



INTERNATIONAL  
HELLENIC  
UNIVERSITY

## **Marketing Plan for D. Giantsis & Co S.A**

Kouroglou Charalampos

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION & LEGAL STUDIES

A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Science (MSc) in Management

December 2018

Thessaloniki – Greece

Student Name:	Kouroglou Charalampos
SID:	1102160015
Supervisor:	Dr Laspita Stavroula & Dr Mavragani Eleni

I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another's work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student's Handbook.

December 2018

Thessaloniki - Greece

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the CEO of the DG Company, Dimitris Giantsis for accepting my thesis proposal. Moreover, I am also grateful to the members of the team, Pericles Zisis and Giarrikannis Ioannis who supported my work during the last months of the thesis. I would also like to thank my supervisors Dr Laspita Stavroula and Dr Mavragani Eleni. Last but not least, I would like to thank Eleanna Darmani for her helpful comments on the writing of my thesis.

## Executive Summary

Marketing is the way that the companies try to understand the needs of their customers satisfy them and increase their profit. DG Company is a metal construction company specialized in constructing metal parts, industrial metal constructions and metal buildings. DG Company was founded as a family business in 1953 and since then it has expanded. It is located in Thessaloniki, in the North of Greece. Although it is the leader company in this geographic area, it also wants to implement new marketing techniques in order to expand. The main objective of this consulting project was to provide a marketing plan to the CEO of the company.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	2
Executive Summary .....	2
Chapter 1. Introduction .....	3
Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework .....	3
Chapter 3. Objectives of the study .....	13
Chapter 4. The company .....	13
Chapter 5. External/Internal analysis .....	15
Chapter 6. Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning .....	20
Chapter 7. Promotion plan .....	22
Chapter 8. Corporate Social Responsibility .....	30
Conclusions.....	31
References.....	33
Appendix A.....	36
Appendix B.....	37

## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

In Greece, from 2010 till today there is a financial crisis that has affected many sectors but mostly the construction sector. One of the main parts of the construction sector is the metal and steel construction market. Although it is a grand market valued more than 84 billion dollars globally (*Grand View Research*, Last Accessed 8 November 2018), in Greece it has been a declining sector the last 8 years and many companies have stopped working. One of the remaining companies of the sector and leader is Dimitrios Giantsis & CO S.A (DG) Company.

DG Company was founded as a family business in 1953 and since then it has expanded. It is located in Thessaloniki, in the North of Greece. The last 45 years it is an active company in the area of steel and metal constructions. Although it is the leader company in this sector in Thessaloniki, DG Company wanted to implement new marketing techniques in order to expand.

The main objective of this consulting project was to provide a marketing plan to the CEO of the company. The implementation of the plan will help the company expand more in the Greek market and abroad by gaining new customers and improving the relationships with the existing ones. The project is divided in 8 chapters. Chapter 2 analyses the theoretical framework on which the consulting project was based. Chapter 3 provides the objectives of the study. Chapter 4 includes an overview of the company and it is followed by chapter 5 that makes an external and internal analysis of the company and the specific market. After analyzing the segmentation and positioning of the company in chapter 6, chapter 7 is providing the promotion that will give an extra competitive advantage to the DG Company. Lastly, Chapter 8 proposes ideas that promote the Corporate Social Responsibility.

## **Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework**

### *2.1 Marketing*

Marketing is “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” (Gundlach and Wilkie, 2009). It is the way that the companies try to understand the needs of their customers satisfy them and increase their profit. Marketing can be divided in the following four categories:

- a. Internal marketing
- b. Integrated marketing
- c. Relationship marketing
- d. Performance marketing

Internal marketing is focused on the employees and the managers of the company and ensures that they are all working in line with the marketing principles of the company. The integrated marketing ensures that the different parts of the marketing means are combined in order to have the best result. The relationship marketing is trying to have the best possible relationships with all the customers and the partners. Last but not least, the performance marketing is trying to explore what the company gains from the marketing activities (Kotler and Keller, 2009).

As nowadays the marketing strategies need to be customer oriented and to satisfy their needs, it is very important for every business to have a holistic marketing approach, in which everything is important. Several marketing theories have been developed to help the companies and the managers with this domain.

## *2.2 Marketing Mix*

One of the best ways to achieve the goals of the company and to have an effective marketing strategy is to use integrated marketing by using the marketing mix. The mix consists of the 4 P's (

Figure 1 1): price, product, place, and promotion (Grönroos, 1997).

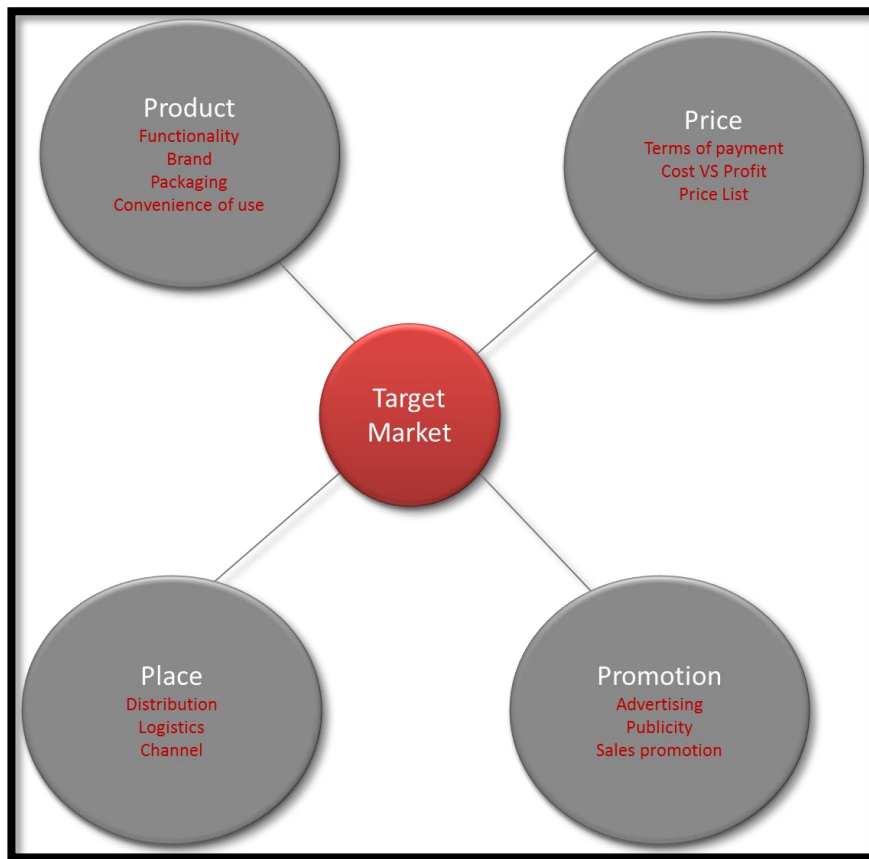


Figure 1. Marketing Mix: the 4 P's. Original Figure based on information from Grönroos, 1997.

Product is the most important part of the marketing mix and it is very important for the industry to pay attention on the five levels of the product (Figure 2):

1. The core product
2. The generic product
3. The expected product
4. The augmented product
5. The potential product

The core product is the basic product, the generic represents the different qualities of the product, and the expected show the benefits that the customer thinks that he will have by buying the product. The augmented product represents all the others factors that will give to the product the competitive advantage such as the brand name and the potential product refers to any transformation the product could have in the future (Horovitz, 2000).

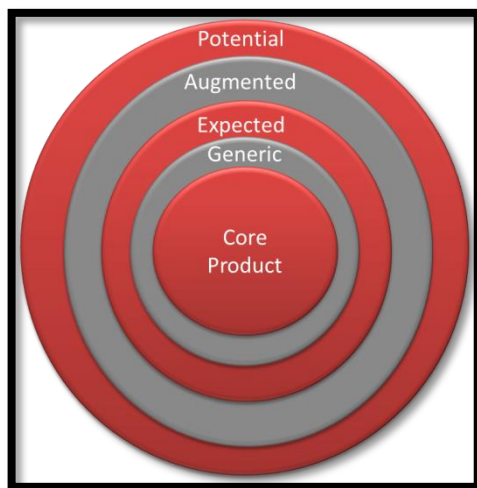


Figure 2. The levels of product. Original Figure based on information from Horovitz, 2000

Price is another crucial element of the marketing mix and it is a complex process. In order to generate the prices, the companies have to take into consideration many factors such as the customers, the competition and the cost. Moreover, it is very important to take into consideration the holistic marketing strategy and the brand positioning. There are many ways that the companies use in order to do the pricing; it depends on the size of the company and the business strategy (Gilaninia, Taleghani and Azizi, 2013). One of the main ways used is a six-step pricing procedure (Figure 3):

1. Selecting the price objective
2. Determining the demand
3. Estimating the cost
4. Analyzing the competitors' cost and price
5. Selecting a pricing method
6. Selecting the final price



Figure 3. The pricing procedure. Original Figure based on information from Gilaninia, Taleghani and Azizi, 2013.

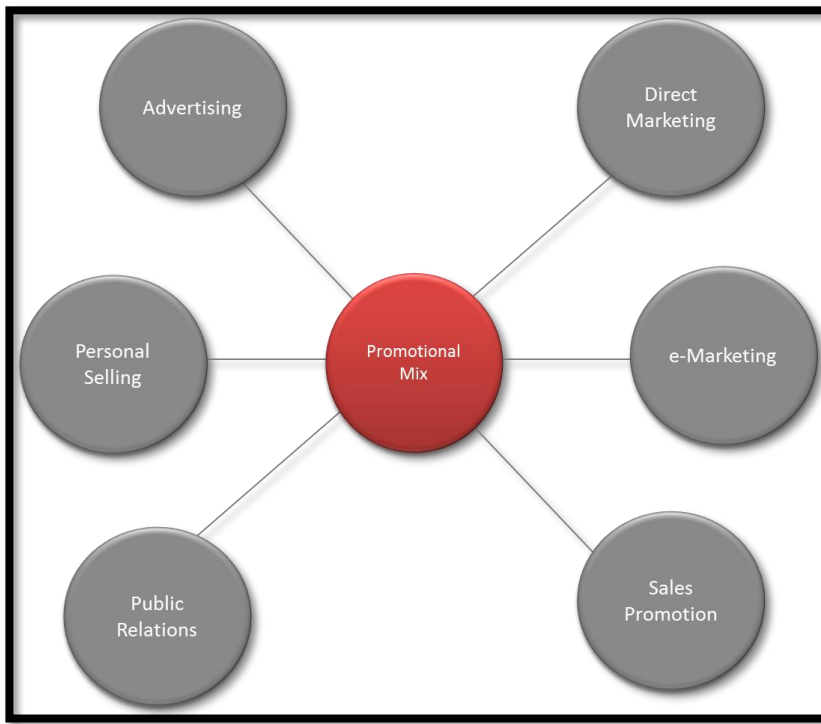
The place refers to the activities of the company that will make the customer get the product or service. This factor includes several facilities such as logistics, distribution channel and the main store or the infrastructure (Håkansson and Waluszewski, 2005). It is important for the customers to know where they can find the product/service and how they can find the distribution channels.

Promotion is the set of activities through which the company can communicate the existence of the product/service to the targeted audience. The promotion consists of a promotional mix which has six elements (Figure 4):

1. Advertising
2. Direct Marketing
3. Internet based Marketing
4. Sales Promotion
5. Public Relations
6. Personal Selling

Through these promotional elements the customers can be informed about the products, prices and places of the company (Harrell, 2008)





**Figure 4. The promotional Mix. Original Figure based on information from Harrell, 2008.**

When planning the marketing mix, the company has also to think the customer's perspective, where the 4Ps are transformed to the 4Cs (Figure 5) (Gilaninia, Taleghani and Azizi, 2013):

1. Customer Value
2. Cost
3. Convenience
4. Communication

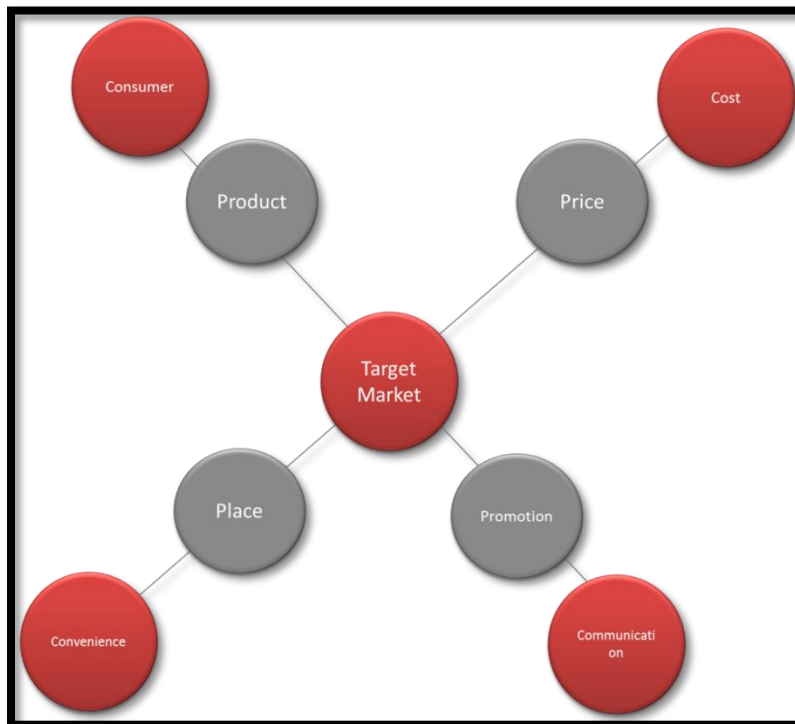


Figure 5. The 4 Cs. Original Figure based on information from Gilaninia, Taleghani and Azizi, 2013.

### 2.3 Relationship Marketing

Relationship marketing is based on making long term relations with the customers of the company. This can lead to trust and commitment of the clients' and it makes it more difficult to swift to the competitors and the company will have repetitive procurement from the customers (Patterson, 1997). Moreover, the relationship marketing can provide to the company word-of-mouth referrals; therefore it is important to build a people-to-people connection (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner and Gremler, 2002). Another important factor is that by having loyal customers, the cost is reduced than trying to find new customers due to the later phases of the relationship life cycle (Figure 6) (Dwyer, Schurr and Sejo, 1987).

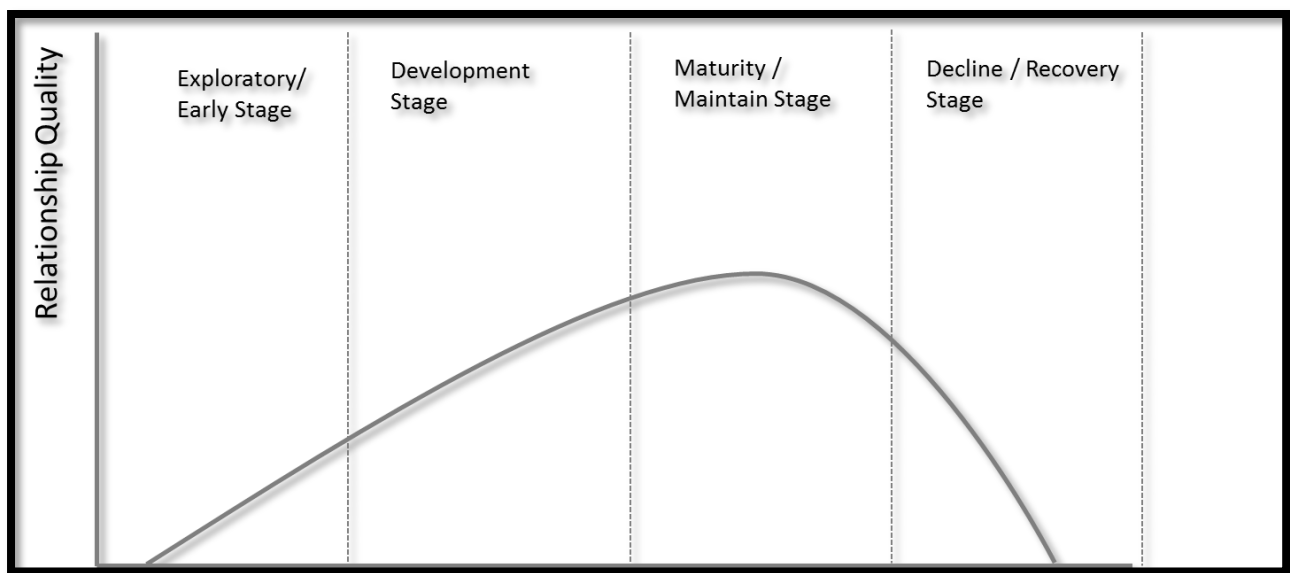


Figure 6. Phases of the relationship life cycle. Original from Palmatier and Sridrah, 2017

## 2.4 e-Marketing

Another essential part of the marketing strategy is the electronic Marketing (e-Marketing) which is very important due to the new digital era. E-marketing is defined as the “the strategic process of establishing online connections with customers to understand their needs as well as employing online tools to create an interactive experience for customers to draw their interest, influence purchasing behavior, and affect voluntary sharing of the experience by satisfied consumers” (Albee, 2018). In the modern world, the companies’ web pages and the social media have become the most important marketing tool of several industries (Hsu, 2012). Therefore e-Marketing is a powerful and effective tool to interact with the customers and to enhance the sales of the company. It is a way to communicate with the customers and increase the sales via digital tools. There are several e-Marketing tools that can be used such as email, mobile marketing and online advertising. The benefits that a company can gain through e-Marketing can be shown by the “5S-model” (Figure 7) which consists of “Sell, Serve, Speak, Save, Sizzle” (MacDonald and Khoo, 2011). Firstly, e-Marketing is used in order to increase the volume of the company’s sales. Until recently the most used digital tool for sales was the email. However, nowadays there are too many social channels that are used for the same reason. Apart from Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, there are also other digital tools such as Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Display Advertisements (Display Ads), the company’s website and Pay-Per-Click (PPC) tools (Saura, Palos-Sanchez and Correia, 2018). Speak refers to the representation of the brand which consists of the logo, the way of thinking, the ways of communication and the way that the customers perceive the company. The digital presence makes the company be always accessible; therefore it is important to show through the digital tools the personality of the brand.

The digital tools exist to serve the company's customers in order to find the products and all the needed information (MacDonald and Khoo, 2011; Saura, Palos-Sanchez and Correia, 2018). This leads to having the customers at the center of the company's attention. E-Marketing can also save time and money for the company as in some cases as e-shops the manual intervention is reduced and in other cases like the use of social media, the company can remain connected with the customers without spending too much time. By sizzling, the company can create an engaging experience through the customers' online experience (MacDonald and Khoo, 2011). In order to perform e-Marketing, the company must have a marketing plan based on the segmentation, targeting of the customers and the positioning of the company.

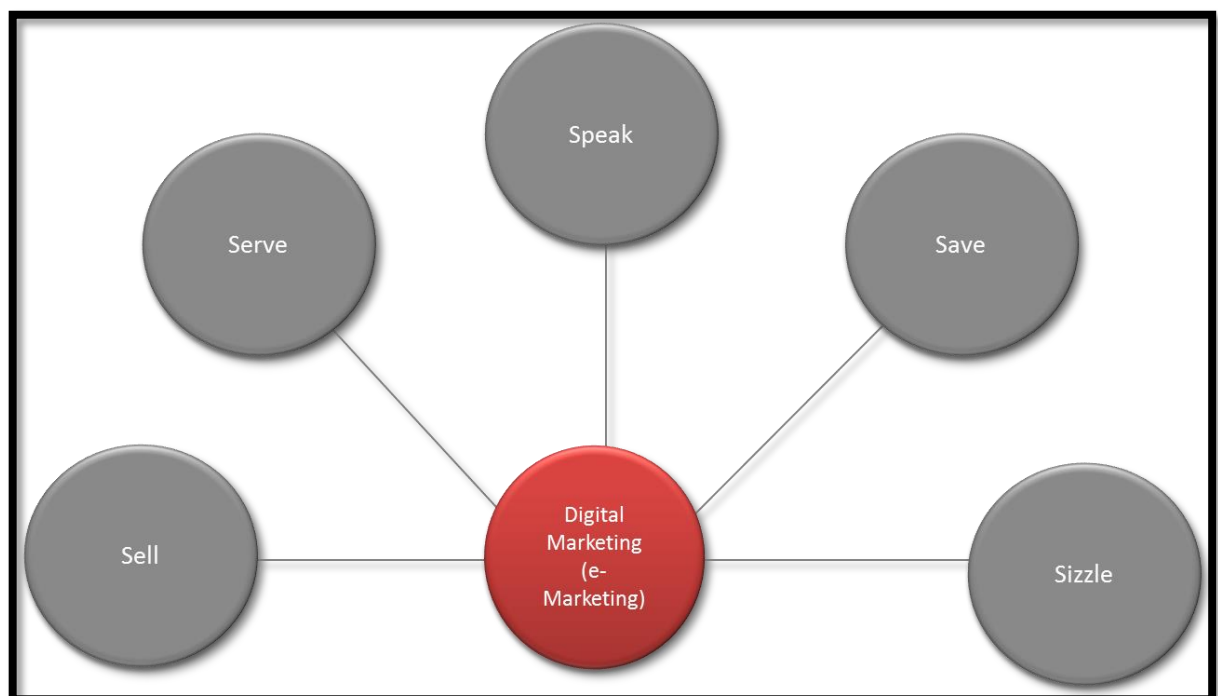


Figure 7. The 5S e-marketing model. Original Figure based on information from MacDonald and Khoo, 2011.

### *2.5 Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning*

The basis of strategic marketing is the segmentation, targeting and positioning. Market segmentation focuses on the identification of niche market segments that have different needs and profiles. After knowing the market segments, the companies can target one or more. For each market segment, the company communicates the benefits through the marketing plan (Kotler, 2015).

There are different types of segmentation such as demographic. In this category the market can be segmented in the following types:

1. Industry: on which industries can the company focus
2. Size of the company: what size should the customer companies have
3. Location: on which geographic areas can the company focus

Another type of segmentation consists of the purchasing approaches, which consists of different purchasing policies of the customer and other situational factors such as the size or the urgency of the order (Dibb and Wensley, 2002). Apart from the segmentation category, the criteria to have effective market segmentation are:

1. Specific characteristics
2. Measurable and obtainable data that show size and profile characteristics
3. Accessible segment
4. Substantial segments in order to have the required returns
5. Stable segments (Beane and Ennis, 1987).

After establishing the segments, the most desirable segments that have the higher opportunities can be targeted. In order to get to the target market, different marketing channels can be used such as the distribution channels to deliver the products, the service channels that include banks, warehouses etc. and the communication channels that include all the marketing methods in order to deliver and receive messages from the targeted customers (Kotler, 2015). While trying to target the appropriate segment, the companies have to make the positioning of the firm which means the place that the company has in the minds of the customers. If there is an established brand positioning, the marketing strategy can be more guided (Ries and Trout, 2000).

## *2.6 Social Responsibility*

Many social debates and boycotts led companies to engage social responsibility marketing. As the activities of the companies have environmental, social and legal effects to the society it is very important to ensure the use of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices (Luo and Bhattacharya, 2006). These practices will lead to the reduction of any negative impacts of the company towards the society and to the increase of any positive impacts. This can be performed by having good relationships with the employees, make partnerships with the local communities, make socially sensitive investments and get involved in activities that promote

environmental sustainability (Maimunah, 2009). Although CSR is part of every business, different aspects occur for large businesses in comparison to small-medium enterprises (SMEs). Large enterprises usually have more formal CSR practices, more resources to invest in this field and they must report CSR activity (Davies and Crane, 2010); however CSR has been recognized as a tool for having competitive advantage among other SMEs (Murillo and Lozano, 2006). The main CSR activities that can be adopted by the SMEs can be divided in the following categories: workforce oriented, society-oriented, market-oriented, and environmental-oriented (Kramer, Pfitzer and Lee, 2005).

### **Chapter 3. Objectives of the study**

#### *3.1 Research Objectives*

The case company is one of the largest metal construction companies in Greece. The success of the company shows that the existing marketing plan is effective. However, through the discussion with the manager of the company it could be understood that there is not a specific marketing plan and everything was based on experience and the trust the customers felt through the years about the company. Therefore, it was decided that the main objective of the thesis would be to develop an effective marketing plan which would be based on e-marketing techniques.

### **Chapter 4. The company**

#### *4.1 Presentation*

DG Company is a metal construction company (Figure 8) specialized in constructing metal parts, industrial metal constructions and metal buildings. The company is fully owned by the CEO Dimitrios Giantsis and currently has its offices and construction plant in the industrial area of Kalochoi in Thessaloniki, Greece (*D. Giantsis & Co S.A*, Last accessed 10 November 2018).



Figure 8. Logo of DG Company. Figure from D. Giantsis & Co S.A., Last accessed 10 November 2018

The company was originally founded by Dimitrios Giantsis in 1960. It started as a small family business totally operated by its founder. The company started by constructing small metal products by hand. In the beginning, the target customers were elaborating in the local market. Through the years, the company gradually expanded its activities by investing in new technologies and acquiring qualified employees. During the nineties, when the construction sector in Greece experienced a great upturn, DG Company decided to expand its facilities, taking significant risk. The company bought 9.500m<sup>2</sup> building in a 14.500m<sup>2</sup> holding in the industrial area of Kalochori, Thessaloniki where it is still located. The new industrial plant was equipped with new machinery such as laser and plasma cutting machines; thus, able to support mass construction. With all the developing actions that have been made the company is able to design and construct great variety of both public and private infrastructure, from a small metal particle to a major project.

#### *4.2 Mission and vision*

The mission of the company is to offer excellent quality products with attractive prices. To achieve that it invests on new emerging technologies, as well as in the professional development of its employees. DG Company's commitment to deliver high quality products to its customers with consistency in delivery time is the key to establish successful relationships with them.

The company's vision remains the same since the foundation of the company, is to grow in the future, become the leader at a national level and increase its presence in the global market. With a professional team of employees and innovative services that satisfy customer needs the CEO of the company visualizes success to naturally follow in the next years.

#### *4.3 Personnel*

One basic pillar of DG Company's sustainability and success through the crisis period is its workforce. Understanding the importance of committed personnel, the company dedicates its efforts in this direction. Unlike its competitors, DG Company not only

maintained all of its employees but proceeded in acquiring five employees in the last 6 years. The team is composed of forty professionals, of which five are senior engineers and thirty-five are machine operators and designers.

#### *4.4 Services*

DG Company offers a great variety of services that apply in industrial and housing constructions. Equipped with specialized machinery the company undertakes construction and conservation works for both public and private sector. It specializes in: Metal industrial buildings, natural gas pipelines, metal farming units, bridges and laser cuts.

### **Chapter 5. External/Internal analysis**

#### *5.1 Macro environment*

In order to have a successful marketing plan, we need to understand all the factors of the external environment that affect company's operations even though the company has little or no control over them. These issues are Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal and will be examined through PESTEL analysis.

##### *Political factors*

Political stability is one of the most important factors when discussing about external issues. The company should continuously monitor changes in government policies concerning the construction industry.

The economic crisis that started in Greece in 2008 has dramatically declined the amount of money given for public constructions. Before the crisis, government practices aimed in large investments in civil works and infrastructure. One of the aspects affected by Greece's engagement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), was the Public Investment Program leading to the bankruptcy of many construction companies.

##### *Economic*

Construction industry in Greece was concerned to be a very prosperous industry in the past decades. Since 2008 when Greek economy entered the recession period, the



construction sector in which DG Company belongs accumulated strong financial imbalances. However, after nine years of recession the construction sector enters a phase of growth (*ICAP Group*, Last Accessed 8 November 2018). According to the experts, perspective in the next two years is positive as new public investments are going to be auctioned.

### *Technological*

Technology always played a fundamental role in the construction industry. Innovations and new technologies have improved the productivity of companies but also enhanced competition among them. The construction companies should follow a continuous modernization process in terms of new machinery as technology rapidly changes how things get done in large companies. In that direction, DG Company emphasizes in innovation and development of different products, investing in machinery.

### *Social*

One of the most crucial social factors to be considered by companies in Greece is the loss of human capital since 2008. It is one of the biggest brain drains in modern times. People who have been educated in Greece, are now working in other countries. With this exodus taking place for almost a decade, companies struggle to find promising candidates to cover strategic positions.

### *Environmental*

Environmental issues are in high concern nowadays so companies committed to environmental protection are positively regarded by society. Therefore, most firms spend part of their investment and activities in sustainable development. Currently, DG Company has established the “zero waste production” program aiming in decreasing the pollutants of raw materials used in production.

### *Legal*

Industry regulations and laws imposed by the government are legal factors that affect the company's operation. Except for laws in Greece DG Company has to obey to the regulations imposed by the European commission such as safety and risk prevention, resource efficiency and sustainability issues.

### *5.2 Market competition analysis*

All companies who want to defend their position in the industry, have to examine their competitors when conducting a marketing plan since they compete for the same customers. The evaluation of competition in this marketing plan is based on the analysis of a Harvard University professor Michael Porter, known as “Five Forces Model”. In this model the competition is taking place in five dimensions: Threat of new Entrants, Bargaining power of buyers, Bargaining power of Suppliers, Substitutes and direct competitive companies.

#### *Threat of new entrants*

Even though there are some new companies that entered the metal construction industry, the threat of new entrants is low, because emerging companies need a lot of time in order to build a strong brand name in the industry. In addition, the entry barriers are high due to the high initial budget needed to equip such a company. As a result, the overall risk for new entrants in the industry is low, which is an advantage for DG Company.

#### *Bargaining power of buyers*

The bargaining power of buyers can vary and depends on the complexity and project requirements. In cases where customers require less complex projects, they have many companies who can satisfy their needs resulting in strong bargaining power. However, when the projects are more special and need a fully equipped production unit to be constructed there are a few firms that can be selected, thus the bargaining power of customers is low.

#### *Bargaining power of suppliers*

The bargaining power of suppliers in the metal construction industry is considered to be low. Companies can change their suppliers, with many suppliers operating in this field, without compromising in the quality of raw materials. Moreover, due to the intense competition between suppliers, prices of raw materials remain low, making cost a less significant factor for a company thinking to shift from one supplier to another.

#### *Substitutes*

The threat of substitutes refers to replacement products that satisfy the same needs of customers. In the metal construction industry, there are no apparent substitute products taking into consideration the characteristics of materials and the requirements of work. For example, steel cannot be subsidized by plastic or wood in a construction project. Therefore, there is the low possibility of substitutes in the industry.

#### *Direct competition*

The rivalry between competitors refers to existing companies in the industry that provide the same products or services. In the metal construction industry, there are few companies that could compete with DG Company for large projects in Greece. The two biggest competitors that are worth mentioning are EKME S.A. and VETA S.A. The first competitor, EKME S.A. is specialized in large metal constructions for oil and gas companies and in 2011 was considered one of the strongest companies in Greece (*EKME S.A*, Last Accessed 10 November 2018) On the other hand; VETA S.A. covers the sector of engineering and processing high-end metal products (*Veta S.A*, Last Accessed 10 November 2018). These two competitors share common characteristics with DG Company such as the many years' experience in the industry, the high quality of products they produce and the investments in new technologies. In addition, E.K.M.E. S.A and VETA S.A. have some strength over DG Company as they both have a global presence and they also have more aggressive marketing strategies.

#### *5.3 Swot analysis*

A SWOT analysis is a powerful marketing tool used to evaluate a company's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Strengths include the company's capabilities and positive characteristics. Weaknesses are the unfavorable internal issues that may slow organizational performance. Opportunities consist of external possibilities that can be exploited by the company in the future. Threats are the external factors that jeopardize the company's success. SWOT analysis as a tool has gained high popularity among marketers and practitioners due to its simplicity and efficiency in marketing planning (Helms and Nixon, 2010). The four parts of the analysis are depicted in Table 1.

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>External Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own facilities</li> <li>• Great Experience</li> <li>• Updated machinery</li> <li>• Committed personnel</li> <li>• Satisfied Customers</li> <li>• Low prices</li> <li>• Delivery time</li> <li>• Wide range of services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion</li> <li>• Decoration –Image</li> <li>• Aged employees</li> <li>• Corporate Communication</li> <li>• Exports</li> </ul>
	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>Internal Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative Projects</li> <li>• Public Sector</li> <li>• Global Market</li> <li>• Talented employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unstable sector</li> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Price of raw materials</li> <li>• Legislation and taxes</li> </ul>

Table 1. SWOT Analysis. Original Table

### *Strengths*

The company's success through the years derives from the favorable internal factors. First of all, DG Company has its own production facilities strategically located in the industrial area of Thessaloniki. With more than 45 years of experience in the metal construction sector and based on its committed personnel and the new machinery it has acquired the company is able to respond to customers challenging projects in short delivery time. The long-lasting connection with suppliers helps the company get high-quality raw materials at low prices. Through this fact, the sales department of the company offers competitive final prices to its customers. Another key factor for the company's success is the flexibility to service a wide range of customers from private clients to public constructions.

### *Weaknesses*

Although the company does a great job in many aspects there are some facts that need to be re-evaluated. The company lacks an official advertising campaign and promotion plan. With fierce competition and the construction sector barely moving, an aggressive advertising campaign is more than necessary. In this direction, a general refreshment should be implemented both in the furniture of the offices and on the website of the company. In a way, the employees of the company are one of its weaknesses. Having the same workforce in the same positions for many years makes it less possible to sustain an enthusiastic and productive workforce that can cooperate effectively with the administration. Lastly, DG Company has no revenues from exports and has never tried to position its products in the global market.

### *Opportunities*

As a well-organized company and technologically equipped DG Company has a great chance to offer innovative ideas to its customers from which additional revenue could be collected. These innovations would also help the company to enter the global market through differentiation. Another opportunity is the urban infrastructure projects as the size of these projects need big production facilities which not all construction companies have. Attracting talented people is also a fact that the company should examine in order to effectively accomplish the transition in the new era.

### *Threats*

The construction sector in Greece is unstable and difficult to predict. The economic crisis combined with the legislation and taxes caused serious damage in the sector making the sustainability of companies a difficult issue. The cost of a product is classified in labor, machinery and raw materials. Assuming that the cost of labor and machinery remain unchanged, changes in prices of raw materials (oil prices) can narrow the margin of the company. In addition, other companies operating in the same field pose a threat for DG Company especially importers who may have a lower manufacturing cost.

## **Chapter 6. Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning**

### *6.1 Segmentation strategy*

The construction industry, as most of the industries, has become global therefore the customers can communicate with any company in the world. For this reason, it is crucial for any existing company to sustain a strategic market position (Skitmore and Smyth, 2007) and market segmentation is a basic decision before making an effective marketing plan (Dibb and Wensley, 2002).

DG Company has made market segmentation through the operating years based on experience. By making taxonomy of the customers, it is clear that the segmentation is based on demographics and situational factors. Specifically, the demographic criteria consist of the location and the industry as DG Company performs business-to-business (B2B) and not business-to-customer (B2C). The geographic segmentation showed that all the customers are located in the area of Northern Greece (Figure 9). By having a geographic segmentation DG Company can have a more focused approach to the needed resources (Choffray and Lilien, 1978). Since the majority of the customers are in the same geographic area with the factory and the warehouse of DG Company, the methods used for transportation of the products are more limited and less costly.

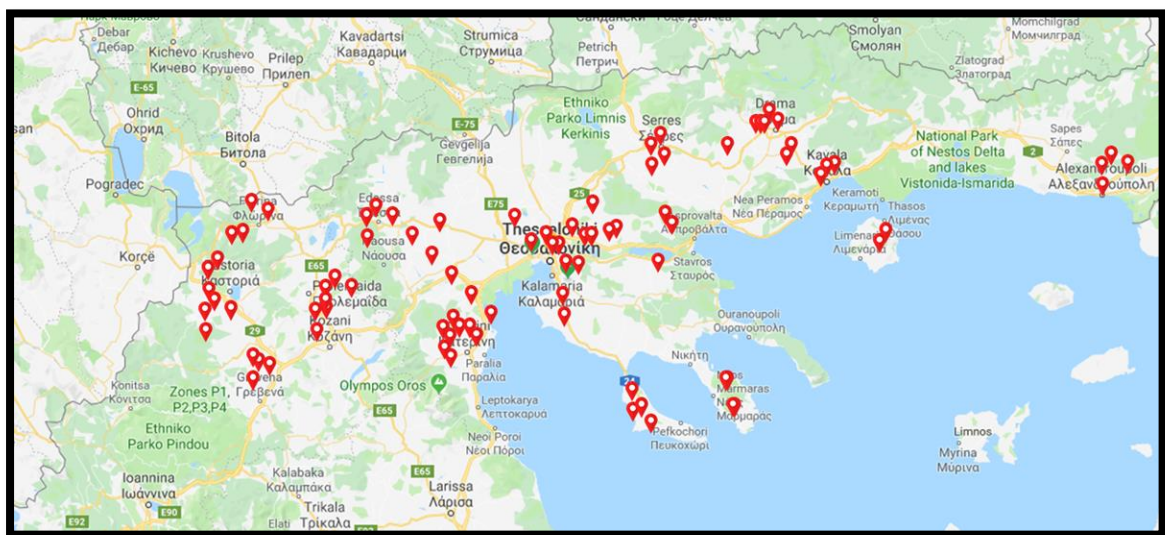


Figure 9. Geographic Distribution of DG Company's customers. Original Figure made with the use of Google Maps.

The situational factors consist of different purchasing policies of the customer and other situational factors such as the size or the urgency of the order (Dibb and

Wensley, 2002). DG Company's factory is fully automated and it cooperates with companies that order big volumes of products as it is more difficult for automated factories to produce a little number of a lot of products.

The customers are targeted by the DG Company based on the differentiated marketing strategy. The targeted sectors are different from each other and each one is targeted through offers that suit them (Hajar and Mahrani, 2014). Moreover, other targeting criteria of DG Company are the substantiality and durability. Based on the CEO of the company it is crucial to know that the selected segments are profitable enough, of sufficient size and have a duration through the years (Hassan, Craft, and Kortam, 2003; Safley, 2013).

The company has to make the segmented customers position the company in the most appropriate and effective way. This will be performed by offering to them propositions that match their needs and buying behavior (Dibb and Wensley, 2002). In order to make the best positioning, the marketing mix can be used. This study was focused only on the promotion part of the marketing mix, therefore the other three were not mentioned. Promotion is a very powerful element of the marketing mix as it includes all the advertising activities (Singh, 2012).

## **Chapter 7. Promotion plan**

The DG Company plans to attract 15% new customers and increase by 5% the market share within 2019 through new marketing techniques that will increase its visibility. These objectives will lead to the financial target of marketing which is the commercial profitability by increasing the net profit of the company by 5% in 2019. In order to succeed this, this study suggested several promotion actions. These actions (Figure 10) were based on the conversion value which is the ratio of the number of customers that make a purchase to the number of people that saw the advertisement. An important promotion action is the offline marketing. This type of marketing is the only one that DG Company uses; therefore it was considered of minor importance in comparison to the other actions that have not been implemented already in the marketing strategy.



Figure 10.  
Promotion  
actions. Original  
Figure.

### *7.1 e-mail Marketing*

Email Marketing is about sending marketing messages by email to existing or potential customers. It is an effective way, low-cost to communicate with the customers (Groves, 2009). Although finding an email list is easy as it can be bought from such companies, it is preferable for the DG Company to make each own list because the ready-to-customer lists contain a lot of emails that does not exist anymore. Moreover, it is a better marketing technique to know the recipient of your email in order to call him with his name. Therefore it is very important to make an email list containing potential clients of the following categories:

1. Super Markets
2. Engineering Companies
3. Automotive Industries
4. Furniture Companies
5. Petroleum Industries
6. Hydroelectric Companies

The potential customers will receive a promotional email (Appendix A) in order to communicate with the DG Company or to subscribe to the newsletter so as to be in contact. The customers that will subscribe to the newsletter can receive a monthly email with new products, photos of products and news about the steel industry. This is a cost-effective marketing tool for an SME as it is free to send monthly up to 12000 emails (*MailChimp*, Last Accessed 18 November 2018). However, the customers'



interest in promotional emails has declined through the years and other more modern marketing techniques can be used, such as social media.

## 7.2 Social Media

There is a rise of social media in the marketing domain. Usually B2C companies use social media to increase the sales; however, a B2B company like DG can also use them as a marketing tool. The products of DG Company solve specific problems for every customer and they are usually unique. By uploading in the social media the products for the existing customers; other companies can position the company in such a way in their mind that will make them potential customers (Hill and McGinnis, 2007) . Therefore loyal customers can be made through curiosity marketing. This type of marketing is more difficult in B2B companies as the main goal is to have a long-term relationship with them (Wong *et al.*, 2014). DG Company can have customer centered engagement by performing curiosity marketing through social media; by creating content delights or entertains the customers. In order to perform the inbound marketing (Logic, Framework and Marketing, 1984), DG Company has to create effective content such as telling a story through a short video that will attract customers and potential employees. The most appropriate social media platforms for the DG Company are Facebook, Youtube, and Instagram. Until 2018 DG Company did not have presence in Facebook. In order to make a social media marketing campaign, in these platforms, an attractive logo can be used (Figure 11). Facebook has more than billions of active users and over 1 billion daily users. Globally it is the second website based on the number of users after the Google website (Kirtiř and Karahan, 2011). This social media platform is considered as the market leader and users can either see the newsfeed of the pages their friends or make advertisements which cost 0.35€ (Stelzner, 2016). The objectives of DG Company for the social media campaign in a 2 months period are:

1. To create a Facebook page and gain 150 followers.
2. To increase the engagement rate to 120 impressions on Facebook
3. To make an Instagram profile and gain 50 followers
4. To make a YouTube Channel and gain 30 Likes in each Video

The strategic plan includes several activities on the above social media. The first step is to create high-quality content such as videos and photos. The videos will be separated in categories. The main category will be the products of the company, the second the facilities and the third the personnel. All the videos will be filmed in an in a creative manner that will lead excitement. For the products, a general video can be produced (Appendix B), and other videos will show the construction process from the designing to the final product, as the manufacturing industry has an advantage over other industries on video making. The general public and the customers are interested in watching complex machinery, large workplaces, metal materials and the science besides the production. The facilities will be filmed inside the factory and also with the use of a drone camera. The employees can be filmed during the working process and also during special events such as the Christmas party. The photos will be shared daily and the videos weekly in order to generate the customer's interest in the DG brand and in the industry practices. Last but not least, it is important to communicate through the social media all the CSR practices that are mentioned in Chapter 8. The social media marketing strategy is also important for the SEO strategy as Google's search algorithm uses more than 200 factors and one of them is the number of mentions a company gets in social media (Clarke, 2015).



Figure 11. New logo for DG Company and the social media campaign. Original Figure.

### *7.3 Search Engine Optimization & Search Engine Advertising*

SEO is the way a company can maximize the number of visitors to the website by ensuring that the website appears first in the list of the results that appear at the search engine (Evans, 2007). Google's ranking algorithm uses many variables, with different percentage factors (Yalçın and Köse, 2010), in order to give the list of results after a

search (Figure 12). SEO is an ongoing and very technical process (Figure 13), and the SEO strategy in combination with the implementation has to focus on specific steps that will result to increased visibility of the website in the search engines.

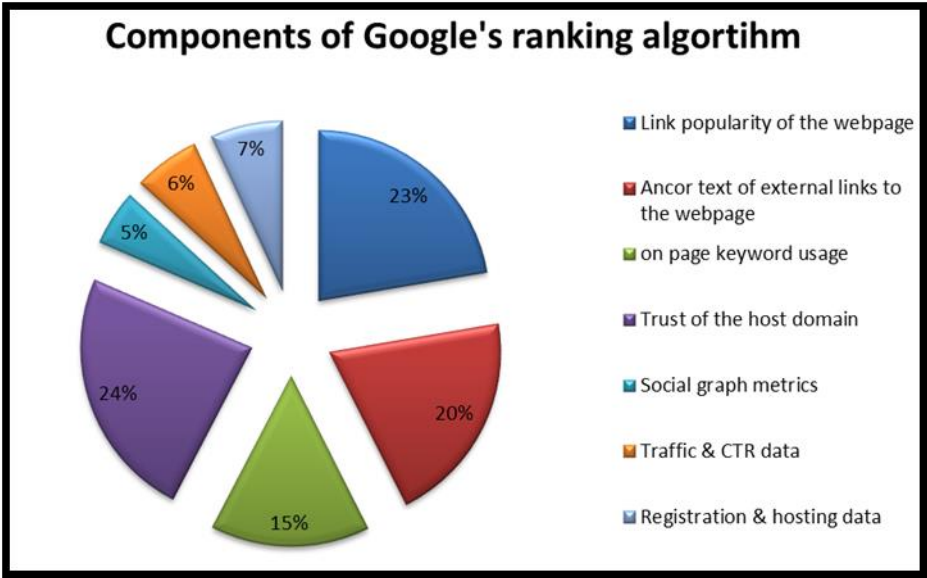


Figure 12. Google's ranking algorithm variables. Original Figure based on information from Yalçın and Köse, 2010)



Figure 13. SEO Process. Original Figure based on information from Enge Eric, Spencer Stephan, 2015

The DG Company's strategic goals are to increase the website's traffic and better visibility as the company's website does not appear in the first page of Google's results when searching for "Metal Constructions Thessaloniki". The SEO strategy is important to be performed before the design of the website in order to include the strategy in the site development strategy. Before designing the SEO strategy it is important to consider the business factors (Enge Eric, Spencer Stephan, 2015) shown in Table 2.

<b>Business Factors</b>	<b>DG Company business factors</b>
The purpose of the site: sell products, sell advertisements, get memberships	Sell products
Target Customers	Companies and Individuals that need large amounts of products
Competitors	EKME S.A. & VETA S.A
Critical search terms for the company	Metal, Steel, Construction, Metal Work, Mechanical Constructions, Stainless Steel Structures
Understanding how customers search for products	

Table 2. Important Business Factors for designing the SEO strategy. Original table based on information from Enge Eric, Spencer Stephan, 2015.

The first step to achieve the company's goals is to insert in the company's website the appropriate keywords. Keywords are not the main object of the SEO strategy; however, they are one of the main paths to get the search goals (Ward, 2017). The search popularity is defined as the number of everyday searches for a keyword that meets the criteria of a specific business. Based on the Google Keyword Planner there are fifteen more appropriate Greek keywords that have to be used in DG Company's website (Table 3); however, three of them that are in Bold were in Greek-English language, therefore, were rejected from the SEO strategic plan.

Keyword	Search Popularity
Ανοξείδωτα	1300
Ανοξείδωτες Κατασκευές	390
Ιnox Κατασκευές	140
Κάγκελα Ιnox	260
<b>Ιnox κατασκευές</b>	50
Ανοξείδωτες δεξαμενές	260
Ανοξείδωτες κατασκευές εστίασης	40
Μεταλλικές κατασκευές	1300
Ανοξείδωτα κάγκελα	210
Κατασκευές Ιnox	50
Κάγκελα inox τιμές	140
inox κάγκελα	260
δεξαμενές λαδιού	170
<b>κατασκευές ιnox</b>	30
<b>κατασκευές ιnox τιμές</b>	90

Table 3. Search popularity for keywords on Google. Original Table based on information from Google Keyword Planner.

Based on the SEO plan, the Search Engine Advertisement on Google was structured (Figure 14) by paying 0.12€ to Google for each click of a user.

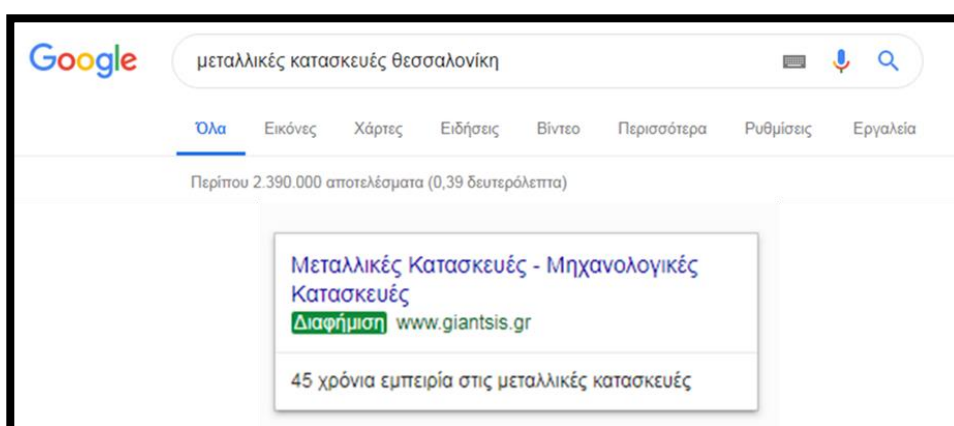


Figure 14. Search from Google showing the DC Company's Advertisement.

#### 7.4 Website

Nowadays it is essential for companies to have their website, since internet is accessible to almost everyone. The website plays an important role in the relationship between company and customer by showing the company's products and services and in the same time identifying potential customer needs and interests through the website traffic. In general, by creating their own website companies can communicate with their potential customers smother than before. However, having a website is not enough as competition in digital marketing is fierce. In order to successfully differentiate, the web page should score high in usability. "Web usability refers to the

extent to which web sites can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals to visit with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified context of website use” (Lee and Kozar, 2012).

DG Company maintains a web page since 2010, which needs some improvements in order to reflect the company’s image and principles. The objectives of the company concerning its website in a 2 months period are:

1. To increase the time that customers stay on the company’s webpage
2. To increase the daily visitors from 5 to 10.
3. To attract visitors from other countries.

The first adjustment that should be made to achieve these objectives is the rejuvenation of the Homepage. The Homepage is the first impression for a visitor and generally the page with the most traffic. The first step is to create a clever short phrase describing the company’s statement. For this use this study proposes the phrase: **“Engineering your metal ideas”** which is the first thing a visitor will observe. In addition, the slideshow that already exists will be enhanced with new photos and videos. When used right, media provide a powerful tool in order to increase the popularity of the webpage and also make visitors more enthusiastic, willing to continue surfing inside the Website. Lastly the social media buttons will be added in the bottom of the homepage, redirecting visitors to the company’s social media pages.

Another improvement that will boost the efficiency of the website is the use of Internet cookies. Internet cookies are computer files placed in the user’s computer by a website that contain unique information about the user. For example, cookies are able to track how visitors find a website or how many pages the visitor has viewed. In addition to that, these files keep the personal information that the user can voluntarily provide such as age, gender or nationality. Thus, when a customer revisits the website he can be recognized by the matching cookie and the website will be customized to the customer’s preferences. For the case of DG company a pop up window will be created asking visitors if they accept cookies when they enter the company’s website.

Moreover, following the company's intension to enter the global market, the website should also be provided in English. Until now only the Greek language was available, making extremely difficult for visitors from abroad understand the descriptions leading to an early abundance of the Website. To reverse that, all the texts will be provided in English in cooperation with a translator.

## **Chapter 8. Corporate Social Responsibility**

Apart from the promotion plan, another way to gain customer loyalty, business reputation and employees' satisfaction is by CSR activities. The CSR plan can be divided in the categories: workforce oriented, society-oriented, market-oriented, and environmental-oriented (Kramer, Pfitzer and Lee, 2005). This study was not focused on market-oriented CSR as in order to propose activities, it is important to know make a study of customer satisfaction until 2018 and this was not the purpose of the study. Another important issue about the CSR activities is that they have to be shared through the social media in order to enhance customer loyalty and brand positioning.

### *8.1 Workforce oriented CSR*

As mentioned before, one part of DG Company's vision is to have high rates of employees' satisfaction and it is a successful company in this domain as in the 45 years only 1% has quitted the job or has been fired. However; it is crucial to evolve the practices through the years; as the workplace affects the quality of the employees' life and work and helps them maintain the balance between work and life. In order to perform this new CSR methods have to be implemented, in combination with the previous ones, such as:

1. One training for each employee annually. The training can be either on the same position or for another position in the company as rotation training.
2. Measures to promote health and safety at work such as the implementation of ISO 9001 that started during the time of the thesis.
3. Annually each employee can generate a new idea that can be designed and manufactured by metal for their houses or family such as the one that was made during this study for one of the employees and is shown in Figure 15.

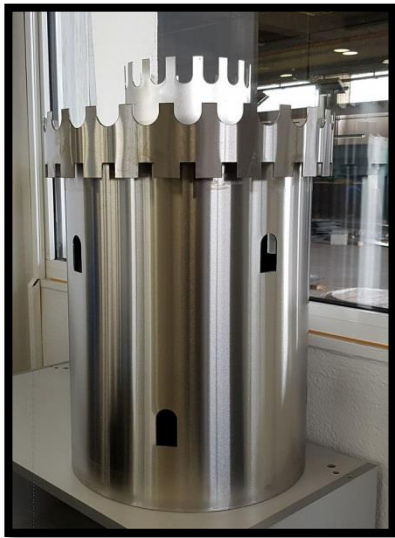


Figure 15. Employee's Idea manufactured by DG Company.  
Original Figure.

### *8.2 Society oriented CSR*

Society oriented CSR refers to the cultural, health and well-being activities. These CSR activities can be based on the annual net profit of the company and a proposed 1% can be given to the SOS Children's Village in Plagiari Thessaloniki to go to the theater.

### *8.3 Environmental oriented CSR*

Environmental oriented CSR activities include those that decrease the negative impact of the company to the environment. During 2018, DG Company established the "zero waste production" program aiming in decreasing the pollutants of raw materials used in production. An important and low cost proposal is to engage employees to the recycling culture during the time they spend in the restaurant of the company.

## **Conclusions**

The objective of this thesis project was to create a marketing plan emphasizing in e-marketing strategies for the company Dimitrios Giantsis & CO S.A (DG). Creating an effective marketing campaign required extensive knowledge of the theoretical framework and also knowledge of the DG Company in order to propose the most effective marketing plan based mostly on digital marketing.

A part of the marketing campaign was implemented during the period of the thesis writing, with results being more than promising. For example, following this thesis



proposal for strong social media presence, a Facebook page was created. The initial objective was to gain 150 followers in the first 2 months. Surprisingly after one month the followers were more than 130 and the number is increasing daily. The remaining proposals are also approved by the CEO Dimitrios Giantsis and will be implemented gradually soon.

In conclusion, this thesis suggests that an additional study could be carried out after all marketing techniques agreed are implemented. This study will control the current thesis proposals, to evaluate if all the steps are followed correctly and have the expected effects to the DG Company. These control methods will check if the initial objectives are being met and in cases where they are not, they will provide to the CEO the information needed to implement corrective action.

## References

- Albee, A. (2018) *eMarketing Strategies for the Complex Sale*. First. McGraw-Hill Education - Europe.
- Beane, T. P. and Ennis, D. M. (1987) 'Market Segmentation: A Review', *European Journal of Marketing*, Emerald, 21(5), pp. 20–42. doi: 10.1108/EUM00000000004695.
- Choffray, J. M. and Lilien, G. (1978) 'A New Approach to Industrial Market Segmentation', *Sloan Management Review, MIT*, 19,(3), pp. 17–29. doi: 10.1016/0019-8501(91)90031-A.
- Clarke, A. (2015) *SEO 2016: Learn search engine optimization with smart Internet marketing strategies*. US: Digital Book Guru.
- D. Giantsis & Co S.A (2018). Available at: <http://www.giantsis.gr/> (Accessed: 10 November 2018).
- Davies, I. A. and Crane, A. (2010) 'Corporate social responsibility in small-and medium-size enterprises: Investigating employee engagement in fair trade companies', *Business Ethics*, 19(2), pp. 126–139. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8608.2010.01586.x.
- Dibb, S. and Wensley, R. (2002) 'Segmentation analysis for industrial markets', *European Journal of Marketing*, 36(1/2), pp. 231–251. doi: 10.1108/03090560210412773.
- Dwyer, R., Schurr, P. and Sejo, O. (1987) 'Developing Buyer-Seller Relationships', *Journal of Marketing*, 51(2), pp. 11–27.
- EKME S.A (no date). Available at: <http://www.ekme.gr/> (Accessed: 10 November 2018).
- Engel, Eric, Spencer Stephan, S. J. C. R. F. (2015) (2015) *The Art of SEO Mastering Search Engine Optimization*. 3rd edn. Sebastopol, CA, USA O'Really Media Inc.
- Evans, M. P. (2007) 'Analysing Google rankings through search engine optimization data', *Internet Research*, 17(1), pp. 21–37. doi: 10.1108/10662240710730470.
- Gilaninia, S., Taleghani, M. and Azizi, N. (2013) 'Marketing Mix And Consumer Behavior', *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 2(12), pp. 53–58. doi: 10.12816/0001270.
- Grand View Research (no date) *Structural Steel Market Analysis By Application (Non Residential (Industrial, Commercial, Offices, Institutional), Residential), By Region, Competitive Landscape, And Segment Forecasts, 2018 - 2025*. Available at: <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/structural-steel-market> (Accessed: 8 November 2018).
- Grönroos, C. (1997) 'Keynote paper From marketing mix to relationship marketing - towards a paradigm shift in marketing', *Management Decision*. Elsevier, 35(4), pp. 322–339. doi: 10.1108/00251749710169729.
- Groves, E. (2009) *The Constant Contact Guide to Email Marketing*. New Jersey': John Wiley & Sons.
- Gundlach, G. T. and Wilkie, W. L. (2009) 'The American Marketing Association's New Definition of Marketing: Perspective and Commentary on the 2007 Revision', *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 28(2), pp. 259–264. doi: 10.1509/jppm.28.2.259.
- Hajar, I. and Mahrani, S. W. (2014) 'Template de Apresentação', 3(10), pp. 47–54.
- Håkansson, H. and Waluszewski, A. (2005) 'Developing a new understanding of

- markets: reinterpreting the 4Ps', *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 20(3), pp. 110–117. doi: 10.1108/08858620510592722.
- Harrell, G. (2008) *Marketing: Connecting with Customers*. Edited by E. Chicago Press.
- Hassan, S. S., Craft, S. and Kortam, W. (2003) 'Understanding the new bases for global market segmentation', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 20(5), pp. 446–462. doi: 10.1108/07363760310489670.
- Helms, M. M. and Nixon, J. (2010) *Exploring SWOT analysis – where are we now?: A review of academic research from the last decade*, *Journal of Strategy and Management*. doi: 10.1108/17554251011064837.
- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P. and Gremler, D. D. (2002) 'Understanding Relationship Marketing Outcomes: An Integration of Relational Benefits and Relationship Quality', *Journal of Service Research*, 4(3), pp. 230–247. doi: 10.1177/1094670502004003006.
- Hill, M. and McGinnis, J. (2007) 'The Curiosity in Marketing Thinking', *Journal of Marketing Education*, 29(1), pp. 52–62.
- Horovitz, J. (2000) *Seven Secrets of Service Strategy*. Edited by P. Education.
- Hsu, Y. L. (2012) 'Facebook as international eMarketing strategy of Taiwan hotels', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. Elsevier Ltd, 31(3), pp. 972–980. doi: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2011.11.005.
- ICAP Group (no date). Available at: <https://www.icap.gr/> (Accessed: 8 November 2018).
- Kirtış, A. K. and Karahan, F. (2011) 'To Be or not to Be in social media arena as the most cost-efficient marketing strategy after the global recession', *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 24, pp. 260–268. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.09.083.
- Kotler, P. (2015) 'Marketing Management 12', (March).
- Kotler, P. and Keller, K. L. (2009) *Marketing Management, Organization*. doi: 10.1080/08911760903022556.
- Kramer, M., Pfitzer, M. and Lee, P. (2005) 'Competitive Social Responsibility: Uncovering the economic rationale for corporate social responsibility among Danish small and medium-sized enterprises', *Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University*, pp. 1–68. Available at: <http://www.eogs.dk/graphics/publikationer/csr/harvard.pdf>.
- Lee, Y. and Kozar, K. A. (2012) 'Understanding of website usability: Specifying and measuring constructs and their relationships', *Decision Support Systems*. Elsevier B.V., 52(2), pp. 450–463. doi: 10.1016/j.dss.2011.10.004.
- Logic, S., Framework, G. and Marketing, I. (1984) 'UFSCAR ENQ 150 : TERMODINÂMICA QUÍMICA APLICADA PROF . ROBERTO DE CAMPOS GIORDANO Notas de aula ( 1984 ): Termodinâmica clássica', pp. 6–10. doi: 10.1007/s11621-009-0094-6.
- Luo, X. and Bhattacharya, C. . (2006) 'Corporate Social Responsibility, Customer Satisfaction, and Market Value', *Journal of Marketing*, 70(4), pp. 1–18. doi: 10.1509/jmkg.70.4.1.
- MacDonald, C. and Khoo, M. (2011) 'An Organizational Model for Digital Library Evaluation', *TPDL 2011: Research and Advanced Technology for Digital Libraries*, pp. 329–340.
- MailChimp (no date). Available at: <https://mailchimp.com/pricing/> (Accessed: 18 November 2018).
- Maimunah, I. (2009) 'CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ITS ROLE

- IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE Maimunah ISMAIL •', *The Journal of International Social Research*, 2(9), pp. 199–209.
- Michael, A. S. (2016) '2016 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING INDUSTRY REPORT: How Marketers Are Using Social Media to Grow Their Businesses', *Social Media Examiner*, (May). doi: 10.1007/BF02653755.
- Murillo, D. and Lozano, J. M. (2006) 'SMEs and CSR: An approach to CSR in their own words', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 67(3), pp. 227–240. doi: 10.1007/s10551-006-9181-7.
- Patterson, P. G. (1997) 'Modeling the determinants of customer satisfaction for business-to-business professional services', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(1), pp. 4–17. doi: 10.1007/BF02894505.
- Ries, A. and Trout, J. (2000) *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*. 20th Ann.
- Safley, T. M. (2013) 'Segmentation strategies for hospitality managers: Target marketing for competitive advantage', *The History of Bankruptcy: Economic, Social and Cultural Implications in Early Modern Europe*. Elsevier Ltd, 36(1), pp. 1–250. doi: 10.4324/9780203066836.
- Saura, J. R., Palos-Sanchez, P. and Correia, M. (2018) *Digital Marketing Strategies Based on the E-Business Model: Literature Review and Future Directions*. IGI Global Disseminator of Knowledge.
- Singh, M. (2012) 'Marketing Mix of 4P'S for Competitive Advantage', *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 3(6), pp. 2278–487. doi: 10.1186/s12967-017-1163-2.
- Skitmore, M. and Smyth, H. (2007) 'Pricing construction work: A marketing viewpoint', *Construction Management and Economics*, 25(6), pp. 619–630. doi: 10.1080/01446190701280710.
- Veta S.A (no date). Available at: <https://vetasa.gr/en/> (Accessed: 10 November 2018).
- Ward, A. (2017) *The SEO Battlefield Winning Strategies for Search Marketing Programs*. O'Reilly Media.
- Wong, A. *et al.* (2014) 'The Review of Content Marketing as a New Trend in Marketing Practices', *International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economics*, 8(2), pp. 1055–1064. doi: 2383-2126.
- Yalçın, N. and Köse, U. (2010) 'What is search engine optimization: SEO?', *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9(July 2009), pp. 487–493. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.12.185.



D. GIANTSIS & CO S.A.

## Μεταλλικές & Μηχανολογικές Κατασκευές



Η εταιρεία μας Γιάντσης Δ. & ΣΙΑ Α.Ε δραστηριοποιείται στον χώρο των μεταλλικών κατασκευών περισσότερα από 40 χρόνια. Η **μακροχρόνια τεχνογνωσία** μας σε συνδυασμό με τον πιο σύγχρονο εξοπλισμό και το έμπειρο ανθρώπινο δυναμικό, μας επιτρέπει να προσφέρουμε ολοκληρωμένες λύσεις **σχεδιασμού και υλοποίησης μεταλλικών κατασκευών**.

### Οι κύριοι τομείς δραστηριοποίησής μας είναι:

Ενεργειακός Τομέας, Μεταλλικά Κτίρια, Μεταλλικές Γέφυρες, Γερανογέφυρες, Ειδικές Μεταλλικές Κατασκευές

Το **σύστημα διαχείρισής** μας και διασφάλισης της ποιότητας πιστοποιείται σύμφωνα με τα πρότυπα **ISO 9001: 2008**



Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες επισκεφτείτε την ιστοσελίδα μας [εδώ](#) ή εγγραφείτε στο newsletter μας

email:

Ακολουθήστε μας στα social media



## **Appendix B.**

The video that was produced for the marketing campaign through YouTube can be found by clicking [here](#).

Link also available here:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1fOH1d8RqAiFNLOcRsX4SkAgoTJ3m8BLr>