

Marketing Final Project

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MKT 337: Marketing Research

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April 20, 2024

Apple's Revolutionary Tool: Marketing Research Findings Report

Introduction and Product Concept

The following marketing research project for Apple will outline a product concept, provide justification for its launch grounded in data and research, and detail the systematic approach for its development and release.

Apple, known for its innovative technology, user friendly products, reliability, and trust, should introduce a new app or website designed to address the challenge of navigating through the complex and deceptive media landscape. The product concept would be aimed at organizing and simplifying the modern media landscape to combat misinformation, bias, scams, deepfakes, synthetic media (AI generated content), and advanced propaganda utilizing new AI detection. At its core, the tool will categorize and archive news content from various sources, including articles, blogs, and videos, akin to the Wayback Machine. The tool offers two levels of access, a simplified overview of trends and opinions on topics, and a deeper dive into the sources comprising these trends. This will allow for easy research, trend analysis, and identification of emerging trends and threats. This tool could come in the form of a standalone tool integrated into existing products and the Google play store, or it could be its own website.

Overview: SWOT Analysis

Why was Apple, of all groups, chosen as the best candidate for a product of this nature? Well, there are a multitude of reasons. Firstly, unlike many modern tech companies, Apple has been shaping the landscape of consumer electronics, software, and digital services for almost half a century. This has allowed Apple to develop a great reputation for both innovativeness and quality. In fact, “Apple replaced Google in the top spot [for best reputation with consumers] this year with a score of 85.62, the highest for any company in the history of the 13-year-old study” (Tode, 2023). Since Apple is a globally recognized and trusted brand with a very large loyal

customer base, the brand attachment will help in the adoption of the new product proposed.

Along with this, because of Apple's success in different ventures, an important strength is the fact that they have the financial resources, technical expertise, and infrastructure necessary for developing and launching innovative products. For instance, Apple annual gross profit for 2023 was \$169.148B ranking them near the top of all corporations. (Apple Gross Profit, 2024).

Another important strength that sets Apple apart, and one that will be crucial for our product, is the ease of integration. Because of Apple's position in the tech sector, the proposed tool could be seamlessly integrated into Apple's existing ecosystem of products and services. In fact, a positive statistic in regard to adoption of this new app is the fact that when comparing iPhone users to Android users, iPhone users were found to be 50% more likely to be early adopters (Alexander, 2020). Lastly, since no tool quite functions like what Apple envisions, the proposed tool benefits from its uniqueness. The closest tool available would be Ground News, offering a platform that analyzes, sorts, and aims to provide a more comprehensive perspective on solely political news. However, as we will discuss later, this uniqueness is unlikely to last forever.

While Apple has a lot of strengths that suit the concept idea, like any company, they also have weaknesses that need to be addressed. For instance, this tool would likely be dependent on specific types of advanced AI that Apple is not as privy to. While Apple is a leader in many areas close to AI, Apple is behind other companies like Nvidia, IBM, and OpenAI regarding AI necessary for this tool. Another potential weakness is employees leaving the company at critical moments. While this is a problem all companies face, Apple just encountered a notable instance. This year the public found out that Apple's Apple Car, which was a \$10 billion investment, was scrapped after nearly a decade of development. A large part in this failure was the absence of many key people who were spearheading the project at the start. Many left and

many were moved elsewhere in the company to prioritize different projects. This destroyed all the momentum of the project and was never recovered by replacements. Apple cannot let this event reoccur. Moving forward, let's explore the opportunities for Apple and the tool to grow.

As shown by Fig 1 and 2 at the bottom, not only is News and media not trusted by nearly any demographic, but there is growing distrust. According to Mintel's Media Landscape's report, because "trust in news media is dangerously low, particularly national TV news ... this creates opportunities for alternate sources, such as social media to take their place" (Nelson, 2023). However, most alternative sources on social media are equally not trusted (Fig 2), this indicates an opportunity for the tool and brand. Another opportunity is technological advancements. This is a double-edged sword. On one hand, continued advancements in AI and data analytics offer opportunities to enhance the tool's capabilities, improving content categorization and detection of fake or misleading content. This will allow us to provide even more value to consumers and potentially drive more traffic.

On the other hand, technological advancements can also be a significant threat. For instance, rapid advancements in AI and deepfake technology pose threats to the effectiveness of content detection and verification, potentially undermining the tool's credibility and trust. Another issue and threat with technology is the competitive response. As time progresses, the systems and technology we use may become more widely available and may allow competitors to replicate or improve upon them, diminishing our uniqueness and therefore the value we provide. It's hard to say if or when this will happen, but it should not be ruled out as this is especially common in the tech sector. Furthermore, as shown in the industry analysis, while the regulatory environment is neutral for the area our tool will be released in, we should anticipate based on logic and database data that regulations will increase (Brocker, 2024). There could be

changes in regard to how data can be collected and stored all the way to AI ethics. It's impossible to predict what the outcome of these changes would be, but nonetheless, it would impact our tool. Lastly, there is the issue of legal problems restricting international launches. While most countries are fine, some countries in Europe are more careful about data collection and some countries such as China limit what their population knows. This means we must be more careful of how we operate, and unfortunately, may require us to exclude a significant portion of the global population from our considerations. That said, while most American platforms (Google, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Netflix, and X) are banned in China due to the country's government enforced adherence to Mao's old idea that "Not to have a correct political point of view is like having no soul" (Mao, 1957), these American companies appear to be thriving nonetheless, proving its unimportance (Summers, 2024). Now that we have identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Apple and the product, we need to identify the target market.

Marketing Mix Elements: Potential Target Demographics

According to the "Media Landscape" Mintel report, our primary target audience, demographically, are educated middle class (household income of \$50-75k) individuals aged 18 to 65, with a focus mainly on both white women and men (Nelson, 2023). As the report mentions, "The more extensive a person's education is; the more interest they have in following the news" (Nelson, 2023). However, this might be in part due to the fact that "news is a commodity, and not everyone can afford the time or money it can take to stay up to date" (Nelson, 2023). Typically, a higher education leads to a higher income. Since we know that social media, rather than traditional media, as the Mintel report primarily focuses on, is popular

with non-white ethnicities, for us, it is essential not to overlook other ethnicities or low-income earners. Not only do they not fall far behind, but we are focused on finding people who want to go beyond media, rather than happy media consumers, who are more likely to be the high-income earners.

The Psychographics of this target audience would consist of individuals interested in news or current events, proficient in digital platforms (displaying some degree of tech-savviness), and motivated to examine media content to discern the truth (O'Donnell, 2022). Geographically, attention could and should be directed towards the 94% of rural residents who currently express distrust towards news and media (Nelson, 2023) (see figure 1). However, as depicted in figure 1, all segments of the population distrust the media, suburban coming the next closest at an 86% distrust in news and media. Note that the middle class we decided on aligns well with rural residents (\$52,386 household income), who typically earn less than urban residents (\$54,296 household income) (US Census Bureau, 2016). When considering a global perspective, the US is the ideal launch market due to its large population size, widespread access to digital devices, alignment with demographics, and political and ideological division which does drive more critical thinking. From this information, our aim should be to provide unique value to consumers in so far as consumers want trust, reasonable pricing, credibility, and informational superiority.

Marketing Mix Elements: Internal and External Organizational Factors

In regard to internal factors, Apple's substantial financial resources and technical expertise provide a strong foundation for developing and launching innovative products. However, a potential misalignment could occur if Apple fails to effectively allocate resources or

if there's a lack of synergy between different departments, hindering the development process. This becomes much more problematic when we include the internal problem of managerial decisions, such as shifting employees' projects. As we mentioned earlier, Apple just experienced this with their idea of an Apple Car, which is now a \$10 billion failure. As a consequence of arguably poor managerial decisions, the car project struggled for years, spending billions, and died. If Apple expects to provide our target market with a revolutionary tool they would enjoy, Apple needs to have better communication and decide early on who will be solely working on this tool, so the idea doesn't die from the outset. Apple also needs to be careful in aiming at only what is already practically doable and center expectations around that rather than going fully theoretical.

For instance, on the external side of things, while Apple's various products offer integration opportunities for this tool, if there are compatibility issues or if the tool fails to meet the evolving needs/expectations of our target demographic, it could result in a misalignment between technological capabilities and customer expectations. Again, Apple has to be careful not to promise something they don't have the technological capability to do, while still pushing the boundary as to not allow competitors the ability to outpace Apple's innovations and take over.

Another external factor is the legal aspect. Changes in regulations, particularly regarding data privacy and AI ethics, may impact development and use. Failure to adapt to will disrupt organizational goals and hurt forward movement of the tool and its outlook.

Marketing Mix Elements: Product Need

Due to the increasing prevalence of misinformation, bias, synthetic media (AI generated content), deepfakes, and propaganda in today's media environment, our target market is looking

for a way to understand and traverse the complex landscape of modern media and get the truth. As highlighted earlier, trust in traditional news sources is low and still falling, with many individuals expressing skepticism towards mainstream media. However, there are currently no tools offered that can provide a broad and clear outlook for critical thinkers that will also be crucial for fighting upcoming problems regarding AI. This is where we come in.

To uphold Apple's reputation for innovation and address an evolving global problem, our product will address the problems of media by providing users with a comprehensive tool for navigating through the media landscape. We will do this by leveraging new AI detection technology and archiving capabilities. The first goal is to create overviews of trends, opinions on topics, and a deeper dive into the sources comprising these trends. The second goal is to be able to detect and warn viewers of problematic, skewed, or unauthentic news or content.

Marketing Mix Elements: Pricing Strategy

For our digital tool, we will create a subscription-based pricing model as this makes the most sense for our middle-class target market. That said, many features will be completely free as this will help with credibility, demonstrate the power of the tool, and allow Apple to be a protector or leader of truth in an age of AI and ideological craziness. This would be done to gain trust and resonate with those who have lost trust or want to understand the media landscape. The ultimate goal is for these individuals to become interested enough to become long term customers and potentially buy the paid features. The paid features, which would be something such as \$10 a month, would gain you access to more advanced functionalities such as the revolutionary AI detection software which would allow you to go much deeper.

Marketing Mix Elements: Placement of Product

Since this product is a digital tool, rather than a physical product, this product will be available online via websites and apps ensuring easy access for users across various devices. This in essence makes it far easier to scale this tool up to the global market. However, as we have mentioned previously, some countries may not allow usage of our tool, meaning we may have to integrate geo-blocking into the product. In general, given that our product will be available online via websites and apps, it's expected that our target market, consisting of critical thinkers who are digitally savvy, will respond positively to the accessibility, convenience, and depth of our tool.

Marketing Mix Elements: Promoting the Product

Some of the methods to promote our product could be campaigns, utilizing social media platforms, SEO, and influencer partnerships. The best methods at least in the beginning would likely be utilizing social media platforms and influencer partnerships. For example, posts on digital platforms can reach a wide audience of tech-savvy individuals interested in media and news. Now while advertisements are usually a popular method, it's also common knowledge that people are not fans of ads. Ads are always an option, however, to gain some initial credibility, avoiding targeted ads until we gain some steam is the best move.

Along with this, collaborating with online platforms, tech influencers, and news related influencers can help generate interest and credibility for our product. With their help, we can showcase unique features and benefits of the tool to our target market through content and demonstrations. This will hopefully help the adoption of the tool as we can show them the value rather than try to convince them. Verbal convincing is usually ineffective for people who have lost trust in the media as a whole.

Marketing Mix Elements: Implications

There are a few small legal implications to conducting our marketing promotion strategies. When it comes to influencer partnerships, there are concerns regarding transparency and disclosure. According to The Federal Trade Commission's "Disclosures 101 for Social Media Influencers" page, the FTC mandates that influencers must clearly disclose any material connections or endorsements, ensuring that consumers are aware of any paid relationships. In their words, "If you endorse a product through social media, your endorsement message should make it obvious when you have a relationship" (FTC, 2019).

Also, we must be aware of data privacy and protection laws. For example, the California Consumer Privacy Act which has strict regulations on the collection, storage, and use of consumer data. However, based on our proposed methods, I don't see this as a large problem with early marketing tactics which are not as concentrated on data collection.

Marketing Mix Elements: Industry Trends

Our product strategy aligns with current market trends, as we are focusing on creating a digital product that caters to an increasing number of individuals who no longer trust online or traditional media. We also plan to adopt a subscription-based pricing model, which reflects the general industry shift towards this model. The plan of online distribution via websites and apps leverages the growing preference for digital means of access and purchase. Our promotion strategy emphasizes social media engagement and influencer partnerships to drive brand awareness. The aim here is to follow consumers want of more authenticity and trust.

Organization's Objectives and Industry Trends

After conducting secondary research and gathering data relevant to Apples Digital Media Analysis tool concept, several trends and opportunities become apparent. First, as most are already aware, “consumers use apps for everyday activities more than ever in a post-COVID environment” (Brocker, 2024). Since the tool will be designed in a manner suitable for an app, this trend in the market already indicates our concept may resonate with an increasingly larger pool of people, directly supporting our organization's objectives. However, to allow for the tool to succeed, there has to be significant and verifiable distrust in the media as the tool aims to organize and simplify the modern media landscape. As shown in numerous places, distrust in the media and news as of 2023 is at an all-time high. While distrust in news and media is widespread across various demographic segments, rural residents exhibit an astonishing 94% level of distrust (Nelson, 2023) (see Figure 1). Suburban and urban residents are not far behind, with 86% and 73% respectively expressing distrust (Nelson, 2023). Given the emerging threats of synthetic media (AI-generated), deepfakes, scams, advanced propaganda, bias, and misinformation, it's evident that Apple's product concept is positioned for success.

However, despite the favorable positioning of this tool and its potential for revolutionizing the industry, two significant threats that we have touched on need to be mentioned. These threats are the rate of technological change and changes in regulation or policy. First, as AI and other technologies evolve, “developers can differentiate through new technologies, capabilities and interfaces,” making it possible for new entrants to take hold of this sector (Brocker, 2024). In essence, technological change brings in new competition, meaning adjustments and progress need to be at the forefront. As mentioned, the other issue deals with regulation and policy. While regulation and policy are considered moderate, the trend is expected

to increase regarding AI and other technologies. These changes could be made any time significantly damaging our aims, concept idea, and industry.

Meeting Legal, Ethical, and Industry Standards

Since our proposed marketing strategies involve a variety of methods employed at different times, such as campaigns, utilizing social media platforms, SEO, and influencer partnerships, it is imperative that we ensure compliance with legal, ethical, and industry standards. For instance, when it comes to influencer partnerships, there are concerns regarding transparency and disclosure from the Federal Trade Commission. To ensure that we abide by this mandate, we will ensure that there is a clear disclosure of a partnership between us and the other party. Also, we must be aware of and take active steps to address data privacy and protection laws. For example, the California Consumer Privacy Act which has strict regulations on the collection, storage, and use of consumer data. The implication of not following these laws will result in regulatory penalties, legal liabilities, damage to reputation, and loss of overall consumer trust. For instance, noncompliance with FTC guidelines on influencer disclosures could lead to investigations and fines of “\$50,000 per violation in civil penalties” (Santos, 2023).

Limitations and Challenges

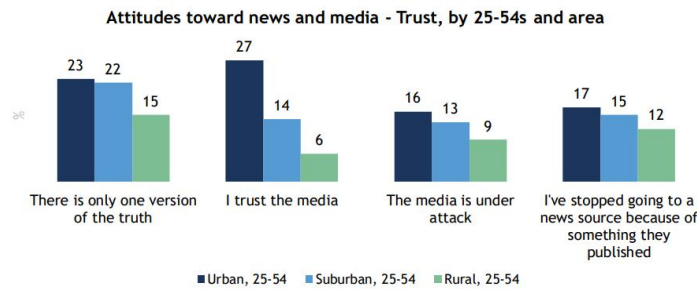
Our market proposal has encountered several limitations and threats primarily from technological capabilities, regulatory considerations, and notably, the lack of data on the diverse reasoning regarding the decline in trust in media sources. In our case, one size fits all solution does not apply. Our users collectively do not trust media and news, but the reasoning, source, and severity differ widely. Not having sufficient data and full clarity makes it more difficult to

provide a tool that caters to this diverse group of individuals. While it's been established that our tool will aim to provide unique value to consumers in so far as consumers want trust, credibility, and informational superiority, further insight into consumers preferences is necessary. To address this gap, we've designed a survey to gather essential information. Nonetheless, the comprehensive nature of the market research serves as a solid foundation for developing effective marketing strategies and addressing potential limitations in the market proposal.

Figure 1

FIGURE 28: ATTITUDES TOWARD NEWS AND MEDIA - TRUST, BY 25-54s AND AREA, 2023

"Which of the following statements about news and media do you agree with? Please select all that apply."



Base: 2,000 internet users aged 18+
Source: Kantar Profiles/Mintel, March 2023

Figure 2

FIGURE 32: PERCEPTIONS OF NEWS MEDIA CHANNELS, 2023

"Which words do you associate with the following news sources? Please select all that apply per source."

	Any TV News - NET	Local TV news	National TV News	Social media	Newspapers	Radio/podcasts	Magazines
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Entertaining	29	20	17	47	20	43	44
Opinionated	46	21	39	45	29	30	21
Convenient	45	34	27	27	29	27	22
Diverse	28	15	21	25	18	21	21
Misleading	35	13	30	40	15	9	11
Trustworthy	39	32	21	9	23	14	14
Timely	36	26	20	12	20	13	12
Personal	22	18	9	26	9	19	15
Essential	36	26	22	12	20	13	10
Balanced	28	20	14	10	17	15	14
Thorough	24	15	15	7	17	10	11

Base: 1,000 internet users aged 18+
The green, yellow, red scale is presented horizontally, indicating the highest (green) and lowest (red) percentage for each attribute. Bold and underlined figures indicate the highest rated attribute for each news media channel.
Source: Kantar Profiles/Mintel, March 2023

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