



MARKET

You cannot separate education from books. In most instances, when you mention books in Kenya "Text Book Centre" comes to mind. This is because generations of Kenyans have grown with TBC as the preferred book seller.

TBC is the largest books and stationery chain store in East Africa with seven retail stores in Kenya and a wholesale department with an unrivalled capacity to supply Kenya and East Africa with office and educational products.

The books retail market in Kenya is experiencing tremendous growth with the increase in specialty retail stores. This trend has been seen in stationery and IT products, a move that is encouraging a healthy competition in the business.

The company has expanded its product portfolio by the introduction of different product lines which has, in turn, encouraged cross selling. Customers are benefiting from the convenience of finding a number of products under one roof, leading to a significant rise in total sales and customer types. The introduction of ecommerce has encouraged online purchases and TBC has been able to reach customers who would have not had a chance of walking into their stores.

TBC's turnover is growing at a healthy pace and this can be attributed to the vision, hard work and dedication by the founders and staff. The growth of technology has changed the books market and in reaction to this TBC has taken the leadership role in the market by introducing eBooks. This they expect to grow significantly in the next five to ten years. It plans to expand within Kenya and throughout East Africa as the trade barriers broken by the East African Community trade agreement, present an attractive market for TBC in South Sudan, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. TBC is keenly observing these markets for growth opportunities. It is also eyeing major towns in Kenya to continue with its expansion plans. They are therefore looking at increasing their market share significantly through these initiatives.

ACHIEVEMENTS

TBC received an award for the best business partner East Africa from Pelikan.

It has also received the presidential award in recognition of the role it plays in education.

The company has moved up the ladder in Superbrand Listing meaning that TBC brand perception is improving.

The Kenya Publishers Association continues to give TBC the honour of exclusively sponsoring the Jomo Kenyatta Literary Award.

It is currently working towards achieving ISO 9001 recognition. They strongly believe in quality and they stock products from brands who have received ISO certification e.g. Kartasi, Pelikan, ACCO brand products just to mention a few.

TBC was the first book retail store to

publishers, and in the early stages E J Arnold publishers, with the intention of monopolising the trade in terms of supply to the country took over the business, leaving the directors as the management, but two years later this was rectified. Supply to neighbouring countries was initiated and good business opportunities were found but they failed to materialise due to defaulting payments.

From this humble beginning they grew to acquire a plot of 5,000 sq ft, in 1968, and another plot of 5,000 sq ft, this led them to go from strength to strength and their wholesaling grew countrywide and the distribution network spread out to schools, universities, libraries, offices and bookshops. In the 1980s they opened another retail branch at Kijabe St, for General Interest books, increasing their range of products and a larger retail space, this branch then moved to a larger space in the Sarit Centre shopping mall in 1984. At the turn of the century they increased this retail space to almost 10,000 sq ft and increased other branches

...Much more than a bookshop.

- Computers
- Africana Books
- Educational Books
- Computer Accessories
- Books of General Interest
- eBooks
- Art & Craft Material
- Music CD's & DVD's
- Office & School Stationery
- Gift Vouchers for every occasion

Branches:

- Kijabe Street, Nairobi
- Thika Road Mall
- Galleria Mall, Langata
- Holden Mall, Kakamega
- Junction Mall, Ngong Road
- Sarit Centre, General & Academic

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Much more than a bookshop



introduce eBooks in the Kenyan Book industry. It is also the first retail outlet to have a mobile payment option that allows customers to buy goods over the counter via Mpesa at no extra cost.

HISTORY

TBC was the brain child of two Indian businessmen, Mr SV Shah and Mr MJ Rughani, who formed a partnership to provide schools with books for the newly independent Kenya in 1964. At the beginning family members of the Shah's and the Rughani's worked in the bookshop. As the business grew, the company was able to employ other staff, some of who were given an opportunity to study a bookselling course in the UK.

The bookshop started in 1964, in a 500 sq ft premise on Kijabe Street, with five employees; the sales at that time did not even cover their salaries. It took lots of marketing and travelling throughout the country to make the masses aware of their services. Financial constraints and difficulties at one point had them borrowing from

PRODUCT

TBC products are aimed at providing superior and friendly service by ensuring extensive product solutions with the aim of exceeding customer expectations. The products are designed to help provide education and knowledge and increase the literacy within the nation. TBC believe in giving quality service and they are synonymous with reputable and quality products. TBC is known for its reasonable price structure, keeping the prices at affordable levels, so the masses of Kenya can read and educate themselves.

TBC have jute bags for packing of books and stationery purchased over the schools opening season. These bags are environment friendly and heavy duty for continued usage. The company is also educating its staff to encourage customers to the use eco friendly bags.

TBC products are in five main Categories

Books

- General books – including motivational, fiction, biographies, gardening, hobbies, children’s books, self help etc.
- Academic Books - including books from kindergarten level, primary level both local and international curriculum, secondary level and tertiary level.
- Professional Books - including books on Marketing, Accounting, Law, Medicine, Photography etc that are focused on particular professions.

Stationery

- School Stationery – Exercise Books, Pencils, Mathematical sets, glue sticks, pens etc.
- Office Stationery- Highlighters, Shredders, Laminators, Whiteouts, projectors etc.

IT and IT Accessories – includes Laptops, Printers and their accessories like flash drives, external speakers, toners etc. Brands include Canon, HP, Asus, Lenovo and Dell among others.

Music - Music CDs and DVDs from local and international musicians and in all genres.

Art and Crafts - Art materials such as easels, oil and water paints, paint brushes etc that can be used by kids, amateurs and professionals. TBC have a wide range of brands including Pelikan, Faber Castel and Windsor.

TBC are especially proud of their relationship with Pelikan. In 1929, Pelikan invented the first fountain pen with an innovative plunger piston mechanism and thereafter started developing writing instruments for use in schools and offices as well as high value writing instruments for pen collectors.

Today, Pelikan is one of the market leaders and pioneers providing office (stationery and desk accessories), school (colouring and painting), writing instruments and printing consumables (toners, cartridges, ribbons and premium quality papers) worldwide. Pelikan strives to maintain the brand’s good reputation that stands for high quality, innovation, reliability, diversity and creativity in its product offerings.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The introduction of eBooks has provided an opportunity for TBC to attract a new market of consumers; the tech savvy customers. Its IT section has continued to grow with different

products from different suppliers ensuring that they have a constant supply of new products in line with the changes in the industry and market demand.

TBC works with various partners to promote its products. Among the most successful campaigns were the eBook campaign under the slogan “Open your world to eBooks” and a campaign supported by Intel under the slogan “Be a Genius”. For both events the brand produced promotional posters and banners which were equally effective.

TBC sends emails to its existing customer database mailing list; both wholesale and retail customers during promotions. It also works with other ecommerce websites like mzoori.com to send text messages to customers on ongoing promotions.

BRAND VALUES

TBC’s brand values are - Friendly, convenient, relaxed, progressive, contemporary, dynamic, social, innovative, educational, empowering, bold, direct and transparent.

Its promise is to give superior service and quality products that meet the customer’s needs and they say that they are... much more than a bookshop.

Their commitment is to support education in Kenya at all levels by providing books to the nation’s masses at an affordable price.

Their tag line ... Much more than a bookshop, is a clear indication that they are not only a bookshop, but have other products that meet customer’s need. This encourages customers to walk in to their stores and explore the variety of products available. The slogan also indicates their commitment to good service, so when a customer walks into TBC he is not only walking into a bookshop but to a store that has a homely, and comfortable ambience, with great service that serves customers’ needs.

The products they stock have been tested and have passed the standards set by the Kenya Bureau of Standards. Products that do not meet this requirement are rejected and shipped back. This means that only quality products are displayed on the shelves. TBC suppliers have also received the ISO 9001 certification of quality. As for books, they follow the regulations set by the Kenya Institute of Education and only stock books that have been approved by KIE for learning. When syllabuses change, they make every effort to ensure they have the new approved books in good time for schools to purchase.

www.textbookcentre.com

Things you didn’t know about Text Book Centre

The Kenya Music Festival, which is an annual event in the Kenya School calendar, was first initiated by TBC before the Government of Kenya took it up and has since been a competition in schools to celebrate the diverse cultures in Kenya expressed through music.

In 1963 TBC won the award for the best decorated shop, which was sponsored by the government to encourage business in the CBD to decorate its premises in the celebration of first Kenya’s independence.



TBC’s newest store is situated at the Thika Road Mall in Nairobi Suburbs along the New Thika Road Superhighway.

TBC have signed an exclusive retail agreement with eKitabu to distribute eBooks to the Kenyan market for both Primary and Secondary Education.

PROMOTION

Electronic Media – Radio: Easy FM, Radio Maisha, One FM, Classic 105 FM, West FM (TBC adverts run in Breakfast and Drive shows on the above mentioned radio stations).

Print Media - Daily Nation, Standard Newspaper, Business Daily, and The Star.

Magazines - The Management Magazine, Smart Life, the Accounting Magazine, Engineering Students Magazine.

Banners - Road Banners, Broad Base in-store banners, flyers.

Social Media - Face book, Twitter, LinkedIn.

E-shots to the TBC customer database.

Every month TBC carries out promotional activities for different products and brands e.g. stationery sale, art materials sale, IT road shows etc. These take place at their Sarit Centre Shops and at the Junction Mall shops with support from the mall management.

The Junction Mall has an annual sale that takes place for a period of two weeks, with shops within the mall giving discounts of up to 50% on certain products. TBC always participated in the Annual Side Walk event, and it has been successful as the Mall attracts huge footfalls which TBC also benefits from.

