

Setting Sights on Building a Strong Brand: Key Insights from the South African Gin Trend

A Case study on Blind Tiger Gin

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Keywords: brand, insights, craft gin, brand building, brand positioning, brand differentiation, brand equity, brand communications

DECLARATION

I, Kendra Hunn, hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for my BA Honours Strategic Brand Communication Degree to the Independent Institute of Education, is my own work and has not been previously submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes. This dissertation is of my own original work. Any secondary research material is appropriate and referenced using the required Harvard referencing method and can be found at the end of this document

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ABSTRACT

This small-scale study identified and explored the key trends within the South African craft gin market. These trends were then used in conjunction with specific brand building models to provide insight into how Blind Tiger Gin can increase brand presence.

The South African craft gin market is saturated as more brands enter the market with more products. As a young brand, it is essential that Blind Tiger Gin know how to increase brand awareness and brand presence. Achieving this will ensure they remain viable in the market.

The research gathered for this study was done through a mixed methods design, that used both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The data collection methods used were numerical AMPS data, interviews and observational research. Through the research design, findings and insights were gathered which led to meaningful conclusions and recommendations.

It was concluded that there are four key trends in the South African craft gin market that Blind Tiger Gin can implement into specific brand building models. By repositioning their brand and investing in distribution and marketing, Blind Tiger Gin can increase brand value and their presence in the market.

As a young brand, Blind Tiger Gin will benefit from this study as they will gain insights into their product category, their consumers as well as industry professional advice on how to increase brand presence. Through the use of strategic brand building models, Blind Tiger Gin will be given a guide as to how they can use this information to increase their viability and combat the competition in the saturated craft gin market.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms and definitions are considered in this document.

Brand Differentiation – Brand differentiation is the difference the brand has over its competitors. This difference occupies a unique position in the minds of the consumers (Klopper & North, 2011).

Brand Identity – Brand identity is a unique set of brand associations that organisations need to create and maintain. These associations will represent the brand in terms of what it stands for and who it is. It will also function as a promise to consumers (Aaker, 1996).

Brand Image - Brand image is the consumer's perception and view of a brand (Klopper & North, 2011).

Brand Positioning – Brand positioning is how the brand is differentiated in the consumer's mind (Klopper & North, 2011).

Customer-based brand equity – Customer-based brand equity is Keller's (2013) perspective of brand equity. Keller (2013) defines brand equity in relation to the consumer, as it is the effect brand knowledge has on a consumer's response to the marketing of a brand.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 CONTEXTUALISATION

Aaker (1996) argues that in today's environment, brand building is not an easy task. It is difficult because brand builders are constantly confronted by internal and external barriers and pressures. Despite these difficulties, brand building is necessary for every organisation (Aaker, 1996). Brand building can be achieved through the use of strategic models that ensure the brand building process follows a strategic direction, that will sustain the brand in the future (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). One of the challenges that strategic brand building assists in overcoming, is the changing consumer market and the key trends that develop from it (Enslin & De Beer, 2015).

The South African (SA) liquor market has recently experienced a shift in consumer product choice. SA consumers' liquor preferences have shifted away from mass-marketed and mass-produced spirit brands, towards higher quality, premium brands that are produced by small-scale, private manufacturers (Ungerer, Kruger, Vorster & Mansfield, 2015). This shift has provided an opportunity for SA craft gins to enter into and be viable. More than a dozen new craft gins emerged in 2015, and gin consumption increased by 11% in that same year (South African National Liquor Authority, 2004) (Mokhema, 2016) (Inside Africa, 2017). The increase in craft gin brands has led to some criticism that suggest the market is becoming overcrowded, too saturated, low in demand and on a path that is unsustainable (Smith 2016). These criticisms highlight that SA craft gin distilleries need to ensure their brands are differentiated and effectively positioned. This will ensure the brand remains viable and of high value to the consumer. Through the use of specific brand building models in conjunction with an understanding of key trends, SA craft gin brands can identify how they can increase their presence in the market to ensure they are top of mind.

1.1.2 RATIONALE

Blind Tiger Gin (BTG) is a SA small batch craft gin brand, that recently entered the market in 2016. As a young brand, it is important for BTG to ensure that the brand stands out in the

saturated craft gin market. In order to increase brand presence, BTG needs to manage their brand through identifying, understanding and applying key trends in the market to specific strategic brand building models. Using credible models will ensure that the brand building process follows a strategic direction that will sustain the brand in the future (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

1.2 FIELD OF STUDY

The field of study explored in this dissertation were brand building models and how they can be used in conjunction with key market trends, to increase brand presence in a saturated market. The study used BTG as a case study. Through a concise, yet in-depth research methodology, significant findings have been identified in order to apply to specific brand building models for the BTG brand.

1.3 PROPOSED JOURNAL

The proposed *Journal of Brand Management* would be a suitable journal for this study to be published in, as this study researches and discusses issues regarding brand building, brand positioning and brand equity.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

BTG is a relevant and current case study where the relationship between brand building and key trends in the SA craft gin market can be identified, analysed and discussed.

As BTG is a young brand, the saturated market which it is entering into will pose internal and external pressures and barriers. These pressures and barriers will make it difficult for the brand to increase brand presence and differentiate themselves (Aaker, 1996). To ensure they are viable in the market, BTG needs to invest in brand building by following strategic models that analyse the brand's positioning and brand equity.

1.5 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this study is to identify key trends of the SA craft gin market. They will then be used in conjunction with specific brand building models to build the BTG brand presence in the saturated market. This study has provided insights into understanding how consumers

interact with craft gin brands, as well as how industry professionals believe a craft gin brand can increase its presence in the market.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

What can one learn from the key trends of the SA craft gin market that can inform specific brand building models in order to increase BTG's brand presence?

1.7 SUB QUESTIONS

1. What are the key trends in the SA craft gin market?
2. What is BTG's current positioning in the market and how is it affecting brand equity?
3. What elements make a craft gin brand successful in the SA market?
4. How can BTG improve their points of contact to increase brand presence?

1.8 OBJECTIVES

1. Identify and explore key trends in the SA craft gin market.
2. To apply specific models in order to evaluate BTG's current brand positioning and brand equity.
3. To analyse BTG's current communications and marketing efforts.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

The research explored the key trends in the SA craft gin market and how these can be used in conjunction with specific brand building models. As a young brand, BTG would benefit from this study, as they would gain insights into their product category, their consumers as well as industry professional advice on how to increase brand presence. Through the use of strategic brand building models, BTG will be given a guide as to how they can use this information to increase their viability and combat the competition in the saturated craft gin market.

1.10 LIMITATIONS

The following limitations have been identified for this study. The financial resources to conduct this study were low as it was self-funded. The time period given to conduct the study was short. Therefore, the amount of information and research collection was limited. The geographical location of research was mostly confined to the Durban area due to time and financial constraints. However, some research was conducted telephonically with participants in Cape Town.

1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter One: Introduction and Overview of the Research

Chapter one is an introduction to the field of research for this study. It will highlight the questions and objectives of this study that will guide the literature and research in the chapters to follow.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter two consists of prior literature that is relevant to this study. The objectives have been linked to the relevant literature.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Chapter three introduces the research design, research methodology and data-analysis methods. The target population, sampling size and data collection methods will be discussed. The validity and reliability of the study have been provided.

Chapter Four: Presentation and Discussion of Findings

Chapter four presents and discusses the research findings of the research study after primary research was conducted. The objectives have been linked to the relevant findings.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter five is an analysis of each objective in relation to the findings from literature and the research. The limitations and ethical considerations have been provided and discussed. Conclusions and recommendations linked to each objective of this study were discussed, as well as suggestions for further studies.

1.12 SUMMARY

The research identified a problem area, namely that BTG is a young brand entering a saturated market. This research was designed to identify and discuss key trends in the SA craft gin market. These trends were then used in conjunction with specific brand building models to provide recommendations for BTG to increase brand presence. Chapter one has presented the problem, questions, objectives as well as the significance of the research. Chapter two is the literature review that contains recent and relevant authors that will inform each objective.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review formed the core of the conceptual framework for this study. It is a comprehensive investigation of the current and seminal bodies of knowledge, that explore the important paradigms, theories and models needed for this study (Visocky O'Grady & Visocky O'Grady, 2009). These sources of information allowed for an understanding of the phenomena, demographic and the issues that were being studied. It also informed the choice of research data collection methods and data analysis methods (Maree, 2016). The literature review ensured that the best research decisions were made in order to achieve the research objectives (Keller, 2013). This literature review contains some older seminal articles, as they are highly relevant to this study. However, these older sources have been substantiated using recent sources.

2.2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The theoretical foundations of this literature review are integral to this study. The literature review further unpacks the key theoretical foundations that were needed to achieve the research objectives.

Objective one reviews the current literature on the SA craft gin trend. The international craft gin trend and SA craft beer trend have been used as reinforcing sources of information. Objective two reviews specific brand building models, namely Cant and Van Heerden's (2013) positioning process and Keller's (2013) brand resonance model that creates customer-based brand equity. Objective three reviews BTG's marketing mix, and then provides recommendations to the brand's consumer touch points based on Klopper and North's (2011) communication planning and management process.

2.2.1 THE BTG BRAND

Secondary sources about BTG were provided by the brand owner, as well as via the brand's website and social media. This information has formed part of the theoretical framework as it was essential to understand the brand in order to achieve the objectives. Table 2.1 showcases the brand's information (BTG, 2017).

Table 2.1: BTG Brand Information.

Product Scope	SA craft gin.
Product features	Distinctive packaging. Distilled in KwaZulu-Natal. Affordable premium price. Handcrafted. Post-stilled. Five botanicals including juniper berries, passion flower, lemongrass, coriander and angelica root.
Brand Essence	The gin of rebellion.
Broad Target Audience	Successful 'high net worth' individuals who are acknowledged as 'lifestyle leaders' within their respective peer groups.
Brand message	Rarely sighted.
Key need descriptors	BTG aims to be a brand of experience and a striver brand. BTG allows consumers to express their personal creativity and individuality and encourages them to stand out from the crowd. As a striver brand, BTG allows its consumers to express their desired status and achievements through the use of the brand.
Brand positioning	Affordable premium price.
Brand proposition	The gin of rebellion.
Brand personality	Masculine, rebellious, charismatic, adventurous, playful, confident, loyal, unpretentious, independent.
Logo	The face of a tiger.
Associations	Hand crafted, quirky, accessible, iconic, high quality.
Functional benefits	Citrus taste, enjoyed straight up or mixed, strong but smooth.

Emotional benefits	Original, authentic, scarcity, rebellious, confident, masculinity.
Self-expressive benefits	Author of your own story. Lifestyle leaders.

Sourced from Brand Owner (2017) and Blind Tiger Gin (2017).

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW IN RELATION TO OBJECTIVES

Each objective has been linked to the relevant literature.

2.3.1 OBJECTIVE ONE - IDENTIFY AND EXPLORE THE KEY TRENDS IN THE SA CRAFT GIN MARKET

2.3.1.1 DEFINITIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SA CRAFT GIN

For the purpose of this study, the term 'craft' will refer to both the SA National Liquor Authority's (NLA) (2004) categorisation of liquor manufacturers as well as the American Distilling Institute (ADI) (2017) definition of 'craft'. The SA NLA (2004) categorise liquor manufacturers into macro and micro-manufacturers. Those who manufacture spirits that are above the prescribed volume threshold of 2 million litres per year, is a macro manufacturer. Those who manufacture spirits below that prescribed threshold is a micro-manufacturer (SA National Liquor Authority's, 2004). Many SA distillers choose to use the ADI (2017) definition of craft. This term suggests that the characteristics of craft distilleries is to be small-scale production, independently owned, artisanal, operates a facility that uses traditional and innovative distilling techniques and creates products that are authentic and have a unique flavour profile (American Distilling Institute, 2017).

2.3.1.2. THE INTERNATIONAL GIN TREND AND THE SA CRAFT BEER TREND AS CASE STUDIES

Credited academic work such as journals and articles on the SA craft gin trend is underdeveloped. This limitation has formed a gap in understanding the key trends of the SA craft gin market. The existing research that has been done on SA craft gin is in the format of news articles, write-ups and short documentaries created by organisations such as Fin24, Food24, Inside Africa, SA People, Bloomberg and Yuppiefchef. In order to account for the lack of accredited academic work on the SA craft gin trend, research conducted on the

international gin trend and the SA craft beer trend will be used as case studies. Parallels were drawn up so that meaningful, valid and reliable secondary data was gathered in order to fill in the gaps within the current SA craft gin literature.

The SA craft gin trend developed out of the craft gin trend that emerged in other countries such as America, Britain, Australia, Belgium and Germany (Smith, 2016) (Oudin, 2015) (Kriel, 2016). Naylor (2016), Nottingham Post (2015), Hudson (2016), Yuppiechef (2015) and Oudin (2015) also argue that the craft gin trend is following in the footsteps of the SA craft beer trend. Similar to the trends in these case studies, Naylor (2016) and Oudin (2015, p.24) argue that the craft gin trend has formed a subculture of “hipster brand ambassadors” who gather together at various gin bars, festivals and events that are dedicated to the spirit. SA craft gin has developed a personality similar to that of SA craft beer; it is trendy, sexy, unique, individual and educational, which makes the trend attractive to the aforementioned subculture (Oudin, 2015) (Mokhema, 2016) (Catchpole, 2016) (Fletcher & Vines, 2014). With the success of the international craft gin and SA craft beer trend, similarities and parallels between SA craft gin and these two case studies will serve as a means of identifying the key market trends. The Wine and Spirit Association (in: Naylor, 2016) argue that the number of distilleries in the United Kingdom has doubled since 2010 from 100 to 200 in 2016. Standard Bank (in: South African Food Review, 2015) provided the statistic that the SA craft beer market would grow by 35% in 2016. Although these statistics are based on last year, 2016, they give insight into the potential future of the SA craft gin market. From this information, one can argue that the SA craft gin market will remain sustainable if it continues to follow in the footsteps of international craft gin and SA craft beer.

2.3.1.3. CRITICISMS AND CONFLICTING EVIDENCE ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SA CRAFT GIN

Although these two case studies show promising indicators of the sustainability of the SA craft gin, there are who argue against this. Smith (2016) argues that the market has become over saturated and the consumer demand is not enough to satisfy the large number of distilling brands that keep growing. On the other hand, Distilique (2014) argues that the craft distilleries will not expand quickly enough to supply the fast-growing demand. These conflicting arguments and criticisms highlight the lack of in-depth academic work that has been done on this trend. Oudin (2015) argues against these criticisms by pointing out that

the craft gin trend is still in its beginning stages and therefore, the future of this trend cannot be determined. Despite these conflicting arguments, SA distilleries have successfully responded to the consumer's change in liquor preference. They have increased their experimentation with the vast array of botanicals that are leading to new innovative craft gin products (Naylor, 2016) (Inside Africa: 2017) (Fletcher & Vines, 2014).

2.3.1.4 CHALLENGES THAT SA CRAFT DISTILLERIES FACE

The challenges that SA craft gin brands face are primarily due to the nature of being a small-business and micro-manufactures of spirits (SA National Liquor Authority's, 2004). The failure rate of small, medium and micro enterprises in SA is between 70% and 80%, and is largely due to financial, environmental and managerial problems (Ramukumba, 2014). In order to overcome the internal and external pressures and barriers of being a small-business, SA craft gin brands need to develop effective brand strategies. This will allow them to identify possible challenges and develop means of coping with them. Currently, despite these challenges, the SA craft distilleries have managed to enter the small-business market and have remained viable. More than a dozen new craft gin brands emerged in 2015, and gin consumption increased by 11% in that same year (South African National Liquor Authority, 2004) (Mokhema, 2016) (Inside Africa, 2017).

2.3.1.5 THE CHANGING CONSUMER MARKET

Despite the debate over the sustainability of the SA craft gin, the market has developed key characteristics and key trends. The main reason for the craft gin's success so far in SA, is due to the distillers successful and effective responses to the changing consumer market.

The HAVAS report (2016) suggests that consumers would not care if 72 percent of the current brands disappeared overnight. These statistics show that the SA consumer market has changed drastically over the years in terms of brand loyalty and purchasing decisions (Enslin & De Beer, 2015). Brands need to recognise this change and respond by creating stronger and more meaningful relationships with their consumers. The consumers' change in lifestyle, their choice of purchasing local products versus mass produced products and their search for authenticity and originality in the brands that they buy have all greatly affected SA craft gin brands. All of these changes lead to the consumers' primary quest for craft gin brands that add value to both themselves and their communities.

CONSUMER'S CHANGE IN LIFESTYLE

Mokhema (2016), Inside Africa (2017), Cunningham (2014), Naylor (2016) and Advisium Growth (2014) identified that the growing craft gin trend is geared towards the young middle class who have developed a taste for premium spirits because of their more sophisticated and cosmopolitan lifestyle. As millennials become the core component of the consumer market, craft gin distilleries need to identify them as their primary target market. Craft gin brands need to focus on appealing to their demands, likes, dislikes, beliefs, values and expectations.

CONSUMER'S CHOICE OF LOCAL VERSUS MASS PRODUCED PRODUCTS

SA craft gin has become an interesting, exciting and fun way to experience what SA has to offer, as craft gin brands are producing innovative products that are unique and use local ingredients (Mokhema, 2016). (Mokhema, 2016). Lorna Scott (in: Mokhema, 2016) and Inside Africa (2017) argue that the SA craft gin trend is rooted in finding flavours that have local roots as they are sourced from SA botanicals and herbs. SA has a distinct plant kingdom, also known as the fynbos kingdom. It is this local environment that provides a vast variety of botanicals and herbs that have driven the craft gin industry. SA is spoilt for choice, as the fynbos kingdom is one of the most bio-diverse in the world. It allows distillers to harness from it and add diversity and individuality to their gins. Inside Africa (2017) argues that the joy of the SA craft gin trend is the distiller's ability to look at what is grown around locally and be able to showcase that. Through the use of local ingredients, SA craft gin brands are attractive to millennials as they enjoy supporting SA brands because 'local is lekker' (De Fleuriot, 2017).

CONSUMER'S SEARCH FOR AUTHENTIC AND ORIGINAL PRODUCTS

The South African Food review (2015), Naylor (2016), Ungerer, Kruger, Vorster and Mansfield (2015) suggest that a major reason for the SA craft beer market's growth, is due to the increased demand for products that are authentic and original. Following in these footsteps, the SA craft gin trend focuses on the consumer's shifted preference from mass-produced and mass-marketed products, towards premium and higher quality products that are produced by small-scale, private manufacturers (Ungerer et al., 2015). The nature of craft gin distilling and the passion put into the process, gives each product the qualities of

being authentic and original. Through this, SA craft gin satisfies the millennial consumers search for brands that have added value.

2.3.2 OBJECTIVE TWO - TO APPLY SPECIFIC MODELS IN ORDER TO EVALUATE BTG'S CURRENT BRAND POSITIONING AND BRAND EQUITY.

2.3.2.1 BRAND DIFFERENTIATION AND POSITIONING

In order to identify BTG's current positioning, the brand was analysed through a seven-step differentiation and positioning process as discussed by Cant and Van Heerden (2013) (Figure 2.1). In a market that is saturated (Smith 2016), it is essential that BTG ensure that are differentiated from its competitors, and positioned in a manner that highlights and emphasises that differentiation. Differentiation plays a key role in the success of a brand. The result of being regarded as 'different' allows the brand to occupy a unique position in the consumer's mind and gives them a reason to purchase a certain product over another. Therefore, positioning is differentiating the brand in the consumer's mind. Effective brand differentiation and positioning is essential if a brand wants to secure and maintain loyal consumers (Klopper & North, 2011).

The positioning process includes an analysis of the target market, the brand benefits and the consumer's perception of the brand compared to its competitors. This all leads to perceptual mapping that compares the brand and its competitors based on what the consumers value most about the product category (Klopper & North, 2011). Cant and Van Heerden's (2013) process follows seven steps (Figure 2.1).

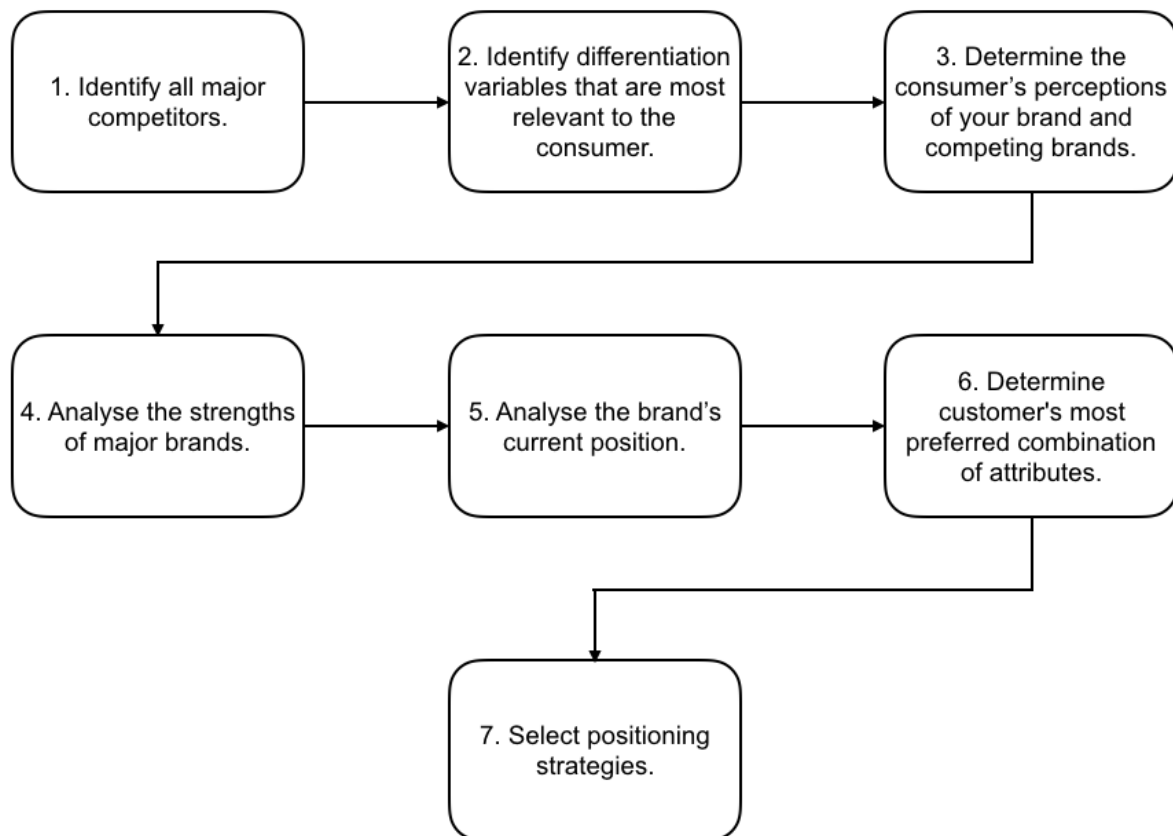


Figure 2.1: Brand positioning model adopted from Cant and Van Heerden (2013).

Firstly, the competitor brands are identified. This will enable an analysis on the strengths and weaknesses of the competitors as well as the brand. The second step is to identify the relevant determinant and differentiation variables. This step analyses the competitive differentiation of the brands and how these are communicated. The third step is to determine the consumer's perceptions of the brands based on the determinant variables in step two. Step four analyses the intensity of the brand's current position. Step five analyses the brand's current position to establish how strongly the brand is associated with the determinant variables. Step six determines the consumer's most preferred combination of attributes. This looks at the consumer's most ideal product and brand within the product category. The final step is to select a positioning strategy. This new positioning needs to reflect the consumer's preference whilst ensuring the brand is differentiated from its competitors. The new positioning also needs to reflect the future attractiveness of the brand (Cant & Van Heerden, 2013).

2.3.2.2 BRAND EQUITY

KELLER'S (2013) CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY CONCEPT.

Various theories have been developed in order to explain brand equity, as it is a multidimensional construct that encompasses several components. Both Aaker (1996) and Keller's (2013) thoughts on 'brand equity' are similar, in that it is added value endowed to any product – this is termed brand value. However, their thoughts differ with regards to perspectives, which results in their definitions focusing on different benefiting parties. Aaker's (1996) argument focuses on brand value as being the benefits for the organisation, whilst Keller's (2013) argument focuses on the consumer's benefits (Klopper & North, 2011). For this reason, this study focuses on Keller's (2013) customer-brand equity theory.

Keller (2013, p.69) defines brand equity in regards to the consumer, as it is "the differential effect the brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand". Swaminathan (2016) and John (2016) praise Keller (1993) for his key contribution in providing a definition of brand equity from the perspective of the consumer, as they argue that brands should be managed through the understanding of their consumer market. In order to establish customer-based brand equity, Keller (2013) has created a brand resonance model (Figure 2.2 and 2.3).

KELLER'S (2013) BRAND RESONANCE MODEL

Keller's (2013) brand resonance model describes how brands can create an intense, active and loyal relationship with their consumers. The model takes into consideration how brand positioning affects what consumers think and feel about a brand, as well as how the brand resonates and connects with them. The brand resonance model builds a brand through a sequence of steps. The success of each step is dependent on achieving the objectives of the previous step (Keller, 2013).

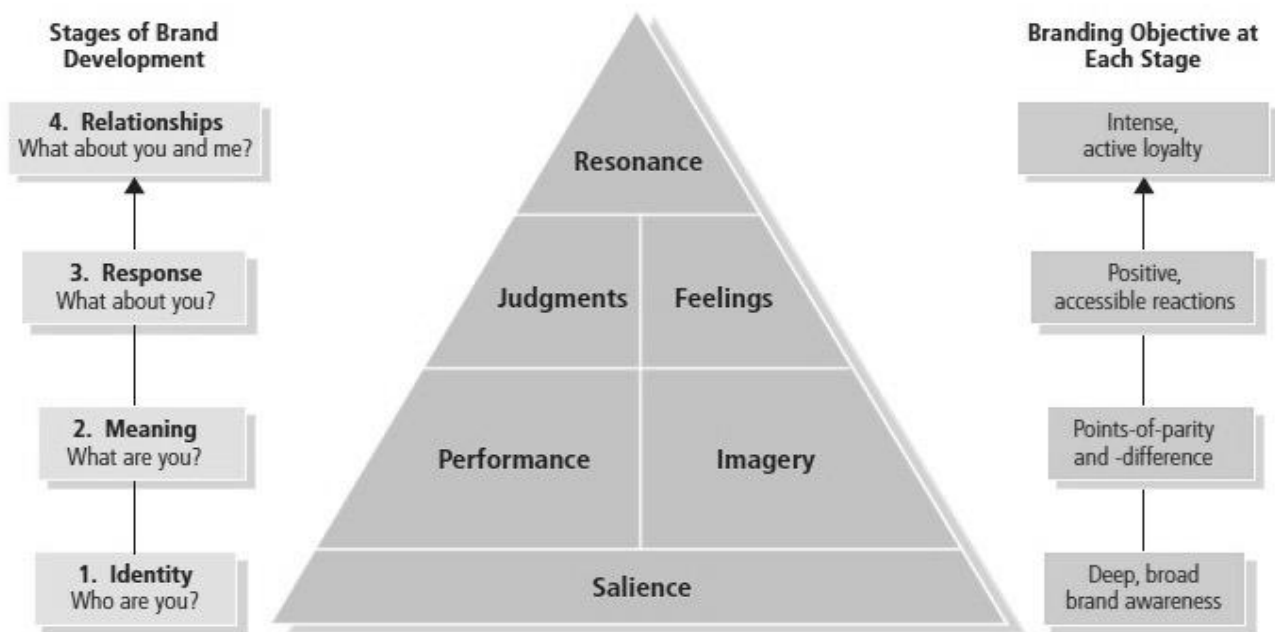


Figure 2.2: Stages of brand development and brand building blocks model adopted from Keller (2013).

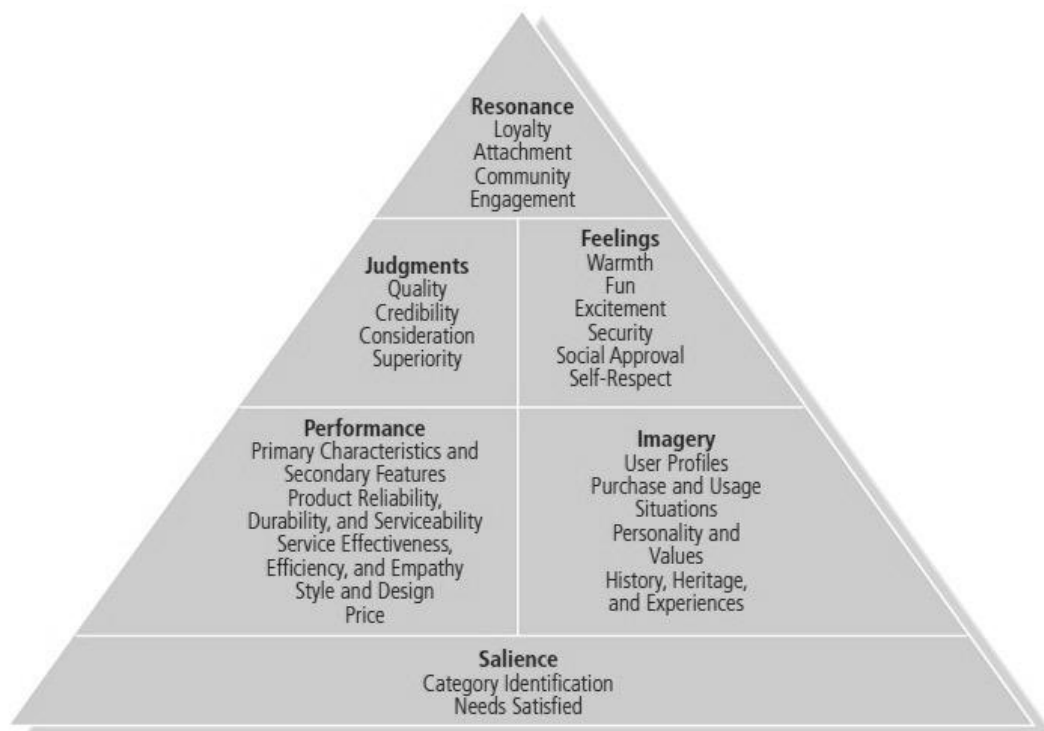


Figure 2.3: Brand building blocks in detail adopted from Keller (2013).

The first step in the stages of brand development is establishing a brand identity that consumers can relate to. The second step is to establish brand meaning by connecting consumers to intangible and tangible brand associations. Step three is brand response, which aims to evoke a desired customer response. The final step is achieving a brand relationship, where brand responses are converted into brand resonance. This final step ensure that the brand has an intense, active, personal and loyal consumer-brand relationship (Keller, 2013).

These four steps form a branding ladder starting from step one to four. These steps are then correlated against the six brand building blocks that Keller (2013) assembles into a pyramid. If a brand reaches the top of the pyramid, it has achieved the fourth step of brand resonance. The combination of the four steps and the six brand building block pyramid forms the brand resonance model. The four steps are positioned on the left hand side of the pyramid, whilst on the right hand side are each emotional objective that a brand achieves at each step. Each brand building block in the pyramid consists of sub-dimensions that give brands more specific objective they need to reach (figure 2.3) (Keller, 2013).

2.3.3 OBJECTIVE THREE - TO ANALYSE BTG'S CURRENT COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING EFFORTS.

2.3.3.1 MARKETING MIX

BTG's marketing mix was analysed in order to identify where the brand's communication and marketing efforts could improve. The marketing mix refers to the four Ps; Product, Price, Promotion and Place. These four P's translate from what the organisation does to what the consumer wants. This value delivered to the consumer is regarded as the four C's; Cost, Convenience, Communications and Consumer wants and needs. All organisations should develop their marketing mix based off these four Cs that directly correlate with each P in the mix (McDonald, 2004). Identifying the marketing mix is essential as it will lead the brand to achieve its objectives (Felicia, 2014).

2.3.3.2 BRAND CONTACT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT MODEL

Brand contact planning and management focuses on points of contact, which is “any moment in which the brand performs or expresses itself and influences what stakeholders think, feel and believe about the brand” (Klopper and North, 2011, p.155). Every point of contact needs to be strategically planned and managed in order to serve the brand’s purpose.



Figure 2.4: Brand contact planning and management model adopted from Klopper and North (2011).

Klopper and North’s (2011) process follows five-phases (Figure 2.4). In phase one, a contact inventory will be conducted in order to identify all points of contact between the stakeholder groups and the brand. In phase two, the primary brand contact patterns will be identified. In phase three, the most influential points of brand contact will be identified. In phase four, a strategy for brand contact cohesion will be developed, and in phase five, a management model for brand contact cohesion will be developed. This process creates contact cohesion in which BTG will be in an ideal state with every contact point serving the brand’s purpose and create strong consumer-brand relationships (Klopper & North, 2011).

After analysing the marketing mix, phase one and three of the contact planning and management model will be conducted on BTG in order to provide contact improvements and recommendations.

2.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This paradigm was used as a lens to view the theoretical foundations that have been sourced. Throughout the discussion of the paradigm, the term ‘demographic’ refers to the population and subculture that partake in and enjoy SA craft gin. The term ‘phenomena’ refers to the SA craft gin trend.

This study was conducted through a phenomenological approach with an interpretivism research orientation. This approach focused on representing the study from the perspective of the demographic, and aimed to develop an accurate and clear understanding of a particular human experience (Maree, 2016). The interpretivism research orientation is influenced by concepts such as phenomenology, “the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view” (Smith, 2013), and hermeneutics, a “methodology of interpretation [which is] concerned with problems that arise when dealing with meaningful human actions and the products of such actions” (Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy, 2016). These two concepts were incorporated into this study as they allow a subjective insight into the demographics’ personal orientations around the phenomena through studying them in their natural environment (Maree, 2016).

This research design was exploratory in order to identify key variables and key issues of the phenomena, the demographic and the social setting in which these two interact in (Maree, 2016). The research was applied through a lens of idealism, as “reality is only knowable through the human mind and through socially constructed meanings” (Maree, 2016: 58). This research design determined why the demographic chose to engage with the phenomena as a result of socially constructed meanings.

This paradigm was chosen in order to achieve the set out objectives of this study. It entailed the primary research to be performed through inductive and qualitative methods such as discussions, interviews and participant observation, which created a deeper insight into the demographics’ perception of the brand as well as their general values, beliefs and experience of the craft gin trend. The information gathered influenced the theoretical foundations, concepts and models that are used throughout this study (Maree, 2016).

2.5 SUMMARY

The literature reviewed above was pertinent to achieving the objectives of this study. These components of literature were crucial in order to develop a foundation of knowledge needed for primary research. This knowledge guided this academic study and created a framework for chapter three, four and five to follow on from. Chapter three presents the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three describes how the findings presented in chapter four were achieved. It provides an in-depth discussion of the research design, research methodology, population, data collection methods, data analysis method, a pilot study, validity, reliability and trustworthiness, limitations as well as the ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The qualitative research tradition of phenomenology formed the research design of this study. This approach was based on the researcher's ontological and epistemological perspectives, research practices and skills, which influenced the choice of data collection methods (Maree, 2016). This approach focused on understanding the essence of the experiences about the phenomena being studied. Qualitative research formed the core of this study, however some quantitative data was collected in order to provide a mixed methods research design. The merging of quantitative with qualitative research methods is regarded as a mixed methods research design. This design was chosen as it provided the necessary tools that were needed to plan and carry out the research in order to fully understand the phenomena and demographic being studied and achieve the research objectives (Maree, 2016).

3.2.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The sampling, population and data collection methods all form part of the research methodology that were executed in order to achieve and answer the research design, research objectives, research questions and problem statement.

3.2.2.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population and sample size for each data collection method was chosen depending on the purpose of this study, the conceptual framework and the time and resources available,

all in order to achieve the goal of optimum data saturation (Maree, 2016). Great care was taken in choosing the population and sampling size for this research design in order to avoid the risk of producing mediocre information (Maree, 2016).

Purposive and homogenous sampling was used in this research study. This was in order to choose members with the purpose of representing a phenomenon, incident, group, type or location and individuals who belong to the same subculture and have the same characteristics, interests, beliefs and values about the phenomenon being studied (Maree, 2016).

The population chosen for this study were men and women between the ages and including 18 to 60 years old. People below the age of 18 are not legal alcohol drinkers and therefore they were not considered for this study due to ethical considerations. This population was segmented into two groups. The first group being craft gin consumers based in Durban. The second group were craft gin industry professionals who were based all over SA. The craft gin consumer's geographic location of Durban was chosen due to time and financial constraints. Despite this, craft gin has recently become a very popular trend in the Durban market. Therefore, the information sourced from these consumers give rich insights into the consumer perception of the craft gin trend. This wide age range was chosen to ensure that data saturation was achieved (Maree, 2016).

The chosen demographic, sample size and sampling strategy were chosen because of their relevance to the conceptual framework and the proposed research questions. Thirteen consumers and nine industry professionals were interviewed. This sample size generated rich information about the phenomenon being studied. It enhanced the transferability of the findings and it produced credible and relevant descriptions and explanations of the phenomenon (Maree, 2016).

3.2.2.2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The choice of data collection methods was influenced by the proposed research questions, the conceptual framework and the objectives of the study. These methods were chosen in order to create an integrated research strategy (Maree, 2016). Although some quantitative data was used, qualitative data formed the basis of the findings. A wide range of qualitative

data collection methods were used for this study in order to ensure that the information gathered could be triangulated through the data-analysis method.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

The quantitative research that was conducted was based on numerical data from AMPS provided by TNT (2015). The quantitative data provided information on the SA consumer's use of gin. This research was conducted in the beginning of the research process in order to segment the market and to analyse the phenomenon and the demographic in a systematic and objective manner (Maree, 2016). Although conducted in 2015 and based on non-craft gin brands, the data identified trends in the consumer market that would inform the qualitative data. Quantitative data deals with objective and systematic data. The advantages of using quantitative research in this study was that it provided precise numerical data that was independent of the researcher. Quantitative data is not in-depth and as rich in insights as qualitative data is, therefore this study used a mixed methods approach (Maree, 2016).

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A primary interview schedule with open-ended questions linked to the objectives was used in order to gather subjective opinions and perceptions about the SA craft gin trend. Interviews were used for this study in order to explore the interviewees views, ideas, attitudes and beliefs about the phenomena (Maree, 2016).

Thirteen consumers were interviewed at a gin event in Durban through structured interviews. Due to the small amount of consumers willing to participate in the interviews, industry professionals were interviewed as well through semi structured interviews. The intention was not to interview industry professionals, however, they were more willing to participate than consumers. Therefore, the consumers' interview schedule was adapted on site to incorporate questions relating to industry professionals. A total of three industry professionals at the event were interviewed. Five other industry professionals were interviewed outside of the event through semi structured interviews. The Brand Owner of BTG was also an interview participant and was questioned through a semi structured interview. This totalled to nine industry professional interviews. Refer to Appendix A for the questions.

The choice of interviewees was based on their knowledge and experience of the SA craft gin market and trend as they could provide rich descriptive data that enabled a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Maree, 2016). The industry professionals were interviewed in a way that that was most convenient for them. They were either interviewed face-to-face, over the telephone or through Googleforms

OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH

Observational research was conducted in order to study the SA craft gin consumer demographic and subculture. This data collection method was conducted at a gin event held in Durban. The observation and immersion into the subculture enabled the identification of the consumer demographic, their appearance, verbal and physical behaviour, their interactions with one another, their personal space and human traffic. How the social setting was constructed was also observed as this influences the way in which the demographic interacted with one another and the phenomena (Maree, 2016). The observational research was conducted over a period of three hours.

INTENDED RESEARCH

It was intended to use focus groups as well as Twitter and Facebook polls as data collection methods. However, these methods were not conducted due to time and budget limitations. It was difficult to gather consumers of a specific age, race and gender that could all meet together for a focus group. The Twitter and Facebook polls were intended to provide answers to any gaps in the primary research that had been conducted. However, once the research was conducted, it did not seem necessary to complete this data collection method as over saturation of data was to be avoided.

PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was conducted in order to form a cornerstone of a good research design that would generate useful insights and findings. It was recognised that a pilot study was an essential initial step in the research process. The pilot studies conducted served as a means to test the methods and procedures that were to be used on a small-scale first before conducting it on a large scale (Hazzi & Maldaon, 2015).

DOCUMENTING FINDINGS

In order to ensure the researcher documented the findings, insights and thoughts during the qualitative research, it was essential that notes were taken. This allowed for the identification, analysis and reflection of key findings in order to develop key insights. Taking notes also ensured that the data gathered was reliable, valid and credible. Photographs were also taken at the event.

3.2.2.3 DATA-ANALYSIS METHOD

Data-analysis was conducted by synthesizing the findings through statements, meanings, themes and general descriptions of the experience (Maree, 2016). In order to synthesis the data, the process of triangulation was used. Triangulation was chosen because of the use of multiple methods in the qualitative research. Triangulation helped to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., and Neville, A.J., 2014). Triangulation was executed through reviewing the transcripts and answers from the data collection methods, alongside the secondary research that formed the conceptual framework. This will test the credibility, reliability and validity of all the information gathered (Maree, 2016).

3.3 VALIDITY, RELIABILITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

Validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility were taken very seriously in this study. All four were considered in the planning stages of this study to ensure that they study would follow an ethical process. Ensuring that all research decisions were valid and reliable allowed for the findings to be trustworthy and credible.

3.4 CONCLUSION

Chapter three has presented an adopted research design in order to achieve the objectives set in chapter one. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative research was selected, and this enabled the researcher to identify the key trends within the SA craft gin market. The choice of target population and sample size made the research adequate and manageable so that the data collection methods and analysis would provide valuable data. This chapter discussed the pilot study that was practiced in order for the researcher to gain experience

before the official process of data collection. It also ensured that the questions would result in significant findings and insights. Throughout the research, validity, reliability and trustworthiness were deeply acknowledged in order to ensure the research was credible. The findings are presented and discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the data collected through quantitative data analysis, interviews and observational research. The data is discussed in a format of word clouds, tables and graphs for ease of interpretation. The word clouds were created via Wordle in order to ensure that the presentation of findings was valid and reliable. The analysis of the data was performed as per the research methodology that was discussed in chapter three. It is important to take note that this was a small-scale qualitative study and therefore, the findings cannot be statistically sound. The study was not a statistical study, but instead a primarily qualitative study, therefore, valuable insights were gained from the SA craft gin industry professionals and consumers. The findings identified represents the researcher's own interpretation understanding of the phenomenon and demographic (Maree, 2016). Conclusions and recommendations are presented in chapter five.

4.2 GENERAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

4.2.1 PARTICIPANTS AT THE GIN EVENT

Primary research was conducted at a gin event in Durban during September. The purpose of attending this event was to gain insight into the consumer's perception of SA craft gin. However, due to the size of the event, there were few consumers there. Therefore, industry professionals were also interviewed. They were interviewed in an informal and unstructured manner due to the circumstances. Therefore, themes in which common ideas were established have been presented and discussed.

4.2.2 PARTICIPANTS NOT AT THE GIN EVENT

The Brand Owner of BTG was interviewed in order to gain a deeper insight into the brand. The questions asked were intended to fill in the gaps of information that the research did not have after reading through the BTG brand breakdown and doing a comprehensive analysis of BTG's marketing and communications.

Various industry professionals not at the gin event were interviewed. The participants were either involved in actual SA craft gin brands or in service provider organisations that distribute SA craft gin.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings from the data-collection methods have been presented depending on which objective they inform.

4.3.1 OBJECTIVE ONE:

Objective one was to identify and explore key trends in the SA craft gin market.

4.3.1.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

The quantitative research that was conducted was based on numerical data from AMPS provided by TNT (2015).

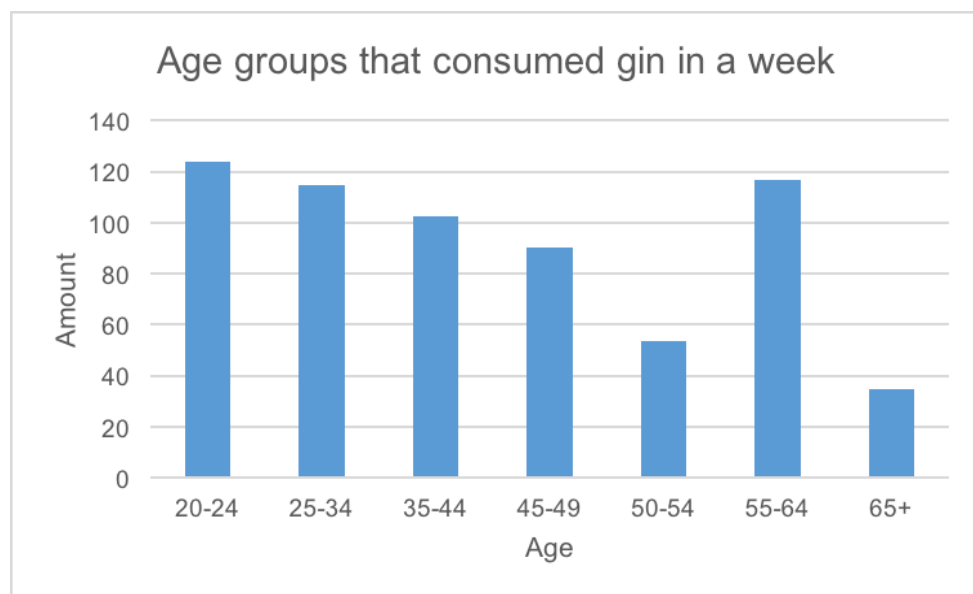


Figure 4.1: Gin consumed by different age groups in a week (TNT, 2015).

Figure 4.1 identifies the segmentation of the market. Those aged 20-34 and 55-64 will be the most likely age groups to consume craft gin (TNT, 2015).

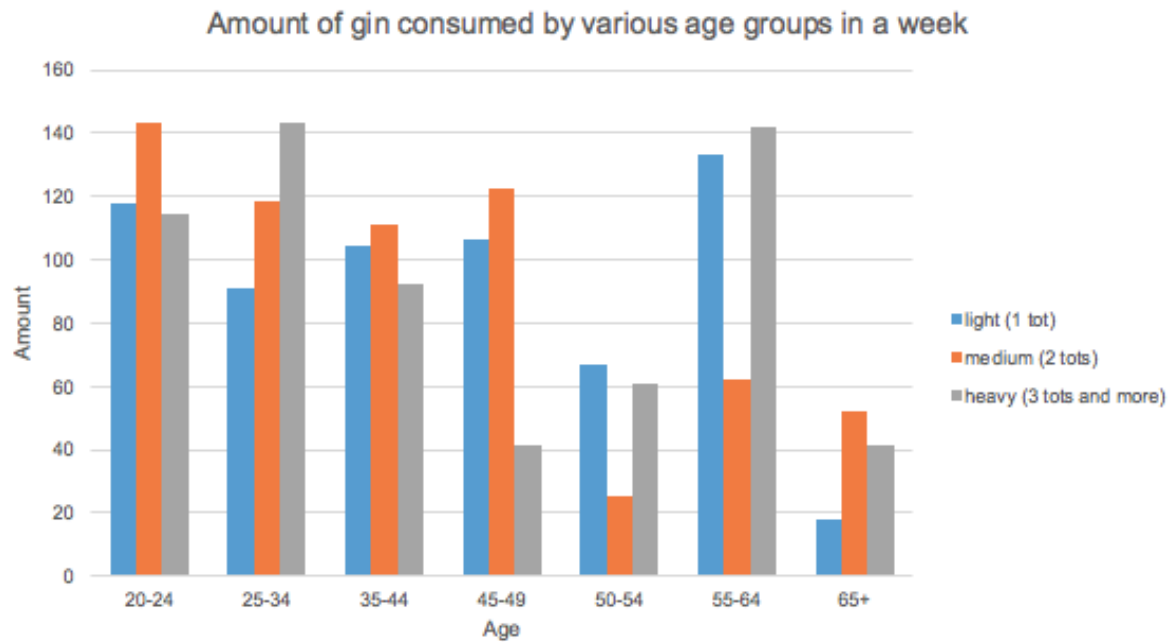


Figure 4.2: Amount of gin consumed by various age groups in a week (TNT, 2015).

Figure 4.2 highlights the amount of gin that each age group consumes by total tots in a week. The heaviest gin drinkers are consumers aged 20 to 35. Although these consumers do not necessarily have the highest amounts per tot measurement, they are the highest in total tot measurements. The age group of 55 to 64 are also relatively high in light and heavy consumption of gin (TNT, 2015).

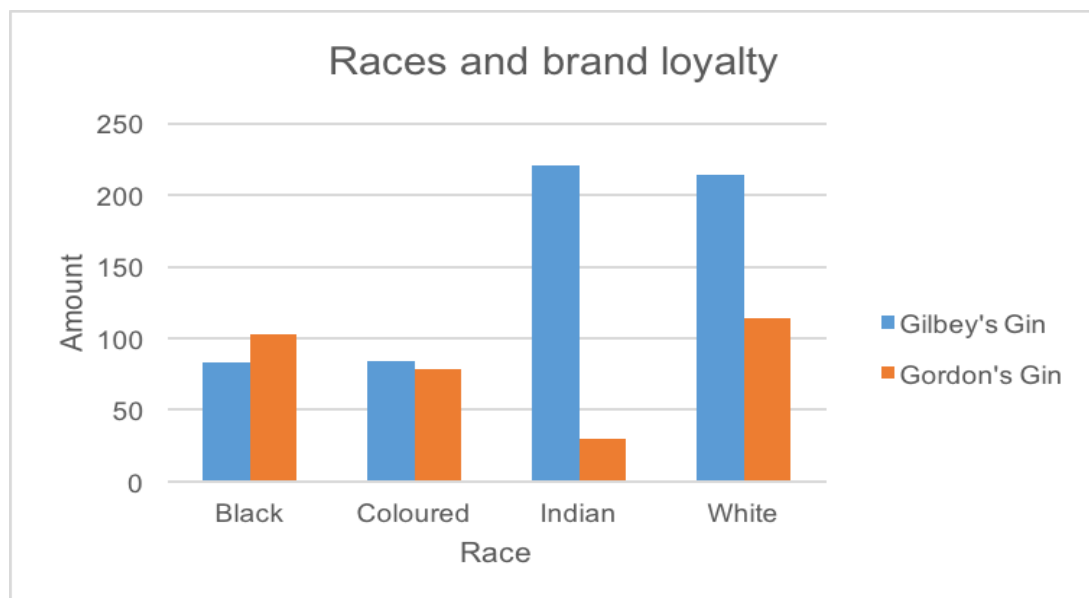


Figure 4.3: Races and brand loyalty (TNT, 2015).

Figure 4.3 highlights which SA racial groups are most brand loyal to Gilbey's Gin and Gordon's Gin. The data indicates that white consumers are most brand loyal as they are the highest total number of consumers drinking both Gilbey's Gin and Gordon's Gin (TNT, 2015).

4.3.1.2 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS WHO WERE NOT AT THE GIN EVENT

Question 6: Which consumers do you believe are the trendsetters and most loyal consumers of the SA craft gin revolution?

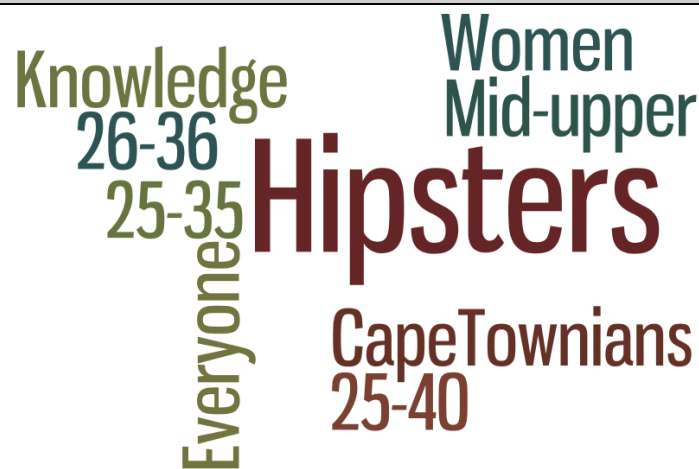


Figure 4.4: Identifying the key trend setters and most loyal consumers of SA craft gin.

The trend setters described to be 'hipsters' aged 25 to 35. The secondary target market are the older consumers from 36 to 45 years old, as these older consumers are more brand loyal to house brands. Both the primary and secondary target market are perceived to be middle-upper class.

4.3.1.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS AT THE GIN EVENT

Theme 1: Motivation for entering the craft gin market.



Figure 4.5: Understanding the industry professional's motivation for entering the SA craft gin market.

The findings suggested that industry professionals have a deep and authentic passion for the craft gin industry. The most prominent reason for getting involved in the craft gin market was because it provides them with the opportunity to create a personalised experience for their consumers.

Theme 2: The perception of a craft gin drinker.



Figure 4.6: Understanding the industry professional's perception of a craft gin drinker.

The findings suggest that craft gin is an all-inclusive product offering as everyone can be a craft gin drinker.

Theme 3: Key drivers of the SA craft gin trend.



Figure 4.7: Identifying the key drivers of the SA craft gin trend.

Although the participants argued that the craft gin drinker is not limited to any age group or racial group, they do believe that millennials are the key drivers of the SA craft gin trend. They argued that these are the consumers that revolutionised the craft gin industry in SA and were the early adopters of the trend. These consumers are regarded as the spark that led to older age groups becoming more interested in the market.

4.3.1.4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF CONSUMER INTERVIEWS

Below is a presentation of the results that were captured from the thirteen consumers who participated in the interviews at the gin event.

Table 4.1: Identifying what spirits consumers drink

Question 1: What spirits do you usually drink? (number is reflective of how many times the spirit was mentioned – it is not reflective of the number of participants)	
Gin	10
Whisky	5
Vodka	4
Tequila	1
Brandy	1

These findings present potential indirect competitors of SA craft gin brands.

Question 2: What encouraged you to drink craft gin?

*Figure 4.8: Establishing why consumers started drinking SA craft gin.*

The research conducted amongst consumers highlighted that they drank craft gin primarily because it of its variety and because it was different. For consumers, craft gin is different because taste, variety and the range the spices, herbs, mixers and fruits you can add to it. The characteristic of being 'different' has created a sense that craft gin is innovative.

Question 3: How do you perceive the image of a craft gin drinker?



Figure 4.9: Understanding the perceived image of a SA craft gin drinker.

SA craft gin consumers are described to be 'sophisticated' and 'adventurous'.

Question 4: Why do you want to be seen as a craft gin drinker?



Figure 4.10: Understanding why consumers wish to be perceived as a SA craft gin drinker.

Consumers felt that being seen as a craft gin drinker was irrelevant to them. Those who said they did want to be seen as a craft gin drinker was because they wanted to stand out and be different within their communities and peer groups.

4.3.1.5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH

Observational research took place at the gin event that was held in Durban on the 6th September. The event showcased a selection of malt whiskies and craft gins.

OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH NOTES.

A) The Venue Setting and the Event as a Whole

- The venue was very secretive and mysterious which made the event more exciting and exclusive.
- The set-up of the event made one feel very sophisticated.

B) The Gin Brands

- The brands featured in the Gin section of the event were; Baker & Quin Tonic Water, Cape Town Gin, Clemengold, Ginologist, KVV, Triple Three and Wixworth.
- Each brand's station had hostesses who enjoyed telling the consumers about the brands especially the specific and unique botanicals in the products.
- The hostesses recommended how each consumer should enjoy the craft gin being served.
- Each brand had coasters and pamphlets on their brand for consumers to take.
- Each brand had their own display of ingredients, botanicals, spices, herbs and fruit that one could add to their gin.

C) The Consumers

- Majority of the consumers were of an older demographic.
- All consumers were well dressed.
- Their dress code, speech and behaviour suggested they were high income earners.
- White consumers spent a lot of time in the gin area.
- There were a few black consumers. Those that were there spent most of their time in the whisky area.
- The black consumers were not as loud as white consumers and they generally kept to themselves.
- The consumers enjoyed engaging with the different flavours.
- The consumers enjoyed educating themselves on the different gin brands.



Figure 4.11: Image one from gin event (taken by Kendra Hunn)



Figure 4.12: Image two from gin event (taken by Kendra Hunn)

4.3.2 OBJECTIVE TWO:

Objective two was to apply specific models in order to evaluate BTG's current brand positioning and brand equity.

4.3.2.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEW WITH THE BRAND OWNER

Table 4.2: Understanding the key trends driving the popularity of SA craft gin.

Question 1: What do you think are the key trends driving the popularity of SA craft gin?
- Global development - Craft beer - Western drinking culture - Craft gin is a white consumer trend

Table 4.3: Identifying BTG's differentiating competitive advantage.

Question 2: What do you believe differentiates the BTG brand from its competitors and puts it at a competitive advantage?
BTG's is a masculine gin that is different to other SA craft gin brands that are perceived as feminine.

Table 4.4: Understanding the inspiration behind BTG.

Question 3: What inspired you to create the Blind Tiger Gin brand?
It is topical at the moment.

Table 4.5: Identifying BTG's direct competitors.

Question 4: Who are your direct competitors?
Hendricks gin as it is also a masculine gin brand. However, Hendricks is not a SA craft gin but rather distilled in Scotland.

Table 4.6: Identifying BTG's indirect competitors.

Question 5: Who are your indirect competitors?
The brand owner does not believe that BTG has any indirect competitors such as craft beer or whisky. He argued that every category functions on its own and therefore, these indirect brands do not affect BTG.

Table 4.7: Understanding the value of winning awards.

Question 6: What encouraged you to enter the international SIP awards and the Gin masters in 2017?
- Intrinsic recognition - Endorsement - The awards suggest the quality of the product

Table 4.8: Understanding the vision for the BTG brand.

Question 7: What is the vision for BTG?
To be the first SA craft gin to enter the black market and to export to other African countries and India.

Table 4.9: Understanding the reasoning behind BTG's history

Question 8: How is the American history of prohibition in line with what you are wishing to communicate about BTG?
SA consumption of alcohol as SA are heavily influenced by Western culture.

4.3.3 OBJECTIVE THREE:

Objective three aimed to provide recommendations to increase BTG's points of contact.

4.3.3.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEWS WITH INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS WHO WERE NOT AT THE GIN EVENT

Table 4.10: Identifying which brands are perceived as most successful and popular by industry professionals.

Question 2: Which do you think are the most popular SA craft gins amongst the consumer market? (number is reflective of how many times the brand was mentioned – it is not reflective of the number of participants).	
Inverroche	4
Triple 3	3
Musgrave	3
Hope on Hopkins	2
Wilderer	1
Ginologist	1
Distillery 031	1
Six Dogs	1

The participants argued that the SA craft gin market is very competitive. Inverroche was regarded as one of the most popular and successful SA craft gin brands due to its distribution, exposure, volume and because it was the first SA craft gin to enter the market. Innovation is also vital to the success of a craft gin brand as consumers are looking for products with a unique offering, such as Musgrave Pink Gin.

Question 3: What elements of these brands do you believe have resulted in their success?



Figure 4.13: Understanding the elements of craft gin brand's success

The key elements to a craft gin brand's success is its early entry into the market, attractive offering, distribution and marketing.

The participants argued that brands need to find a gap in the market and be the first to enter it such as Musgrave pink gin and Wilderer fynbos gin. Alongside having a unique offering, it is recommended that brands ensure their packaging is unique as this plays a huge role in the consumer's preference for a product. Brand such as Musgrave pink Gin and Six Dogs are succeeding in the market because of their unique packaging.

Marketing and distribution interconnect with one another and are essential to the brand's success as consumers should not have to go looking for the product. Participants suggested that marketing and distribution be achieved through social media, ensuring the products are on the shelves of reputable liquor stores and restaurants and having branded merchandise such as glasses and T shirts.

Question 4: Do you believe there is a major challenge that craft gin distilleries and brand face?



Figure 4.14: Identifying challenges that craft gin distilleries face

One of the greatest challenges that craft gin brands face is the pressure to be innovative in a market that is quickly becoming saturated. Participants argued that because there is so much diversity with regards to botanicals in SA, and that craft gin is such a versatile product, that brands need to ensure they have the most innovative product in order to succeed in the competitive market. Six Dogs and Musgrave Pink Gin are examples of an innovative product that have shaken the SA craft gin market. The market is becoming saturated and therefore, marketing needs to be budgeted for in order to ensure that distribution of the products will serve the brand (Pierre, 2017).

Keeping up with the exclusive offer of craft gins whilst attempting to scale up the business is also a challenge. As craft gin brands feel the pressure of the saturated market, they will feel a pressure to push out more product and increase marketing budget in order to increase brand awareness. As most craft gin brands boast that each bottle is handcrafted and that the

labels are signed by distillers, the more these brands will have to keep up this high quality as they try to put all their efforts into overcoming the other challenges in the market.

Question 5: What do you think are the best ways for a craft gin brand to increase their presence in the market place?



Figure 4.15: Understanding how craft gin brands can increase their presence in the market place

Public presence and distribution interconnect with one another and are the key factors to increasing brand presence for craft gin brands. Through effective marketing and distribution channels, craft gin brands will be able to have an impactful presence in the market. Public presence and distribution can be achieved through tastings, a strong entry into the market, social media, presence as gin festivals and events as well as presence in gin bars and restaurants. It is interesting to note that social media was not regarded as the most effective means of increasing brand presence as one might presume. This is because the respondents feel that having a more physical touch points with the consumer is more beneficial as it gives the consumer a greater and more heightened experience of the brand. Due to the price of craft gin, it was argued that consumers are not happy to spend R300 to R400 on a bottle of craft gin if they are unsure whether they like it or not. Having a more physical presence allows consumers to taste and experience the product before purchasing it.

4.4 KEY INSIGHT

Through the primary research and triangulation of findings, a key insight was drawn up. It was found that SA craft gin encourages consumers to find their own uniqueness and express their individuality through the product. The flexibility, variety and innovative nature of craft gin allows consumers to add meaning to their beverages, making the drink more personalised to the individual's preference.

4.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Chapter four focused on the findings from the quantitative and qualitative research conducted. These findings were presented, interpreted and then discussed. The findings have relevant, interesting, exciting and informative insight into the SA craft gin trend. In chapter five, conclusions and recommendations have been drawn from the results and will be discussed in order to achieve the objectives mentioned in chapter one. Conclusions and recommendations relating to each objective will be provided in chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter five, the findings from the literature and the research are presented in relation to each objective. These are then followed by a conclusion and recommendations. In addition, the limitations of this study, suggestions for further research as well as a closing comment have been provided.

5.2 OBJECTIVE ONE:

To identify and explore the key trends of the SA craft gin market.

5.2.1 KEY TRENDS

Through primary and secondary research, four key trends of the SA craft gin market were identified. Each trend will be discussed based off the findings from the literature and research. These trends will inform and influence objective two and three as well as the recommendations made throughout chapter five.

Table 5.1: The four key trends of the SA craft gin market.

1. Millennials are the trendsetters.
2. The sophisticated and adventurous craft gin drinker.
3. Craft gin creates a personal experience.
4. Craft gin encourages social engagement.

5.2.1.1 MILLENNIALS ARE THE TRENDSETTERS

FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

The growing craft gin trend in SA is geared towards the middle class millennial consumer who have developed a taste for premium spirits because of their more sophisticated and cosmopolitan lifestyle (Mokhema, 2016) (Inside Africa, 2017) (Cunnington, 2014) (Naylor,

2016) (Advisium Growth, 2014). Millennial consumers are also more attracted to 'local is lekker' brands that are authentic, unique and different, therefore, making SA craft gin brands attractive to this demographic (De Fleuriot, 2017).

FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

The primary research highlighted that the key drivers of the SA craft gin trend are millennial SA consumers. The age of this demographic are consumers aged 25 to 35 and are regarded as 'hipsters'. This target market are the trend leaders and early adopters within their communities and peer groups. By targeting these consumers, BTG will enter the market with a unique product that will increase brand awareness, engagement and attachment. BTG needs to view this market segment in relation to the diffusion of innovation theory as millennials will form the innovators category (Figure 5.1). The Diffusion of Innovation Theory: The Adoption Curve (2015) argues that these young consumers are risk takers and adventurous. They are the consumers responsible for introducing innovations to the larger population. They are eager to try new things and because they enjoy sharing their experiences with their communities and peer groups. The older SA consumer will fall into the category of late majority as they are more brand loyal and resistant to change. However, they are very responsive to peer pressure. These consumers want to ensure that innovations have been tested and used before they themselves risk trying them. Figure 5.2 provides insight into the SA craft gin market segmentation

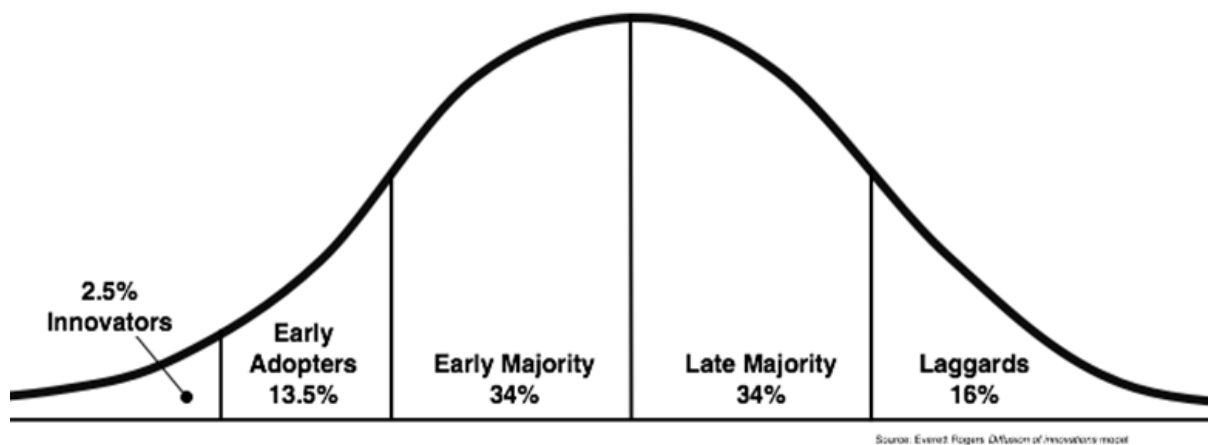


Figure 5.1: The Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Behavioral Change Models, 2016).

Source adopted from Behavioral Change Models (2016).

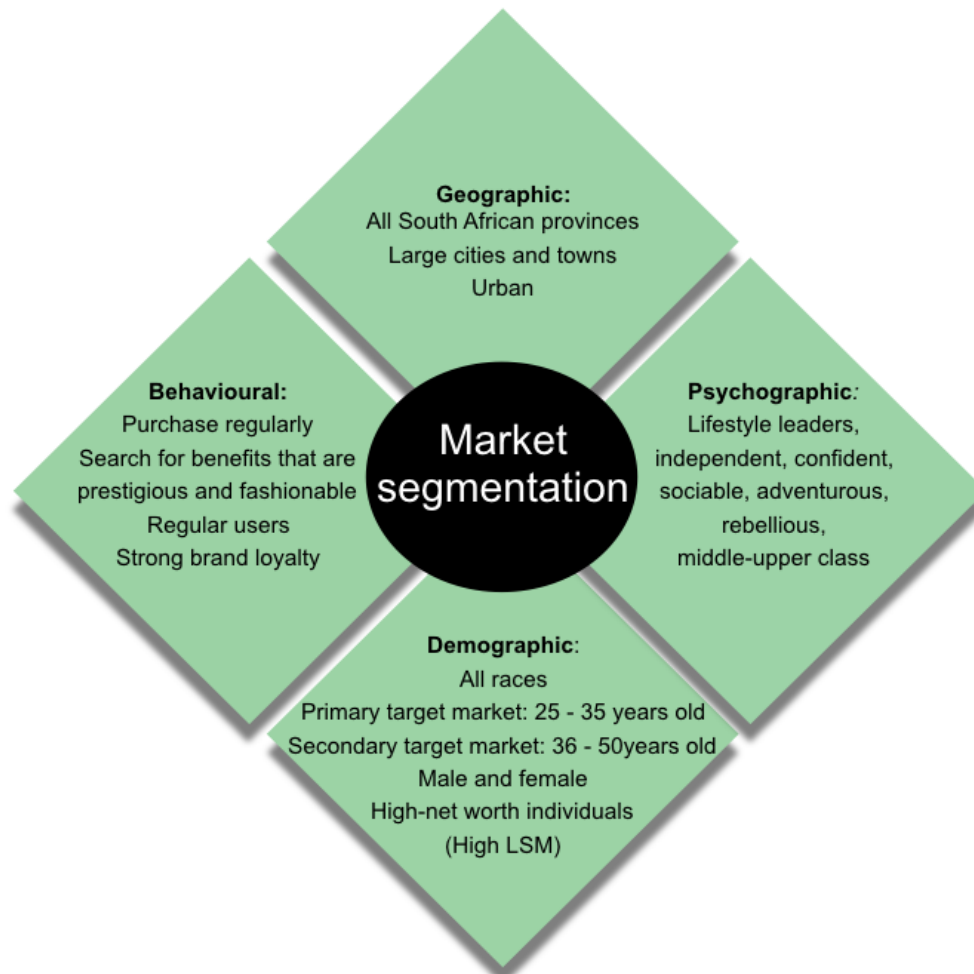


Figure 5.2: Market segmentation based on Cant and Van Heerden's (2013) guidelines.

5.2.1.2 THE SOPHISTICATED AND ADVENTUROUS CRAFT GIN DRINKER

FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

Naylor (2016) and Oudin (2015, p.24) argue that the SA craft gin trend has formed a subculture of "hipster brand ambassadors". These consumers are similar to that of SA craft beer consumers in that they are trendy, sexy, unique, individual and curious (Oudin, 2015) (Mokhema, 2016) (Catchpole, 2016) (Fletcher & Vines, 2014).

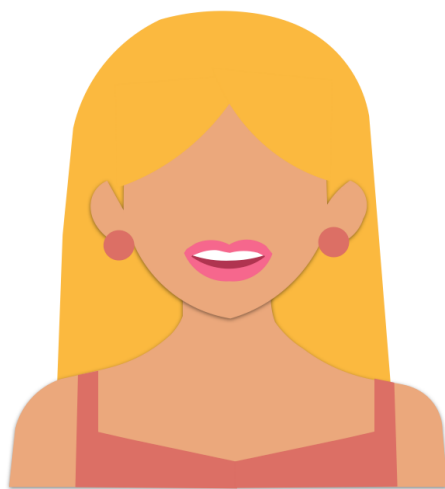
FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

The most common perception of a SA craft gin drinker was that they are sophisticated and adventurous. The characteristic of being 'sophisticated' creates the image of a craft gin drinker as someone who is fancy, classy, mature, trendy and glamorous. This

‘sophistication’ also suggests that the consumer is curious to educate themselves on craft gin, and that they enjoy sharing their craft gin experience with others.

A craft gin drinker is seen as adventurous as they are eager to experiment with different gin brands, botanicals, mixers, fruits and spices. Each craft gin they create and try gives them a new experience.

A target market profile has been created to describe the ideal sophisticated and adventurous craft gin consumer (Figure 5.3).



Meet Claire

- 27 years old
- Lives in Cape Town
- Graphic designer
- Coffee shops by day
- Bars and clubs by night
- Very conscious of trends
- Socialite
- Active on social media
- Enjoys going for hikes up Table Mountain

Figure 5.3: Target market profile.

5.2.1.3 CRAFT GIN CREATES A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

SA craft gin has become an interesting, exciting and fun way to experience what SA has to offer. Craft gin brands are producing interesting products that are unique and use local ingredients (Mokhema, 2016). SA's distinct plant kingdom provides a vast variety of botanicals and herbs. This environment has driven the craft gin industry as it allows distillers to add variety and individuality to their gin (Inside Africa, 2017).

FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

SA craft gin encourages consumers to find their own individuality and gives them the opportunity to express themselves through a brand and its product. The flexibility, variety and innovative nature of craft gin allows consumers to add meaning to their beverages, making the drink more personalised and tailored to the individual's unique [preference. The vast arrangement of herbs, spices, botanicals, fruits and mixers allows the craft gin consumer to be adventurous and experience gin brands in an exciting and different way. Craft gin is described as an experiential drink because of its freedom to be personalised by every consumer.

5.2.1.4 CRAFT GIN CREATES A COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGES SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

Naylor (2016) and (Oudin, 2015:24) argue that consumers engage with craft gin at various communal gatherings such as gin bars and festivals that are dedicated to the spirit.

FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

Craft gin is attractive because of the personalised experience it offers to consumers, as well as to the community it has created. Consumers feel as though they can express their uniqueness and individuality within a social environment that shares a common interest. They are able to stand out from the crowd whilst still being part of something. Craft gin encourages story telling where consumers can engage together in public spaces such as gin bars, festivals and events.

5.2.2. CONCLUSION

The four key trends that were identified through primary research reflect the findings from literature. The trends that were identified and unpacked highlight that millennials are the trendsetters of the SA craft gin trend, and that the profile of a SA craft gin drinker is one who is sophisticated and adventurous. It was also identified that craft gin is a very personal gin as consumers have a lot of freedom in how they create their craft gin beverage. This personalisation is a reflection on the consumer's own desire to express their individuality and uniqueness. Craft gin is an experiential drink due to this personalisation and freedom.

Finally, craft gin has created a community that encourages social engagement between consumers. Craft gin brings people together especially through the increasing presence of gin bars, restaurants, festivals and events in SA.

5.2.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to stand out in the increasingly saturated craft gin market, BTG needs to use these four trends to their advantage. All four trends can assist in bettering their current communication and marketing efforts, as well as inform their own brand to ensure that the BTG is attractive to its target market. These four trends can be used in conjunction with specific brand building models to increase BTG's presence in the market.

5.3 OBJECTIVE TWO:

To apply specific models in order to evaluate BTG's current brand positioning and brand equity.

5.3.1 BRAND POSITIONING

5.3.1.1 FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

In order to analyse BTG's current brand positioning, a seven step brand positioning process was conducted following the steps of Cant and Van Heerden (2013) (Figure 2.1). In a saturated market, it is essential that BTG ensure that are differentiated from the competitors and positioned in a manner that highlights and emphasises that differentiation (Smith 2016) (Cant & Van Heerden, 2013). Differentiation and positioning play a key role in the success of a brand as it provides consumers with a reason to purchase a certain product over another (Klopper & North, 2011).

5.3.2.2 FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

A comprehensive analysis of BTG's competitors was conducted in order to determine where these brands sit on the positioning plane in comparison to BTG. The choice of these competitors was based of the interviews with industry professionals who each discussed which brands they think are most successful and popular. The comparison of competitors can be seen in table 5.2.

Table 5.2: BTG's competitor analysis.

	The brand	Strengths	Weaknesses	Contact strategies
Inverroche (Inverroche, 2017)	Premium spirit brand which is original and authentically SA.	Gold at the 2016 Alberta beverage Awards. Produces three products. First entry into the market. Offers tastings and tours at the distillery.	More appealing to an older consumer market.	Social media, TV and magazine features, partnerships with restaurants and events, bloggers and influencers, website, PR, partnerships with events, tastings and tours.
Musgrave (Musgrave, s.a)	Luxury brand.	Two Silver awards in the 2017 International Wine and Spirit competition and a first place at the 2016 Michelangelo Wine and Spirits awards. Produces two products, Products are sold in 750ml as well as 50ml miniatures. First pink gin in South Africa. Featured in the Gin Box.	Distilled by competitor brand, Hope on Hopkins. Pink Gin is more popular than Musgrave 11.	Social media, TV and magazine features, partnerships with restaurants, bloggers and influencers, PR, partnerships with festivals and events, featured in the Gin Box.

Triple 3 (Triple 3, 2017)	Premium gin with world class quality.	Three products, Double gold at the San Francisco World spirits competition 2017, One of the top three best-selling local gins in SA (Von Ulmenstein, 2017). Unique offering of 100% Juniper Berry Gin is (Spit or Swallow, 2016). Offers tastings at the distillery.	Website is very plain.	Social media, TV and magazine features, partnerships with restaurants, bloggers and influencers, PR, partnerships with festivals and events, tastings and tours.
Hope on Hopkins (Hope on Hopkins, 2017)	High quality.	Regarded as the Mother City's first artisanal distillery. Distils five spirit products for their own brand. Offers tastings at the distillery.	Distils competitor brands.	PR, Social media, TV and magazine features, partnerships with restaurants, bloggers and influencer, tastings and tours.

By using this competitor analysis, BTG can be positioned on a positioning plane in comparison to its competitors. The research identified that there was a perceived image of a craft gin drinker. This image is connected to the brand image of various craft gins. It can then be argued that consumers develop a brand image of craft gin brands based on the price of products. The price of the brand suggests the quality of the product that informs the brand image. A high priced product will suggest that the brand is exclusive, whereas a

cheaper brand will do the opposite. The differentiation variables that are most relevant to the consumer are therefore, price and quality.



Figure 5.4: BTG's desired brand positioning.

BTG's brand positioning is to offer a product at an affordable premium price. However, this does not align with their target market who are high net income individuals who are lifestyle leaders within their respective peer groups. 'Premium price' is defined as a product being sold at a higher price than its competitors (BusinessDictionary, 2017). This price gives it a sense of 'exclusivity'. Therefore, for a product to be sold at an 'affordable premium price' seems to be contradictory. BTG's target audience are high net income individuals, which suggests they are wealthy and are more likely to purchase expensive brands because they can afford it and because of the perceived image and quality associated with this. Therefore, BTG do not need to position themselves as 'affordable' if they wish to continue targeting this market.



Figure 5.5: BTG's recommended re-positioning

Figure 5.5 displays BTG's recommended re-positioning based on being a premium product sold at a premium price, rather than an affordable premium product. This repositioning will enable BTG to better target their desired market of high net worth individuals.

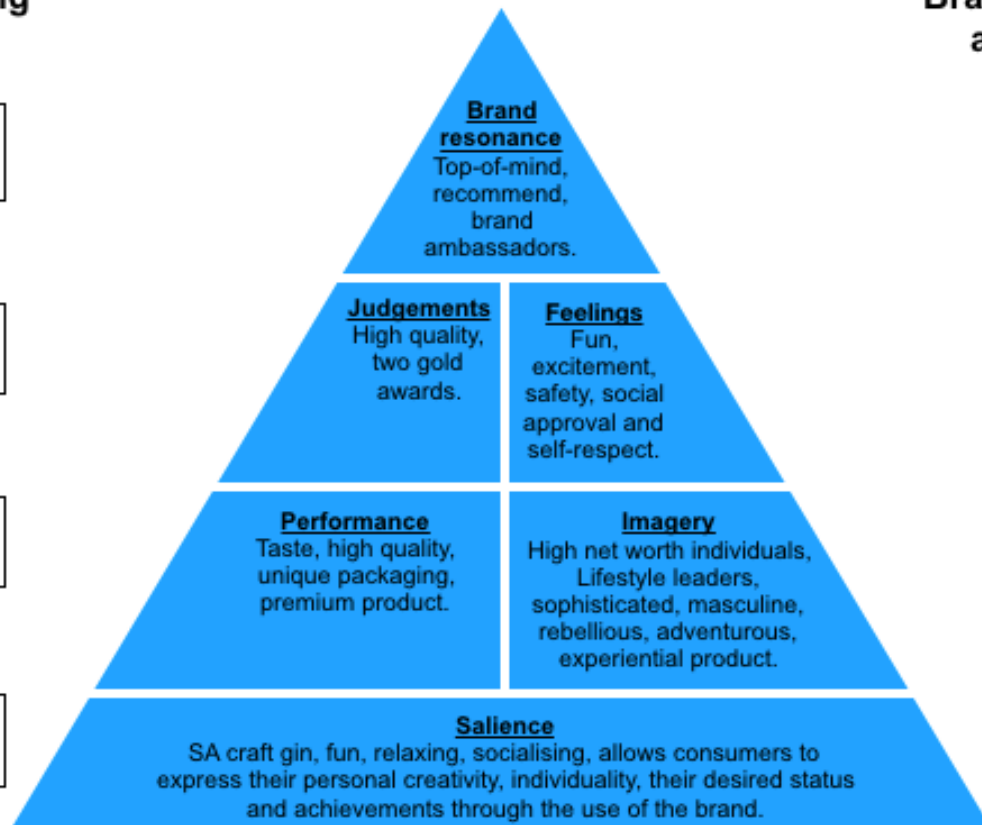
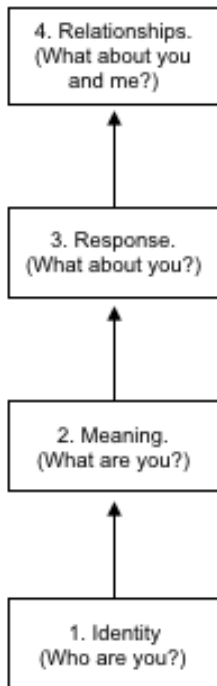
5.3.2 BRAND EQUITY

5.3.2.1 FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

BTG's brand equity was analysed by using Keller's (2013) consumer-based brand equity model and resonance model (Figure 2.2 and 2.3).

5.3.2.2 FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

Brand Building Ladder



Branding objective at each stage

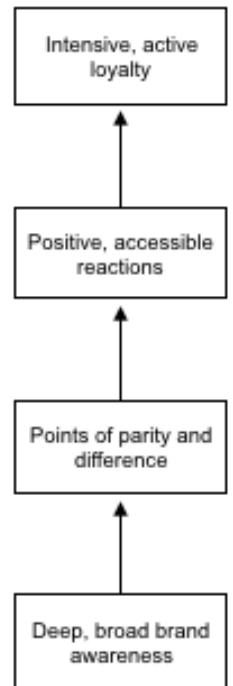


Figure 5.6: Keller's (2013) brand resonance model applied to BTG.

By using Keller's (2013) resonance model, a strategic guide can be developed as to how BTG can move up the pyramid to achieve brand resonance.

In step one, consumers will analyse the BTG brand identity through the brand's communications and marketing strategies. Strong brand salience will highlight BTG's unique identity within the saturated product category. It will communicate the product offering and the brand's ability to satisfy the consumers' unmet needs being the need to express creativity, individuality, desired status and achievement. As a young brand, achieving high brand salience is essential as it will increase brand awareness.

In step two, consumers will analyse the meaning of the BTG brand and its characteristics compared to other brands in the same product category. Performance examines the product

that BTG provides. Performance of BTG includes the brands product characteristics such as its unique taste, high quality, unique packaging and premium price. Imagery describes the extrinsic properties of BTG, including the ways in which the brand attempts to meet customers psychological or social needs and how these relate to the brand's personality (Keller, 2013). BTG's imagery understands the user profile and how they the brand can connect with them through similar personality traits. Step two encourages consumers to determine the brand's points of parity and difference that compare the brand's position against its competitors.

In step 3, consumers create perceptions about the brand. Brand judgements are the consumers' personal opinions and evaluations of BTG, which they form by putting together all the brand performance and imagery associations (Keller, 2013). The consumer's judgements of BTG are reinforced by the credibility of the brand through its awards as well as word of mouth. The feelings evoked by BTG will strengthen the consumer-brand relationship. BTG needs to connect with the consumer's lifestyle by creating feelings of fun, excitement, security, social approval and self-respect (Keller, 2013). By creating these feelings, BTG will enhance their image of being necessary for their target market's lifestyle. Through the creation of positive judgements and feelings, BTG will generate positive and accessible reactions.

In step four, consumers will begin to ask what is the relationship between themselves and the brand. Brand resonance describes the ultimate relationship and level of identification that consumers have with a brand. It describes the nature of this relationship and the extent to which consumers feel that they are in sync with the brand. Brand resonance is characterized in terms of intensity; depth of the psychological bond that consumers have with the brand. and activity engineered by this loyalty; repeat purchase rates and the extent to which consumers seek out brand information, events and other loyal consumers. These two dimensions can be broken down into four categories; behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community and active engagement (Keller, 2013). The SA craft gin market is increasingly becoming saturated. Therefore, BTG need to invest in ensuring they have loyal and attached consumers. These consumers will become brand ambassadors and will recommend the brand to other consumers. By creating a community of BTG brand ambassadors, active engagement with the brand will be increased. By achieving step four,

BTG will have intense, active loyalty from their consumers. and will have a strong brand positioning and presence in the market.

5.3.3 CONCLUSIONS

BTG's current positioning is contradictory as the brand aims to sell their product at an 'affordable premium price'. However, this does not align with their target market who are high net income individuals who are lifestyle leaders within their respective peer groups. 'Premium price' suggests that the product is sold at a higher price than its competitors (BusinessDictionary, 2017), and that it is an exclusive product. Therefore, for a product to be sold at an 'affordable premium price' seems contradictory. BTG's target audience are high net income individuals which suggests they are wealthy and are more likely to purchase expensive brands, because they can afford it and because of the perceived image and quality associated with this. Therefore, BTG do not need to position themselves as 'affordable' if they wish to continue targeting this market. Their positioning has limited their consumer's ability to reach brand resonance based on Keller's (2013) brand resonance model. By repositioning the brand, BTG can better target and communicate to their target market. This will allow the consumer to feel of more value to the brand, thus motivating them to move up the brand equity pyramid and reach brand resonance.

5.3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

BTG need to apply the four key trends of the SA craft gin to brand building models, specifically brand positioning and brand equity models. This will ensure that the brand is set up in the most effective way to reach, communicate and resonate with consumers.

MILLENNIALS ARE THE TRENDSETTERS.

BTG's current target market is broad and proper segmentation and profiling has not yet been established. BTG needs to narrow down their target market to 'millennials aged 25 to 35 who are of high net worth and lifestyle leaders in their respective peer groups'. By doing this, BTG will be targeting the trend setters of the market who will be the first consumers to climb up the brand resonance pyramid. Having a more defined target market will also help them in clearly defining their position in the market so that they can effectively communicate their competitive advantage. Defining their position will make their points-of-parity and point-of-

difference more noticeable. Therefore, making the brand stand out in the overcrowded and saturated craft gin market.

THE SOPHISTICATED AND ADVENTUROUS CRAFT GIN DRINKER.

Having a more defined market segmentation will allow BTG to communicate more effectively to their target audience. BTG's brand identity is perfectly aligned with the millennial sophisticated and adventurous craft gin drinker. By establishing strong brand salience based on similar identities, consumers will become more brand loyal to BTG because the brand is more relatable. The brand becomes an avenue for the consumer to express their individuality. BTG currently aim to target consumers who seek experience and are strivers. By repositioning their brand, BTG will be more in line with being striver brand as consumers will feel more compelled to communicate their high net worth status through the BTG brand.

CRAFT GIN CREATES PERSONALISED EXPERIENTIAL MOMENTS.

BTG is a brand that provides their consumers an experience in which they can express their personal and creative individuality through the engagement with the brand and the use of the product. By repositioning the brand to make it a more exclusive offering, BTG will enhance its experiential and striver qualities. The repositioning will also create a more exclusive community of brand users as the segmentation and target market are more defined by a specific target market profile. By giving consumers a way to experience personal moments with the brand will guide consumers to climb up the brand resonance pyramid and reach the top where they become active loyal consumers of BTG.

CRAFT GIN ENCOURAGES SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.

Even though BTG's brand identity is rooted in individuality and uniqueness, the brand needs to ensure that it is including themselves in the craft gin community. If they do not do this, the brand will lack distribution and marketing which will hinder brand awareness. BTG needs to find a balance between communicating themselves as a brand that encourages individuality, and a brand that encourages socialising and engagement.

5.4 OBJECTIVE THREE:

To analyse BTG's current communications and marketing efforts.

5.4.1 FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE

The process in which BTG's current contact points were analysed was through the marketing mix. The marketing mix will be analysed as it is a starting point to identify where the brand needs to invest in the brand in order for it to reach its objectives (Felicia, 2014). Recommendations to improve contact points will be made based on Klopper and North's (2011) brand contact planning and management process (Figure 2.4).

5.4.2 FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

The findings highlighted that the greatest challenge facing SA craft gins is that the market is becoming saturated and therefore, brands need to invest in distribution. The most effective way for consumers to combat this is to invest in their marketing in order to increase their public presence. Table 5.3 highlights BTG's current marketing mix. As one can see, the brand has weak marketing strategies compared to its

Table 5.3: BTG's current marketing mix.

Marketing mix
<u>Product:</u> SA craft gin.
<u>Place:</u> Liquor stores only in the Western Cape and Gauteng. Featured in various gin bars.
<u>Price:</u> Average price of R385.00 (Bottleshop, 2017).
<u>Promotion:</u> PR and social media on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

BTG's current marketing and communication efforts is limited. Compared to its competitors, the brand has a very small following on social media, which is its main marketing channel. The brand has been involved in some PR, however it is not as rewarding as it could be. In order to improve the brand's awareness, various marketing recommendations have been suggested. The interviews highlighted that the most effective way for craft gin brands to increase brand awareness in the market is through distribution and increasing public presence.

Public presence and distribution interconnect with one another, and these are key factors to increasing BTG's brand presence in the market. Through effective marketing and distribution channels, BTG will be able to have an impactful presence in the market. Public presence and distribution can be achieved through tastings, a strong entry into the market, social media, presence at gin festivals and events as well as presence in gin bars and restaurants. By investing in marketing that uses more physical interaction with the consumer, BTG will increase brand awareness, strengthen consumer-brand relationships, and encourage consumers to climb up the resonance model and reach brand attachment.

5.4.3 CONCLUSIONS

By analysing BTG's current marketing mix, it can be said that their marketing and communications is weak compared to its competitors. The brand's current distribution efforts are limiting the brand as the product is only sold in Cape Town and Johannesburg liquor stores, the brand has not yet been featured at any festivals and events, and only recently have they started showcasing the brand at gin bars. The research highlighted that the most effective ways to increase brand awareness is through distribution and physical presence. Therefore, BTG needs to invest in their marketing and distribution.

5.4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

BTG needs to find a gap in the market and be the first to enter it. It is recommended that they do this through communicating their 'masculine' gin and unique packaging. They also need to create an interesting and engaging marketing content around the message of 'rarely sighted'.

Through the use of Klopper and North's (2011) brand contact planning and management process (figure 2.4), a brand contact inventory has been created alongside the most influential points of contact for BTG (table 5.4 and 5.5). Table 5.4 and 5.5 provide suggestions as to how BTG can improve their contact points in order to increase their brand presence in the market.

5.4.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS OF CONTACT POINTS

Table 5.4: Recommended brand contact inventory adopted from Klopper & North (2011).

Brand contact inventory	
<u>Product</u> - The BTG bottle - A BTG gin drink - At the liquor store - At gin bars - Restaurants - Merchandise (T-Shirts, coasters, glasses, stickers) - Tasters	<u>Service</u> - Gin bars - Tasters at liquor stores - Festivals and events - Restaurants
<u>Planned</u> - Facebook - Instagram - Twitter - Website - Liquor stores - Gin bars - Restaurants - Tasters - Festivals and events - Merchandise (T-Shirts, coasters, glasses, stickers)	<u>Unplanned</u> - Word of mouth - Consumers sharing product

Table 5.5: Most influential points of contact based on recommended brand contact inventory.

Most Influential Points of Contact	
<u>First point of contact:</u> Tasters, festivals and events.	<u>Last point of contact:</u> Finishing their BTG drink.

<u>Points of frequency:</u> Social media, seeing brand at gin bars, restaurants, events and festivals.	<u>Points of impact:</u> Festivals, events and merchandise.
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These recommended points of contact will now be discussed in relation to the key trends identified in objective one.

THE SOPHISTICATED AND ADVENTUROUS CRAFT GIN DRINKER

In order to succeed and increase brand awareness, BTG needs to ensure that every interaction between the consumer and the brand is one that is a unique experience. BTG's primary target market are adventurous drinkers. Therefore, they will choose brands that give them an innovative, unique and valuable experience. BTG's marketing mix highlights that the brand's current communications are not innovative. The brand's message of 'rarely sighted' implies that the brand is not seen often, which limits the brand's ability to distribute and market the product. This brand message needs to be approached in a unique and innovative manner so that it is still rooted in the brand's identity, but will be effective enough to increase brand awareness. The message of 'rarely sighted' can be communicated through various merchandise such as stickers, t-shirts, business cards, coasters and glasses (figure 5.7 – 5.12). The purpose of this merchandise is to get consumers questioning, "what is rarely sighted"? Seeing their peers and other craft gin drinkers with this merchandise will encourage them to seek out the brand for themselves. This merchandise can be given to consumers when BTG is at gin festivals and events or when a BTG drink is served at a respective gin bar or restaurant. The mystery behind the brand being 'rarely sighted' will encourage the adventurous craft gin drinker to seek out the BTG brand.

PERSONALISATION OF CRAFT GIN

The challenge that BTG might face with growing the business is keeping up with this authentic and personalised energy put into the brand. One of the ways in which BTG can remain personalised is through their social media. Through re-posting consumer's social media posts with the brand, consumers will feel that they are being noticed by the brand, and will therefore will continuing trusting in the brand because it values them. By showcasing their consumer's personal drinks, BTG will satisfy the consumer's need to express their uniqueness and individuality.

CRAFT GIN IS ROOTED IN EXPERIENCE

BTG need to take their brand experience out of the home and communicate that it can lead to many other experiences. In order to do this, BTG needs to distribute more at gin bars and get involved in gin events. At these physical sites, BTG can promote their brand through merchandise as well as brand pamphlets and business cards that give information on the brand (Figure 5.7 – 5.14). Although they are a 'rarely sighted' brand, they can add a sense of mystery to their communications where finding the brand becomes an adventure and experiences for consumers.

BTG can also increase their exclusive brand experience through PR strategies such as featuring in The Gin Box. The Gin Box is monthly subscription where consumers receive a mystery box containing a small batch craft gin, unique tonics that accompany the gin, and hand-picked gourmet food items that complement will complement the drink and enhance the experience. Through a partnership with The Gin Box, BTG will gain direct exposure to their target audience and give them a unique experience. The partnership lasts for one month that will promote the gin and the brand. Alongside sending the product to the consumers, The Gin Box also sends a detailed distiller's note that showcases why the gin brand is unique and special. The botanicals of the brand are also showcased as this is a unique characteristic of the gin. The Gin Box aims to tell the brand's story to an audience of gin lovers and connoisseurs. The gin brand features are offered on their gin SHOP, and they promote the brand on social media. This will allow for the brand to reach a wide audience (The Gin Box, 2017).

CRAFT GIN ENCOURAGES COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.

BTG is already successful in portraying themselves as a drink to share with friends and family. They can enhance this message by encouraging consumers to post their shared experiences with the brand and then BTG can repost it on their social media. This direct engagement with the consumer will strengthen the role that BTG has to play in the SA craft gin community.

5.4.4.2 RECOMMENDED COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

The following images are recommendations as to some of the merchandise and marketing that BTG can invest in to improve their contact points.



Figure 5.7: BTG coasters (created by Ntando Dlamini)



Figure 5.8: BTG glasses (created by Ntando Dlamini)



Figure 5.9: BTG t-shirts example one (created by Ntando Dlamini)



Figure 5.10: BTG t-shirts example two (created by Ntando Dlamini)

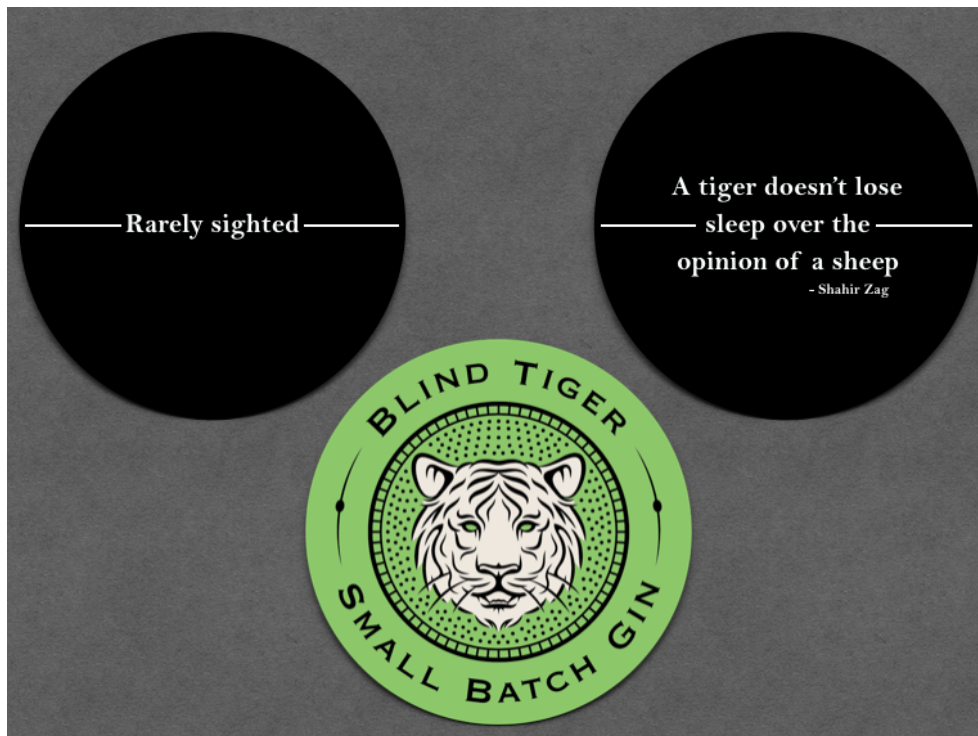


Figure 5.11: BTG stickers (created by Kendra Hunn)

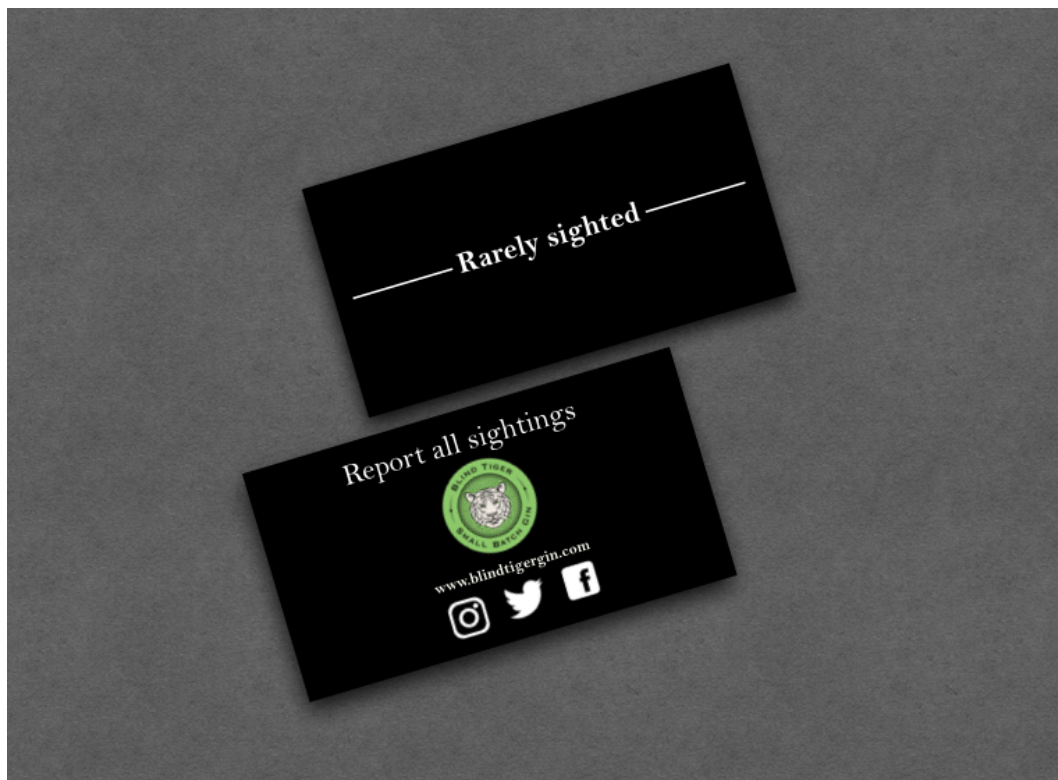


Figure 5.12: BTG business cards (created by Kendra Hunn)



Figure 5.13: Pamphlet front cover (created by Kendra Hunn)



Figure 5.14: Pamphlet (created by Kendra Hunn)

5.5 ETHICAL CONCERNS

For this study, the researcher had the responsibility of ensuring that all research was done in an ethical manner. This meant that all recording and conducting of research was done ethically, honestly and accurately. Consent from all participants prior to the research being conducted was essential in order to inform them of the objectives of the study. No private information of the participant's behaviour and activities was shared without their consent. A clear description of the study was explained to all participants. Industry professionals were informed that their responses were to be used for the benefit of a competitor brand. The researcher remained objective throughout the research process and all data gathered will be done ethically and honestly. No research participant was under the legal drinking age of 18. The researcher was also responsible for communicating ethical and responsible messages of drinking alcohol.

5.6 LIMITATIONS

A variety of limitations were faced when conducting this study. Firstly, was approval from gin events and festivals to conduct research. Two craft gin festivals were initially approached to enquire about performing informal interviews and observational research at their respective locations. However, these requests were denied. Later in the research process, one gin event did give permission for primary research to be conducted consisting of interviews and observational. The initial purpose of attending this event was to interview only consumers. However, the event was very small, therefore only a small number of consumers were willing to be interviewed. Due to this limitation, some of the industry professionals were interviewed as well. This was unplanned for, therefore their interviews had to be done in an unstructured approach. Despite this limitation, key trends were identified between the three industry professional participants. The second limitation that was encountered at the gin event was getting an even number of responses from different demographics. Majority of the consumers were Caucasian and very few were Black. The Caucasian females were more willing to participate compared to their Caucasian and Black male counterparts. The third limitation at the event was that the participants had been drinking alcohol. In order to combat this limitation, the participants were interviewed early on in the evening so that they had had a limited amount to drink. A focus group was the initial data collection choice; however, it was difficult to get a group of people together who were willing to participate.

5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A more in-depth study should be conducted in order to determine avenues in which SA craft gin brands can enter the Black market. This study highlighted that SA craft gin is regarded as a 'white consumer' drink. For a gin brand to be the first to truly enter the Black consumer market and become the top brand within that demographic, would be a huge feat for the brand and the organisation. Further and more extensive research into the Black consumer would need to be conducted in order to understand their perceptions of liquor brands.

5.8 CLOSING COMMENT

This mixed methods research study identified the key trends in the SA craft gin market, and used these in conjunction with specific brand building models. Research has proven that

there are four key trends in the SA craft gin market, and that young brands such as BTG, need to understand them and incorporate them into their brand building and communication efforts. As the SA craft gin market is becoming increasingly saturated and overcrowded, it is essential that a brand is differentiated and positioned based on their unique offering. This will ensure their consumers reach the top of the resonance model and become loyal, attached brand users and ambassadors. Literature concerning the problem and the objectives was presented and from here, a sound research plan was developed. An interview schedule was drawn up based on the literature and respondents were chosen. Appropriate findings were made which resulted in suitable conclusions with the support from literature. This process ensured that sound and realistic recommendations were made in order to strengthen BTG's presence in the market.

[14854]

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR GIN EVENT

1. What spirits do you usually drink?
2. What encouraged you to drink craft gin?
3. How do you perceive the image of a craft gin drinker?
4. Why do you want to be seen as a craft gin drinker?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BRAND OWNER INTERVIEW

1. What do you think are the key trends driving the popularity of SA craft gin?
2. What do you believe differentiates the BTG brand from its competitors and puts it at a competitive advantage?
3. What inspired you to create the Blind Tiger Gin brand?
4. Who are your direct competitors?
5. Who are your indirect competitors?
6. What encouraged you to enter the international SIP awards and the Gin masters in 2017?
7. What is the vision for BTG?
8. How is the American history of prohibition in line with what you are wishing to communicate about BTG?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS NOT AT THE GIN EVENT

1. Please state which organisation you are from.
2. Which do you think are the most popular South African craft gins amongst the consumer market?
3. What elements of these brands do you believe have resulted in their success?
4. Do you believe there is a major challenge that craft gin distilleries and brands face?
5. What do you think are the best ways for a craft gin brand to increase their presence in the market place?
6. Which consumers do you believe are the trend setters and most loyal consumers of the South African craft gin revolution?



ANNEXURE A

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

VEGA School of Brand Leadership

Honours: Strategic Brand Communication Research Dissertation

Researcher: Kendra Hunn (073 23 93 809)

Supervisor: Simon Granger (078 736 8824)

Dear Respondent,

My name is Kendra Hunn. I am an honours student at Vega School of Brand Leadership and in order to complete my qualification, it is essential that I conduct an in-depth research study. I invite you to participate in my research project entitled: ***Setting Sights on Building a Strong Brand: Key Insights from the South African Gin Trend, A Case study on Blind Tiger Gin.*** The aim of this study is to explore how the insights and trends of the South African craft gin market can be used in building the brand identity and brand equity of Blind Tiger Gin in order to better position and differentiate the brand in the rapidly growing craft gin market.

Your participation is completely voluntary with no monetary gain. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequences. All information gathered in this study will be held in strict confidence and only the researcher will have access to the original data. Results will only be retained for as long as required for the research purpose. Any wishes to remain anonymous in the final dissertation will be respected. It is important that you fully understand what is involved if you agree to participate in this study. If you have any questions that you feel are not addressed or sufficiently explained in this consent form, do not hesitate to ask the researcher for more information. The contact details of the researcher and the supervisor are above.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I have read the information presented to me in a language that I understand and understand the implications of participating in this study. The content and meaning of said information have been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and am satisfied that they have been adequately addressed. I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this study and that I can withdraw from this study at any stage without having to provide an explanation for my withdrawal. I hereby volunteer to take part in this study.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Full Name and Surname: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____