



# The Effectiveness of the Marketing Mix Used by Penshoppe in Terms of Product, Price, Place, and Promotion: A Literature Review

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## ABSTRACT

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This study scrutinizes and examines Penshoppe's expansion and strategic growth as a fashion retail company. The company was founded in Cebu, Philippines. Bernie Liu founded the small t-shirt printing business in 1986 as a venture. That was the beginning of Penshoppe, and then it steadily developed into a well-known domestic and global brand. The research examines Penshoppe's application of the Marketing Mix Framework, which encompasses Price, Product, Place, and Promotion, to address market changes, competitive pressures, and industry interactions. By combining theoretical

frameworks with real-world brand tactics, the study emphasizes the importance of aligning marketing initiatives with consumer preferences and adapting to external market circumstances. It also examines the challenges Penshoppe has



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faced in expanding internationally. The market's harsh environment and how these encounters shaped its strategy for worldwide branding. The results reveal that the Marketing Mix remains a useful strategic tool; however, its effectiveness depends on how well it is tailored to a particular market condition.

## INTRODUCTION

Among the most well-known fashion labels in the Philippines today is Penshoppe (Bagatsing, 2023; Balita, 2025). Their beginnings were humble, starting as a modest t-shirt printing company in Cebu in 1986; the brand catered to gatherings for holidays and reunions. Established by Bernie Liu, Penshoppe gradually built a loyal customer base and expanded its business (Limpag, 2016). One significant turning point occurred in 1991 when the brand's first Luzon location, at SM North EDSA, opened, marking the beginning of its shift from a regional business to a national force (Lee-Chua, 2020).

Penshoppe faced increased competition from both domestic and foreign fashion brands as it expanded its retail presence (Yhans, n.d.). The business employed strategic marketing techniques to maintain its competitive edge, particularly the marketing mix framework introduced by E. Jerome McCarthy (Kenton, 2024). This framework is a focused model on Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, which offers a methodical way to hone Penshoppe's image, build strategy, and fortify its relationship with customers (McCarthy, 1960; Twin, 2024).

For many years, the Marketing Mix, also known as the 4Ps, has been a fundamental concept in Marketing, providing a comprehensive approach to assessing the creation, pricing, distribution, and promotion of products (Nunes & Boatwright, 2004; Peek, 2024; Prasad, 2021). The use of this framework by Penshoppe was essential to its development into a powerful nationwide retail entity. Ultimately, the company expanded into foreign markets, opening stores in Norway and China (Chan & Gonzales, 2014).

However, going global presented new difficulties. Penshoppe struggled to adapt its tropical clothing to colder climates, resulting in setbacks and the closure of some stores abroad (Chan & Gonzales, 2014). These encounters highlighted the importance of understanding regional market conditions and adapting strategies to diverse customer contexts (Lee-Chua, 2020). The marketing mix is used in this literature review to examine Penshoppe's strategic development. It examines the brand's implementation of each framework component, the lessons learned from its overseas endeavors, as well as the broader implications for retail branding in an increasingly globalized economy (Go, 2017; Prasad, 2021).

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to investigate how Penshoppe strategically utilized the framework of the Marketing Mix, also known as the 4Ps, to expand its brand in foreign markets as well as within the Philippines (Bartleby, 2025; Chan & Gonzales, 2014). Understanding its main goal, how Penshoppe utilized each element—Price, Place, Promotion, and Product—to draw in customers and continue to compete in the ever-changing retail market (Ayala et al., 2014; McCarthy, 1960).

Analyzing the difficulties Penshoppe faced while expanding internationally is one of the main goals. Experiences with the brand in nations like China and Norway exposed the limitations of implementing domestic tactics in international markets (Chan & Gonzales, 2014). Through an analysis of these setbacks, the study aims to extract knowledge that could help other companies looking to expand internationally.

Another objective is to compile the body of research on the marketing mix and its applicability to the retail industry (Jindal et al., 2020; Pretious, 2023). Through a comparison of Penshoppe's journey with comparable case studies and theoretical models, the Research will assess the 4Ps' usefulness in forming a brand strategy in practice (Goi, 2009; Van Vliet, 2024).

Furthermore, the study aims to identify knowledge gaps in existing research, specifically regarding how brands in tropical nations or countries adjust to temperate climates (Deo & Prasad, 2022; Pérez & López-Ospina, 2022). There is only a handful of useful information available regarding how these companies modify product designs and respond to changes in consumer behavior in order to meet the ever-changing needs and wants of customers and achieve their satisfaction (Rinaldi, 2019).

Lastly, the research aims to provide useful information for academics, entrepreneurs, and marketers. Stakeholders can apply Penshoppe's strategic decisions and results by comprehending them and understanding their lessons to improve their branding initiatives and enhance their capacity to compete in various market circumstances (Go, 2017).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Marketing Mix was first presented by E. Jerome McCarthy, a pioneer in the 1960s concept of a marketing plan (Anderson & Taylor, 1995). The marketing plan, comprising the four fundamental components—product, price, place, and

promotion—provides a methodical framework for matching customer needs with business offerings and adapting to market circumstances (McCarthy, 1960; Novak, 2024). As time went on, academics such as Mary Jo Bitner and Vincent Van Vliet have extended and evolved this model to emphasize the significance of precision and flexibility in implementing the 4Ps in modern business settings (Van Vliet, 2024; Yhans, n.d.; Zeithaml et al., 2010).

The fashion company Penshoppe, founded in Cebu in 1986, is a real-world example of how the effective use of the marketing mix is possible (Ayala et al., 2014; Yhans, n.d.). Beginning as a modest company that printed t-shirts, the brand eventually expanded into foreign markets after becoming a national retail leader. Its calculated application of the 4Ps was essential for creating a powerful brand identity and surviving in the cutthroat environment of the retail industry (Nunes & Boatwright, 2004). Penshoppe's capacity to deliver was a major factor in its success in the Philippines, with fashionable and reasonably priced apparel that appealed to local customers (Alindogan et al., 1996).

For their products, Penshoppe concentrated on providing stylish clothing that was appropriate for the tropical Philippine climate. The youth market was drawn to casual styles and lightweight materials, promoting a sense of brand loyalty (Chan & Gonzales, 2014; Yhans, n.d.). However, in colder markets, the same product approach presented difficulties, such as in China and Norway, where poor performance was caused by a lack of climate-appropriate apparel that led the company to close its stores and now focusing on countries in Asia and the Middle East (Chan, & Gonzales, 2014; Siebers, 2022).

Another important element of Penshoppe's strategy was price. By offering reasonably priced and fashionable apparel, the brand attracted young professionals and students (Ax et al., 2020; Ayala et al., 2014; Neypes, 2024). This method of pricing allowed Penshoppe to build up against both domestic and foreign competitors. As stated by Billige (2017), efficient pricing tactics need to strike a balance between consumer willingness to pay and production costs, particularly in marketplaces with intense competition (Deo & Prasad, 2022; Pérez & López-Ospina, 2022; Solberg Söilen, 2024).

In terms of place, Penshoppe placed its stores in busy shopping malls and business districts, ensuring accessibility and visibility (Chan & Gonzales, 2014). The company expanded its reach by embracing e-commerce, allowing it to go beyond geographical boundaries. Van Vliet (2024) highlighted that, in addition to the actual positioning of products and distribution channels, they have a significant impact on what customers buy.

Promotion is possibly the most dynamic component of Penshoppe's marketing strategy. The company brand heavily funded advertising campaigns with global

stars like Gigi Hadid and Zac Efron (Dacanay, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2019; Reyes, 2024). These promotions enhanced Penshoppe's reputation and established it as a global brand within its marketplace, both locally and internationally (Chan & Gonzales, 2014; Daza et al., 2012; Hung, 2021). Liu emphasized the importance of celebrity endorsements and promotional events endorsements in influencing public opinion and boosting customer involvement (Mejia, 2016; Schouten et al., 2021; Solberg Söilen, 2024).

Despite its success in the Philippines, Penshoppe's global growth highlighted the limitations of using the same approach in various markets (Chan & Gonzales, 2014). The brand's inability to modify its product range highlighted the need for market-specific research and strategic adaptability in colder climates. Liu recognized these failures as valuable educational opportunities, highlighting the importance of creativity and resilience (Go, 2017; Limpag, 2016).

The notion that marketing tactics need to change in tandem with consumer behavior is supported by the broader literature on market dynamics and consumer behavior (Kristiana et al., 2024). Tekin (2020) and Ratnawati (2020) conducted studies on financial and human development indicators, emphasizing the significance of flexibility and long-term planning in achieving long-term accomplishments. These revelations are consistent with Penshoppe's gradual transition from a production-focused model to one that is more customer-focused (Alejo, n.d.).

Research on the effective adaptation of tropical-origin brands remains scarce, even in temperate marketplaces. There is limited empirical information available on product redesign, the effectiveness of promotions, and customer behavior in these situations (Safeer et al., 2022; Sulhaini, 2020). These topics should be explored in future studies to provide practical guidance for companies seeking to expand their global presence.

## RESEARCH GAPS AND DIRECTION FOR FURTHER STUDY

Despite the extensive research and application of the Marketing Mix framework in numerous sectors, a discernible research gap remains regarding how tropical-origin brands, such as those entering non-equatorial or temperate markets, modify their approaches. Significant difficulties were revealed by Penshoppe's experiences in nations like China and Norway, especially in terms of product relevance. The clothing from the brand, which featured a tropical theme, did not align with the climate requirements of these areas, resulting in fewer customers and store closures. This highlights the need for further research into the impact of environmental influences on product design and customer

satisfaction in international retail growth (Alejo, n.d.; Prasad, 2021).

The alignment of promotional strategies with culture is another area that needs more research. In the Philippines, Penshoppe's utilization of global celebrity endorsements has proven remarkably successful, particularly in a context where Western pop culture has a significant impact (Knoll & Matthes, 2017). However, it is still unknown whether the same strategies that appeal to customers in diverse cultural contexts will yield the same results. Studies should examine cultural and regional differences in values, media consumption patterns, and brand perception, as well as how these variations can be reflected in promotional materials (Go, 2017; Van Vliet, 2024).

Additionally, there is little empirical evidence regarding the long-term effects of pricing strategies in developing and advanced markets. Penshoppe's aggressive pricing strategy proved successful domestically, attracting price-conscious consumers (Ax et al., 2020). However, its efficacy in global markets—where buying differences in power, brand expectations, and value perceptions have not been fully investigated. In the future, pricing will impact perceived value, brand loyalty, and market penetration across various economic contexts (Billige, 2017).

Another area for study is the expanding role of digital platforms in retail marketing. Penshoppe has leveraged social media and e-commerce to expand its reach; however, it is essential to acknowledge how brand equity and actual sales are influenced by digital engagement across various platforms (Three Sixty Supply Chain Group, 2022). Comparative research on the efficacy of digital marketing in Southeast Asia and the West or Middle Eastern markets could provide brands looking to expand internationally with insightful information (Alejo, n.d.).

Lastly, further research is needed to identify the internal organizational adjustments required for effective globalization. Penshoppe's transformation from a manufacturing-to-customer-focused business model approach was a crucial point in its development. However, the structural choices made by the leadership, the operational plans, and the modifications that underlie this shift are not well documented. Examining these internal dynamics may help other brands prepare for the challenges of cross-border expansion without sacrificing operational effectiveness or brand integrity.

## METHODOLOGY

To ensure a thorough understanding of Penshoppe's marketing strategies, the study also examined case studies, press releases, and brand interviews. These resources offered first-hand information about the company's strategic shifts and decision-making procedures. Including both a deeper, more complex analysis was

made possible by the perspectives of academia and business.

Surveys and interviews were not used to gather primary data for the study. Rather, it depended on ethically sourced secondary data that was publicly accessible. This method was used to synthesize the existing body of knowledge and highlight trends and insights that could be applied to other retail brands.

The research successfully identified strategic patterns and recurrent themes in Penshoppe's utilization of the marketing mix. After that, these results were analyzed using accepted marketing theories, particularly those related to international market entry, consumer behavior, and brand positioning.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

This study utilized secondary data sourced from reliable and publicly accessible publications, including scholarly journals, business articles, and official brand statements. Because there were no human participants, no personal information was gathered or processed. All sources were correctly referenced to uphold academic integrity and to provide credit to the original authors. Its objectivity served as the compass for the analysis, and interpretations of Penshoppe's strategies were grounded in theoretical frameworks and factual data, specifically the Marketing Mix model (Van Vliet, 2024; McCarthy, 1960; Prasad, 2021).

To prevent prejudice, the study adopted an impartial approach when evaluating Penshoppe's achievements and challenges. The brand's failures in foreign markets were discussed, not to be critical, but to highlight the importance of strategic adaptation. Results were presented with care and respect. Moreover, in a productive way, particularly when referring to choices made by the company's executives. The study also recognized the economic and cultural contexts of various markets, avoiding generalizations and ensuring that inferences were made with consideration for regional variations (Alejo, n.d.). This moral method ensures that the research remains respected, credible, and beneficial for both academic and practical applications.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Penshoppe's strategic application of the components of the marketing mix was incredibly effective in the Philippine market (Yhans, n.d.). Its product strategy was to release collections that reflected the latest trends in fashion and styles while staying within the budget. The brand's focus on breathable, lightweight materials is well-suited to the nation's tropical environment and has contributed

to building a devoted clientele. Yet, this same approach became a drawback in colder markets like China and Norway, where the absence of wearing climate-appropriate apparel decreased customer interest and ultimately led to store closures (Chan & Gonzales, 2014).

For pricing, Penshoppe maintained a competitive edge by offering fashionable clothing at reasonable price points (Bartleby, 2025; Yhans, n.d.). This approach struck a deep chord with its target audience, students and young professionals, who typically have limited financial resources (Bliss Tulle, 2022; David, 2025). By taking affordability into account, Penshoppe was able to successfully compete with both domestic and foreign retailers as a trendy brand, enhancing its attractiveness to consumers on a tight budget (Go, 2017).

In terms of place, Penshoppe also showed strategic strength. The brand prioritized visibility by establishing shops in high-traffic areas, such as shopping malls and business districts. For customers, this guaranteed accessibility and convenience (Coffie, 2020). Furthermore, with the implementation of e-commerce, Penshoppe was able to reach a wider audience outside of its actual retail locations, expanding its market presence and meeting the increasing demand for online shopping (Business Mirror, 2021; Three Sixty Supply Chain Group, 2022).

For promotion, Penshoppe's strategy was especially dynamic in its promotion component. The brand invested in powerful advertising campaigns featuring global celebrities like Gigi Hadid, Zac Efron, and Ian Somerhalder (Cabuenas, 2024; Dacanay, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2019; Reyes, 2024). These recommendations enhanced Penshoppe's reputation and positioned the brand internationally while maintaining its local roots (Alejo, n.d.). Platforms for social media also significantly contributed to attracting younger audiences, encouraging brand loyalty, and expanding the campaign's reach (Chan & Gonzales, 2014).

Despite these advantages, Penshoppe's global growth underscores the significance of adapting to the market. The company's inability to adapt its product line to accommodate cooler climates resulted in store closures and poor performance (Chan & Gonzales, 2014). These findings underscore the importance of conducting extensive market research and adapting strategies to meet the needs of new markets. Van Vliet (2024) emphasized that effective global branding requires a nuanced understanding of local environmental factors and consumer behavior.

## SYNTHESIS OF LITERATURE REVIEW

A large body of research on marketing strategy consistently confirms the continued applicability of the marketing mix framework in guiding the growth of brands and markets (Marketing Mix, 2024; Prasad, 2021). McCarthy's Marketing Mix Model, which comprises Product, Price, Place, and Promotion—the four Ps of the 1960s foundational model—remains an essential tool for marketers seeking to match customer needs with company offerings (Novak, 2024). Over time, for businesses to manage the complexities, researchers such as Van Vliet (2024) have refined and expanded the model of contemporary markets, emphasizing the importance of flexibility and contextual accuracy.

Penshoppe's strategic development offers a compelling example of how the Marketing Mix can be effectively applied in real-world situations. The main factor behind the brand's success in the Philippine market was its ability to supply stylish, climate-appropriate goods at affordable prices, distributed through easily accessible stores, and advertised through powerful campaigns featuring famous global people (Alejo, n.d.). These tactics demonstrate a high degree of alignment with the 4Ps framework, illustrating how localized marketing can enhance brand loyalty and development.

Despite this, the research also highlights the drawbacks of employing a standardized marketing approach across various global markets. The entry of Penshoppe into colder countries, such as China and Norway, demonstrated the necessity for more thorough market research and product adaptation (Chan & Gonzales, 2014). The brand's inability to adapt its products to regional conditions and customer demands resulted in poor performance and ultimately led to its departure from these markets (Go, 2017; Limpag, 2016). This result supports Van Vliet's (2024) claim that the Marketing Mix's efficacy is contingent upon its contextual implementation and the business leaders' decision.

Related research on flexibility and strategic planning, including that conducted by Tekin (2020) and Ratnawati (2020), highlights the importance of adapting business strategies in response to changing market conditions. Penshoppe's transformation from a manufacturing-focused business model to a customer-centered business is discussed by Alice Liu, who notes that a focused approach demonstrates the internal transformation required to promote long-term sustainability and external growth (Alejo, n.d.).

Ultimately, the literature review suggests that although the marketing mix remains a potent strategic framework, its success depends on a careful adaptation of the business to the industry's circumstances (Prasad, 2021). Penshoppe's experience underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity, consumer

intelligence, and environmental consciousness in international branding (Go, 2017). Subsequent studies should investigate how companies with tropical origins can more effectively manage global expansion, particularly in regions characterized by diverse pricing strategies, product innovation, and promotional relevance across various economic and cultural landscapes.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined Penshoppe's application of the Marketing Mix framework in its growth from a small local business to a well-known fashion brand, both domestically and internationally. By exercising strategic control over its product line, costs, distribution methods, and marketing initiatives, Penshoppe successfully established a significant presence in the Philippine retail industry.

The company's understanding of local consumers was a major factor in its domestic success and preferences, as well as its ability to provide reasonably priced, stylish apparel suitable for the climate. Its marketing tactics, particularly the use of active participation and celebrity endorsements, contributed significantly to creating a relatable and aspirational brand identity on social media.

However, Penshoppe's globalization highlighted the drawbacks of using domestic methods that have not been sufficiently modified. Challenges facing the brand in colder markets, such as China and Norway, emphasized the importance of matching local climate conditions with product design and what customers expect. These setbacks were crucial teaching moments that led to a review of its international strategy.

The results confirm that the marketing mix remains relevant in today's competitive retail environment. The framework is still a useful tool, but how well it works will determine its effectiveness in adapting to a particular market situation. Brands must have the flexibility to innovate, adjust, and respond to the nuances of every market in order to remain competitive.

Penshoppe's experience offers valuable insights for marketers, business owners, and academics. It illustrates that having a strong product is not the only factor in branding success; it also involves being nimble enough to change course, communicating clearly, and understanding the market as needed. These lessons are particularly relevant to companies seeking to expand beyond their domestic markets and establish an international presence.

In conclusion, the literature review emphasizes how Penshoppe's transformation from a small local t-shirt company to a well-known fashion retailer, demonstrates the Marketing Mix framework's ongoing applicability in directing brand development and strategic market expansion. With the help of

the 4Ps, Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. Penshoppe was able to achieve remarkable success in the Philippine market by utilizing climate-appropriate products, reasonable prices, well-planned store placement, and powerful marketing campaigns. However, the limitations of implementing domestic strategies globally without adequate adaptation are demonstrated by its difficulties in colder international markets, such as China and Norway. These failures underscore the importance of market-specific research, contextual sensitivity, and strategic adaptability when venturing into heterogeneous settings. According to the research, the Marketing Mix is still a highly effective tool, but how well it is adapted to local consumer behavior, cultural quirks, and environmental factors will determine how effective it is. This information is helpful for brands looking to expand internationally in a sustainable way.

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