



## STAGE 1 PROJECT

MAY 2004

# MARKETING IN THE IRISH OPTICAL INDUSTRY

### Introduction

The optical industry in Ireland has undergone significant alterations since the mid 1980s when optical chains became an integral part of the Irish market landscape. Prior to this period, independent opticians operated as sole traders or in some cases partners, often in family owned businesses in a relatively stable environment. It has been suggested that little differentiation existed between these independents, with all competitors engaging, for the most part, in similar business practices. (Phelan, 1999). The independents were the only sellers of spectacles and providers of the specialist eye test. All were registered members of the Opticians Board and belonged to the Association of Optometrists of Ireland. The Association operated like a monopoly as its members were the sole suppliers of prescription eyewear.

The industry then changed for the independents with the arrival of the optical chains into the Irish market. These chains were selling similar products or close substitutes to the independent's product lines and were conducting eye examinations. It seemed to the Opticians Board that these chains were operating more like retail outlets than medical practices, with in-store labs reducing waiting times and direct and indirect costs to the consumer (Phelan, 1999).

### The Project

- Select an optical company with which you are familiar. Outline any assumptions you have made regarding your selection.
- Provide a summary of the background to the company. The objective of this summary is to give the examiner a clear understanding of the chosen company. **(15%)**
- Paying particular attention to the marketing activities of the company you have chosen, describe in detail the key present or planned marketing strategies. **(35%)**
- Based firmly on your research, make recommendations to other companies within the same business. **(35%)**
- Your project must be presented in a professional manner, therefore 15% of total marks are awarded for:
  - appropriate use of citations & bibliography **(6%)**
  - effective presentation/structure **(6%)**
  - accurate syntax, grammar and spelling **(3%)**

P.T.O.

**Additional Briefing Notes**

- A word count **MUST** be included as part of your Contents Page.
- Candidates are **NOT** to submit their projects in individual page plastic covers.

**NOVEMBER 2003**

**STATEMENT**  
**STAGE 1 PROJECT**  
**MAY 2004**

I hereby certify that:

- I have read the rules.
- This project is my own work prepared as part of my marketing examination.
- I have fully acknowledged all my sources.
- I have not made this project available to another student.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# PLEASE READ THESE RULES CAREFULLY

1. This project is an exercise in investigative study. Because it is not being prepared under examination conditions, style and presentation will be taken into account as well as content.
2. The project must be typed on A4 paper. It should be presented in a folder or loose binder. Your name, student registration number and your project title must appear on the title page. The pages should be numbered and there should be a Table of Contents.
3. A one-page abstract forms part of the completed project. This abstract should be a brief description of the **objective** to be achieved by the project, the **methods** used and the **conclusions** reached.
4. We would envisage that you would not be able to do justice to the topic in less than 3,000 words. On the other hand you should not exceed 5,000 words.
5. You must acknowledge all your sources; not to do so is **plagiarism**. Acknowledgement involves naming your source (report, textbook, website) in brackets at the relevant point in the text, and appending a bibliography at the end of your text. This should be in alphabetical order and should include the author's name, the title, the publisher and the city and date of publication. Web references should be as detailed as possible, not just the home page. The quality of your bibliography is an important element in the overall assessment of your project.
6. This project will be assessed and marked like the other subjects in **Stage 1**. You will not have passed **Stage 1** until you have passed the project.
7. The project is due by **FEBRUARY 24, 2004**. As time management is a major feature of the discipline of report writing, projects submitted after the due date will not be accepted. ***Students should, therefore, start work on the project immediately as excuses relating to mishaps (poor health, computer failure, typing) in the final week will not be accepted.***
8. A two-part project form is enclosed with this notice. Please complete **BOTH** parts and staple on the outside of front cover. One part of the form will be returned to you as acknowledgement of receipt.
9. Since the project is treated as an examination subject, The Marketing Institute staff **cannot** assist you with the interpretation of the brief or sources of information.
10. The same sanction applies to copying and to plagiarism: all subjects in the sitting are deemed to have been failed and the candidate may not register as a student with the Institute thereafter. **Please sign the statement overleaf and incorporate it into your project after the bibliography.**