No. 1  Background & Field Research:  Pactiv, the company and its products

Project Description

This semester (academic school year), the IPD client/corporate sponsor is Pactiv Corporation. Pactiv Corporation, (NYSE: PTV), a $3.4 billion company, is a market leader in the packaging industry, serving the consumer, food service/food packaging and protective/flexible packaging markets. Pactiv is a specialty packaging leader that currently operates in 16 countries around the world. Their consumer products (Hefty brand) may be found at grocery stores, mass merchants (aka Big Box), drug store chains, as well as at a variety of specialty retailers. In North America, Pactiv is a major player in the growth sectors of the packaging industry, including consumer products (Hefty), food service, food packaging, as well as both protective and flexible packaging.

Seeing that Pactiv is both this year’s client and corporate sponsor, it is only appropriate that all students in the class begin to familiarize themselves with the company, its brand(s), history, product lines, position in the marketplace, and channels of distribution.

Go to the company web site, www.pactiv.com, and take some time to get a good sense of how the company presents itself to the public. Next, visit various types of retail outlets that represent each different channel of distribution and see the products first hand (Field Research). Inspect the product samples closely for materials, color palettes, manufacturing processes, packaging, point of purchase display (if applicable), retail price points, sale price points, location within the store (shelf or end cap), etc. Also take note of competitive products within these same venues.

Immerse yourself into their industry, their product categories, the company, and its competition. At the end of this exercise, each student should have a good understanding of Pactiv and the industry, as well as be familiar enough to be able to discuss any of the aspects mentioned above in class. This preliminary background and field research will help each student acquire a general understanding (big picture overview) and basic sensibilities of Pactiv.

Project Requirements

1. Visit and thoroughly explore the Pactiv company web site.

2. Field Research: On site store visits to at least one store within each channel of distribution (eg. mass merchant/big box - Target; grocery store - Jewel; drug store - Walgreens/CVS). Close examination of Pactiv products and review of the competition.

Due Date       Tuesday, August 30, 2005