BI for AI: Brand Innovation in the age of Artificial Intelligence
HUL LIME 2023

Context for the case:

Importance of White Spaces, and the role AI can play.

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, the identification of potent white spaces has become a game-changer for creating big brands and seizing untapped opportunities. As consumer behaviors evolve, mega trends shape industries, and technological advancements disrupt traditional norms, leveraging these unexplored frontiers has become essential for companies seeking to stay ahead of the curve.

Below are a few real world examples that will help you understand this better:
1. Airbnb: Airbnb created a white space in the hospitality industry by offering a platform connecting travelers with unique and personalized accommodations, addressing the unmet need for authentic and personalized travel experiences, and empowering hosts to monetize their unused spaces.
2. Dollar Shave Club: Dollar Shave Club identified an unexplored market in the shaving industry by offering affordable, high-quality razor blades through a subscription-based model, entering the white space and disrupting the traditional razor brands.
3. Vegetarian Butcher: Beyond Meat tapped into the growing demand for sustainable and ethical food options by creating realistic and tasty plant-based meat substitutes, capturing the white space for environmentally-friendly and ethical food choices.

These brands demonstrate how identifying white spaces and catering to emerging consumer needs have led to their widespread popularity and success in recent times. They have leveraged innovative products, technology, and business models to capture the attention of their target audiences and gain a competitive edge in their respective markets.

The advent of AI - From a Marketer's Lens

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has proven to be a game-changer, offering unprecedented. By leveraging the power of AI, we can delve into the depths of consumer pain points, unearthing valuable insights that lead to the creation of innovative products and brand solutions that resonate with their target audience like never before.

AI also equips marketers with the tools to adapt to shifting consumer needs and stay ahead of the curve in an ever-changing market landscape. By analyzing vast amounts of data, AI enables marketers to uncover emerging trends, evolving preferences, and untapped potential in previously unexplored territories. This strategic approach not only positions brands at the forefront of innovation but also opens doors to new growth opportunities, driving long-term success.

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With AI, the life of the marketer has been revolutionized, streamlining various aspects of their work. AI's capabilities empower marketers to create highly targeted and personalized solutions, optimizing their effectiveness and return on investment.

Role of AI in discovering and capitalizing on White Spaces.

Harnessing the power of AI, forward-thinking brands like HUL can uncover deep consumer pain points, leading to innovative product ideas and brand extensions that resonate with their audience like never before. This strategic approach can not only enable brands to adapt to shifting consumer needs but also position them at the forefront of innovation, ready to unlock new growth opportunities and drive success in an ever-changing market landscape.

Exploring White Spaces at HUL

HUL has a portfolio of over 60 brands spanning diverse categories, like:
- *Beauty & Wellbeing:* 20 brands like Dove, Clinic Plus, Ponds, and Lakme, delivering beauty and wellness solutions.
- *Personal Care:* Lifebuoy, CloseUp, Pears, and other trusted personal care brands, ensuring consumers your daily comfort.
- *Home Care:* Household solutions, brands like: Surf Excel, Comfort ,Vim, PureIt, Domex, Rin, and other home care brands .

- *Nutrition*: Body nutrition brands like Boost, Horlicks, Knorr, and more, delivering vitality and well-being.
- *Ice Creams:* Indulgent icy treats from Kwality Walls, Cornetto, Magnum.

And HUL's diverse presence in various categories underscores its commitment to adapt to consumers' evolving needs.

To secure long-term success, continuous innovation and market expansion are paramount in the ever-changing business landscape. With emerging trends, evolving consumer preferences, and technological advancements, untapped potential beckons our brands to explore uncharted territories, unlocking new growth opportunities.

Furthermore, dynamic shifts in consumer demographics and the transformative impact of post-pandemic behavior have carved out unexplored frontiers, aptly termed "white spaces." Within these domains, our existing brands have the potential to find fresh avenues for growth and triumph.

But what's also important to note is that AI has revolutionized the life of the marketer, streamlining various aspects of their work and enhancing customer understanding. With its data analytics capabilities, AI has enabled marketers to create highly targeted and personalized campaigns, optimizing their effectiveness and ROI. Moreover, AI-driven customer insights have provided invaluable information on consumer behavior, preferences, and trends, allowing marketers to develop products that resonate better with their audience.

So it has become essential for every marketer to embrace AI as an indispensable tool, and use it to harness its power to drive innovation, understand customers deeply, and build creative solutions.

Case, Round 1

With the context in mind you are required to fill up a template where you'd be doing the following tasks:

Note: The AI tips and Expert tips are provided to help you attempt the case well, but they are not an exhaustive list. So, please feel free to go above and beyond in exploring more AI tools and best practices to excel.

Task 1: For this round you need to choose a category HUL operates and identify opportunities for HUL's growth through its existing brands. For the category you have selected, do meaningful consumer immersions through which you will need to find the consumer pain points that are waiting to be resolved - these in turn will be the opportunities that result in real brand extensions aka whitespaces.

1. Talk to 10-15 consumers to understand their needs & problems in the category to arrive at consumer pain points which need to be solved. This could be your family/friends or anyone whom you have direct access to. Go completely in depth in terms of the broader space and if possible, observe them and ask questions on practically everything that they are doing.

2. Additionally, conducting secondary research using tools like google trends, keyword planner, and AI to uncover the emerging trends, and any significant changes in consumer behavior which can lead into potential brand extensions.

   Expert Tip: Please do note that in consumer immersions, consumers may often give you solutions or some specific suggestions so as not confuse them with the actual opportunities. *And since your goal is to investigate deeply in a short period of time, you might be better served by picking a Space where expertise will not be hard to come by,*

   AI Tip: An Auto GPT is an agent that breaks your goal into subtasks, executes them automatically and creates new sub-tasks. Hence it ideal for secondary research. Here is an example of AgentGPT helping us understand

the most common problems that lack of sleep leads to. Here's a [tutorial video](#).

Task 2: The next step is to decode the information shared by consumers to identify the real consumer pain points and arrive at some themes which have come out clearly as the most common customer pain points. E.g. If the consumer tells you that they want a spray to clean the door handles, what they are really telling you is that they value portability and want to expend less effort. These pain points would then need to be turned into insights and subsequently turn those into brand extensions or new product ideas. Here is how to do it:

1. List down 5 consumer pain points that have been most frequently and enthusiastically vocalized in your consumer inferences.
2. Every consumer pain point that we have identified above could lend itself to one or more product ideas, you can even use AI tools here to generate product ideas. At this stage you again go divergent and let the ideas emerge through a brainstorming session.

   Expert Tip: Note that if the pain POINT is not real then they will not be motivated to try something new. The stronger the pain point, the better the chances of product / brand working. So, look for inspiration in other markets, in other categories and keep an open mind. Don't constrain yourself with any thoughts on feasibility, scalability or sustainability for the moment. A product idea is when you flip an insight into an opportunity for the brand.

Task 3: Now with all the data points that you have gathered, it's time to converge. Narrow down on 2 product ideas which you see as the spaces that you would like to move ahead with. While converging please ensure to pick the spaces which tick on all the following - they seem attractive, align with one of HUL's existing brands and have deep pain points for the consumer.
1. Choose two product ideas based on a) Size of prize (how big is the opportunity) and b) Brand right to win (How well poised is the brand to win the opportunity)

2. For both your product ideas,

a. create a packshot
b. List 3 product attributes
c. 20 words product description
d. product pricing that you would choose

This will give more meaning to your idea. but while listing this please ensure that the attributes, product description and pricing is centered around the main consumer pain point that you are trying to solve with this product idea.

Expert Tip: list down the specific consumer problems that need to be addressed by the product/service. For each problem, detail out how the product will solve it with specific features.

Task 4: This is a crucial stage, because everything comes together here. You need to help us visualize your top product idea that you feel is the strongest, do this by writing a description for it & framing its attributes alongside a strong visual cue to the product with the help of AI.

1. **Using AI: Create** a static mock-up to help us visualize both the 2 product ideas you had zeroed in on to show how the products would look if they come to life. Please make sure to include product descriptions, attributes etc to give the product

   Expert Tip: Ensure that your product idea and the way it's visualization is shared effectively resolves the consumer pain points and effectively communicates the product's benefits.

   AI Tip: You can get a lot of options for your product descriptions using ChatGPT. There are also plugins like AIPRM that will write prompts for you. Tools like Pebblely & Flair.ai can help you create packaging mockups & product shots. If you want to visualize brand imagery or something specific, Midjourney is a text to AI tool that can help you do that.