

Report On
How E-Business Is Working During COVID19 Pandemic

By
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An internship report submitted to the BRAC Business School in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelors of Business Administration

BRAC Business School
BRAC University
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Md. Ashik Mahmud
16204030

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

Ms. Rahma Akhter
Lecturer, BRAC Business School
BRAC University

Letter of Transmittal

Ms. Rahma Akhter
Lecturer,
BRAC Business School
BRAC University
66 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

Subject: Submission of the internship report.

Dear Madam,

I am pleased to present my report on "How E-Business Is Working During COVID 19 Pandemic," which I have prepared using my sound judgment and by following the procurement criteria of The LAFZ's. This report was prepared to meet the criteria of my assigned company, The LAFZ's internship program.

I have been giving my level best to finish this paper. This report is based on my practical experience as a member of The LAFZ's PR and Communication team. During my three-month internship, I have learned a lot from my studies and gained a lot of valuable experience and skills.

While I was working on the report, I appreciate your recommendations and support. If it is possible, I will gladly answer and discuss any concerns you may have.

Sincerely yours,

Md. Ashik Mahmud
16204030
BRAC Business School
BRAC University
Date: January 27, 2022

Acknowledgment

To begin, I want to offer my sincere gratitude to the Almighty. Without his blessings, I would not be able to conclude this report in due time especially since the world is amid a global pandemic. Physically doing the internship by coming to the office every day is a big difficulty nowadays days because of COVID-19. I would also want to express my gratitude to some people. Without their help, it would not have been possible.

I would like to thank Ms. Rahma Akhter, Lecturer, BRAC Business School, for acting as my internship adviser and for continuing to mentor and help me throughout my internship. I would also like to thank my colleagues at The LAFZ for their assistance, consideration, and learning experience. Throughout my internship, I have learned a lot and I am delighted to be a part of The LAFZ.

Finally, I want to thank BRAC Business School, all of my faculty members, and every member of the BRAC University staff for assisting me in achieving this position and growing as a person over the last four years.

Executive Summary

The largest Halal Certified brand is LAFZ. The umbrella company is Believe Pte. Ltd., and LAFZ is one of the four brands. Zayn & Myza, Dr. Rhazes, and Zayn & Myza Labs are the other brands. This report describes my job responsibilities at LAFZ. I have also included an overview from the beginning to the present as well as the company's condition throughout the pandemic, and the various strategies that assisted LAFZ to survive. I used mostly primary data and just a few secondary data in this report. The SWOT analysis and Porter's Five Forces assisted me to understand what is in favor of the company and what is not. The purpose of this report is to prepare a long-term goal, service compliance and adherence rate, and the company's future market demand while the other specific goals are to find out the factors affecting the overall working environment.

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List of Acronyms

CRM- Customer Relationship Management

PR- Public Relations

BD- Bangladesh

IT- Information Technology

SKU- Stock Keeping Unit

Chapter 1 Overview of Internship

1.1 Student Information

Name: Md. Ashik Mahmud

ID: 16204030

Program: Bachelor of Business Administration

Major(s): Marketing & E-Business

1.2 Internship Information

1.2.1 Company's Information

Period: 3 months

Company: The LAFZ

Department: PR and Communication, CRM

Address: The LAFZ, House- 49, Road- 13, Block- D, Banani, Dhaka

1.2.2 On-Site Supervisor Information

Supervisor's Name: Mr. Rajibul Hossain

Position: Senior Marketing Manager

1.2.3 Job Scope

Job Responsibilities as an Intern

It has been two months since I have begun to work with LAFZ. It is also a tremendous pleasure to work for a company where I was never viewed as an intern but rather as a valuable team member of the CRM, PR, and Influencer Marketing teams. My supervisor spent some time at the start of my internship getting to know my core challenges and setting up an ice-breaking session before assigning me to the core responsibilities.

My primary responsibility as a member of the PR & Communication team is to work with both established and emerging influencers. At the month's end, the LAFZ BD team meets in a central global meeting with the department head and planners to arrange the next month's collaborations. Each month, we attempt to schedule three to four collaborations, with various goals and expectations set for each region and team. This also covers the product lists that we

intend to promote in the coming month. After that, I talk with the Product Management Team and send them the product requisition. Then my supervisor divides the full influencer list among the team members, including myself. Then I write collaboration proposals and email them to my supervisor. After getting approval, I complete my list and start contacting the influencers. I send influencers the proposal along with the terms and conditions. Then I create a new list for those who agree with the terms and conditions. Then I provide the list to the delivery team slot by slot and my supervisor instructed me to provide at least 40 to 60 per slot.

After getting the email about dispatching parcels from the delivery person, I start sending messages to the influencers again to inform them that they will receive their parcel within one or two days and after receiving the parcel they have to contact me then I will provide them the content brief. Meanwhile, I begin preparing the content brief, and when someone informs me that they have received the parcel I send them the content brief which includes the deadline and our criteria. I also have to track the deadlines and follow up on who has not received their parcel. Then I create a new list of them and send it to the delivery person to get an update regarding those packages. When I realize that I will not be able to manage 40-60 influencers from the earlier lists for the next slots, I started my research on new influencers, looking into their profiles, followers, contents, etc., and cross-checking if they appear in the previous list. If not, I provide them with the proposals once more and meet with them multiple times to make sure they understand our requirements. If they accept and find it convenient, I follow the same approach and send them the products. After sending all the slots and completing all procedures, I started making the month-end report, which includes the influencers' names, number of followers, items and shades that I sent, video status (Complete or Pending), content URLs, and views of those contents throughout the month. Finally, I continue to follow up with influencers for content, deadlines, and any product or delivery-related concerns.

However, I am also responsible for dealing with customers' queries. They offered me to the PR and Influencer Marketing team after one and a half months of my internship and I accepted that. Firstly, I started in the CRM department. We have a team of 9 members. I have my fixed time slot. Between that time slot, I have to check all the customer's questions and concerns. I do messages on Messenger and Instagram, manually placed purchases, responded to comments on both Facebook and Instagram, and resolved any concerns that a consumer had when placing an order, making a transaction. I also have to resolve the critical issues, deal with delivery agents for any product delivery issues, deal with and inform the product team of any product damage or missing products, and prepare weekly reports based on the current issues and send them to the team leader. I also have to manage exchanges, replacements, and refunds. I also have to sit for a meeting with the Indian Tech Team once a week and report all the technical difficulties I have faced during the week. I always try my best to provide each consumer with the finest purchasing experience possible.

1.3 Internship Outcome

1.3.1 Student's contribution to the company

At this moment, I'm working in two roles. One is PR & Communication Executive and another one is a member of the LAFZ Bangladesh CRM team. Both the PR & Communication team, as well as the CRM team, play an essential role in LAFZ Bangladesh. As a member of the PR & Communication team as well as the member of the CRM team, I have to work effectively to improve communication with our influencers so that they receive our information about the criteria and can provide us with a better result. We have a target of 800 content. So far I have collected 35 content. I along with my team members have collected 452 content so far I am trying my best to fulfill the target. After joining the LAFZ Bangladesh CRM team I noticed

that there were many messages, comments, and issues pending. So, I attempted to respond to both new and pending queries. Then I try to learn as much as I can about the product, skin types, and consumer preferences so that I can deliver proper information appropriately to support customers and provide them the best shopping experience. I find some issues taking more time to resolve so I inform those to the appropriate concern and get the solution from them as early as possible and solve the customer's concern. This also creates a positive influence on the customer. I try to deal with the issues on my own, listening to their concerns and taking the appropriate steps to fix the problem as soon as possible. Recently, the global team has launched simplify360 where we can divide our work based on different sources finish the work in time, and solve issues as fast as possible.

1.3.2. Benefits of the Student

Working as an intern in LAFZ Bangladesh gave me a better understanding of how a start-up business operates, especially in the face of a global pandemic. Working here has taught me to be patient with customers and ability to work under extreme pressure. I also had to follow up with the influencers regularly. I have also gathered information on various skin types, skin problems, and potential remedies. Furthermore, I learn about the many components used in various skin care products, their functions, frequent skin problems, and how to treat them. I also gained practical experience in dealing with various types of individuals with patience. My coworkers have been extremely helpful.

1.3.3 Problems and Difficulties I have faced

My experience at LAFZ BD has been amazing and I have learned a lot of things. I started during the pandemic, it took a while for me to understand my responsibilities and receive direct briefing and instruction from my supervisor. However, to gain access to the CRM and obtain

the primary brief, sometimes I had to come to the office. My supervisor gave effective training and support. My supervisor tried multiple ice-breaking sessions over the first few days of my internship, where I had to deal with a variety of people. This helps me to gain confidence. Furthermore, my supervisor introduced me to the others and also some necessary departments to whom I have to contact regarding different purposes like exchange policy, return policy, etc. Finally, LAFZ BD's return policy was Cash on Delivery, even if the consumer had paid via Mobile Banking. As a result, processing the refund for consumers who lived outside of Dhaka took a long time, and I had difficulty dealing with clients about this refund issue.

1.3.4 Recommendations

The internship is important because it is required for graduation as well as it leads to the establishment of a professional career. To have a better future completing credits is not enough. Taking different challenges is also necessary to have a better future. Students should explore the new professional environment for the sake of the future. The professional world is very different compared to what we learn in educational institutions. So, this three-month term is the first opportunity to go outside the classroom, to break those comfort zone to learn more and gain experience. This experience will come in helpful in the full-time work life.

Chapter 2 Organization Part: Overview, Operations, and a Strategic Audit

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Objective

- To give an overview of LAFZ
- To learn about the different parts and functions of LAFZ
- To understand how E-business was going during the pandemic.
- To show how e-business used different strategies to keep going.

2.1.2 Methodology

To complete this report, both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected during the three months of my internship, in which I had one-on-one discussions with the MD, my supervisor, content creator, and other colleagues, as well as other LAFZ members. I also gathered some vital information from the official websites of both LAFZ and Believe Pte. Ltd., as well as my learning and job experience.

2.1.3 Scope

This internship report gives a summary of LAFZ and how its e-business activities are operating during the global crisis. It also contains brief descriptions of some of the most important strategies applied since the outbreak began. This report will discuss the multiple factors that contributed to the ability to survive in this situation, as well as the drawbacks.

2.1.4 Limitation

- Duration of the Internship.
- Insufficient information about the operation.
- Lack of hands-on opportunities.
- Insufficient written materials to learn from.

2.2 Overview of the Company

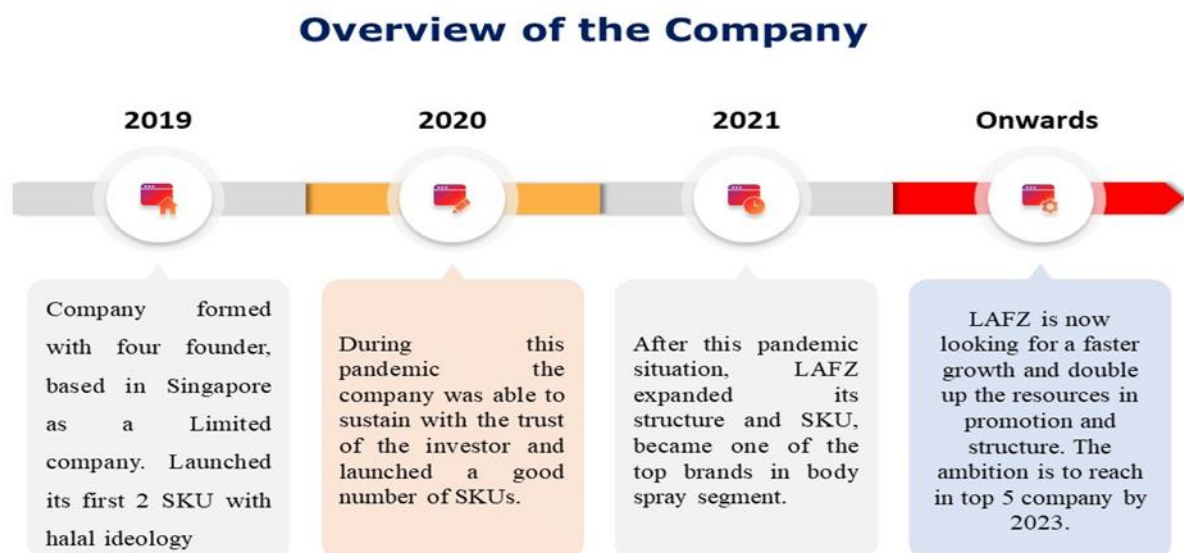


Figure 1: The timeline of LAFZ Bangladesh

The term "halal lifestyle" has increased in popularity during the past decade. This way of life refers to a portion of Islamic sharia, which states that Muslims must consume and use only what is said to be halal. When it comes to cosmetics or fragrances, finding a halal product is even more difficult. Attar was traditionally one of the halal scents used by Muslims. With time,

the company's founders realized that they needed to create something halal to alleviate Muslim people's important needs. They created a formulation that was without alcohol, ignoring all the bad chemicals and toxic chemicals that are prohibited in Islam. They even offered their product in front of various mosques to evaluate market response. After assessing market needs, LAFZ launched six SKUs for men and women. This was the beginning. Since then they haven't had to look back. The fragrance industry has grown at an incredible rate. Within two years, LAFZ had become the country's leading fragrance brand, with various SKUs launched in a halal manner. The pandemic was unable to prevent the growth of the company. It is now the most well-known halal brand. The journey to gain the trust of customers and stakeholders was not easy. With all of their good intentions and hard effort, LAFZ successfully navigated a difficult path. The company's vision is well-decorated and clean. Their goal is to provide all Muslims with a great opportunity to live a halal lifestyle. As part of their ongoing efforts, they have established one successful brand and strengthened and doubled up their structure to reach every part of the country and offer the halal lifestyle.

2.2.1 Corporate Vision

LAFZ intends to deliver A-Z solutions in this industry as a cosmetic brand. Every product line linked to beauty cosmetics will be available on the market. In other words, LAFZ is becoming a pioneer in the cosmetics sector of Bangladesh.

We intend to achieve the following goals by constantly developing natural, high-quality, unique cosmetic products that are both user and environmentally friendly. We aim to:

- Secure the top market position in the category of beauty care products around the world.
- Become the first choice of both end-users and professionals.
- Expand our market share and corporate reputation in our existing markets.

- Expand into new areas within and outside of Asia.

2.2.2 Corporate Mission

LAFZ contributed successfully to the cosmetics market with a proper solution that is manufactured entirely of halal chemicals for a large religious community such as Bangladeshis.

By maintaining the halal product category, we have constantly fulfilled the needs and expectations of end-users and professional users with high-quality cosmetic products and services. Based on trust and support, we establish and keep better relationships with our customers and other stakeholders. We aim to create a comfortable working atmosphere and do our best to improve the well-being of our community, both locally and globally. We take special care to maintain the natural world because we are aware of our environmental responsibilities. We strive to enhance the environmental aspects of our company's business operation and use energy, raw materials, and other natural resources responsibly.

2.2.3 Corporate Values

- Formed and developed as a halal-certified brand.
- Ensure that cosmetics are made in a Halal manner.
- Developing long-term connections with the customer.
- Attempt to keep the delivery procedure as simple as possible.
- Quick response to a customer's concern or question of any kind.

2.2.4 Core Values of LAFZ

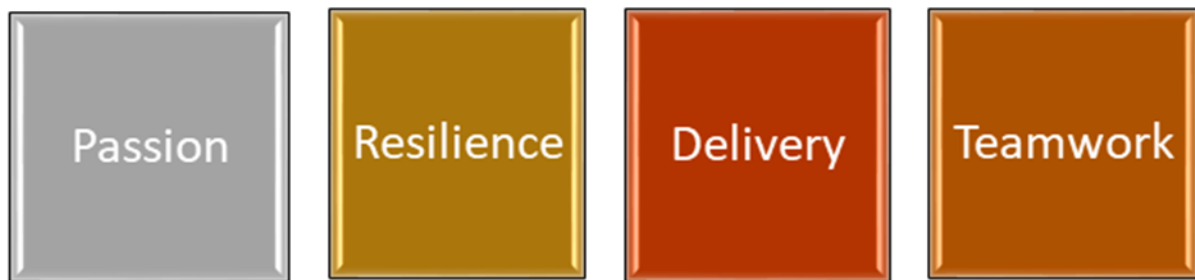


Figure 2: Four core values of LAFZ

LAFZ's four core values are passion, resilience, delivery, and teamwork. LAFZ values hardworking employees who go above and beyond to get the job done. Each employee is equally valued. They tend to provide employees enough freedom so that none of them feel pressured or uncomfortable while working here. In the office, there is no hierarchical or traditional "boss" structure. Everyone works together as a team under the supervision of a team leader.

2.2.5 Product Lines of LAFZ

Products Only for Women

- Foundation
- CC Cream
- Concealers
- Primers
- Makeup Remover Wipes
- Lip Color
- Lipsticks

- Lip Balms
- Nail Polish
- Nail Polish Remover

Products for Both Women and Men

- Sunscreen
- Face Wash
- Face Serum
- Face Mask
- Body Lotion
- Olive Oil
- Olive Essence
- Hand Serum
- Fragrance
- Hair Serum
- Hair Color
- Hair Oils
- Shampoo

2.3 Management Practice

The country director of LAFZ Bangladesh is Arefin Hossain. Mr. Rajibul Hossain is in charge of the entire marketing team and reports to the Marketing Director, MD. Zahid Hasan. The finance and accounting are managed by Mr. Nahid Alam. The Sales Manager, Legal Team,

and IT Manager report to the country director. The sales manager monitors corporate sales, wholesale and retail sales, as well as e-commerce sites. The Corporate Sales department deals with banks, corporate offices, NGOs, and other entities. The Wholesale & Retail Sales team works with supermarkets, salons, parlors, and other local businesses. The E-commerce team works with Bangladesh's largest and most prominent e-commerce sites, such as Daraz, shop.shajgoj.com, M-mart, The Mall, etc. Furthermore, the Product Development Team is primarily focused on product quality research. They conduct market research to determine similar types of products, which they buy and use. After that, they try to figure out what the differences are between those items and ours, why people buy them, and what customers want, and then they create reports and send feedback to the manufacturing team. The Inventory Management Team maintains track of the products and updates the available stock regularly. They have a benchmark when any product hits that benchmark, they send a new request to the appropriate team, and the team delivered new stock to the warehouse. They also maintain track of the source, quantity, and buyers, such as who is taking what number of items for what reason. The quality assurance team is also active and they are always quick to respond to any difficulties we have with our products. For instance, if a customer has a problem with one of our products, such as how their skin reacts to one of them. This team identifies the most likely causes of that reaction, as well as potential ways to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. They also deliver the information to the manufacturing team if any significant changes are required. Finally, the Inventory Management team is in charge of product delivery and packaging. LAFZ does the delivery through third-party delivery companies. The packaging staff is also supervised by the Inventory Manager.

The autocratic leadership style is used in this organization. The executives report directly to their managers and the managers and directors report directly to the country head. The country head fixes the goals and he is in charge of all decisions.

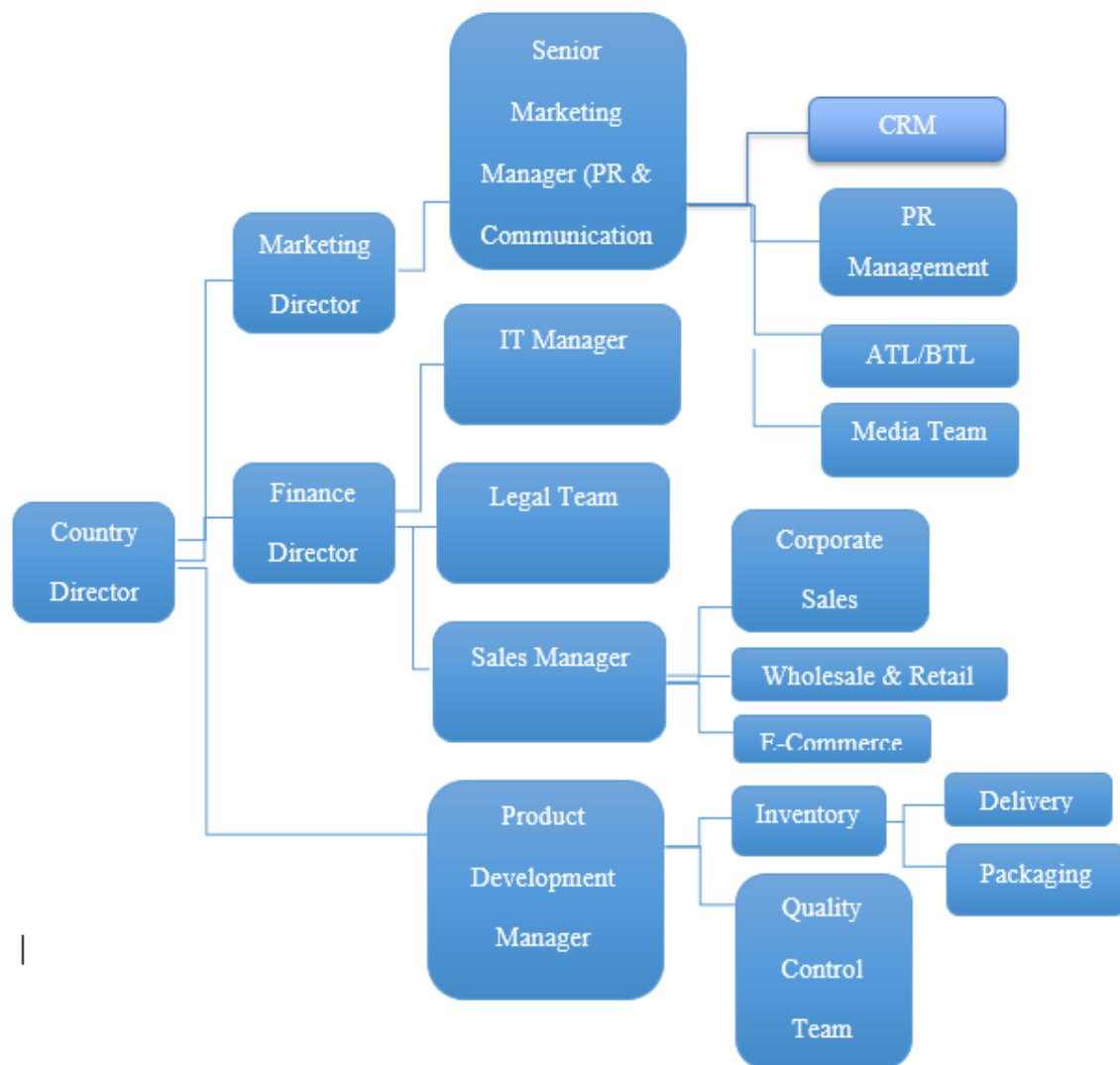


Figure 3: The Organizational Structure

2.3.1 Recruitment and Selection Process

LAFZ Bangladesh prefers to hire from internal references. However, they evaluate the candidate in every possible way. Department heads or managers interview their teams. In the

interview, they attempt to determine whether the candidate has time flexibility, ability to adapt, the ability to work under extreme pressure, and a desire to learn. They do not mind if someone does not know anything about a certain job. They train the individual from the beginning. There is a three-month probation period. Once the candidate is hired, during that time they learn about his or her strengths and weaknesses, and the supervisors seek to improve those areas while also assisting them in learning more about themselves. When I got the call for the interview, I had to sit with the Senior Marketing Manager who focused on my knowledge, interpersonal skills and also discussed their expectation from me.

2.3.2 Compensation System

LAFZ follows the Salary and Bonus as a monetary compensation system. When a team or a person does exceptionally well in any given month or any project, the company rewards the team or individual with incentives. They are currently offering life insurance to their employees as well.

2.4 Marketing Practices

LAFZ had to figure out numerous marketing strategies after successfully launching in Bangladesh. In the beginning, they focused on social media sites, as they can cover a huge portion of Bangladesh as well as through this platform capturing a target audience will be easier. LAFZ had the benefit of attracting enough attention by debuting their TV advertisement with Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, after that customers had already begun to order their preferred products. The database of previous customers was later utilized to retarget existing customers. This approach has been maintained for social media promotions to this day.

Then there are promotions on web portals and social media to build a large audience base. LAFZ also attracts the attention of parents by promoting the product on online news sites and allowing them to relate to the product when it comes to purchasing cosmetics.

On the other hand, influencer marketing boosted LAFZ's results. Young-aged people love to relate themselves to inspirational figures. LAFZ began collaborating with influencers to attract more customers. LAFZ provided those social media influencers free promotional products as gifts and if they loved the products, they created influencing content and uploaded it on their social media platforms. Contents are about how to use the items and their importance. As a result, the influencer's followers gain a proper idea of the product and they are more likely to follow them by purchasing similar items.

LAFZ has also sponsored several major television series including BIG BOSS. LAFZ has recently begun collaborating with Dipto TV in Bangladesh, by sponsoring various Turkish TV series that has been dubbed in Bangla for the Bangladeshi audience, and in terms of audience coverage, TV commercials always have a large margin.

Another part of LAFZ's promotional strategy is telemarketing. Existing customers received SMS notifications whenever a new product, a new discount offer, or an old product became available.

LAFZ's main strategy is to get a good amount of responses from the public then push the items to be purchased by branding as a HALAL brand.

2.5 Operation Management & Information System Practices

2.5.1: Information Management System

At the moment, all traditional organizations are attempting to improve their practices on the digital platform. LAFZ is in the same position. They also store the details of their customers in confidentiality for further promotional purposes. LAFZ has a team of highly qualified IT specialists and they work tirelessly to ensure that the database is used safely and securely. Customers first contact the end of the purchasing process; all data is held in strict confidence. Every department of LAFZ maintains this type of confidentiality.

2.5.2 Order Placement Methods

- Website
- E-commerce platform
- Ads of the social media platform
- Official Facebook page and other social media platform
- Local authentic cosmetic shops
- Directly communicating with the LAFZ sales team

2.5.3 Payment Method of LAFZ

LAFZ Bangladesh accepts all available payment methods in Bangladesh. Cash on delivery is preferred by the majority of customers. However, in recent years, cashless payment has become increasingly popular. Mobile banking, such as Bkash, is the most common method of cashless payment. Nagad, are becoming increasingly popular as well. Internet banking is very popular

among customers. Most importantly all the payment-related information is kept by following utmost confidentiality and security.

2.6 Industry Competitive Analysis

Since LAFZ is a quickly growing consumer goods industry and a game-changer in the world of growth or the internet marketplace, it has many competitors who are regarded as the industry's biggest competitors. Unilever, Marico, Fogg, Inglot, and Vini are our main competitors. All of them sell similar products, but LAFZ has the unique benefit of being the first halal-certified brand.

2.6.1 SWOT Analysis

Strength:

- Imported products produced in cutting-edge facilities (factories and technology).
- A product with a high perceived value-certified as Halal, cruelty-free, and free of animal products.
- Excellent value for money.
- Dermatologically proved to be safe for all skin types.

Weakness:

- Global shipment dependency.
- Availability of the product.
- Rely on outside delivery services.

Opportunity:

- The popularity of certain products is increasing.
- Examining the market that has yet to be discovered.
- Raising awareness of halal products within the target market.
- A lifestyle that is based on values.
- Raising halal product awareness.

Threats:

- Inadequate understanding of product ingredients.
- Competitors who could pose a threat.
- Duty regulations are changing.
- The impact of a pandemic or other natural disaster on global transportation.

Strengths: LAFZ International Ltd. is a global FMCG conglomerate based in Singaporean company that provides customers with market-ready solutions by listening to their needs and producing goods that fit their culture and lifestyle preferences. Our global team of professionals uses cutting-edge technology, which is scientifically proven methodology, and ancient wisdom to gift our customers with anything from innovative personal care needs to beauty items that exceed global standards. We have constantly satisfied the needs, wants and expectations of end-users and professional users with high-quality cosmetic products and services as the leading Halal product segment. We establish and sustain trusting and reciprocal partner relationships with our customers and other stakeholders. We seek to create a pleasant working atmosphere and do our best to contribute to the well-being of our community, both locally and globally.

Weaknesses: Despite the potential strength and intent of the company's mission and vision, we still have some limitations to raise to the top of all brand segments. One such limitation is the import impediment, which limits our product's expansion and creates scarcity of our customer's needs. Newly introduced products are one of the main factors to drive faster growth, but the periodical launch can also cause stability difficulties. Last but not least, we lack our delivery system, which is essential to achieving the vision on time. By using a third-party delivery system, we cannot give negative feedback to other shoulders and have a significant impact.

Opportunity: According to a 2020 estimate, Islam has 1.9 billion believers, representing around 24.7 percent of the world's population. It is the world's second-largest religious group. Islamic ideologically encourages the halal lifestyle and most people of Bangladesh are practicing Islam. LAFZ belongs to the halal lifestyle. Our products are halal-certified and well-known around the world. There is no other competitor that can match the segment's success and comprehend the needs of Muslim customers. To share the beauty of Islam and be able to explore the market, creating awareness will be a top priority. The product was certified by a recognized organization, making it trustworthy to all customers. LAFZ items are all Halal Certified and follow the Islamic lifestyle. As a result, they are safe and do not include animal ingredients at any point during the preparation, manufacturing, storage, or transportation process.

Threats: Even though the Islamic way of life is synonymous with the Halal way of life, most individuals are unaware of the components of items that can be used or avoided in daily life. There are no awareness-raising programs from the Islamic society or government. Furthermore,

government protectionism and a hostile regulatory procedure create considerable obstacles for product import, resulting in product unavailability in the country.

2.6.2 Porters Five Forces Analysis

The Threats of New Entry: The introduction of a new company always poses a challenge to an existing one. A strong strategy may lead to the acquisition of other organizations. However, the threat is low due to the current state of affairs. It is much tougher to defeat LAFZ.

Threats of Substitute: Some customers are always looking for the cheapest choice when it comes to skincare products and ended up choosing lower quality products over current good options. As a result, losing clients is always a risk for a business or a brand. Many well-known brands and multinational corporations, such as Marico, Unilever, and Inglot, are unable to deliver similar items. As we are now the only halal-certified brand the risk is minimal.

Power of Buyers: In the case of LAFZ, the buyers' power is limited because there is no such way for them to bargain for anything. Here, the price and the amount are fixed so the buyer's authority is also limited.

Power of Suppliers: Suppliers' power is high here because suppliers can put pressure on businesses by rising costs, restricting product availability, or deteriorating quality. Furthermore, by raising prices and reducing availability, they might put pressure on buyers.

Rivalry among Competitors: Bangladesh has a variety of established cosmetic companies. As a result, there is constantly a competition to see who is the best. Unilever is our toughest competitor because they have long dominated the market and the industry. As a result, there is a lot of competition among the competitors in this scenario.

2.7 Summary and Conclusion

To conclude, LAFZ is working hard to ensure that the product's quality and customer service are also of the utmost importance. For a country like Bangladesh, the HALAL slogan is incredibly strong and precious. To compete in this competitive industry, every stage of promotion, quality control, tagline, and service must be top-notch. LAFZ keeps a close eye on every area of the brand to ensure that it remains a competitive competitor to the market's other pioneers.

2.8 Recommendations

Due to their rapid and thoughtful response to the market, LAFZ became a pioneer in a very short time. The company's greatest strength is its high investment policy and appropriate target audience. Nowadays, Muslim individuals are more likely to follow the Islamic way of life and are looking for alternatives. People's perceptions of the company will become more steady because of their understanding of Islam as well as the benefit of halal components increases in developing the products. As this country's purchasing power is low to medium, LAFZ can help by launching affordable products. Low-income individuals are selective about their purchases and prefer to stock up on low-cost, high-quality brands. If LAFZ can launch more cost-effective brands in the country, they will be successful in grabbing the market. It may occur as a result

of the establishment of manufacturing plants in individual countries. The price of imports and the procedure of imposing restrictions are becoming increasingly aggressive. As a result, doing business with solely import base products would be challenging, and they must also secure the availability of all products. The compliance is further strengthened by the company's distribution and delivery method. Customer satisfaction should be a primary concern and a must-have thing. Customers demand quicker delivery and refunds at all times. There are also several more locations where a strong heritage can be developed. Maximum sales will be the result of maximum coverage. Knowing what constitutes halal ingredients is also a challenge for all Muslims. Increased consumer knowledge of halal ingredients will expand market capacity while also enhancing the brand's reputation. Social media is the new battleground in the marketing world, and LAFZ needs to take full advantage of it. One of the most effective ways to reach a huge number of people with a halal lifestyle is to spread information through social media. During such social media engagement, the spokesperson must take caution, since any unusual explanation will result in a negative customer experience. Here is a list of recommendations that must be implemented to achieve future higher growth.

- 1) Establish manufacturing facilities in our own country.
- 2) Research the market more thoroughly and conduct product tests more regularly.
- 3) Gain a better understanding of halal components.
- 4) Increase the number of people in the workforce.
- 5) Expand promotional activities and funds to reach every corner of the country.
- 6) Must set up their delivery system to ensure quicker product delivery.

Chapter 3 Project Part: How E-Business is Working During COVID

19 Pandemic: A Study on LAFZ Bangladesh

3.1 Introduction

In 2020, E-commerce earned 120 million takas, indicating a 45 percent increase in underlying sales. E-commerce now accounts for almost 6% of our total sales. The rate was just over 4% at the end of 2019, thus the pace with which it has risen is remarkable.

The COVID-19 lockdown, as well as a growth in the number of people shopping online around the world, have all played a role. Many individuals are discovering online shopping for the first time, resulting in a higher penetration rate. The epidemic, however, isn't the only thing fueling its rapid spread. Our cross-functional e-commerce teams have been laying the foundation for the growth of this side of the business for years. Around 80 professionals have been gathered, including those with digital and marketing expertise, and also Supply Chain, R&D, key account managers who work with our partner retailers, and more.

3.1.1 Background

The COVID-19 epidemic has had an extraordinary influence on our lives and several businesses around the world: many brands' marketing spending and activities, including various digital marketing programs, have been interrupted. LAFZ Bangladesh was not immune to the pandemic's effects. Furthermore, the pandemic interrupted the development and pace that a new startup company is needed. For LAFZ, the leadership made a big difference. The time it took to approach the market ensured their viability and enhanced the structure. Since

people are isolated to their homes, all activities, including commercial operations, have moved online.

The good news is that LAFZ has been preparing for online business from the beginning, and they have a strong focus on online sales, which includes their website, e-commerce site, social media platform, and influencer marketing. Every platform was designed to help in the time of the pandemic. They place a greater emphasis on influencer marketing because individuals spend their free time following their favorite celebrities over these three months. However, growth remained poor as individuals struggled to meet their fundamental requirements and began to neglect their luxuries. Furthermore, people's outings and gatherings decreased and they began to socialize on an internet platform. LAFZ saw a positive reaction from their online business and social media site. LAFZ created unique digital promotional materials to grab their attention and ensure a dynamic presence in the electronic media and lifestyle section. Whatever the case may be, they continue to face challenges in maintaining their profit margin. However, LAFZ was able to keep the BOARD of investors informed of the situation and their ongoing efforts. As a result, it appears that the board of investors did not lose faith in them and continued to invest. Influencer marketing on social media and collaboration with another online platform assists them to maintain their image in the minds of their target audience. It had an instant impact on the market after the COVID situation was a bit light.

Because of the COVID 19 breakout, various countries restricted the procedure at that time it was critical to ensure that the products were available in the warehouse. The shipment of goods via air was also suspended. For the time being, it was quite difficult to maintain all of my responsibilities and queries in order. For the well-organized shipping of items to Bangladesh,

LAFZ developed a special team. The team was developed to track and manage product deliveries. They looked into every option for following up with the product line and assuring transportation. The company did not try to cut costs; instead, it focused on product availability. This approach supports their long-term viability and presence among customers.

There was also a problem with the delivery system. It was difficult to assure door-to-door delivery because of the pandemic condition. LAFZ was able to organize a delivery team that could only deliver their products while preserving all safety precautions.

The establishment of a new brand, Dr. Rhazes, was the highlight of the presentation. Because of its qualities and natural setting, it was exceptional. Dr. Rhazes came up with a novel solution for people who struggle with hand washing and ensuring the safety of their own and their families, such as 2 hours' ultra-protection for skin and 7 days' protection for the home. It became the disinfectant sector's brand leader in a relatively short time and the online platforms accounted for the majority of the revenue. Mashrafee-Bin-Mortoza, one of the country's top superstars, was recruited to advertise the disinfectant segment. It gave the brand a huge boost in terms of reaching out to the general public. The company was able to get maximum trust and reach because of the impression of the Bangladesh cricket captain. The product is promoted using digital and social media platforms.

In conclusion, the proactive strategy, quicker response, and long-term mentality supported LAFZ to survive the pandemic while also having an immediate impact following the COVID. The online platform was used in a highly strategic way to maximize productivity and reach.

When other companies were considering moving their operations to the internet, LAFZ was equipped with all the necessary infrastructure to launch a campaign.

3.1.2 Objective(s) of the Report

The primary goal of this report is to develop a long-term goal, as well as service compliance and adherence rates, and future market demand. To achieve the fastest growth, LAFZ noticed a pandemic situation at the start of their business, and when they transitioned to online business, it was important to watch how customers interacted with their activities, processes, and products. To keep their business alive, the entire world migrated to online platforms overnight. Nobody could have predicted it, and there are few experts' perspectives and rules on how to handle such a platform. LAFZ met these issues immediately and reacted quickly to changing conditions. From goods import to delivery to customers, everything was a test throughout the pandemic. Customer management, warehouse setup, product delivery, product return, and cash collection are all areas where LAFZ will need to employ many teams. Every requirement was treated as a top priority by all teams. They needed to be at the top of their customers' minds when it came to the brand, so they allocated funds and people to the online platform. As a result, it was critical to understand their service compliance rate during the pandemic, as well as how customers evaluated their efforts. Customers' voices are always important to be successful in businesses. It should be well prepared to receive customers' feedback, complaints, and ideas. The survey was created in a SMART manner to reach the objective. This is one of the most successful methods for obtaining effective user results. Since the company put forth every effort to manage each customer during a pandemic, it was necessary to obtain certain specific feedback, such as the appropriate customer category, age, and preference. LAFZ also wants to know the rate of customer interaction with their social media

and electronic media strategy, which is measurable. How customers learned about the product and how they chose the best solution for themselves or their loved ones. What were people's thoughts on the difference between the abstract design and the finished product? This survey was created to obtain real-time feedback on product quality and the gap between commitment and service, both of which are critical components in improving and ensuring the customer's long-term viability during a pandemic. Online platforms or social media were not the sole way to get through the crisis; rather, it was a set-up for the coming days that customers might accept and include into their daily lives.

Following are the main goals:

- 1) Determining the most important aspects influencing the overall working environment.
- 2) Determining the most important E-business adaptation approach.
- 3) Determining what customers require the most in this pandemic.
- 4) Analyzing pandemic time's customers' purchasing patterns.
- 5) Analyzing delivery and money transaction risk concerns.

3.1.3 Significance

Keeping and maintaining better manufacturing quality with HALAL ingredients was a major challenge for LAFZ during this pandemic. Finding an immediate solution in such a situation is impossible for the e-business market. Thus developing and implementing a new strategy was the main challenge. Although people were isolated to their houses for such a long time, skincare is always required. The biggest issue in selling LAFZ's products was discovering and reaching customers who are budget-conscious and willing to adapt and try new branded products. During a pandemic, people's income drops, and as a result, their purchasing behavior drops as

well, which is a major concern. In terms of the buyer's mindset, they were more likely to acquire a product that would last a long time and cost less than other similar products on the market. Furthermore, people were more willing than before to strive to be religious, therefore they connected the concept of using halal items rather than conventional brands.

3.2 Methodology

Primary and secondary data were used to prepare this internship report, and all information is accurate. To begin, I created the following questionnaire to learn more about our customers' perceptions of purchasing from online platforms during the epidemic. To gather more accurate results from this survey, I needed to reach out to people of all ages, genders, and demographics. Because of that the behavioral and purchasing choices will be better categorized. The survey results included questions using a multiple-choice question, Likert scale, and rate-based questions. I also used my experience as a buyer as well as a LAFZ employee to gain a better knowledge of the subject. In addition to primary sources, I also included secondary data into my report to make it more resourceful and genuine. I also obtained information from LAFZ and LAFZ's parent company BELIEVE and finally my daily observations and ideas from my colleagues.

3.3 Findings and Analysis

3.3.1 Analysis of the Survey Response

In this survey, I focus on the online shopping experiences of the customers. With the company's permission, I have taken this survey on real-time customers. However, I was not permitted to reveal any of the customer's details. Thus I was unable to utilize a phone

number, any e-mail address, or other information. When a consumer contacted us via social media to place an order manually or to share an issue about the product, I requested the customer to take part in this survey.

I have got 61 responses from the survey. Survey responses were about 63.9% of females, 32.8% are male and 3.3% choose to prefer not to say. As I am working in LAFZ which is a cosmetic brand, that is why in this survey I got more responses from females than men and few responses from people who do not want to share their gender. So from here, I can get different opinions for my report.

In the age group, I got a response of about 19.7% from age group 15-20 years old, about 42.6% from the age group 21-25 years old, about 21.3% from the age group 26-30 years old, about 11.5% from the age group 31-35 years old, about 1.6% from the age group 36-40 years old and lastly about 3.3% from the age group 40 years and more. Here we can see a huge number of people in the age group of 21-35 make online purchases during this pandemic. This is about 95% of the people. LAFZ BD had to work tirelessly and smoothly during the pandemic. People at LAFZ BD started working from home at the start of the pandemic. As everyone was in the same situation, we had to think in a new way about how customers could buy our products safely during this crisis. Women are now more concerned about their lifestyle and like to use cosmetics and skincare products. So, LAFZ started to teach people about the skin, what our skin needs, how to treat the skin well, what to do and what not to do. Most people started to use and engage in social media more, so LAFZ started to work more with influencers to be always present in front of potential customers and let people know more about our brand.

Most people watch promotional videos so that they can know about the existence of the product. Most companies have begun to offer products online; which customers can buy while in the comfort of their own homes. About 67.2% of people got to know about LAFZ from social media and influencers (37.7% from social media and 29.5% from influencers). The rest of the 32.8% of people got to know about LAFZ from other sources. To be precise, 19.7% from friends, 6.6% from television advertisements, 4.9% from cosmetics shops, and 1.6% is from the newspaper.

In the next segment, I had asked them about who did they purchase for. The options were own self, family members, friends, and colleagues. About 52.5% purchase for themselves, 31.1% purchase for their family members, 13.1% purchase for their friends, and 3.3% purchase for their colleagues. During this pandemic, people got more attached to their family members and their close ones. Because of the pandemic, people are mostly isolated to their homes and we can see that people are taking care of themselves as well as their family members.

After that, I asked them about the availability of the LAFZ's product. Of the 47.5% who said all the products are available, 39.3% said products are mostly available, 11.5% said products are less available, and 1.6% said products are not available. As LAFZ is a startup multinational company we have shortcomings. We import our items from several nations, which is why we occasionally have trouble restocking them on time. Some offline shops do not carry all of our products, and sometimes certain things go out of stock because of special offers and campaigns. Therefore, we are sometimes unable to provide all of our customers with their preferred products at that time. Though there are many restrictions on importing of many products in

different countries because of the pandemic still we try to provide the product near to the customer so that they can use the halal products and take care of themselves.

In the next segment of the survey, I asked them how satisfied the customers are in terms of the quality of the products. About 82% of people are satisfied with the product quality and LAFZ being a startup company, is a big achievement. However, about 18% of people are not satisfied with the quality of the product. We feel that there are always places for improvement and that customers' feedback is valuable which we take seriously and use to improve our product and quality.

After that, I had asked if the customers get the exact product that they see on the website and 52.5% said they got the same product, 41% said they got the mostly same products, 3.3% people voted mostly different, and 3.3% people voted for totally different products. We make every effort to deliver the same thing that customers see before making a purchase and we believe we are very successful in this area. However, there are some variations between the images and the actual products. The reason is sometimes the product shades and colors may vary slightly depending on the resolution of different devices' screens. Earlier, we received very few objections about it and as a result, we have edited and updated the images that are available on the website.

In the next segment of the survey, I asked them if they are satisfied with the packaging of the products. So, here I also got a good response. About 85% of people are satisfied with the packaging of the products. Of the 65.6%, people are very satisfied with our packaging and 19.7% are satisfied. 9.8% of people voted for neutral. 3.3% voted for dissatisfaction and 1.6%

of people are very dissatisfied with the packaging. So, I think it is a win for the LAFZ. As packaging plays an important role in customers' minds. It can grab the attention of the customer at a glance.

When it comes to delivery time, the majority of respondents have given good responses, with 77% saying yes that they are satisfied with the delivery duration. Earlier to this, we had a lot of delivery concerns. At the time, the duration was longer. We do our delivery through FlingEx, E-Courier, and BD Parcel. In recent days, we faced some delivery issues and in most of the cases we found out that the delivery man was sick. Since customer satisfaction is a top concern for us, so when we started receiving a lot of complaints, we change the delivery agents and employ more people. By this, the problems in this area have been successfully reduced. We also intend to improve our delivery system so that we may attain 100 percent customer satisfaction with zero product delivery complaints.

My next question was if the customers are getting a quick response from the LAFZ representatives. About 97% of people are saying positively that they got their responses very quickly. CRM agents are not allowed to give replies to the customers using Messenger or Meta Business Suite. So, we do our work through simplify360. Sometimes there is some glitch in simplify360 and because of that, the messages come to us a bit late. Whenever this type of incident happened we immediately inform the Indian tech team to solve this matter. Rather than this simplify360 is a great platform to work and we can instantly get back to our customers and solve their issues.

In the next segment, I asked the customers about how helpful the customer support service and here we also got 97% positive responses, and only 3.2% of people voted for negative. Sometimes the customer's got confused about whether they are talking to any agent or not. All the messages, comments, and concerns are dealing by the agents. Whenever we got a new query or we need a brief about the new launch product we immediately inform the team and there we got our brief from the team leader. Though there are some saved responses still I maintain a FAQ file and keep every information there and if my colleagues require any information I share that from my FAQ with them. Furthermore, there is a training session on products, ingredients, and processes so that we can provide correct information to the customer.

My next question was if LAFZ products are budget-friendly. 50.8% of people think the products are budget-friendly, 31.1% people voted for maybe and 18% people think that the products are not budget-friendly. The price range is appropriate for the higher middle class to higher class people. So, to grab the middle class and below middle-class LAFZ started to offer up to 70% discount on specific products so that everyone can afford them. This information is collected from CRM. My next question is related to this. In that question, I asked them how often they get discounts on LAFZ's products. 85.2% of people said that they get offers on LAFZ's products. Furthermore, our authentic distributors like Daraz, MMART, shop.shajgoj.com also provide discounts on our products.

In the next segment, I asked if the customers feel safe when they share their contact details. 90.2% of people voted that they feel safe to share their contact details with us. As per our privacy policy, we never share the information of our customers with anyone or anywhere.

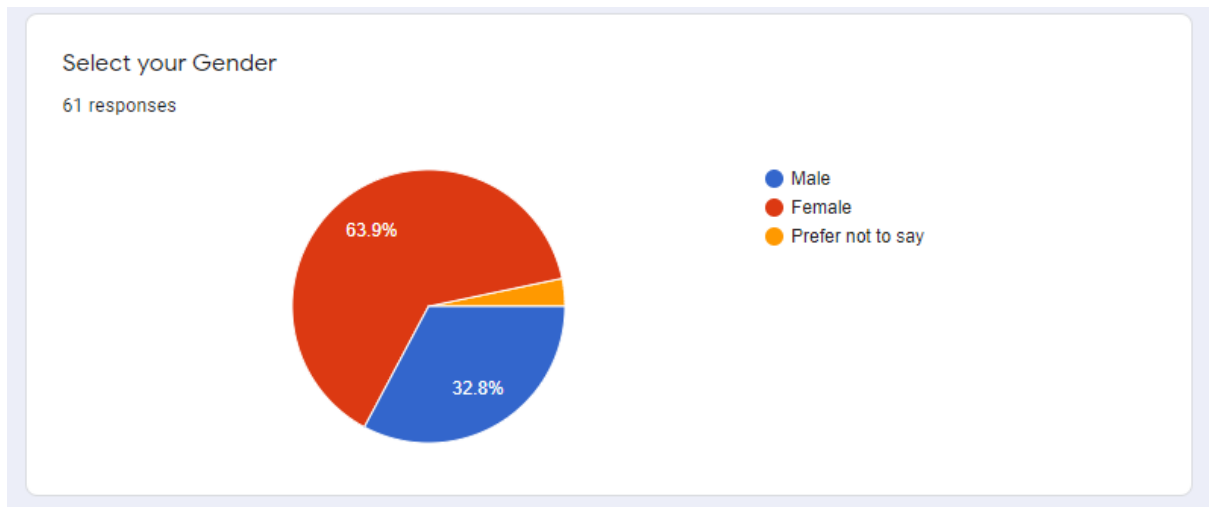
My next question was about convenient payment methods. 72.1% people voted for cash on delivery, 16.4% people voted for mobile banking, and 11.5% people voted for a card transaction. All the payment methods are available on the website so that customers can select their convenient payment method.

After that, I asked the customers if they are satisfied with the return policy of LAFZ. 95.2% of people voted that they are satisfied with our return policy. Most customers are happy about our policy because our primary concern is the satisfaction of our customers. From the authority, we are instructed that if there is any issue about product, return or refund we have to solve it immediately and do the return or refund within one day.

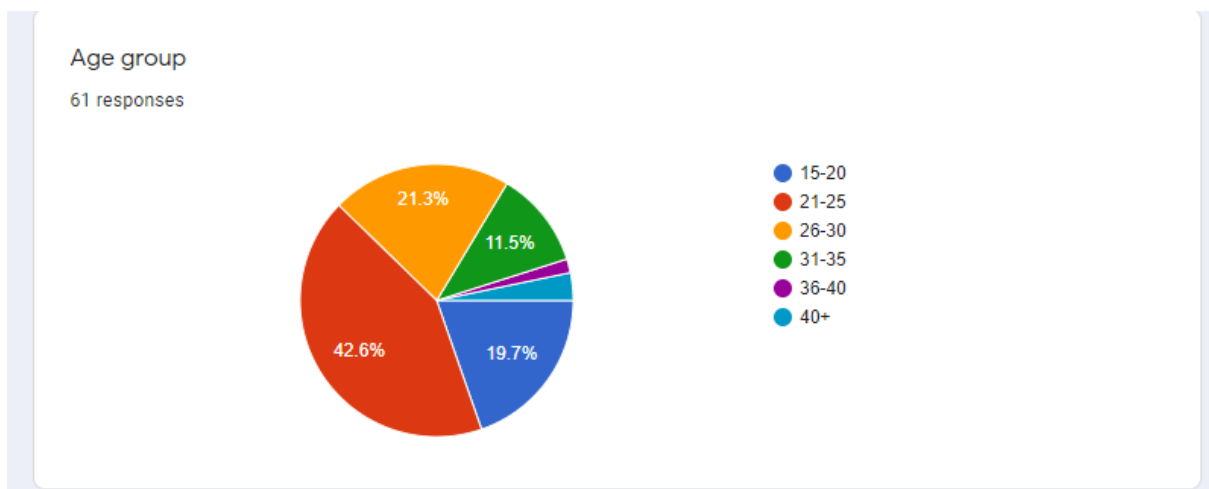
My last question was, whether the customers will recommend LAFZ to others. 95.1% of customers said that they will recommend LAFZ to others. 4.9% of customers said negative. We value their opinion and we will try to analyze their feedback and will try to solve those and improve ourselves and we will try to give them the best shopping experience.

3.3.2 Survey Results

1.



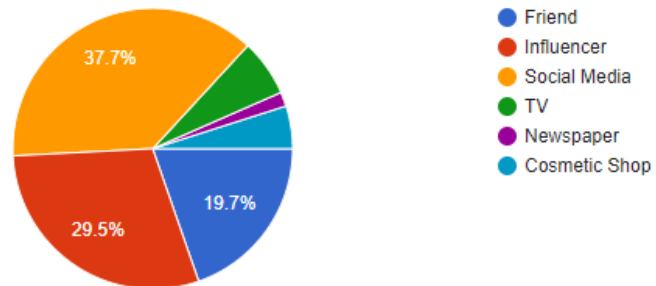
2.



3.

How did you know about LAFZ?

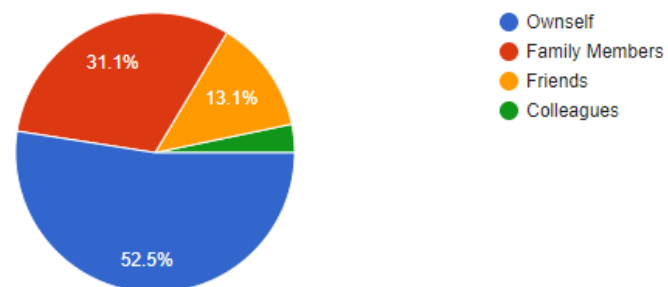
61 responses



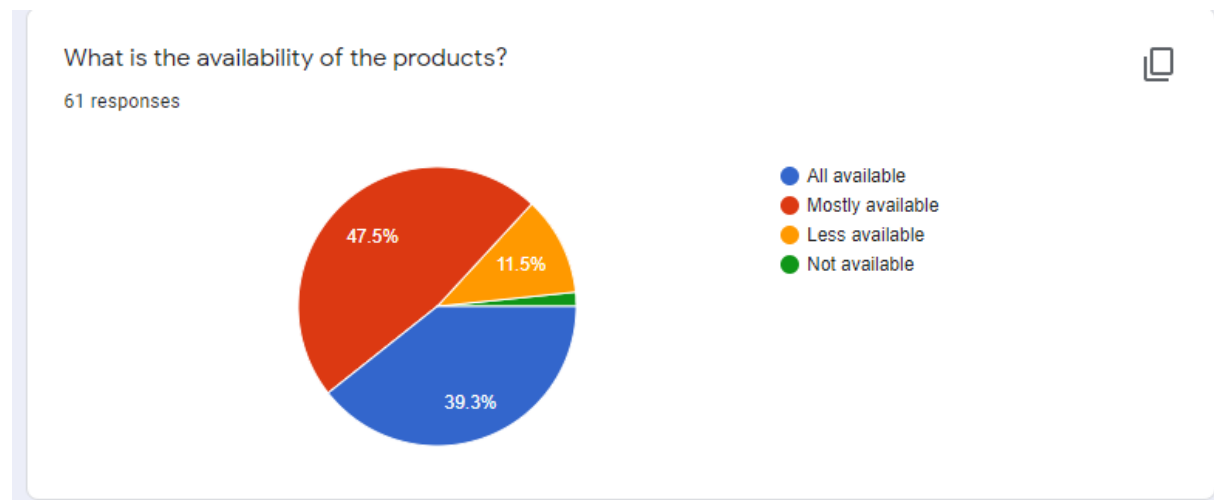
4.

Who did you purchase for?

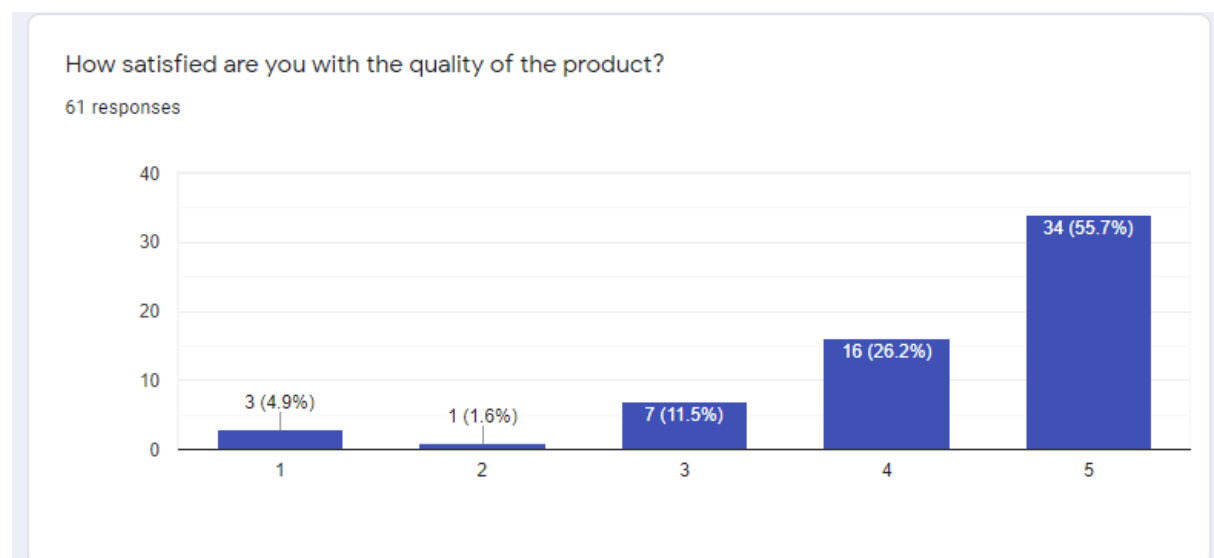
61 responses



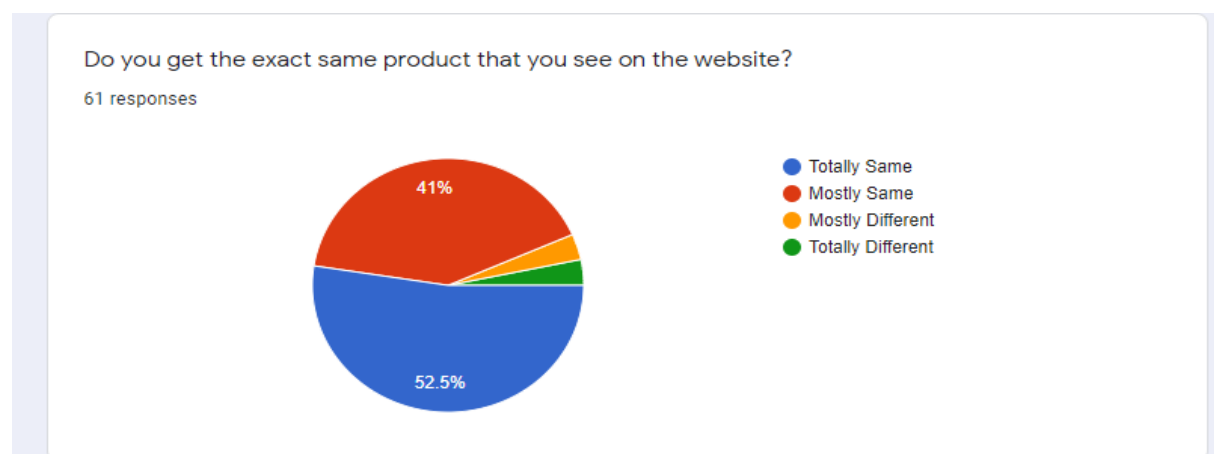
5.



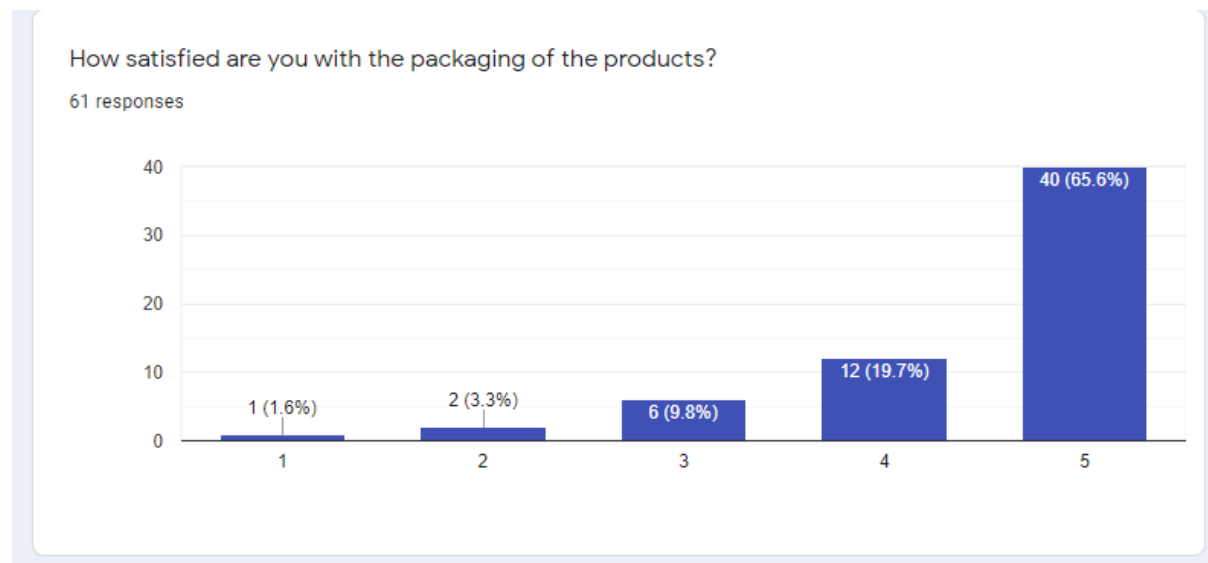
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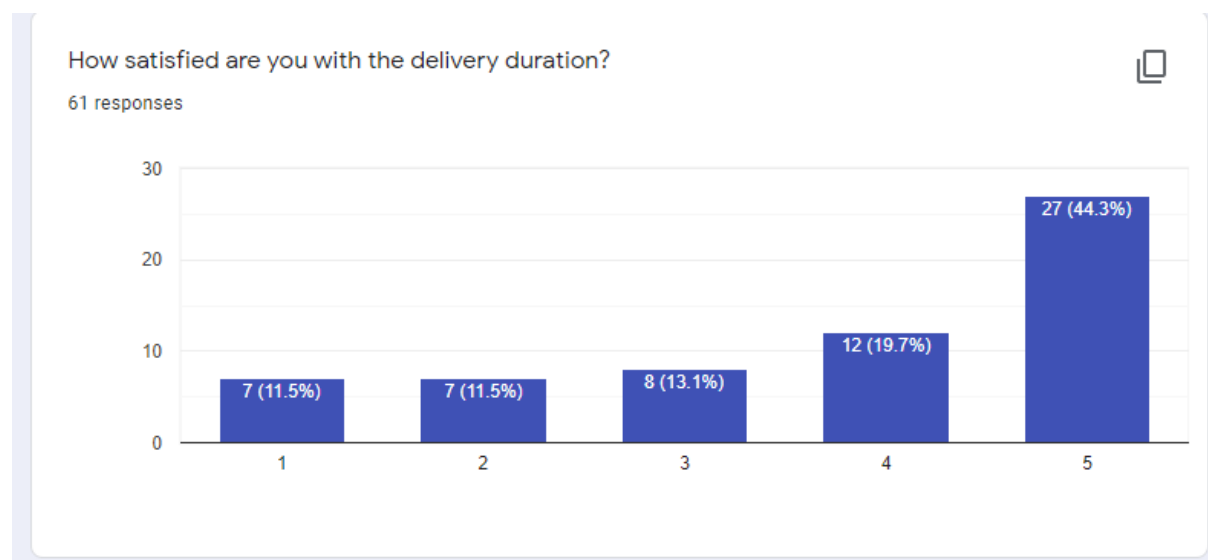
7.



8.



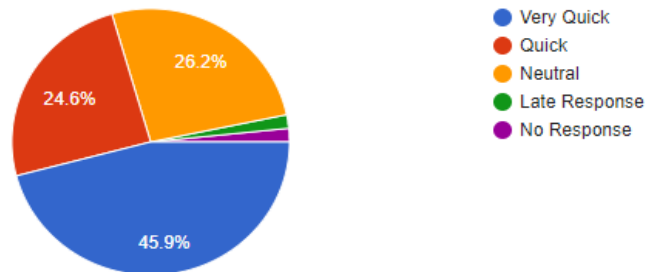
9.



10.

How quick is the response when you reach out to the LAFZ representative?

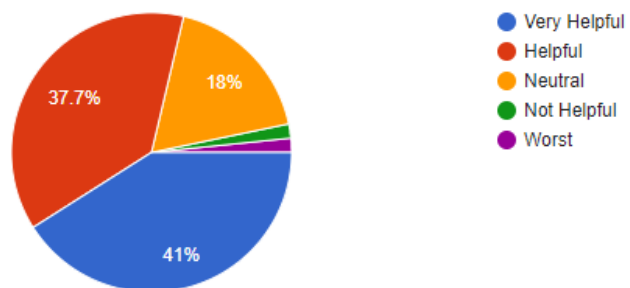
61 responses



11.

How helpful is the customer support service?

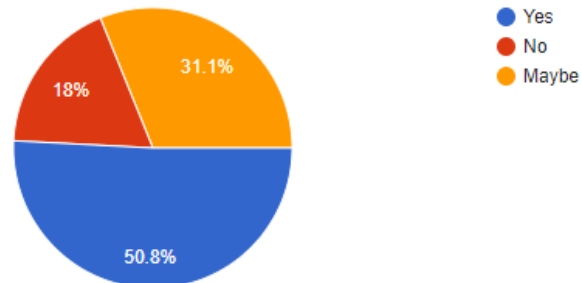
61 responses



12.

LAFZ products are budget-friendly.

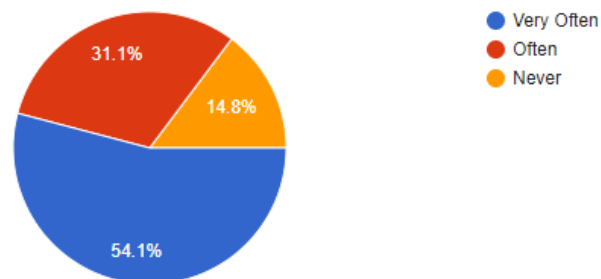
61 responses



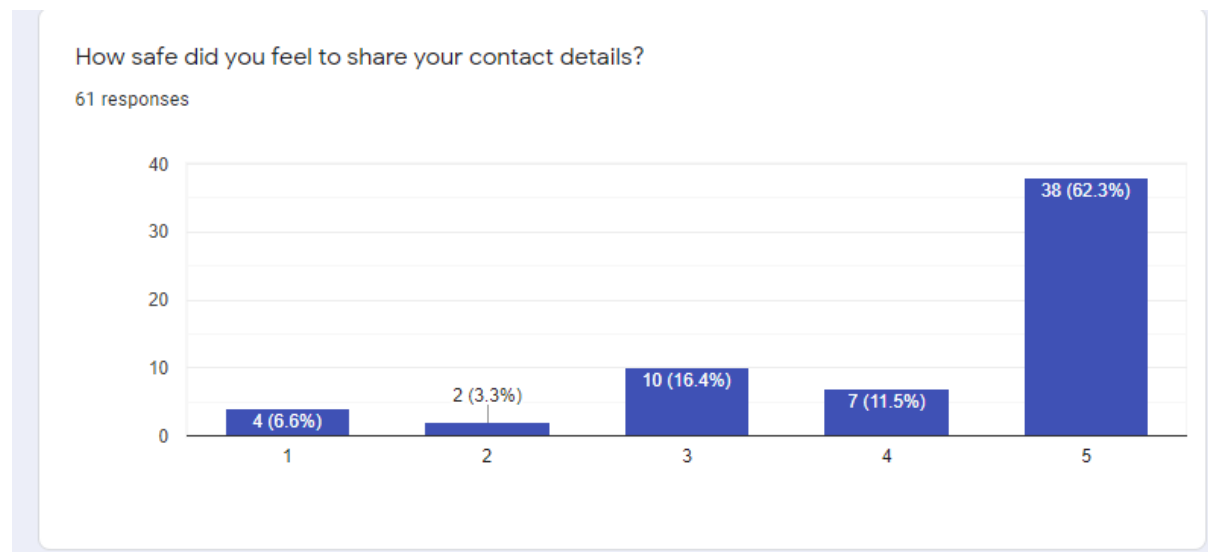
13.

How often do you get discounts on LAFZ's products?

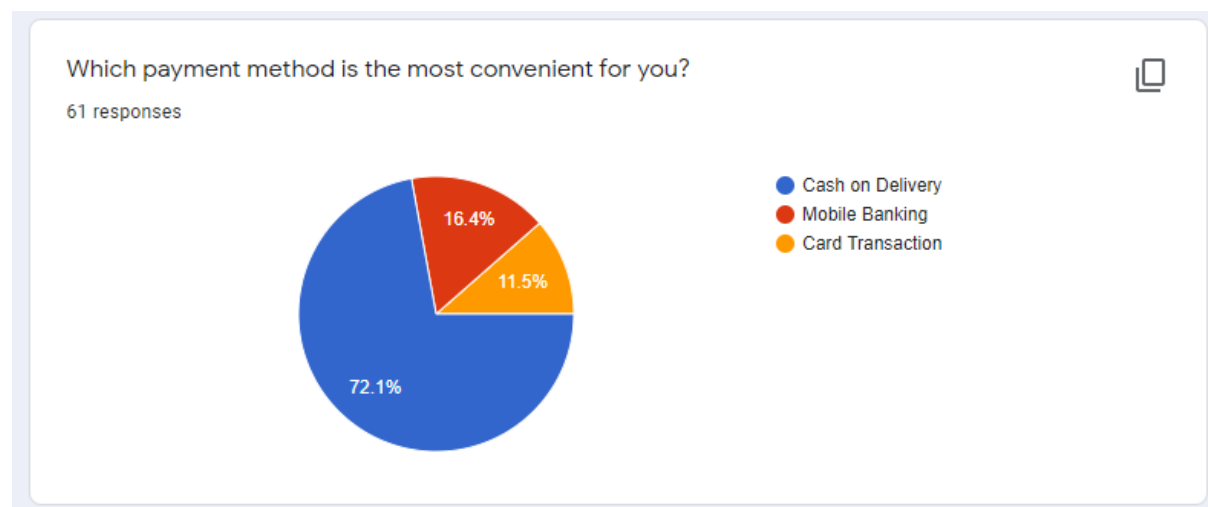
61 responses



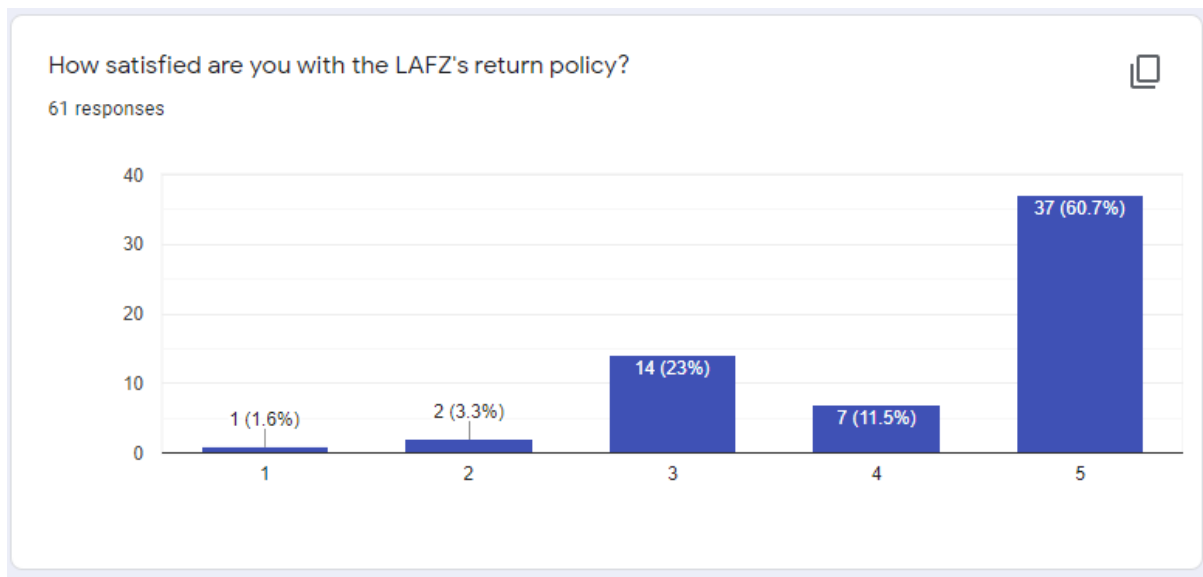
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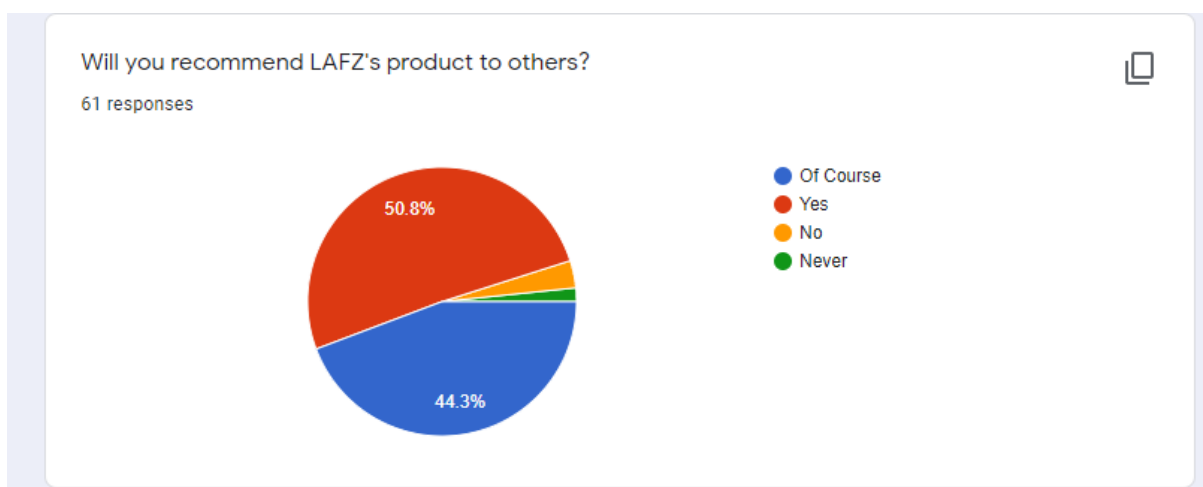
15.



16.



17.



3.4 Summary and Conclusion

In the Covid-19 epidemic, it has been demonstrated that there is no other marketplace except the online market place and the survey's findings reveal the current state of LAFZ's online presence. Though it took some time for customers to adapt to the plan, it seemed to have had a significant impact on every outcome and discussion. According to a study, people aged 25 to 34 are most likely to shop on e-commerce platforms [The Daily Star; December 24, 2021]. This is the study's positive aspect and it shows that LAFZ is on the correct path to grab the e-commerce-dependent youth market. According to our survey, a major percent of customers are in the above-mentioned age group and this age group accounted for 90% of all sales. Bangladesh's E-commerce sector is rapidly expanding and it will soon overtake the United States, China, and India. Furthermore, people in this age range are very engaged in social media, celebrities, influencers, and bloggers and they found out about LAFZ through those channels. LAFZ should make a concerted effort to enhance its presence to grab the millennial age group as a potential market and to secure a place. According to several experts, client satisfaction during the delivery and refund processes might influence a customer to choose and stay with a brand. LAFZ made a positive effect on its customers. Customers are pleased with the shipping and refund systems, indicating that LAFZ should keep working on these two processes. LAFZ sells its products through a variety of channels and it is successful in reaching the majority of its clients. Another major consideration was payment method and according to a recent study, 95 percent of online clients prefer cash on delivery, which was reflected in the survey as well, although all payment alternatives were available. In the future, several payment alternatives will help to capture all levels of customers. The majority of buyers decided to buy the product either for themselves or for someone they know. To summarize, we believe LAFZ should maintain its focus on online customers and use a day-by-day approach to capturing new customers and snatching rival markets.

3.5 Recommendations

LAFZ needs to improve its delivery process as in this pandemic people are more concerned about their health. We have received complaints about delivery men who are not following safety precautions and some of the delivery men are not even wearing masks, some of them refuse to deliver products to the customer's doorsteps and force people to leave their homes just to receive the parcel. Furthermore, many customers preferred to pay via mobile banking after getting their package to avoid any interactions with the delivery person. However, the delivery agency lacked such a facility. They refused to accept any kind of payment other than cash. LAFZ has little authority to resolve these problems because they rely on third-party agents to distribute their products. As a result, I would advise them to develop their delivery system, where they may establish their procedures and regulations and provide their customers with a smoother delivery experience.

When a situation arises, it may take longer to resolve the issue due to a lack of communication across departments. I have come to realize that all departments are interconnected, therefore strong communication is essential for resolving any issues and being on the same page. Furthermore, the CRM team must meet with the main teams on a weekly or monthly basis and receive all updates in real-time. As the CRM team has direct contact with customers, they must have all of the latest updates and information on hand to provide accurate information to them immediately. They plan their social media strategy every half year or year. Promotions may go live on many social media platforms without the CRM agents being aware of it. As a result, solving inquiries takes longer and results in customer dissatisfaction.

LAFZ pays a significant amount of money only to import their products because they are made specifically in Turkey, Italy, and India. They must also pay higher customs taxes as a result of this. So, I would advise them to start by establishing at least one factory in Bangladesh which will help them save money in the long term. Furthermore, supplies are not delivered on time or are delayed due to the pandemic and other factors. As a result, they occasionally fail to provide products that meet their consumers' needs which is another source of customer dissatisfaction. When they provide a sale or a special offer for a special event, they may not be able to satisfy all of the customers and this may lead to a negative impression. I would also advise them to have strong planning before making any decisions as well as keep and manage stock updates for all of their products.

LAFZ must have a good strategy for product availability in the market. Customers sometimes wish to buy things directly from the market after testing them as still now some people have less trust in online purchases. However, they continue to fall in terms of providing customer service traditionally. Furthermore, some stores do not supply sample items, so buyers are unable to check the hues before making a purchase. To overcome this limitation, I recommend increasing the number of sample products available in stores, hiring brand promoters who are knowledgeable about color cosmetics, and giving appropriate training sessions to CRM agents and salespeople so that they can recognize skin types and shades make appropriate recommendations to customers. They also need to open their showrooms to boost their market presence and satisfy the customers who still prefer traditional purchases.

Finally, they have skincare products that are suitable for both men and women. However, they constantly market their products, and also on their official website, they present the criteria in

a manner that some people believe the skincare products offered on the website are only for women and males are unaware of the fact that they may use them as well. As a consequence, they are losing a significant number of potential customers. They mostly work with female influencers, bloggers, vloggers and create TV commercials mostly with female public figures, and the articles are always about women. So, I would advise them to concentrate on male customers too, teach men about the importance of skincare, and raise awareness among them because everyone has to take care of their skin.

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Appendix

Feedback on the survey

1. Select Your Gender

- 1) Male
- 2) Female
- 3) Prefer not to say

2. Age group

- 1) 15-20
- 2) 21-25
- 3) 26-30
- 4) 31-35
- 5) 36-40
- 6) 40+

3. How did you know about LAFZ?

- 1) Friend
- 2) Influencer
- 3) Social Media
- 4) TV
- 5) Newspaper
- 6) Cosmetic Shop

4. Who did you purchase for?

- 1) Own self
- 2) Family Members

- 3) Friends
- 4) Colleagues

5. What is the availability of the products?

- 1) All available
- 2) Mostly Available
- 3) Less available
- 4) Not Available

6. How satisfied are you with the quality of the product?

Very Disappointed - Very Satisfied

7. Do you get exactly the same product that you see on the website?

- 1) Totally same
- 2) Mostly same
- 3) Mostly different
- 4) Totally Different

8. How satisfied are you with the packaging of the products?

Very Disappointed - Very Satisfied

9. How satisfied are you with the Delivery duration?

Very Disappointed - Very Satisfied

10. How quick is the response when you reach out to the LAFZ representative?

- 1) Very Quick
- 2) Quick
- 3) Neutral

4) Late Response

5) No Response

11. How helpful is the customer support service?

1) Very helpful

2) Helpful

3) Neutral

4) Not helpful

5) Worst

13. LAFZs products are budget-friendly

1) Yes

2) No

3) Maybe

14. How often do you get discounts on LAFZ's products?

1) Very Often

2) Often

3) Never

15. How safe did you feel to share your contact details?

Not Safe - Very Safe

16. Which payment method is the most convenient for you?

1) Cash on Delivery

2) Mobile Banking

3) Card Transaction

17. How satisfied are you with the return policy of LAFZ?

Very Disappointed - Very Satisfied

18. Will you recommend LAFZ's product to others?

1) Of Course

2) Yes

3) No

4) Never