MKT 620 2-2 Final Project Milestone 1: Product Category, Determinant Attributes and Product Brands

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Product Category

For my final project, I have chosen parenting lifestyle websites as my digital product (service) in the online entertainment product category. Parenting lifestyle blogs/websites, if not niched down, often cover a wide variety of topics from conception through college parenting, children in those age groups and everything that could possibly affect those parents and children during that time. Some topics covered are news, parenting, fashion and beauty, home and food, travel, tech, entertainment and even more specific topics like mental health, infant loss and politics, to mention a few.

The target audience for these websites are usually women who have children or are expecting of child-bearing age. According to Mom Blogging for Dummies, the target audience for these websites are college-educated, professional, middle-class moms or women who are expecting ages 18-44 with the highest engaged demographic group being age 25-34.

Product Brands

The product brands that I have chosen in this category are the following parenting websites which are all established and have longtime brand loyalty online:

- Café Mom
- The TRUTH about Motherhood
- Scary Mommy

Café mom was launched in December 2006. According to Café Mom's about page, "CafeMom meets the emotional and practical needs of every mom with an honest, gritty, funny, wise, practical and uplifting spirit that mirrors motherhood itself. Our stories satisfy a demand: to laugh, to connect, to commiserate, or to get smart advice you've never heard before. We lift up

the voices of all moms, and make them feel confident, hopeful and understood. Like a good friend, we just make life better.
This is motherhood. #NoFilter," ("Parenting, Baby Names, Celebrities, and Royal News | CafeMom.com," n.d.).

The TRUTH about Motherhood launched May 2009. The tagline, *life perspective through mom googles* says it all, but according to The TRUTH about Motherhood's about page, "Over the years the TRUTH has evolved from just a little baby book full of mommyisms and how to survive the early years to us being on the brink of raising young ladies. I can tell you how to change a diaper, co-sleep, survive kindergarten drop off and discuss sex and guide your daughter through the murky waters of male attention**.** We're only just beginning. Currently trying to raise good human beings and doing a good job.
There's a little bit of everything here; parenting from conception to the teen years, travel, politics, entertainment, delicious recipes, home decor and DIY renovations, tech and a little fashion/beauty," (Cruz, 2019).

Scary Mommy launched March 2008. According to Scary Mommy's about page, "We're a community of millions of Scary Mommies supporting each other through laughter, empowerment, and the shared experience of motherhood," (Scary Mommy—Pregnancy Advice & Parenting Tips for Imperfect Parents, 2020).

Determinant Attributes

The top six determinant attributes that most affect product selection by a consumer, including the features and benefits most important to the consumer when making a decision about this type of product are:

- **Relatability** to consumers. If you want a website to appeal to your target audience, it is helpful for it to be relatable to their life situation. This could be the difference between choosing one website over the other.
- **Authenticity** of stories. When dealing with parenting lifestyle blogs, the readers prefer authenticity because if the stories feel disingenuous the reader feels like they are being spoon fed what they want to hear and, surprisingly, that's not what they want. Most of them want to see the real mess because then they feel not alone.
- **Transparency** in storytelling. Honesty is the best policy in storytelling and especially in Advertainment. Lies or pretending to be something you're not will backfire every single time in this niche. Moms don't have time to vet referrals, if they did they wouldn't need these types of websites and word-of-mouth marketing from other moms.
- **Popularity** (traffic to website). Traffic is an indicator of establishment and authority but not a good measure of influence. But high traffic makes it easier to check the site by getting feedback by other users and their experiences with the service, especially via their social media platforms and communities.
- **Trustworthiness** (do readers trust and respect the opinions of the writer and would they buy what the brand is promoting?). This is definitely a quality metric that can

leverage one website over another. If a consumer trusts the writer, they are more likely to trust the content and convert to a buyer.

- **Engagement** between community members and the brand and also, amongst readers. Engagement lets a consumer interact with the brand and also is a way for the brand to intimately connect with the consumer.
- **Quality of entertainment** (does the reader enjoy the service enough to take the next step to convert from one-time visitor to loyal fan and/or buyer?) Is the brand providing a service that fills a need or want of the reader? Only by doing so can a brand ensure the demand for its existence.
- **Brand reputation.** In the digital content creation space, your reputation is everything. Since the entire business is hosted and transacted online, reputation is crucial to stay relevant to consumers. If the reputation is tarnished, there are a million more to replace the brand and it almost immediately becomes obsolete to the consumer.
- **Accessibility** (is the website easily accessible online? Easy to find in SERPS? Is the contact information easy to find on page? How fast does it load? Is it easy to navigate?) If the audience can't find an online brand, does it even exist? The internet is an instant gratification business and if the brand is not where it is supposed to be , when it's supposed to and doing what it's supposed to be doing, it will not succeed and will not be of use to the consumer. No matter if it is the best parenting website ever to exist, if no one sees it and engages with it, none of it matters.

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