



# Export Plan DinnerFresh

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## **General information**

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## Executive Summary

‘De Verse Maaltijd’ is a leading company of different food concepts. The company is specialized in the preparation of fresh and healthy meals for different target groups. The new concept of De Verse Maaltijd, DinnerFresh, is a slightly different and very challenging. This concept offers fresh and healthy meals for a reasonable price. The food delivery service targets an international young-minded audience between the ages of 18 and 25 years old.

Due to a growing food-only retail market and the new concept, DinnerFresh could become the next big thing among students internationally. This export plan has explored the possibilities of further international expansion of De Verse Maaltijd with their new Dutch label, DinnerFresh. Germany is the chosen country because it is a country with a lot of students, possibilities for start-ups and successful stories about other delivery companies. Therefore, the research question is: *‘What is the best strategy for De Verse Maaltijd to export their new concept DinnerFresh to Germany?’*

Both desk and field research were conducted to discover the answer of the research question and the sub questions. This export plan indicated DinnerFresh’s market description and analysed the strengths and weaknesses. The external aspects influencing the company were analysed through the different analyses. The findings of the strategic options were explained through the confrontation matrix. In order to get a better understanding of the perceptions of the customers about DinnerFresh, a test panel and survey were conducted among several Dutch students in a student house in Leiden and German students from different German Universities.

Based on the results of this report, it can be concluded that there are some market opportunities for DinnerFresh in Germany, which means that it will not be unsuccessful when starting to export. After analysing DinnerFresh’s strategies, it is clear that the company does need to amend its strategy a little; it requires some adjustments. For a successful export strategy of DinnerFresh to Germany, the company need to pay a lot of attention to the improved marketing mix. It is recommended to target the German students between 18 – 25 years old who are living in the top ten student cities of the country. It is recommended to start with a direct export channel, in collaboration with sales representatives and later on with brand ambassadors. Furthermore, it is advised to keep the CSR and low pricing strategy. Besides those strengths, the company can benefit from various factors that their competitors are already implementing in their export strategy. Factors like online marketing strategy, developing a mobile app, a more diversified product assortment and collaboration with food bloggers and chefs.

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# 1. Introduction

‘De Verse Maaltijd’ is a leading company of different food concepts. The company is specialized in the preparation of fresh and healthy meals for different target groups. De Verse Maaltijd is offering the best suitable and customized service to childcare organisations, health facilities and independent people who are living alone (De Verse Maaltijd, 2016). The most important and fast growing concept of De Verse Maaltijd is Lekker en Vers. In 2005 the company started with healthy lunchboxes for children at the out-of-school care. The aim was to stimulate a healthy lifestyle of children by offering tasty and healthy lunches in a ‘happy meal’ style packaging. In 2007 the company had contact for the first time with childcare via Lunch4kids - a Dutch school-catering concept that offers ‘Happy Healthy Meals’ to children who have their lunch at school. The organisation of childcare in The Netherlands was looking for a company that could offer healthy hot meals for children. The owner of De Verse Maaltijd was able to assist and started developing healthy meals which could be delivered easily and fast at different locations in The Netherlands (De Verse Maaltijd, 2016).

Since the start of Lekker en Vers - the best growing concept of De Verse Maaltijd - in 2008 the company has developed into a strong national company. They take care of fresh hot meals at more than 250 locations in The Netherlands. Also, the company has become an international company; delivery to childcare organisations in Belgium is active as well. After the great success of the healthy lunchboxes of Lekker en Vers, it was time for a new concept. Peter Veldhuizen, CEO of De Verse Maaltijd, was thinking about delivering fresh meals to another target group and decided to choose international students. That was the moment the idea of DinnerFresh was born. Because Lekker en Vers is already exporting the childcare concept to Belgium, the choice was to do research to export the student delivery service to Germany. However, the company is not yet active in Germany, but the German market presents an opportunity for DinnerFresh. It is a country with a lot of students, possibilities for start-ups and successful stories about other delivery companies, like Lieferando.de and Delivery Hero. (Lekker en Vers, 2013) (De Verse Maaltijd, 2016) (Reuters , 2016).

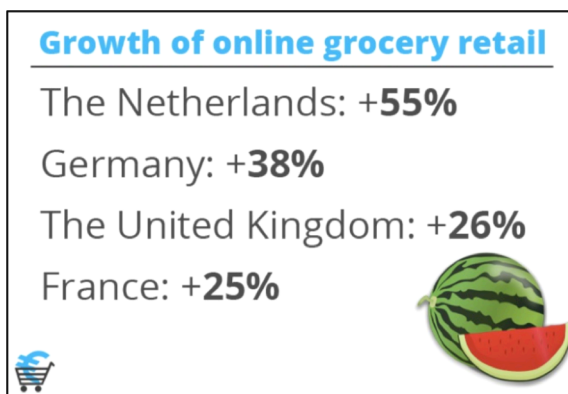
## ***1.1 Problem definition***

According to research from Rabobank, consumers are increasingly making their purchases online. As a result, online food retail is set to experience rapid growth over the next few years. While this could mean opportunities for players all along the supply chain, for food processors it raises important questions regarding the strategic decisions required to capitalise on the development. As online food retailing grows, so will the complexities for food processors. Food processors will need to adapt their strategies to the new reality. They should embrace the online trend and look for

ways to address the changing needs of both food retailers and consumers. Product visibility will become ever more important since consumers will increasingly view products through retailers' online ordering sites rather than in-store (Roeg, 2014).

As previously said, consumers in Europe increasingly turn to online stores for their grocery shopping. The global online channel is expected to grow to more than 80 billion euros by 2018. Syndy published a new study on the online grocery industry across the most advanced markets in Europe: the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France and Germany. The four European countries showed remarkable double-digit growth of online grocery sales last year, according to Syndy's data. The smallest market, that of the Netherlands, grew fastest with a growth of 55%. Although the French online grocery market grew slowest, it still reached a 25% growth. The German and British markets increased by 38% and 26% respectively, as shown in figure 1 (Ecommerce News, 2015).

*Figure 1: Growth of online grocery retail (Ecommerce News, 2015)*



According to research from eMarketer, Germany is generally known to have lagged behind the UK in online grocery shopping. In 2012, for example, the value of UK digital grocery sales was more than 10 times the German tally, according to the February 2014 EY report, "Cross Channel - Revolution im Lebensmittelhandel" (eMarketer, 2014).

Research from various websites shows that the online food-ordering category in Europe is heating up fast, and the main battleground is Germany (Wauters, 2014). Whilst doing research for this export plan, information about the online delivery trends is useful to focus on the market for DinnerFresh in Germany. Important topics such as the competitors and market strategies in this industry need to be studied accurately. It is important to have a close look at the international food delivery market as well; what are competitors in the rest of the world doing to make their business the most successful one? How are the companies beating their competitors in this fast growing business?

During the last six years there has been a lot of progression regarding the service of food companies for delivering fresh meals. However, there is a big difference between the services that companies offer. For example, some companies are offering boxes with ingredients including recipes, others are offering a fresh meal ready to put in the microwave or in the conventional oven, and the last category are the companies that offer fresh hot meals you can eat directly. To succeed in this business, companies have to make a good export and marketing plan for promoting their concept. Furthermore, the food companies have to be aware of their international competitors (Eilander, Messages, 2010).

Due to a growing food-only retail market and the new concept, DinnerFresh could become the next big thing among international students. This export plan will explore the possibilities of further international expansion of De Verse Maaltijd with their new Dutch label, DinnerFresh. This research was definitely of great value for the company because De Verse Maaltijd is looking to expand its international market and Germany is a potential country to which the company can export their service.

The aim of the central research question was to find out whether there are actual market opportunities for DinnerFresh in Germany. The focus was on which entry strategy would be the most appropriate for approaching the German market. Therefore, the research question states: *'What is the best strategy for De Verse Maaltijd to export their new concept DinnerFresh to Germany?'*

In order to answer the research question, the following sub-questions were formulated:

1. What is De Verse Maaltijd and what is their new concept DinnerFresh?
2. What are the mission and vision of the company?
3. What are the needs of the international target group?
4. What are the current German online food delivery services trends?
5. What are the German customer preferences regarding online food delivery services?
6. Who are the main competitors in Germany on the online food delivery market?
7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the company?
8. What are the opportunities and threats of the company?
9. What strategy could DinnerFresh follow when entering the German market?
10. What marketing elements have to be used to successfully enter the German market?

The purpose of this research is to explore the international possibilities to export the new label, DinnerFresh, of De Verse Maaltijd, onto the German market.

## ***1.2 Research methods***

In order to answer the central research question, including the sub-questions, as much reliable information as possible was gathered. Two different types of data collection techniques were used, namely desk research and field research.

### *Desk research*

This research method contributed to the completion of the internal analysis (company and market description, strengths and weaknesses), as well as the external analysis (country, industry, distribution and competitor analysis). Desk research is used in order to define which export strategies De Verse Maaltijd and DinnerFresh apply in The Netherlands and Germany. Furthermore, articles from newspapers, companies, the Internet and other research articles are used during the whole research procedure.

#### ➤ **Offline methods**

Literature and various books on export planning, management and marketing were used to gather more information on several models and theories. These books were useful for the internal as well as the external analysis. In addition, these export and marketing books were also be used for the export strategy, marketing mix and confrontation analysis chapters. Teachers from The Hague University recommended the textbooks as reliable and trustworthy material. De Verse Maaltijd company's information brochures were valuable for several chapters of this export plan. Below is a list of the most important books used for making this export plan.

- 'Export Management A European Perspective' by Dr. J. Veldman  
This book was utilised in order to choose the right export models to execute the internal and external analysis chapter. The book focuses on the integration of all aspects of the export business and the implementation of export strategies in the daily business practice.
- 'Zo maak je een Exportplan' by Hans Veldman  
This textbook offers an overview and roadmap to achieve a good export plan. An important book for the theoretical structure of this final project.
- 'Marketing an introduction' by Armstrong and Kotler  
A very helpful tool for the basic understanding of the marketing strategies and the marketing mix elements. It also provides an overview of the internal, external and competitor analysis.
- 'Marketing Fundamentals' by B. Verhage  
This book strikes the right balance between marketing theory and practice. A mix of European and global examples – both successes and failures in business – encompassing the field of marketing.



- De Verse Maaltijd company brochures  
These brochures were useful for the internal analysis of this report.
- ‘101 Management Modellen’ by M. Mulders  
This book was useful for the understanding of a lot of the marketing and export models. Examples are DESTEP, competitor method of Kotler and SWOT analysis.

➤ Online methods

De Verse Maaltijd and Lekker en Vers’ company website, governmental organisations’ websites and other websites were consulted. The following websites were the most important and the most useful for this report:

- [deversemaaltijd.nl](http://deversemaaltijd.nl) – the company’s website that was one of the main online sources for the internal analysis of De Verse Maaltijd.
- [cbs.nl](http://cbs.nl) – a website which was useful for the external analysis. Especially for the statistics for the demographical part of the DESTEP method.
- [emarketer.com](http://emarketer.com) – a website which presented articles about online groceries in Germany. This was useful for the external analysis of this report.
- [ecommercenews.eu](http://ecommercenews.eu) – a website which presented the online trends in the food delivery business. Information about the share of online grocery shoppers that has not changed in Germany is one example of the articles that is used.
- [economictimes.com](http://economictimes.com) – is a reliable British online newspaper which provided the report with information needed for the competitor analysis in order to describe the competition in the food delivery market. A useful website for the better understanding of the most important food delivery start-ups in The Netherlands and Germany.

*Field research*

Quantitative data will be gathered to measure consumer demand in the food industry in The Netherlands.

➤ Test panel

A part of this field research is a test panel (see Appendix 1) that is conducted in a student house in Leiden. The purpose of this test panel was to examine the brand awareness and consumer behaviour of De Verse Maaltijd among the Dutch consumers. Moreover, the test panel is designed to measure the desire of the target group for exporting the new label DinnerFresh. The target audience of DinnerFresh refers to international students around the age of 18 to 25 years old. For this test panel the target group consists of Dutch students because it was not possible to go to Germany for just one test panel. Therefore, a number of around 5 to 10 Dutch students was used for the test panel.

On the day of the test panel, De Verse Maaltijd, delivered the fresh meals to the student house in Leiden. Seven respondents were available to be part of the test panel (see Appendix 2). Five of them mentioned that they were not familiar with De Verse Maaltijd and two other respondents did know De Verse Maaltijd because of this final project. The most important elements for the new concept DinnerFresh according to the respondents are the payment system, the delivery service, quality and the taste of the meals. Five respondents are already making use of ready-to-eat meals from the supermarket and six of them are ordering food online now and then. The most popular website among these students for ordering food is Thuisbezorgd.nl and Deliveroo. After tasting the meals, the respondents agreed on the advantages and disadvantages of this new concept.

➤ Survey

Another part of this field research is a survey compiled for a specially selected group, namely German students between the age of 18 to 25 years old. This survey (see Appendix 3) was conducted via an online tool, namely thesistools.com. The questionnaire was carried out from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October till the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2016. The online platform for survey creation thesistools.com was a useful tool to conduct this survey. The questionnaire is distributed to a total of more than 100 people. Unfortunately, this survey was not very successful because it was hard to get in personal contact with German universities and students in a short time period. After the 7<sup>th</sup> of November only 10 respondents filled it out, five women and five men between the age of 18 to 25 years old (see Appendix 4). The results of these 10 respondents were luckily all valid for use for the customer analysis. The results of this questionnaire filled out through the potential target group are useful to create the competitor analysis as well as the export marketing mix.

The research methods presented above were used to collect reliable information, necessary to answer the sub-questions of this final project that led to the answer of the research question.

### ***1.2.1 Limitations***

In order to evaluate the methods used for the purposes of this report, its limitations must be considered. The first limitation referred to one of the field research methods, namely the test panel. It was designed for the target group of DinnerFresh, the German students. Due to the combination of working and writing this report, there was limited time to visit German universities and students to test the new concept. The mind-set of Dutch and German students is not totally different; therefore it was decided to test the concept amongst several Dutch students. For further research on this concept in the future, it is recommended to create a test panel amongst the students in Germany. The other method of the field research, the questionnaire, is the second limitation. As mentioned before, more than 100 German students were asked to participate in a questionnaire, while only 10 respondents participated. Important to mention is that these 10 respondents cannot

represent the total student target group of Germany. The difficulty was to get into contact with German universities that will accept your post about a thesis survey. Due to the small number of respondents it is not possible to really draw conclusions. The respondents of the survey participated because of the friendships that were made during the exchange period of Aline.

The last limitation is that the concept DinnerFresh is still a 'draft version' of the company De Verse Maaltijd. This research is useful for the company to find out whether or not it is a good idea to go live with their concept DinnerFresh. Because DinnerFresh is not live yet, the financial statistics were very limited or not available.

### ***1.3 Structure of the report***

This export plan for De Verse Maaltijd and their new concept DinnerFresh consists of several chapters. In these chapters the answer of the research question will be researched and analysed. The answers of the first eight sub-questions are important to come to the answer of the last two sub-questions. Therefore, the research question will be mainly answered by the last two sub-questions. Chapter two is the theoretical framework of this final project, it explains the export and marketing theories and models. These theories and models are integrated within the chapters of this export plan. The third chapter provides the company description, market description and the strengths and weaknesses of De Verse Maaltijd. The next chapter, chapter four, refers to the external analysis of De Verse Maaltijd and DinnerFresh. The external analysis chapter consists of different analyses to describe the external environment of De Verse Maaltijd and DinnerFresh. The first analysis describes the country analysis, the second part of the external analysis is the industry analysis, customer analysis is the third one, the fourth analysis describes the competitors, a distribution analysis is the fifth part and the last section refers to the opportunities and threats. A confrontation analysis for DinnerFresh is in the next chapter. This chapter provides the first analysis that discusses a SWOT analysis. Additionally, a confrontation matrix will be explained. In chapter six the strategies - the strategic options and the market entry strategies - will be discussed. The export marketing mix is the seventh chapter, which discusses the explanation of the marketing tools. The last chapter of this export plan is about the payment and delivery conditions. The concluding chapter of this marketing plan discusses the findings of the various export analyses. In addition, this section gives recommendations for the best export strategy for DinnerFresh in Germany.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Throughout this research process, several export and marketing models and theories will be used. These models and theories are integrated in the following chapters of this export plan. The chapter below provides a description of the theoretical framework; the export and marketing models and theories.

### ➤ Abell Model

The market description chapter discusses brand positioning, target groups, needs and technology. This section is based on the Abell model. According to the Abell model, a business can be defined using three categories:

- Customer groups: who is the company going to serve;
- Customer needs: which customer needs is the company aiming to meet;
- Technology: how is the company going to meet those needs (Open Learning World Platform, 1999-2011)

In order to become a market leader De Verse Maaltijd/ DinnerFresh has to focus on the food delivery market, discover what the target group wants and needs and define how the business serves this specific target group. A limitation of this model is that there is no analysis of the external business factors and it is mostly connected to marketing.

### ➤ DESTEP analysis

The external analysis consists of several analyses which will describe all the relevant elements within the external environment of De Verse Maaltijd and DinnerFresh. The DESTEP method has been used in order to discover the macro environment market opportunities of DinnerFresh in Germany. This model describes the following elements:

- Demographic: this factor addresses the composition of the population;
- Economic: these are all factors that have to do with economic growth, inflation, purchasing power, etc.;
- Social (cultural): these are characteristics in the area of culture and way of life;
- Technological: this is about all developments and innovations an organisation has to respond to in order to keep up with the times;
- Ecological: this includes all factors in the area of the physical surroundings and the environment;
- Political: these are all political measures at a decision-making, provincial and municipal level (Vliet, DESTEP Analysis, 2013)

Within this report, the decision has been made to only discuss the most relevant factors of the DESTEP analysis. The chosen factors that will be described in the external analysis of this report are demographic, economic, social (cultural), technological and ecological factors. This is because these aspects are essential to analyse the attractiveness of DinnerFresh on the German market. The results of the DESTEP model outlines the market attractiveness, which is relevant for the development of the growth and marketing strategy.

#### ➤ 5 Forces of Porter

In order to determine whether the student food delivery business in Germany is attractive for DinnerFresh, it is necessary to analyse the market based on the 5 forces of the Porter model. The purpose of this model is to identify the 5 competitive forces for the student food delivery business, to understand if the company is able to enter this specific market in Germany. This model also contributes to the identification of the opportunities and threats for DinnerFresh, those elements allowed the external analysis completion. The 5 forces of Porter include the following elements:

- Threat of substitutes: the extent to which different products and services can be used instead of a company;
- Threat of new entrants: the ease with which new competitors can enter the market if they see that a company is making good profits;
- Competitive rivalry: the strength of competition in the industry;
- Supplier power: the power of suppliers to drive up the prices of the input;
- Buyer power: the power of the customers to drive down the prices (MindTools, 2016)

#### ➤ SWOT analysis & Confrontation matrix

A SWOT analysis refers to a situation analysis in which internal strengths and weaknesses of an organisation and external opportunities and threats faced by it are closely examined to chart a strategy (Business Dictionary, 2015). It can be seen as a summary of the internal and external analysis. The next step is the confrontation matrix. A confrontation matrix is part of the strategic process. It shows confrontation between the strengths and weaknesses inside the organisation and the challenges and opportunities created by the environment the organisation operates in (Move Learning, 2011). The confrontation matrix includes the basic elements for the market entry strategies and the marketing mix.

#### ➤ Competitor analysis

To analyse the competitors in the food delivery industry an analysis was conducted using a marketing mix for each direct and indirect competitor. It is based on a positioning matrix to create a clear overview of DinnerFresh' position in relation to their competitors.



➤ Marketing mix

The marketing mix refers to the set of actions, or tactics, that a company uses to promote its brand or product in the market. The marketing tools that make up a typical marketing mix are: price, product, promotion and place. However, nowadays, the marketing mix increasingly includes several other tools like physical distribution and people as vital mix elements (The Economic Times, 2015).

### 3. Internal Analysis

This chapter provides the company description of De Verse Maaltijd. Internal aspects such as history, mission and vision, organizational structure and labels are discussed in this chapter.

#### *3.1 Company description*

‘De Verse Maaltijd’ is a leading company of different food concepts. The company is specialized in the preparation of fresh and healthy meals for different target groups. De Verse Maaltijd is offering the most suitable and customized service to childcare organisations, health facilities and independent people who are living alone. For a nice party at home or a big event, de Verse Maaltijd is also offering freshly made meals. (De Verse Maaltijd, 2016).

In 2005 De Verse Maaltijd started the concept Lekker en Vers , who provide healthy lunch boxes for kids during their lunch break. The goal of ‘De Verse Maaltijd’ was encouraging a healthy lifestyle for kids by offering delicious and healthy lunches packaged in a way similar to a happy meal. The company worked together with many different professional partners to raise awareness about the subjects of food, physical activity and health for children and parents. For two years they have been providing lunch for many children. In 2007 Peter Veldhuizen came into contact with childcare for the first time, through Lunch4Kids. During an informal conversation about lunchboxes at day-care centre Kinderdagpaleis La Luna, Peter was posed the question if he could also provide warm meals. Of course his answer was positive. In short, Lunch4Kids jointly started developing the right meals and equipment for an easy and good offer of the concept in any location. Through step-by-step growth the company learned about all different kinds of things that could happen in practice and now they have grown into a highly experienced and professional organisation. Since the start of Lekker en Vers in 2008 their main growth is the result of word of mouth of their satisfied customers. Nowadays, De Verse Maaltijd provides chilled meals in over 250 locations in The Netherlands and in Belgium (Lekker en Vers, 2013) (De Verse Maaltijd, 2016).

##### *3.1.1 Concept DinnerFresh*

DinnerFresh is a new concept of De Verse Maaltijd. The purpose of this service is to deliver fresh meals to students for a reasonable price. The busy life of students is comparable to the busy working life of parents with children. The idea of De Verse Maaltijd is making life easy and makes use of a fresh food service. If you as a student know that you have soccer training twice a week and do not have time for cooking, you can easily order fresh meals that will be delivered to your home. Because De Verse Maaltijd is already exporting their childcare concept to Belgium, the choice was made to do research to export the student delivery service in another European country. The company choose Germany. However, as the company is not yet active in Germany, the German