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Analysis of the company Mark Sport to strengthen the importation and marketing
and proposal of commercialization through virtual media

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents Marco and Monica, who have always given me their confidence that I can achieve everything I set my mind to with effort and dedication, and the support they give me whenever I need it despite any situation.

Carolina Fernandez

I dedicate to my parents for being the main promoters of my dreams, thank you for believing in me and in my expectations. Thanks to life, for this new goal achieved and to all the people who supported me and believed in the completion of this thesis. Thanks to my parents (Ana Mamá and Papi Yoyo) for getting up at 5 am, to my brother Piolin for always being there for me and to Mami Gladys whose presence and love is always felt even though she is far away.

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to propose an improvement plan to strengthen the import process and propose marketing strategies through virtual means to promote and stimulate sales locally, nationally and with a view to international markets. The methodology was based on the quantitative approach, descriptive level and the survey aimed at consumers between 18 and 50 years of age. In addition, tools such as SWOT, PESTEL analysis, PORTER forces were applied, in order to carry out an internal and external analysis of the reality of Mark Sport. The main findings determined that, although consumers are interested in face-to-face purchases, the majority trend is for online purchases; and that in the import it generates needs for improvement, especially, due to the inclusion of safeguards that have affected the MiPymes that import. Thus, it is concluded that Mark Sport maintains an acceptable level of consumers, but that it requires innovative marketing strategies such as improvements in the import process to stay in the market, which is currently highly competitive.

Keywords: import, digital media, *Mark Sport*, MiPymes

Introduction

Faced with the interest of companies to generate a positive dynamic of economic income because produced by the global pandemic of Covid-19, a group of proposals have emerged aimed at strengthening the business modality that had to change its buying and selling strategies through virtuality. Thus, according to Orús (2022), for months the Internet was the indispensable means for companies to generate income, and for end consumers a virtual space to obtain items considered not to be necessities that were not readily available.

After the normalization of activities, companies continued under virtual modality, turning digital marketing into an ally for companies such as MSMEs, which also had to reinvent themselves. This is an issue that according to Campos and Buitrago (2022), Latin American countries such as Colombia and Peru have already applied digital techniques, so Ecuador has also had to explore the strategic digital side, which according to Buitrago (2023), the challenge is to turn digitization as a key tool towards the generation of competitive advantages.

However, for entities whose function is the supply of imported products such as footwear, it has also resulted in conflictive situations due to the effect of the safeguards that were applied in Ecuador in order to boost the country's domestic economy but which, on the other hand, for Auquilla (2020) meant for companies that import, an obstacle that resulted in the duplication of costs and, therefore, the increase in prices to the final consumer.

This is an issue that, for Mark Sport, dedicated to the sale of footwear imported from countries such as the United States and China, meant a negative factor, not only due to the effects of the measures applied to imported products, but also because of the global pandemic and, today, in the face of the new virtual mode of buying and selling that has required updating their strategies to keep up with the competition.

Furthermore, the main objective of the study was to propose an improvement plan to strengthen the import process and propose marketing strategies through virtual media to promote and boost sales locally, nationally and with a view to international markets. The methodology used had a quantitative approach, descriptive level with a population ranging from 18 to 50 years old, the population group that most generates purchases in the company Mark Sport, to whom a survey was applied.

Chapter 1: State of the Art and Theoretical Framework

1. Imports

According to the National Customs Service of Ecuador (SENAE, 2021), the term import refers to the purchase of goods and services from other nations, to subsequently bring these goods into the buyer country so that they can be used. For these foreign goods to enter the country, they must comply with certain customs obligations and formalities, according to the import code under which the goods have been declared.

According to Atucha and Gualdoni (2018), in the capitalist system, the market is an exercise of exchange of goods and services, in which prices and volumes to be produced are determined. It is thus understood that, from the market, needs are satisfied in a bidirectional manner from supply and demand. Therefore, in the process of purchasing goods or services that are offered outside a country for domestic consumption, there is the concept of import, which according to Kiziryan (2020) is a commercial action aimed at acquiring products from abroad when they do not exist in a country, or are more convenient economically speaking, but these clearly maintain certain economic restrictions that for Kiziryan (2020) are intended to regulate the entry of products, in order to generate regulations that benefit the countries that sign agreements in common.

1.1.1 International negotiation

The activity of trade has been a practice that has had mankind. This is due to the interest in satisfying needs such as food or clothing, which has determined a space to reach a fair price through persuasion. This is stated by Granados (2017), who adds that the Canaanites were the first traders to exercise negotiation activities maintained with empires such as Egypt or Greece, who were those who largely imposed their laws.

Over time, negotiation activities evolved along with the governmental policies that were imposed around the world, which, in fact, for Granados (2017) meant a much more complex process to exercise, so it evolved in an orderly, consecutive way and under specific conditions that determined the success or failure of an organization that undertook transaction actions of buying and selling to obtain mutual benefits.

The term international negotiation is defined, according to Mones (2022) as a process that allows managing relations between two or more parties through dialogue and skills to

achieve the goals set between agents from different countries. The term speaks of a series of variables as actors involved, whose purpose is to reach an agreement together to obtain the best benefits. This transferred to the international arena, for García-Lomas (2015) is an important step for future deals, which translates into the implementation of strategic alliances to achieve the objective outlined by each side.

International negotiation is an important factor within the practices of international trade, carried out by different countries around the world and which, today, has been exercised with greater force, where according to Orbe (2022), negotiation is largely due to the globalization process that is related to strong trade links and also to foreign direct investment, where there is a need to exchange products that forces countries to negotiate conditions for both exports and imports.

Thus, for Calle (as cited in Álava, Avilés and Navas, 2021), international negotiations take place between different states, business leaders and individuals, and international organizations. But according to Álava et al. (2021), regardless of the actor in the negotiations, the culture of the counterpart must be deciphered to analyze the nature, strategy orientation, dynamics, and characteristics of the negotiation.

In international trade, negotiation activities can take place either in an export or import, depending on the objectives of the parties that are going to perform the commercial act. According to Garcia-Lomas (2015) regarding the international negotiation of purchase and sale operations, to achieve the expected result in the negotiation, the following indications should be followed: an orderly process from the preparation to the determination of the agreement, that there is a multiple exchange for the conformity of the parties, that there is an interdependence of the parties for the transformation of the negotiation according to the interests, predisposition in pursuit of reaching a bilateral agreement and empel creativity when adding resources of interest that suit the two parties.

As a final point, it is important to say what a market is and its types. For Atucha and Gualdoni (2018), the term market is the entity that relates both buyers with sellers enabling the exchange of goods. About market types of Quiroas (2020) mentions that there are a variety of market types according to variables such as product, buyers, competition, and geographical area. Table 1 provides a more detailed description of market types.

Table 1

Market Types

Types of market	Variables
According to producto	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumer• Use or investment• Industrial products• Services• Financial
By buyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From distributors• From industrial buyers• From government buyers• From consumers• From labor
According to competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perfect competition• Imperfect competition• Pure monopoly
According to the geographical area covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local• National• Regional• International• Global

Source: Quiroa (2020)

Own elaboration.

As can be seen, the wide variety of market types suggests that there is a significant supply of products and services, where these types establish a reference on the different ways in which the market manifests itself at the local, national, and global levels.

1.1.1.1 The negotiation process

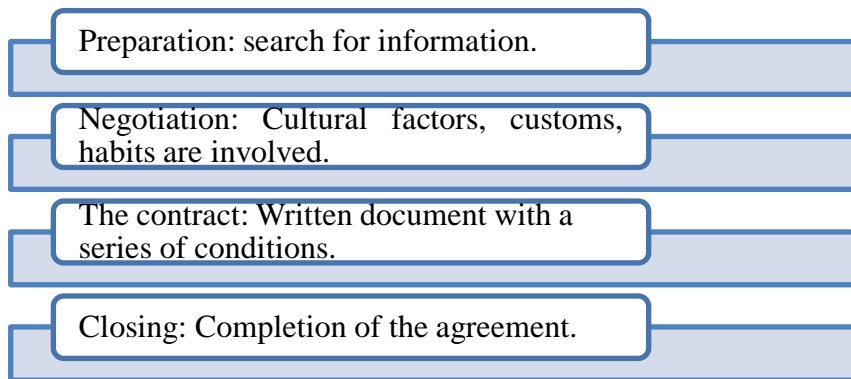
The negotiation process refers to the steps that must be followed to effectively conclude a negotiation. For the negotiation process to be carried out correctly, it is necessary to follow an order that avoids confusion and thus ensures that the key points are dealt with. According to Mones (2022), every type of negotiation, even the smallest, requires a process that has four steps: preparation, negotiation, contract, and dispute.

The first step is the preparation, it is the search for the necessary information regarding world trends and interests of the other party. The second step is the negotiation, which is carried out according to a group of elements such as the cultural elements related to the customs and habits of the negotiator; it also involves knowing the international and local law, carrying out a negotiation where it is possible, as far as possible, to be carried out between two equal parties.

If the negotiation stage has been transcended, thirdly, there is the creation of the contract, which according to Mones (2022) the document must include the so-called framework contract, the skeleton, and the letter of intent. Finally, there is the closing phase, once the positions of each party have been established and the conditions defined, the negotiation is concluded. Figure 1 describes the phases of the negotiation process.

Figure 1

Negotiation process



Source: Mones (2022)

Own elaboration.

Thus, as the negotiation process has been described, it is important to mention that these stages are only carried out if there is clarity on both sides that agreements can be reached that will benefit them in closing a deal; therefore, once this has been done, those involved must transmit a clear and concise message that does not lead to confusion and that exerts a positive influence on both sides.

1.1.2 Harmonized system

It was implemented by the World Customs Organization (WCO), with the objective of facilitating the identification of products to be traded through an international nomenclature. The term arose due to the expansion of trade which, according to Aguila, Yanela, Mendoza, and Arias (2022), the volume of sales grew drastically, so it was necessary to have a control on commercial transactions generated by exports and imports.

Currently, the international term of the Harmonized System is based on the classification of goods through a system of 6-digit international codes. According to the World Customs Organization (2017), countries using this system are all WCO participants, which may add subclassifications or subheadings, 8 to 10 digits in total, to contribute to precision in certain goods with statistical or tariff purposes.

According to the Secretariat of the Andean Community (Secretaría de la Comunidad Andina, 2021) in decision 88, the member countries of the Andean Community of Nations CAN agreed to abide by the approval of the Common Nomenclature-NANDINA, for the

identification of the seventh and eighth subheadings; and in decision 657 within the Andean Integrated System-ARIAN it was established that the ninth and tenth subheading will identify the national openings made by the nations of the block; but in case of the absence of subheadings 7 and 8 or 9 and 10, they will be described with the numbers 00.

According to the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI, 2020) there is a structure in the Harmonized System to systematically order different products from a general to a specific way. Thus, the following points can be seen: "Sections, Chapters, headings and subheadings; Section, Chapter and Subheading Notes (Legal Notes); and General Rules for the Interpretation of the Harmonized System" (ALADI, 2020), p. 2). See Figure 2.

Figure 2

Structure of the Harmonized System



Source: Senae (2022)

Next, in Section XII, Chapter 64 related to footwear, gaiters and similar articles and parts thereof; part of the distribution of the Harmonized System that is considered for the identification of products in Ecuador is shown. For this, it is important to mention that the classification in goods to interpret the nomenclature, according to the Ministry of Foreign Trade of Ecuador (2017), must be governed under a series of principles, where the same is elaborated according to the NANDINA instrument, which facilitates the identification and classification of goods.

Comments the General Secretariat of the Andean Community (2021), that each subheading contains 8 digits where:

The first six digits shall be the numerical codes corresponding to the subheadings of the Harmonized System Nomenclature; b) The seventh and eighth digits shall identify the NANDINA subheadings. If a Harmonized System subheading has not been subdivided for Community needs into NANDINA subheadings, the seventh and eighth digits shall be zeros (00) (p.3).

Figure 3 shows the structure of the Harmonized System that is considered for the identification of footwear products in Ecuador. First, the section to which the footwear belongs must be identified, which is section XII: "Footwear, headgear, umbrellas, sun umbrellas, walking sticks, whips, riding-crops, and parts thereof; prepared feathers and articles made of feathers; artificial flowers; articles of human hair".

The first two digits refer to the corresponding chapter, which in this case is chapter 64 "Footwear, gaiters and the like; parts thereof"; the next two digits to the heading to which they belong, which is 02 "Other footwear with outer soles and uppers of rubber or plastics", the next two digits to the subheadings, which identify the type of footwear and the following are subheadings assigned for the more specific description of footwear, depending on the country.

Figure 3

Designation of merchandise

Sección XII

CALZADO, SOMBREROS Y DEMÁS TOCADOS, PARAGUAS, QUITASOLES, BASTONES, LÁTIGOS, FUSTAS, Y SUS PARTES; PLUMAS PREPARADAS Y ARTÍCULOS DE PLUMAS; FLORES ARTIFICIALES; MANUFACTURAS DE CABELLO

Capítulo 64

Calzado, polainas y artículos análogos; partes de estos artículos

Notas.

1. Este Capítulo no comprende:
 - a) los artículos desechables para cubrir los pies o el calzado, de materiales livianos o poco resistentes (por ejemplo: papel, hojas de plástico) y sin suela aplicada (régimen de la materia constitutiva);
 - b) el calzado de materia textil, sin suela exterior encolada, cosida o fijada o aplicada de otro modo a la parte superior (Sección XI);
 - c) el calzado usado de la partida 63.09;
 - d) los artículos de amianto (asbesto) (partida 68.12);
 - e) el calzado y aparatos de ortopedia, y sus partes (partida 90.21);
 - f) el calzado que tenga el carácter de juguete y el calzado con patines fijos (para hielo o de ruedas); espinilleras (canilleras) y demás artículos de protección utilizados en la práctica del deporte (Capítulo 95).

64.04	Calzado con suela de caucho, plástico, cuero natural o regenerado y parte superior de materia textil.			
	- Calzado con suela de caucho o plástico:			
6404.11	- - Calzado de deporte; calzado de tenis, baloncesto, gimnasia, entrenamiento y calzados similares:			
6404.11.10.00	- - - Calzado de deporte	2u	10 + USD 6/par	
6404.11.20.00	- - - Calzado de tenis, baloncesto, gimnasia, entrenamiento y calzados similares	2u	10 + USD 6/par	
6404.19.00.00	- - Los demás	2u	10 + USD 6/par	
6404.20.00.00	- Calzado con suela de cuero natural o regenerado	2u	10 + USD 6/par	
64.05	Los demás calzados.			
6405.10.00.00	- Con la parte superior de cuero natural o regenerado	2u	10 + USD 6/par	
6405.20.00.00	- Con la parte superior de materia textil	2u	10 + USD 6/par	
6405.90.00.00	- Los demás	2u	10 + USD 6/par	

Source: Foreign Trade Committee (2017).

The intention is to establish a uniform classification, whose instrument is used within the field of trade involving state entities, private companies and international organizations, and according to Tomalá and Vergara (2020) its use is essential to carry out trade negotiations, as well as to establish trade policies, trade agreements between the countries involved and for economic research.

1.1.3. Tariffs

In general terms, tariffs according to the World Trade Organization (2017) are understood as those "duties applied by customs for its goods, in order to tax a good or service that is from abroad in the country" (p. 4). It is seen by Mejía, Pino and Parrales (2019) likewise, as a tax that is imposed on a good that is the object of import or export activities, or a regulatory instrument that is established in the activity of international trade that aims to

collect, also constituting a tool for the application of international policy within the economic area.

The importance of tariffs is given by generating a collection of levies that affect the merchandise, being surcharges applied to import activities, with the objective that the national market through these tributes increases in the international arena. The idea is to use this instrument to protect the economy of a country, but also certain sectors when importing products; so for Mejía et al. (2019) the imposition of tariffs has the following most common effects:

- Collection
- Reduction of imports
- Increase in domestic production as a measure to boost the economy.
- Increase in the price of imported goods.

It is thus understood that a tariff has a positive trade protection effect, where according to Sartancángelo and Padin (2019) it goes especially for developing nations. This is because in the market there are sensitive productive sectors exposed to be affected by large companies coming from outside with more attractive products that can reduce their income, and that it is understood that they cannot overcome the competition, and that in practice it is understood that the tariff allows regulating international trade.

1.1.3.1 Terms of Negotiation or Incoterms

In general terms, the so-called Incoterms, which stands for International Commercial Terms, have been developed to facilitate the conditions in the purchase and sale of goods at an international level, where, according to the International Chamber of Commerce (as cited in Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá, 2008), they reduce the risk of complications in legal terms. The purpose of these negotiation terms is due to their usefulness to counteract inconveniences due to cultural issues that may arise in the negotiation process. To be more precise, it is useful for the international operation in relation to the transaction cost and its obligations.

According to the Chamber of Commerce of Bogota (2008), Incoterms are a valuable tool that allows to obtain answers and solutions regarding concerns that arise at the time of negotiation, reducing costs, offering higher quality in the service of international purchase

and sale operations, and gaining in security, whose rules facilitate the delivery of goods related to obligations and responsibilities in the process.

Thus, for the Bogota Chamber of Commerce (2008) they determine the place where it will be delivered, as well as the time and place where the transfer will take place; in addition, who will be responsible for the expenses generated by issues such as transportation and insurance. The following table explains the division of Incoterms according to the International Chamber of Commerce (as cited in Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá, 2008):

Table 2

Characteristics of Incoterms used in international negotiation.

Acronym	Characteristic
EXW (Ex work named place)	<p>This negotiation term is the simplest for the exporter of the merchandise and the one that assumes less responsibility. The responsible party is the buyer, who is obliged to ensure that the merchandise is packed for its correct exportation, in addition to the customs procedures involved in the process.</p> <p>According to the International Chamber of Commerce (2022), in EXW (Ex work), any transport can be used up to multimodal transport, which refers to the fact that it is feasible to move the goods from the place of departure to their destination by means of different types of transport using only one transport contract.</p>
FCA (Free carrier and named place or Franco or free carrier and named place at origin)	<p>According to JCV Shipping, "any transport can be used but land transport is advisable" (2020, p.12); it is for this term of negotiation that the loading of the goods needs internal transport and handling, documentation of origin, approval and other documents and export formality according to their country, so it generates responsibility to the seller although it will depend on the conditions established by the</p>

	<p>buyer, and it will be there where these costs will be determined.</p>
<p>FAS (Free alongside ship).</p>	<p>According to the International Chamber of Commerce (2022), it is defined as only useful when it is given by means of transport by sea and river, where the seller takes charge when the goods have already been placed alongside the ship at the port of origin, thus determining that the risk is transferred to the seller.</p>
<p>FOB (Free on board)</p>	<p>It is the most widely used because it is aimed, especially, for suppliers who have no knowledge of customs issues in the buyer's country. Thus, when the goods are cleared through customs for export, the obligations are delivered to the customer from this point.</p>
<p>CFR (Cost and Freight or Agreed Port of Destination)</p>	<p>This form is based on the goods being cleared through customs for export, where your responsibilities are cost and freight to the named destination. The buyer's obligation begins from the moment the merchandise is already on the ship and has passed the ship's rail, the risks, expenses and freight are borne by the buyer.</p> <p>According to the International Chamber of Commerce determines that the seller is the one who pays the freight to the place of destination, however, the buyer remains the owner and responsible for the goods (2022).</p>
<p>CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight)</p>	<p>This type of incoterms translated into English as Cost, Insurance and Freight indicates that the seller is equal in obligations also when it is done under cost and freight. Thus, the agreed port of destination includes cost, insurance, and freight as payment liability to the seller. To this is added the marine insurance that is granted on</p>

	<p>account of possible perils of loss or damage insuring according to its value, expenses and premium. However, the seller's responsibility is only until the transport document and insurance policy have been issued, the import holder continues.</p>
<p>CPT (Carriage Paid To or Agreed Place of Destination)</p>	<p>According to the JCV Shipping Incoterms Guide article (2020), the seller is responsible for paying and insuring the carriage to the agreed place of destination, and its respective customs clearance for export. In practice, the suppliers of the goods are the ones who take control through this term of negotiation of costs, destination, deadlines.</p>
<p>CIP (Carriage and Insurance paid to or Carriage and Insurance paid to place of destination agreed)</p>	<p>According to studies by JCV Shipping (2020), this term helps to control the costs of the goods, destination, deadlines, and the goods are insured to the agreed place of destination.</p>
<p>DAF (Delivered at frontier)</p>	<p>This term is determined by the word border. Thus, it is necessary to establish a border area as well as the country of export or import, since the seller is responsible until the goods are delivered and cleared for export, at the agreed and determined border place but before the border customs of the adjoining country.</p>
<p>DES (Delivered ex ship or Delivery on Ship)</p>	<p>Delivery ex ship or named port of destination provides that the seller must deliver on board the ship cleared for export, however, the seller must not cover import customs clearance and costs or hazards on unloading.</p> <p>However, it is still the seller who is responsible for the costs and risks up to the port of destination and agreed</p>

	<p>delivery point. "The goods are delivered to the vessel at destination" (CCB, 2021).</p>
<p>DEQ (Delivered ex quay named port of destination)</p>	<p>This negotiation term is used in sea or multimodal transport by river, where the seller is the one who delivers the goods and delivers the goods to the customer on the quay of the country of destination determined between buyer and seller.</p>
<p>DDU (Delivered duty unpaid and named place of destination)</p>	<p>In this term, the seller is obliged to bear the costs and risks of the goods to the agreed place of destination but import duties and taxes at customs are excluded.</p> <p>This negotiation offer differs by the last phase of the means of transport, which does not have to be maritime. The costs and risks of import customs clearance are borne by the importer. "The goods must be delivered on the destination transport" (JCV Shipping, 2020).</p>
<p>DDP (Delivered Duty Paid).</p>	<p>The term Delivered Duty Paid is the one that generates the most risk for the seller, since it is the one who bears transportation and irrigation costs from the point of origin to the importer's warehouse. The goods are available from the arriving means of transport already prepared for unloading and at the point of destination for import already determined (JCV Shipping, 2020).</p> <p>Thus, this negotiation term is not recommended by JVC Shipping, especially when the exporter does not know the relevant import procedures, but it can be competitive since intermediaries are eliminated, which allows it to be more solvent and to be active in the international market (2020).</p>

Source: International Chamber of Commerce (2022); Naviera JCV Shipping (2020; CCB (2021).

In short, an Incoterm is very useful for activities related to international trade, since, according to the Bogota Chamber of Commerce (2008), the rules established by it make it easier to interpret both the responsibilities and the conditions under which the negotiation process is executed in the purchase or sale made to a foreign supplier or a customer. Its relationship with the negotiation is thus pointed out, since, as a rule, it establishes conditions between the negotiation process and the delivery of the good.

1.2. Companies and their classification

According to the National Assembly of Ecuador (2019), the term company is an organized unit engaged in commercial, industrial, or service activities based on profit-making purposes, which carries with it the indissoluble link between it and the civil society in which it operates. It is a system integrated by individuals and means that have a specific objective and common goals, which is the reason why it has been formed.

Rojas (2017) say that the term company itself is not new, since it had been included in some way or another in the Middle Ages but since then until today the purpose of its creation has been evolving, because according to the same author beyond obtaining the maximum benefit, it implies maximizing the profitability of the invested capital. Likewise, to generate greater growth and power in the market towards obtaining greater benefits, objectives of stability, adaptability to the environment, open to changes, and the exercise of social responsibility.

In terms of the classification of a company, it is based on different criteria and parameters that, according to INEN (2023), in the Organic Code of Production, Commerce and Investment, the size of the company is classified into microenterprises, small companies, medium-sized companies and large companies. Figure 4 explains each of them in detail, establishing them by monthly income and number of workers.

Figure 4

Classification of a company in Ecuador

Type of business	Revenues	No. of workers
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Micro enterprise	Revenues less than \$100.000,00	Between 1 to 9 workers
Small company	Revenues between \$100.001,00 and \$1'000.000,00	Between 10 to 40 workers
Medium enterprise	Income between \$1'000.001,00 and \$5'000.000,000,00	Between 50 to 199 workers.
Large companies	Revenues over \$5'000.001,00	Workers: More than 200 people

Source: INEN (2023)

1.3. Ecuador's Electronic Commerce Law

According to the National Congress within the Law of electronic commerce, electronic signatures, and data messages (2002), in Ecuador, determines that the law of electronic commerce with the passage of time has more importance because of the development of trade in both the private and public sector. This is based on governing the use of technologies, electronic networks, which need to be regulated by law, whose objective is:

"Art.1 This Law regulates data messages, electronic signature, certification services, electronic and telematic contracting, the provision of electronic services, through information networks, including electronic commerce and the protection to the users of these systems" (National Congress, 2002, p. 2). Thus, in Ecuador there are some articles that govern electronic commerce. Among the principles in this matter are the following articles, within Title I Data Messages, Chapter I General Principles. See Table 3.

Table 3

Articles of the Law on Electronic Commerce, Electronic Signatures and Data Messaging

Article	Interpretation
Art. 2	Determines legal validity of data messages.

- Art. 4 Establishes that data messages are subject to laws and even international agreements relating to intellectual property.
- Art. 5 It is based on the confidentiality and reserve of information by messages in any form.
- Art. 9 Determines that the protection of data transfer or its use will require the consent of the owner.
- Art. 36 The only organism of diffusion will be "COMEXI" of foreign trade and electronic services and investments.
-

Source: Law on Electronic Commerce, Signatures and Data Messages (2002).

As mentioned by López (2018), the Ecuadorian E-Commerce Law points out a series of actions related to protect mainly the user and also the interests of the consumer in general, and whose law also establishes important points such as penalties and fines with graduation of amounts according to certain criteria for their application. The idea is to contribute from this system to the development of trade and production through its use in the different negotiations that are carried out.

1.3.1 E-business

E-business is within the business that has changed the traditional model of the activity of buying and selling either services or products for another more related to the process of globalization that according to Sanchez (2019) is the "introduction of information and communication technologies (ICT)" (p. 307), in function of executing activities related to new business strategies. In this way, according to him, it encompasses all economic activity and business practice related to the management that is executed from the Internet.

It is thus understood as a modern strategic model of a company related to the so-called information society that has different principles such as the digitization of business processes and easy integration of all processes and applications, where for García, Nájera, García and de Palbos (2016), e-busines facilitates a company to perform electronic transactions as value chain activities are executed in which include customer service, sales, contracting, coordination with business and information partners allowing, in this way, every company to execute business transactions.

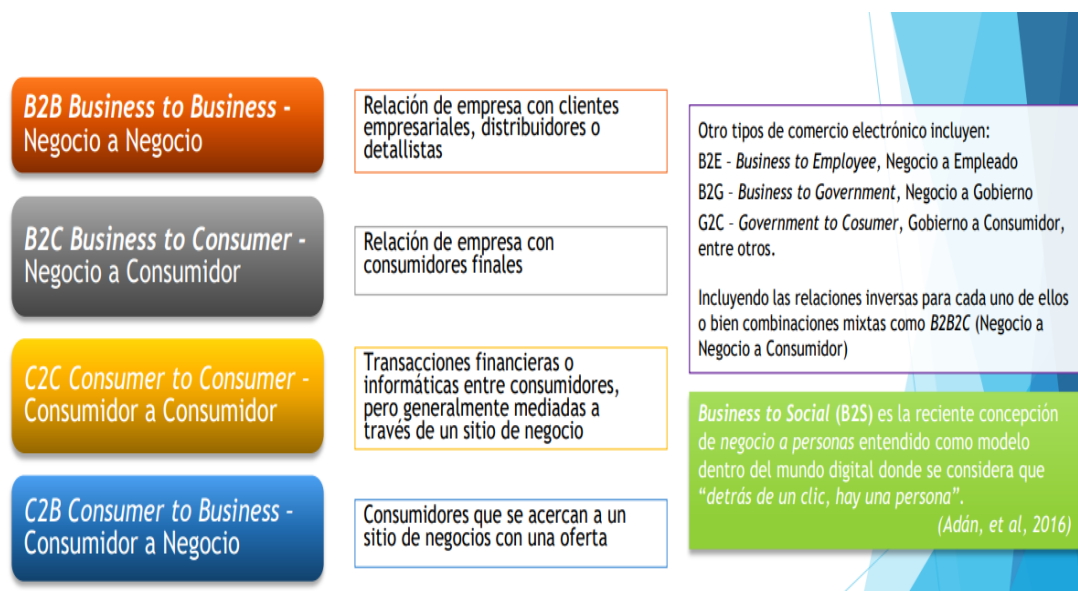
1.3.2 E-commerce and types of e-commerce

E-commerce understood as electronic commerce is defined as a "delivery of good or service and payment by means of networks or any electronic means" (Torres, 2022, p. 4) and which consists of carrying out transactions between companies and consumers doing business with each other through the web, where according to Anteportamlatinam (2014) plays an important role within the process of globalization that in the Network, according to him, has facilitated the initiation of a series of businesses around the world 24 hours a day generating in its path a greater increase in business success.

Now, according to Vargas (2020), there are a number of types of e-commerce that go according to the type of customer or according to the value added to the customer, in whose essence for Mena (2020) to establish a business model that fits the needs of a company it is necessary to know the types of e-commerce that occur in the electronic world, as it is understood that in this all transactions are made from electronic media.

Figure 5

Below shows the types of e-commerce.



Source: Chaffey y Ellis-Chadwick (2016)

As can be seen, within e-commerce there are a variety of types of e-commerce that are assumed as those different ways to reach the customer, and that in essence encompasses all transaction activity performed by digital means which, in effect, for Vargas (2017)

contemplates a series of complex actions that are not only related to activities executed by online stores, but also assists in the internal process of an entity and, even, activities executed by governments in favor of the citizenship.

1.3.3 Digital marketing

It is a field that currently has had a wide notoriety, because it allows a better process in the marketing of different products, including services. Thus, for Gutiérrez and Pérez (2021), this term is defined as a type of marketing that helps to give an added value to what is offered, where there is direct communication with consumers and to reach different markets around the world.

Angueta (2018), understands the term as the application of marketing strategies, but making use of the different tools such as the different media within the so-called 2.0 world, where this is implemented from the positioning of the web in the so-called search engines, whose business objectives it is understood must go hand in hand with the digital communication tools that today has also been digitized.

Thus, for Jara et al. (2019), the use of technology has generated a progressive acceptance of e-commerce in entities around the world. Developed countries have greater interaction in the purchase and sale of items and services compared to Latin American countries; although recently, and with technology, Latin American countries have had to adapt to the requirements of globalized people seeking the same objective of a quick purchase of certain products or services through instant transactions.

Each company has a target audience, so one of the main tools for a good diffusion in the different virtual businesses is digital marketing. This in companies represents a great strategy to show what the company offers to the public and its differentiation from the rest, using the Internet, social networks, display advertising, search engines and other channels.

Thus, to create a digital marketing strategy according to Ballesteros et al. (2019), the first point is to analyze the market situation, as well as the competition and end consumers, to create opportunities by available resources offered by virtual media. This determines the need for the company to update its actions focused on strengthening its brand, its reputation according to the benefits offered by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

1.3.4 Dissemination methods

Regarding e-commerce, for Calderón (2021), the dissemination methods are digital communication channels, which have a variety of resources available. These resources allow sharing information to a large audience in real time; in addition, to manage different advertising strategies, to generate an impact on viable users of the item or service offered to customers.

Thus, companies that have decided to apply digital media in their marketing strategy according to Acibeiro (2021) achieve greater profitability, customer retention, attracting other customers and brand loyalty, through the application of a planned approach to improve the knowledge of the target user, the transmission of integrated communication, and online services depending on the user's need, in terms of convenience, price, product or service information and speed. Some e-commerce tools will be described below.

1.3.4.1 Email marketing

According to Acuña (2023), it is a communication tool that uses email as a way of disseminating commercial information presented in newsletters, conventional mailings, or video-e-mailing, which calls the viewer's action. The objective of this marketing method is to increase sales in current and potential customers, customer loyalty and traffic attraction, through constant communication about promotions, new products, or seasonal sales.

1.3.4.2 Website

According to Marín, Iasso de la Vega and Mier-Terán (2015), the web page is a digital document that is entered from a browser with internet, and contains images, videos and texts. Websites are created with the objective of showing something to the public, either to generate revenue or disseminate information. Websites are used by businesses as a means of communication to sell a product or service to a target audience. The use of web pages in SMEs is a tool to highlight the sales of the company and have more public outreach.

1.3.4.3 Alkaline Tide (catalog)

For Santos (2021), the alkaline tide is a website that provides entrepreneurs, content creators and MSMEs to create digital presence by creating content such as catalogs, menus, and presentation pages. From this website you can get useful data, such as graphs of views and click counts for each button that has been added in the creation and security. Each page is encrypted with HTTPS, i.e., the product that allows to generate a connection between the server and the user.

According to Santos (2021), on the creation of catalogs to make visible the products and services that entities offer and require people to see, this website offers several benefits for different types of companies that want to add a catalog through an access link. It allows an easy creation of a series of contents, maintains a simple structure, and connection with social networks of interest to the user.

1.3.4.4 Facebook Business Suite

Facebook business was created for businesses. It is a tool that helps to manage in a better way the marketing actions. It allows more people that integrate the entity to interact, through the entry to certain actions. So says Varas (2022), who adds that through this tool offered by Facebook you can manage from one place the connected accounts of Facebook and Instagram; you can create instant or scheduled publication; it gives an ease of reviewing the interaction statistics and activities of the accounts; it helps easy management by linking profiles to designate activities by assigning roles; and allows promoting publications, choosing the niche market of interest, in any range of distance, and the days of promotion for a monetary value depending on the interests of each company.

1.3.4.5 Instagram for Businesses

According to Amanquez and Perchik (2021), the social network Instagram has been used progressively by many companies around the world, as the platform offers a mainly visual interaction with users of images or videos of the products or services offered. According to statistics from the platform, its active users are more than one billion, of which 90% follow at least one business account on Instagram.

According to Quiroz, Loor, and Beltran (2022) Instagram provides businesses to create a business profile with which you get several benefits, such as: direct contact booty, links to website, button to share content on Facebook page, categorizes the business according

to its type. You have access to uploaded content, user activity, days and hours of greatest visit to take advantage of the interaction with followers; you can make direct sales and promote posts that have monetary value. Thus, according to Santos (2014), according to statistics, 81% of SMEs that use this social network have increased their sales.

1.3.4.6 WhatsApp Business

This application is very useful for MSMEs, as it allows you to create a company profile with essential information such as logo, business description, address through google maps, business hours, website address link. In this application they can create automatic messages such as welcome for users who write for the first time; of absence, for users who write outside business hours or in a certain season if it is not going to be attended. For Guiometrics (2019) it is also possible to create quick replies via keyboard shortcuts, of messages that are frequently sent for quick response. A broadcast list can be made with customer contacts, which allows products to be sent in one message to several contacts at once, so that they are aware of new merchandise.

1.4. Analysis methodologies

1.4.1. PEST analysis

It is a useful tool used in companies wishing to obtain information and analyze the environment in which they are. It is considered, according to Morales (2019), as a flexible method that assists in decision making, allowing to know the current market by evaluating risks, and to be able to anticipate; therefore, for the Organization Acción Educa (2022), for a Pest analysis to be performed correctly, an objective related to the analysis must be defined, therefore, a precise approach is established to obtain effective results. The following is a detailed explanation of each point of the PEST analysis, which is divided according to the political, economic, social, and technological analysis to which it owes its acronym.

1.4.1.1 Political analysis

According to Amador (2022), political analysis is understood as one of the most important analyses for a company to be successful, since it offers a macro analysis of the (external) environment of a company to evaluate government intervention in aspects that may affect the performance of an entity. This is given according to the establishment of laws such as fiscal or monetary policies applied by the governmental entity.

1.4.1.2 Economic analysis

According to Londoño (2022) this type of analysis is related to the different components of an economic nature but related to the company. It includes aspects such as market trends that can facilitate or limit the company's activity. Thus, among the examples to be considered are issues such as inflation, macroeconomic trends, industry growth, among others.

1.4.1.3 Social analysis

In relation to this analysis, Mejía (2022) comments that it is related to the sociocultural sphere which, in essence, facilitates knowing the social trends in terms such as taste or fashion that affects the level of consumption of goods and products, health-related issues, religious aspects, population changes on birth rate, life expectancy or mortality. Likewise, the subject of income or the way in which the individual relates or communicates.

1.4.1.4 Technological analysis

Innovation is found in the technological field; changes can greatly benefit the company, however, for Amador (2022) it can also harm an entity that has not transcended in the improvement of its infrastructure. Thus, according to Londoño, there are a series of questions that the researcher can ask himself when analyzing this category. For example, could technology represent an advantage for the company or not, or are there new technologies on the market that facilitate the improvement of a company's processes at a lower cost, among others.

Thus, by performing the Pest analysis and all its variables, more accurate factors and results are obtained, to know whether it is convenient to execute the proposed project by looking at its chances of success, which, in fact, according to Amador (2022) is a valuable tool for diagnosing the macro environment of an entity for the subsequent establishment of strategies and actions to be designed to improve more effectively an enterprise or business.

1.5 Value chain

Globalization has become a phenomenon that has currently allowed the development of the word competitiveness, where the term is not new as it has been widely studied. This is pointed out by Salazar (2021), who says that it is found as part of the topic of productivity and innovation of the companies and that it is already in the different public

policies of the different countries. Therefore, competitiveness is related to the value chain in the sense of promoting a company's competitive advantage over its competitors.

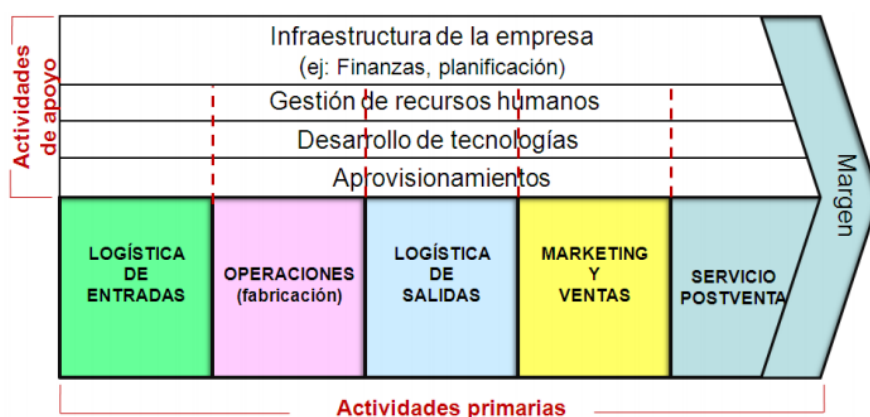
According to Perez (2019), the value chain is assumed as a theoretical model that was developed by Michael Porter, whose tool is used for the analysis of activities of a company allowing to obtain information on all those processes that concern the company to identify its advantages in relation to the competitor, and is supported on different forms related to the products it sells in terms such as quality, among others.

Porter (1991) understands that competitive advantage is an attribute that makes it easier for a company to position itself above the competition in a sector or industry, therefore, according to him, this includes two types: lower cost and differentiation, which according to Quintana (2020) help the different companies to generate greater productivity in relation to the competition, since it is understood that in the market there is a great variety of companies engaged in the same activities.

Porter (1991) states that to know what the competitive advantage is, it is not necessary to see the company, but rather to focus on the activities that are performed, since these can establish a differentiation with other companies. Thus, the most organized way to analyze the activities and interaction of a company is the value chain, since it highlights the important activities that help to understand the variations in costs, and the origin of differentiation present to obtain benefits in the processes or costs compared to the competition, and thus generate a competitive advantage. Figure 6 below explains in detail the activities that make up the processes of this sequence.

Figure 5

Value Chain



Source: Porter (1991)

As shown in Figure 6, the value chain includes two types of activities: support and primary activities, which, according to Peiró (2021), are established as a group of actions aimed at the physical production of a product and its transfer to the customer. In his opinion, the support activities become the support of the primary activities, where the participation of human resources is important, so that the analysis of the value chain considering these elements strengthen the diagnosis of the competitive advantage of an entity.

1.6 Michael Porter's forces

According to Hernandez (2023), Michael Porter's Forces constitute a holistic model that facilitates the management of a company to face situations that may affect the normal development of its activities, based on specific action strategies that have been designed after a research process. This in order to face competitiveness by means of advantages that have been obtained based on this analysis which, in effect, marks profitability in the medium and long term.

Thus, Michael Porter's model states that there are five forces that make up the structure of the industry, which determine the requirements for investment, costs and sales price, and which together demonstrate long-term profitability. From the analysis it is concluded that rivalry among competitors is caused by four forces that together create competition. The following are the five forces that according to Domínguez and Cartagena (2019) are the following. See Table 4.

Table 4

Porter's Forces

Strength	Characteristic
Threat of new competitors:	It helps the company to take advantage of the competition by using tactics aimed at greater profitability.
Power of Suppliers	Ability to negotiate with entrepreneurs that do not affect price standards. In addition, it measures the quality of the products offered according to the participation of industries.
The power of buyers	Direct analysis of the client, where at this point it depends on the salespeople that each company has and also on the sales strategy that is provided.
Threat of substitute products	With which it is intended to reach the customer through ways that reduce the cost of production.
Rivalry among existing competitors	This is due to the interest of having a greater market share, which, in effect, leads to the establishment of strategies that allow to maintain the customer, but also to increase demand.

Source: Domínguez y Cartagena (2019)

Own elaboration.

1.7 SWOT Matrix

Also called SWOT, this technique according to Sarli et al. (2015), consists of executing an evaluative process based on the weak and strong elements of an organization, where as a whole they execute a diagnostic action of the internal and external situation of a company, therefore, the objective of the analysis is to know in what environment and conditions the company performs in order to establish strategies that help to potentiate the positive aspects and reduce the negative aspects.

For Pursell (2023), the acronym SWOT is broken down into strengths and weaknesses, which is the internal analysis of the company, and opportunities and threats, which is an analysis of the company's external environment. Thus, both the micro and macro environment help a company to identify factors, trends and circumstances that can be applied in the development of its activities to create strategies that provide new opportunities for a company within an industry.

According to Catillo-Ruano, Gustavo (2018), in order to provide a response to the changes presented by a company, it has to be analyzed internally; so the company must analyze its strengths to take advantage over its competition. These can be additional activities that the company develops, differentiation in terms of variety, location, personalized attention, or schedules. It also allows to identify weaknesses, factors that may cause an unfavorable position with the competition such as: lack of certain resources, skills that have not been developed and activities that are not performed correctly. At the external level, on the other hand, it is related to suppliers, consumers, the state economy, among others.

1.8 Market research

As mentioned by Wide (2019), market research is important for any type of company that wants to enter the market such as analyzing the fall of its sales, possibility of entry of a new line of activity, change in product or service structure, and impact of marketing campaign. It helps to analyze the environment in which it is going to develop and allows to make appropriate decisions for the company to generate viable strategies. According to the same author, the study must include business analysis and identification of the product or service to be offered, analysis of supply and demand, analysis of marketing and conclusions with the collection of information.

For Moncayo, Salazar and Avalos (2021), when carrying out a market research as an initial point, it facilitates determining the real opportunities offered by the market,

establishing as a first point a methodological and philosophical basis of research with techniques and real values that will facilitate the investor group to make the best decision when it is understood that their capital is at risk, whose results will be attached to the reality of the market.

According to Moncayo, Salazar and Avalos (2021), prior to conducting in-depth research on the market, it is important to consider the geographic delimitation, the sectoral economic context, the current socio-demographic context and infrastructure, since these points make it possible to comply with the objectives set out in the study. In terms of geography, the place where the activities will be carried out should be thoroughly investigated, since supply and demand may vary depending on the location. It is necessary to know the economic situation of the sector in relation to the geographical area of the company under analysis; and the others, to have a comparison and to know the advantages and disadvantages.

1.8.1 Supply

In general terms, supply is one of the elements that determine the functioning of the market, which as a force allows the market economy to function. Thus, for Jara (2017) this force is understood as the quantity of products or services that sellers can sell in the market at a price, in each space and time, to satisfy needs or desires.

Thus, according to him, there is a relationship between the price of a good and the quantity offered. Since it refers to the fact that while the price of a good increases, the quantity offered also increases, because as prices are high, they will make more money and it is convenient to produce more; but on the other hand, if the price of a good decreases, the quantity offered also decreases.

In this process of offering a good or service, for Garrido and Cejas (2017) it is important to know the competitors depending on the market in which a company is going to be established, where there may be little or a lot of competition. It is important to know these companies, since they are looking for the same objective as all, that is, to have an advantage with the other companies and position themselves in the market by satisfying customer needs which, in fact, according to Garrido and Cejas (2017) allows to discover possible weaknesses of both the competition and its own. In this way, it is necessary to analyze how the evolution of competing companies has been during the last five years and to assess the short-, medium- and long-term vision of the sector.

1.8.2. Demand

Demand, according to Jara (2017) is assumed as the amount of goods or services that consumers are willing to pay, according to the different price levels offered, and that depending on the purchasing power that each person has, it is acquired or not. Thus, according to him, the demand curve is given as a function of the quantity of a good that a person will pay according to different price levels.

Thus, for Arboleda (2021), demand is one of the main elements used by a company to set the prices of what is offered, thus establishing a relationship with the price term, where the lower the price, the higher the demand and vice versa. In addition, when the quantity of demand for a good decrease, this is because the price has increased and this term, like supply, is used in the field of economics.

Chapter 2: Mark Sport Company and the import process

2.1 Situational analysis

The Mark Sport footwear trading company has been in the market since 1990, when it started selling imported sports shoes for men, women, and children with brands such as Nike, Adidas, Sketcher, Puma, New Balance, Lotto, among others, which are sold at retail in stores and at wholesale around the Austro. It currently owns two stores, where the headquarters is in the historic center and its branch in the El Arenal shopping center, a place with high commercial activity.

Fernández (2018) comments that the stores opened their activities since 1990, when it has managed to maintain the matrix and open a new branch in 2004, where the company is owned by Marco Fernández and Mónica Brito. Its organizational structure is made up of the manager, who is the owner, a supervisor, an accountant, and three saleswomen who are distributed among the stores, thus establishing itself in the microenterprise category. In addition, within its philosophy its mission is established: "to satisfy the needs of our customers for sports footwear, exceeding their expectations, complying with principles of quality, service and respect, within the philosophy of continuous improvement" (Fernández, 2018, p. 82), and its vision: "to consolidate as a leading company in the market, being recognized for the quality of our products and services, generating welfare to all our stakeholders" (Fernández, 2018, p. 83).

Regarding its values, Mark Sport emphasizes that these are the pillar of the company, the same ones being: honesty (credibility), trust (quality relationships), responsibility (social welfare), excellence (maximum quality in products), teamwork (companionship) and difference (unique experience in the purchase of footwear). Regarding the use of social networks, the company is active, although not on a permanent basis, through Facebook, but does not have a web page on which its commercial activity and the footwear products it offers are socialized.

2.2 PEST Analysis

2.2.1. Political analysis

Following the effects of the global pandemic that brought about a worldwide economic recession, the national government of President Guillermo Lasso established a tariff reform in 2021 to promote the reactivation of the country. Thus, according to Executive Decree number 68, as stated by Agencia EFE (2021), it promoted the reduction of costs and expenses on inputs, raw materials, and capital goods, which would benefit more than 6 thousand companies that employ around 500 thousand people belonging to 81 sectors.

However, according to Agencia EFE (2021), in 2019 the country already experienced another reform in terms of tariff reduction on 250 subheadings, in 2020 another reform on 128 subheadings and a smaller one in May 2021. The idea was to strengthen the national productive matrix, in view of the effects of the global pandemic on the country's economy, which at the time represented a drop in income for many companies.

Concerning the safeguard measures, Cruz (2019) comments that from 2015 such measures were applied to about 32% of imported products leaving aside raw materials, vehicle spare parts and capital goods; the same that lasted until mid-2017 and that were applied especially to Colombia and Peru, countries from which Ecuador imported cheaper products and that, in effect, should be regulated by encouraging the local market which resulted precisely in the improvement in the sale of national footwear.

On the other hand, Cruz (2019) points out, with the measures implemented in the government of Rafael Correa regarding safeguard measures, imports from countries such as China and the United States generated a reduction, where from China for 2016 was reduced by 6.6% and for 2018 generated a decrease of 19.8%, which affected footwear companies engaged in imports and, therefore, brought affectation to employment.

Thus, Cruz (2019) comments that since 2009 although the country has increased its income as production with a variety of diversified brands, with prices and quality that have generated a competitive advantage strengthening even imports where between the period 2014 to 2018, the largest exporter to Ecuador was China and then the United States; in his opinion, with the urgent measures implemented in 2015 regarding safeguards, domestic products were affected by reason of high imports.

This is a situation that also affected the footwear sector, where according to research by Merchán and Zambrano (2019), with the safeguards measure of Resolution 011 - 2015, there was a drastic reduction in imports with respect to the main footwear tariff items, especially in 2016-2017, with negative figures in subheadings 6401 to 6406, i.e., waterproof footwear (the most affected with -100), rubber (-12.4), leather (-1.4), textile footwear (-14.1), other footwear (with 900), and parts of footwear (-1.6).

2.2.2. Economic analysis

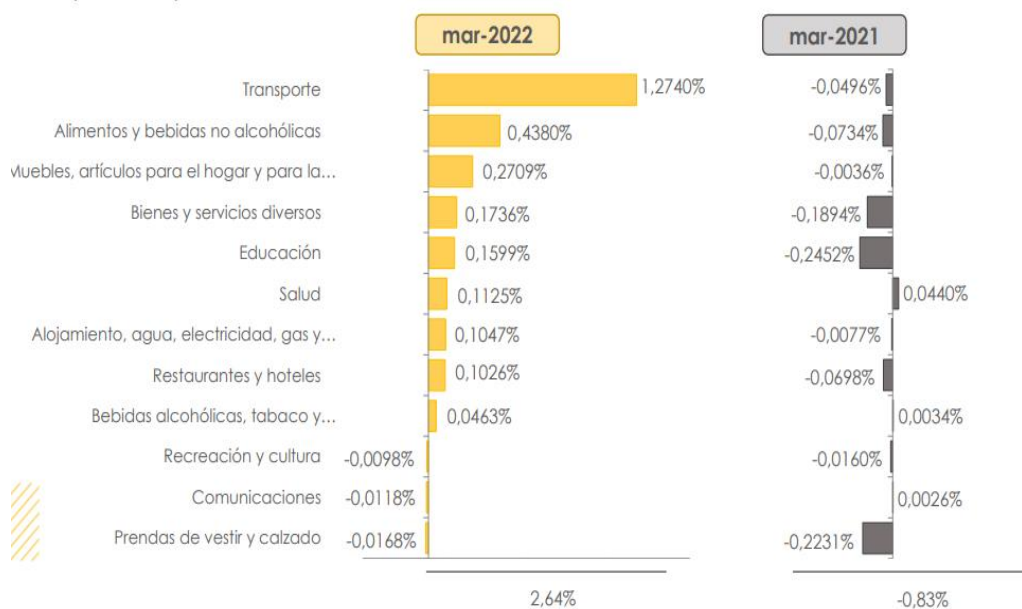
In 2021, Ecuador was beginning and persisting a very difficult stage in the pandemic with

a gross domestic product of 4.2%, thus growing the Ecuadorian economy with a very low standard of living precept. This value showed that the country's economic activities were recovering in relation to 2020 (Central Bank of Ecuador, 2021), but it still represented a negative factor for companies, since the reactivation started only from 2022. In terms of unemployment, according to Vinueza's research (2023), up to December 2022 a percentage of 3.2% was registered, a lower record if compared to the same period of 2021 which was 4.1%, which means that it has improved by one point. Regarding adequate employment, INEC figures (as cited in Angulo, (2023) indicate that for this 2023 it stood at 34.8% but compared to 2019 in which it stood at 38.8%, it is still not recovering.

Regarding inflation, in the first third quarter of this year there was a variation in the consumer price index of 2.6% (BCE,2022). In relation to the inflationary index for the year 2021, which was zero, Ecuador becomes one of the main countries to have the lowest indicator in America, which makes it competitive as an exporting country. However, the dynamics of the economy in the footwear sector, according to Baque et al. (2022), ended in 2020 with difficulties due to the pandemic, which, in effect, affected businesses that had to close due to reduced sales, which for 2021 and 2022 still reflected red data as shown in Table 1.

Table 5

IPC by consumer division



Source: INEC (2022)

From what can be seen in Table 1, between March 2021 and March 2022, there is a negative consumption figure between both periods that is improving for the latter year according to information from the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC, 2022). This is something that reflects the resurgence attempt and favorable momentum for the sale of these goods, but the clothing and footwear item still generates a low margin.

Baque et al. (2022) comment that by 2020 the footwear sector ended with difficulties because of the pandemic, where most of the enterprises had to close due to the lack of production and commercialization, including the dismissal of employees. He adds that most of the footwear companies decided to use the online modality for the sale of their products, but the lack of purchasing power of families and the priority of households to buy food and health products rather than clothing and footwear, were factors for the reduction in sales. In addition, according to Diario la Hora (2022), the national strike called by the indigenous sector in June 2022 also generated losses for the sector, like other productive sectors in Ecuador, due to the impossibility of mobilization, shortage of supplies, products and even lack of labor.

On the company Mark Sport, the negative effects of the global confinement also affected the sales margin that until 2019 had remained relatively positive, since the physical sale in the premises had to be reduced and, subsequently, eliminated for a considerable period of time, which forced the introduction of new strategies focused on virtuality through

Facebook, but the activity was almost null for the sale, meanwhile, records very reduced publications observed only in mid-August 2021, and no interaction with the user.

As for the employees, they had to face adverse economic situations to assume the expenses in terms of salary, which were overcome by the approach of regular customers that Mark Sport has, which enabled the company to remain in the market until today, something that did not happen with other small footwear companies.

2.2.3. Social analysis

According to information from the World Values Survey (2021), 47% of Ecuadorians believe that they are thrifty with their income, with education being the main investment factor at 60%. In addition, 67% consider that they are at a medium level in relation to the monthly income they receive, with only 10% of respondents indicating that they are at the high-income level.

Similarly, Castro (2021) comments that, within sports footwear, the latter is interested not only in the functionality of the product, but also in the adaptability, material, durability, comfort, and structure adjusted to the fashion trend of the moment. Likewise, for Tenorio and Mideros (2022) by age group, people between 18 and 30 years of age are inclined to choose sports shoes (especially training) based on the quality of the product in 44%, and the brand in 25%.

Aguirre and Vallejo (2020) agree with Tenorio and Mideros (2022), stating that the profile of the sports shoe's consumer reflects that quality and comfort are the most important factors in their purchase decision. Castro (2021) adds that Ecuadorians are widely predisposed to consume sports shoes manufactured by foreign brands, where the study by Aguirre and Vallejo (2020) determined that the most preferred brands are Nike followed by Adidas, and that there is a preference for purchasing the product in shopping malls.

2.2.4. Technological analysis

One of the negative factors in terms of technology in the footwear sector is the lack of innovation in the production and marketing of this type of product. This is stated by Piedra (2021), who adds that the consumer trend is towards the purchase of foreign products due to issues such as durability, price, design, among others, but according to him, in the

domestic market there is not enough technology to customize the shoe adapting to the customer's foot and according to their needs, which brands such as Adidas do generate.

This, in effect, suggests that the customization of footwear is a little explored aspect in the country, which means that the main competition is given by foreign products with recognized brands. To this added, according to Piedra (2021) a raw material that does not meet the requirements of the domestic market, this being a difficulty for the footwear sector.

Regarding the use of technology to promote footwear in Ecuador, data from Chavarrea (2020) indicate that since the country is not on par with the so-called first world countries such as the United States and China, it is not competitive with them. Guamán and Lucero (2021) indicate that in the province of Azuay in the so-called MSMEs there is little attention to rely on technological means related to digital marketing. This is due, in their opinion, to the lack of knowledge of the benefits that technology provides.

Thus, at present, there is a lack of professional development proposal in the field of digital marketing for MSMEs, since the pandemic accelerated this form of trade, an issue that Mark Sport also presents shortcomings, while the digital marketing factor is little explored for the sale of footwear that is imported from countries such as the United States, being the face-to-face sale the main strategy that the company performs with promotions at certain times.

2.3 Value chain

Within the value chain analysis developed by Porter, which refers to a strategic analysis tool that allows diagnosing the competitive advantage of a company in relation to others, this has been done according to the information obtained by the manager of the footwear company Mark Sport, Marco Fernandez, as shown in Figure 7, below, each point is explained:

Figure 6

Value chain: Analysis

Infraestructura de la empresa: actividades como finanzas, contabilidad y planificación.				
Gestión de Recursos Humanos: búsqueda de personal, contratación y motivación.				
Desarrollo tecnológico: generadores costo y valor.				
Compras: abastecer y almacenar materias primas para la producción.				
Logística interna (Almacenamiento y distribución del producto al consumidor)	Operaciones (Procesar la materia prima para transformar la misma en producto final)	Logística externa (Operaciones de recepción, almacenamiento y distribución de la materia prima obtenida)	Marketing y ventas (Estrategias para publicitar el producto)	Servicio (Actividades post-venta, y las destinadas a mantener, mejorar el valor y aplicar garantías al producto)

ACTIVIDADES PRIMARIAS

Source: Peiró (2021)

Internal logistics: This activity involves verifying that the incoming footwear product meets quality standards. The merchandise is stored in the main warehouse and in the branch's warehouse, divided by size so that there is an equal quantity in both locations. Before being divided and stored in the respective warehouses, each pair of shoes must be checked to see if it has any faults so that they can be returned in time. The codes are then printed and affixed to the shoe boxes.

Once the invoice is received, the company enters the items with their respective descriptions (supplier, brand, category, code, size series, model, color, cost plus VAT, retail and wholesale price). Then the invoice is entered considering the invoice numbering, selection of the date of issue, selection of the branch, selection of the type of purchase and merchandise, selection of the supplier. Then the code is entered to enter the available sizes, and finally the total value of the system is squared with that of the invoice; the authorization number is entered, and the invoice is saved to proceed with the withholding.

Operations: Mark Sport operates from the city of Cuenca, where it has two stores dedicated to the sale of shoes. The process of delivering the product to the end consumer begins with the transfer of the products to be sent to the branch, which is done through the system of the head office, to know what sizes are available in the head office and

branch. This, in case a specific product is out of stock in a particular store and needs to be transferred.

Thus, a person is designated to transfer the merchandise to the branch for new products, and the salesperson oversees storing them in the warehouse. The person in charge of selling the products in the branch office must check the store's stock every month so that, if any product is missing, the main store is asked to send it as soon as possible and transfer it into the system, or vice versa. In this way, the company ensures that it offers the customer a variety of products.

External logistics: In terms of the value chain, Mark Sport has no national intermediaries for the sale of footwear in its two stores. Thus, the process of receiving, storing, and distributing the footwear begins with the ordering process, which is done directly or through WhatsApp with the sales agents, and they contact the transport and logistics company that Mark Sport trusts, which is Transportes Ortiz S.A., for the shipment of the requested merchandise. Once the order is placed, the company can choose to pay by credit or cash.

The credit option is made for 30, 60, and 90 days, where three checks are made out to the supplier company and the checks are sent to them by Servientrega. On the cash option, the company receives a discount of between 5% and 10%, depending on the supplier. This value is cancelled with a check drawn on the supplier and the check must be crossed for greater security. By electronic means, the invoice and the waybill are received, to proceed first with the entry of the product into the system for accounting purposes, and then to the issuance of the respective withholding.

Marketing and sales: It is important to know how to potentiate sales through digital marketing, which is a tool that works perfectly due to globalization. Thus, Mark sport offers and promotes its products through Facebook. These social networks have been very important for the marketing of the merchandise. Through WhatsApp, the merchandise to be sold wholesale is published in a group and orders are received through this channel. On Facebook, the incoming merchandise and seasonal promotions are publicized through paid advertising. However, network activity is relatively low.

Post-sales services: The after-sales service offered by Mark Sport is given by the exchange of the product for another of the same value in case of sizes or any nonconformity with the product if the invoice was recorded with data. Also, through

social networks can communicate with the company for questions, hours of operation, and request models of shoes or warranties. In terms of brand loyalty, the company's activities have not been aimed at strengthening this point, although it maintains a high level of service on the product offered, which tends towards its quality.

a) Support activities:

Company Infrastructure: The Mark Sport company was created from a small business idea of selling shoes that did not have a name, but over time the economic activity became stronger, which allowed opening a matrix and, little by little, it grew due to the importation of branded merchandise. At present, the company is governed by the rules established by law for its normal operation, to obtain a broader scope at the local level. As a microenterprise, it does not have partners, but it does have a work team that is responsible for keeping the company going, which is made up of four salespeople, an accountant, a systems engineer, and a multitasking employee.

Human resources management: A person specialized in personnel recruitment oversees interviewing and selecting potential employees, and then giving a report on the best candidates. In this way, the company ensures that it has professional personnel who are willing to perform effectively in their jobs. It is worth mentioning that in terms of incentives and benefits to the personnel working in the company is given by bonuses granted by sales margin, in addition to discounts on shoes. They are also affiliated with the Instituto Ecuatoriano de Seguridad Social IESS (Ecuadorian Social Security Institute).

Development of technology: As time has gone by, it has been necessary to implement technological means to enable customers to view the variety of products, ask questions, and purchase the product quickly, where the company has considered the use of social networks such as Facebook, where they can view promotions or new products and ask questions about an item, payment method, quality concerns, among others.

Similarly, it has a catalog which can be shared to users through a link, and in which they can see the models of shoes with their respective brands, colors available and price so that the buyer can choose and select the product they like and, thus, optimize the time of both the customer and the company.

Now, regarding the product registration and inventory system, there is an updated model for this purpose, where different activities related to the Internal Revenue Service

(Servicio de Rentas Internas SRI), number of incoming products, those that are cancelled, number of items sold, and an electronic invoicing system are kept; there is also an electronic invoice system. The accountant also has specialized software for the activity she performs.

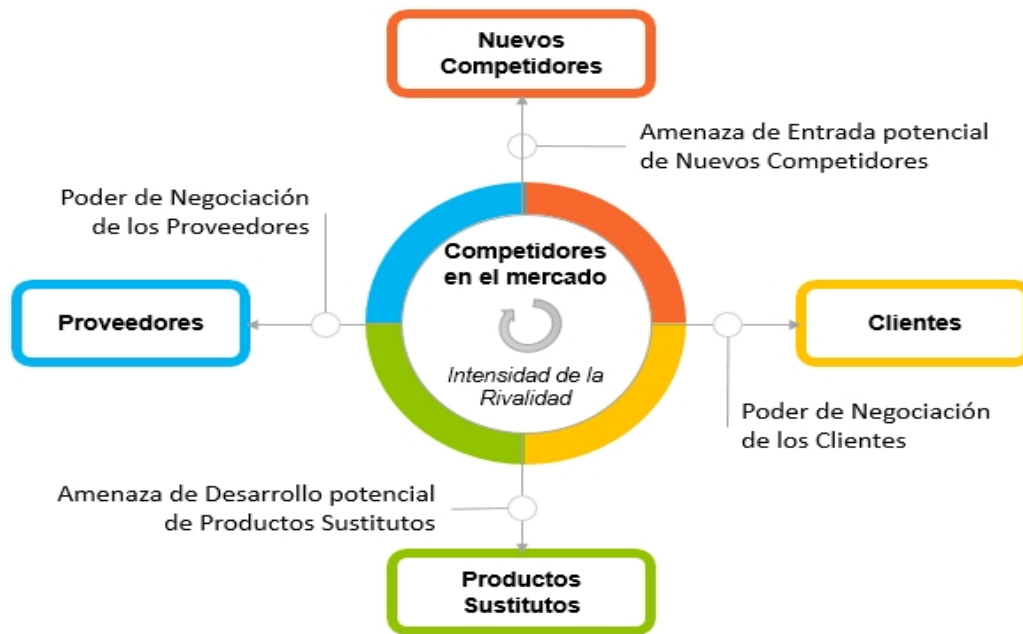
Purchasing: Mark sport has several suppliers that distribute different brands of footwear. As a company that has been in the market for several years and has consistently purchased from the same suppliers, it has a credit advantage for the cancellation of the value purchased, which is beneficial for the company because it will have the desired products. Also, since the company is recognized by its suppliers, they apply additional discounts for good payment relations, which gives the company a competitive advantage over those that have recently entered the market, in terms of costs.

2.4 Michael Porter's Forces

For every company it is essential to analyze and understand the forces that form the competition of the sector to which it belongs, since they interpret the average profitability of the sector and how it changes over time; therefore, they are important to create competitive strategies according to the conditions of the sector. Thus, the following analysis is carried out according to Porter's five forces, taking into account the information obtained by the manager of the Mark Sport footwear company, Marco Fernández, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 7

Porter's Forces



Source: new-iso-9001-2015.com (2020)

a) Customer bargaining power:

A fundamental point is that consumers demand quality for the price they pay, at the same time the company offers that security in quality, which makes it a reliable company. There have been demands from customers in terms of prices because some of them buy products from non-recognized brands, but at the same time they cannot demand quality in those substitute products; on the other hand, Mark Sport's products are one hundred percent original. Thus, what Mark Sport could do to reduce customer pressure on price is to demonstrate and advertise the guaranteed quality of the products, since they have the backing of the supplier companies for their quality and durability.

On the other hand, because there are fixed suppliers, the value is the same for the majority that buys branded sports shoes, the difference would be in the percentage of profit of a competitor with another; so for Mark Sport it is not a problem because the profit is 30% plus VAT, which, compared to the others in the price, in some cases is lower and in others equal.

b) Bargaining power of suppliers:

This is a fundamental point, since suppliers have a fixed selling price, although some customers who are fixed buyers are given an additional discount. Mark Sport has this discount in some supplier companies due to the good relationship in on-time payments. What it should do is to take advantage of this discount on certain models of shoes to discount it in the final price to be able to compete with other companies and win the preference of customers.

c) Threat of new entrants:

For Mark Sport it is negative since there will be more supply in the footwear sector, but being a company that has already been in the market for several years and is well occupied, this threat has less impact compared to the others. Although because price, variety and customer service influence customer preference, what Mark Sport should do to compete in this area is to take advantage of the commercial sites where it is located and make itself known through social networks, because it is an accessible place since it is in the historic center and should also attract the customer by choosing models that are in trend, provide specialized attention, compete with the best price and have a modern presentation of the premises to attract the customer to buy.

d) Threat of substitute products:

Substitute products have recently been a major threat in the footwear industry, as there has been an increase in the sale of replica shoes of original brands at lower prices. In some cases, buyers opt for the other quality because of the price, but the downside is that these products are illegal. What Mark sport should implement is the purchase of various brands and styles so that variety and quality is preferred over replica shoes, telling the customer that the durability of the product offered is superior to replica shoes.

e) Rivalry among existing competitors:

There are brand name commercial houses that also offer footwear such as Mark Sport, however, it is aimed at a type of public with high purchasing power that is a minority in relation to the Ecuadorian population that, for the most part, do not have sufficient resources to purchase a brand name product due to the high cost. Thus, the rivalry for the company is given by those companies that offer quality products with offers on them,

which would reduce sales margins for Mark Sport. At this point, the strategy would be to use social networks to socialize the quality of the footwear at more convenient prices.

2.5 SWOT Analysis

This section explores the internal and external analysis of the company considering the SWOT, a very useful tool to determine the performance of a company in the market both internally and externally. This is explained in detail below, considering all the information obtained in the previous steps, with the process of non-participant observation and the information obtained by the manager of the footwear company Mark Sport, Marco Fernández.

a) Strengths of Mark Sport

- It has a variety of brands and models of sports shoes, thus resulting in a great competitive advantage with the rest of the competition.
- The company stands out for the quality of the product offered to the consumer.
- It is a company that is in a strategic commercial location, where many stores selling different products are located, which means that there is a high number of potential consumers. At the time they visit the other stores, they also do so with Mark Sport.
- It is a store that over time has positioned itself in the market, so it has a medium recognition in the city of Cuenca. According to the community Paseo Centro Histórico, in which most of the stores that are in the center of Cuenca are subscribed, they state that there are 10 sport shoes stores registered among the most relevant around the historic center, so it gives Mark Sport a competitive advantage.
- It is a company that buys from several supplier companies, but it has the possibility of resuming the imports that it used to do in the past and improve the sale price and the variability of models. It would be a very important step in its trajectory to position itself as a company with exclusivity in models and prices, which will grow substantially if it invests in direct imports.

b) Weaknesses of Mark Sport

It is in only one city in the country, which reduces its sales compared to companies that sell sports shoes, which have branches in different parts of the country and are recognized not only locally, but nationally.

Low notoriety in social networks, where interacting with Facebook sporadically, does not allow the company to strengthen its sales margins through other means than traditional ones.

Lack of knowledge of the benefits that digital marketing offers to the company.

c) Opportunities

- The implementation of an e-business planning that in companies such as Mark Sport, which maintains a good positioning in the cuencan market, is an actor to boost its sales.
- Possibility of expansion of companies such as Mark Sport through the dissemination of the products offered by virtual means.
- Greater economic dynamism of the Ecuadorian population with purchasing power to buy.
- Quality footwear products offered by suppliers at convenient prices for the end consumer.

d) Threats

- Competition from local brands such as Adidas and Skechers, which have franchises in Cuenca, would represent a threat, in terms of models, since they are affiliated with the original company.
- Outlet stores that offer a variety of products and at lower costs offering quality footwear.
- Companies that have substitute products, it is a threat because they have replica shoe models, which have a lower value, although the quality is not as good.
- Companies dedicated to the commercialization of shoes with a variety of models and at convenient costs.

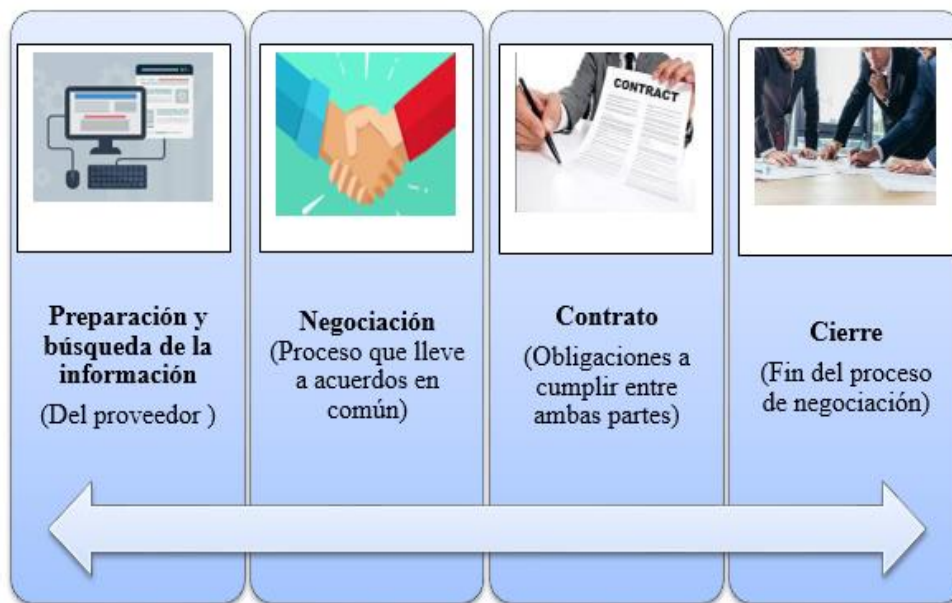
2.6 Mark Sport's International Negotiations

The Mark Sport company, due to its footwear import activity from countries such as the United States and China, carries out an international negotiation process. Thus, this point is explained in detail below, considering the information obtained by the manager of the Mark Sport footwear company, Marco Fernandez, and the non-participant observation technique, as shown in Figure 9.

2.6.1 Negotiation process

Figure 8

Negotiation process



Own elaboration.

a) Preparation and search for information

To start the negotiation process, the product to be imported must be chosen, where in the case of Mark Sport, the company sells sports shoes. For the purchase of merchandise, it is possible to opt for manufactured products or order their manufacture. In the case of opting for manufactured products, the first step is to identify the supplier of the brands that need to be imported, to investigate their existence and credibility in reliable sources in the country of origin.

Mark Sport has been verified through the California Secretary of State on the web, where there is a database of legally registered companies where you can view the necessary information of the company. Then comes the contact with the supplier, can be face-to-

face or virtual to agree on price, quality, payment method and product characteristics; where the manufacturer must be clearly informed of the standards required by SENAE. If you choose to buy a manufactured product that is already predetermined in both brands and characteristics, you do not have the option of modification. As for the second option, if you choose to import exclusive products, you must identify the manufacturer, the country and city of origin, to proceed with the investigation of the veracity of the company.

b) Negotiation

Once the supplier is found, Mark Sport contacts the company to discuss price, quality, and quantity before starting the manufacturing process. To verify the quality of the product, a physical sample must be requested, which will be sent to the country by air without setbacks; and if the company agrees with the order, manufacturing is authorized; otherwise, modifications or required changes are requested. In addition, the incoterms terms must be negotiated with the supplier or manufacturer, with the help of a transport company to minimize the risks in the logistic processes. The supplier is the one who carries out the import formalities,

f) Contract

After the previous steps, an international sales contract is drawn up, in which there are different obligations of the two parties, i.e., payment of the agreed price, the deadline for payment and delivery of the product, delivery of the good, among others.

g) Closing

This last step indicates the finalization of the agreement, a point that has been reached after a common agreement, a step that marks the culmination of the negotiation process of the product or service.

2.6.2 The import process into Ecuador

The process of importing products into the country contemplates a series of actions within the international purchase and sale, which according to importacionesecuador.com.ec (2023) is understood as an agreement between two persons, whether natural or legal, domiciled in different countries that begin with the acceptance of a proposal to subsequently carry out the international transaction. Thus, the following is a description of the import process into the country, considering its international and national nature.

2.6.2.1 International

The process of importing footwear to Ecuador, within the international character that is linked to the national, is carried out by a group of distributors of recognized brands such as Nike, Adidas, among others, who import from countries such as China and the United States. The distribution is made to micro-companies such as Mark Sport, whose distribution channel contemplates elements such as the producer, which is the foreign company from which the product is purchased for import, the wholesaler that sells to the micro-companies and the retailer, which in this study is Mark Sport, until it reaches the final consumer. The process thus presents the supply of products that maintain a wholesale price.

2.6.2.2. Of national character

The import process in this point is based on companies in Ecuador such as Carjomi S.A, Equinox Ecuador S.A, Importaciones KAO CIA. LTDA, Magicnegsa S.A., Superdeporte S.A. and Mundo Deportivo, which are located mainly in the cities of Quito and Guayaquil. These companies are engaged in the process of importing footwear into the country on a wholesale basis, where it is understood that they are suppliers for microenterprises such as Mark Sport.

2.7 Miscellaneous formalities

For the development of this section, information obtained from the manager of the Mark Sport footwear company, Marco Fernandez, and from non-participant observation by the researchers was considered. In this way, the various procedures are accounting and are necessary to be able to take the container out of Customs, there are different payments that must be made to the shipping company and to the port or warehouse where the merchandise is located. First, with the notice of arrival of the merchandise in Ecuador, the bill of lading or air? bill with approval and the departure letter are processed so that the container or loose cargo has these formalities ready for what follows.

Likewise, when the merchandise arrives through the agent, the merchandise is nationalized. Thus, the procedure to follow is to pay the liquidation, which must be paid to Customs in any bank in Ecuador only with the liquidation number or the DAI. With the payment of the liquidation to the Customs, the capacity is carried out, and then the payments are made with the Shipping Company that are to be able to process the Bill of

loading or the air waybill with the approval and the exit letter issued by the shipping company; it is in ok so that with those papers you can invoice and make the payment of the storage in the port.

After that, we proceed to pay the storage at the port where the merchandise is located. Once the storage is invoiced, we proceed to take the merchandise out of the port, with different ports in Ecuador such as Arpi, Contecon, Naportec. Then we proceed to process with the land transport to the factory different transports that are used by Mark Sport is ATLAS or CITEP, which leave the goods on the premises.

Now that the storage is invoiced and paid, they issue a schedule for the internal transport to pick up the cargo. It is important to consider the return of the container guarantee if it is the case, whose information is issued by the shipping company, otherwise, if the days are exceeded, it will have a cost according to the shipping company.

2.8 Prerequisites

Regarding the present point, the information was obtained from the manager of the company Mark Sport, as well as from non-participant observation. Depending on the country to which an import process is to be carried out, the company must follow all the steps to become an importer according to the regulations determined by the country. The following is a description of the fundamental points to follow for importing:

- The first step to be able to import is to obtain the RUC at the SRI.
- The electronic signature is processed at the Central Bank.
- Subsequently the company registers in the ECUAPASS portal.
- Registration as an importer with Ecuadorian customs.
- Within the Foreign Trade Information System (ECUAPASS) the authorized signature must be registered, for the Andean Value Declaration (DAV).
- Once enabled, it is determined what type of products meet the requirements and are authorized by law. (SENAE, 2023)

Once the necessary requirements are fulfilled according to the law, it is proceeded to analyze and start the negotiation proposal with the person or company with whom the

import process is going to be carried out. The important points for an import process to take place are the following:

- Search for a secure supplier.
- Request a quotation of the products according to their characteristics.
- Analyze the product by means of a sample of the footwear to be produced or already manufactured.
- Ensure that you have all the documentation so that you can proceed with the importation.
- Define in the purchase: order description, incoterms, shipping date, payment method and verify goods packaging.
- Manage logistics.
- Receive and store the payment documents from the bank through which the transaction was made.
- Manage the customs process, in which the imported goods must go through an administrative process carried out by SENAE. This process begins with the presentation of the customs declaration and ends with the release of the goods.
- Passing customs control, in which the merchandise is first subjected to some form of gauging, payment of customs duties, payment of taxes on foreign exchange outflows and payment of customs service fees.

Withdrawal of merchandise: for this purpose, the corresponding documentation, and its liquidation for the release of merchandise is presented. It is important to mention that once the declaration is accepted, the endorsement is generated, which is a series of unique identification numbers of the customs declaration for the company's merchandise. For the structure of the numbering, first the customs district code is identified, second, the year of numbering of the customs declaration, third the regime to which our merchandise is subject, and fourth the sequential number of the customs declaration (SENAE, 2023).

2.9 Import regimes, Ecuadorian regulations

According to the National Customs Service, the import regimes that can be used in Ecuador are as follows:

1. Importation for consumption.
2. Temporary admission for re-export in the same state.
3. Temporary admission for inward processing.
4. Replenishment of duty-free goods.
5. Transformation under customs control.
6. Customs warehouse.
7. Reimportation in the same state" (SENAE, 2023).

The import regime for consumption "is the one that covers our products by which imported goods, after complying with the corresponding tariff payments, can circulate or be sold freely within the country" (COPCI, 2022, para. 1).

According to the COPCI Regulations (Organic Code of Production, Commerce, and Investments), Article 147, it is established that import for consumption is a customs regime, in which the goods entered and imported into the country after having paid all customs duties and their respective obligations to circulate freely in Ecuador.

SENAE (2023) states that goods declared under the import regime for consumption are considered nationalized goods and, therefore, of free trade in the country once the customs tax obligation has been fulfilled. This tax obligation corresponds to the legal bond between the customs administration and the person linked to the customs operation. It also states that the subjects of the tax obligation are the active and the passive subject. The active subject refers to the State, which works through the SENAE and the passive subject is the natural or legal person, who is linked to the customs operation, who must comply with the tax obligations as responsible or taxpayer.

Regarding the fact generating the obligation, SENAE (2023) states that it refers to the fact that, due to the entry or exit of goods into the country, there is an obligation on the part of customs, which has the power over such goods. This customs obligation entails ensuring that the active subject has accepted the customs declaration of the goods or that the passive subject has made the same; therefore, a control of the goods that pass through

Ecuadorian territory in international customs transit is generated, according to the regulations applicable to each case.

Finally, SENA (2023) states that the applicable regulations for compliance with the customs tax obligation are governed according to the regulations in force on the date of acceptance of the customs declaration, and the taxes applied are those in force on the date the customs declaration was presented for consumption in the case of importation.

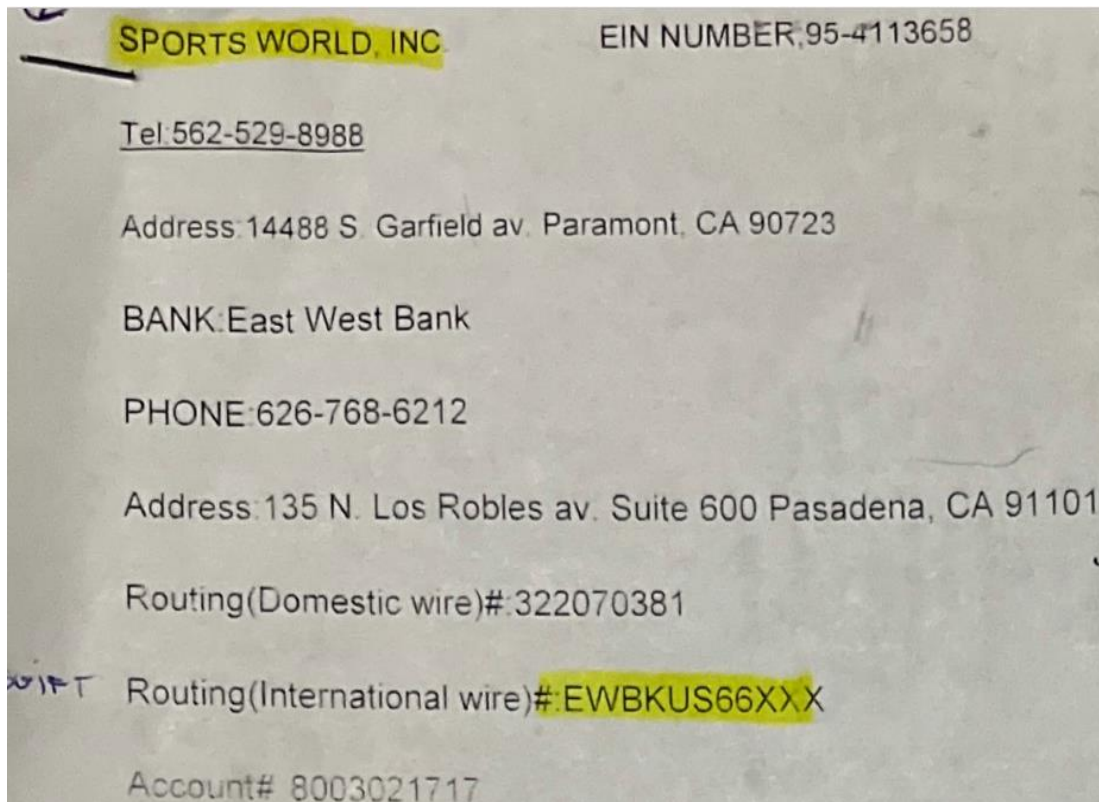
2.10 Instrument or means of payment.

The payment instruments used in international negotiation are through documentary credit and international transfer, the most used. Thus, in an interview with Fernández (2023), he states that the means of payment used by the company Mark Sport is the international transfer, which consists of a payment order made by the owner of the bank account to send funds to the supplier abroad, making a transfer request abroad using the swift code.

Request for transfer abroad. - This document specifies the data of the supplier or manufacturer with whom the transfer is made, and the respective reason for the transfer. According to Fernandez (2023), the international transfer reflects the swift, which is the international code of the other part to make this type of transfer to the receiving bank. Figure 1 shows the data of a foreign transfer request made by Mark Sport, including the account and payment. Figure 10 shows the form to be filled out, the account and the payment:

Figure 9

Mark Sport's average payment model



Source: Mark Sport (2023)


In the image you can see all the necessary information sent by the supplier or manufacturer to be able to make the validation in the bank to, subsequently, make the request in the bank on an international transaction. The document details general data such as telephone number, address, among other points of interest between the parties. Figures 11 and 12 below explain the foreign transfer request of the company under study.

Figure 10


Mark Sport's foreign transfer request

SOLICITUD DE TRANSFERENCIAS AL EXTERIOR "AGENCIAS"

Todos los campos del formulario son obligatorios, excepto los que contengan la palabra "opcional" o la frase "de aplicar"

Lugar: <u>CUZCO</u>	Fecha: <u>2016-05-16</u>	Comprobante No:	Compro: _____
BANCO BENEFICIARIO / PAGADOR DE LOS FONDOS			
Nombre del banco beneficiario: <u>EAST WEST BANK</u>			
Códigos: ABA / SWIFT: * <u>EWBKUS66XXX</u>		Ciudad-País: <u>PASADENA CALIFORNIA - EE.UU</u>	
Dirección del banco beneficiario (opcional): <u>1350 Los Rios av. Suite 600 Pasadena, CA 91101</u>			
<small>* código SWIFT o BIC: Se compone de 8 a 11 caracteres (corresponden a la identidad del banco en el sistema Swift) ** ABA: Se compone de 9 números (identidad a bancos domiciliados únicamente en EE.UU).</small>			
DATOS DEL BENEFICIARIO (QUIEN RECIBE LA TRANSFERENCIA)			
Número de cuenta o código IBAN: ** <u>8003021717</u>			
Nombre del cliente beneficiario: <u>SPORTS WORLD, INC</u>			
Dirección: <u>14685. Garfield av. Paramont CA 90732</u>			
Ciudad-País: <u>LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA ESTADOS UNIDOS</u>			
<small>** ABA: Se compone de hasta 34 caracteres (corresponden al nuevo número de la cuenta que se utiliza en los países de la comunidad Europea). Empezar siempre con 2 letras que identifiquen el país de destino.</small>			
DATOS DE LA TRANSFERENCIA			
Morada: <u>DOLAR</u>	Valor en números: <u>4.808,00</u>	Valor en letras: <u>CUATRO MIL OCHOCIENTOS OCHO 00/100</u>	
DATOS DEL CLIENTE (Cuenta de Débito)			
Nombres: <u>MARCO LEONARDO</u>		Apellidos: <u>FERNANDEZ UJLA</u>	
Identificación (C.I., C.D., Pasaporte, RUC): <u>0102851680</u>			
Dirección: <u>PRESIDENTE CARDONA 8-03 Y BENIGNO MALO</u>			
Teléfono/Celular: <u>0994586837</u>		E-mail: <u>marcoxr400@hotmail.com</u>	
DATOS DEL BANCO INTERMEDIARIO (DE APLICAR)			
Códigos ABA / SWIFT:		Ciudad-País:	
Nombre del banco intermediario:			
Dirección del banco beneficiario (opcional):			
MOTIVO DE LA TRANSFERENCIA			
<u>PAGO DE IMPORTACION</u>			
AUTORIZACION PARA TERCEROS (PERSONAS JURIDICAS) DE APLICAR			
Espacio a ser llenado únicamente para autorización de transacción.			
Bajo mi (nuestra) responsabilidad autorizo(amos) a _____ para que realice la presente transacción en mi nombre.			
con documento de identificación No. _____			
El (los) cliente(s) acepta(mos) todas las declaraciones, autorizaciones y condiciones detalladas aquí y al reverso de esta solicitud.			
FIRMA(S) ORDENANTE(S)			
Firma: 		Firma: _____	
Nombre: <u>Marco Leonardo Fernandez Ujla</u>		Nombre: _____	
Documento de identificación No.: <u>0102851680</u>		Documento de identificación No.: _____	

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 **BANCO PICHINCHA**
En confianza

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

Figure 11

Mark Sport's outbound transaction form

TRANSACCIONES AL EXTERIOR - MOTIVO

Lugar y Fecha: Cuenca, 2016-05-16

Referencia Swift: EUBKUS 66XXX

Identificación: CI RUC PAB 0102851680

Nombres y Apellidos: Nara Leonardo Fernando Villa

Dirección: Piñata Colón B.C

Teléfono: 2530691

Escoja con una X el motivo para el uso de sus fondos

Código	Motivo de Transacciones Internacionales	Descripción
1. Comercio exterior de Bienes		
105	Importaciones	Número DAI/DAS (Referido)
106	Exportaciones	Número DAE/DAS (Referido)
X 110	Anticipos de Importaciones	Número DAI/DAS (Referido)
111	Anticipos de Exportaciones	Número DAE/DAS (Referido)
2. Comercio exterior de Servicios		
Servicios de transporte		
201	Servicios de transporte marítimo, aéreo y terrestre de pasajeros	
202	Servicios de transporte marítimo, aéreo y terrestre de carga (fletes)	
203	Servicios portuarios y de aeropuerto	Se debe incluir servicios de transporte de carga y otros pagos por tasas y servicios en general correspondientes a la descripción
Viajes / turismo		
205	Viajes, salvo servicios de transporte de pasajeros	
Servicios financieros		
210	Primas por Reaseguros	Nro del Contrato de Reaseguro (obligatorio)
212	Indemnizaciones de seguros	
214	Servicios financieros	Se debe incluir intereses que no correspondan a créditos, comisiones de cualquier naturaleza y otros gastos correspondientes a la descripción.
216	Restitución de avales y garantías en moneda extranjera	
218	Arrendamiento mercantil	
Servicios técnicos		
220	Servicios de Telecomunicaciones	
222	Servicios de informática y de información	
224	Marcas y patentes	
225	Regalías, derechos de licencia y de autor	
226	Servicios arquitectónicos, de ingeniería y otros servicios técnicos	
228	Servicios agrícolas, mineros y de transformación en el lugar	
230	Servicios médicos, quirúrgicos y hospitalarios (Gastos de salud)	
232	Servicios odontológicos y afines	
Servicios empresariales		
240	Arrendamiento	
242	Construcción	
244	Investigación y desarrollo	
246	Servicios jurídicos, contables y de asesoramiento de empresas	
248	Servicios de publicidad e investigación de mercado	
250	Reparaciones	
Otros Servicios		
260	Servicios culturales, artísticos y deportivos	
262	Servicios a gobiernos extranjeros	
264	Subscripciones, cuotas de afiliación y aportes periódicos	
266	Gastos educativos	
268	Anticipos en operaciones de comercio exterior de servicios	
3. Remuneración de empleados		
300	Pagos laborales	Corresponde a Sueldos y Salarios, Beneficios Sociales, y otros pagos de personal en relación de dependencia
4. Renta de la Inversión		
405	Dividendos / distribución de utilidades	
410	Intereses de créditos	Nro de Registro en Banco Central: (obligatorio) Fecha de registro Banco Central: (obligatorio)
5. Transferencias		
505	Remesas de trabajadores	
510	Donaciones	
515	En cumplimiento de leyes o dispositivos de organismos de control	
6. Transacciones de activos frente a no residentes		
610	Amortizaciones de créditos	Corresponde a pagos de capital de préstamos
615	Desembolso de créditos	Corresponde al otorgamiento o recepción de préstamos
620	Prepago de créditos	Corresponde a la liquidación anticipada de préstamos
625	Inversiones financieras a largo plazo en el exterior	Se debe incluir bonos, pagarés y otros derivados financieros emitidos en el exterior
630	Inversiones financieras a corto plazo en el exterior	Se debe incluir bonos, pagarés y otros derivados financieros emitidos en el exterior
635	Inversiones de capital a largo plazo en el exterior	Se debe incluir acciones y participaciones en el exterior (inversión extranjera directa en el exterior)
640	Inversiones de capital a corto plazo en el exterior	Se debe incluir acciones y participaciones en el exterior
645	Inversiones overnight en el exterior	
650	Depósitos en cuenta propia en el exterior	
7. Transacciones de pasivos frente a no residentes (Ver Nota)		
710	Amortización de créditos concedidos por no residentes	Nro de Registro en Banco Central: (obligatorio) Fecha de registro Banco Central: (obligatorio)
715	Desembolso de créditos	
720	Prepago de créditos	Nro de Registro en Banco Central: (obligatorio) Fecha de registro Banco Central: (obligatorio)
725	Inversiones financieras a largo plazo en el Ecuador	Se debe incluir bonos, pagarés y otros derivados financieros emitidos en el Ecuador
730	Inversiones financieras a corto plazo en el Ecuador	Se debe incluir bonos, pagarés y otros derivados financieros emitidos en el Ecuador
735	Inversiones de capital a largo plazo en el Ecuador	Se debe incluir acciones y participaciones en el Ecuador (inversión extranjera directa en el país)
740	Inversiones de capital a corto plazo en el Ecuador	Se debe incluir acciones y participaciones en el Ecuador
745	Inversiones overnight en el Ecuador	
750	Depósitos en cuenta propia en el Ecuador	

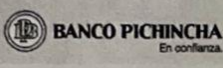
EL CLIENTE DECLARA QUE LOS FONDOS OBJETO DE ESTA TRANSACCIÓN SON LICITOS, NO PROVIENEN DE NI SERÁN DESTINADOS A NINGUNA ACTIVIDAD LEGAL O DELICTIVA, NI CONSENTIRÁ QUE EFECTÚEN DEPÓSITOS O TRANSFERENCIAS A SU CUENTA, PROVENIENTES DE ESTAS ACTIVIDADES. EXPRESAMENTE AUTORIZA AL BANCO PICHINCHA C.A., REALIZAR LAS VERIFICACIONES Y DEBIDA DILIGENCIA CORRESPONDIENTES E INFORMAR DE MANERA INMEDIATA Y DOCUMENTADA A LA AUTORIDAD COMPETENTE EN CASOS DE INVESTIGACIÓN O CUANDO SE DETECTARE TRANSACCIONES INUSUALES E INJUSTIFICADAS, POR LO QUE NO EJERCERÁ NINGÚN RECLAMO O ACCIÓN JUDICIAL, SIENDO CONSCIENTE QUE LA INFORMACIÓN PROPORCIONADA ES CORRECTA.

LA INFORMACIÓN REGISTRADA EN EL PRESENTE FORMULARIO ES DE ABSOLUTA RESPONSABILIDAD DEL CLIENTE.

Firma: [Firma manuscrita]

No. Identificación: 0102851680

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 **BANCO PICHINCHA**
En confianza.

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

Finally, after the successful completion of the transaction abroad, the payment receipt is obtained with the information of the beneficiary and the user, in order to have a document guaranteeing that the transaction was completed. See Figure 13.

Figure 12

Foreign transfer voucher – supplier

Altamirano Torres Veronica Noemi

De: Pavon Romero Ruth Veronica
Enviado el: Martes, 17 de Mayo de 2016 10:03
Para: Altamirano Torres Veronica Noemi
Asunto: RE: GIRO \$ 4808.00//CLIENTE MARCO LEONARDO FERNANDEZ VILLA

COMPROBANTE DE ENVIO DE GIRO AL EXTERIOR

COMPROBANTE NUMERO: 454COMGIRO909076	FECHA: 2016/05/17
NOMBRE DEL CLIENTE	FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO
CUENTA DE DEBITO	Ahorros 4855409700
VALOR DEBITADO POR EL ENVIO DEL GIRO	\$ 4808.00
VALOR DEBITADO POR COMISIONES	\$ 48.24
VALOR DEBITADO TOTAL	\$ 4856.24
GIRO ENVIADO AL BANCO	EAST WEST BANK 6003021717
GIRO ENVIADO AL BENEFICIARIO	SPORTS WORLD INC 144690 GARFIELD AV. PARAMOUNT, CA 90730
IMPUESTO SALIDA DE DIVISAS (ISD)	\$ 240.40
USUARIO CAJERO: VPAVON	

RANCO INCHINCHA C.A.
Verónica Altamirano Torres
Ejecutivo de Asesoría

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

As can be seen, Mark Sport complies with the procedures required for the payment of the footwear products to be imported, thus determining that it is complying with the requirements for the foreign transfer request and, therefore, the proof of remittance of the transfer abroad. This indicates that the company is handling this type of procedure as required.

2.11 Organizations linked to the import process.

This point is related to treaties and agreements with international organizations, to obtain benefits in imports of products such as footwear, considering the tariffs that are convenient for companies engaged in this activity. According to Diario El Exportador (2020), among the international organizations that support the dynamics of foreign trade with agreements and, therefore, with facilities for product exchange processes are the World Customs Organization (WCO), whose task is to facilitate international trade by reducing operating costs arising from bureaucratic procedures.

There is also the World Trade Organization (WTO) which, according to Diario El Exportador (2020), the international organization deals with the rules that govern trade between countries, whose objective is to help the so-called producers of goods and services, as well as importers and exporters to carry out their activities without any work that slows down procedures, taking into account the different agreements that have been ratified by parliaments.

According to the Foreign Trade Information System (2022), one of the international agreements called Economic Complementation was carried out between the member countries of the Andean Community and the member states of Mercosur, where the main objective was the development of trade and investment. To this end, according to the organization, a trade liberalization program was established, which, in summary, was aimed at a process of progressive reduction of current tariffs.

2.12 Import Logistics to Ecuador

Import logistics to Ecuador, according to Bravo (2016), has the function of optimizing resources such as the flow of materials within the procedure of an import from the country of origin to the place of destination, i.e., the consumer. He thus points out that to understand this process, it is essential to consider customs districts as the customs clearance processes. Thus, the process of import logistics into the country is explained below.

2.12.1 Cargo

According to importacionesecuador.com.ec (2023), cargo is defined as the type of goods that are moved from one place to another by means of transportation. For this purpose, there are different types of cargo: general cargo, which includes products of different

nature to be transported in large or small quantities and in independent units, which, being packed or not, are treated as units. There is also unused or loose general cargo, which according to importacionesecuador.com.ec (2023), is the type of cargo that has loose or individual goods that are shipped as separate units.

On its side, there is the unitized general cargo, which according to importacionesecuador.com.ec (2023), is composed of individual items such as boxes, packages and other disunited products that are grouped together in bulk to perform a single operation and facilitate stowage. Finally, there is the palletized cargo where goods of the same class are placed with standardized packaging in a grouped and secured manner with pallets or pallets made as a package for subsequent handling.

Importsecuador.com.ec (2023) comments that the pallet, pallet, or pallet is assumed as a loading platform of plastic, wood or other materials that supported on legs at a sufficient height allow handling from small hydraulic cranes called forklifts. In this way, Mark Sport footwear is transported by Pallet or Pallet, since it allows its handling and is resistant to impact, bending and compression. Figure 14 describes the dimensions established by the different pallets europallet, universal and bottle rack.

Figure 13

Pallet Dimensions

TIPO	DIMENSIONES
EUROPALET	1200 x 800 x 145 mm
UNIVERSAL	1200 x 1000 x 145 mm
BOTELLERO	1200 x 1200 x 145 mm

Source: importacionesecuador.com (2019)

In 20-foot containers fit 10 standard or universal pallets, and 11 europallets and in 40-foot containers fit 21-22 standard pallets and 25 europallets. Mark Sport uses the 20-foot container in which standard pallets are used, and it is transported by boxes of 12 to 24 pairs of shoes. It is important to note that this type of container has a maximum capacity of 28 tons. However, the shipping company and the experience of Mark Sport's logistics process advises not to exceed 22,000 kg. In addition, it will be the shipping company who will accept the maximum weight of the goods in the container. It is also stated that the boxes must be marked, labeled, and identified, standard or shipping marks. These contain

the necessary information on the importer, destination, number of units, reference number and others.

2.12.2 Packaging

Packaging for footwear should mainly identify what it contains and inform about the characteristics of the footwear and the requirements for its use. Thus, according to Jiménez (2019), packaging is important in the logistics process, as it protects the product during its transportation and arrival to the target market. The misaligned arrangement reduces by 30% the resistance of the boxes, one horizontal and two verticals; and facilitates the load to be damaged by blows. There are three types of cardboard used for footwear packaging: single face cardboard, single wall cardboard and double wall cardboard.

According to Fernandez (2023), in the case of imports of Mark Sport and its suppliers of sports footwear, single wall cardboard should be used. This consists of a rigid structure formed by a wave that is glued to both flat sides while strictly protecting the merchandise. According to the Chamber of Commerce of Ecuador, it is determined that the packaging should be arranged in a box in the opposite direction to each other, and separators and plastic bags are used to take care of the import logistics.

For Fernandez (2023), it is important that the dimensions and specifications are according to the type of footwear, it must have a lid for easy inspection and customs clearance, both at origin and destination. The packaging in which the footwear is transported is a large carton, which may contain 12 or 24 pairs depending on the distribution and models. There are different measures of the large carton used, since it depends on the characteristics of the footwear. The standard measures of a large box of 12 pairs are 61,5x45,5x31cm. The box must have certain indications, such as the reference number, the color of the model, the number of pairs and their respective sizes, the net weight of the merchandise and the gross weight of the entire package. See Figure 15.

Figure 14

Packing box models



Note: Standard box of 12 pairs

Note: Large box of 12 pairs.

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

2.13. Labeling

In 2016, when Mark Sport made the last import, the regulations and the institution in charge were different from those now. According to the Instituto Ecuatoriano de Normalización (2013), the requirement for imports is to obtain the INEN certificate of conformity from an organization endorsed by the Servicio de Acreditación Ecuatoriano (SAE), which varies depending on the product. For footwear, it falls under the RTE INEN 080 standard. According to the RTE INEN 080 standard, the footwear label must carry certain fundamental information, where suppliers apply. Such as:

- Country of origin or manufacture.
- Identification and ruc of the importer.
- Size.
- Materials used in the manufacture of the four parts of the footwear which are uppers, lining, insole and sole. This information may be in letters or pictograms.

Currently, the footwear importer must comply with Resolution 2107 regarding labeling, which over time has not changed in terms of the fundamental information that the label must carry since it is the same as that described above. Next, in Figures 16 and 17, by means of images of different brands such as Skechers, Adidas and Vans, the labeling that carries the permanent label and one of them the non-permanent label that is optional is shown. This is for a better appreciation of the characteristics of the shoe.

Figure 15

Vans brand Mark Sport footwear labeling



Note: Vans brand model, permanent labeling attached to the tongue, with the characteristics in text: pictogram or letters that establish the percentage of what the product is composed of: capeyado, lining, textile, and leather.

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

Figure 16

Adidas brand Mark Sport footwear labeling



Note: Skechers model, label sewn to the side of the shoe with corresponding specifications in pictograms and text.

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

According to the Ecuadorian Standards Institute (2013), the company should follow the technical regulations of the Resolution 2107, which describes in more detail the requirements for labeling, as this would adequately comply with one of the most important steps for customs clearance. The following is a description of the points to be considered at the time of labeling:

1. Field of application

According to Tandazo (2021), the tariff classification of shoes and subheadings detailed in Chapter 64, which refers to footwear, gaiters, and similar articles, includes a series of points to be considered, starting with the identification of the section to which the footwear product belongs (section XII), followed by the establishment of the first two digits, i.e., chapter 64.

According to Fernandez (2023), the heading to which it belongs, i.e., 02, then the two digits within the subheadings related to the type of footwear, up to a more detailed description of the footwear. Thus, the tariff heading used in Mark Sport is 64.01 for sports footwear, with its respective subheadings depending on the specifications of the shoe to be imported.

2. General Conditions

Within the general conditions that must be considered within the labeling of footwear, Resolution 2107 (2019) determines the following points:

- Labels must contain the data corresponding to the nature of the product, and distorted or erroneous information must not be placed.
- The information must be clear and visible to the consumer, so that there is no confusion.
- As for the label, it must be in a visible place and must not be made of a material that is uncomfortable for the consumer.
- Labels must be of adequate size and contain all the essential information required.
- Non-permanent labels are not mandatory but help the customer to better visualize the specific characteristics of the product.

2.13.1 Labeling requirements








Permanent labels

In relation to this point, the Resolution 2107 (General Secretariat of the Andean Community, 2019) points out the following points to be considered in permanent labeling. These are:

- The information is presented in Spanish language, without prejudice to its presentation in other languages.
- The shoe must contain the permanent label, which must be sewn or attached by a heat-setting or similar process, so that the consumer can appreciate the relevant information about the product.
- The permanent label must clearly show the materials used in the four parts of the shoe, which are the upper, the lining, the insole, and the sole. They should be expressed by text, pictograms, or both. Figure 18 shows three examples of labeling.




Figure 17

Examples of labeling

		CAPELLADA	CUERO
		PLANTILLA	
		FORRO	TEXTIL
		FIRME O SUELA	OTROS
HECHO EN (PAIS DE FABRICACIÓN)			
RUC No...			

Note: Pictograms

Note: Text

CAPELLADA PLANTILLA	CUERO 
FORRO	Textil 
FIRME O SUELA	Otros 
HECHO EN (PAIS DE FABRICACIÓN)	
RUC No...	

Note: pictograms and text

Source: INEN (2013)

- As these are pairs of shoes, the label may be sewn on only one part of the pair of shoes.
- Another important specification about the materials used in the four parts of the footwear that go on the label is that it must be indicated which material constitutes at least 80% measured on the surface in the uppers, lining and insole and the material that makes up at least 80% of the volume in the sole of the footwear. If no material represents at least 80% in their respective parts, the information on the two main materials that make up each part of the footwear must be included, indicating the predominant material.
- It must be considered that in the upper, which is the upper, the determination of the materials is defined without considering the buckles, eyelet rings, ears, trims, and ankle protectors.

- The importer's or importer's company name and tax identification number (RUC) must be indicated. Below are two labels that reflect two types of importers; in this case, one is the owner of Mark Sport and the other is one of Mark Sport's supplier companies.

Figure 19 shows, on the other hand, the labeling of footwear made by Mark Sport of the Adidas brand, considering the required specifications by way of pictograms and text.

Figure 18

Mark Sport Adidas brand footwear labeling



Note: Adidas model permanent label attached to the tongue with its characteristics in pictograms and text, non-permanent label with specifications of the footwear model.

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

According to the Ministry of Industries and Productivity (2017), specific label requirements contemplate the following:

- Country of origin: the following expressions may be used: "Made in...", "Manufactured in...", "Made in...", "Elaborated in...", among other similar expressions.
- The size must be legible and visible and shall be placed on the product in the place where the manufacturer considers convenient.
- For footwear without lining, the label must indicate "without lining".

- When the design of the footwear or the material from which it is made does not allow the stamping, sewing, stencilling, printing, or engraving of the information required in 5.1.3, a label firmly attached to the footwear must be incorporated.
- The terms fur or leather and its derivatives should not be used to refer to materials that do not come from animal skins.
- The permanent label must be displayed on the two units that make up the pair of footwear (p. 6-7).

1. Sampling

With respect to sampling, the Ministry of Production, Foreign, Trade, Investments and Fisheries (2023) points out that for sampling to be carried out, it should be inspected in the premises where the merchandise is distributed or dispensed. This should be 1.5% evaluated as acceptable quality limit, according to the technical Resolution 2107.

2. Control and Surveillance Authority.

For Fernandez (2023), the competent authority to carry out the control of the respective technical and normative in the merchandise will be the Ministry of Industries and Productivity, and the institutions of the State towards the manufacturers and importers of footwear, as in the case of Mark Sport.

3. Sanction Regime

According to the Law of the Ecuadorian Quality System as mentioned in the Ministry of Industries and Productivity of Ecuador (2014) the suppliers of the merchandise will be sanctioned based on the risk for the users and the severity of the normative techniques.

4. Responsibility of conformity assessment bodies.

The Ministry of Industries and Productivity of Ecuador (2014) states that the different inspection agencies will be penalized according to the Law of the Ecuadorian Quality System and other laws in force, in the case of erroneous or adulterated quality certificates.

2.14. Containers

Regarding footwear, Fernandez (2023) points out that Dry Van or standard containers are used; these do not have refrigeration, ventilation and are hermetically sealed, so they are suitable for the goods imported by Mark Sport and its suppliers, since they do not require special care like other products. The Dry Van containers have one door and are the most basic, but resistant because they are made of Corten steel, the floor is made of wood, the panels are 1.6 mm thick, and their weather stripping is made of rubber. They are approximately 2.40 m wide and 2.60 m long. The most used models are the 20 ft and 40 ft models.

Fernandez (2023) adds that the container in which goods can be brought in can be a full container (FCL) or shared (LCL or groupage), this will depend on the amount of goods to be imported. The port where the goods are unloaded is usually in Guayaquil, the cost of international shipping and transit time varies depending on the country of origin and port of origin. It is important to select the right shipping agency, as it can influence costs, safety and time; for example, the company iContainers, charges 2,415 euros for a 20 feet container in FCL from Los Angeles, California to Guayaquil.

2.15. Security in the logistics chain

The logistics chain of Mark Sport, according to Fernández (2023), focuses its activity on the acquisition of merchandise for subsequent resale without any transformation of the product. Thus, there are different stages in the logistics chain.

- Handling of merchandise for shipping and packaging of products in the warehouse and for the required carrier.
- Logistics planning must be in place to reference the warehousing strategy.
- Merchandise should be received and have an inventory and record of the stock before making the storage of the merchandise as a preventive for the logistics of the same.
- Manage the location of the storage in the commercial to be distributed or in the warehouse.
- Coordinate the transportation for the transport of goods between the main warehouse and sub warehouses that Mark Sport has.
- Transportation to a point of sale or to the end customer,

According to Fernandez (2023), the logistics chain organizes efficient transportation for shipments, fleet maintenance and control, storage and organization of the merchandise that is already sold. For security in the logistics chain, different processes must be carried out, such as: before filling the container with cargo, the shipping company must ensure that there are no holes in the outer panels, that the doors are not broken, check that there is no information on the inside or outside of the container regarding the labeling of the previous cargo, and keep it disinfected so that the cargo does not suffer any type of sweating or problem that could damage the cargo.

After filling, says Fernandez (2023), the cargo at the beginning, where the door is, must be secured so that it does not suffer consequences due to movement. When the doors are closed, the latches must be properly engaged; therefore, before emptying, the seal must be checked to ensure that it has not been tampered with or tampered with, and it is important to check the outside of the container to see if the contents may have been damaged.

2.16. Customs duties

The taxable base for calculating customs duties is taken into account the FOB price of the original commercial invoice plus the sum of the international transport freight, the value of the insurance premiums and the result is added respectively to the following tariffs; this is stated by the Foreign Trade Information System (2023), which states that first there are the import tariffs, which are subject to international trade activities, these are:

- Ad valorem tariffs 10%.

Specific tariffs usd 6 x par.

Mixed tariffs 10% + usd 6 x par.

A levy is then collected for the Children's Development Fund, which helps finance programs and projects related to the Ministry of Social Welfare.

- Fodinfra 0.5%

Figures 22 and 23 show images of settlements made in 2016, in which Mark Sport made imports from China as well as from the United States. There is also a transaction voucher of settlement number 34159230 and images of the general import information. It can be

seen that at that time a safeguard was also paid. This measure was taken in that year for a period, since this measure helped to repair and prevent an injury to the national industry.

Figure 20

Settlement document

Fecha : 07/07/2015

Liquidación

CONTRIBUYENTE:

Número de la liquidación	33020042	Tipo de identificación	RUC	Número de identificación	0102851680001
Nombre o Razón Social	FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO	Ciudad	CUENCA	TELÉFONO	072889344
Dirección					

LIQUIDACION ADUANERA:

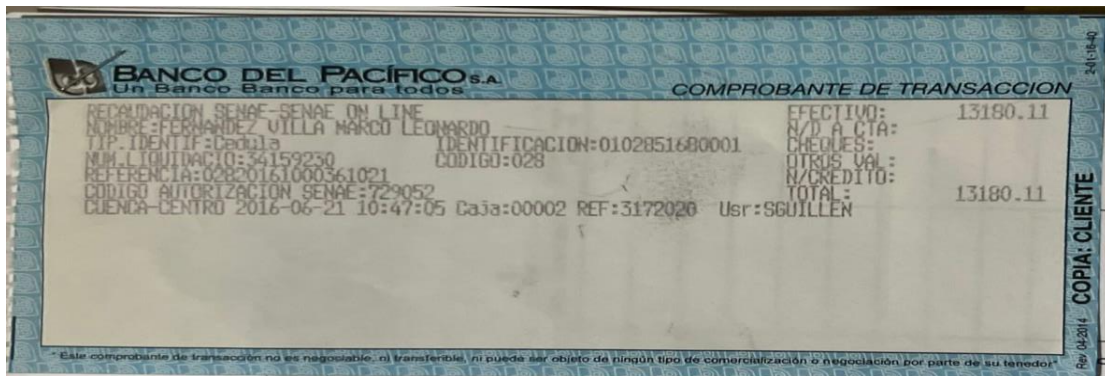
CONCEPTO		Liquidación de Aduana	Valor liberado	Valor a Pagar	Valor Garantizado	Diferencia a pagar no garantizada
A. Derechos arancelarios						
	ARANCEL ADVALOREM	2,031.570	0	2,031.570		
	ARANCEL ESPECIFICO	16,632.000	0	16,632.000		
	ANTIDUMPING	0	0	0		
B. Impuestos						
	FONDINFA	101.590	0	101.590		
	ICE ADVALOREM	0	0	0		
	ICE ESPECIFICO	0	0	0		
	IVA	5,299.190	0	5,299.190		
C. Tasas						
	Tasa de Vigilancia Aduanera	0	0	0		
D. Recargos Arancelarios						
	SALVAGUARDIA	5,078.950	0	5,078.950		
	SALVAGUARDIA ESPECIFICA	0	0	0		
E. Intereses						
F. Multas						
G. Otros						
TOTAL:		29,143.300	0	29,143.300	0	29,143.300

Fecha/Hora de liquidación	07/07/2015	Fecha máxima de pago	09/07/2015	Banco
Número de Garantía		Valor liquidado	29,143.300	
Motivo Liquidación				
Observación:				
Observación de Anulación:				

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

Figure 21

Settlement transaction voucher number 34159230.



Source: Mark Sport (2023)

Figure 21 describe the settlement transaction vouchers and the Amounts Paid Information - United States related to customs duties.

Figure 22

Amounts Paid Information - United States

Información de general

- A01. Código del declarante: 01777792
- A03. Aduana: [028] GUAYAQUIL - MARITIMO
- A04. Código de régimen: [10] IMPORTACION A CONSUMO
- A05. Tipo de despacho: [0] DESPACHO NORMAL
- A06. Número de despacho (partes):
- A07. Tipo de pago: [A] PAGO NORMAL

Información de importador

- B01. Nombre: FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO
- B02. Tipo de documento: [001] RUC
- B03. Dirección: 0102851680001
- B04. Ciudad: CUENCA
- B05. Dirección: PRESIDENTE CORDOVA 863 Y BENIGNO MALO
- B06. Teléfono: 072889344
- B07. CIJU: [5131] VENTA AL POR MAYOR DE PRODUCTOS TEXTILES, PRENDAS DE VE

Información del declarante

- B08. Tipo de documento: [001] RUC
- B09. Código del declarante: 01777792
- B10. Dirección: URB VANDER 1 HZ 125 SOLAR 11 BO FERRETEL LER PISO OFICINA 110
- B11. Apellidos/nombres: SUIZ ARIAN ROHNE ELIAS

Información de carga

- C01. País de procedencia: [US] ESTADOS UNIDOS
- C02. Código de endoso: [00] SIN ENDOSO - DOC DE IDENTIDAD EN DOC DE TRANSP. ES DEL CONSIGNATARIO FINAL
- C03. Consignatario: FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO
- C04. Número de carga: CEC2016DFIU004100070003
- C05. Documento de transporte: 2017

Valores totales

D01. FOB	\$ 14,281.500	D02. Flete	\$ 701.100
D03. Seguro	\$ 97.390	D04. Ajustes	\$ 0
D05. Otros ajustes	\$ 0	D06. Valor en aduana	\$ 15,079.990
D07. Items declarados	75	D08. Peso neto (kilos)	692.000
D09. Cantidad de unidades físicas	726.00000	D10. Cantidad de unidades comerciales	726.000
D11. Total en tributos			\$ 13,180.110

Total en tributos

Resultado : 7

No	E01. Concepto	E02. Monto	E03. Liberacion/suspension	Monto de pago
1	ARANCEL ADVALOREM	\$ 1,508.080	\$ 0	\$ 1,508.080
2	ANTIDUMPING	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
3	FONDINFA	\$ 75.400	\$ 0	\$ 75.400
4	ICE ADVALOREM	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
5	IVA	\$ 3,470.570	\$ 0	\$ 3,470.570
6	SALVAGUARDIA	\$ 3,770.060	\$ 0	\$ 3,770.060
7	ARANCEL ESPECIFICO	\$ 4,356.000	\$ 0	\$ 4,356.000

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

2.17. Customs clearance of goods

2.17.1 Documents in the customs clearance process

According to Fernandez (2023), Mark Sport hires a bonded agent authorized by SENAE for the customs clearance process, who oversees the documentation process. According to the company, the two imports that have taken place have been reviewed through the documentary gauging channel, as the goods were considered to have a low-risk profile. At the end of the gauging review, no inconsistencies were found, and the goods were released. Figures 25 and 26 below show images that verify parts of the merchandise clearance process, such as the detailed consultation of the declaration and the invoice with a breakdown of the amounts to be paid to SENAE for the processes carried out.

Figure 23

Detail consultation of the declaration

REPUBLICA DEL ECUADOR
DECLARACION ADUANERA DE IMPORTACION

Consulta de detalle de la declaración

Aforo Documental
16698
029-086

Número de Declaración: 028-2016-10-00361021

Información de general

Aduana	GUAYAQUIL - MARITIMO	Código de régimen	IMPORTACION A CONSUMO
Tipo de despacho	DESPACHO NORMAL	Número de despacho	
Tipo de pago	PAGO NORMAL	Fecha de Aceptación	20/06/2016 15:58:00

Información de Importador

Nombre	FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO	Número de	RUC-0102851680001
Ciudad	CUENCA	Teléfono	072899344
Dirección	PRESIDENTE CORDOVA 863 Y BENIGNO MALO		
Causa	VENTA AL POR MAYOR DE PRODUCTOS TEXTILES, PRENDAS DE VE		

Información del declarante

Apellidos y nombres	RUIZ ROMAN ROMMEL ELIAS	Número de	RUC-0915261325001
Código del documento	01777792		
Dirección	URDENOR 1 MZ 125 SOLAR 11 ED FERRETAL 1ER PISO OFICINA 11B		

Información de carga

País de procedencia	ESTADOS UNIDOS	Código de empaque	SIN ENDOSE - DOC DE IDENTIDAD EN DOC DE
Beneficiario del giro	FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO	Número de carga	CEC2016DFIU004100070003
Documento de transporte	2017		

[Comun]

Valor en aduana

Fpa	14281.5	Flete	701.1
Seguro	97.39	Ajustes	0
Otros ajustes	0	Valor en aduana	15079.99
Items declarados	79	Peso neto (kilos)	692
Cantidad de unidades físicas	726	Cantidad de unidades comerciales	726
Total en tributos	13180.11		

[Item]

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

Figure 24

Original commercial invoice

超群进出口贸易有限公司
CHAOQUN IMPORT AND EXPORT TRADING LIMITED
ADD: YI WU CHANG CHUN SAN QU 23 DONG I MEN 301, ZHEJIANG, CHINA
MOB: 0086-13553517066 TEL/FAX: 0086-579-85132313

COMMERCIAL INVOICE

To Messrs: Fernandez Villa Marco Leonardo
RUC: 0102851680001
PRESIDENTE CORDOVA 8-63 Y BENIGNO MALO
CITY: CUENCA-ECUADOR
TEL: 072830691

Invoice No.: CQ00150509
Date: MAY.16,2015
Payment Term: T/T

Shipping Marks	Item No.	Description	Quantity	Unit	Dollar price per unit	Amount Dollar american
		CONTAINERS AND SEAL'S NO: BSLU260083 W427400				
	MS-001A	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	420	PAIRES	7.07	2969.40
	MS-001B	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	340	PAIRES	7.07	2403.20
	MS-001C	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	340	PAIRES	7.07	2403.20
	MS-001D	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	232	PAIRES	7.07	1648.64
	MS-002A	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	240	PAIRES	7.07	1696.80
	MS-002B	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	240	PAIRES	7.07	1696.80
	MS-002C	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	300	PAIRES	7.07	2121.00
	MS-002D	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	240	PAIRES	7.07	1696.80
	MS-003A	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	240	PAIRES	7.19	1725.60
	MS-003B	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO SKATE	240	PAIRES	7.19	1725.60
		Total:		SEA Freight:		5518.00
						21173.64

For and on behalf of
CHAOQUN IMPORT AND EXPORT TRADING LIMITED
超群进出口贸易有限公司
代章

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

2.17.2 Packing list

According to iconainers.com (2023), this document is of utmost importance in international shipping. In addition, it is cited as the packing list, which establishes the contents, weight, and measures per unit to be transported, which must be as accurate and detailed as possible. This step is necessary in order to issue the Bill of Lading and avoid sending prohibited goods in the state of destination. It is not a spreadsheet document, but the following must be related without errors (see Figure 28).

Figure 25

Mark Sport packing list example

超群进出口贸易有限公司
CHAOQUN IMPORT AND EXPORT TRADING LIMITED
 ADD: YI WU CHANG CHUN SAN QU 23 DONG 1 MEN 301, ZHEJIANG, CHINA
 MOB: 0086-13553517066 TEL/FAX: 0086-579-85132313

PACKING LISTING
 BUYERS: FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO NO.M00001
 RUC: 0102651680001 DATE: MAY 16, 2015
 ADDRESS: PRESIDENTE CORDOVA 8-63 Y BENIGNO MALO CUENCA-ECUADOR
 TEL: 072630691 0994586837
 MARCA: RANER
 PAIS DE ORIGEN: CHINA

MARKS & NUMBERS	Description of goods	CNTS	QTY/CT N	T.T. QTY/CTN	WEIGHT (KG)	MEASURE
MS-001A	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	35	12	420	360.50	2.9030
MS-001B	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	30	12	360	309.00	2.4883
MS-001C	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	20	12	240	206.00	1.6589
MS-001D	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	21	12	252	216.30	1.7418
MS-002A	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	20	12	240	212.00	1.6589
MS-002B	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	20	12	240	212.00	1.6589
MS-002C	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	25	12	300	265.00	2.0736
MS-002D	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	20	12	240	212.00	1.6589
MS-003A	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	20	12	240	210.00	1.6589
MS-003B	ZAPATO DEPORTIVO	20	12	240	210.00	1.6589
TOTAL		231		2772	2412.80	19.1601

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

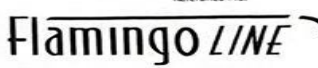

In Figure 28 it can be seen how the specified merchandise is found, the merchandise code, description, quantity, weight and measurement. Likewise, the buyer's general information, country of origin, address and telephone number.

2.17.3 Bill of Lading (Airway Bill or waybill).

According to Quiñonez (2020), the bill of lading is a contract of carriage or bill of lading. It is understood to be evidence of the contract of carriage between the shipping company and the shipper, where it is stated that the goods to be transported to the port of destination have been received on board the vessel indicated, and according to the conditions agreed upon by both parties, i.e., the buyer and the seller. See Figure 29.

Figure 26

Shipment declaration

MILLENNIUM PLUS INC. 411 NORTH OAK STREET INGLEWOOD CA 90302 USA		BILL OF LADING Not negotiable unless consigned to order Reference No.		B/L No. SANOYE16 1056
				
Consignee FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO RUC # 0102851680001 PRESIDENTE CORDOVA 8-63 Y BENIGNO MALO CUENCA ECUADOR		For delivery apply to: FLAMINGO LINE DEL ECUADOR S.A. CDLA. GUAYAQUIL MZ 3 SOLAR 75 CALLE MIGUEL ILLICIVAR ENTRE V HISCOURRET Y AV. FRANCISCO DE ORELLANA		
Notify address FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO RUC # 0102851680001 PRESIDENTE CORDOVA 8-63 Y BENIGNO MALO CUENCA ECUADOR				
Pre-carriage by*	Place of receipt by pre-carrier*			
Vessel DOLE COSTA RICA	Port of loading SAN DIEGO			
Port of discharge GUAYAQUIL	Place of delivery by sea carrier* GUAYAQUIL			
Marks and Nos.	Number and kind of packages; description of goods 30 BOXES STC SHOES	Gross weight 593,0000Kgs	Measurement 7,000 cbm	
				
Particulars furnished by the Merchant				
Freight details, charges etc. LOADED INTO: CTRN. SEAL No. DFIU 426032-9 UL-416115 40 NOR FREIGHT COLLECT USD 806		BILL OF LADING RECEIVED by the Carrier the Goods as specified above in apparent order and condition unless otherwise stated; to be transported to such place as agreed, authorized or permitted herein and subject to ORIGINAL conditions appearing on the front and reverse of this Bill of Lading to which the Merchant agrees by accepting this Bill of Lading any local privileges and customs notwithstanding. The particulars given above as stated by the shipper and the weight, measure, quantity, contents and value of the Goods are unknown to the Carrier in WITNESS, whereof one (1) original Bill of Lading has been signed if not otherwise stated hereafter, the same being accomplished the other(s), if any, to be void, if one (1) original Bill of Lading has been surrendered in exchange for the goods or delivery order. *Any claim or dispute arising under this Bill of Lading shall be determined by the courts of the country where the Carrier's operation office, as mentioned on the front of this Bill of Lading is domiciled and according to the law of the country where the operation office is domiciled but only to the extent that anything has not already been dealt with by the provisions of this Bill of Lading. (Terms to continue on back here)		
Excess value declaration refer to clause 6 (4) (B) + (C) on reverse side.				
Shipped on board Date 09/29/2015	Freight payable at Number of original B/L 0 / None	Place and date of issue Signed on behalf of the Carrier: PABLO GIL		

Source: Mark Sport (2023)

In the case of Mark Sport, according to Fernandez (2023), the following information is included:

- Type of a transported. - Sport footwear
- Seller or exporter. - Millenium Plus Inc.
- Vessel where the merchandise will be transported. - Dole Costa Rica
- Shipping company. - Flamingo Line
- Bill of Lading number. - SANOYE16
- Forwarder - Full forwarder details and license number. 1056
- Shipper or shipper. - Millenium Plus Inc.
- Consignee. - Fernandez Villa Marco Leonardo

Notify. -

FERNANDEZ VILLA MARCO LEONARDO

RUC # 0102851680001

PRESIDENTE CORDOVA 8-63 Y BENIGNO MALO

Etc.

2.18 Landed Cost

According to Moldtrans (2023), the landed cost is the total final price of the merchandise until it reaches the importer, from its manufacture to its shipment. This calculation includes all the specific cost with the shipment of the merchandise, such as the original price of the footwear in the case, transportation and shipping costs, taxes, duties, insurance, packaging, handling, dispatch, packaging prices and payments, as well as currency exchange. With this calculation, the competitive selling price will be obtained and thus be able to define a profit margin for the footwear or product.

According to Mundi (2022), all final costs must be calculated using the following basic formula: $\text{Product} + \text{Shipping} + \text{Customs Fees} + \text{Risk} + \text{Operating Expenses} = \text{Landed Cost}$. The following is a practical exercise, but with fictitious data, to explain how this process is carried out:

Mark Sport company, based in Ecuador sells sports shoes. You buy 250 sports shoes for \$10 each from your supplier based in Los Angeles, California, so your final purchase price is \$2,500. The duty is 2%, so the freight price is \$500, insurance is \$100, and you pay \$5 per package sent to customers. However, since the transaction is in U.S. dollars, a payment processing fee of \$2 per item is charged. The net costs are:

- Product: \$10 per item.
- Shipping: total shipping cost is \$500 for 250 items, so \$2 per unit.
- Customs fees: 2%, which is a total of \$50 or \$0.20 per item.
- Risk: \$5 for packing each item + \$100 for insurance for 250 items, totaling \$5.40 per unit.

Operating Expenses: \$2.00 per unit.

The Landed Cost is: $\$10 + \$2 + \$0.20 + \$5.40 + \$2 = \19.60 . In this case, in order to achieve profitability, a pair of sneakers should be sold at \$19.60 per pair, and this number should be increased in order to achieve profits.

2.19 Improving the import process.

Since Mark Sport is a company that sells imported footwear from countries such as the United States and China, improvements in the process are required. The following are some of the points that are considered important:

An important factor for improvement would be given by increasing import volumes to reduce costs in the import process, while the same value is paid to the customs bonded agent to remove a container; however, this means that Mark Sport must make a greater investment of the imported product, but the advantage is that what is offered is not perishable, although that would mean digital marketing strategies, for example, through the offer in social networks of imported footwear to be sold more quickly, this to recover in less time the investment.

The above is anchored to the idea of increasing the working capital that, in the absence of the necessary investment to import a greater volume of footwear, a loan is made to the bank, but this would also require digital marketing strategies to increase the sale of the product and, therefore, reduce the interest on the loan acquired with the bank.

A point to consider is the supply of quality footwear that countries like Colombia offer, and not only direct import actions from China or the United States. This is because at the level of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) there is a benefit granted after a trade agreement between the countries of the region with Ecuador, that the mixed tariff with Colombia, for example, is reduced to 0%, which which generates a profit and benefit for the company that imports products from this country according to Rivera (2021), which means that certain items would not be paid for, thus reducing investment costs and, therefore, allowing the use of strategies such as promotions or discounts for the end consumer.

An element to consider in terms of reducing the cost of constant travel to the countries to which the product is imported, due to negotiation issues, would be for suppliers to strengthen spaces of trust so that buyers can check models through digital means and, thus, reach the final process of purchasing the product online. This would also have a positive impact on the action of importing certain items that are reduced due to permanent travel abroad.

As a strategy to improve the import process from countries such as China, for example, it would be given by the so-called groupage or LCL (Less Than Container Load) shipping, or type of maritime transport in which the cargo is shared in a container between goods from two or more shippers or suppliers. According to Bull Importer (2022), this strategy is useful especially for small importers, who do not carry a large volume of goods and the port of origin and destination is the same, whose advantages, according to him, are obtained in savings in transportation costs, but this requires that the documentation of each one is complete so that there are no delays in delivery.

To finish with the improvements, it is important to take care of our merchandise so that it does not generate loss, so it is necessary that the declaration of the invoice value is the actual value paid, because currently the thresholds for the importation of footwear by the Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade, Investments and Fisheries.

Chapter 3: Market research and marketing proposal through virtual media

3.1. Market Study

The market study was carried out by means of a structured questionnaire with 15 closed questions, on a Likert scale and multiple choice, which was applied to the clients of the company Mark Sport. The form was made in Google forms and was sent via email to customers. With a waiting time of two months, the questionnaire was closed with a total of 710 completed surveys.

3.1.1. Market Research

In the early days of Mark Sport with its footwear imports, the target market was defined as the population of the city of Cuenca, with an eye on the national level, so it reinvented its sales to marketing to other cities in the country such as Loja, Quito, and Guayaquil. Currently, after the pandemic Mark Sport wants to investigate the market to know consumer preferences and apply them to online sales. That is why, the methodology in this study establishes the trends derived from the applied field study, with which it will be possible to obtain from primary sources a criterion attached to the current reality of the sports footwear market in the city. To obtain the information, a questionnaire with 17 questions was applied to a sample selected by convenience of 710 customers.

3.1.1.1. Descriptive Research

Based on the above, a descriptive study was conducted, which for Deobold et al. (2016) should describe situations, customs, and prevailing attitudes through the accurate description of activities, objects, processes, and subjects. From this perspective of study, researchers gather information based on a hypothesis or theory, expose and synthesize the data in a methodical way and then carefully analyze the results, in pursuit of knowing significant generalizations that contribute to knowledge (Deobold et al., 2016).

In this case, descriptive research will be applied for the market research conducted by Mark Sport. Descriptive research focuses on describing situations, customs, attitudes, and predominant characteristics in a certain context. In this study, researchers collect information based on a hypothesis or theory, carefully present and summarize the data, and then analyze it thoroughly to draw meaningful generalizations that contribute to knowledge.

Methods

Quantitative research was applied in the study, this is about collecting and studying numerical data, it is also ideal for identifying predispositions and averages, making

predictions, checking relationships, and obtaining general results of significant populations, as in the present study refers to the population of the city of Cuenca (Ochoa et al., 2020). In the study conducted by Mark Sport, quantitative research was applied, which is characterized by collecting and analyzing numerical data to obtain general results and establish relationships between variables. This methodology is especially useful when seeking quantifiable and statistically valid information to make informed decisions.

In the context of this market study, quantitative research allowed the collection of numerical data through surveys applied to a representative sample of the target population, which in this case are the clients of Mark Sport in the city of Cuenca. By using closed questions in the survey, Likert scale and multiple choice, responses are obtained that can be quantified and analyzed statistically.

Research techniques and instruments

The survey will be used to obtain primary information from the population determined for the study.

Survey

It is a technique used through the application of a questionnaire to a sample of people. Surveys provide information on opinions, attitudes, and behaviors (Hernández et al., (2018). The application of surveys in Mark Sport's market research allowed obtaining valuable information about consumer preferences in the athletic footwear market. These surveys provided detailed data on footwear styles, brands, desired features, appropriate price points, and more. Trends and patterns were identified, customer satisfaction was assessed, and demographic data was collected to segment the market. The information obtained supported strategic decisions, improved product, and service offerings, and enabled us to adapt to market needs more effectively.

3.1.1.4. Population

In statistics, population refers to the complete set of all individuals, objects, events or measures that share a common characteristic and are of interest for a particular study (Pastor, 2019). For this study, a population of 950 clients of the analysis entity was considered, which had records from the months of December 2022 to April 2023. The

information was cleaned by eliminating duplicity of clients to obtain the exact population of the number of consumers existing in that period.

3.1.1.5. Sample

The sampling was by convenience, this is a non-probability sampling method in which subjects are selected based on their availability and accessibility to participate in the research. That is, subjects are selected because they are available and convenient for the researcher. This sampling method is commonly used in exploratory studies, where the main objective is to obtain preliminary information about a specific topic. It is also used in research where the researcher has limited access to the population, such as in single case studies or in studies with small populations (Hernández O., 2021). For the study, the sample consisted of 710 clients who completed the entire questionnaire.

3.1.2. Analysis and Results of the market study

With the field activity it has been possible to obtain information from primary sources that justifies and supports the development of the proposed problem; therefore, the respective analyses will be defined according to the results obtained.

3.1.2.1. Respondent age

Table 7 shows the age distribution of the respondents of the Mark Sport footwear commercialization company. This information will be analyzed below to better understand the market trend and strengthen the import and marketing proposal through virtual media.

Table 6

Respondent's age

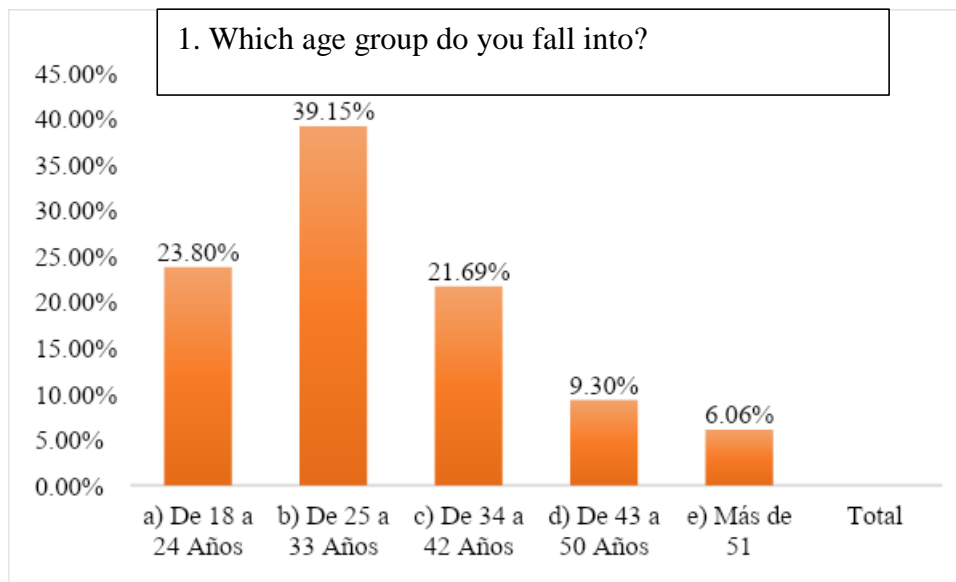
	Frequency	Percentage
a) From 18 to 24 Años	169	23.80%
b) From 25 to 33 Años	278	39.15%
c) From 34 to 42 Años	154	21.69%

d) From 43 to 50 Años	66	9.30%
e) Over 51	43	6.06%
<hr/>		
Total	710	100.0%
<hr/>		

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 27

Respondent's age



Source: Own elaboration

Result

The results show that most customers are in the 25-33 age range, with 39.15% of respondents. This indicates that this demographic group is one of the main market segments for the company.

The second largest group is in the 18 to 24 age range, representing 23.8% of respondents. Although this group has a significant share, it is important to note that customers aged 25 to 33 are the largest segment. Mark Sport may consider developing specific marketing strategies for these age groups, such as online promotions, social media advertising and collaborations with influencers or celebrities popular in these age groups.

Respondents aged 34 to 42 represent 21.69% of customers, followed by those aged 43 to 50 (9.3%) and those over 51 (6.6%). These segments are also important and should be considered when designing import and marketing strategies. Mark Sport can offer a

variety of products to suit different age groups, ensuring that there are attractive options for each of them.

Analysis

In terms of the virtual media marketing strategy, it is crucial that Mark Sport tailors its online presence and e-commerce platforms to cater to these different age groups. For example, younger customers may prefer a more dynamic online shopping experience and use platforms such as Instagram or TikTok to discover new products and trends. On the other hand, older customers may value a more intuitive e-commerce interface and personalized customer service.

3.1.2.2. Gender

To analyze the market trend and strengthen the import and marketing proposal of the Mark Sport footwear marketing company through virtual means, one can begin by examining the data provided in Table 6 related to the gender of the customers.

Table 7

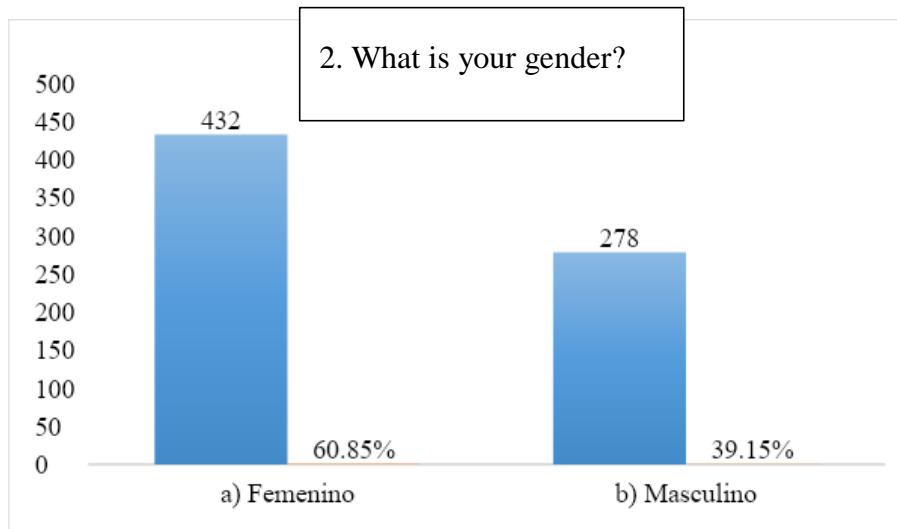
Gender

	Frecuencia	Porcentaje
a) Femenino	432	60.85%
b) Masculino	278	39.15%
Total	710	100.00%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 28

Gender



Source: Own elaboration

Results

The table shows that a total of 710 clients have been registered. The gender distribution shows that 60.85% of the clients are female, while 39.15% are male. This indicates that the majority of Mark Sport's clients are women. This information is valuable for the company, as they can target their marketing efforts and import strategies towards footwear products that are more popular among women.

Analysis

In addition, given the context of strengthening the import and virtual media marketing proposition, it is important to consider the growing trend of online shopping and the rise of e-commerce. This suggests that Mark Sport can focus on developing a strong online presence and improving its e-commerce platform to capture and serve a wider audience.

Also, the company could consider marketing strategies specifically for men, as they account for nearly 40% of the customer base. This could include promoting attractive men's footwear products, creating content and marketing campaigns targeted to men, and improving the online shopping experience for this customer segment.

3.1.2.3. Size Range

Table 8 presents the frequency distribution of the different shoe size ranges of Mark Sport's respondents. This information will be analyzed to understand the market trend in

terms of the most common sizes among customers and to strengthen the importation and decrease the purchase of slow-moving footwear.

Table 8

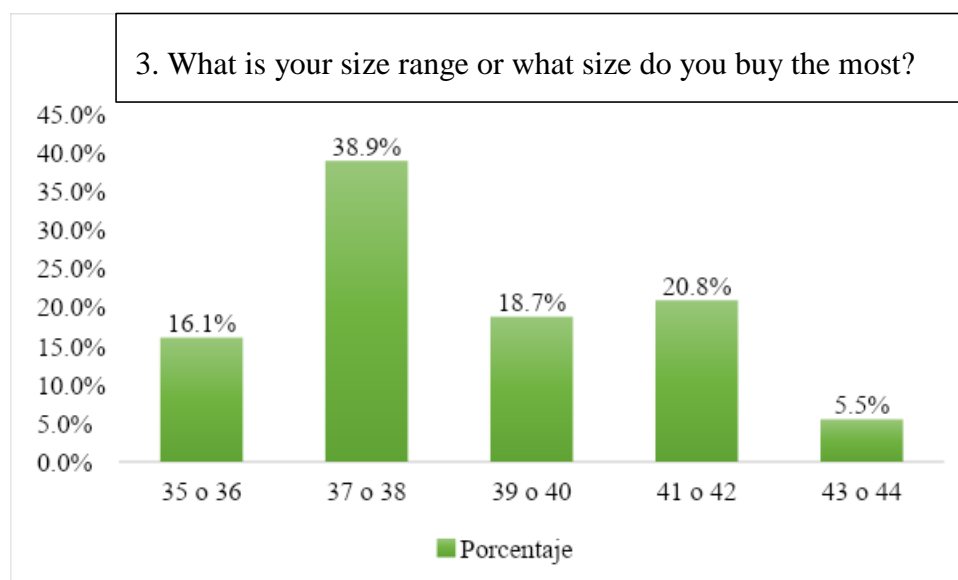
Size range

	Frequency	Percentage
35 or 36	114	16.1%
37 or 38	276	38.9%
39 or 40	133	18.7%
41 or 42	148	20.8%
43 or 44	39	5.5%
Total	710	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 29

Size range



Source: Own elaboration

Result

The results show that the most common size range is 37 or 38, with 38.9% of respondents selecting this option. This indicates that most Mark Sport customers have shoe sizes in

this range. The second most common size range is 41 or 42, with 20.8% of respondents. This is followed by the 39 or 40 size range accounting for 18.7% of respondents. These three size ranges (37 or 38, 41 or 42, 39 or 40) are the most significant and should be considered when selecting products to import and designing marketing strategies.

Analysis

It is important for Mark Sport to ensure that it has sufficient inventory in these most common size ranges to meet customer demand. This may include identifying reliable suppliers and implementing an effective inventory management system to avoid product shortages in these popular sizes.

In addition, the company may consider offering a wide variety of footwear styles and designs in these more common size ranges to cater to individual customer preferences. This may include different types of footwear, such as sneakers, formal or casual shoes, and sandals, among others.

As for the less frequent size ranges, such as 35 or 36 and 43 or 44, they represent a lower percentage of respondents. However, this does not mean that customers wearing these sizes should be neglected. Mark Sport may consider offering customization options or special ordering to meet the needs of these customers and ensure an inclusive and satisfying shopping experience.

In summary, by analyzing the distribution of respondents' size ranges, Mark Sport can identify the most common and popular sizes among its customers. By ensuring that it has sufficient inventory and offers a variety of styles and designs in these size ranges, the company can strengthen its position in the market and meet the needs of its customers. In addition, it is important to consider customers who use fewer common sizes and to consider customization options or special orders to provide a complete and satisfactory service.

3.1.2.4. Safety when buying online.

Table 9 provides information on the perception of security when shopping online by the respondents of the Mark Sport company. This information is relevant to understand the market trend and strengthen the import and marketing strategy through virtual means.

Table 9

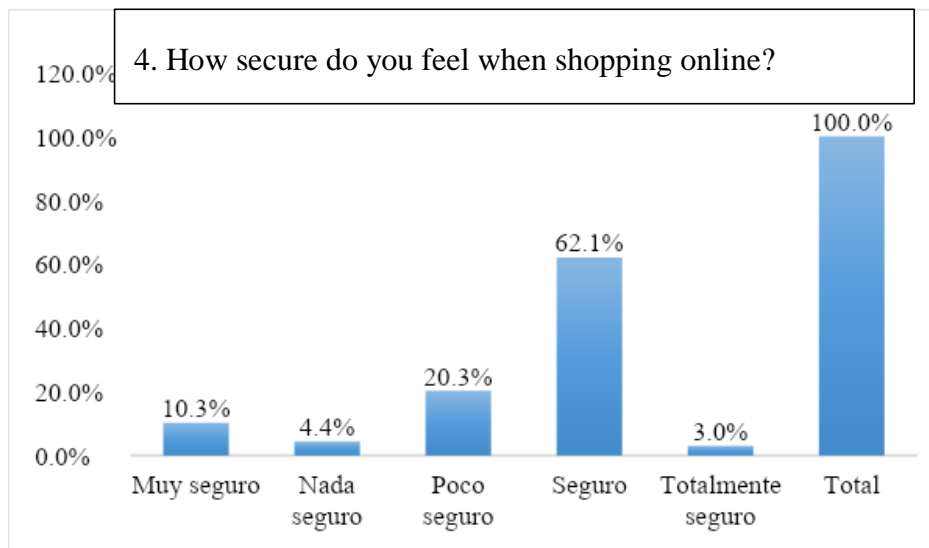
Safety when buying online.

	Frequency	Percentage
Very safe	73	10.3%
Not at all safe	31	4.4%
Not very safe	144	20.3%
Safe	441	62.1%
Completely sure	21	3.0%
Total	710	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 30

Security when buying online



Source: Own elaboration

Result

The results show that most respondents feel safe shopping online, with 62.10% of respondents selecting the "Safe" option. This finding is encouraging and suggests that there is a solid base of customers who are confident in the safety of online shopping. This is relevant for Mark Sport as it seeks to strengthen its virtual marketing proposition.

Perception of security is a crucial factor in e-commerce success, as customers need to feel comfortable and confident when shopping online.

Although most respondents feel secure when shopping online, it is also important to consider those who expressed lower levels of security. 20.3% of respondents selected the option "Not very secure", and a small percentage selected the options "Very secure" (10.3%), "Not at all secure" (4.4%) and "Completely secure" (3.0%).

This indicates that there is still a significant proportion of potential customers who may have doubts or concerns about security when shopping online. To strengthen the import and virtual media marketing proposition, Mark Sport can implement strategies to address these concerns and increase customer confidence.

Analysis

To strengthen the virtual import and marketing strategy, Mark Sport can consider several actions. First, it is important to provide clear information about the security measures implemented in your e-commerce platform, such as data encryption, secure payment methods, and customer protection policies. In addition, incorporating testimonials or reviews from satisfied customers who have had a secure experience shopping online with Mark Sport can increase the confidence of potential buyers.

On the other hand, offering return or refund guarantees can also give customers peace of mind in case they are not satisfied with their purchase. Establishing effective communication with customers, responding quickly to their queries and providing assistance on security-related issues, is also crucial. In addition, it is essential for Mark Sport to stay up to date with online security trends and best practices, protecting customer data and collaborating with trusted cybersecurity partners. Overall, by implementing robust security measures, providing clear information, and establishing effective communication with customers, Mark Sport can strengthen its virtual import and marketing strategy, building trust and success in the marketplace.

3.1.2.5. Frequency of Purchase

Table 10 provides data on the frequency with which Mark Sport's customers make online purchases. This data is important for understanding how customers behave when shopping and for adjusting the company's strategy in terms of importing and marketing in the virtual realm.

Table 10

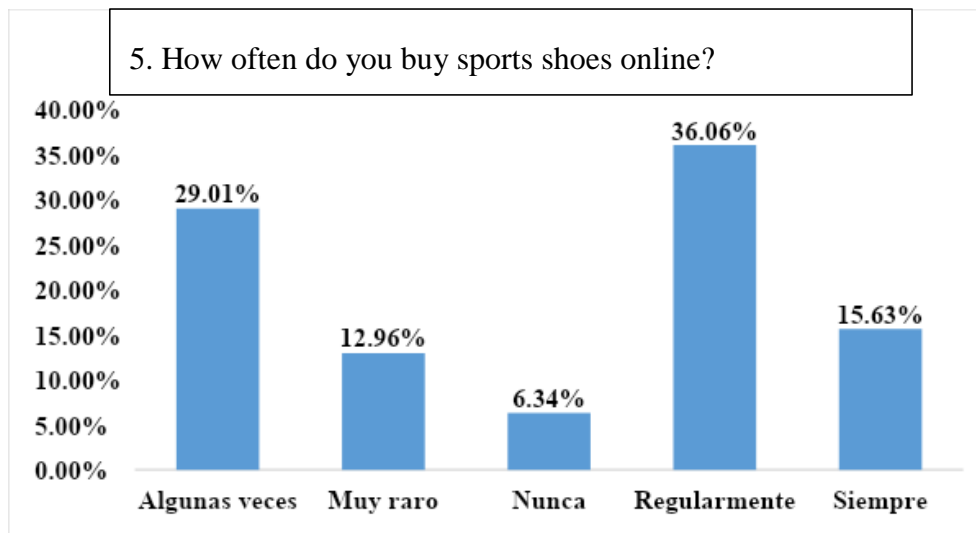
Frequency of online purchases

	Frequency	Percentage
Sometimes	206	29.01%
Very rarely	92	12.96%
Never	45	6.34%
Regularly	256	36.06%
Always	111	15.63%
Total	710	100.00%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 31

Frequency of online purchases



Source: Own elaboration

Result

When analyzing the online purchasing trend of the respondents, it can be observed that there is a solid base of customers who make purchases on a regular basis, representing 36.1% of the respondents. This indicates a stable preference for e-commerce and suggests an opportunity to strengthen the import and marketing strategy through virtual means.

In addition, 29.01% of respondents make occasional online purchases, indicating that there is a significant segment of customers who use e-commerce at specific times. This highlights the importance of capturing the attention and fostering the loyalty of these occasional customers through personalized marketing strategies and promotions.

On the other hand, 13.0% of respondents stated that they rarely shop online, while 6.3% indicated that they have never shopped online. These lower percentages reveal that there are still people who are not comfortable or have reservations about shopping online. Addressing these concerns and providing clear and reliable information about the security and convenience of e-commerce is critical to gaining the trust of these customer segments.

Finally, 15.6% of respondents indicated that they always shop online. This group represents loyal and committed e-commerce customers. It is important to maintain effective communication with this segment, providing exceptional service and seeking opportunities to foster their loyalty.

Analysis

To strengthen the import and marketing strategy through virtual media, Mark Sport can implement several actions. First, it is important to specifically target customers who make regular online purchases and offer them additional incentives to encourage their loyalty. This could include exclusive discounts, rewards or membership programs that motivate them to continue choosing the brand.

Strategies should also be developed to attract those customers who make occasional or sporadic online purchases. This involves implementing personalized marketing campaigns, special promotions and improving the online shopping experience to make it more attractive and convenient.

It is crucial to identify the reasons why some respondents answered that they never shop online and address those concerns. This can be achieved by providing clear and reliable information about the security of online transactions, offering personalized assistance in making online purchases, and establishing flexible return policies that give customers peace of mind.

In addition, Mark Sport must keep abreast of the latest trends and technologies in e-commerce to quickly adapt to changing customer needs and preferences. This involves

keeping abreast of new platforms and tools, as well as best practices in terms of security, user experience and logistics.

By implementing these actions, Mark Sport will be strengthening its virtual import and marketing strategy, engaging, and building loyalty with regular customers, attracting occasional shoppers, addressing the concerns of those who do not buy online, and staying ahead of market trends.

In short, by understanding customers' online shopping frequency, Mark Sport can adjust its virtual import and marketing strategy to meet the needs of different customer segments. By targeting existing customers, attracting occasional shoppers, and addressing the concerns of those who do not buy online, the company can strengthen its market presence and increase sales through virtual media.

3.1.2.6. Brand Preference

The trend of the footwear brand market can be analyzed from the data provided in table 11. These results are intended to determine the purchasing preferences with respect to brands. This would prevent the company from importing large quantities of footwear of those brands that are less demanded by the market.

Table 11

Brand preference

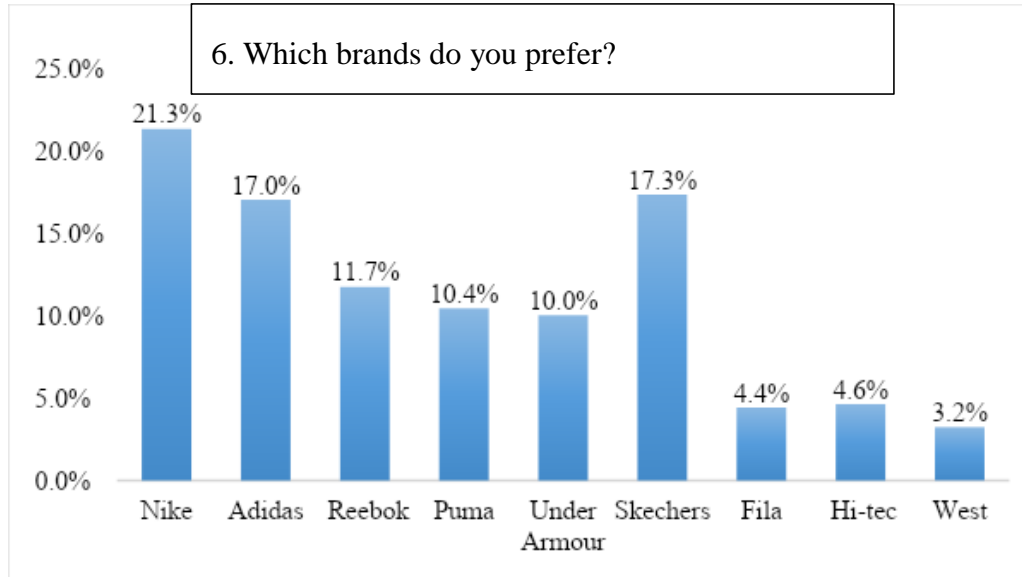
	Frecuencia	Porcentaje
Nike	198	21.3%
Adidas	158	17.0%
Reebok	109	11.7%
Puma	97	10.4%
Under Armour	93	10.0%
Skechers	161	17.3%
Fila	41	4.4%
Hi-tec	43	4.6%
West	30	3.2%

Total	930	100.0%
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Source: Own elaboration

Figure 32

Brand preference



Source: Own elaboration

Result

In the analyzed market study, the preference of brands by the participants is shown. The table provides the frequency and percentage of each brand mentioned.

According to the data presented, the most preferred brand by the respondents is Nike, with a frequency of 198, representing approximately 21.3% of the total valid responses. It is followed by Adidas, with a frequency of 158 and a percentage of 17.0%. Reebok ranks third with a frequency of 109 and a percentage of 11.7%. Puma and Under Armour also have a significant presence, with frequencies of 97 and 93, respectively, and percentages of 10.4% and 10.0%.

Skechers is another popular brand in this sample, with a frequency of 161 and a percentage of 17.3%. Fila, Hi-tec and West have a smaller presence in comparison, with frequencies of 41, 43 and 30, and percentages of 4.4%, 4.6% and 3.2%, respectively.

Overall, Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Puma, Under Armour and Skechers are the brands most preferred by respondents in this market study. These brands account for most valid

responses, indicating their popularity in the target market. However, it is important to note that these results are sample specific and may not reflect the general preferences of all consumers.

Analysis

The market trend reveals a strong preference for established brands such as Nike and Adidas, but also shows opportunities for emerging brands. Puma, Under Armour and Skechers are growing and gaining popularity among consumers, indicating healthy competition in the market. Consumers have a wide variety of choices available to them, creating an environment conducive to growth and development for both new and existing brands.

Therefore, seizing opportunities in the footwear brand market will require strengthening the leading brand, competing closely with prominent brands, driving growth of up-and-coming brands, exploiting opportunities for emerging brands, and encouraging brand diversification and combinations. These strategies involve highlighting the distinctive values and attributes of the leading brand, developing differentiated marketing strategies to compete with leading brands, investing in research and development for the growth of up-and-coming brands, highlighting the unique value proposition of emerging brands, and offering attractive product combinations to satisfy diversified consumer preferences. By implementing these strategies effectively, brands can strengthen their market position and take advantage of growth opportunity.

3.1.2.7. Price range

Table 12 analyzes the market trend in terms of consumer preferences in relation to the price range of products. This information is crucial for companies, as it allows them to understand which price segments are most popular and to adapt their pricing strategies accordingly. The analysis focuses on four specific categories covering different price levels: "Less than \$50", "Between \$50 and \$100", "Between \$100 and \$150" and "More than \$150".

Table 12

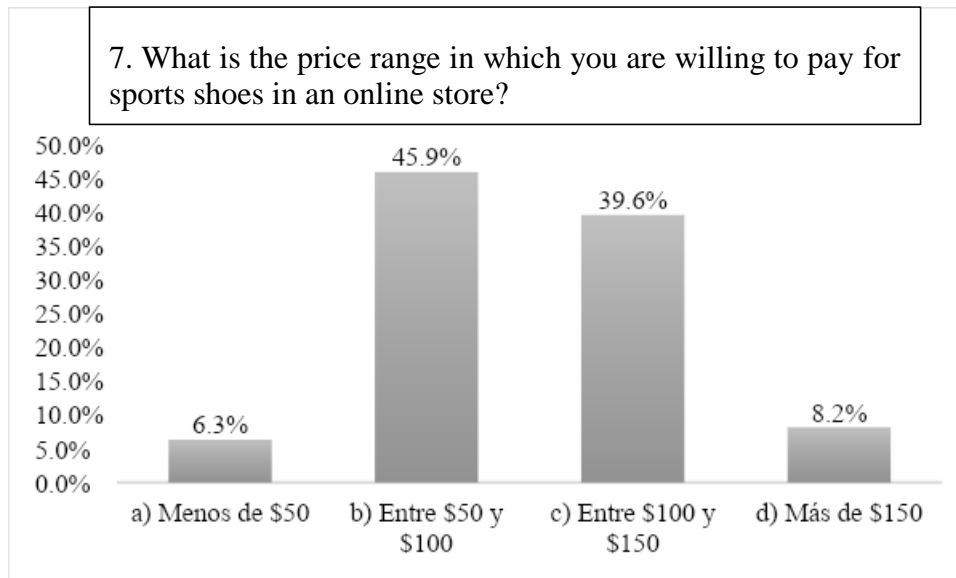
Price range

	Frequency	Percentage
a) Less than\$50	45	6.3%
b) Between \$50 and \$100	326	45.9%
c) Between \$100 and \$150	281	39.6%
d) More than\$150	58	8.2%
Total	710	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 33

Price range



Source: Own elaboration

Result

The analysis of the table reveals important information about consumer preferences in relation to the price range of products. The most frequent and preferred category is "Between \$50 and \$100", with a frequency of 326, representing 45.9% of respondents. This result indicates that a large proportion of consumers are attracted to products within this price range. In addition, this category also contributes significantly to the cumulative percentage of 52.4%, highlighting its importance in the market.

The next most preferred category is "Between \$100 and \$150," with a frequency of 2801 and a valid percentage of 39.6%. Although it has a slightly lower frequency than the previous category, this is still a popular choice among consumers. In addition, its contribution to the cumulative percentage of 91.8% indicates that many consumers are willing to invest in products in this price range.

The "Less than \$50" category shows a frequency of 45, representing 6.3% of respondents. Although it has the lowest frequency among the categories, it still has a notable presence in the market. This result suggests that there are consumers looking for affordable and economical products. Despite its lower frequency, the contribution to the cumulative percentage of 6.5% shows that this category has its own niche in the market.

Finally, the "Over \$150" category has a frequency of 58 and a valid percentage of 8.2%. Although it is the category with the lowest frequency compared to the others, there is still a preference for higher priced products among some consumers. Its contribution to the cumulative percentage of 100.0% indicates that, although to a lesser extent, this category has its own space in the market.

Analysis

To take advantage of consumers' preference for products in the \$50 to \$150 price range, companies can offer a wide variety of products in different price ranges, emphasizing the balance between quality and price. In addition, they can run targeted promotions and discounts to attract consumers interested in bargains and savings opportunities. Offering financing options or flexible payment plans can also facilitate access to higher-priced products. These strategies will help meet consumers' needs and preferences, thus strengthening the companies' competitive position in the marketplace.

3.1.2.8. Company characteristics when buying online.

Table 13 provides information on consumer preferences when shopping online based on company characteristics. The options include ease of return, fast shipping time, quick response to questions and concerns, and payment methods.

Table 13

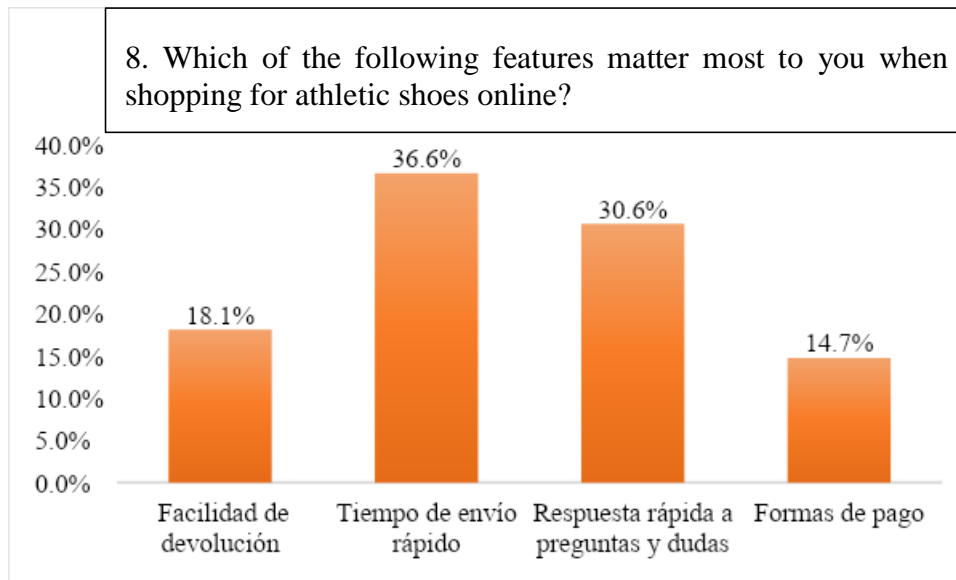
Company characteristics when shopping online

	Frequency	Percentage
Ease of return	157	18.1%
Fast shipping time	318	36.6%
Quick response to questions and concerns	266	30.6%
Payment methods	128	14.7%
Total	869	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 34

Company characteristics when buying online



Source: Own elaboration

Result

In the analyzed market research, the characteristics of the company when buying online are presented, showing the frequency and percentage of each characteristic mentioned by the participants.

According to the data provided, the feature most valued by respondents when buying online is "Fast shipping time", with a frequency of 318, representing approximately

36.6% of the total valid responses. This indicates that fast delivery time is an important factor for consumers.

The next most mentioned characteristic is "Quick response to questions and doubts", with a frequency of 266 and a percentage of 30.6%. This highlights the importance of having efficient and responsive customer service to resolve any concerns customers may have during the online purchasing process.

"Ease of return" is also considered a relevant feature, with a frequency of 157 and a percentage of 18.1%. Consumers value the ability to easily return products if they are not satisfied with their purchase.

Lastly, "Payment methods" is mentioned less frequently, with a frequency of 128 and a percentage of 14.7%. While not as prominent as the other features, it is still an important consideration for consumers when shopping online, as they want secure and convenient payment options.

Therefore, fast shipping time, quick response to questions and doubts, easy returns and payment methods are the features most mentioned and valued by respondents when shopping online according to the market research analyzed. These features are important to meet consumers' expectations and needs in the e-commerce environment.

Analysis

Analysis of consumers' online shopping preferences reveals that there are key features that influence their purchase decision. Ease of return stands out as the most valued feature, followed closely by fast shipping time. These two features have a significant impact on the cumulative percentage, indicating their importance to consumers.

Quick response to questions and concerns is also a valued feature, demonstrating that consumers are looking for efficient and effective customer service. Finally, although to a lesser extent, payment methods also play a role in consumers' purchase decision when shopping online.

This analysis reveals that companies should pay particular attention to these features when developing their e-commerce strategies. Improving the ease of returns, optimizing shipping time, implementing rapid response systems, and diversifying payment options can be effective strategies for attracting and retaining customers in the online environment.

Companies that focus on improving these key features will be able to deliver a more satisfying online shopping experience tailored to consumers' expectations. By tailoring their operations and services to meet these preferences, companies will be able to increase consumer confidence and foster greater loyalty to their brand.

3.1.2.9. Online payment method preferences

The analysis of online payment method preferences in Table 14 plays a critical role in planning and executing successful business strategies in the digital environment. The results are presented below.

Table 14

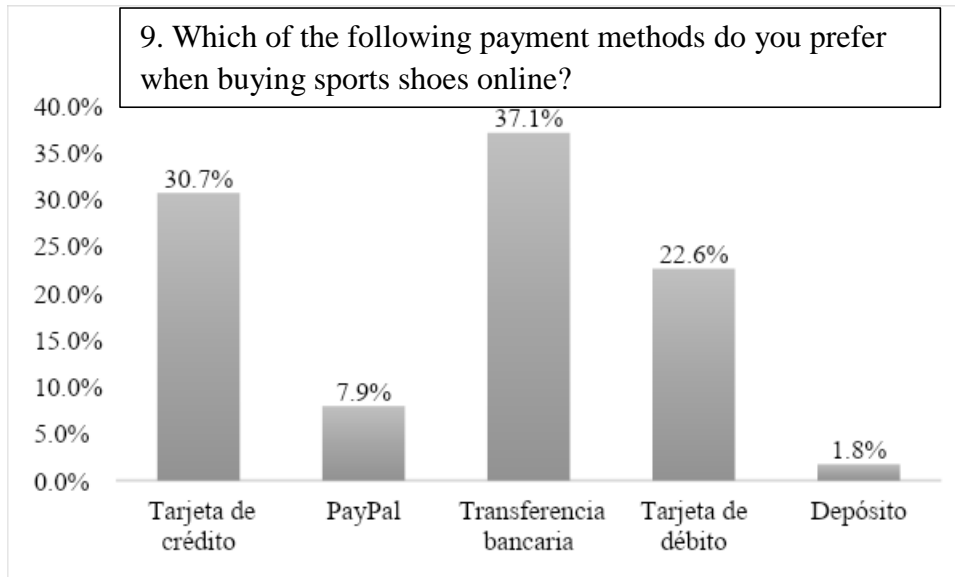
Online payment method preferences

	Frequency	Percentage
Credit card	244	30.7%
PayPal	63	7.9%
Bank transfer	295	37.1%
Debit card	180	22.6%
Deposit	14	1.8%
Total	796	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 35

Company characteristics when buying online.



Source: Own elaboration

Result

In the analyzed market study, the forms of payment used by the participants when making purchases are presented. The table provides the frequency and percentage of each form of payment mentioned.

According to the data provided, the payment method most used by the respondents is "Bank Transfer", with a frequency of 295, representing approximately 37.1% of the total valid responses. This indicates that most consumers prefer to make payments through bank transfers when shopping.

"Credit card" is the second most frequent form of payment, with a frequency of 244 and a percentage of 30.7%. This indicates that a significant proportion of respondents prefer to use credit cards when making purchases.

"Debit card" is also mentioned frequently, with a frequency of 180 and a percentage of 22.6%. This suggests that a considerable portion of consumers prefer to use their debit cards to make online payments.

To a lesser extent, the use of "PayPal" is mentioned, with a frequency of 63 and a percentage of 7.9%. PayPal is a widely used online payment platform but appears to be less preferred compared to other options in this specific sample.

Finally, the use of "Deposit" as a payment method is mentioned on only 14 occasions, representing a percentage of 1.8%. This indicates that bank deposit is a less common option among respondents.

In summary, according to the market research analyzed, the most used payment methods by respondents when making purchases are bank transfer and credit card. Debit card and PayPal are also mentioned with some frequency, but to a lesser extent. It is important to note that these results are specific to the sample and may not reflect the general preferences of all consumers.

Analysis

In general, it is important for the company to offer a variety of payment methods to meet the preferences and needs of consumers, making sure to include credit cards, PayPal, bank transfer and debit cards as main options. This will enable customers to make purchases conveniently and securely, increasing satisfaction and enhancing the online shopping experience.

In this regard, the company can consider payment strategies that include simplifying the payment process, providing financing options, implementing robust security systems, offering special promotions and discounts, exploring new payment technologies, and providing excellent customer service. These strategies can enhance the customer shopping experience, increase customer satisfaction, and foster brand loyalty.

3.1.2.10. Willingness to pay more for exclusive athletic footwear.

The results in Table 15 focus on understanding consumers' willingness to pay more for exclusive athletic footwear becomes a key factor for companies, enabling them to adapt their products and marketing strategies to meet the expectations of this evolving market segment.

Table 15

Willingness to pay more for exclusive athletic footwear.

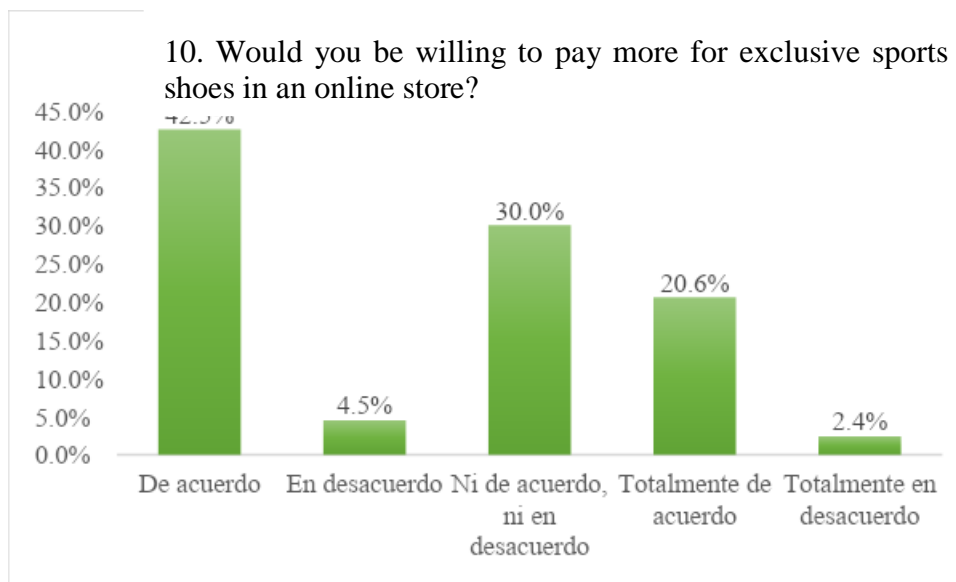
	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	302	42.5%
Disagree	32	4.5%

Neither agree, nor disagree	213	30.0%
Strongly agree	146	20.6%
Strongly Disagree	17	2.4%
<hr/>		
Total	710	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 36

Willingness to pay more for exclusive athletic footwear.



Source: Own elaboration

Results

When analyzing the market research on the willingness to pay more for exclusive sports footwear, it can be observed that there is a clear trend among consumers. A considerable percentage of respondents are willing to pay more for this type of footwear, with 42.5% agreeing and 20.6% strongly agreeing. This indicates a preference for exclusivity and a willingness to invest more in unique and exclusive products.

However, a smaller group of people (4.5%) is also identified as disagreeing with paying more for this type of footwear. Although their frequency is lower, their opinion is still relevant in the analysis.

It is interesting to note that a significant percentage of respondents (30.0%) show neutrality in their willingness to pay more for exclusive athletic footwear. This indicates that there is a segment of consumers that could be persuaded or influenced by appropriate marketing strategies.

Analysis

In general, the company can leverage this information to develop marketing strategies that target those consumers who are willing to pay more for exclusive athletic footwear. This could include creating exclusive products and lines, promoting exclusivity and brand differentiation, and communicating the unique values and attributes of the products.

3.1.2.11. Market Preference for Promotions and Sales Information

Table 16 analyzes the market trend and preference in relation to the advertising and social networking options of the test company. Interesting patterns are observed that can provide valuable information.

Table 16

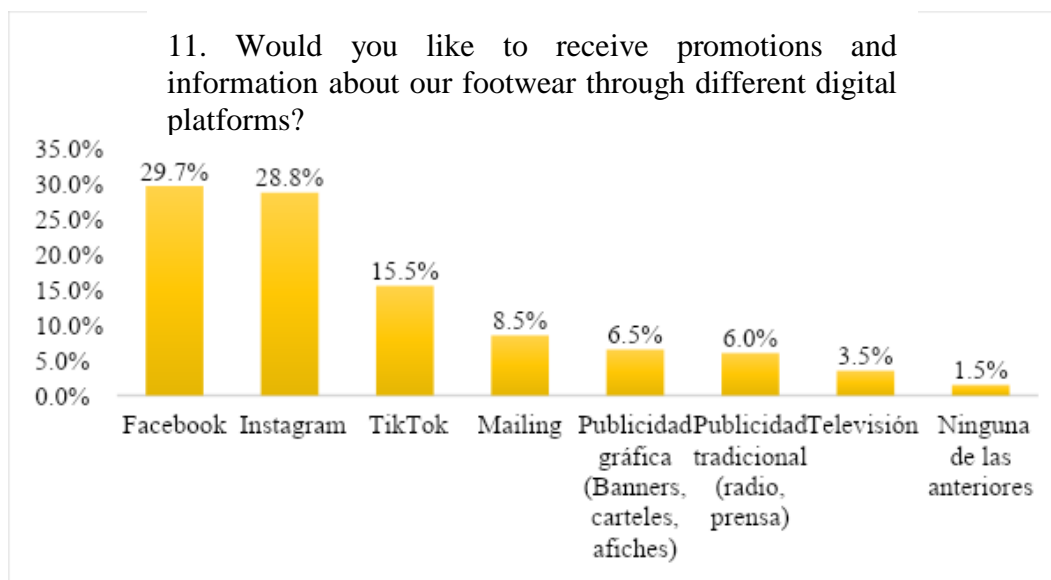
Market preference for promotions and sales information

	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	283	29.7%
Instagram	274	28.8%
TikTok	148	15.5%
Mailing	81	8.5%
Display advertising (banners, posters, billboards)	62	6.5%
Traditional advertising (radio, press)	57	6.0%
Television	33	3.5%
None of the above	14	1.5%
Total	952	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 37

Willingness to pay more for exclusive sports footwear



Source: Own elaboration

Results

In the analyzed market research, the market preference in terms of promotions and sales information is shown. The table provides the frequency and percentage of each platform or method mentioned. According to the data presented, the platform most preferred by respondents to obtain promotions and sales information is Facebook, with a frequency of 283, representing approximately 29.7% of the total valid responses. It is closely followed by Instagram, with a frequency of 274 and a percentage of 28.8%.

These results show the significant influence of social networks in the promotion and dissemination of sales information. TikTok is also mentioned as a preferred platform by a considerable proportion of respondents, with a frequency of 148 and a percentage of 15.5%. This reflects the growing popularity of TikTok as a source of content and promotions for consumers. As for more traditional methods of advertising, "Mailing" (sending emails) is mentioned with a frequency of 81 and a percentage of 8.5%. Graphic advertising" (banners, posters, billboards) and "Traditional advertising" (radio, press) are also mentioned with frequencies of 62 and 57, respectively, and percentages of 6.5% and 6.0%. In comparison, "Television" is mentioned less frequently, with a frequency of 33 and a percentage of 3.5%. A small percentage of respondents (1.5%) indicated that none of the above options was their preference. In summary, according to the market research

analyzed, social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, are preferred by respondents for promotions and sales information.

In addition, TikTok also has a significant presence in this regard. However, more traditional methods of advertising, such as mailing, display advertising and traditional advertising, are also mentioned by a proportion of respondents. Television has a lower preference in this context. It is important to note that these results reflect the preferences of the specific sample and may vary in different market segments.

Analysis

The survey results reveal that Facebook and Instagram are the most used platforms for advertising, reflecting their prominence in the market. However, the company should consider a mix of platforms and advertising approaches to adapt to changing consumer preferences. Likewise, display and traditional advertising still have a relevant place in marketing strategies. By understanding these trends and preferences, an organization can make more informed decisions to effectively reach its target audience and maximize the impact of its advertising campaigns.

3.1.2.12. Market color preference in sports shoes

By analyzing table 17 of color preference in sports shoes, several interesting findings can be extracted.

Table 17

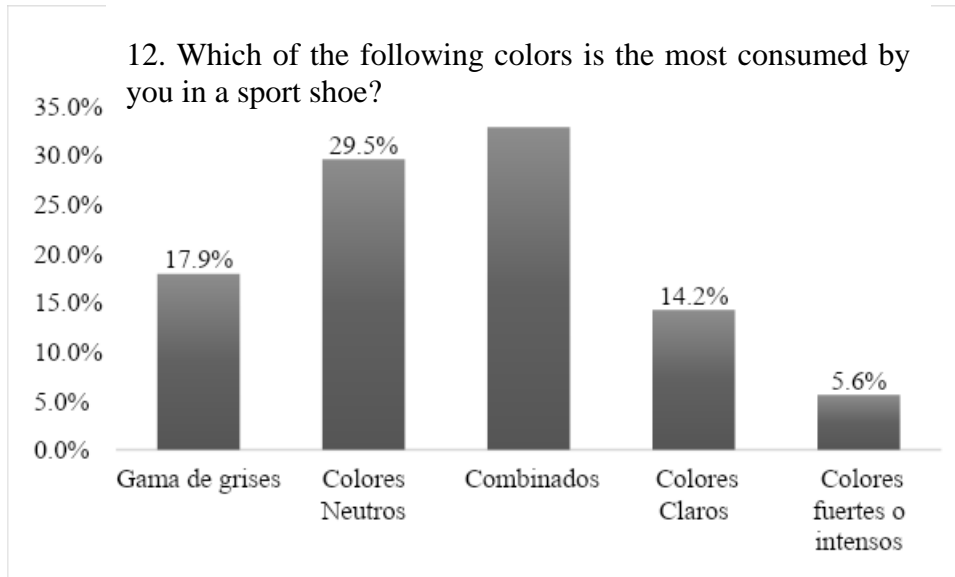
Color preference in sports shoes

	Frequency	Percentage
Range of grays	147	17.9%
Neutral colors	243	29.5%
Combined colors	270	32.8%
Light colors	117	14.2%
Strong or intense colors	46	5.6%
Total	823	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 38

Preference of colors in sports shoes



Source: Own elaboration

Results

According to the data, the most preferred color category by respondents is "Combined", with a frequency of 270, representing approximately 32.8% of the total valid responses. This indicates that consumers are inclined towards sneakers that feature a combination of different colors.

The color category "Neutral Colors" is also frequently mentioned, with a frequency of 243 and a percentage of 29.5%. Neutral colors, such as white, black, gray and beige, are considered versatile and easy to combine with different outfits, which may explain their popularity among sneaker consumers.

"Range of grays" also has a significant presence, with a frequency of 147 and a percentage of 17.9%. Shades of gray are often seen as a stylish and versatile choice in athletic shoe design.

To a lesser extent, "Light Colors" are mentioned with a frequency of 117 and a percentage of 14.2%. Light colors, such as white or pastel shades, can convey a feeling of freshness and lightness.

Finally, "Strong or intense colors" are mentioned less frequently, with a frequency of 46 and a percentage of 5.6%. These bold and vibrant colors may appeal to consumers looking to stand out with their choice of athletic footwear.

In summary, according to the market research analyzed, consumers show a preference for color-matched sneakers, followed closely by neutral colors. Gray ranges and light colors are also mentioned with some frequency. Strong or intense colors have a lower presence in respondents' preferences. These results reflect the preferences of the specific sample and may vary according to market segments and current fashion trends.

Analysis

The results in the table reveal that color combinations and neutral color choices have higher market acceptance. These findings can be useful for athletic footwear companies when designing products and marketing strategies that align with consumer preferences.

Strategies for the company include focusing on the range of grays and neutral colors, offering subtle color combinations, limiting light and bold/intense color choices, conducting ongoing market research, and providing customization options. These strategies seek to satisfy the most common consumer preferences, adapting to changing trends and offering products that suit customers' individual tastes.

3.1.2.13. Market preference for types of sneakers

The market's sport shoe type preference is an important factor to consider for footwear companies. Through market research, consumer trends and preferences can be identified in relation to the different types of sports shoes available. Table 18 presents the results of consumer preferences regarding the sports shoes sold by the company under analysis.

Table 18

Preference of type of sports shoe

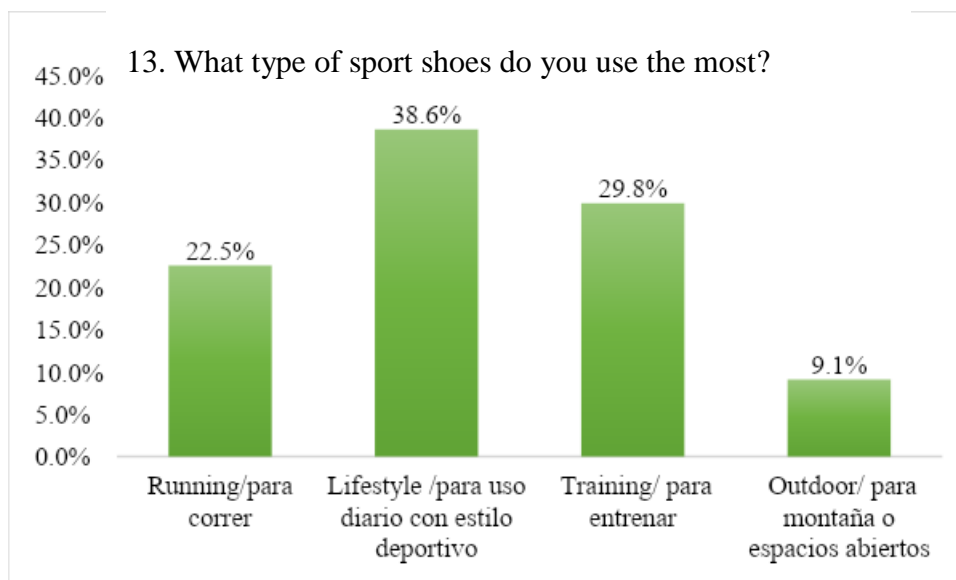
	Frequency	Percentage
Running	191	22.5%
Lifestyle /for daily use with sporty style	327	38.6%
Training/ para entrenar	253	29.8%

Outdoor/ for mountain	77	9.1%
Total	848	100.0%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 39

Preference of type of sports shoe



Source: Own elaboration

Results

Table 18 presents the preference of type of sports shoe among the respondents, with a total of 848 responses. The results obtained are detailed below:

As for the category "Running/for running," it represents 22.5% of the preferences, with a total of 191 responses. This suggests that a significant portion of respondents show a preference for this type of footwear designed specifically for running or running activities.

On the other hand, the category of "Lifestyle/for daily use with sporty style" is the most prominent among respondents, obtaining 38.6% of the responses, i.e. 327 people showed a preference for sporty style shoes for daily use and casual occasions.

Likewise, the category "Training/for training" obtained a considerable 29.8% of the preferences, with 253 responses. This indicates that a significant number of respondents prefer training shoes, intended for physical activities in gyms or other sports disciplines.

To a lesser extent, the "Outdoor/mountain or outdoor" category accounted for 9.1% of the preferences, with a total of 77 responses. This type of footwear is designed for outdoor activities, such as hiking or mountain excursions, suggesting that a minority of respondents show a preference for this specific type of footwear.

Analysis

The category most preferred by respondents is "Lifestyle/for everyday use with sporty style," followed by "Training/for training" and "Running/for running." The category of "Outdoor/for mountain or outdoors" received the lowest preference among respondents. These results are valuable in understanding consumer preferences regarding the type of athletic shoe and may be of use to the footwear industry in making business and strategic marketing decisions.

3.1.2.14. Willingness to purchase footwear online from the entity.

The willingness of consumers to purchase footwear online is a relevant aspect in today's market. Through an analysis of consumers' willingness, it is possible to determine their attitude towards purchasing footwear through online platforms. The results are shown in table 19.

Table 19

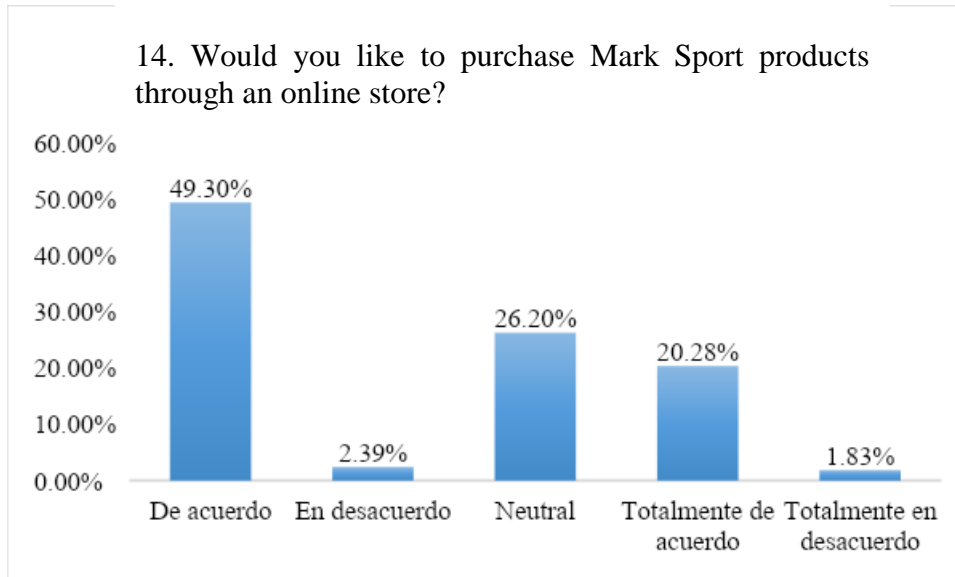
Willingness to purchase footwear online from the entity

	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	350	49.30%
Disagree	17	2.39%
Neutral	186	26.20%
Strongly agree	144	20.28%
Strongly disagree	13	1.83%
Total	710	100.00%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 40

Willingness to purchase footwear online from the entity.



Source: Own elaboration

Results

The table shows consumers' willingness to purchase footwear online. The results reveal that most respondents, 49.3%, agree to purchase footwear online. A smaller percentage, 2.4%, disagrees, while 26.2% are neutral. In addition, 20.3% strongly agree and 1.8% strongly disagree.

These findings indicate that there is widespread acceptance of online footwear purchasing, with a significant majority of consumers willing to engage in this activity. This is important for footwear companies, as it provides them with an opportunity to expand their online sales channels and provide a convenient and satisfying shopping experience for those consumers who prefer to purchase footwear in this way.

Analysis

The results of the table on consumers' willingness to purchase footwear online suggest strengthening online presence, offering detailed and accurate information, providing a personalized shopping experience, implementing flexible return and exchange policies, and using digital marketing strategies. These strategies will enable the company to capitalize on the acceptance of online shopping, build consumer trust, meet their

personalized needs, ensure a satisfactory shopping experience, and promote its products effectively in the digital environment.

3.1.2.15. Customer willingness to recommend the company's website.

Customer willingness to recommend a company's website is an important indicator of online user satisfaction and user experience. By analyzing customer willingness to recommend a company's website, one can assess consumers' overall perception of the quality and usefulness of the online platform. The results of the survey are shown in Table 20.

Table 20

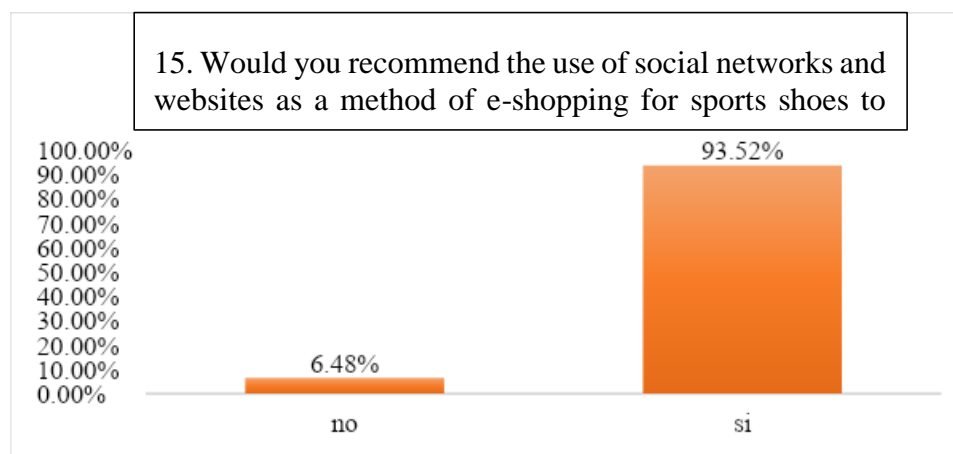
Customer's willingness to recommend the company's website

	Frequency	Percentage
No	46	6.48%
Yes	664	93.52%
Total	710	100.00%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 41

Willingness to purchase footwear online from the entity



Source: Own elaboration

Results

The table shows the willingness of customers to recommend the company's website. The results reveal that most respondents, 93.52%, are willing to recommend the website. Only a small percentage, 6.48%, indicated that they would not. These findings are encouraging for the company, as they demonstrate that the majority of customers have a positive opinion of the website and are willing to share it with others. This may be an indicator of customer satisfaction with the user experience, quality of products or services, and trust in the company.

Analysis

It is important for the company to take advantage of this positive disposition and use strategies to further encourage referrals to its website, such as providing incentives for satisfied customers to share their experience on social networks or implementing referral programs. This can help increase the company's visibility and reputation, as well as attract new customers.

Marketing proposal in virtual media

According to Philip Kotler (2021) marketing has five phases. These are classified into two groups: the first four phases are part of the process of understanding the needs and desires of the customer to design a marketing strategy that builds programs whose purpose is to communicate and provide value, while achieving a strong bond with the customer.

Social media management is the process of managing, monitoring, and analyzing the presence of a brand, company, organization or individual on social media platforms. In simpler terms, social media management involves the administration and control of activities related to social networks to achieve specific objectives of an organization in this case for the company Mark Sport, have been defined some communication strategies for social networks, which are already in force.

3.2.1 Implementation of virtual media

Nowadays, digital marketing is very essential for any company, as it is the fastest way to spread any message to any corner of the world with internet access. It is a two-way communication between a company and its customers, as it not only conveys a message or product to its customer but can also get direct feedback from them (Kotler et al., 2021).

As part of the current sales management, e-business arises, which is called an electronic business and whose management or transactions are made digitally, through various technological platforms (García, 2016). In this context, and as part of the sales and marketing strategies today, e-commerce or electronic commerce consists of the distribution, sale, purchase, marketing, and supply of information of products or services through the Internet, an aspect in which the company Mark Sport seeks to capture a larger segment of customers through this medium.

In the current context of sales and marketing strategies, electronic commerce or e-commerce has become a fundamental tool for companies. E-commerce refers to the distribution, sale, purchase, marketing and information supply of products or services over the Internet. To capture a larger segment of customers, the company Mark Sport seeks to use e-commerce as part of its strategies.

In addition, the digital channels most used by companies include websites, email, and social networks. In the case of Mark Sport, various social networking tools have been developed and must be leveraged to achieve the desired reach.

The use of virtual media and technology in a company can generate a significant impact on sales and business growth. According to studies and testimonials from various companies, the effective use of digital media can provide an increase in sales, increased brand visibility, greater interaction with customers and a wider geographical expansion. Social media, for example, can help create an online community, foster customer engagement, and build brand loyalty.

In addition, the digital channels most used by companies are their website, email, and social media accounts. The company Mark Sports has developed several social networking tools, which should be enhanced to obtain the desired reach, therefore, the social networks of the company are detailed below.

- Facebook Business Suite

The company has recognized the importance of having a presence in social networks and has created an institutional profile in a specific social network. This strategy is based on taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the digital environment for the company's marketing.

Within the institutional profile, the company develops the digital marketing products necessary to achieve its objectives. One of these products is the creation of content for publications on the social network. These contents are carefully planned and designed to attract the attention of the target audience and convey the company's key messages effectively. A variety of formats, such as images, videos, or text, will be used to generate interest and engagement with followers.

In addition, the company will enter a contract to advertise on the social network. This will involve paying for the promotion of certain publications to expand their reach and reach a wider audience. The sponsorship contract will make it possible to take advantage of the segmentation and personalization tools offered by the social network to specifically address the target audience and maximize the impact of the promoted publications.

The strategy will also involve the publication of content with organic reach. These publications are disseminated free of charge through the institutional profile and aim to generate interactions and participation from the community of followers. Through these publications, the company seeks to build a solid relationship with its audience and foster brand loyalty.

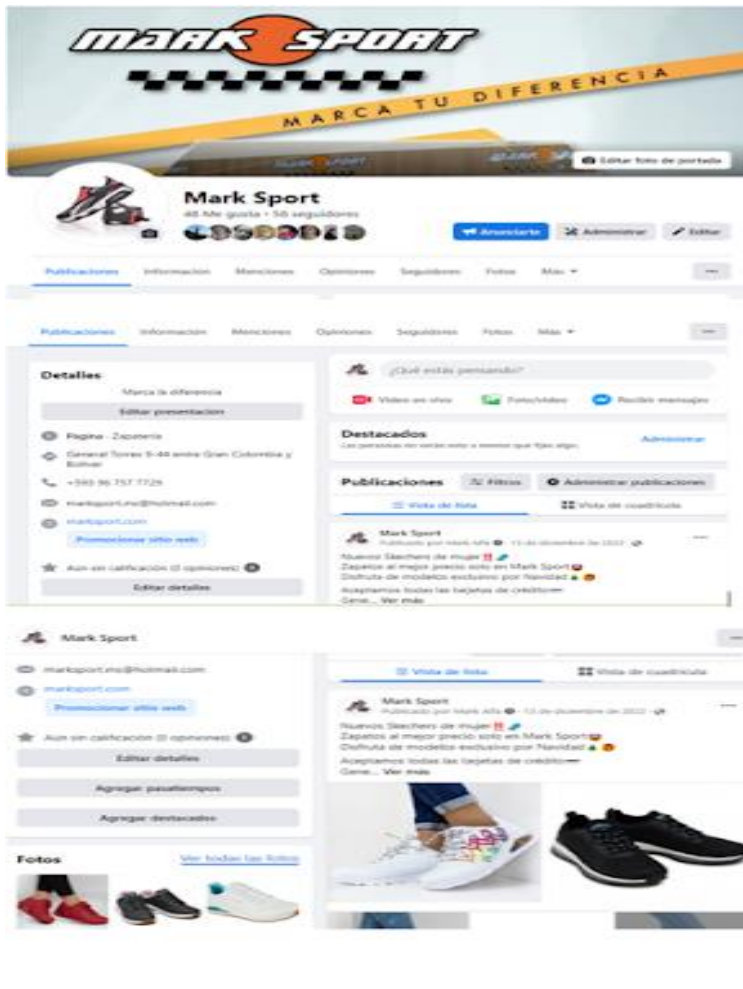
Target audience segmentation is a fundamental aspect of the digital marketing strategy in the social network. The company will use the segmentation tools provided by the platform to define and reach its target audience accurately. This will involve identifying demographic characteristics, interests, and behaviors relevant to the brand, which will allow customizing and tailoring messages and content to the specific needs and preferences of each audience segment.

Finally, budget allocation is based on the analysis of statistics on reactions to the company's posts. The company tracks key metrics, such as reach, interactions and conversions, to evaluate the performance of posts and make informed decisions about resource and budget allocation. This will involve investing more in strategies and tactics that show positive results and adjusting strategies that do not meet established goals.

Below is an example of Facebook posts for the company.

Figure 42

Mark Sport's facebook page



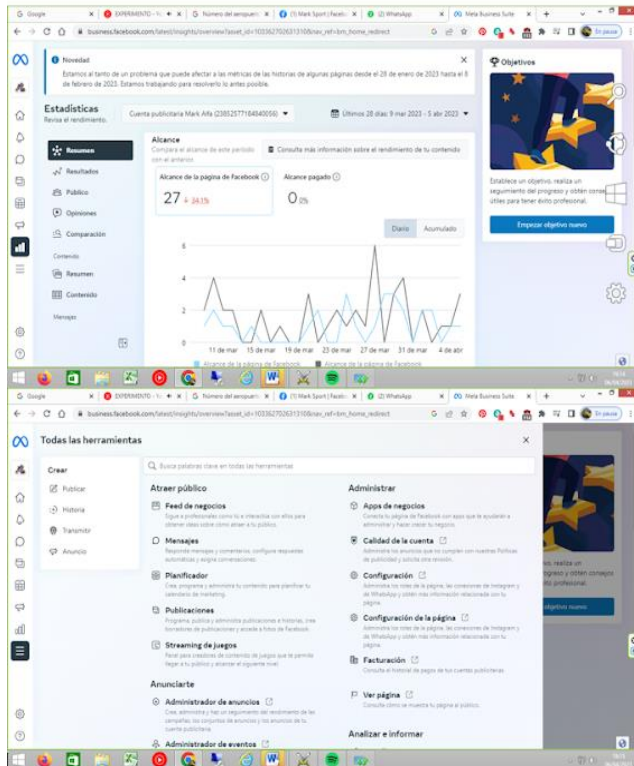
Source: Own elaboration

As depicted in Figure 46, business statistics on social media platforms such as Facebook (now Meta), Instagram, LinkedIn, etc., will enable the company:

- Reach and impressions: These metrics show you how many people have seen your content and how many times it has been viewed in total.
- Engagement: This metric shows how many people interacted with your content by liking, sharing, commenting, etc.
- Website clicks: This shows you how many people clicked on your website link through your business page.
- Followers and page growth: These metrics show you how many people follow your page and how it has grown over time.
- Demographic information: This provides you with information about who your followers are, including their age, gender, location, etc.

Figure 43

Meta for Business Statistics



Source: Own elaboration

WhatsApp for Business

In the context of the use of social networks for a company's communication and sales, the WhatsApp Business application stands out as an important tool. WhatsApp Business provides businesses with a platform to effectively interact with their customers and enhance the user experience.

By creating a home page on WhatsApp Business, key characteristics of the company can be established, such as its line of business, opening hours, contact numbers and address. These data are essential to provide customers with the necessary information to communicate and access the company's products or services. In addition, it is important to include the company logo, which helps the visual identification of the company and reinforces its brand image.

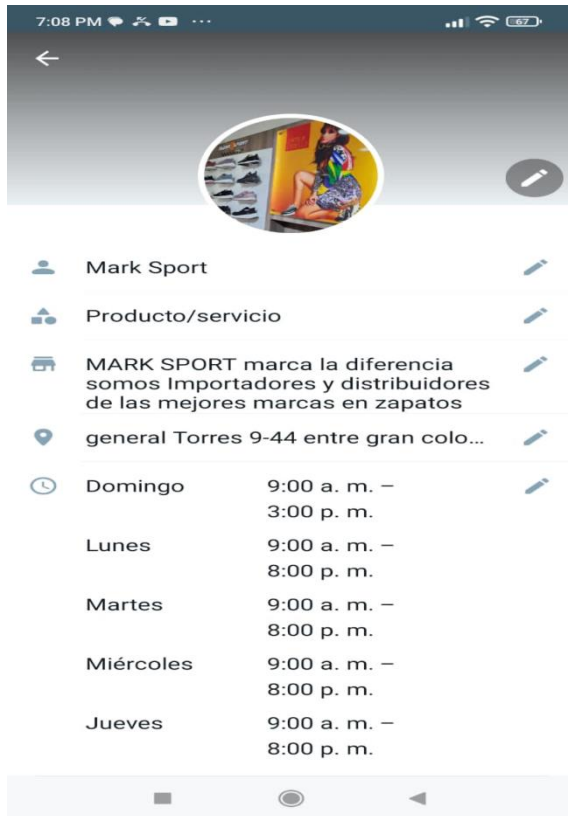
WhatsApp Business will offer several features that facilitate communication and sales. Among them are:

- Automatic responses: Automatic responses will be set up for frequently asked questions or welcome messages. This will help save time and provides immediate responses to customers.
- Organizational tags: With organizational tags, conversations will be categorized and tagged according to different topics, such as sales inquiries, technical support, order tracking, among others. This allows for efficient and orderly management of customer interactions.
- Highlighted messages: Important messages will be highlighted for quick access and to avoid getting lost in the flow of conversations.
- Product catalog: WhatsApp Business allows you to create a product catalog with images, descriptions, and prices. Customers will be able to browse the catalog and make purchases directly in the application.
- Broadcast lists: With broadcast lists, you can send messages to multiple customers at the same time, maintaining personalized and effective communication.

The WhatsApp Business application will give Mark Sport the opportunity to establish direct and personalized communication with its customers, which will improve customer service, increase efficiency, and facilitate the sales process. By leveraging the functions and features of WhatsApp Business, the entity will strengthen its online presence and provide a positive experience to its customers. In this application usually the initial pages are made to establish the characteristics of the company, its line of business, opening hours, contact numbers, address, as relevant data, which must be accompanied by the business logo that helps to identify the company, Mark Sport. The following is an example of the proposed profile.

Figure 44

Wathsaap Business Profile



Source: Own elaboration

Instagram for Business

Instagram is an application that allows companies to boost sales through a wider reach to the target audience. According to the surveys conducted, it is one of the media that Mark Sport's customers prefer the most, so by applying it, web traffic will increase, it is important that there is a constant interaction of the account with the public to reach more people and thus have a feedback from potential customers, geo locate followers, track what content generates more interest and thus increase the dissemination of the same. The following image shows the Mark Sport page as a proposal:

Figure 45

Instagram profile



Source: Own elaboration

With the profile created Mark Sport has several business options, such as promoting publications and verifying the same through statistics of the performance of publications. Instagram for business allows us to visualize the information of our followers and clients to be able to add contact data, which is efficient compared to a personal profile, due to its advanced management.

The configuration part provides us with the necessary resources for the management of the business account, the most important are the statistics which will access the summary of the content published from stories, publications, and promotions of Mark Sport. It provides how many people discovered the profile and interactions, as well as the characteristics of your audience, these benefits will be provided once you reach 100 followers. Below, we can visualize the summary statistics.

Figure 46

Example of summary of Instagram statistics.



Source: Own elaboration

To create promotional publications, you must go to the advertising options by location, audiences, and behaviors, among other audience characteristics. In addition, Instagram allows us to define a calendar to progressively upload publications, in which the duration and budget can be limited. According to Campos Fernández in 2022, 15 to 16 hours are the most frequented by users of the social network and from 21 to 22 hours. The best days tend to be Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays. So, it would be ideal to schedule publications or promotions according to these statistics, which would go hand in hand with the hiring of a professional in the management of social networks to interact more effectively with followers and increase engagement.

- Digital Catalog (Marea Alcalina)

A digital catalog is essential for any company that wants to show their products, in the case of Mark Sport we propose the Marea Alcalina catalog so that customers can quickly access a catalog through any social network through an easy access link. Marea Alcalina through the catalog allows the company to see how many times the link was opened and thus know the reach that the catalog has had. This type of catalog is designed for those customers who want to visualize the products that the company has in an immediate and

clear way, as well as to promote the sale of products through an advertisement that appears at the top once the link is opened, which we can see in the following image.

Figure 47

Main page of the digital catalog Marea Alcalina

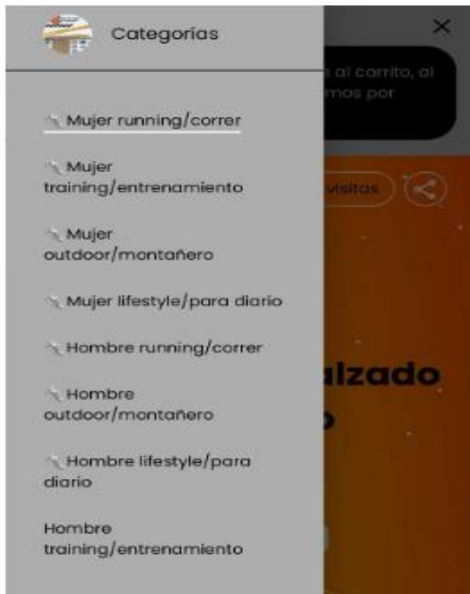


Source: Own elaboration

The digital catalog allows companies to categorize their products in the case of Mark Sport, it is mainly categorized by the type of sports footwear, and whether it is for women or men, so that they can access the search quickly to what the customer is looking for. Below is an image of the access options for sports footwear:

Figure 48

Marea Alcalina Digital Catalog Categories

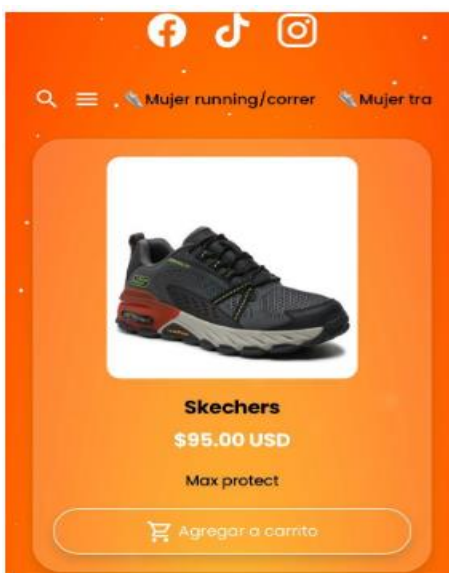


Source: Own elaboration

Once the category required by the customer is selected, the digital catalog will show all the model options according to the type of footwear and its gender. For greater clarity, the price, brand, and description of the footwear model are specified. In addition, the option to add to the shopping cart, if the customer chooses to make a quick purchase.

Figure 49

Footwear options by type

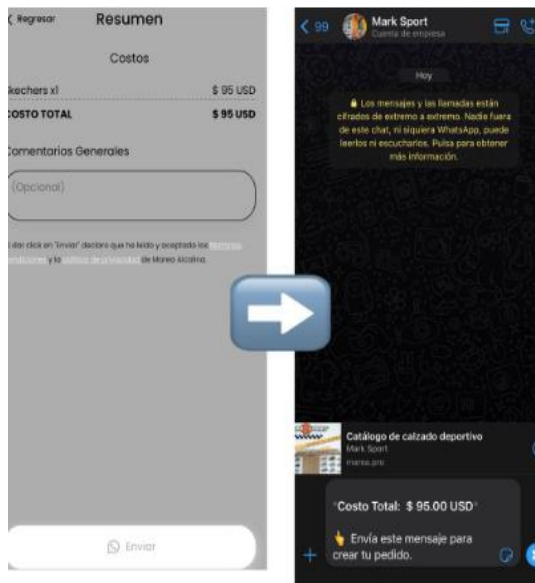


Source: Own elaboration

If the customer decides to add one or more products to the shopping cart, a summary of the purchase will be displayed and the user will be redirected to Whatsapp, along with the total of the products already selected and thus be able to pay by bank transfer at the national level, or the option of paying in cash at the time of delivery, only if it is within the city of Cuenca.

Figure 50

Sending the order to Whatsapp



Source: Own elaboration

Email marketing

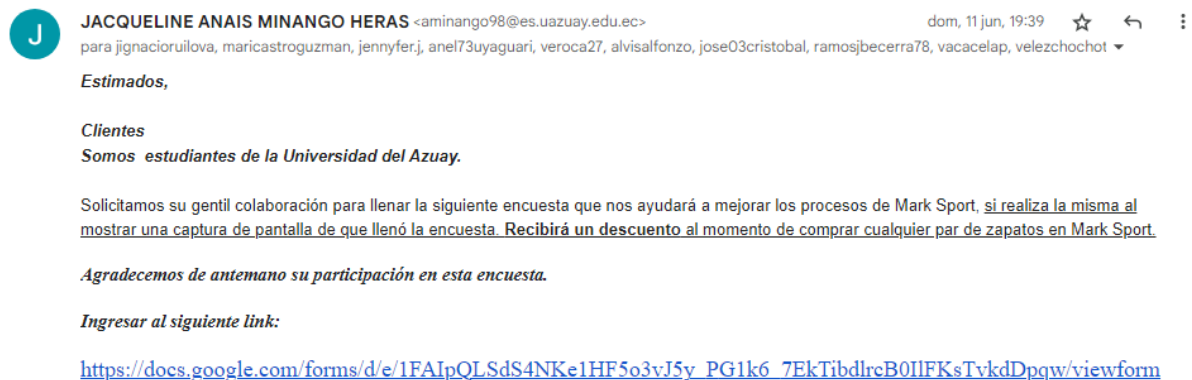
E-mailing or email marketing is the sending of mass emails to email addresses of a customer database. In the case of Mark Sport, it has the emails for electronic invoicing, key to carry out this marketing practice effectively for its loyalty and footwear promotion. According to ADigital in 2018, more than 60% of people check their email and social networks several times a day, so the consumption of internet content is instantaneous, to increase sales in the company.

The email marketing proposal is a powerful low-cost strategy, with which Mark Sport can increase its digital presence in the consumer and in consumer sales. In addition, for the survey research case, this strategy was used, and the success of our results was reflected in the fact that more than 75% responded to the surveys. The surveys were sent for research purposes, but at the same time the footwear was promoted, since it was reported that with the capture of the answers you would get a discount on the purchase of

your sports shoes and there was a rise in sales of the company. In the following image you can see the mailing and the message of a discount on the product if the survey was filled out.

Figure 51

Information mail to Mark Sport customers



Source: Own elaboration

2. Website as a sales strategy

In the future, the company will benefit from a strong online presence through its website, which will enable it to reach a wider audience and access geographically dispersed markets. It will ensure that its website is well designed and optimized to improve its visibility and make it easier for customers to find it on search engines.

The company will leverage its website to provide detailed information about its products or services. It will include complete descriptions, technical specifications, images, and testimonials from satisfied customers. The goal is to make visitors thoroughly understand and trust the company's products or services.

A strong emphasis will be placed on building trust through a professional and carefully designed website. Relevant information will be displayed, such as company history, equipment, certifications, or awards obtained, and testimonials from satisfied customers. This will generate a higher level of trust in visitors and encourage them to make a purchase.

The company will use its website as a tool to capture leads or potential customers. Through contact forms, newsletter subscriptions or exclusive content downloads, it will

collect contact data from interested visitors. It will make sure to nurture and convert these leads into subsequent sales.

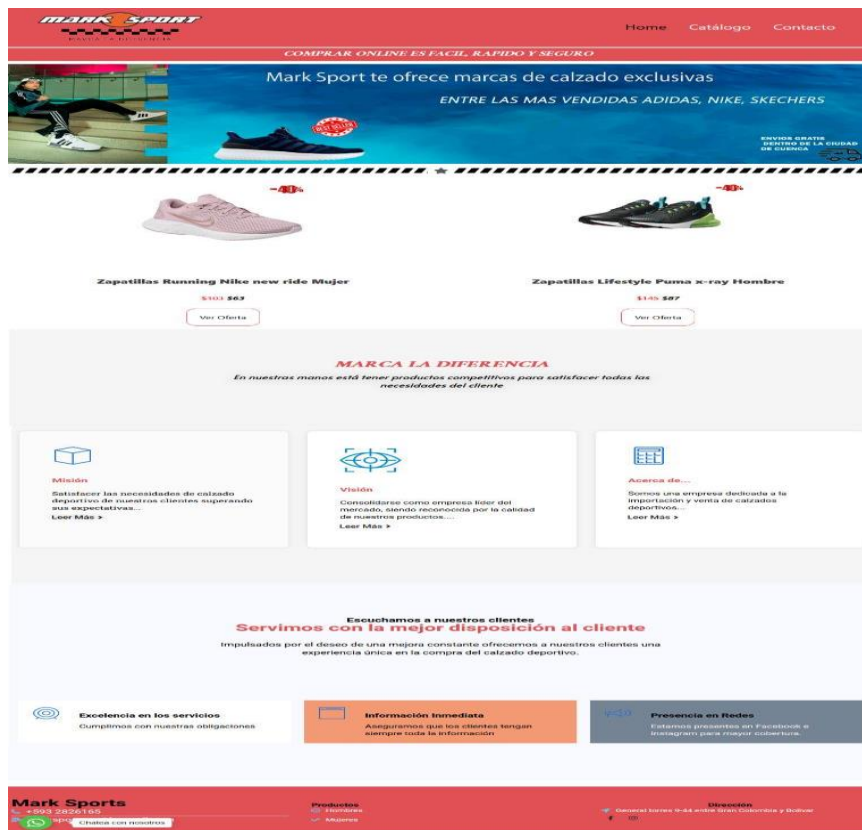
In addition, the website will serve as an e-commerce platform, allowing customers to make purchases directly online. This will expand the availability and accessibility of the company's products or services, leading to increased sales and expansion of its market.

The company will also focus on providing excellent customer support through its website. It will include FAQ sections, tutorials, or live chat to resolve doubts and problems quickly and efficiently. This will enhance the customer experience and generate long-term loyalty.

Therefore, the company's website-based sales strategy will offer numerous benefits, such as increased online presence, trust building, lead generation, online sales, and customer support. By creating a well-designed and optimized website, the company will improve its market positioning, expand its reach, and increase its sales opportunities. You will be fully committed to the success of your website-based sales strategy.

Figure 52

Web page presentation - Initial link



Source: Own elaboration

It has been determined the importance of presenting the images of the logos of the footwear brands that the company markets. Therefore, from the home page of Mark Sport's website, images will be highlighted that will allow visitors to quickly identify the brands represented and establish an association with quality and reliability.

Additionally, a box will be included on the home page that will provide initial information about the company. In this section, some of Mark Sport's corporate philosophy will be stated and the management criteria on which the company's direction is based will be shared. The goal is to make visitors aware of Mark Sport's vision, values, and business principles from the moment they enter the website.

This section will highlight aspects such as Mark Sport's commitment to excellence in customer service, passion for delivering quality products, and focus on innovation and trends in the athletic footwear industry. It will also highlight core values such as integrity, accountability, and teamwork, which guide the company's daily decisions and actions.

By providing this initial information about the company, Mark Sport seeks to establish a strong connection with visitors and convey confidence in its brand. The goal is to make them feel confident in exploring the website and consider Mark Sport's products as a reliable option to meet their athletic footwear needs.

Therefore, the Mark Sport website prioritizes the presentation of images of the footwear brand logos, as well as the inclusion of initial information about the company and its corporate philosophy. The company is committed to transmit transparency and trust from the first contact with visitors, to provide them with a positive and satisfactory experience during their visit to the website. Below is an image of how the presentation will look like.

Figure 53

Web page-Link to company information



Source: Own elaboration

Following what was mentioned in the initial sections of the web page, it will be of vital importance for the company to adequately establish communication channels that allow it to maintain fluid contact with customers. In addition to offering excellent customer service as an added value, it will be necessary to generate a section dedicated to after-sales service, all with the focus of ensuring customer satisfaction.

The company will undertake to provide different communication channels, such as telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and online contact forms, so that customers can communicate easily and quickly. In addition, the company will implement a system for responding promptly to customers' queries and requests, providing them with the necessary assistance in the shortest possible time.

As for after-sales service, the company will ensure that it provides continuous support and personalized attention to customers even after the purchase has been made. This will include assistance in the installation or use of the products, troubleshooting, warranty and returns management, among other aspects related to the customer's experience after the sale.

In addition, additional resources may be implemented on the website, such as FAQ sections, tutorials or live chat, to provide detailed guidance and resolve any doubts or problems that may arise during the purchase process or afterwards.

The main objective of this strategy will be to ensure customer satisfaction at all stages of their experience with the company. By providing excellent customer service and having an effective after-sales service, the company will be able to strengthen customer trust and loyalty, generating long-term relationships and fostering positive word-of-mouth.

Therefore, in the future, the company will focus on establishing effective communication channels and providing exceptional customer service. In addition, emphasis will be placed on implementing a comprehensive after-sales service, providing continuous assistance and personalized attention to customers even after purchase. All of this will be focused on achieving full customer satisfaction and strengthening the long-term relationship with them.

Figure 54

Web page - Contact link



Source: Own elaboration

3.2.2.1. Digital product catalog of the website

Based on the results of market research that revealed that the preferred shoes are Lifestyle/for daily use with a sporty style, as well as Training/for training, and color-matched, the company will focus on implementing an online (or digital) catalog as a strategy to promote its products in a practical and accessible way.

An online catalog is the adaptation of a conventional catalog to the virtual environment, allowing potential customers to easily view it from their computers or mobile devices. This digital catalog will provide a convenient and attractive way to showcase the

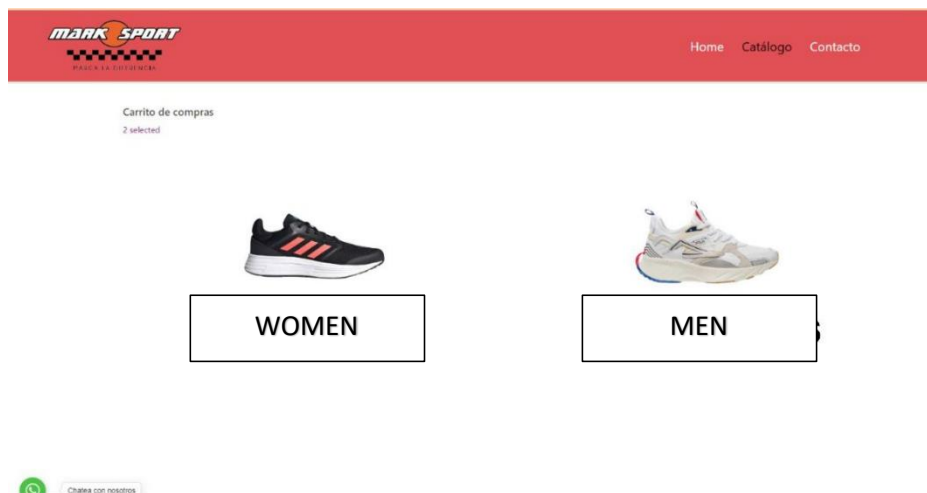
company's products, both Lifestyle and training shoes, with special emphasis on color-matched designs, which are in high demand according to market research.

The online catalog will feature high-quality images and detailed descriptions of each product. Visitors will be able to browse different categories, filter products according to their preferences and access relevant information such as sizes, materials, and technical features. In addition, interactive options, such as image zooming and 360-degree views, will be included to provide an immersive experience and allow customers to examine products up close.

In addition, the online catalog will be designed to be responsive, which means that it will automatically adapt to different devices, such as desktop computers, tablets and smartphones. This will enable customers to access the catalog and make purchases anytime, anywhere, providing them with a convenient and flexible shopping experience.

Figure 55

Home page of the website's digital catalog for online shopping.

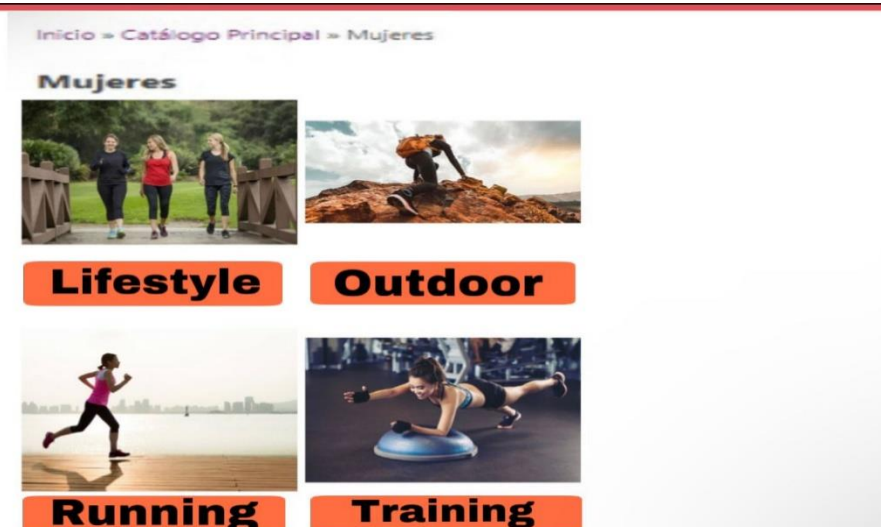


Source: Own elaboration

The following figure shows the options of the type of footwear in the men's and women's catalog, to be able to identify the colors, sizes and preferences, and then add them to the shopping cart.

Figure 56

Digital catalog of the website - footwear type options



Source: Own elaboration

3.2.2.2. Payment Methods

Based on the results of the market research, it is observed that customers' payment preferences are mainly by credit card, debit card and bank transfer. The right choice of payment methods is a relevant criterion for any online store or e-commerce, as it can affect the success of sales.

It is important to delimit the appropriate payment methods for the type of business, considering the preferences and convenience of customers. In this context, online payment methods are of particular interest, as they are a key aspect in making or losing a sale in e-commerce.

Among the main payment platforms that can be considered are integrated payment platforms, credit and debit cards, PayPal, payments through operators, commerce without a payment platform, bank transfers and the cash payment method.

In the case of Mark Sport, they have chosen to use bank transfers in addition to the use of credit and debit cards and PayPal, this choice is based on several factors, such as ease of admission as a partner, security in the payment process and the ability to allow customers to pay as they are most comfortable.

The Mark Sport website will clearly detail the availability of payment options. Information on the security and confidentiality of payment details will also be provided to provide confidence and peace of mind to customers.

Figure 57

Website payment method



Source: Own elaboration

3.2.2.3. Logistics

The company plans to use its existing warehousing system for physical sales in its new online sales initiative, and no physical changes in warehouse management are planned; the logistics infrastructure is already in place. This means the company can leverage its existing warehousing capacity and inventory management procedures to meet the demands of online sales. This can simplify the transition to e-commerce and enable a smoother integration of online and offline operations. However, the following changes are proposed:

Stock control: it will be essential to keep accurate control of footwear stock. This will involve implementing an inventory system that accurately records incoming and outgoing products. Tools such as inventory management software or bar-coding systems can be used to facilitate stock tracking and control. The objective is to ensure that sufficient stock is available to meet customer demand without incurring overages or shortages.

Replenishment management: To ensure product availability, an efficient replenishment system will be put in place. This will involve regular stock monitoring and reordering based on demand and sales forecasts. It is important to establish strong relationships with reliable suppliers and have sourcing agreements in place to ensure timely availability of new products.

Inventory safety and security: The storage of footwear should consider safety and security aspects. This will involve implementing adequate security measures, such as surveillance systems, access control, and protection against theft or damage. In addition, precautions should be taken to protect products from damage, such as keeping them in appropriate environmental conditions and using appropriate packaging for storage.

Order management

It is essential to have an efficient system for managing orders placed online. This will involve receiving, processing, and preparing orders quickly and accurately. Clear processes should be established for order management, including order confirmation, product preparation and shipping label generation.

Order reception: An advanced system will be set up to receive orders placed by customers online. A highly efficient and scalable e-commerce platform will be used to automatically receive orders. In addition, verification and validation algorithms will be implemented to ensure the accuracy and completeness of orders received.

Orders will be placed via the website, WhatsApp, and Facebook. Also, for order verification and validation to ensure the accuracy and completeness of orders received, verification and validation algorithms may be implemented. These algorithms can be part of the e-commerce platform or can be custom developed. For example, a verification algorithm could check that all required fields on the order form are complete, and that the data entered is valid (e.g., that the zip code matches the city and state, that the credit card number is valid, etc.). A validation algorithm may check that the product ordered is in stock and that the quantity ordered is available.

Integration with the inventory management system: To ensure that online orders are reflected in real time in the inventory management system, an integration between the e-commerce platform and the inventory management system could be implemented. This could involve the use of APIs (application programming interfaces) or the use of integration middleware. This integration would allow that when an order is placed online, the inventory is automatically updated, thus avoiding overselling of products.

Product preparation: Real-time inventory management systems will be implemented that will allow for efficient product preparation. Automated scanning and labeling

technologies will be used to streamline the product picking and packing process. This will ensure accurate preparation and minimize errors in packaging.

Once an order has been received, the next step is to prepare the product for shipment. If the footwear is already in its original box, that box can be used for shipping. However, if the footwear does not have a box or if the original box is not suitable for shipping, a standard box will be used. This standard box will be strong enough to protect the footwear during shipping and will be sized to accommodate most styles and sizes of footwear. Preparation of the product will also include the inclusion of any necessary documentation, such as invoice or packing slip, and the application of the shipping label. This process will be carried out carefully to ensure that the product reaches the customer in perfect condition.

Integration with shipping service providers: The link to the supplier's application will be sent to the customer so that he can track his shipment. This way you will be able to know the actual time the product will be delivered and will reduce missed deliveries.

Packaging

Product packaging is a crucial aspect to ensure that the shoes arrive in good condition to the customer. Appropriate packaging materials, such as sturdy boxes and internal protection materials, should be used to avoid damage during transport. In addition, branding elements can be included in the packaging to reinforce the brand image. The logistics are presented below:

Selection of suitable packing materials: Strong, durable boxes should be used to provide the necessary protection for the shoes during transport. Internal packaging materials, such as bubble wrap or foam, will be carefully selected to ensure adequate cushioning and prevent possible damage. In addition, environmental aspects will be considered when choosing sustainable and recyclable packaging materials.

Packaging customization: Packaging will be used as an opportunity to reinforce the brand image. Branding elements, such as logos, distinctive colors or personalized messages, can be included on boxes and packaging materials. This will not only contribute to brand identity but will also add a touch of professionalism and uniqueness to the unpacking experience for the customer.

Box specifications and handling during shipment: Shoes will be shipped in their original box whenever possible, as these boxes are specifically designed to protect footwear. In the event that the footwear does not have a box, or the original box is not suitable for shipment, a sturdy standard box will be used. When preparing products for shipment, the specific characteristics of the footwear, such as fragility or the possibility of dents, shall be considered. Products will be carefully packed and handled during transportation to minimize the risk of damage. In addition, the shipping company will be informed of the need to handle these packages with care to ensure that they reach the customer in perfect condition.

Shipping and delivery

The choice of shipping service providers is important to ensure efficient and timely delivery of products. Arrangements should be made with reputable suppliers that offer fast and secure shipping options. It is also important to provide customers with tracking information so that they can track the status of their orders.

Selection of reliable suppliers: Agreements will be sought with reputable and reliable shipping service providers. Extensive research will be conducted on the reputation and quality of service of each supplier before deciding. Aspects such as speed of delivery, transportation security, and customer satisfaction will be evaluated. Options such as Pedidos Ya, Servientrega will be considered. The following process will be used to select the supplier:

To evaluate the delivery delivery supplier, an evaluation process will be developed according to the following questionnaire. This instrument will include questions on various aspects of the delivery service, such as timeliness, reliability, ability to handle fragile packages, communication, and customer service, those with the best scores should be chosen to maintain good customer service.

Questionnaire

Give a score from 1 to 5 where 1 is the least favored and 5 is the highest satisfaction.

Timeliness: Does the delivery provider meet promised delivery deadlines? How often are deliveries delayed?

Reliability: Can the delivery provider handle a high volume of packages without problems? How often are packages lost or damaged in transit?

Handling of fragile packages: Does the delivery provider have experience in handling fragile packages? Do they have special procedures to ensure that fragile packages are handled with care?

Communication: Does the delivery provider provide regular updates on the status of deliveries? How do they handle inquiries or problems that arise during the delivery process?

Customer service: Does the delivery provider have good customer service? How do they handle complaints or problems that arise?

Cost: Does the delivery provider offer good value for the cost of their services? ¿Do they offer volume discounts or long-term contracts?

- Fast and secure shipping options: Priority will be given to shipping service providers that offer fast and secure shipping options. This will include express or priority delivery services for those customers who wish to receive their shoes in the shortest possible time. In addition, it will be ensured that suppliers meet appropriate safety and handling standards to guarantee the integrity of the products during transportation.

- Ongoing evaluation: Shipping service providers will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure that they meet quality and customer satisfaction standards. Regular monitoring of supplier performance will be carried out, considering factors such as timeliness of deliveries, customer service, and claims handling. If recurring problems or customer dissatisfaction are identified, corrective action will be taken, and more suitable alternatives will be considered.

Effective collaboration and communication: Clear and effective communication will be established with shipping service providers. Company-specific requirements and expectations, such as delivery times, handling of fragile products, and security protocols, will be shared. A collaborative relationship will be fostered to solve problems and improve the quality of shipping service.

Returns management

Clear and efficient return management policies should be established. If a customer wishes to return a pair of shoes, clear instructions should be provided and uncomplicated return options should be offered. Proper returns management can contribute to customer satisfaction and strengthen the company's reputation.

Hassle-Free Return Policy: Customers may return any product for any reason within a specified period after purchase, up to 10 days thereafter. Products must be in their original condition and in their original packaging. Customers must receive a full refund, excluding shipping charges, unless the return is due to an error on the part of the company (e.g., incorrect, or damaged product).

Size or Model Exchange Policy: If a customer has ordered the wrong size or simply wishes to change the shoe model, the company allows for product exchange. The customer may return the original product and receive a new pair of shoes in the correct size or model. Shipping costs for the return and reshipment will be covered by the customer.

Return Policy for Defects: If a product is delivered with a defect or is damaged during shipping, the company is responsible and allows the return of the product. In this case, the company covers all shipping costs and offers the customer the option to receive a full refund, product replacement or store credit.

Customer Service

Logistics in online footwear sales also involves providing excellent customer service. Efficient communication channels should be established to address queries, solve problems, and aid customers regarding shipments, returns or any other logistics-related issues. In this case, communication channels such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Telegram, and website messaging will be used. Local marketing and internationalization opportunities.

3.3. Local marketing and internationalization opportunities

Mark Sport currently distributes imported footwear to different stores nationwide, specifically its direct sales are in the central area of the city of Cuenca, its sales in the

national area are made on credit with its wholesale customers, with the study aims to market its own sports brand nationwide, establishing itself in a store in 2 more cities such as Quito and Guayaquil and thus meet the needs of sports footwear to people.

The main risks that Mark Sport visualizes, is the competition since there are companies that sell sports footwear as the brands already specified at the beginning of the study, so our special product will be to enter the market with a footwear with a sporty style based on international brands, but with low prices compared to these, printing recognized international brand, and high-quality footwear.

3.3.1. Local marketing

Local marketing is essential to reach customers in the geographical area where the company operates and generate a significant impact on the community. Some marketing strategies that are proposed to be implemented are:

Expanding with local initiatives is an important strategy to adapt to the target market and increase the relevance of footwear products. The following is the proposal to understand the local target audience and adapt the marketing strategies accordingly:

- Market research: Market research will be conducted to understand local demographics, buying behaviors, preferences, and trends. This will include surveys, interviews, data analysis and direct observation of customers.
- Market segmentation: Using the information gathered, the target market will be segmented into more specific groups.
- Tailoring the message: Knowing the needs and preferences of the local target audience, the marketing message will be tailored to resonate with them. Using language, tone and approach that fit the culture, values, and way of communicating.
- Product customization: If possible, consideration will be given to customizing footwear products to meet local preferences. This will involve incorporating specific design elements or features that are popular in the region.
- Local collaborations: Strategic partnerships will be established with local brands, influencers, or stores to increase the visibility of footwear products in the target market. These collaborations will help generate interest and trust in your brand among local consumers.

- Participation in local events and fairs: Identify relevant events, fairs or festivals in the local community and participate in them. This will provide the opportunity to interact directly with the target audience, showcase your products and receive real-time feedback.
- Geographically targeted digital marketing: Using digital marketing strategies, such as social media advertising or search engine optimization, messages and promotions will be directed specifically to the local target audience.

3.3.1. Possibility of internationalization

Internationalization offers opportunities for global growth and expansion. To explore the possibility of internationalization, the company should consider the following strategies:

International Market Research: Conduct market research to identify international markets with potential for marketing the company's footwear products. Evaluate factors such as demand, competition, market trends, and cultural and legal aspects that may influence market entry.

- Website and content adaptation: Adapt the website and marketing content to reach international customers. This will include translations into various languages, price and currency adjustments, and consideration of the cultural preferences and norms of each target market.

International logistics and distribution: Agreements will be established with international logistics partners and shipping service providers to ensure efficient and reliable delivery of products to international markets. It will also be important to comply with the customs and legal requirements of each country.

International promotion strategies: Specific promotion strategies will be developed for each international market, including online advertising, collaborations with local influencers, participation in international trade fairs, and leveraging global e-commerce platforms.

Long-term strategy

Marketing through Amazon

As an effective strategy to reach a wider audience and leverage the leading e-commerce platform, it is proposed to market on the Amazon platform.

Below are the key requirements for selling on Amazon:

- Registering a seller account: You will need to create a seller account on Amazon for professional (for more established sellers).
- Product identification: The entity must have UPC, EAN or ISBN codes for your products, as Amazon requires these to list them.
- Product listing creation: Detailed and attractive listings are created for your products on Amazon. This includes clear descriptions, high quality images and relevant specifications.
- Inventory management: The inventory management system will be adapted more efficiently to ensure that your products are available and up to date in the Amazon warehouse.
- Compliance with legal requirements: Comply with all applicable regulations and legal requirements, such as intellectual property, safety standards and product quality standards.
- Logistics and shipping: You should consider whether to use Amazon's fulfillment service or ship on your own.

Customer Service: Amazon prioritizes customer satisfaction, so be prepared to provide excellent customer service. Respond quickly to inquiries, handle returns and resolve problems in a professional manner.

Optimization and promotion: Optimization strategies will be used to improve the visibility of your products on Amazon, such as selecting relevant keywords, optimizing titles and descriptions, and obtaining positive reviews. Paid advertising strategies on Amazon will also be considered to increase the visibility of your products.

Chapter 4: Conclusions

4.1 Theoretical and Methodological Conclusions

- According to the research it can be concluded that state of the art highlights the importance of understanding and mastering the international negotiation process, as well

as the harmonized system and tariffs. In addition, it is essential to identify the appropriate classification of companies to adapt business strategies and take advantage of market opportunities. Compliance with Ecuador's e-commerce law ensures security and trust in online transactions, while proper digital marketing brings competitive advantages and greater reach in the digital environment. Keeping up to date in these aspects is crucial for the growth and success of companies in an increasingly digitized and globalized world.

- Moreover, the market research for Mark Sport highlights the preference of women as the main customer segment, suggesting targeting marketing efforts towards products popular among them. The 25-33 age group stands out as the largest, requiring marketing strategies and improvements in the online shopping experience to attract and retain these customers. The most common shoe sizes are identified, which helps ensure sufficient inventory and customization options to meet customer needs. The survey has helped us learn that the type of footwear customers prefer, are: lifestyle and training, with 68.4%, in brands: Nike, Adidas and Skechers, with 55.6%, in colors predominate the neutral and combined with 62.30%, this helps us to know that footwear is the one that more variety should bring Mark Sport to generate more sales according to user preference, clearly without failing to bring the other options of footwear that also liked in the survey but in lower percentage, because the idea is to have progressively more customers, through the implementation of virtual media and thus more variety of brands and styles. As for the creation of the website is a good idea to generate a greater reach of users, and it is feasible because according to surveys conducted 93.66% of MarkSport customers have purchased online, some more frequently than others but if we show customers and the general public that it is a good option when they do not have time to go to physical stores, encouraging with offers and discounts on the website. Online security is a key aspect, and it is recommended to implement robust measures to address customer concerns and increase their trust. In addition, the strategy should be differentiated to cater to both regular and occasional customers, using special promotions and an engaging shopping experience.

- The proposal presented by the company Mark Sport focuses on the use of digital channels to enhance its marketing and sales strategy. The main channels used are the website, email, and social networks. In terms of social networks, the presence on Facebook stands out to take advantage of the opportunities of the digital environment. The company focuses on creating attractive and promoted content to reach its target audience. It uses segmentation tools to accurately reach its audience and tracks statistics

to evaluate the performance of publications. In addition, the use of WhatsApp Business is mentioned as an important tool for the company's communication and sales. Features such as autoresponders, organizational tags, product catalog and broadcast lists are highlighted, enabling effective interaction with customers, and enhancing their experience.

4.2 Recommendations

The results obtained from the market study presented offer valuable information that can be used to improve the company's marketing and commercialization strategies. To maximize the impact of these findings, it is suggested that they be applied proactively in making business decisions and formulating marketing campaigns.

For internationalization plans, it is recommended to create a detailed database on sales performance in the local and target markets. This database will provide a complete picture of consumption patterns and customer preferences in different regions. By analyzing the information gathered, the company will be able to tailor its products and marketing strategies to the specific needs and tastes of each market, which will increase the chances of success in its international expansion.

In addition, to improve the marketing of the company's products in the digital environment, it is advisable to use the proposal presented as an effective tool in virtual media. The use of digital media, such as social networks, websites, and e-mail campaigns, makes it possible to reach a wider and more diversified audience, amplifying the company's reach. The marketing proposal presented in the market study can be adapted and optimized for virtual platforms, which will allow the company to effectively reach potential customers and generate greater interest in its products.

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Annexes

Annexes 1

Table of justification of the survey questions

Sample -Population

Type of sampling Convenience

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which subjects are selected on the basis of their availability and accessibility to participate in the research. That is, subjects are selected because they are available and convenient for the researcher. This sampling method is usually used in exploratory studies, in which the main objective is to obtain preliminary information on a particular topic. It is also used in research in which the researcher has limited access to the population, such as in single case studies or studies with small populations (Hernández, 2021).

Description	Number of people (population)	Sample
Customers of the company Mark Sport	Mark Sport company customers 950 Mark Sport customers	For convenience, depending on the number of people who are willing to answer, the number of respondents should be as close as possible to the total number of customers, in order to obtain a better result in the market study.

Type of Question	Number	Question	Objective	Analysis	How to Measure	Indicator
Multiple Choice -One choice only.	1	What age group are you in?	Obtain some of the demographic information about potential consumers for the online store selling athletic footwear.	Quantitative	It will be measured by count to obtain frequencies and percentages of each age group.	The highest percentage of the age group will be obtained for the definition of Mark Sport's e-commerce.
Multiple Choice -One choice only.	2	What is your gender?		Qualitative	It will be measured by count to obtain frequencies and percentages on the gender type of Mark Sport's potential customers.	We will be able to define which gender is the one that buys the most and thus be able to know which footwear should be brought, male or female.

Multiple Choice -One choice only.	3	Choose which size range is yours in or which size range do you buy the most?	Identify the size of the potential customer	Quantitative	It will be measured by count to obtain frequencies and percentages on the size of the customer.	Identify in relation to age and gender the shoe size, for the e-commerce inventory to identify which size numbering to publish according to the demographics of each customer.
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Likert Scale	4	How confident do you feel about shopping online?	Identify satisfaction regarding the online footwear shopping experience.	Qualitative	It will be measured by count to obtain frequencies and percentages on customer shopping comfort.	To know how satisfied the customer feels when buying online and thus to know how comfortable the customer would feel if online sales are made.
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Likert Scale	5	How often do you purchase athletic footwear online?	Determine the frequency of online athletic footwear purchases by consumers.	Qualitative	It will be measured by count to obtain frequencies and percentages of the frequency of purchase of sports shoes online.	According to the frequency with which customers buy sports shoes, it will be possible to analyze whether it is convenient or not to apply online sales of Mark Sport's shoes as another way of purchase.
Multiple Choice	6	Select: What are your preferred brands?	Determine preferences for specific athletic footwear brands and be able to identify behavioral patterns and preferences in relation to brands.	Qualitative	Will be measured by count to obtain frequencies and percentages of potential customers' preferred brands.	To be able to define which brands are the ones that customers are more inclined to buy and to be able to bring more variety on the preferred ones than the ones that are not for the inventory of e-commerce and social networks of Mark Sport.

Multiple Choice	7	What is the price range at which you are willing to pay for athletic footwear in an online store?	To determine what is the fair price range that consumers are willing to pay for an athletic shoe in an online store, and to be able to identify behavioral patterns and preferences in relation to the perceived price of the product.	Quantitative	It will be measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages on price ranges willing to pay by Mark Sport customers.	According to the range chosen by the customer, we will know which shoes and their respective prices we will offer in the online store.
Multiple Choice Choose 1 or more than 1 option.	8	Which of the following features matter most to you when shopping for athletic shoes online?	Determine what are the most important features for consumers when shopping in an	Qualitative	It will be measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages of preferences in relation	Implementation of ease of purchase through social networks and Mark Sport's website.

			online store for sports footwear.		to the characteristics at the time of online shopping.	
Multiple Choice	9	Which of the following payment methods do you prefer when buying sports shoes online?	Determine which payment methods are preferred by consumers when making online purchases of athletic footwear.	Qualitative	Measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages. on payment method preferences.	Put more focus on the most used payment method for the website and digital platforms.
Likert Scale	10	Would you be willing to pay more for exclusive athletic footwear in an online store?	To determine consumers' willingness to pay more for a well-known brand's athletic footwear when shopping online, and to be able to identify	Qualitative	Measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages.	Define if customers are willing to pay for footwear that is exclusive but has a higher cost, in order to be able to apply it in the online store and give added value to the company.

			behavioral patterns and preferences in relation to the perceived value of the brand.			
Multiple Choice Check according to preference, 1 or more than 1 option.	11.	Would you like to receive promotions and information about our footwear through different digital platforms?	Determine consumers' preferred digital platforms for receiving promotions and new product information.	Qualitative	It will be measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages of the preference for receiving information and promotions about Mark Sport.	In which media to have more influence towards potential customers, and a greater use by the company targeting customers.
Multiple choice	12	Which of the following colors is the most consumed by you in an athletic shoe?	Determine consumer preference in terms of the color of the sports footwear they purchase.	Qualitative	It will be measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages of consumer color preference.	Results will be obtained for the publication of the variety of sports footwear in preference of the potential customer, on the

						website and social networks.
Multiple choice Choose more than 1 option.	13	What type of sports shoe do you use the most?	Determine the most popular model of athletic footwear among consumers.	Qualitative	The preferences of type of sports footwear will be measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages.	According to the percentages and frequencies, results will be obtained for the inventory of the website and social networks.
Likert Scale -Strongly Disagree -Disagree -Indifferent -Agree -Strongly Agree -Agree	14	Would you like to purchase Mark Sport products through an online store?	Determine whether there is sufficient demand for an online store for this brand and whether it is worth investing resources in its creation.	Qualitative	It will be measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages on the level of agreement or disagreement to purchase footwear through an online store.	The demand to implement e-commerce

Closed Question	15	Would you recommend the use of social networks and websites as a method of e-shopping for sports shoes to your friends and family?	To determine the level of consumer satisfaction and loyalty with the online athletic footwear store, and to be able to identify behavioral patterns and preferences in relation to the overall shopping experience.	Qualitative	It will be measured by counting to obtain frequencies and percentages on the preference to buy through virtual means.	The feasibility of using purchasing methods through digital platforms of potential customers.

Variables to measure in the survey:

Variables	Questions
Age	1
Gender	2
Price	6-9
Security	3-14
Purchase method	14
Preference	5-7-8-10-11-12-13
Brands	5

Frequency of purchase	4
Time	7
Ease of return	7
Quick response	7
Formas de Pago	7-8-9
Size	3

Attachment 2

SURVEY

Questionnaire

Objective: To conduct a market study of the company Mark Sport in order to determine the preferences of the target public and the implementation of online sales.

Instructions: Following is a series of questions, please mark them according to your opinion.

1. Which age group do you fall into?

Choose only one option.

- a) From 18 to 24 years old
- b) From 25 to 33 years old
- c) From 34 to 42 years old
- d) From 43 to 50 years old
- e) Over 51

2. What is your gender?

- a) Female
- b) Male

3. What is your size range or what size do you buy the most?

- a) Under 35
- b) Between 36-38
- c) Between 39-41
- d) Between 42-44
- e) More than 44

4. How secure do you feel when shopping online?

- a) Not at all secure

- b) Not very confident
- c) Confident
- d) Very safe
- e) Very secure

5. How often do you buy sports shoes online?

Choose only one option.

- a) Always
- b) Regularly
- c) Sometimes
- d) Very rarely
- e) Never

6. Which brands do you prefer?

Choose one or more than one option.

- a) Nike
- b) Adidas
- c) Reebok
- d) Puma
- e) Under Armour
- f) Skechers
- g) Fila
- h) Hi-tec
- i) Lotto
- j) West

7. What is the price range in which you are willing to pay for sports shoes in an online store?

Choose only one option.

- a) Less than \$50
- b) Between \$50 and \$100
- c) Between \$100 and \$150
- d) More than \$150

8. Which of the following features matter most to you when shopping for athletic shoes online?

Choose one or more than one option.

- a) Ease of return
- b) Fast shipping time
- c) Quick response to questions and concerns
- d) Payment methods

9. Which of the following payment methods do you prefer when buying sports shoes online?

Choose one or more than one option.

- a) Credit card
- b) PayPal
- c) Bank transfer
- e) Debit card
- f) Deposit

10. Would you be willing to pay more for exclusive sports shoes in an online store?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

11. Would you like to receive promotions and information about our footwear through different digital platforms?

Choose 1 or more than 1 option.

a) Yes, Facebook

b) Yes, Instagram

c) Yes, TikTok

d) Yes, Mailing

e) Yes, Display advertising (Banners, posters, billboards)

f) Yes, Traditional advertising (radio, press)

g) Yes, Television

h) No, none of the above

12. Which of the following colors is the most consumed by you in a sport shoe?

Choose 1 or more than 1 option.

a) Range of grays

b) Neutral Colors

c) Combined

d) Light colors

e) Strong or intense colors

13. What type of sport shoes do you use the most?

Choose 1 or more than 1 option.

a) Running

b) Lifestyle/for daily use with sporty style for casual outfits

c) Training/for training

d) Outdoor/for mountain or open spaces

14. Would you like to purchase Mark Sport products through an online store?

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Indifferent

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

15. Would you recommend the use of social networks and websites as a method of e-shopping for sports shoes to your friends and family?

a) yes

b) no

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely

