com platform and search for his/her desirable residence for his/her stay in that country. In most developed and developing countries, Airbnb has come to the rescue of most travellers who would earlier on have to interact with the locals to find their desirable places of stay. Globally, Airbnb has been noted to offer accommodation in over 100000 cities and 191 countries (Guttentag, 2016).

While the use of the Airbnb.com platform might be considered common in most countries, some countries have been left behind for various reasons. These reasons have been influenced greatly by the company’s objectives, political factors in those countries and economic factors. All the same, some of the countries which are not member countries have proved to be great arenas for the company's operation due to their favourable nature. In this paper, we are going to look at a desirable country for marketing the Airbnb.com platform and define the factors that make this country suitable for the introduction of this service.

# **Country Selected**

Airbnb’s mission is to create a world where each person can feel at home from any corner of the world (Airbnb mission, 2021). As such, the company does not have boundaries in the countries to invest in as long as there are enabling factors for its operation. Considering that the company operates in 191 countries out of 195 countries globally, Airbnb has made such a huge stride in diversifying its services globally. Among the countries where Airbnb operations are restricted include Iran, Syria, Crimea and North Korea (Pugliese, 2016). These countries have regulations imposed on the use of the Airbnb website, making operations in these countries impossible.

Although Airbnb operates in most countries globally, its popularity tends to be a little bit behind what it should really be in some countries. For example, Kenya, a country in Africa that is well known for its richness in wildlife and one of the cleanest beaches in the world, tends to lie behind a little bit in terms of people who are well-conversant with the platform. African countries, especially those with a coastline, tend to have most of their Airbnb hosts concentrated mainly in their coastal regions. This leaves most of the other parts of the country with few or no hosts and clients who are conversant with the Airbnb platform. As such, visitors touring other regions within the country tend to benefit less from what should be an all-rounded platform.

Some factors that make Kenya a great target for the Airbnb.com platform include its attractiveness to visitors in terms of an outstanding clean beach, the unique migration of wildebeests, a variety of national parks and game reserves comprising of wildlife, unique sceneries and finally, the availability of the internet as well as a good communication system. Since many people along the coastline are already conversant with the Airbnb.com platform, the greatest task would be to market the same to other regions within the country.

# **Types of People Who Would Find the Service Attractive**

Considering the type of business that Airbnb.com is, the platform would mainly attract three sets of people. These sets include homeowners who would act as hosts, local visitors and foreign visitors, both of whom would act as clients. Just to be specific, the homeowners who would be attracted to this service would be those whose houses and/or apartments were lying idle with no occupants.

# **Ways to introduce the product to the country.**

In Kenya, Airbnb.com is not a new service. The service has been there since 2008. However, it was not until 2014 when Brian Chesky, one of the founders, arrived in Kenya in former US President Barack Obama’s delegation that year that it became well known. Although the founder’s visit had such a positive impact on the number of Airbnb.com users, the concertation still remained in Kenya’s capital city, Nairobi, and its coastal region.

The main goal would therefore be to introduce the service in some parts of the country that had been left behind as far as the Airbnb services were concerned. This would involve holding physical and visual campaigns and giving offers to every host or client who registers on the platform. More so, we would use mass media to highlight the outstanding advantages of using Airbnb compared to the use of other similar platforms.

# **Location for a regional sales centre**

In Kenya, the most appropriate city/town to base the sales centre would be in the central business district of Nairobi. Ideally, research has it that most international offices and bodies in Kenya are located in its capital city, which is Nairobi (Murage, Mutisya, & Muthengi, 2020). Some of these bodies include the United Nations headquarters, Deloitte, and the UNEP, among others. This is primarily due to its convenient location. Considering that Kenya’s capital city is the hub of multiple communication networks, the availability of strong and reliable internet would be assured. This would be quite supportive to the data centre if it were located in the capital city.

Since this is an online platform, the only way to sell it would be through marketing the platform. Marketing in this sense would involve running television advertisements, putting up billboards in the city centre and its outskirts, erecting posters, publishing advertisements in local magazines and newspapers and using social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter for advertisement purposes (Lesidrenska, & Dicke, 2012). More so, having human agents would be vital for hosts who would like a physical guide on how to go about making their homes appropriate for the platform. As such, apart from the sales centre located in the central business district of Nairobi, more physical offices would be created in other major towns to help in the interaction between the company representatives and its players.

# **Summary**

Marketing the Airbnb.com platform in other regions within Kenya would not only impact the company positively but also the locals and the foreign visitors. Ideally, the locals would benefit more since they would have the chance of putting up their idle-lying homes into use as well as have a more convenient way to find residence whenever they visited new places. Whether the homes were near sceneries or not, people living in any part of the country would at least have a chance to make some money out of their homes while providing shelter to others in need.

# **7.0 Conclusion**

In the new environment that is away from the coastal region and the city centre, the platform is expected to do fairly well. However, considering the country's terrain and its richness which lies in different regions, some areas are expected to do better than others. For example, areas that are near game parks and national reserves will definitely adopt the platform as compared to areas that are less advantaged with such. More so, towns near-natural sceneries such as mountains, hills and the great rift valley will most definitely outdo towns that are not close to such sceneries in terms of adopting and using the Airbnb.com platform.

# **8.0 Recommendations**

The steps that the company should take immediately to market its service includes running advertisements on television. With time, the company should consider using other platforms such as social media and billboards to make the platform known to its intended target. Some other marketing methods that might work best for the company include erecting posters, using the google ad feature, and holding both physical and virtual campaigns (Weinberg, 2009). This would work best where the company set a budget for marketing purposes. However, if no budget was to be set, then there would be a chance of failure. The financial action plan to enable the success of these marketing strategies would include the marketing strategy alongside the cost of each. For example, the cost of putting up a billboard would be $5000 while that of advertising the television would be $10000. Having identified the costs alongside the marketing strategies, the company would be in a position to choose the most appropriate strategy according to its price and result.

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