



## Living in Apples or Oranges?

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## Executive Summary

Casamona International is a small real estate office located in Barcelona, Spain. Casamona International is known for their offerings in the market as “unique and different”. However, the company failed to attract Dutch customers and therefore this marketing plan was written to attract new clients from the Netherlands to the Barcelona area. Casamona International’s target group bases its marketing strategies on couples between the ages of 35 and 65 and also people who are recently divorced and are in need of a second home in the Barcelona area.

The internal analysis will clarify the organization’s overall mission, organizational structure, resources and offerings. The external analysis clarifies the market and environmental analyses. Also, the real estate business in Spain has been in has always been a very competitive business market. The top three businesses Casamona considers, as major competitors are Lucas Fox, Engel & Völkers and Casc Antic. In order to reach full potential it is important for Casamona International to maximize the use of their strengths and opportunities so the company can minimize their weaknesses and be prepared for possible threats.

For clear guidance to implement this marketing plan, it is important to keep the financial, marketing and societal objectives in mind to achieve maximum turnover. In order to be successful, Casamona International needs to focus on the following social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Pinterest. When focused on these four social media the marketing department of Casamona Int. will be able to work more efficiently. Furthermore, a new website with a better use of search engine optimization is an essential tool to maximize the use of Casamona International’s online presence. Furthermore, Casamona Int. should focus on properties outside Barcelona, give discounts on agency fees and send out newsletters periodically. Also, Casamona Int. should promote their image as an eco-friendly company on all of their online marketing strategies for this will strengthen the brand image of Casamona International. Online advertising and attending the International fair in the Netherlands are of key importance to attract more Dutch customers directly. Lastly, to handle the new Dutch customers it is suggested to hire a Dutch-Spanish speaking sales person.

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## 1. Introduction

This final project will be a marketing plan written for the company that I did my internship for the first semester of the school year 2013-2014. The company I did my internship is Casamona International Real Estate. Casamona International targets clients from all over the world to buy or rent properties in the Barcelona, Spain area.

The company struggles to receive clients from different countries that buy or rent a property through their agency. Casamona International targets its marketing strategies on clients from specific countries. However, despite the fact that Casamona Int. had some Dutch clients, they have failed to attract a high number of Dutch customers. Therefore, I have decided to write a marketing plan with the following central research question: How can Casamona International attract new clients from the Netherlands to the Barcelona area?

In order to analyse and determine the plan I will do some research based on primary and secondary sources. Also, since I have been able to achieve the function of Marketing Coordinator at Casamona Int. I have the advantage of the knowledge and experiences I have gained during my internship. In addition, I will hold an interview with two Marketing Coordinators at Casamona Int. Furthermore, to acquire the necessary information from an experienced professional within the real estate market I shall stay in close contact with the owner of the company.

## 2. Company Profile

Two Danish women founded the company in 2004. Two friends Tine Mathiasen and Anette Kragdahl were looking for a nice apartment to rent during their travel to Barcelona. Unfortunately, they were not able to find a real estate agency in Barcelona that offered good service and attractive properties. Therefore, they decided to form a company that offered “unique and different services”. They portray this by using a metaphor of Apples and Oranges. Casamona Int. wants to be a unique red and shiny apple in the market between all the ordinary oranges (other real-estate agencies). Casamona International currently offers the following services: sales, long-term and short-term rentals, and holiday rentals and buildings. The company distinguishes itself by always offering a special touch to their properties like spectacular views, balconies or private terraces.

In addition, the company consists of an international team to combine the local traditional spirit with an international flavour. What is unique about the functioning of Casamona International is that the company is mainly run by interns. Usually there are around 10-15 interns present at the company. The only full-time employee of Casamona besides the owner is the general manager, Raluca Tronaru.



Figure 1 (Google Street View)

### 3. Situational Analysis

Analysing the current marketing situation gives a clear understanding of the company's strategies in the past and therefore a better marketing plan and strategy for the future will be found. It will give a detailed explanation of the internal and external analysis of Casamona International.

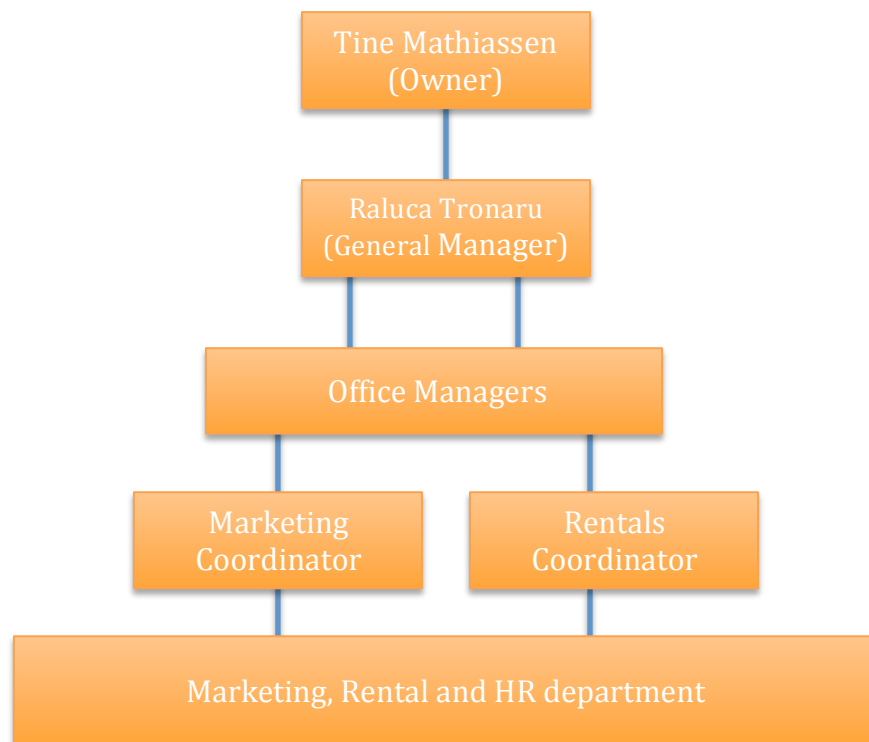
#### 3.1 Internal Analysis

The internal analysis will give a clarification of the organisation's overall mission, organisational structure, resources, goals and offerings.

##### 3.1.1 Mission & Vision

The mission of Casamona international is "to be the agency in Barcelona you can trust 100% and only sell flats we would like to live in ourselves". Furthermore, in order to achieve their mission, their aim is to be a "Real Estate company with an edge; providing a friendly but professional tailored service to both clients and property owners, with an international team and offering the best properties Barcelona has to offer" (Casamona).

##### 3.1.2 Organizational Structure



### 3.1.3 Resources

Casamona International distinguishes itself from others through the unique service they offer to their customers. The company's strategy is "to only advertise properties, we would like to live in ourselves". The company and their international team are constantly looking for properties that are 'unique and different'. With their employees that come from all over the world and being able to speak a variety of languages, they are able to have a personal connection with the international clientele.

**Human resources:** usually a marketing intern is in charge of HR. They hire new interns constantly during the year in deliberation with the general manager and the owner. Casamona International cannot function without their interns. Therefore, a lot of effort is invested in recruitment. However, specific training might lack due to inexperienced interns and absence of management.

**Informational resources:** in order to understand their customers and the marketplace, Casamona Int. utilizes the information received from news updates, Google Analytics, Facebook insights and their own database with registered clients.

**Supply resources:** Casamona Int. is dependent on the approval of homeowners. The more properties available in the market, the more properties Casamona Int. will be able to offer once the owners decide to publish their properties with Casamona Int.

### 3.1.4 Goals

Casamona International celebrates its 10-year anniversary in 2014. They had strong beliefs and objectives since the start of the company. First of all, Casamona Int. wants to offer a special home to each customer, despite the many offers on the market. Secondly, to only advertise the best properties with a unique service. Furthermore, to offer international students a special internship where they can learn, grow and develop skills for their further careers. Lastly, Casamona International attaches value to be eco-friendly within the company efforts in providing their services.

### 3.1.5 Offerings

Currently Casamona offers:

- 300 available properties for sale
- Short term rental (Outsourced to partner)
- Expansive price range from €155.000 to €2 million

The properties of Casamona Int. are required to be unique and different. Therefore, all of the properties have balconies, amazing views, and private terraces, located on the beach, city centre and other great locations.

Casamona Int. is one of the few real estate agencies that have an entire marketing department. This allows the company to use a variety of marketing and communication tools. In addition, it allows the department to develop marketing strategies for different purposes and target groups. Casamona International promotes and advertises properties and their company through their own website and blog. Furthermore, over the years Casamona has used a vast variety of social media platforms, however, Casamona currently uses Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube and Google+. In addition to these, the company actively works on public relations to spread news about the company and the market into different media channels. Also, Casamona has several flyers for different purposes. The flyers are usually spread to apartments in “most-wanted” neighbourhoods as well as private universities to target privileged students. By using many strategies Casamona International aims to have more brand awareness and a better understanding of brand identity for their customers.



Figure 2 (Casamona)



### 3.2 External Analysis: DESTEP

The external analysis will give a better understanding of the customer potential.

#### 3.2.1 Demographic

Casamona International has customers from all over the world. The company's receiving group belongs to a bigger audience, which includes international students, middle-aged couples, and retired couples. However, Casamona International's target group bases its marketing strategies on couples and divorced women between the ages of 35 and 65 who are in need of a second home in the Barcelona area. Casamona Int. has learned through experience that women are usually the ones in a relationship who decide to purchase a property abroad. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) there are 8.4 million women in the Netherlands, 3.75 million of them are women who have a job, are between the ages of 35 and 65 and are either divorced or married. Furthermore, the average income of these women alone is €28.000 a year.

This marketing plan will mainly focus on sale clients and they will be the target group. However, the receiving group might also include rental clients.

#### 3.2.2 Economic

Today the buying power of the Dutch population has been decreasing every year since 2009 (Dynamische koopkrachtontwikkeling 2013, August 20). However, the gross income has increased since 2000 for private households. In addition, the disposable income is stable since 2008 (Gemiddeld inkomen; particuliere huishoudens naar diverse kenmerken, 2013, August 20). Furthermore, according to an analyst at Fitch Ratings in London, "repossessed homes during the crisis in Spain are sold for an average discount of 72 percent in 2013" (Spain Banks With \$55 Billion of Property Seek Deals: Mortgages, 2014, March 27). This means that with the increasing gross income Dutch prospective clients have a high potential to buy properties in Spain.

### 3.2.3 Social-cultural

The first official language in the Netherlands is Dutch. According to the Eurobarometer the three most spoken languages after Dutch are English, German and French ("Europeans and their," 2006). Casamona International always has a team with natives or employees that speak the languages from those countries. In addition, as shown in figure 3 the Netherlands is more individualistic and has less power distance than Spain. Furthermore, Spain has a higher masculine culture and a higher uncertainty avoidance percentage than the Netherlands. This might be the social-cultural difficulty Dutch buyers might face in Spain.

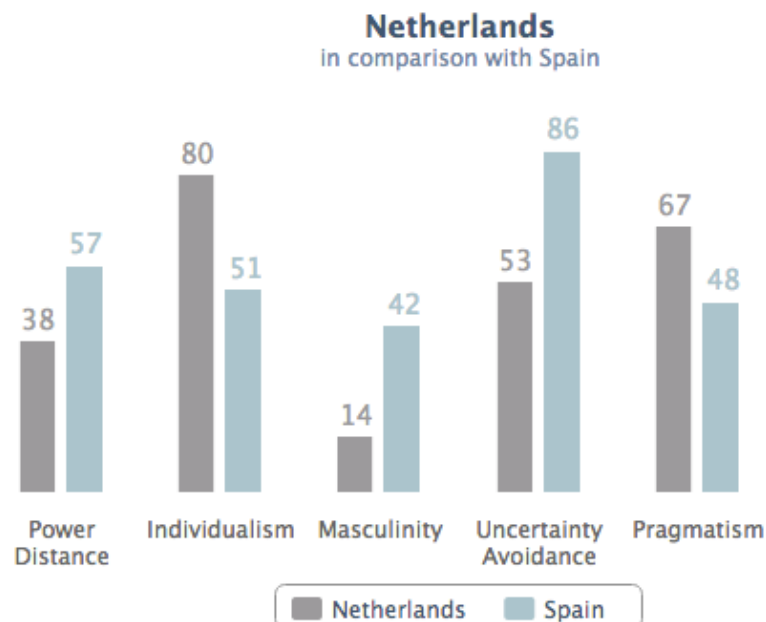


Figure 3 (Hofstede)

### 3.2.4 Technological

In order to keep up with the constant changing world Casamona international has to stay updated about the use and popularity of the current Social Media platforms as well as upcoming new social media. This is so they can see which social media services are commonly used in the Netherlands and which are not used. Also, what new marketing techniques are efficient and unique.

#### 4.2.5 Ecological

The average temperature in the Netherlands is 10 degrees Celsius ("Weerstatistieken de bilt," 2014), while in Barcelona it is 23 degrees Celsius ("Gemiddelde temperatuur spanje,"). This could be an important reason for Dutch people to emigrate or to buy a second home in Barcelona. In addition, Barcelona has mountains with spectacular views while the Netherlands has none.

#### 3.2.6 Political

There are no major political factors, since according to Article 20 and 21 of the Treaty of Rome "citizens of the European Union have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States" (Van Ooik, & Vandamme, 2010, p. 39). The only difficulty would be the paper work to actually purchase. However, Casamona Int. guides and advises their customers through this process.



Figure 4 (Euroespirit)

### 3.3 Competitive Situation

Casamona international is in the real estate business. The real estate business has always been a very competitive business market in Spain. However, Casamona due to their long existence, Casamona Int. has been able to build up a network of homeowners, building owners and clients who buy and sell their properties through Casamona Int. especially in Spain where the real estate market is huge. There are hundreds of real-estate agencies and businesses spread throughout Barcelona. It is more feasible to count the agencies that target international clientele just like Casamona International. According to Casamona International's historical experience these are the following biggest competitors: Lucas Fox, Engel & Völkers and Casc Antic. These are companies who operate their business from Barcelona. Also, these companies are oriented on international and offer luxurious properties and high quality. Figure 5 shows the three major competitors, their assumed market share, what they offer and their strengths and weaknesses.

Competitor	Established date	Market share (%)	Value offered to customers	Strengths	Weaknesses
Lucas Fox	2005	25%	Luxury, Expertise, quality services, cultural and legal guidance	Expertise, Multilingual team, quality.	Out of reach, too expensive
Engel & Völkers	1999	30%	Premium, high class properties, expertise, properties around the world	Brand strength, expansive offers	Not specified in Barcelona
Casc Antic	2003	5%	Expertise, high quality service, advice, guidance,	Three offices in Barcelona, local expertise	Very local oriented

Figure 5 (Business Victoria)

### 3.4 Market Situation

Figure 6 is helpful to understand the broad definition of market and needs. Therefore, to explain the market situation five market levels are used.

Type of Market	Definition	Casamona Int.
<b>Potential Market</b>	All customers who may be interested in a particular offering.	Any buyer in the Netherlands looking for a home abroad.
<b>Available Market</b>	Customers who are interested, possess sufficient income, and have access to the offering.	Any buyer in the Netherlands who can afford a second home and is looking in the Barcelona area.
<b>Qualified Available Market</b>	Customers who are qualified to buy based on age or other criteria.	Couples and divorced women who between the ages of 35 and 65 and have a HHI of 50.000 and higher.
<b>Target Market</b>	Customers that the company intends to target for a particular offer.	Buyers in the qualified available market that are looking for a unique and different second home in the Barcelona area.
<b>Penetrated Market</b>	Customers who are already buying the type of product sold by the company.	Buyers in the target market who have previously bought second homes.

Figure 6 (Wood)

### 3.5 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is based on the experience of previous and current marketing coordinators. Also, my own experiences as marketing coordinator will be processed in the analysis. To convey a clear SWOT analysis an interview with previous marketing coordinator Karolina Fetingyte and current marketing coordinator Danut Raileanu was held. See appendix 1 and 2 for the transcripts of the interviews.

#### *Strengths:*

- **Contacts in the market** – Casamona Int. is working since 2004, so they are very familiar with the market, have many connections and knows how the legal institutions are working there. This helps to save time for customers, because Casamona Int. is guiding them through the whole process;
- **Experience** – after many years of company existence, Casamona Int. is very familiar with customer needs and housing trends;
- **Supply** – Casamona Int. is very skilled when it comes to providing housing. If currently the company does not have a particular apartment or house, the agents will put a lot of effort into finding one in the market.
- **Organization** – all employees have a lot of freedom to do their own projects in the company and this brings a lot of innovative thinking and ideas in the organization.
- **Languages** – the company is international and is focusing on foreign potential customers, so Casamona is able to offer many agents who are speaking many different languages. This creates a sense of security and comfort to the client.

#### *Weaknesses:*

- **High turnover of employees** – company's organizational structure is based on Interns. There are only several permanent employees. This creates a chaotic working environment because there are always people coming and going from the company;
- **Lost information** – due to the last factor, a lot of information gets lost. Interns usually take the information with them when their internship is over.
- **Lack of motivation** –interns working at Casamona Int. are not motivated to seek the best results because of the lack of both financial and psychological motivation.
- **Poor performance website** – the website of Casamona Int. are very out-dated and constantly fails to load.

- **Poor internal communication** – management tends to fail at communicating in a polite and professional manner. Interns complain regularly of being treated like children.

*Opportunities:*

- **Entrance to a new market** – another way to grow would be to enter a new market. One of the ways would be to work in other Spain cities;
- **Advertising** – Casamona Int. would benefit from investing in advertising, since this could lead to more brand awareness and persuasion of customers.
- **Change of website** – Casamona International's website is very old-fashioned and could use an upgrade. This could help to gain more trust from customers.

*Threats:*

- **Competition** – Barcelona's market is huge and there are many other companies like Casamona and many of them are stronger and this creates a strong competitive environment;
- **New entrants** – however, Barcelona's market is very attractive to many industries including real estate. So opportunities for even more companies like Casamona is huge;
- **Changes in country's political situation** - there are always changes in laws. so it can be difficult for the international company to operate in unstable Spanish system;
- **Economic crisis** – the housing market and financial strength of buyer's changes depending on the economic situations within the world, but especially within the Netherlands and Spain.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Strong connections in Barcelona area</li><li>- Experience</li><li>- Offers exclusive properties</li><li>- Organization</li><li>- Multilingual team</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- High turnover interns</li><li>- Information gets lost easily</li><li>- Lack of motivation</li><li>- Poor performance website</li><li>- Poor internal communication</li></ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Expanding to new markets</li><li>- Advertising</li><li>- Upgrade/Change of website</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- High competition within the market</li><li>- New entrants</li><li>- Dependent on government laws</li><li>- Economic crisis</li></ul>

Figure 7



## 4. Target Segments

### 4.1 Targeting and Segmentation

The target group for Casamona International can be divided in four categories. The target audience of Casamona International in the Netherlands includes couples and divorced women in the Netherlands between the age of 35 and 65, who are looking for unique and different homes that are bright, cosy and luxurious in the Barcelona area. They are looking for a secondary vacation home. Also, the target group's household incomes will range between €50.000 and €100.000. These customers are looking for an international real estate agency, which have employees that are able to speak a language other than Spanish. In addition, who have experience with international clientele and are able to guide them through the Spanish regulations. The main targeted consumers live an active lifestyle and are willing to pay for unique and different homes for a decent price. The following table shows the four different segments of the target audience.

Customer	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Education	Household Income	Lifestyle	Values	Interests
Life enjoyers	35-40	Male & Female	Dutch National	University degree	€70.000 and higher	Active & Luxurious	Appreciates quality	Looking for a unique second home through an international agency.
Divorced	35-45	Female	Dutch national	University degree	€50.000 and higher	Adventurous	Likes changes	Looking for a new start in life. A home in a lively area.
Family oriented	41-55	Male & Female	Dutch national	University degree	€70.000 and higher	High paced	Family oriented	Looking for a vacation home to go to with their children every summer.
Older generation	56-65	Male & Female	Dutch national	University degree	€80.000 and 100.000	Relaxed	High quality and service	Looking for a second home to get rest and peace in a quiet area.

**Figure 8**

## 4.2 Positioning

Casamona International likes to position itself as a real estate agency that offers unique properties with special service to all international clientele with a multilingual and dynamic team. They want to appeal to the middle-upper class by only offering luxurious houses that require a minimum price to classify as a Casamona product. Casamona does not compete on price and represents itself through high quality rather than being able to offer cheap accommodation. In addition, as shown in figure 9 the unique position of Casamona Int. with property locations gives Casamona Int. an advantage within the market. Moreover, Casamona Int. has a better position in its price strategies compared to the competitors Lucas Fox and Engel & Völkers. Casamona Int. does not offer very expensive or inexpensive properties. Also, of all the competitors Casamona Int. offers a variety of great locations compared to the others, who mostly offer properties in a specific area or unpopular areas. The information is based on the properties listed on each company's website and information from Casamona Int.

Prices of properties



Figure 9

## 5. Marketing Objectives and Issues

In this chapter, the specific objectives to be achieved through this marketing plan will be outlined in three categories. Also, it will identify any issues that may affect the organization's ability to achieve these objectives. The SMART theory is applied to all of the objectives. Furthermore, issues that Casamona International might come across are financial difficulties to reach the target group. Therefore, it will take an investment to reach the target group. In addition, lack of motivation for sustainability might also cause the societal objectives to fail. The objectives are aimed to be achieved starting upon the implementation of the marketing plan on August 1, 2014.

### 5.1 Financial Objectives

- Renting out at least one apartment every month after three months upon implementation of the marketing plan.
- Sale of two properties within the first year.
- Achieve 20% ROI on funds invested in marketing programs within one year.

### 5.2 Marketing Objectives

- 1,500 likes on the Facebook channel of Casamona International within the first year and 2,500 likes in the second year.
- Increase of 20% of overall website traffic within six months.
- Create brand awareness among 15% of the target group within one year.

### 5.3 Societal Objectives

- Recycle and separate 100% of garbage within the first month.
- Support at least one charity within 3 months.
- Reduce the office's use of electricity by at least 10% in the first year.

## 6. Marketing Programs

In order to achieve the objectives that have been set, a variety of marketing strategies and programs will be used. The marketing strategies will be based on positioning the brand image. To have a better understanding in the technique to reach the potential target group, the AIDAS-model will be used to state a clear explanation.

The AIDAS-model consists of Attention, Interests, Desire, Action and Satisfaction. First, to raise attention social media will be used to build an online presence that creates trust amongst the target group. Furthermore, to generate interest and desire, a specific advertising campaign will be used that focuses on the advantages and benefits of buying a home in Barcelona. The advertisements on social media and on Internet news websites will represent a specific image to revoke the target group to desire their need to buy a home in Barcelona. Finally, a personal letter will be sent to clients a month after the purchase of a property to understand the satisfaction level of the clients with the services of Casamona International.



Figure 10

### 6.1 Product Strategy

Casamona international offers various types of properties within the Barcelona area and neighbouring cities. These offers are shown on their website at [www.casamona.com](http://www.casamona.com). Casamona positions itself in a different way within the real estate market in Barcelona. They distinguish themselves through their 10 years of experience, network and connections. Furthermore, with an international and enthusiastic team that speaks several languages and only providing properties that are unique and different. The kinds of properties they offer are: apartments, studios, houses, villas, attics and buildings. In addition, most of the properties have a special balcony, terrace, magnificent view or have traditional Catalan features. However, in order to keep attracting customers, a modernized upgrade of the website is highly recommended. A website where visual graphics, information about buying and moving to Barcelona should be the main features of the website. The website should be simple, clear and comfortable to read for the visitor. According to Ron Giles, the website consultant, "61% of customers feel better about a

company that delivers custom content and are in turn more likely to buy from that company” (Giles). Furthermore, Casamona International has recently been focusing on properties just outside Barcelona in cities such as Gerona and Sitges. This also attracts the older segment customers who prefer less crowded places. In addition, these properties are usually cheaper but are still close to the big city, Barcelona.

## 6.2 Price Strategy

Casamona International offers two types of properties: for sale and for rent. For each, Casamona uses a different price strategy to acquire turnover. However, the focus will only be on properties for sale. Casamona International does not own any property. It's a real estate agency that helps owners of properties publish their homes online and helps customers who are looking for properties to find these homes. Furthermore, the properties for sale are divided in four categories depending on the price. When a property is sold for a price:

- Lower than €200.000, Casamona receives €10.000 + VAT
- Between €200.000 and €400.000, Casamona receives €12.000 + VAT
- Between €400.000 and €700.000, Casamona receives 3% of the sale price + VAT
- Higher than €700.000, Casamona receives 4% of the sale price + VAT

In order to attract and persuade customers, a discount on these agency fees is recommended. A discount up to 50% to the first 10 customers or 70% discount for the first buyer and then 35% for the other nine. This could lead to additional motivation for buyers to be persuaded to buy a property through Casamona International.

## 6.3 Place

The office of Casamona International is located in Barceloneta, which is a touristic neighbourhood next to the beach in Barcelona. Tourists and international clientele have no trouble finding the office. Clients find their way to Casamona Int. while they walk to the beach and stop by to see if they can find a property they are interested in. However, the main clients that contact Casamona Int. are those who have seen properties of Casamona Int. online, either on Social Media, Property Portals, Google, or from the Casamona Int. website. The online presence of Casamona Int. is therefore of high importance and therefore requires a strong and broad presence.

## **6.4 Promotion**

The fourth section of the marketing mix is the promotion strategy. This part includes the different approaches to promote Casamona International the Dutch target group. These include: online, public relations, advertising, direct marketing, service and internal marketing.

### **6.4.1 Online**

For Casamona International's online presence, it is important that the company actively promotes the brand image and their properties. The most important main online tool is the website of Casamona Int. since it is the first image prospective clients will see of the company. In addition to this, another key factor is social media; it is crucial for Casamona Int. to be aggressive with their online presence, because this is the only visual way for Dutch clientele to find information about the company and to contact them. If this part lacks, customers will have less interest and distrust the company's abilities (Gisele). Taking the target group into consideration, it is important to focus on the following social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Pinterest. When focused on these four social media, the marketing department of Casamona Int. will be able to work more efficiently. Furthermore, SEO is an essential tool to maximize the use of the website. Also, Casamona Int. should promote their image as an eco-friendly company on all of their online marketing strategies for this will strengthen the brand image of Casamona Int.

#### **6.4.1.2 Facebook**

The most essential social medium to target Dutch clients for Casamona international is Facebook. According to Newcom Research & Consultancy, Facebook had 7.9 million users in the Netherlands in 2013. In addition, 5 million of them are active users on a daily basis (Oosterveer). Thus, this means that a strong and detailed Facebook strategy is needed in order to effectively target potential Dutch clients.

The strategy for Facebook involves several little changes as well as some big changes. However, before making any changes it is crucial to come up with goals. One of the marketing objectives as stated in this plan was to have 1.500 likes within the first year and 2.500 in the second year after implementation of this plan. Creating goals will help Casamona to track the success of their strategies. One of the actions to take is to include the Facebook (and all other social media) page URL into the signature of all e-mails. At Casamona international a lot of potential clients send e-mails to ask questions about a

property or the company. When e-mailing back, the recipient most likely will see and click on the links and become an active follower. Another way to promote the Facebook page is to display the link within the office. Since, a lot of clients have the first interaction with the company by stopping by without any prior knowledge about Casamona, this would be a useful tactic. A great way to do this is through putting signs on the front window where people passing by can see it and in the main room where clients visiting can also see it. Also, according to the Facebook Insights feature, Casamona Int. followers are mostly online during 3pm and 4pm. To be effective as possible updates should occur during these hours. However, two to five posts per day with at least 2-hour interval is most effective according to North Social Media (Manarang).

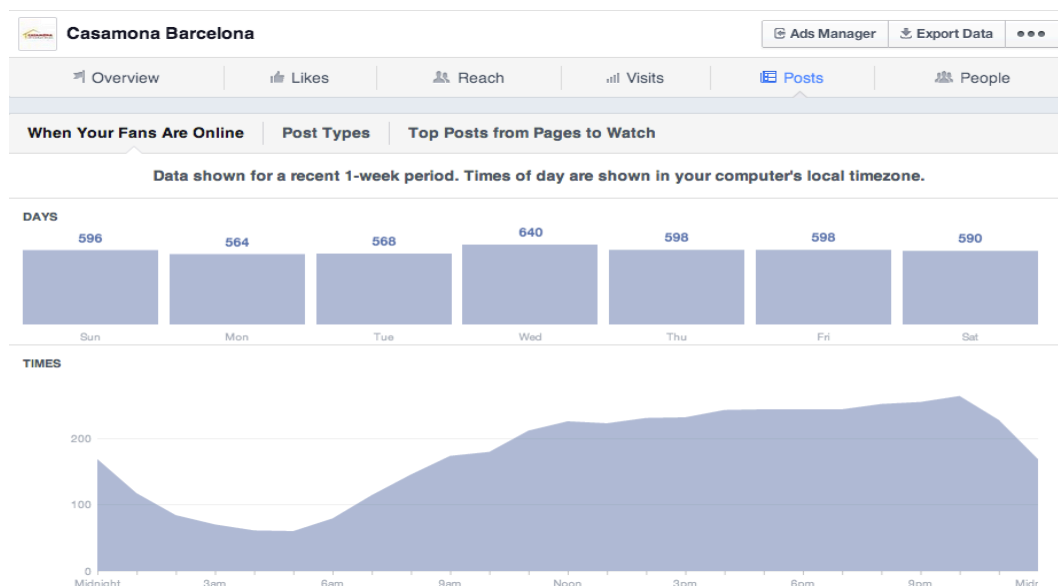


Figure 11 (Facebook.com)

Furthermore, in order to build a relationship, trust and loyalty from followers it is crucial to focus on engagement. This can be done through exciting contests where followers can win something for free. For example, giving a free bottle of "Cavamona" (which is a special Cava with the Casamona logo) for every 100<sup>th</sup> like on the Facebook page. Also, when posting about Holidays (like Easter) pictures of eggs or bunnies can be hidden on the Casamona Int. website and the first to find all the eggs or bunnies can win a box of chocolate eggs (with a Casamona Int. sticker on the box). This, will not only increase engagement of followers, but also increase the traffic to their website. The best way to combine these contests is through advertisements. Advertising on Facebook is critical to reach your specific target group and it is also very inexpensive.

#### 6.4.1.1 Twitter

According to Pew Research 26% of the people who use Twitter are between the age of 30 and 64. Moreover, 31% of Twitter users have a household income of \$50.000 and higher (Couwenbergh). This is a large group that is similar to Casamona Int. target audience. Casamona Int. can use Twitter to stay updated about the real-estate business, news and of competitors. According to PR Newswire, the number one reason to use Twitter is to listen to the customers and deliver what they ask for (Meranus). Therefore, Casamona should use Twitter to tweet daily about their properties, information and events in Barcelona in Dutch, however, this should be kept to a couple tweets a day. Furthermore, to be more personal and to keep engaged with potential and current customers, monthly Twitter chats should be held about a specific subject. Everyone interested in the matter can join using a hash-tag and by that evoke interest and curiosity of other twitter users to create more brand awareness. (Rodriguez)

#### 6.4.1.3 YouTube

According to Newcom Research & Consultancy 7.1 million Dutch users are on YouTube and 1 million are active on a daily basis. However, YouTube should be considered as a supportive medium rather than a main medium. Casamona International already has a variety of videos. For example, they have posted videos about neighbourhoods in Barcelona, however, it is not a completed list. Videos about all areas should be completed and then shared on Facebook and Twitter to gain more views and engagement. In addition, there should be a video made every month about a featured property of the month. This way, clients can experience the properties through an audio-visual medium. Then again these videos should be posted on Facebook and Twitter.

#### 6.4.1.3 Pinterest

The final social media platform recommended to use for Casamona International is Pinterest. According to a social media research of Newcom Research & Consultancy Pinterest has 530.000 users in the Netherlands and 56.000 active users (Oosterveer). Despite the fact that the amount of users is low, the users belong very specifically within the target group. According to comScore 28% of Pinterest users have a household income of above \$100.000, 68% is women and 40% of the users are between 35 and 54 years old (Erickson). However, it is recommended to keep the energy invested in Pinterest to a minimum. Casamona Int. already has a huge amount of photos on Pinterest. It is suggested to categorize the photos based on areas in Barcelona rather than the current random categories.



#### 6.4.1.4 Website

Compared to the websites of the competitors as mentioned in section 3.3 of the report, the website of Casamona International has an amateuristic and out-dated look. On the websites of the competitors you can clearly see that visual graphics are the main feature of the website. It gives a trustful, simple and modern view of their websites. Therefore, the first thing Casamona International should be working on is the improvement and modernization of their website [www.casamona.com](http://www.casamona.com). It is definitely the most critical part of this marketing strategy. The more attractive a website looks, the longer visitors will stay on it to browse for more ("10 BENEFITS OF QUALITY WEB DESIGN"). Essential factors of an excellent website are the use of graphics to gain attention. Also, the price and location of a property should always be listed for the visitor to see. Furthermore, the links to the social media pages is of high importance. Finally, good content in form of articles in order for visitors to have something to read and browse further through the website is recommended, which again improves the search engine optimization of the website.

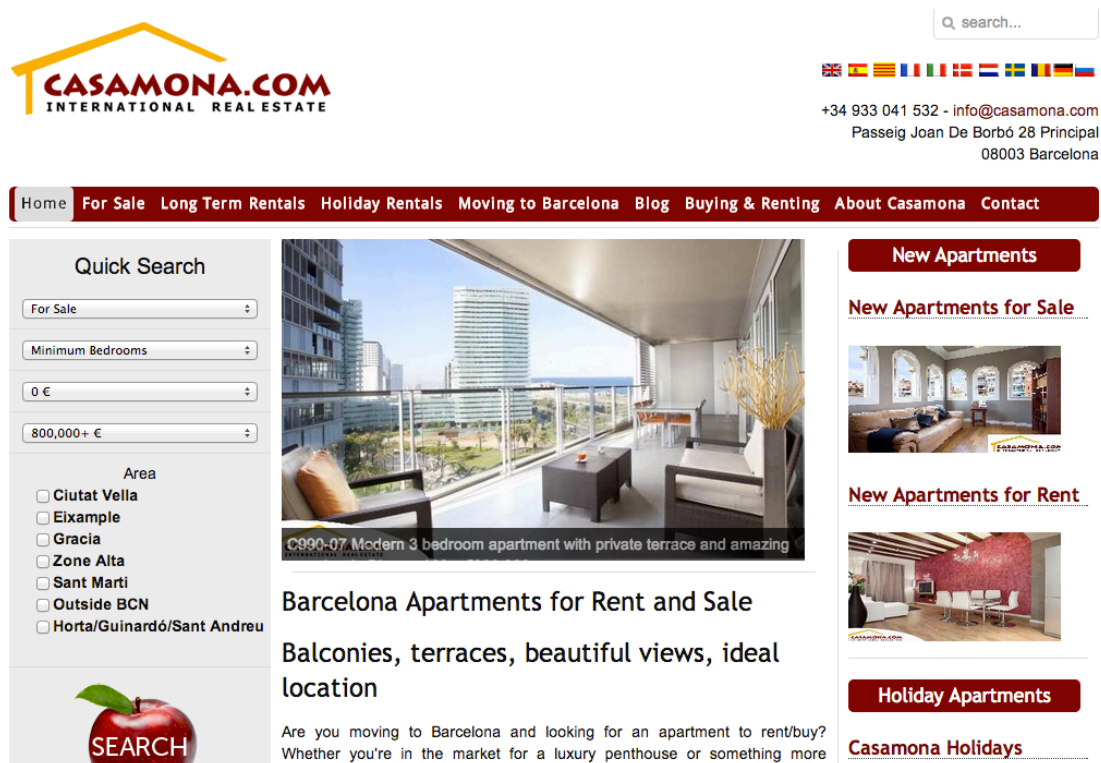


Figure 12 (Casamona.com)

#### 6.4.1.5 SEO

“Search engine optimization helps to improve the visibility of a website in search engines” (Chavan). It helps to have a higher position in the search results. Since, Casamona International is very dependent on online contact it is essential for Casamona Int. to be the first in the search results. When searching for “houses for sale in Barcelona” and “houses for rent in Barcelona” Casamona Int. ends on the second and third result. According to the International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology the first results get 60% of the clicks. This means that Casamona Int. should drastically improve their SEO tactics. Also, Dutch people will most likely Google in Dutch, however, when searching for “huizen te koop in Barcelona” or “huizen te huur in Barcelona” there is no option to click for Casamona Int. Therefore, Casamona Int. should optimize their Dutch page and in addition to this create more optimized articles in English and Dutch as much as possible to reach the first result on Google. A useful approach to accomplish this is through the use of Google AdWords.

#### 6.4.2 Public relations

The easiest and most inexpensive way to conduct public relations strategies is through writing a press release. Casamona International should write a press release about the current historically low prices of properties in Barcelona and add an interview with a local bank that owns the foreclosure properties. Moreover, Casamona Int. should write an article about their efforts of being an eco-friendly Real-Estate business. A small company like Casamona Int. that puts an effort in corporate social responsibility might attract the attention of news media. After this they should send the press release to Dutch newspapers in order for them to publish it. Since, most newspapers will not allow a company to use their own company name in a press release. It is suggested to write a press release as a student or freelancer and have an interview with “Casamona” and a “local bank” and mention Casamona Int. In that way, the newspapers will allow the names to be used. A respected Dutch Newspapers Casamona Int. can consider is: NRC (47% are 50+ years old and have above average HHI).

#### **6.4.3 Advertising and Promoting**

Besides advertising on Facebook (mentioned in section 6.4.1.2.), Casamona Int. should strongly consider investing in online advertising. Online advertising is cost efficient, targets specific audiences and it is measureable. Casamona International should start with Facebook ads and then continue with online advertising on Dutch news websites.

Furthermore, promotional pens are an excellent approach to gain more brand awareness in a cost efficient way. People use them and give them away every day. Casamona International should hand them out to clients; they will then most likely end up with their Dutch friends and family members.

A very essential key factor to promote the company for Casamona International is to be present at the 'Second Home International Fair', which is held twice a year in the spring and in the fall in the Netherlands. None of competitors located in Barcelona are present on this fair. According to Second Home International Fair, 30% of their visitors buy or rent a home in Spain (Exhibitors). This fair is the perfect and a crucial approach to gaining more brand awareness among the target group within the Netherlands. Also, taking the promotional pens to these fairs will be very useful.

#### **6.4.4 Direct Marketing**

Direct marketing has not fully efficiently and effectively been used at Casamona International. Casamona Int. has an extensive database of email addresses. It is an effective tool to send out an email newsletter periodically. The best time to do this is during Holidays like Christmas and Easter. This gives a reason for a company to send out an email without customers feeling annoyed. In addition, in order to gain more potential clients there should be an option available for visitors of the website to subscribe to newsletters. The competitors have this on their landing page (the first page visitors see when browsing a website). Furthermore, to understand the satisfaction of the clients of the services of Casamona Int. after a purchase it is crucial to ask for feedback. An adequate tactic to conduct this is by sending out a personalized letter one month after the purchase and ask if clients want to give feedback by filling out a survey online on the Casamona Int. website.

#### 6.4.5 Service

Customer service is of high importance at Casamona International. The company aims to respond to clients within a few hours, seven days a week. The sales department is expected to have their mobile phones turned on at all times and have a voicemail message in English and Spanish. The company expects their employees to be outgoing and have a positive attitude at all times. Furthermore, Casamona Int. should definitely hire a Dutch-Spanish speaking sales person. In order for Casamona Int. to focus on clients from the Netherlands it is essential that they can rely on a Dutch sales person who has an understanding of the Spanish real estate market.

#### 6.4.6 Internal Marketing

An essential ingredient to providing any service is the use of appropriate staff. Casamona Int. hires and trains staff that accurately represents their company to the market. The organization really cares about their workers and tries to make them feel at home as much as possible. Casamona Int. updates their staff everyday during their morning meetings. In addition, the company celebrates all victories and applauds employees on their skills and knowledge. Casamona International gives the employees personalized coffee mugs and signed Spanish flags on departure. Even goodbye parties and nice dinners are held on a regular basis. The effort of Casamona Int. within the company delivers a strong and motivated team spirit. However, due to the high turnover of interns it is suggested that they receive adequate knowledge and skills during their internship.



Figure 13

## 7. Financial and Operational Plans

### 7.2 Financial Forecast and Budget

Year	1	2	3
<b>Revenue</b>	€34,000	€58,000	€82,000
<b>Expenses overhead</b>			
<b>Facebook Ads</b>	€480	€840	€1,320
<b>Promotional Pens</b>	€230	€230	€460
<b>News websites</b>	€350	€560	€700
<b>Fair</b>	€2,225	€2,225	€4,450
<b>Travel</b>	€500	€500	€1000
<b>Total expenses</b>	€3,785	€4,355	€7,930
<b>Net profit</b>	€30,215	€53,645	€74,070

Figure 14

The revenue of year one is based on the states objective in section 5. Projections based on these objectives would lead to two sold properties with a price assumed around €200.000. This would lead to €24,000 in agency fees. Also, including the rented apartments and assuming one apartment will be rented out every month for 10 months a year with an average of €1000 in agency fees. Would lead to  $2000 \times 10 = €10,000$ . This gives a total of  $10,000 + 24,000 = €34,000$  in revenues in the first year.

To calculate the expenses for the first year, the most accurate recent prices were used. For Facebook ads, a daily ad for €4,00 a day was calculated. The months September, October, February and March have a total of 120 days. Thus,  $4 \times 120 = €480$  total a year. The promotional pens were calculated as an order of 500 pens once a year with an average price of €230. Ads on news websites are based on prices of NRCmedia.nl of an ad of €25 a day (25728x90 pixels) with total of 14 days of advertising a year is  $25 \times 14 = €350$  (NRCmedia). Furthermore, the price for the most basic stand of 12m<sup>2</sup> at the Second Home International fair is €2,125 (Tarieven). However, additional costs to rent furniture is around €100 (Meubelpakketten) which makes the total €2,225. In addition, traveling to the Netherlands will be a cost as well. According to Transavia.com, the price from Barcelona to Amsterdam is around €100 per person for a round trip (Transavia.com). It is expected that at least two representatives of Casamona Int. will attend the fair. Also, according to Booking.com hotel prices are around €250 for 3 nights (Booking.com). Not to forget, the fair exhibitors have to eat during their stay. This leads to a total of €500 for travel costs.

Making the expenses a total of €3,785. Thus, taking the total amount of expenses off of the revenue is  $€34,000 - €3,785 = €30,215$  net profit in the first year.

It is assumed that in the second year after a successful implementation of the marketing programs in the first year that the total customers will double. Therefore, this would mean that four properties would be sold in the second year. Also, it is assumed that there will be no change in amount of rental clients. Thus, the double of first years sold properties is €48,000, adding the €10,000 of rented apartment makes it €58,000 in revenues in the second year. Since, it is expected that a higher revenue will be collected, a higher investment in advertising on news websites and Facebook is suggested. This makes the total expenses €4,355 and the net profit then is  $€58,000 - €4,355 = €53,645$  in the second year.

It is expected that in the third year the trend of increasing customers with two sold properties a year will continue. Therefore, six properties sold for the same price as in year 1, will make the total of agency fees €72,000. Assuming that there will still be no change in amount of rental clients, the total revenue will be €82,000 in the third year. Also, in the third year it is suggested to keep investing more in Facebook ads and on news websites. In addition to this, it is also suggested to join the fair twice a year in the third year. This also means that there will be a double amount of promotional pens needed as well as double amount of traveling costs. Which lead the total expenses to €7,930 in the third year. The net profit will then be  $€82,000 - €7,930 = €74,070$  in the third year.

## 7.1 Schedules

The marketing communication tools in section 6.4 of the report are outlined monthly in the figures 15 and 16. This marketing plan will be implemented starting on August 1, 2014. This will give Casamona Int. sufficient time to read through the report and decide what and how to conduct the plan into the company.

It is recommended to first take one month to design and create a new website for Casamona Int. The entire plan is based on the basis of a new, modernized website. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 15 all Social Media platforms will be used and updated at all times as well as SEO to position a strong presence online. The YouTube videos about the different areas in Barcelona should be finished before the new website will be launched in September. In addition, videos will be made every month of the featured

property. Furthermore, press releases will be written and sent in September and February to create more brand awareness before the fairs held in October and March. Additionally, ads on Facebook and news websites shall be published one month before and the month during the fairs to create additional brand awareness and to make clients aware of the presence of Casamona Int. at the fairs. Also, the promotional pens should be bought a month before the fairs and handed out during the fairs. Finally, the newsletters should be sent every other month around holidays like Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter and right before the summer.

Communication Tools FIRST YEAR	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
<b>Online</b>												
Facebook		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Twitter		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pinterest		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
YouTube	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SEO		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
New Website	X											
<b>Public Relations</b>												
Press release		X					X					
<b>Advertising</b>												
Facebook Ads		X	X				X	X				
News websites		X	X				X	X				
Pens		X					X					
<b>Events (fairs)</b>												
Second Home Int. fair			X									
<b>Direct Marketing</b>												
Newsletter			X		X		X		X		X	

Figure 15

Moreover, the schedule for the second year and onwards shall continue with the same planning and might be adapted depending on the results and budget of the previous year.

Communication Tools SECOND YEAR ONWARDS	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
<b>Online</b>												
Facebook	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Twitter	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pinterest	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
YouTube	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SEO	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Public Relations</b>												
Press release		X					X					
<b>Advertising</b>												
Facebook Ads		X	X				X	X				
News websites		X	X				X	X				
Pens		X					X					
<b>Events (fairs)</b>												
Second Home Int. fair			X									
<b>Direct Marketing</b>												
Newsletter	X		X		X		X		X		X	

Figure 16



## 8. Metrics and implementations control

Figure 10 shows the objectives outlined by category with the dates of review and the methods used to measure the stated objectives.

Objectives	Date of review	Monitoring methods
<b>Financial</b>		
<i>Renting out at least one apartment every month after three months upon implementation of the Marketing Plan</i>	Aug 1, 2015 (Annually)	Measure number of customers by registering them on internal systems
<i>Sale of two properties within the first year</i>	Monthly	Measure number of customers by registering them on internal systems.
<i>Achieve 20% ROI on funds invested in marketing programs within one year</i>	Aug 1, 2015 (Annually)	Measure through financial statements/budgets. Comparing revenues and expenses
<b>Marketing</b>		
<i>1500 likes on the Facebook channel of Casamona International within the first year and 2500 likes in the second year</i>	Weekly, Monthly and Annually	Measure through Facebook Insights
<i>Increase of 20% of overall website traffic within six months</i>	Weekly, Monthly and Annually	Measure through Google Analytics
<i>Create brand awareness among 15% of the target group within one year</i>	Biannually	Measure through amount of pens giving away at each fair
<b>Societal</b>		
<i>Recycle and separate 100% of garbage within the first month</i>	Weekly	Measure through using separate bins for each garbage kind.
<i>Support at least one charity within 3 months</i>	Biannually	Measure through financial statements
<i>Reduce the office's use of electricity by at least 10% in the first year</i>	Annually	Measure amount used by month quarter, and year

Figure 17



## 9. Conclusions and Recommendations

This marketing plan has been written as an assignment for Casamona International Real Estate. The purpose of this plan was to discover how to attract new customers from the Netherlands to the Barcelona area. Also, the intention was to discover what the target group was, what marketing programs and strategies could be applied and finally, how the plan would be implemented.

Due to my position as a marketing coordinator during my internship I had the opportunity to acquire the necessary information to create this plan. Therefore, this plan has been written based on the feasibility of all activities mentioned in the marketing mix. The specific target group of Casamona Int. has been categorized in different segments. However, the general audience includes couples and divorced women in the Netherlands between the age of 35 and 65, who are looking for unique and different homes that are bright, cosy and luxurious in the Barcelona area.

It is highly recommended to follow and integrate the strategies outlined in this marketing plan to be successful in attracting Dutch clients. It is also recommended to specifically reach out to the target audience through advertising and to accompany the International Fair held in Utrecht. In addition to these recommendations, for the prospective customers to trust the brand, it is essential for Casamona Int. to create more brand awareness and work on the brand image. This can be done by portraying a modern and professional website and the adequate representation and presence of Casamona Int. on social media. Also, it is recommended to aim for the objectives for this will give a clear direction for the company and its employees to achieve the positive results.

In order to successfully implement this plan it is recommended to pay attention to the schedules with the marketing activities. Also the budget should be feasible and are within a fair time frame. Therefore, it is recommended to not withhold from investing in the promotional strategies outlined in the report. Furthermore, Casamona Int. should focus on properties outside Barcelona, give discounts on agency fees and send out newsletters periodically. Lastly, an accurate use of the marketing programs and strategies of online, public relations, advertising, direct marketing, service and internal marketing should lead to satisfactory results to attract the target group.

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## 11. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Transcript interview with Danut Raileanu

Can: Hi Danut how are you doing! It's been such a long time!

Danut: Hi Can, doing great how are you?

Can: I'm fine thank you.

Can: So, as we talked on Facebook before, I could really use your help since you're now the current marketing coordinator at Casamona int. uhh I could really use your insights haha.

Danut: haha okay

Can: uhh so, then I will start asking my questions. I'm kind of in a hurry haha.

Danut: haha it's no problem I have to get back to my work as well!

Can: okay so Danut uh, so could you tell me what the Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Casamona International are? Uhh could you give me many options as possible you can think of?

Danut: Yes I can let me think. For strengths I would say of course the expertise Casamona has. After you left uhh we actually celebrated the uhh nine-year anniversary of Casamona haha. You missed the fancy dinner! Haha

Can: really! Oh my God! Too bad I had to miss that haha

Danut: haha yeah it was fun!

Can: So, what else could you say?

Danut: uhm I think the multilingual team. Everyone, every intern comes from a different country uhh that is uh a great ability of the international interns. They are able to speak different languages with international clients.

Can: I totally agree. That is such a huge benefit.

Danut: Oh yeah, and also uh the different projects that everyone can choose out and do themselves. It is cool that they give you the freedom to choose and be responsible for your own project!

Can: uh-huh

Danut: uhh what else uhh oh yes weakness... a huge weakness is the constant new interns. Everyone leaves so quickly and the interns take their knowledge with them. Which leaves Casamona to start all the way over again with a new intern. But I guess they are used to this haha.

Can: uh-huh and what else?

Danut: uhh one of the annoying things is the Tine and Raluca. They are so bad at leading this company. They don't know how to communicate with us. Especially Raluca, she can be really rude sometimes. A lot of people feel uncomfortable because of her. Tine is never here. She's always in Denmark and she very conservative and doesn't want to invest in new things. That's really a pity, because the company is not able to grow because of that. Unfortunately.

Can: uh-huh I understand. Do you have opportunities and threats?

Danut: yes I do, let me say entering new markets would be a very good opportunity.

Can: uh-huh

There are so many possibilities that Casamona should take but doesn't. And with threats uhh the competition for sure and new companies that want to start a real estate business. Uhh at last the economic crisis. The housing market an economy are very important.

Can: thank you Danut. This should be more than fine for me. Thank you really.

Danut: you're welcome.

Can: have a great day!

Danut: You too, Bye!

## Appendix 2: Transcript interview with Karolina Fetingyte

Can: Hi Karolina, how are you?

Karolina: heyy, I'm good how are you?

Can: I'm doing great thank you!

Can: Uhm, so I have to conduct an interview with you for my uhh final thesis. Which I am doing about Casamona International. Uh It is to attract Dutch customers to buy properties through Casamona.

Karolina: Okay

Can: So, uhm I would like to ask you some questions if that is okay?

Karolina: Of course, sure! Ask me!

Can: Okay, so uh what are according to you and your past experiences as a Marketing coordinator the strengths of Casamona?

Karolina: Well, I would say the connections and network Casamona has within the real estate market. Uhh they have been for so long in the real estate market of Barcelona. Ehh so, they also have a lot of experience within the field. Yeah.

Can: are there any more things that you can think of?

Karolina: Uhm yeah let me think. Well also, the ability of the interns to do their own projects and develops their own skills and learn so much. This wouldn't be as much possible at other companies so that is definitely one of the strengths of Casmona International.

Can: yeah yeah that's is true.

Can: So, what about weaknesses? What would you say the weaknesses of Casamona are?

Karolina: haha let me think... the first thing would be uhhh the constant change of new interns. As you know uhm a lot of new interns came and went away. That is not really good for the environment and motivation of the company. This way a lot of information gets lost as well.

Can: hmm that is so true! I had the same opinion about that. We had so much trouble with that I remember.

Karolina: Yeah, well and they didn't want to change anything about it. It's like we were our own bosses.

Can: Yeah true. At least we did have a fun time together with the team haha

Karolina: Yes for sure! I miss those times and the time spending with you guys.

Can: Yeah me too!

Can: Anyway, hahah let me see what else I need to ask. Uhmm

Can: Oh yeah, what about opportunities and threats? What do you think they are?

Karolina: Uhm that would be the possibility to offer properties in different cities. I mean, Casamona has for the past years only focused on Barcelona, while there are still so many properties available outside Barcelona.

Can: I totally agree with that. Not everyone wants a house in Barcelona.

Karolina: yeah yeah, exactly. With threats I would say the competition of course. I mean the real estate market is very competitive. There are so many businesses in Barcelona. Uhh also the laws of course. While I worked there I noticed that Casamona was so dependent on the new regulations the Spanish government was making. Its influences the real estate market and the behavior of international buyers.

Can: Yeah I noticed that as well. We had to make these news updates about the law constantly and even hired a lawyer to deal with this haha

Karolina: hahaha

Can: anyway, those were my question! So, thank you so much for you time and helping me out with my thesis. I really appreciate it!

Karolina: sure thing! No problem! If you need anything else please let me know!

Can: Sure, I will! Thank you and I will talk to you later!



### Appendix 3: Consent form

#### Informed Consent Form

1) Project Title

**Living in Apples or Oranges?**

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

**The final project is a marketing plan written for Casamona International to attract Dutch customers to the Barcelona area. The research is based on primary and secondary sources and it involves desk research and interviews.**

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Signed: 

Date: 17/05/2019

## Appendix 4: Consent form

### Informed Consent Form

1) Project Title  
**Living in Apples or Oranges?**

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

**The final project is a marketing plan written for Casamona International to attract Dutch customers to the Barcelona area. The research is based on primary and secondary sources and it involves desk research and interviews.**

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

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Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Signed:

 Karolina Feling  
Date: 16th May 2014