

**THE INFLUENCE OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON GROWTH
OF SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS IN AIR TRAVEL AGENCIES
IN NAIROBI COUNTY IN KENYA**

**BY
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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree course in this, or any other university.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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To my family and, in particular, my husband Francis Njau for the support and encouragement, to my children Anne, Monicah, Samuel and Wanjiku for giving me the unconditional support throughout the course.

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May the almighty god bless you all!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
LISTS OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.1.1 Marketing Strategies.....	2
1.1.2 Business Growth.....	4
1.1.3 Small and Medium Enterprises.....	5
1.1.4 Small and Medium Business in Air Travel Agencies in Nairobi Kenya.....	6
1.2 Research Problem.....	7
1.3 Research Objective.....	9
1.4 Value of the Study.....	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study.....	11
2.2.1 Resource-Based View.....	11
2.2.2 Game Theory.....	13
2.3.3 Institutional Theory.....	14
2.3 Marketing Strategy.....	15
2.4 Organization Growth.....	16
2.5 Marketing Strategies on Business Organization Growth.....	17
2.6 Empirical Literature.....	20
2.7 Conceptual Framework.....	24

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
3.1 Introduction	25
3.2 Research Design	25
3.3 Population of the Study	25
3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Design.....	26
3.5 Data Collection.....	26
3.6 Data Analysis	26
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSIONS	28
4.1 Introduction	28
4.2: Response Rate	28
4.3 Demographic Information of the Respondents	29
4.3.1 Position of the Respondent	29
4.3.2 Experience	29
4.4 Background Information of the Air Travel Agency.....	30
4.4.1 Location	30
4.4.2 Years of Operation of the Organization	31
4.5 Marketing Strategies adopted by Small and Medium Air Travel Agencies	32
4.5.1 Market Segmentation.....	32
4.5.2 Promotion Channels used by Air Travel Agents	33
4.6 Marketing Strategies	35
4.6.1 Quality of Service Strategy.....	35
4.6.2 Pricing Strategy	36
4.6.3 Place Strategy	37
4.6.4 People Strategy	38
4.6.6 Process Strategy.....	39
4.6.7 Physical Evidence.....	40
4.7 Importance of Goals in Operations	42
4.8 Correlation Analysis between Marketing Strategies and Growth of the Air Travel Agencies	43
4.9 Discussion of the Findings	44

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..	46
5.1 Introduction	46
5.2 Summary of Findings	46
5.3 Conclusion.....	48
5.4 Limitation of the Study	49
5.5 Recommendations	49
5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies	50
REFERENCES.....	51
APPENDICES	55
Appendix I: Questionnaire	55
Appendix II: Small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya	60

LISTS OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Response Rate.....	28
Table 4.2: Position in the organization	29
Table 4.3: Experience	30
Table 4.4: Location of Air Travel Agencies	31
Table 4.5: Years of operation of the organization	31
Table 4.6: Market Segmentation.....	32
Table 4.7: Travel Agents Promotion Channels.....	33
Table 4.8: Promotion Strategy	34
Table 4.9: Quality of Service Strategy.....	35
Table 4.10: Pricing Strategy	36
Table 4.11: Place Strategy	37
Table 4.12: People Strategy	38
Table 4.13: Process Strategy.....	40
Table 4.14: Physical Evidence.....	41
Table 4.15: Importance of Goals in Operations.....	42
Table 4.16: Correlational Analysis between Variables.....	43

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework	24
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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

CB	Commercial Banks
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRM	Human Resource Management
MFI	Microfinance Finance Institutions
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PFI	Public Financial Institutions
RBV	Resource Based View
SACCOS	Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

ABSTRACT

The main aim of the study was to investigate the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya. The contribution of marketing strategy in the organization lies in the formulation of strategies to choose the right customer, build relationships of trust with them and create a growth. There are no statistics and attempts taken to investigate the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi Kenya. This study, therefore, sought to find out the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium businesses. This report covers theoretical foundation of the study, the influence of marketing strategies on business growth and empirical literature. The research design that was used in this study was descriptive survey method aimed at establishing the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya. The study used a simple random sampling technique to select a sample of 52 small and medium businesses in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya from a population of 104 air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya. The study heavily relied on primary data which was collected through administering structured questionnaires comprising closed and open-ended questions. The process of data analysis involved several stages; the completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency, check for errors and omissions and then coded. A statistical analysis and descriptive analysis was employed. A total of 52 questionnaires were randomly distributed using even numbers and 50 were collected having been filled completely this constituted a response rate of (96%). The issue of Marketing Strategies on Growth of Small and Medium Business, the study found out that, the appearance of the physical facilities of the air travel agencies, both at the airport and on the airplane itself, were in accordance with the type of service provided. The marketing strategy was noted to be an essential tool in growth, for the company to be competitive the products and services have to be different than the rest of the competitors. The price as well has to be fair for all. This will increase the destination points hence the company profile. While cost saving measures, including creating partnerships and strategic alliances, will be implemented to strengthen the financial resource base. The study results conclude that there is a significant effect of marketing strategies on the sales growth of an enterprise, likewise a significant relationship between the usages of direct distribution channels on the profitability of an enterprise. The staffs of air travel agencies companies were usually very busy and, therefore, they required a lot of time in order to fill in the questionnaires. The challenge was overcome by giving the respondents the questionnaires at the right time. Inadequate financial resources affected the results of the study. The study recommends that marketing air travel agencies should implement the use of integrated marketing communication because it solves most problems and helps the marketing agencies to improve their services to their customers.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The contribution of marketing strategy in the organization lies in the formulation of strategies to choose the right customer, build relationships of trust with them and create a growth. Therefore, for the organization to cope with the outside world of customers and competitors, it is necessary to train and motivate all staff within the organization to provide the appropriate level of service to customers. Having accurate and reliable information on customers is an essential ingredient in strategic marketing; with the aid of modern technology and appropriate software, organizations can develop a customer information file which is accessible and designed to aid decision making (MaCristina, Enrique and Ricardo, 2012).

The study is guided by the resource-based view (RBV), game theory and institutional theory. The central premise of RBV addresses the fundamental question of why firms are different and how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage by deploying their resources (RBV) of the firm (Campbell, 2004). Game theory can be used by management to gain a better conceptual understanding of decision-making in competitive situations. Outcomes of various possible marketing strategies can be represented in game matrices, and preferred solutions can be determined under a number of different behavioral assumptions (Shubik, 1972). The institutional theory asserts the institutional environment can strongly influence the development of formal structures in an organization, often more profoundly than market pressures.

The travel agency industry in Kenya is characterized by many small businesses that have recently been under pressure from changing external factors including those in the technological and competitive environments as well as from the customers on both sides of their transactions their clients and the service providers. To avoid the unprofitable pitfalls, travel agencies must implement processes and tools that enable them to capture higher wallet share, migrate customers to more cost-effective channels, and properly identify customers to be DE marketed or divested.

1.1.1 Marketing Strategies

Marketing strategy is a management discipline, which focuses on the organization's mission, searches for unique opportunities, determines whether they fit the organization's strategic direction, defines the measures for success, and continually reassesses opportunities (Gaynor, 2002). The term competitive marketing strategies refer to both radical and incremental changes in thinking, things, and processes or in services (McAdam and McClelland, 2002). In many fields, something new must be substantially different to be innovative, not an insignificant change, in the arts, economics, business, and government policy. In economics, the change must increase value, customer value, or producer value. Marketing strategies leading to increased productivity is the fundamental source of increasing wealth in an economy. The competitive strategy provides a clear direction and focuses the effort of the entire organization on a common competitive strategies goal. Management needs to develop the strategy and communicate the role of competitive marketing strategies within a company, decide how to use technology and drive performance improvements through the use of appropriate performance indicators.

Oke and Goffin (2006), suggested that the first step in formulating a marketing strategy is to define what competitive strategies means to the firm or the areas of focus in terms of marketing strategies. By understanding the drivers of competitive strategies needs, a firm can develop its focus areas for competitive strategies.

Most economic texts classify competition as consisting of four key forms namely; pure or perfect competition, monopolistic or imperfect competition, oligopolistic competition and monopolies (Reynolds, 2005). Pure competition and pure monopoly environments are the most extreme forms of competition but rarely occur in the real world (Reynolds, 2005). A pure monopoly is characterized by a single seller who controls the supply of a good or service and prevents other businesses from entering the field (Reynolds, 2005). According to Afuah, (1998), pure competition exists when a large number of sellers produce a certain type of product or service that is slightly differentiated. These sellers have low barriers of entry into the market and easily enter or leave it as they choose. No attempt is made in this study to further expound on these extreme forms of competition as it is believed that they present a hypothetical market structure (Clayton, 2010).

The importance of having a clearly defined new marketing strategy guiding the growth process was recognized by (Afuah, 1998). Marketing strategy provides a clear direction and focuses the effort of the entire organization on a common innovation goal. Oke, (2004) suggested that the first step in formulating an innovation strategy is to define what innovation means to the firm or the areas of focus in terms of innovation. By understanding the drivers of innovation needs, a firm can develop its focus areas for

innovation. Reynolds, (2005) suggested that more successful firms had more tangible and visible signs of management commitment to new product development especially in terms of providing adequate funding and resources, than less successful firms.

1.1.2 Business Growth

All businesses pass through distinctive stages (each with its own characteristics) as they develop. This development process can be likened to the product lifecycle. Like products, businesses do not move through the cycle at the same speed but unlike most products businesses can stay in the same stage for a considerable period of time (Larry, 1972). Because of the different characteristics of each stage the transition from one to the next is often accompanied by a crisis' which may be either external or internal to the firm. It follows that the small businessman has two major concerns in moving from one stage of development to the next (Nelson, 1996).

Growth strategies in business also include diversification, where a small company will sell new products to new markets. This type of strategy can be very risky, according to Koopmans (1977), a small company will need to plan carefully when using a diversification growth strategy. Marketing research is essential because a company will need to determine if consumers in the new market will potentially like the new products. Growth strategies in business can also include an acquisition. In acquisition, a company purchases another company to expand its operations (Nelson, 1996). A small company may use this type of strategy to expand its product line and enter new markets. An acquisition growth strategy can be risky, but not as risky as a diversification strategy. One

reason is that the products and market are already established. A company must know exactly what it wants to achieve when using an acquisition strategy, mainly because of the significant investment required to implement it.

1.1.3 Small and Medium Enterprises

The term Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) covers a wide range of definitions and measures, varying from country to country. Some of the commonly used criteria are the number of employees, total net assets, sales, and investment level. However, the most common definitional basis used is employment. Currently the SME Department of the World Bank works with the following definitions: Small Enterprises are defined to have up to 50 employees, with total assets and total sales of up to \$3 million while Medium Enterprise is one that has up to 300 employees, having total assets and total sales of up to \$ 15 million per annum (ILO, 2012). The definition used to describe the SME sector in Kenya are based on employment size and include both paid and unpaid workers. A micro-enterprise is defined as having no more than 10 employees; a small enterprise with 11-50 employees and a medium/large enterprise with more than 50 employees.

Small and Medium sized enterprises (SMESs) are often seen as vital for the growth and innovation of dynamic economics as they help to diversify economies and at the same time create employment (Machacha 2002). Since the SME sector plays a major role in national economies, these benefits to individual SMES collectively translate into productive results in the form of job creation, revenue generation, and overall country competitiveness. The SMEs sector experienced substantive growth from 2000-2010

increasing to 2.8 million enterprises and SMEs employment of 5.1 million persons, accounting for 74.2 percent of the total employment in 2010. SMEs are spread widely across the country, with two-thirds of them located in rural areas (Gok 2006; ILO 2012). In Kenya significant number of SMEs engage in commerce with 74 percent and 66 percent in urban and rural areas respectively Liedholm (2002). Others are involved in agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, telecommunications and other services (ILO, 2008).

1.1.4 Small and Medium Business in Air Travel Agencies in Nairobi Kenya

Kenya has increasingly become a popular tourist destination for visitors from Europe, North America and emerging tourist-generating regions, particularly South-east Asia. The country receives over 6% of the total international tourist arrivals to Africa, and the relative importance of tourism in Kenya's economy has risen steadily over the last 40 years (Akama & Kieti, 2007). A report by the World Travel and Tourism Council showed that in 2013, Kenya generated KES161.3bn in visitor exports (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2014). Domestic travel spending generated 49.2% of direct travel and tourism GDP in 2013 compared with 50.8% for visitor exports, with Mombasa being the leading tourist center in Eastern Africa, receiving over one-third of international tourist arrivals to Kenya (Akama & Kieti, 2007).

The agents represent an important example of an intermediary between producers such as airlines, hotels or rental car firm and consumers prospective travelers (Kibe, 2008). The travel agents industry has seen considerable recent consolidation, but most agencies are independent small businesses that get the bulk of their revenue from services charges set

up by airlines and commissions paid by hotels. This study deals with the relationships between travel agents and those carriers, although agencies also represent other providers such as railroads, hotels, cruise lines, and rental car firms (Njeru, 2013). In Kenya, the prospective traveler who deals with an agency usually gets effective, personal service and can benefit from the expertise of the agent and the agent's colleagues. The agent can issue plane tickets on behalf of the provider, but also acts in the consumer's interests.

The overall market with regard to the Travel Agency Service Industry in Kenya includes direct selling by travel agencies, retailers and wholesalers, online travel agencies, online wholesalers/consolidators, airlines, tour operators and other ground content accommodation, attractions, event and show tickets, car hire etc., accommodation hotels, motels, serviced apartments etc., tourist attractions theme, amusement parks, museums etc. and bookings made for business, personal and/or leisure purposes (Kibe, 2008).

1.2 Research Problem

Companies have been forced to craft marketing strategies in order to sustain or grow their market share, expand to new territories or markets, acquire new technologies, develop brand or line extensions, reduce costs and risks (Oliver, 1995). The growth of the business is an important precondition for a firm's longevity. Negative growth of an SME is often a sign of problems, while stagnation, i.e. a situation where growth has stopped, is usually indicative of problems that a firm will face in the future. As a matter of fact, growth often has instrumental value. For new ventures, firm growth is needed to ensure an adequate production volume for a profitable business. Growth can serve as an

instrument for increasing profitability by enlargement the firm's market share. Other similar goals include securing the continuity of business in the conditions of growing demand or achieving economies of scale. Moreover, growth may bring the firm new business opportunities and a larger size enhances its credibility in the market. Also, achieving a higher net value of the firm can be regarded as a motive for firm growth (Njeru, 2013).

Air travel agencies in Nairobi in Kenya faces stiff price competition, businesses have to constantly change their business model. The industry presents unique competition, most stemming from the fact that there are many uncontrollable factors business owners must deal with. The general growth in the Kenyan economy and steady increase in tourism earnings have led to expansion and new investments in the Air travel agencies. Hospitality organizations are turning to performance measurement and management in order to qualify for the IATA is the global trade organization for air transport (Njeru, 2013).

There are research studies done on marketing strategies on growth of small and medium; Globally; Gajanayake (2002) did a study on the impact of marketing strategies and behavior of Small and Medium Enterprises on their Business Growth, the economic growth of developing countries can be sustained by the expansion of private sector in Sri Lanka, Trivedi (2013) did a study on marketing strategies of Small and Medium-sized in India and Mulunga (2010) did a study on factors affecting the growth of microfinance institutions in Namibia. Local studies include; Njanja (2009) did a study on management

strategies affecting the performance of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Kenya. Obonyo (2013) carried out a study on marketing strategies adopted by supermarkets for a competitive edge in Kisii town Supermarkets (Kenya); Magunga (2010) did a study on effects of marketing strategies on the performance of insurance companies in Kenya. There are no statistics and attempts taken to investigate the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi Kenya. This study, therefore, wishes to find out the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium. The question that remains to be addressed is, what is the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi Kenya?

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of the study is to investigate the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings from the study will particularly be useful in the application of theory in the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies. This expanded knowledge on the application of resource-based view (RBV), game theory and institutional theory on the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies. Academicians and business researchers have managed to borrow from the findings of this research to

support literary citations as well as develop themes for further research on the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies.

The results to be obtained from the study may help determine the essential elements and common problems associated with marketing strategies and growth of small and medium and identify methods that could make the system more effective. This study was significant to the management of small and medium business in air travel agencies.

The study was useful to policymakers, especially those in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya in strategic planning and would like to leverage on the findings on the influence marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies. The government will be a beneficiary of this study as entities for licensing of small and medium business in air travel agencies. The findings of this research proved to be important to small, medium and micro enterprises who managers to assist in policy formulation on how to develop and promote their marketing strategies. SMEs can use these study findings to leverage their growth in the global arena and hence create employment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review section outlines and analyzes published articles and journals written by accredited scholars and researchers with reference to the topic that is being studied. This covers theoretical foundation of the study, the influence of marketing strategies on business growth and empirical literature.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study

This section discusses the relevant theories that are related to competitive strategy and organization. In this case, the study focused on the resource-based view (RBV), game theory and institutional theory.

2.2.1 Resource-Based View

The resource-based view theory can be used to elaborate competitive marketing strategies. This theory argues that competitive advantage lies in the resources that an organization can access and exploit and not in the ability to manage the environment (Campbell, 2004). It maintains that companies are well endowed with a bundle of resources in the form of assets, competencies, processes, and substitutes that provide the organization with a competitive advantage. David (2007) denotes that since companies have different attributes at different levels and different bundles of resources, differences in organizational performance are likely to be witnessed. The theory further asserts that firms have three types of resources namely; tangible resources, intangible resources, and

organizational capabilities. Tangible resources include financial, physical, technological and organizational assets and thus are easily identified on the other hand intangible resources are more complex to identify and thus difficult to imitate. They include strategies that a firm adopts over time and culminates to improved performance (Barney, 2006). Finally, organizational capabilities are skills and competencies which a firm combines to transform tangible and intangible resources into outputs, for example, outstanding customer service (Dess et al, 2007). The resource-based theory also argues that organizational resources in themselves are not necessarily a source of competitive advantage because rival firms may also possess similar resources. In this case, therefore, competitive advantage lies in the resources possessing one or more of other attributes such as valuable substitutes. A firm has to, therefore, sustain a competitive advantage as long as other firms are unable to duplicate the same attributes (Dess et al, 2007).

The theory argues that a firm needs to harness its resources using the organizational repeatable knowledge that ensures it a competitive advantage. Grant (2004) posits that achieving and developing organizational competence is paramount to achieving competitive advantage and, therefore, competitive advantage is sourced in the organization's ability to learn and apply knowledge rather than simply accessing resources. The theory further argues that competitiveness ought to be supported by a culture that encourages sharing and exchanging skills, competencies and capabilities through organizational learning.

2.2.2 Game theory

Game theory can be defined as part of a large body of theory providing a formal language to describe conscious, goal-oriented, decision-making processes involving one or more players. The solution concepts derived from game theory may be thought of as normative or descriptive views of multi-person decision-making (Shubik, 1972). Porter (1990) further argues that a company's strength ultimately could be placed into two categories: cost advantage or differentiation. Application of those strengths in either a broad (industry wide) or narrow (market segment) scope results in three generic strategies: Cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. These three strategies are supposed to be applied on a business unit level. Andrews (2003) defines competitive strategy as the pattern of decisions in a company that determines and reveals its objectives, purposes, or goals, produces the principal policies and plans for achieving those goals.

Game theory analysis requires making assumptions about players' behavioral intentions, the most useful insights into players' strategies and counterstrategies was obtained when the rules and results of the game matrix solution incorporate information about industry behavior gained from other sources (Shubik, 1972). While game theory can help indicate the outcomes of different strategic choices, it is not likely to yield precise solutions to marketing problems. The models require selecting the appropriate set of decision variables or options available, the set of possible outcomes, and the assumed objectives of all firms involved (Porter, 1985).

2.3.3 Institutional Theory

The institutional theory focuses on the deeper and more resilient aspects of social structure. It considers the processes by which structures, including schemas; rules, norms, and routines, become established as authoritative guidelines for social behavior. Different components of institutional theory explain how these elements are created, diffused, adopted, and adapted over space and time; and how they fall into decline and disuse. Amenta, (2005) define an emerging perspective in organization theory and sociology, which they term the 'new institutionalism', as rejecting the rational-actor models of classical economics. Instead, it seeks cognitive and cultural explanations of social and organizational phenomena by considering the properties of supra-individual units of analysis that cannot be reduced to aggregations or direct consequences of individuals' attributes or motives.

Scotto (1996) indicates that, in order to survive, organizations must conform to the rules and belief systems prevailing in the environment, because institutional isomorphism, both structural and procedural, will earn the organization legitimacy. Service organizations operating in different regions of a country with varying institutional environments will face diverse pressures. Some of those pressures in the host and home institutional environments are testified to exert fundamental influences on competitive strategy (Porter, 1990) and Human Resource Management (HRM) practices. There is substantial evidence that firms in different types of economies react differently to similar challenges. Social, economic, and political factors constitute an institutional structure of a particular environment which provides firms with advantages for engaging in specific types of

activities there. Businesses tend to perform more efficiently if they receive the institutional support.

2.3 Marketing Strategy

Marketing strategies in SMBs are typically those strategies and operational process options chosen by business owner or operator to ensure the superior performance and competitiveness of their business. The majority of the studies involving small business management were conducted in the 1980's and 1990's and many of their implications are still valid in Kenya's contexts. At a business unit level, they include the selection of strategies that competitively position the business in their environment (Porter, 1985). Whilst at a functional level, they include managers' choices of marketing, operational and human resource strategies and business processes that facilitate the achievement of the organization's strategic goals. For the smaller business, Storey & Greene (2010) concluded that six factors significantly impact upon the performance of the business: legal structure, business size, age, industry sector and markets, location and ownership. Selecting strategies for success is one of the most important decisions for small businesses (Morris, Kuratko & Covin, 2010).

Market penetration is an effort to increase company sales without departing from an original product-market strategy (Porter, 1985). The company seeks to improve business performance either by increasing the volume of sales to its present customers or by finding new customers for present products. The market penetration strategy is the least risky since it uses and builds upon the company's existing resources and capabilities. If

the market is growing, a company maintaining market share can experience growth. It is important to point out that market penetration has its limits, because of market saturation. If the market saturates, companies must use another strategy in order to continue their growth.

2.4 Organization Growth

Organizational growth has the potential to provide small businesses with a myriad of benefits, including things like greater efficiencies from economies of scale, increased power, and a greater ability to withstand market fluctuations, an increased survival rate, greater profits and increased prestige for organizational members. Many small firms desire growth because it is seen generally as a sign of success, progress. In brief organizational growth is, in fact, used as one indicator of effectiveness for small businesses and is a fundamental concern of many practicing managers.

According to O'Farrell & Hitchens (1988), have focused attention upon the strategic dimension of achieving sustained growth and the way in which the owner-manager responds to business and personal environmental indicators. Hence, they concentrate upon the identification of the owner manager's policies and strategies for the conduct and development of the business and their subsequent translation into managerial action that will lead to sustained business development.

An organization is said to be ambidextrous when it has established a relationship between environmental factors, innovation strategy, and organizational capabilities and growth. Organizational ambidexterity is about the organizational capability to simultaneously

deal with paradoxical or conflicting activities such as organizational alignment and adaptation; evolutionary and revolutionary change; manufacturing efficiency, flexibility; strategic alliance formation; and even strategic renewal (Adler, Goldoftas, and Levine, 1999). Exploitation and exploration are the most recurrent underlying dimensions regarding organizational ambidexterity.

2.5 Marketing Strategies on Business Organization Growth

Analysis typically starts with product dimension as the service product is the heart of a company's marketing strategy. Even if all other dimensions of the marketing mix were designed and executed in an excellent manner, a company could not be successful with a poorly developed core product (Lovelock, Wirtz, Chew, 2008.). The core service that customers purchase when they book a flight is simply getting from point A to B. The airline product further consists of aspects like safety, reliability in terms of punctual departure and arrival, services provided prior to the flight which are mostly experienced at the airport, in-flight services including food and beverages.

Price is the most flexible element of the marketing mix and also the most problematic one (Kotler et al. 2008). Wensveen (2007) asserts that since the deregulation of the market price is the main competitive element for any airline. The price basically reflects the costs which arise for delivering a certain service. Marketers, in general, choose between various pricing strategies which follow a cost-based or value-based strategy. Following a cost-based approach, the price is determined by investigating the costs that occur for the company, a value-based strategy is not solely concerned about production costs, but takes

the perceived value that customers have, of a product or service into consideration for making pricing decisions (Kotler et al., 2010).

The third dimension of the marketing mix comprises the process of making the service available to customers (Kotler et al., 2008; Lovelock et al., 2008). In the airline industry, this dimension covers the selection of the right distribution channels which enable the company to reach their target market, hence the travel agencies. The impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) on airlines has always been predominant because they have provided the possibility of a direct channel between the airline and its customers.

One of the main purposes of promotional activities is persuading potential customers to choose the product of the own company and not products from competitors (Armstrong et al., 2009; Wensveen, 2007). It can be noted that since the impact of customers as co-produced is vital, promotional activities should also provide education to customers. This education can ensure an improved and smooth operation as customers will be likely to know and follow procedures fostering a smooth service process.

A cost leadership strategy is one in which a firm strives to have the lowest costs in the industry and offer its products or services in a broad market at the lowest prices (David, 2001). Characteristics of cost leadership include low-level differentiation, aim for the average customer, use of knowledge gained from past production to lower production costs, and the addition of new product features only after the market demands them.

It is a challenging task for travel agencies to differentiate their product. There are cases where the only difference between two service providers lies in the way the employees interact with the customers (Lovelock et al., 2008). Then emphasize should be put on carefully recruiting, training, motivating and rewarding staff. Lovelock et al. (2008) additionally highlighted the impact of the behavior, number of staff and their uniform on the image of the company. Indeed, a uniform plays a crucial role in how a customer perceives individual employee and the company as a whole.

In marketing, the process is what customers experience with regard to organization's products and services. The process issues that are most annoying for a customer are the process elements which put the provider's convenience ahead of the customer's. Therefore, organizations should design their processes to maximize the customer's enjoyment throughout. Indeed, the process of giving a service and the behavior of those who deliver are crucial to customer satisfaction. Issues such as waiting times, the information given to customers and the helpfulness of staff are all vital, to keep customers happy.

This is less about organization's internal productivity than their ability to deliver to customers. Productivity in this regard is always combined with quality – companies supply the best quality every time. The use of productivity measurement in relation to the marketing function is relatively new. The central role of marketing can be expressed as the management of consumer demand and the translation of this demand into sales and profits. Marketing productivity analysis is an important tool in evaluating the

performance of the marketing department in carrying out this role. It measures the efficiency with which marketing inputs are used to generate target levels of marketing outputs.

2.6 Empirical Literature

Gajanayake (2002) did a study on the Impact of Marketing Strategies and Behavior of Small and Medium Enterprises on their Business Growth, the economic growth of developing countries can be sustained by the expansion of the private sector, as they are the engine of growth. The implementation of the correct marketing strategies is a vital factor for the growth of SMEs. Therefore, the problem centered in this research was to identify the impact of marketing strategies and behavior of SMEs on their business growth in Sri Lanka. This study was based on secondary and primary data. Primary data was collected through the method of sample survey and for this purpose a structured questionnaire was used as the research instrument. Data was gathered by the sample of 100 entrepreneurs in Gampaha district who were engaged in the manufacturing sector. Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as correlation, and partial correlation were applied through SPSS to test the validity of formulated hypotheses. The findings revealed that there was no significant impact of marketing strategies on their business growth. Moreover, there was no impact of the behavior of the entrepreneurs and the business growth.

Obonyo (2013) carried out a study on marketing strategies adopted by supermarkets for a competitive edge. This study was conducted in Kisii town Supermarkets (Kenya) using

descriptive research and a sample of thirty (30) respondents from each Supermarket whereby twenty-nine (29) respondents were customers and eight (8) consumer goods were selected randomly. Purposeful sampling was employed to identify one marketing manager from each Supermarket for they possessed vital information regarding formulation and implementation of marketing strategies and were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire to provide in-depth information. Questionnaires, interview schedules, and observation were used as instruments of data collection. The questionnaire was designed in such way as to enable the researcher to use both the closed and open-ended questions to solicit ideas and answers related to the problem from respondents. Completed questionnaires were coded and analyzed and the data collected was classified both qualitatively and quantitatively. The results were presented in the form of charts, tables, graphs. From the findings, location was identified as the strategy that yields greater returns as compared to other strategies.

A Study on marketing strategies of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises done by Trivedi (2013), indicates that Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been the backbone of the Indian economy. The good part first. Employing close to 40% of India's workforce and contributing 45% to India's manufacturing output, SMEs play a critical role in generating millions of jobs, especially at the low-skill level. The country's 1.3 million SMEs account for 40% of India's total exports. The bad thing is that SMEs in India, due poor adoption of technology and marketing practices have led to very poor productivity. Although they employ 40% of India's workforce, they only contribute 17% to the Indian GDP. Now SME's have realized the importance of various marketing practices as now

they are utilizing various marketing tools like internet platform, digital advertising in metro cities, mobile applications for customers, CRM and many more. The study aims to determine various innovative marketing practices at SMEs, trends, challenges and other related issues.

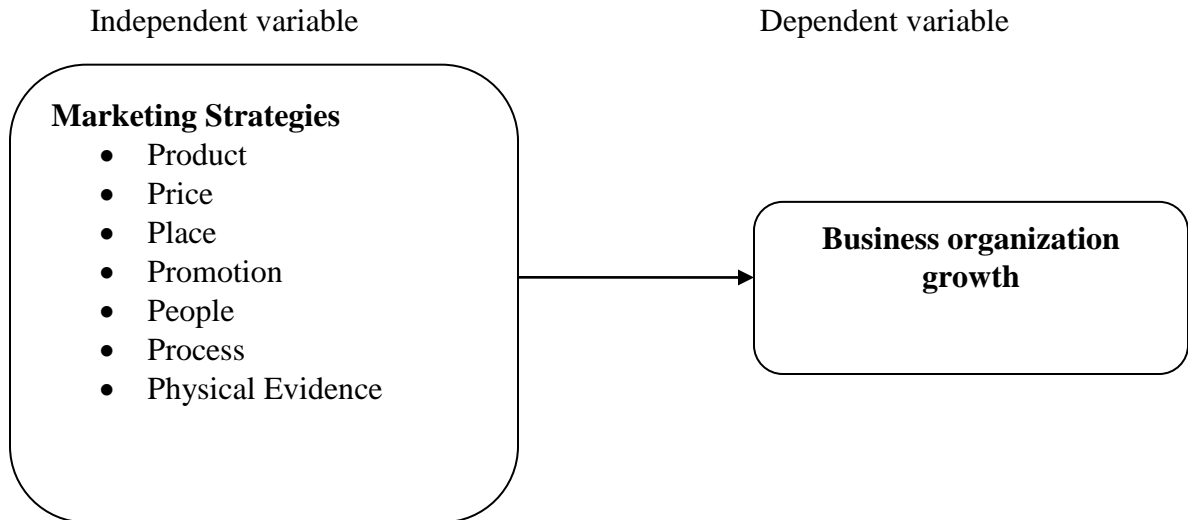
Magunga (2010) did a study on effects of marketing strategies on the performance of insurance companies in Kenya. In order to operationalize the phenomena under study, the following variables were utilized to guide the research paper, i.e. sales promotion, market intelligence and product development and innovation. The data was collected from the marketing managers of all the insurance companies to gain wide representative of the sector. In all, 43 self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the marketing managers. There is much distrust of the insurance sector among the low-income earners, mostly out of ignorance, thus there is a need for a comprehensive awareness programme in order to tap the vastly un-insured market of low-income households in need of insurance services. In addition, the products available are not designed to meet the needs of low-income earners. According to the insurance industry report 2008 from AKI, the penetration of insurance in Kenya is very low at only 2.54 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) compared to 2.57 percent in 2005. Long-Term (life) insurance recorded a penetration ratio of 0.76 percent while that of general insurance was 1.78 percent. The penetration ratio reveals existing coverage and growth challenges for insurance market in a given country.

Njanja. (2009) did a research on management strategies affecting the performance of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Kenya, doctor of commerce thesis, university of South Africa. This research was geared towards the investigation of management strategies (factors) that affect the performance of MSMEs in Kenya. Many developed countries record a time in history when entrepreneurial activities led to a revival of economic growth after a decline. This implies MSMEs is a very vital sector especially for a developing country like Kenya. MSMEs stagnate and their performance. The hypotheses and conceptual model were analyzed and the results obtained suggested that most strategies did not affect the profitability separately but severally. The integrated effect of the management strategies and the associated factors had a higher impact on the performance of the MSMEs than any individual strategies.

Mulunga (2010) did a research report aimed to study and identify the problems that impact on the growth of microfinance finance institutions (MFIs) in Namibia. The findings of this study revealed that lack of regulatory and policy framework, lack of capital and high operational costs were the main problem areas hampering the growth of MFIs in Namibia. The main providers of microfinance services consist mainly of Micro-lenders, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS), Public Financial Institutions (PFI) and to a less extent Commercial Banks (CB). The study made recommendations which are aimed at enhancing the growth of microfinance institutions.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

The Independent variable in this research is Marketing Strategies and Business organization growth is the dependent variable.



Source: Author (2015)

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods that were used to achieve the objectives of the study. The chapter is structured into research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

Descriptive research design was used for the purpose of the study. This research design was considered appropriate because it was suitable in providing a description of the current status of the marketing strategies vis-à-vis the growth of small and medium businesses in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya.

According to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005), descriptive research is used when the problem is structured i.e. it gives answers to who, where, what, how and when of a phenomenon under the study. It is used to make clear the distinctiveness of a population or an observed fact. Therefore, descriptive research studies are based on some previous understating of the nature of the research problem.

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population of this study comprised all the 104 air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya according to IATA (2015).

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a population can be defined as an entire set of relevant units of being studied. Further, the target population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the results of the study.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Design

The study used the systematic random sampling technique where every second travel agency was selected to arrive at sample size 52 of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003), states that a sample of 30% is considered representative for a population less 500. The sample was therefore 50% of the population. The sample size was adequate since it was large enough to represent the entire population of the study.

3.5 Data Collection

The study relied on primary data which was collected through semi-structured questionnaires comprising closed and open-ended questions. This data was collected from the MD of each air travel agency by the researcher.

3.6 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis involved several stages; the completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency, checked for errors and omissions and then coded. Descriptive statistics including percentages mean scores, and the standard deviation was used to analyze the data. Inferential statistics was used, that is, analysis of

variance and correlation analysis to determine the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi city-county in Kenya.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and interpretation. The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya.

4.2: Response Rate

The response rate refers to the number of people who responded to the instruments vis-à-vis the pre-determined sample size. The response rate was 96% of the sample.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Response	50	96%
Non-response	2	4%
Total	52	100%

This was excellent since the researcher obtained data from an adequate proportion of the sample targeted (the managing directors). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) a response rate of 50 percent is adequate for analysis and reporting. Table 4.1 shows the response rate. The high response was achieved because of the enough time allocated to the respondents to fill the questionnaires.

4.3 Demographic Information of the Respondents

The demographic information describes the demographic characteristics about the target population which enables increased understanding about the population. These are often considered to be general reference sources, which means that they provide basic facts and knowledge that can be used as a foundation.

4.3.1 Position of the Respondent

The results indicate that majority of the respondents were managers with expertise at 85%, followed by office administrators at 15%, as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.2: Position in the organization

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Managers	44	85%
Office Administrators	8	15%
Total	50	100%

This implies they are qualified and knowledgeable to give up-to-date information on the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya.

4.3.2 Experience

Respondents were asked to state their working experience in the organizations. The results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.3: Experience

Experience of Staff	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	11	21%
5 – 10 years	15	29%
11 – 15 years	13	25%
16 – 20 years	8	15%
Over 20 years	5	10%
Total	50	100

The results in Table 4.3 that 29% of employees had 5 to 10 years work experience; 25% had an experience of 11 to 15 years; 21% had an experience of less than 5 years, while 15% and 11% had an experience of 16 to 20 years and over 20 years, respectively, as shown in Table 4.3.

The results in Table 4.3 further imply that the agencies have managed to retain and gradually increase the number of their employees. This implies some growth in terms of human resource in the industry.

4.4 Background Information of the Air Travel Agency

4.4.1 Location

The study sought to determine characteristics of air travel agencies by the location of the firms. The analysis is presented in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Location of Air Travel Agencies

Location of the Firm	Frequency	Percentage
Nairobi	27	53%
Mombasa	12	25%
Nakuru & Eldoret	11	22%
Total	50	100

The results show that 53% of the air travel agencies are located in Nairobi, 25% in Mombasa and 22% in Nakuru and Eldoret, as shown in Table 4.4. This implies that most of the clients are located in Nairobi and Mombasa and the growth of the air travel agencies is not reflecting in other towns. The technological development and, in particular, electronic ticketing, whereby a travel consultant can serve their clients while in one location, may also explain why the expansion of air travel business in other towns is low. The results also imply that air travel agencies are concentrated in major urban locations (the Cities) because most clients are found in those cities.

4.4.2 Years of Operation of the Organization

Respondents were asked by the researcher to indicate the years of operation of the organization in their respective Air Travel Agencies. The results are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Years of operation of the organization

Years of operation	Frequency	Percentage
0-10 years	7	13
11-20 years	5	10
21-30 years	16	31
31-40 years	13	25
41-50 years	10	19
Above 50 years	1	2
Total	50	100

The results show that, 31% of the air travel agencies have been in operation for between 21 and 30, 25% have been in operation between 31 and 40 years, 19% for a period of 41 to 50 years, 13% for a period of 0 to 10 years, while 2% had operated for a period of over 50 years.

This shows that the grow of the travel industry has been affected by the state of decline in the tourism industry that has been occasioned by negative travel advisories, terrorism and poor economic performance in the global market.

4.5 Marketing Strategies adopted by Small and Medium Air Travel Agencies

Marketing strategy is a process or model which allows a company or organization to channel limited resources to the best opportunities to increase sales and thereby achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. This section presents an analysis and discussion of marketing strategies considered in this study.

4.5.1 Market Segmentation

The respondents were asked to indicate the main destination that the customers they serve travel to. The findings are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Market Segmentation

Main Destinations	Frequency	Percentage
International destinations	22	44%
Local Destinations	28	56%
Total	50	100%

The findings show that 56% of the respondents indicated that agents in Kenya serve local destinations, while 44% serve international destinations. This implies that small and medium Air Travel businesses in Nairobi City County mainly serve the local market segments.

4.5.2 Promotion Channels used by Air Travel Agents

The Respondents were asked to indicate promotion channels they use to reach their clients. The findings are presented in Tale 4.7.

Table 4.7: Travel Agents Promotion Channels

Promotion Channels	Frequency	Percent
Seminar/ Workshop	10	20%
Internet	35	70%
TV and radio	5	10%
Total	50	100%

The study found that 70% of Air Travel Agents use the internet, 20% use seminars and workshops while 10% use TV and Radio as their promotion channels. The results imply that the main promotional strategy adopted by the Air Travel agencies is through the internet since it's the main channel of communication with the client.

4.5.3 Branding Strategy

Branding strategy is a way of getting the organization's brand in front of the public and attracting new customers. The study sought to determine how the Air Travel agencies

showcased their brands to the public to attract new customers. The results are presented in Table 4.8.

The promotion strategies were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with a possible minimum of 1 and a possible maximum of 5. The maximum value of 5 gives a percentage rating of 100%. The cut-off point is computed at 60%, at a value of 3.

Table 4.8: Promotion Strategy

Factors to consider	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
The promotions of the Air Travel agency are always attractive	3.12	62.4%	0.8792
The seasonal promotions of the Air Travel agency are available	4.21	84.2%	0.0251
This Air Travel agency uses deadline low price ticket incentive to encourage customers	3.84	76.8%	0.0251
Overall Mean value	3.72	74.4%	0.3098

The results show that the Branding strategy received an overall mean rating of 74.4%. This was 14.4% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of Branding was high. The main factor that most contributed to this rating was the “availability of seasonal promotions” by the Air Travel agencies. The least rated factor was “attractiveness of promotion”, which received only 62.4% rating.

4.6 Marketing Strategies

The marketing strategy is the foundation of a marketing plan. Respondents were asked to rate the marketing strategies used by their Travel Agencies using a five-point Likert Scale. The following sections present the findings.

4.6.1 Quality of Service Strategy

This section presents an analysis of ratings on quality of service strategies applied to ensure the growth of small and medium Air Travel agencies. The findings are contained in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Quality of Service Strategy

Statements on quality of service strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
This air travel agency offers high service quality.	4.56	90.2%	0.0125
The service provides by this air travel agency is reliable.	4.25	85%	0.8741
Can rely on this air travel agency to provide good service	4.01	80.4%	0.0184
Overall Mean Rating	4.27	83.4%	0.3017

The results show that the Quality of Service Strategy received an overall mean rating of 83.4%. This was 23.4% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of Quality of Service Strategy was very high. The main factor that most contributed to this rating was the “provision of high service quality” by the Air Travel agencies, rated at 90.2%. Other

contributing factors centered around the reliability of service, which were rated high (above 80%) by the Air Travel agents' customers. This implies that the respondents agreed that the services offered have a positive influence on the market growth.

4.6.2 Pricing Strategy

Pricing strategy involves taking into account segments, ability to pay, market conditions, competitor actions, trade margins and input costs, amongst others. The respondents were required to indicate the pricing strategies they use. The findings are contained in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Pricing Strategy

Statements on Pricing Strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
The small and medium businesses in air travel agencies services are reasonably priced.	4.42	88.4%	0.0211
This small and medium business in air travel agencies offers satisfactory value for what it prices	4.56	91.2%	0.0214
This small and medium business in air travel agencies provides a good service for the price.	4.21	84.2%	0.3642
pricing decisions or factors in the destination countries environment influence growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies	4.32	86.4%	0.1245
Overall Mean Rating	4.38	87.6%	0.1328

The results in Table 4.10 show that the Pricing Strategy received an overall mean rating of 87.6%. This was 27.6% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of Pricing Strategy was very high. The main factor that most contributed to this rating was the “satisfactory value of price” by the Air Travel agencies, rated at 91.2%. Other

contributing factors included reasonable pricing, good service and destination environment, which were rated high (above 80%) by the Air Travel agents’ customers. The results imply that, the air travel agencies make reasonable profits when they charge prices which cover the costs of service provision.

4.6.3 Place Strategy

Place strategy incorporates the distribution by which a company puts its products and services in front of the consumers. It is a plan for obtaining the optimal location for a company by identifying the airline travel business needs and objectives, and searching for locations with offerings that are compatible with these needs and objectives. The results are presented in Table 4.11

Table 4.11: Place Strategy

Statements on Place Strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
Fast check in for passengers off	4.25	85%	0.8971
Convenient parking of vehicles for passengers	3.95	79%	0.0542
The location of this air travel agency service counter is convenient public transport to get to.	3.75	75%	0.5412
Overall Mean Rating	3.98	79.6%	0.4975

The results in Table 4.11 show that the Place Strategy received an overall mean rating of 79.6%. This was 19.6% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of Place Strategy was moderately high. The main factor that most contributed to this rating was the “efficient passenger check in” by the Air Travel agencies, rated at 85%. Other

contributing factors included convenient parking and service counter, which were rated high (above 70%) by the Air Travel agents' customers.

The findings from the place strategy imply that, if the air travel agencies select the wrong location, they may not have adequate access to customers, workers, transportation, materials, and 'and so on. Consequently, location often plays a significant role in the travel airline agency's profit and overall success.

4.6.4 People Strategy

This section covers people with common culture, tradition, or sense of kinship, that typically have common language, institutions, and beliefs, and that often constitute a politically organized group who influence airline travel agencies in Nairobi. The results are presented in Table 4.12

Table 4.12: People Strategy

Statement on People Strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
I receive prompt attention from this air travel agency's employees.	4.25	85%	0.0254
Employees of this air travel agency are always willing to help me.	4.18	83.5%	0.8742
I feel safe in my transactions with this air travel agency's employees.	3.82	76.4%	0.0254
Overall Mean Rating	4.08	81.6%	0.3083

The results in Table 4.12 show that the People Strategy received an overall mean rating of 81.6%. This was 21.6% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of People Strategy was moderately high. The main factor that most contributed to this rating was the “prompt attention to customers” by the Air Travel agencies, rated at 85%. The lowest rated factor was “safety in transactions”, which received a rating of 76.4% by the agencies.

The findings imply that, giving the people in air travel agency real autonomy, and celebrating their achievements the organization is guaranteed of success. For instance, the organization can identify star contributors, highlight brand ambassadors in the internal newsletters and host parties for individual employees. As one respondent indicates, success in business is all about people, people, and people. Whatever industry a company is in, its employees are its biggest competitive advantage.

4.6.6 Process Strategy

A process is a collection of linked tasks which find their end in the delivery of a service or product to a client. A business process has also been defined as a set of activities and tasks that, once completed, will accomplish an organizational goal. The analysis of the Process Strategy is presented in Table 4.13

Table 4.13: Process Strategy

Statements on Process Strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
This air travel agency handles customer complaints very well	3.87	77.4%	0.1252
This air travel agency handle order is very fast.	3.88	77.6%	0.2154
This air travel agency listens to the customer's problem is very earnest.	4.25	85%	0.2518
Qualified and Competent workers	4.10	82%	0.2514
Using efficient processes	4.25	85%	0.2851
Simple registration/admission procedures	3.91	79.2%	0.4123
Empathy to clients	3.81	76.2%	0.2151
Overall Mean Rating	4.01	80.2%	0.2509

The results in Table 4.13 show that the Process Strategy received an overall mean rating of 80.2%. This was 20.2% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of Process Strategy was moderately high. The main factor that contributed to this rating was the “customer relations” by the Air Travel agencies, rated at 85%. The lowest rated factor was “handling of customers’ complaints”, which received a rating of 77.4% by the agencies’ customers. The results imply that the agency business employees need to work as a team to achieve optimum performance in service delivery to customers.

4.6.7 Physical Evidence

Physical evidence is any material object that plays some actual role in the matter that gave rise to the litigation, introduced in a trial, intended to prove a fact in issue based on the object's demonstrable physical characteristics.

Table 4.14: Physical Evidence

Factors to consider	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
The facilities of this air travel agency and the front office suit my needs.	3.92	79.2%	0.258
The facilities of this air travel agency, both at the airport and on the airplane itself suit my needs.	4.12	82.4%	0.256
The appearance of the physical facilities of this air travel agency, both at the airport and on the airplane itself, is in accordance with the type of service provided.	4.18	83.6%	0.021
Overall Mean Rating	4.07	81.4%	0.178

The results in Table 4.14 show that the Physical Evidence received an overall mean rating of 81.4%. This was 21.4% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of Physical Evidence was moderately high. The main factor that contributed to this rating was the “appearance of physical facilities” by the Air Travel agencies, rated at 84%. The lowest rated factor was “meeting of customer needs at front office’ which received a rating of 79.2% by the agencies. This implies that since travel agencies offer a service, physical evidence is an important element in creating customer satisfaction according to the experience of the respondents.

4.7 Importance of Goals in Operations

This section covers the importance of goals in operations and its influence on the growth of small and medium air travel agencies. The following are respondents results as shown in Table 4.15

Table 4.15: Importance of Goals in Operations

Factors to consider	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
Survival in Market	3.52	70.4%	0.0215
Growth (Gain Market share)	4.52	85.4%	0.8745
Profitability	4.22	84.4%	0.2547
Product and Market differentiation	3.92	79.4%	0.4521
Market development	3.75	75%	0.8792
Diversification	3.21	64.2%	0.1788
Overall Mean Rating	3.86	77.2%	0.4435

The results in Table 4.15 show that the Goals and Operations received an overall mean rating of 77.2%. This was 17.2% above the cut-off point (60%), hence, the rating of goal setting was moderate. The main factor that most contributed to this rating was the “growth” by the Air Travel agencies, rated at 85%. The lowest rated factor was “survival in the market”, which received a rating of 70.4% by the agencies’ managers and managing Directors. Thi implies that growth of the travel Agencies rates higher than their survival in the market.

4.8 Correlation Analysis between Marketing Strategies and Growth of the Air Travel Agencies

The study primarily sought to establish the influence of Marketing Strategies on the Growth of the Air Travel Agencies. Table 4.16 presents an analysis.

Table 4.16: Correlational Analysis between Variables

The Marketing Strategies			Rating on Growth of Air Travel Agency
Rating on Promotion Strategy	Correlation Coefficient		.382
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N		50
Rating on Service Strategy	Correlation Coefficient		.097
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.050
	N		50
Rating on Pricing Strategy	Correlation Coefficient		.113
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.043
	N		50
Rating on Place Strategy	Correlation Coefficient		0.402
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.026
	N		50
Rating on Market Segmentation	Correlation Coefficient		.146
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.0310
	N		50
Rating on People Strategy	Correlation Coefficient		.158
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.0275
	N		50
Rating on Process Strategy	Correlation Coefficient		.301*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.034
	N		50

Table 4.16 presents an analysis of the correlation between the factors, where the growth of the Air Travel Agencies represents the Dependent variable while the marketing strategy factors represent the Independent variables. The correlation coefficients are

computed using the Spearman's rank correlation since the variables were measured on an ordinal scale. The results show that all the rated marketing strategies have a relationship with the Growth of the Air Travel Agencies, because they are significant at 5% level (95% level of confidence).

The existence of a relationship between the variables implies the existence of a possible cause-effect relationship between the variables. The results in Table 4.16 indicate that, promotion, place and process strategies have a high correlation with the growth of the Air Travel agencies in Nairobi County. This implies that the factors are likely to have greater influence in enhancing the business capacity of the organizations. The results further show that service strategy, pricing strategy, market segmentation strategy and people strategy play an important role in the growth of the air Travel Agencies.

4.9 Discussion of the Findings

The findings show that the majority of the respondents have indicated that Air travel agencies in Kenya serve local destinations. This finding is contrary to Gajanayake (2002) who did a study on the Impact of Marketing Strategies and Behavior of Small and Medium Enterprises on their Business Growth, the economic growth of developing countries can be sustained by the expansion of the private sector, as they are the engine of growth.

Small and medium businesses in the air travel agencies offer satisfactory value for what they price. This finding corresponds with Kotler et al. (2008) who indicates, the price is the most flexible element of the marketing mix and also the most problematic one. Also,

Wensveen (2007) suggests that since the deregulation of the market price is the main competitive element for any airline, players in the industry can achieve growth if they set prices that absorb costs of operations. The price basically reflects the costs which arise for delivering a certain service. Marketers, in general, choose between various pricing strategies which follow a cost-based or value-based strategy.

Kotler et al., (2008); Lovelock et al., (2008) argue that marketing mix comprises the process of making the service available to customers. In the airline industry, this dimension covers the selection of the right distribution channels which enable the company to reach their target market, hence the travel agencies. The impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) on airlines has always been predominant because they have provided the possibility of a direct channel between the airline and its customers.

Lovelock et al., (2008), suggests it is a challenging task for travel agencies to differentiate their product. There are cases where the only difference between two service providers lies in the way the employees interact with the customers. Emphasis should be put on carefully recruiting, training, motivating and rewarding staff. Additionally, it is important to highlight the impact of the behavior, number of staff and their uniform on the image of the company. Indeed, a uniform plays a crucial role in how a customer perceives individual employee and the company as a whole.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The findings indicate that the majority of the companies have been operational between 21 to 30 years. However, most of the employees had experience of between 5 and 10 years. Most of the respondents were from the management and marketing department of the Travel Agencies.

The study further found that promotion, place and process strategies have a high correlation with the growth of the Air Travel agencies in Nairobi County. The issue of Marketing Strategies on Growth of Small and Medium Business, the study found out that, the appearance of the physical facilities of air travel agency, at the airport and on the aircraft itself, determines the perception of service delivered to the customers. This fields seems to lack competition since a proportion of respondents indicate lack major competitors, therefore, much needs to be done to enhance competitive advantage. Even though, the air travel agency industry, in general, offers high quality service that is reliable.

Marketing strategy was noted to be an essential tool in growth. The company to be competitive it must differentiate its products and services from those of its competitors. By increasing the destinations, while implementing cost saving measures, small and medium air travel agencies will expand their company profiles. Creating partnerships and strategic alliances, will strengthen their financial resource base and offer a larger market. Positioning is the act of designing the company's offering so that the services and products are based on some core idea or benefit that add value to the customer. Competitive advantage is created a superior product or quickest service, accessibility or affordability. This way the product occupies a clear, distinctive and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of the target customers.

On the importance of the operation in the future of the companies and the entire air travel business, the study found out that staff, managers and everybody involved in the entire process at the Air Travel Agency are crucial to success of the firm. The industry focused on the future growth rather than survival as requested by the researcher. This will help the company achieve the vision 2030 millennium goal. On the issue of selecting destinations, more competition is needed in order to increase the competitive strategy. This decision is done through meetings held identify the main factors influencing the company's goals and growth.

5.3 Conclusion

The study has contributed to our knowledge on the influence of marketing strategies on the growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya. The results demonstrated that there is a significant effect of service strategy, pricing, promotion, place, process and peoples on the growth of air travel agencies, likewise a significant relationship was identified between the usages of direct distribution channels on the profitability of an air travel agencies.

Findings of the paper imply that government should formulate policies that will encourage, enterprises in adopting marketing strategy by creating awareness programmes that intimate them of the benefits to enterprises. Also, the air travel agencies should know that no firm can survive without an adequate marketing strategy. The earlier the enterprises start making marketing a centre of their activities, the better for the enterprise. The workers should be properly informed about marketing and everything that it entails so that they can be making the most of it in their daily operations. Marketing strategies are used to increase sales, launch new products and generally provide profit for a company.

If proper mechanism are put in place the Air travel Agency companies operating in Kenya, will gain competitive advantage in the global market thus contributing to social economic developments in Kenya.

5.4 Limitation of the Study

The travel managers of air travel agencies companies were usually very busy and, therefore, they required a lot of time in order to fill in the questionnaires. The challenge was overcome by giving the respondents the questionnaires and picked on a later date.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the study provides a few points on how small and medium air travel agency could improve their use of marketing strategy:

Marketing air travel agencies should implement the use of integrated marketing communication because it solves most problems and helps the marketing agencies to improve their services to their customers.

Entrepreneurs will need to intensify their effort on marketing their products either through open market sales or consumer contact (one on one sale) for improved sales hence a better bottom line. They could also make use of product display, proper packaging, and branding.

The entrepreneurs should engage in more advertising by making use of the internet, print, radio, television etc. to ensure that they reach the clients wherever they are. Effective sales promotion, enhance a firms marketing strategy .

Entrepreneurs should be able to understand the need for customer satisfaction and create a niche for their product or service. Who is your customer, what are your customer needs are the questions to answer before designing a product or service. This will ensure not only customer satisfaction but will delight them.

There should be proper training and retraining of personnel. The staff of the enterprise should be well informed about the use of marketing strategies to maximize benefits to both customers and the travel agency.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study suggests further studies should be done on the influence of competition on growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies.

A similar study should be done on how travel agencies can effectively market to international clients.

Future studies should be done specifically on challenges faced by the small and medium businesses in air travel industry where recommendations will be provided to address performance challenges in that sector.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

PART 1- GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What is the name of your Air Travel Agency? _____
2. Where is it located? _____
3. Title/Position of the respondent _____
4. Number of years your Air Travel Agency has been operating?
 - Less than 5 years []
 - 5 – 10 Years []
 - 11 – 15 years 16 – 20 years []
 - Over 21 years []
5. What is the estimated population size of the your Air Travel Agencies?
 - 0 – 10 []
 - 11 – 20 []
 - 21 – 30 []
 - 31- 40 []
 - 41- 50 []
 - Above 50 []

PART B: THE INFLUENCE OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS IN AIR TRAVEL AGENCIES IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY IN KENYA

6. What are you main destinations that travel agents in Kenya serves?

Domestic () International () Don't know ()

7. How would you describe competition in the industry in your catchment area?

Weak competition []

Strong competition []

Very strong Competition []

Hyper Competition []

8. Who do you consider as your major competitor?

.....

9. Currently, what type of marketing does the agency practice among travel agents in Kenya?

Relationship () Word of Mouth () Mass Marketing () Online

Marketing () Email Marketing () Direct Marketing () Others ()

10. What are the principle policies in communicating and relating with the clients, before and after sales?

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11. How do you promote your air travel services in Kenya?

Internet () Television and radio () Seminar/workshops ()
 others ()

12. The following statements are measured on a five-point scale. Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement on marketing strategies on growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City County in Kenya: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neutral, (2) disagree, (1) strongly disagree.

Marketing Strategies	1	2	3	4	5
product					
This air travel agency offers high service quality.					
The service provides by this air travel agency is reliable.					
can rely on this air travel agency to provide good service					
Price					
The small and medium business in air travel agencies services are reasonably priced.					
This small and medium business in air travel agencies offers satisfactory value for what it price.					
This small and medium business in air travel agencies provides a good service for the price.					
pricing decisions or factors in the destination countries environment influence growth of small and medium business in air travel agencies					
Place					
Fast check in for passengers of					

Convenient parking of vehicles for passengers.					
The location of this air travel agency service counter is convenient public transport to get to.					
Promotion					
The promotions of this air travel agency are always attractive.					
The seasonal promotions of this air travel agency are available.					
This air travel agency uses deadline low price ticket incentive to encourage customer.					
People					
I receive prompt attention from this air travel agency's employees.					
Employees of this air travel agency are always willing to help me.					
I feel safe in my transactions with this air travel agency's employees.					
Process					
This air travel agency handle customer complaints is very well.					
This air travel agency handle order is very fast.					
This air travel agency listens to the customer's problem is very earnest.					
Qualified and Competent workers					
Using efficient processes					
Simple registration/admission procedures					
Empathy to clients					
Physical Evidence					
The facilities of this air travel agency, both at the airport and on the airplane itself suit my needs.					
This air travel agency's physical facilities, both at the airport and on the airplane itself are visually attractive.					
The appearance of the physical facilities of this air travel agency, both at the airport and on the airplane itself, is in accordance with the type of service provided					

13. How important are the following goals in your operations? Please rate them in order of their importance using the following scale, 5. Extremely Important 4. Very Important 3. Moderately Important 2. A little Important 1. Not Important

	1	2	3	4	5
Survival in Market					
Growth (Gain Market share)					
Profitability					
Product and Market differentiation					
Market development					
Diversification					
Survival in Market					

14. In the last 6 months, how do you describe the selection of various destination for your customers

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Appendix II: Small and medium business in air travel agencies in Nairobi City

County in Kenya

- 1 ACHARYA TRAVEL
- 2 AFRICAN TOUCH SAFARIS
- 3 AFRIQUE EXPLORER LTD.
- 4 AKARIM AGENCIES CO LTD
- 5 BCD TRAVEL
- 6 BUNSON TRAVEL
- 7 BOMA HOLIDAYS LTD
- 8 CHARLESTON TRAVEL
- 9 BUNSON TRAVEL IFC
- 10 COTTS TRAVEL
- 11 EXPRESS TRAVEL
- 12 FCM TRAVEL
- 13 FLEET TRAVEL (K) LIMITED
- 14 GEORGETOWN TRAVEL N TOURS
GLOBAL CONNECT TRAVEL & SAFARIS
- 15 LTD.
- 16 WILD VISION ADVENTURES
- 17 WILDERNESS ESCAPES LTD
- 18 WILDTREK SAFARIS
- 19 WILD BREEZES TRAVEL & TOURS LTD
- 20 VENTURE AFRICA TRAVEL
- 21 UNIGLOBE NORTHLINE TRAVEL
- 22 VILLAGIO TOURS & TRAVEL LTD

- 23 VINTAGE TRAVEL
- 24 TWIGA TOURS
- 25 TWIGA TOURS AND TRAVEL
- 26 TROPICAL WINGS LIMITED
- 27 TULIP TRAVEL
- 28 TURACO AFRICA SAFARIS
- 29 TURKENYA TOURS & SAFARIS LTD
- 30 TRAVELSTART KENYA LTD
- 31 TUSMO TRAVEL
- 32 TRINITY TOURS & SAFARISTD.
- 33 TEKKO TOURS TRAVEL
- 34 TRIPPLE TOURS & TRAVEL LT
- 35 TRAVEL 'N STYLE LTD
- 36 TRAVEL HIVE
- 37 TRAVEL PLAZA LTD
- 38 TRAVEL POINT CONNECTION
- 39 TRAVEL SHORE
- 40 SPEEDBIRD TRAVEL AND SAFARIS LTD
- 41 TRAVELCARE LTD
- 42 TRAVEL ASSOCIATES LTD.
- 43 SOMAK FLIGHTS LTD NBO
- 44 SILVERBIRD TRAVEL PLUS L
- 45 TRAVEL COLLECTIONS LTD
- 46 THORN TREE TOURS AND SAFARIS
- 47 TICKET TO FLY TOURS & TRAVEL

- 48 SHIAN TRAVEL LTD
- 49 SATGURU TRAVELS
- 50 SAGAL TRAVEL AND TOUR AGENCY LTD
- 51 ROSKAR TRAVEL
- 52 RICKAIR TRAVEL
- 53 RICKSHAW TRAVEL KENYA LTD
- 54 RAYDOLL TOURS AND TRAVEL
- 55 RAJAIR TRAVEL AND TOURS
- 56 PRIMELINK TRAVEL LIMITED
- 57 PRIVATE SAFARIS
- 58 PINNACLE K TRAVEL N SAFARI
- 59 POLLMANS TOURS & SAFARIS LTD
- 60 PALBINA TRAVEL LTD
- 61 NORTHLINE TRAVEL
- 62 OCEAN AIR SAFARIS LIMITED
- 63 MUTHAIGA TRAVEL LTD
- 64 MONCAL TOURS TRAVEL
- 65 MYFAIR TRAVEL LIMITED
- 66 MIGHTY TOURS AND TRAVEL
- 67 MIGHTY TOURS TRAVEL
- 68 MILANY SAFARIS
- 69 MILES & BEYOND TRAVEL LTD
- 70 MAGICAL HOLIDAYS LTD
- 71 LET'S GO TRAVEL
- 72 JET TRAVEL LTD

- 73 INTO AFRICA SAFARIS
- 74 INTRA OCEANIC TOURS & TRAVEL
- 75 IMRAN TRAVEL AND TOURS
- 76 INCENTIVE TRAVEL
- 77 HOLIDAY BAZAAR LIMITED
- 78 GOOD HOPE TOURS
- 79 DODOWORLD K LTD
- 80 KAMBO TRAVELS
- 81 KATE FREIGHT & TRAVEL LIMITED
- 82 KENYA CHINA TRAVEL & TOURS LTD
- 83 KLASS TRAVEL & TOURS LTD
- 84 MANIAGO TRAVEL AND CRUISES LTD
- 85 TWIN BUFFALOS SAFARIS LTD
- 86 SENATOR TRAVEL SERVICES LTD
- 87 SHAH TRAVEL AGENCIES
- 88 SOUTHERN TRAVEL SERVICES LTD
- 89 TRAVELLERS DEN LTD
- 90 TRAVELWISE KENYA LTD
- 91 THE TRAVELMART LTD
- 92 EAGLE TRAVEL SERVICE
- 93 NOOR TRAVEL
- 94 SHIMASY TRAVEL CO LTD
- 95 SELECT TRAVEL & TOURS LTD
- 96 VOGUE TOURS & TRAVEL LTD
- 97 MANTRA MARKETING & TRAVEL LTD

- 98 FOURWAYS TRAVEL SERVICES LTD
- 99 TAMANA TRAVELS AND TOURS LTD
- 100 THE TICKET COMPANY LTD
- 101 TOUR AFRICA SAFARIS LTD
- 102 NORTH AND TRAVEL SOUTH LTD
- 103 PAGO AIRWAYS TRAVEL SERVICES LTD
- 104 PHOENIX SAFARIS LTD