



Co-operative Education Report

Practical Insights into FMCG Marketing at Surya Nepal

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Siam University

Practical Insights into FMCG Marketing at Surya Nepal

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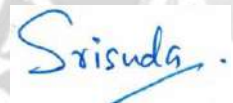
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Abstract

This report presents a comprehensive account of my four-month internship at Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd., a leading FMCG company in Nepal and a subsidiary of ITC Limited. I worked as a Marketing & Sales Intern in the company's trade marketing division. I applied key theories from marketing, consumer behavior, channel management, and strategic management to real field tasks such as retailer visits, competitor benchmarking, market research, and product launch execution. Concepts such as the Consumer Decision-Making Process (Kotler & Keller, 2016), Point-of-Purchase Influence Theory (Underwood et al., 2001), Relationship Marketing (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), and Trade Marketing Channels (Rosenbloom, 2013) shaped my understanding of FMCG operations. My responsibilities encompassed market research, retailer visits, customer perception analysis, competitor benchmarking, and the development of marketing strategies. I was actively involved in gathering feedback from retailers on Surya Nepal's existing product range, conducting competitor analysis to identify market gaps, and assisting in the launch of a newly introduced product at the retailer level. Additionally, I contributed to the preparation and presentation of marketing plans and gained valuable exposure to the organizational workflow, supply chain structure, and corporate governance of Surya Nepal. This internship allowed me to apply marketing, consumer behavior, and strategic management knowledge in real-world settings. I developed skills in research design, data analysis, market segmentation, communication, and problem-solving. It also deepened my understanding of trade marketing, distribution strategies, and the dynamics of Nepal's FMCG sector, strengthening my readiness for a marketing and brand management career.

Keywords: *Marketing & Sales, FMCG, Trade Marketing, Market Research, Consumer Behavior, Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd.*

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter includes the extensive overview of Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd., a leading FMCG manufacturer in Nepal. The following sections dive into the company's profile, its history and evolution, its mission, vision and core values as well as the reason behind my choice to join Surya Nepal for my Co-op studies.

1.1 Company Profile



Figure 1: Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. Logo (<https://www.snpl.com.np>)

Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. (SNPL) is one of the largest and most established private sector companies in Nepal. Founded in 1986 as a joint venture between ITC Limited (India), British American Tobacco, and Nepalese shareholders, the company operates as a subsidiary of ITC Limited. Over nearly four decades, SNPL has built a strong reputation as a market leader, particularly in the cigarette industry, where it commands more than 90% market share in Nepal.

1.1.1 History and Evolution

Surya Nepal began its operations by producing cigarettes and gradually expanded into other sectors to diversify its portfolio. The company ventured into leaf development, ensuring quality raw materials for its tobacco business, before expanding into garments and later into fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) such as agarbatti (incense sticks), confectionery, biscuits, and safety matches. Today, SNPL continues to explore opportunities in new industries, including hospitality.

1.1.2 Mission of the company

To be an internationally benchmarked multi-business corporation in Nepal—making domestic consumers proud by delivering 'Made in Nepal' products to markets around the globe. To be a trusted partner in nation-building and in creating enduring value for all stakeholders.

1.1.3 Vision of the company

The mission of Surya Nepal is to deliver high-quality products and services while upholding ethical practices, customer focus, and innovation to create sustainable value for all stakeholders.

1.1.4 Strategies of the company

Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. pursues a multi-dimensional strategy rooted in “Responsible Competitiveness”, which seeks to balance economic growth with social and environmental stewardship ([SNPL](#)). The company deploys this through three main areas:

1. Sustainability & Environmental Conservation

- **Water Positive Initiative:** Surya Nepal has reduced its water consumption by approximately 26% over the past three years and now replenishes more water than it consumes, reviving about 580,000 kiloliters to benefit 1,300 farmers and irrigate 868 acres [SNPL](#).
- **Carbon Sequestration Efforts:** Since 2017, the company has slashed energy consumption by about 30% and advanced wetland revival and afforestation programs that help capture CO₂ and improve green cover [SNPL](#).
- **Waste Recycling:** Surya Nepal emphasizes minimizing waste through efficiency controls and expanding recycling, thereby reducing landfill dependency [SNPL](#).

2. Community Development through CSR Platforms

Surya Nepal channels its CSR through thematic platforms under the "Snpl Prakriti, Asha, Adharshila, and Gatha" umbrellas, focusing on:

- **Environmental preservation** (Prakriti): Tree plantations along roads, mountain clean-up campaigns in collaboration with the Nepal Army, and local greenery projects.
- **Community infrastructure** (Aadharshila): Projects such as green plastic road construction, school water tanks, watershed conservation, and community hall renovations SNPL.
- **Community health** (Suswasthya): Initiatives including free health camps, eye and dental clinics, ambulance donations, awareness programs, and infrastructure assistance Snpl.
- **Heritage & cultural support** (Gatha): Though less detailed in sources, it underscores investment in promoting Nepali art, literature, and cultural heritage.

3. Employee Engagement & Organizational Culture

The company also emphasizes cultivating a high-performance, inclusive culture that celebrates achievements, nurtures camaraderie, and fosters a deep sense of belonging among its workforces.

1.1.5. Product Ranges and Descriptions

SNPL has developed into a multi-sector FMCG company with a diverse product portfolio:

- **Cigarettes** – Its core business, with flagship brands such as Surya Legend, Surya Luxury, Surya Dual Burst, 24 Carat, Shikhar, Naulo Burst, Khukuri, Pilot, and Saan Filter. These brands cater to different consumer segments, from premium to mass-market.
- **Agarbatti (Incense Sticks)** – Introduced in 2014 under the Mangaldeep brand, with varieties such as Champa, Jasmine, Sandel, Lavender, Marigold, Puspanjali, Arpan, and Indreni, becoming one of the fastest-growing brands in Nepal.
- **Confectionery** – Popular brands include Tadka Kachha Mango, Tadka Litchi, Tadka Imli, Cofitino, Creame Lacto, Minto Bite, Eclairs, Coffee Delight, Minto Fresh, DuoZ, Fruity Fun, and Chatpata Fun, each tailored to local tastes.
- **Biscuits** – The Sunfeast Dark Fantasy range, particularly its 75g and 300g packs, has

emerged as a strong competitor in the premium biscuit/snack market.

- **Other Ventures** – The company also produces Tir Safety Matches and has a presence in the domestic garments sector, with potential plans to enter hospitality and related service industries.

1.2 Organizational Structure

Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. (SNPL) follows a structured corporate hierarchy designed to support its diversified operations in cigarettes, agarbatti, biscuits, and confectionery. The organization is led by the Board of Directors, with the Managing Director at the top executive level. Reporting to the Managing Director are multiple Vice Presidents overseeing core functional areas such as Marketing, Corporate Affairs, Technical Operations, and the Corporate Office.

Each division has specialized functional heads, including Finance and IT, Human Resources, Sales, and Engineering, who ensure smooth coordination across the company. Within the Marketing and Sales Division, responsibilities cascade from the National Sales Manager to Regional Sales Managers, Trade Marketing Executives, and Marketing Officers, supported by field teams and distribution partners.

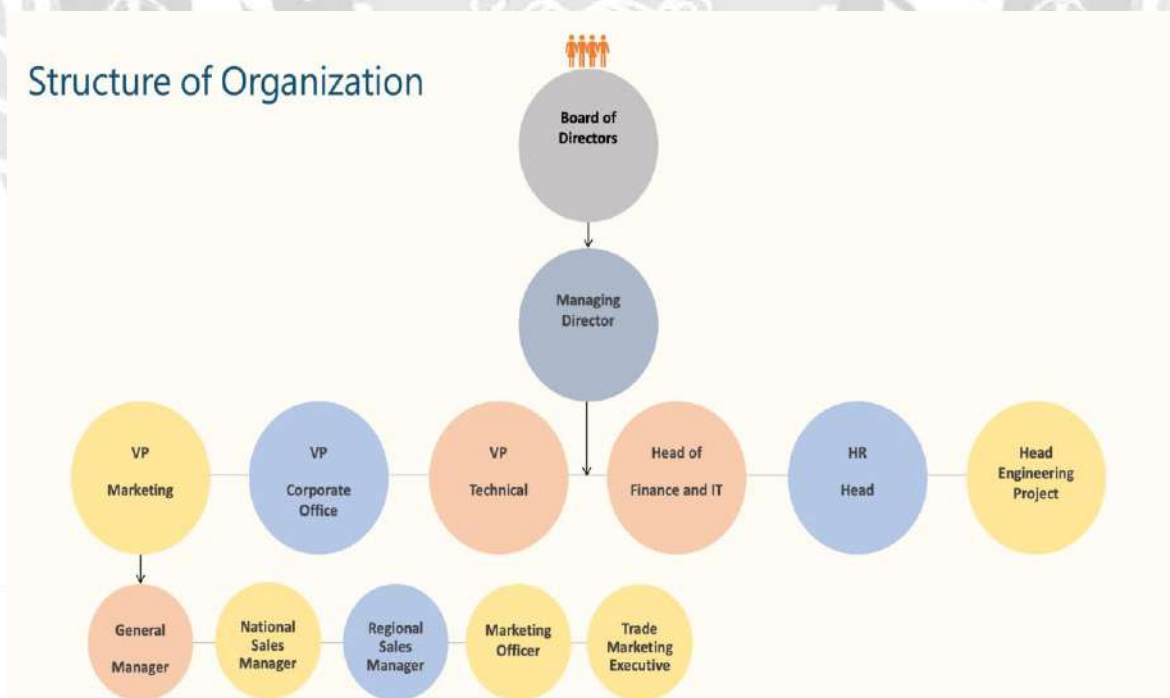


Figure 2: Organizational Chart of Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd

- A. **Marketing & Sales:** Oversees brand positioning, trade marketing, retail-level activation, and product launches across all FMCG categories.
- B. **Technical & Production:** Manages manufacturing facilities, product quality, and supply chain efficiency.
- Finance & IT:** Handles budgeting, reporting, and digital systems to support business operations.
- C. **Human Resources:** Develops policies, talent engagement, and employee growth initiatives.
- D. **Corporate Affairs & CSR:** Ensures compliance with national laws, manages corporate governance, and drives CSR initiatives.

1.2.1 My Job Position

I worked as a Marketing & Sales Intern under the Marketing and Sales Division of Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. My responsibilities required me to operate across both field-level execution and office-level strategic tasks. On a day-to-day basis, I reported to Mr. Navin Raj Saroj (Branding Supervisor) and, less frequently, to Mr. Shrinivas Baniya (Marketing & Sales Supervisor).

My role primarily involved conducting market visits, retailer feedback collection, competitor analysis, and product placement activities, while also contributing to reports, presentations, and marketing strategy discussions at the office level. This dual positioning enabled me to gain insights into both the operational execution of Surya Nepal's trade marketing and the strategic planning behind its campaigns.

1.2.2 Job position in the company's organizational structure

I was placed under the Marketing and Sales Division as a Marketing & Sales Intern, where my role bridged both field operations and office-based strategy.

- **Reporting Lines:** On a daily basis, I reported to market supervisors, who guided me depending on the assigned location and project. More consistently, I reported to Mr. Navin Raj Saroj (Branding Supervisor) for regular updates and strategic guidance, while

occasionally reporting to Mr. Shrinivas Baniya (Marketing & Sales Supervisor) for higher-level direction.

- **Work Areas:** My responsibilities initially focused on cigarettes and agarbatti market research, where I gained hands-on experience in understanding consumer perception and retailer feedback. Later, I was assigned to work on the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack, a newly launched biscuit product, where I contributed to both field execution and strategic reporting.
- **Collaboration:** I worked primarily with field teams, engaging directly with retailers and customers to gather market insights. At the same time, I coordinated with office teams to prepare reports, presentations, and marketing strategies.

This placement allowed me to experience both the grassroots level execution of Surya Nepal's distribution model and the strategic planning carried out at the corporate office, giving me a holistic perspective of how the company's marketing and sales functions operate.

1.3 My motivation to choose Surya Nepal as the workplace for my Co-Op Studies

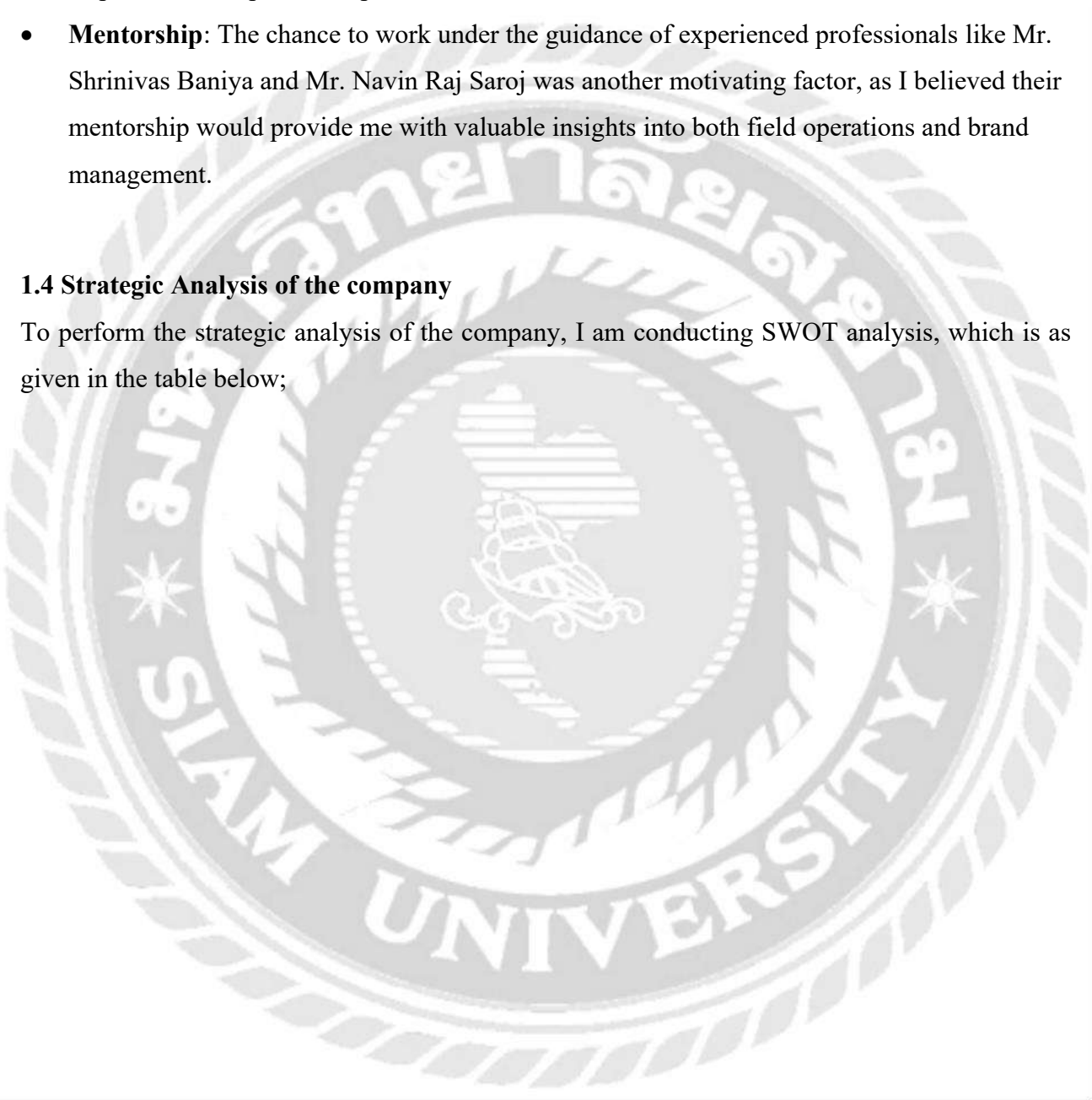
My decision to join **Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd.** for my internship was influenced by several key factors:

- **Market Leadership:** As one of the largest private sector companies in Nepal with a dominant presence in the FMCG industry, Surya Nepal offered me exposure to real-world marketing and sales practices at a scale unmatched by many other organizations.
- **Learning Opportunity:** The company's diversified portfolio—ranging from cigarettes to agarbatti, confectionery, and premium biscuits—provided me the chance to gain hands-on experience in multiple product categories and understand how different consumer markets are approached.
- **Professional Development:** I wanted to work in an environment where I could apply my academic knowledge of marketing, consumer behavior, and strategic management to practical challenges. Surya Nepal's structured approach to trade marketing, retailer engagement, and distribution made it an ideal setting for this

- **Career Relevance:** As a BBA (Finance & Investment) student aspiring to build a career in business management and marketing, I viewed this internship as an opportunity to strengthen my analytical, research, and communication skills while learning from one of Nepal's most respected corporate environments.
- **Mentorship:** The chance to work under the guidance of experienced professionals like Mr. Shrinivas Baniya and Mr. Navin Raj Saroj was another motivating factor, as I believed their mentorship would provide me with valuable insights into both field operations and brand management.

1.4 Strategic Analysis of the company

To perform the strategic analysis of the company, I am conducting SWOT analysis, which is as given in the table below;



Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Market Leadership: Holds over 90% share in Nepal's cigarette industry, ensuring brand dominance and strong consumer loyalty. Diversified Portfolio: Presence in multiple FMCG categories including cigarettes, agarbatti, confectionery, biscuits, garments, and matches, reducing reliance on a single product line. Robust Distribution Network: Over 5,000 wholesalers and 100,000 retailers across Nepal, ensuring wide accessibility of products. Strong Corporate Reputation: One of Nepal's largest taxpayers and a leading private sector company, reinforcing trust and credibility. Innovation and Brand Equity: Ability to launch new products like Dark Fantasy biscuits and maintain strong brands such as Mangaldeep Agarbatti and 24 Carat Cigarettes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> High Dependence on Tobacco: Cigarettes remain the core business, making the company vulnerable to regulatory restrictions on advertising, labeling, and public smoking. Limited International Expansion: Operations are largely domestic, with limited presence outside Nepal. Public Perception Challenges: As a tobacco-centric company, it faces criticism related to health and regulatory pressures despite diversification. Slow Diversification Pace: Compared to global FMCG leaders, expansion into non-tobacco categories is still in early stages.

Opportunities	Threats
<p>1. Growth in FMCG Segments: Increasing demand for premium biscuits, chocolates, and eco-friendly agarbatti presents avenues for diversification.</p> <p>2. Hospitality & New Ventures: Expansion into hotels and service industries provides potential for future growth.</p> <p>3. Consumer Trend Shifts: Rising preference for value-added, premium, and healthier products can be tapped through product innovation.</p> <p>4. CSR & Sustainability: Initiatives in environment, education, health, and infrastructure strengthen brand goodwill and align with consumer expectations for responsible businesses.</p> <p>5. Digital Transformation: Leveraging apps for sales, trade marketing, and distribution provides opportunities for data-driven decision-making and market insights.</p>	<p>1. Regulatory Environment: Strict government regulations such as TOPCA Act (advertising ban, labeling restrictions, public smoking bans) pose ongoing challenges for the tobacco segment.</p> <p>2. Intensifying Competition: New FMCG players and international brands are entering Nepal, particularly in biscuits, chocolates, and confectionery.</p> <p>3. Changing Consumer Behavior: Rising health consciousness and a shift towards alternatives like vapes or herbal products may impact traditional cigarette sales.</p> <p>4. Economic & Political Uncertainty: Instability in Nepal's business environment, inflation, and import/export policies can disrupt operations and pricing strategies.</p> <p>5. Supply Chain Risks: Dependency on raw material imports and logistical challenges may increase costs and affect efficiency.</p>

Table 1: SWOT Analysis of Surya Nepal

1.5 Objectives of this Co-Operative Study

The primary objective of this internship was to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical business exposure by engaging directly in the marketing and sales functions of a leading FMCG company. More specifically, the internship aimed to:

- Apply theoretical knowledge from marketing, consumer behavior, and strategic management courses to real-world situations.
- Gain a practical understanding of trade marketing, retailer engagement, and distribution strategies in the Nepalese FMCG sector.
- Conduct market research, competitor analysis, and consumer perception studies to support strategic decision-making.
- Actively participate in the launch of a new product (Dark Fantasy Delight Pack) and understand the process of retail-level activation.
- Strengthen communication, analytical, and presentation skills by preparing reports, marketing strategies, and delivering presentations to supervisors.
- Collaborate with both field teams and office teams, thereby experiencing the full cycle of Surya Nepal's marketing and sales operations.
- Build professional relationships and learn from experienced mentors such as Mr. Shrinivas Baniya and Mr. Navin Raj Saroj to enhance personal and professional development.
- Explore career pathways in marketing, brand management, and business strategy, aligning internship experiences with long-term career goals.

Chapter 2: Co-Op Study Activities

2.1 My Job Description

As a Marketing & Sales Intern at Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd., I was assigned to the Marketing and Sales Division, where I engaged in both field operations and office-based strategic tasks. The primary focus of my internship was to support market research, retailer engagement, competitor analysis,

and product launch initiatives. I was involved in collecting consumer and retailer insights, assisting in trade marketing activities, and preparing reports and presentations for supervisors.

My work required close coordination with field market supervisors, under whom I reported daily, and with Mr. Navin Raj Saroj (Branding Supervisor), to whom I regularly submitted updates and findings. Additionally, I occasionally reported to Mr. Shrinivas Baniya (Marketing & Sales Supervisor) for strategic guidance and feedback.

This position provided me with hands-on exposure to both the grassroots execution of marketing activities and the strategic planning processes at the corporate office, making it a comprehensive learning experience.

2.2 My Job Responsibilities

During the course of my internship, I was entrusted with a range of responsibilities that exposed me to both the practical aspects of trade marketing and the strategic decision-making processes within Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. My responsibilities can be summarized as follows:

- **Market Research**

One of my core tasks was conducting detailed market research to assess consumer preferences and retailer perspectives regarding Surya Nepal's product range. This involved designing surveys, visiting outlets, and analyzing purchase behavior to identify gaps in consumer demand. The research particularly focused on the acceptance of newly launched products and the brand perception of existing categories, which provided valuable insights into overall market trends. My market research activities aligned closely with the Marketing Research Process outlined by Burns & Bush (2014), who emphasize systematic data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

- **Retailer Engagement**

I frequently visited retail outlets to interact directly with shopkeepers and distributors.

These interactions helped me gather feedback on product visibility, availability, and customer demand. Retailers also shared their perspectives on how Surya Nepal's products could be further improved in terms of packaging, pricing, and promotional activities. This process gave me a practical understanding of how trade relationships are

maintained and strengthened in the FMCG sector. Retailer relationships reflect the principles of Relationship Marketing Theory, where trust and communication form the foundation of long-term partnerships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

- **Competitor Analysis**

Another key responsibility was analyzing competitor activities in the market. By comparing product pricing, promotional campaigns, packaging styles, and consumer appeal, I was able to highlight areas where Surya Nepal could enhance its strategies. This competitor benchmarking exercise was crucial for understanding market dynamics and identifying opportunities to maintain a competitive edge. I applied Porter's Five Forces (Porter, 1980) to examine rival biscuit and confectionery brands.

- **Product Launch Support**

A significant part of my internship involved supporting the launch of the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack in the Nepalese market. My tasks included monitoring product placement at retail stores, collecting initial customer responses, and assisting in retailer-level activations to increase awareness. I had also worked on earlier projects involving the agarbatti and cigarette product categories, which gave me a wider exposure to Surya Nepal's diverse portfolio.

- **Reports and Presentations**

Alongside fieldwork, I prepared regular reports and marketing presentations for my supervisors. These reports summarized market findings, retailer insights, and competitor comparisons, and were presented in structured formats to aid managerial decision-making. This responsibility enhanced my analytical and presentation skills while allowing me to contribute directly to strategic discussions.

2.3 Activities in Coordination with Co-Workers

During my internship at Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd., I had the opportunity to collaborate with professionals from diverse academic and professional backgrounds within a dynamic and integrated work environment. I worked under the supervision of Mr. Navin Raj Saroj (Branding Supervisor) and occasionally reported to Mr. Shrinivas Baniya (Marketing & Sales Supervisor). In addition, I coordinated daily with different market supervisors during field activities. The

collaborative environment allowed me to learn extensively, and some of the key areas of coordination are explained below:

- **Communication**

Clear and consistent communication was an essential part of my role. Whether it was clarifying instructions, sharing retailer feedback, or updating progress on market visits, I regularly engaged with supervisors and co-workers. Communication took place both verbally during field activities and formally through reports, presentations, and emails at the office level. This ensured accuracy, minimized errors, and kept all stakeholders aligned.

- **Learning Sessions**

Throughout the internship, I was guided by supervisors who often shared their expertise on trade marketing practices, consumer behavior, and competitor positioning. These informal learning sessions helped me better understand the company's approach to launching and sustaining FMCG products in the competitive Nepalese market. They also ensured that I was aligned with the larger goals of the organization when performing my tasks.

- **Product Launch Activities**

I worked closely with colleagues during the launch of the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack, where coordination played a crucial role in executing field-level marketing activities. This involved aligning with field supervisors, ensuring proper product placement at retail outlets, and gathering immediate consumer and retailer feedback. Collaborating with both office staff and field teams allowed me to witness how strategy and execution come together during a major product rollout.

- **Reporting and Feedback**

Another important aspect of coordination was preparing reports and presenting them to supervisors. These reports included detailed findings from market visits, competitor analysis, and retailer feedback. By sharing these insights with the branding team, I contributed to discussions that influenced short-term tactical decisions. Regular feedback from my supervisors further helped me refine my approach and improve the quality of my work.

2.4 Job Process Diagram

This section presents the workflow of the major tasks I performed during my internship at Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. Each process illustrates how activities were initiated, executed, and completed in coordination with field supervisors, marketing supervisors, and other team members.

A. Market Research & Retail Visit Process

Description: This workflow shows the steps involved when conducting market visits, interacting with retailers, and collecting data about Surya Nepal's products and competitors.

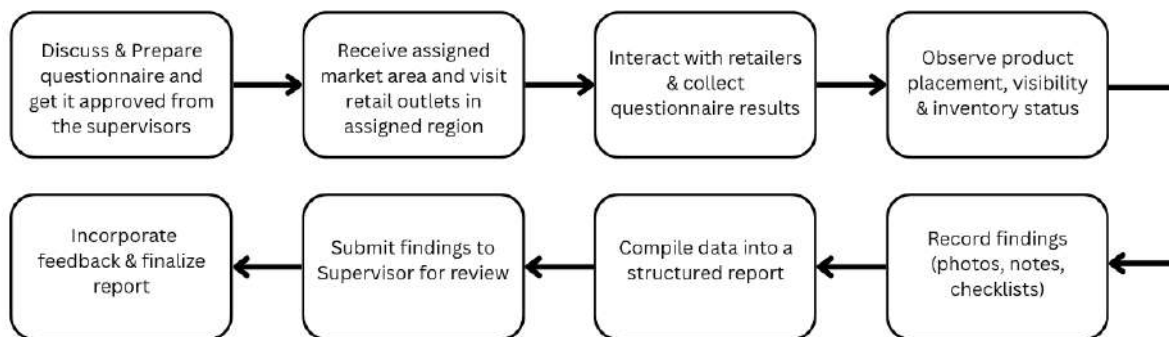


Figure 3: Job process diagram of market research and retail visit process

B. Product Launch & Activation Workflow

(Applicable to Dark Fantasy Delight Pack launch)

Description: This process outlines how I supported retail-level activation and monitored product rollout.

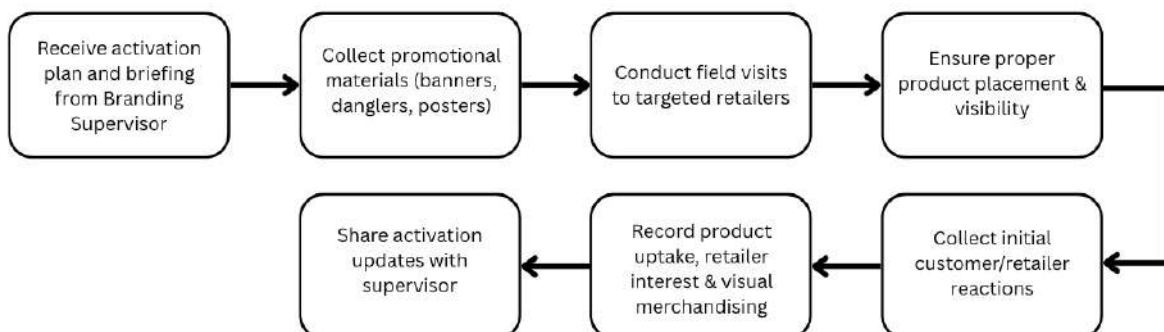


Figure 4: Job process diagram of product launch and activation workflow

C. Reporting & Presentation Workflow

Description: This workflow shows how raw field data was converted into formal reports and presentations.

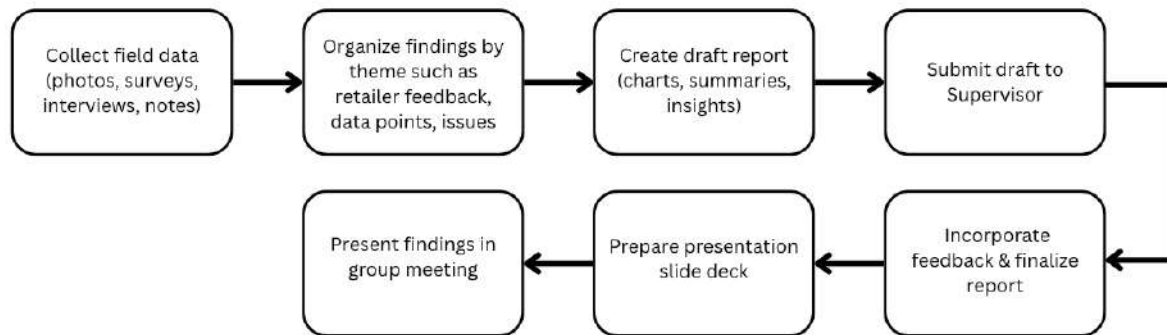


Figure 5: Job process diagram of reporting and presentation workflow

2.5 Contributions as a Co-Op Student in the Company

During my 16-week internship at Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. as a Marketing & Sales Intern, I was able to make meaningful contributions to the company's ongoing marketing and trade operations. My role allowed me to support both field-level execution and office-based strategic functions, giving me the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge while adding value to real business processes.

My major contributions to the organization are summarized below:

1. Retailer Feedback & Market Insight Collection

One of my core contributions was conducting extensive market visits across different retail outlets following Consumer Behavior frameworks (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Through these visits, I collected valuable insights into retailer satisfaction, product availability, product display, and consumer preferences. These findings supported the Marketing & Sales Division in assessing retail-level challenges, visibility gaps, and opportunities for improvement. The data I collected was also used during internal meetings to refine product placement strategies.

2. Contribution to Dark Fantasy Delight Pack Product Launch

I played an active role in the launch of the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack in the Nepalese retail market. My responsibilities included:

1. Visiting retailers to ensure correct product placement
2. Monitoring visibility and shelf prominence
3. Gathering initial customer and retailer responses
4. Tracking stock movement during the early launch phase

The insights I collected were incorporated into the brand supervisor's evaluations of the product's performance and early adoption.

3. Preparation of Reports, Presentations & Market Summaries

I consistently prepared structured market reports summarizing retailer feedback, market observations, and competitor findings. These reports were submitted to my Branding Supervisor and used during weekly team discussions. Additionally, I created presentation slides when required, contributing to communication between field teams and office teams.

4. Enhancing Retail-Level Activation Through On-Ground Execution

During various field assignments, I contributed to Enhanced visibility following findings related to point-of-purchase influence (Underwood et al., 2001) and retail activation activities such as:

1. Arranging POSM materials (posters, danglers, banners)
2. Ensuring standardized product display
3. Communicating retailer concerns to supervisors
4. Supporting the company's brand visibility initiatives

This helped maintain Surya Nepal's presence at the retail level and strengthened retailer relationships.

Chapter 3: Learning Process

3.1 Problems/Issues of the Company

Throughout my internship at Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd., I had the opportunity to closely observe the internal dynamics of trade marketing operations, retailer relations, and brand visibility strategies. Although Surya Nepal is one of the most structured and dominant FMCG companies in Nepal, several challenges surfaced in the field that affect the execution of marketing plans.

One of the most prominent issues I encountered was the inconsistency in retail-level product visibility. While some outlets displayed Surya Nepal's products prominently, others lacked updated point-of-sale materials or had product placements that did not follow the company's guidelines. Retailers often mentioned that POS materials were insufficient or "had not reached them," which suggested a gap between planning and on-ground distribution. Such inconsistencies can dilute the impact of a brand launch or hinder sustained visibility.

Another challenge was the lack of real-time data collection mechanisms. During my field visits, all retailer feedback, competitor observations, and product stock updates were recorded manually. Although supervisors are accustomed to this method, the absence of a digital reporting tool slows decision-making and creates delays in addressing emerging competitor activities or retailer grievances. Lack of digital tools reduces speed of decision-making; Burns & Bush (2014) emphasize the role of real-time data in effective marketing research.

Retailer communication gaps also became evident during my visits. Many shopkeepers expressed that they were occasionally unaware of ongoing schemes or new product introductions. In a competitive FMCG environment especially for categories like biscuits, confectionery, and agarbatti retailer awareness directly influences product push and sales velocity.

Finally, the launch of the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack revealed a recurring issue: limited early-phase promotional support in certain outlets. Without consistent visual merchandising and product sampling at the early stages, retailers find it harder to promote a newly introduced premium product, and consumers may overlook it entirely.

These challenges, though not severe, highlight key areas where operational refinement could significantly enhance market performance.

3.2 Solving the Problems

While the issues identified require medium- to long-term systemic improvements, I made efforts within my capacity to address them and also explored relevant theoretical frameworks to understand how these challenges could be solved more effectively.

To reduce inconsistencies in product visibility, I ensured that every visit included a verification of display standards and assisted retailers with rearranging products when appropriate. Research shows that product placement and in-store visibility significantly influence impulse buying and consumer attention, especially in FMCG categories (Underwood, Klein, & Burke, 2001). My interventions were small in scale but contributed to creating a more uniform shelf presence across outlets.

The delays in data reporting encouraged me to strengthen communication practices. I started sending real-time updates through photographs, WhatsApp messages, and short summaries to my supervisor. Although this did not replace formal reporting, it ensured that urgent observations such as competitor promotions or stockouts were shared promptly. According to Burns and Bush (2014), timely and accurate data collection is essential for effective marketing decision-making, and even simple methods can improve responsiveness when formal tools are unavailable.

Similarly, to bridge communication gaps between retailers and the company, I made an effort to provide clear explanations about schemes, pricing, and the newly launched Dark Fantasy Delight Pack. Even small conversations helped retailers feel better informed and more confident promoting products. This aligns with Morgan and Hunt's (1994) assertion that trust and communication are the core of strong long-term relationships in marketing channels.

Regarding the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack specifically, I documented retailer challenges, early consumer feedback, and visibility gaps in a structured format. These findings helped supervisors understand the product's early-market performance more accurately and supported improvements in its rollout. Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovation Theory highlights that early impressions and first-phase reactions play an important role in determining whether new products gain momentum, which explains why gathering feedback during the launch was essential.

Overall, my actions contributed incremental value, but more importantly, they helped me understand how theories learned in the classroom such as consumer behavior, retail visibility, and relationship marketing are applied in real corporate settings.

3.3 Recommendations to the Company

Based on field observations, discussions with retailers, and the theoretical frameworks applied during my internship, I believe Surya Nepal could benefit from several improvements that would strengthen its marketing operations, enhance retailer relationships, and support future product launches such as the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack.

1. **Introduce a Digital Field Reporting Tool:** A mobile app designed for field teams could streamline data collection and enhance real-time decision-making. The app could allow supervisors to view retailer feedback, visibility gaps, and competitor analysis instantly. Incorporating GPS-stamped photos, checklists, and automated summaries would reduce manual work and improve accuracy. Many global FMCG companies use such tools to improve market responsiveness and field discipline.
2. **Establish a Structured POS Material Allocation System:** One of the biggest issues during my field visits was the unequal distribution of posters, danglers, and display materials. Implementing a tracking system—either digital or checklist-based—would ensure that each outlet receives the correct promotional support. This is especially important for premium launches like Dark Fantasy Delight Pack, which relies heavily on eye-catching visibility to attract new customers.
3. **Strengthen Retailer Communication Through Micro-Training & Broadcasts:** Retailers should receive frequent micro-updates through WhatsApp broadcast lists or short video clips explaining new schemes, introductions, and product benefits. Such communication would help retailers feel more connected to the brand and reduce misinformation. Periodic micro-training sessions could also empower retailers to understand new product USPs and display guidelines.

4. **Develop a “Launch Kit” for New Products:** For new launches, Surya Nepal could provide a standardized launch kit containing: Small display stands, Taste samples (for biscuits/confectionery), Attractive danglers and posters, Retailer briefing cards. A structured kit would ensure consistent visibility across outlets and make launches especially premium products more impactful.
5. **Conduct Pre-Launch Consumer Research for Future Biscuit Products:** While Dark Fantasy Delight Pack is a strong premium product, conducting pre-launch sensory tests or small-scale sampling campaigns would help generate consumer curiosity and refine product messaging. Such data could also guide decisions about pack size, pricing, and consumer positioning.
6. **Introduce Periodic Market Visibility Audits:** A formal monthly audit system would identify visibility gaps early and help ensure that brand standards are maintained across regions. Visibility audits are commonly used in global FMCG companies to measure marketing effectiveness, POS relevance, and retailer compliance.

Overall, these recommendations combine theoretical insights, field-based observations, and practical feasibility, ensuring they can be realistically implemented to strengthen Surya Nepal’s marketing operations.

3.4 Learnings During the Co-Op Studies

My co-operative education experience at Surya Nepal allowed me to grow academically, personally, and professionally. Throughout my internship, I was consistently exposed to real market environments, retailer interactions, and brand activation activities that helped me understand the complexity of FMCG operations. The key learnings I gained during this period are described below.

A. Understanding Retail Consumer Behaviour: During my market visits, I observed how consumers make purchasing decisions inside retail shops. I learned how visibility, price sensitivity, and product placement influence the customer's quick choices, especially in categories like biscuits and confectionery. These real-life observations helped me connect theoretical concepts of consumer behaviour with actual buying patterns in Nepali markets.

B. Retailer Relationship Management: Interacting with retailers on a daily basis taught me how important trust and communication are in trade marketing. I understood that retailers are more likely to recommend products when they feel supported, informed, and valued. This experience strengthened my interpersonal skills and taught me how to handle different types of retailers professionally and confidently.

C. Market Research and Field Insight Collection: A major part of my internship involved gathering information related to stock levels, visibility standards, and competitor behaviour. I learned how to take structured notes, verify information through observation, and convert raw field data into meaningful insights. These skills helped me understand how market research contributes to decision-making for supervisors.

D. Product Launch and Trade Activation Experience: Working on the launch of the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack provided hands-on experience in how new products enter the market. I learned about the importance of early visibility, retailer acceptance, and trial generation in ensuring a successful launch. This exposure helped me understand how even small details like POS placement can affect the early performance of a product.

3.5 Applying Knowledge from Coursework

My academic coursework played an important role in helping me understand and perform my internship responsibilities effectively. Many of the concepts I studied during my BBA program became directly useful once I entered a real FMCG work environment.

Courses such as Principles of Marketing and Consumer Behaviour helped me analyze why certain products perform better than others in retail settings. I could relate theories of

segmentation, perception, and buyer psychology to the behaviour I observed during market visits. Similarly, lessons from Business Communication supported me in preparing clear and organized reports for my supervisors, allowing me to present findings in a structured format. During my field research tasks, knowledge from Market Research and Business Analysis helped me understand how to interpret qualitative data and categorize information into meaningful patterns. Concepts from Strategic Management also helped me identify how Surya Nepal positions its products differently from competitors and how brand strength influences retailer preferences.

Overall, these academic foundations allowed me to carry out my responsibilities more confidently and helped me appreciate how classroom theories translate into practical marketing activities.

3.6 Special Skills and New Knowledge I Learned from this Co-Op Studies

My internship allowed me to develop several new skills and strengthen abilities that will be valuable in my future career. These skills came from direct interaction with the market environment and the responsibilities I handled during the internship.

- A. Communication Skills:** Working with supervisors, retailers, and sales representatives significantly improved my communication abilities. I learned how to explain product details clearly, ask the right questions during retailer visits, and provide concise updates to my supervisors. This enhanced my confidence in interacting with different stakeholders.
- B. Field Marketing and Visibility Management:** I gained practical knowledge of how brands maintain visibility in stores and how display strategies influence product performance. Understanding shelf placement, POS utilization, and in-store branding gave me hands-on experience in trade activation, which is essential in FMCG marketing.
- C. Competitor and Market Analysis:** By observing pricing, packaging, and promotions of competitor brands, I strengthened my ability to analyze the market environment. This taught

me how to compare different products objectively and identify subtle differences in positioning strategies among FMCG brands.

D. Time Management and Task Prioritization: Balancing daily field visits, data collection, and report preparation improved my time management skills. I learned how to plan routes efficiently, manage deadlines, and adapt quickly to last-minute assignments, all of which helped me become more organized and productive.

Chapter 4: Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Summary of Highlights

My internship at Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd. provided me with several meaningful experiences that significantly contributed to my academic and personal growth. One of the most memorable highlights was the opportunity to work for such an established and respected company in Nepal's FMCG sector. Being able to witness how a large corporation operates internally—especially its distribution and trade marketing systems gave me a deeper understanding of how products reach retailers and consumers across different regions.

Another major highlight was the exposure I gained through field visits. Interacting directly with retailers and customers allowed me to observe consumer behaviour and market conditions in real time, which strengthened my understanding of the industry far more than theoretical learning alone. I also enjoyed conducting in-depth analyses and preparing structured reports and presentations after each field assignment. These tasks not only helped me refine my analytical skills but also gave me confidence in converting field observations into meaningful insights. Overall, the internship was a holistic learning experience where I gained practical knowledge, developed stronger communication skills, and learned to approach marketing problems with a more structured and research-oriented mindset.

4.2 Evaluation of Work Experience

My work experience at Surya Nepal was both enriching and supportive. I received strong mentorship from supervisors, especially during fieldwork, where I learned how to approach retailers, gather reliable information, and interpret market conditions accurately. Their guidance helped me understand trade marketing processes more deeply and encouraged me to ask questions whenever I needed clarity.

The workload throughout the internship was manageable, and my supervisors maintained an environment where I felt comfortable sharing my thoughts and asking for feedback. I appreciated the balance between independence and guidance, as it allowed me to take responsibility for my tasks while still being supported when required.

During the internship, I noticed significant improvements in my communication skills, especially when interacting with retailers and presenting findings to supervisors. I also developed stronger market research capabilities and gained confidence in generating marketing ideas based on field insights. The overall work experience was positive, encouraging, and aligned with my academic and career goals.

4.3 Limitations of the Co-Op Study

Although the internship was highly beneficial, there were certain limitations that affected the scope of my learning experience. One recurring challenge was that many retailers were hesitant to answer questions or were not available during store visits. In some cases, retailers were not well informed about the product details or promotional schemes I needed information about, which made it difficult to collect complete and accurate data.

The monsoon season also posed challenges, as heavy rain disrupted several field visits and limited the amount of time I could spend in certain market areas. This occasionally affected the consistency of my fieldwork and data collection timeline.

Another limitation was the restricted exposure to some internal departments within the office. While I gained valuable experience in the marketing and sales division, I had limited interaction with other functions, which could have helped me build a more holistic understanding of the company.

Finally, access to certain internal data was limited due to confidentiality, which meant I sometimes had to rely solely on field observations rather than deeper analytical data from the organization.

4.4 Recommendations for the Company

Based on my overall experience and understanding of Surya Nepal's operations, I believe the company could benefit from several forward-looking strategies, particularly in relation to newer product categories like biscuits. As Surya Nepal continues to expand beyond cigarettes and agarbatti, more creative and intensive promotional approaches could help strengthen the market presence of products such as the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack.

One recommendation is to adopt more innovative and impactful visibility strategies for new launches. For example, creating unique in-store displays, branded biscuit baskets for cash counters, or rotating visibility zones could help increase product recall and encourage impulse buying. Additionally, more targeted digital marketing strategies such as geo-targeted ads or content showcasing how the product pairs with tea could attract younger consumers and encourage trial purchases.

Another recommendation is to promote new products more intensively during their launch phase. Micro-sampling activities in high-traffic areas, collaborations with cafés for co-created items using Dark Fantasy Delight, or festival-based limited editions could generate excitement and build early brand momentum.

Finally, better integration of interns into cross-functional teams would enhance learning experiences and allow interns to understand how multiple departments contribute to overall brand strategy. This would also encourage interns to develop a wider range of skills and insights.

4.5 Recommendations for the Co-Op Program

To further strengthen the cooperative education experience, the program could introduce preparatory workshops before students begin their internships. These workshops could cover topics such as professional communication, basic research methods, industry-specific expectations, and reporting formats. This would ensure that students enter their workplaces with greater confidence and clarity.

Additionally, the program could provide more opportunities for students to interact with industry professionals through guest lectures or networking sessions. Exposure to real industry insights before starting the internship could help students better understand how to align their academic learning with workplace requirements.

Finally, the Co-Op Office could consider implementing periodic check-ins with both students and supervisors to ensure that internships are progressing smoothly and that students are receiving adequate guidance. These check-ins could help address challenges early and support students in achieving better outcomes through their internship experience.



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Appendices

Appendix A: Weekly Log

Week No.	Dates	Tasks Performed
Week 1	1 st July – 7 th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attended internship orientation and met direct supervisors (Branding Supervisor & Marketing/Sales Supervisor).• Learned about Surya Nepal's product portfolio (cigarettes, agarbatti, confectionery, biscuits).• Understood organizational structure, roles of departments, and reporting hierarchy.• Reviewed previous marketing campaigns and sales reports to understand market context.• Briefly observed internal meetings and learned basic expectations for field reporting.
Week 2	8 th July – 14 th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joined supervisors on guided market visits across selected routes.• Observed retailer behavior and customer purchase patterns in small groceries and convenience stores.• Learned the basics of visibility audits, POSM placement, and shelf arrangements.• Assisted in recording retailer feedback on product availability and competition.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepared first weekly summary report with images and observations.
Week 3	15 th July – 21 st July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted independent visits to retail outlets across assigned routes. • Collected structured feedback regarding stock rotation, pricing, and product movement. • Carried out display and shelf audits for agarbatti, confectionery, and biscuits. • Identified common issues such as low visibility, cluttered shelves, and outdated promotional materials. • Submitted a detailed field report highlighting outlet-specific insights.
Week 4	22 nd July – 28 th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted product-level competitor benchmarking (price, placement, packaging, schemes). • Created a small database comparing visibility scores across major brands. • Mapped high-traffic retail outlets for future activation activities. • Noted competitor POSM usage and promotional tactics. • Presented competitor insights to supervisor during weekly review.
Week 5	29 th July – 4 th Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently planned market routes and daily visit schedules.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted interviews with shopkeepers regarding consumer preferences in biscuit and confectionery categories. • Gained deeper understanding of price sensitivity and impulse buying patterns. • Captured real-time updates (photos + short notes) to communicate urgent findings. • Highlighted high-performing and low-performing outlets for visibility improvement.
Week 6	5 th Aug – 11 th Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefed on launch objectives, target outlets, and display expectations. • Collected retailer expectations and concerns about biscuit category expansion. • Surveyed consumer reactions to existing Dark Fantasy SKUs. • Identified ideal visibility spots in different outlets for upcoming launch. • Submitted a pre-launch readiness report with suggestions.
Week 7	12 th Aug – 18 th Aug	Away from city; not working.
Week 8	19 th Aug – 25 th Aug	Away from city; not working.
Week 9	26 th Aug – 01 st Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resumed fieldwork and immediately supported launch execution.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensured new product was properly placed at eye-level or impulse-buy positions. • Conducted post-launch feedback collection with shopkeepers and customers. • Reported on issues like stockouts, low initial demand, or confusion about SKU differentiation. • Worked with supervisor to resolve visibility or merchandising gaps.
Week 10	2 nd Aug – 08 th Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placed posters, wobblers, danglers, and shelf strips where needed. • Assisted retailers in reorganizing shelves to improve brand presence. • Noted outlets requiring additional promotional inventory. • Captured before–after photos to document improvements. • Submitted weekly visibility progress report.
Week 11	09 th Sept – 15 th Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explained new promotional schemes or offers to retailers. • Clarified pricing, pack size, and product benefits for the new Delight Pack. • Identified confusion among some retailers and addressed them with supervisor support.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged retailers to highlight Dark Fantasy products at the counter. • Reported recurring communication challenges to management.
Week 12	16 th Sept – 22 nd Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted structured consumer and retailer interviews using pre-planned questionnaires. • Compared pricing gaps among biscuit brands across multiple outlets. • Observed consumer reactions to premium vs. value-priced biscuits. • Updated internal data sheet with findings and insights. • Attended team discussion to present weekly results.
Week 13	23 rd Sept – 29 th Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compared display techniques used by key competitors (e.g., Britannia, Nestlé). • Identified retailers strongly influenced by competitor schemes. • Created a competitor presence map for supervisor review. • Recommended specific outlets for follow-up visits and activation. • Submitted competitor benchmarking report with visuals.

Week 14	30 th Sept – 06 th Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compared display techniques used by key competitors (e.g., Britannia, Nestlé). • Identified retailers strongly influenced by competitor schemes. • Created a competitor presence map for supervisor review. • Recommended specific outlets for follow-up visits and activation. • Submitted competitor benchmarking report with visuals.
Week 15	7 th Oct – 13 th Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checked sell-through of Dark Fantasy Delight Pack across multiple routes. • Identified outlets with increasing demand trends. • Reported issues such as shelf stock depletion or inadequate replenishment. • Suggested visibility reinforcement in low-performing stores. • Assisted supervisor in understanding regional performance variations.
Week 16	14 th Oct – 13 th Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped prepare internal PowerPoint slides summarizing field updates. • Organized all field photographs and retailer comments into structured folders.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created charts/tables showing visibility improvements over time. • Attended monthly review meeting with marketing team. • Received feedback on documentation and communication improvements.
Week 17/18	14 th Oct – 1 st Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed final round of retail visits. • Prepared closing report summarizing learnings, challenges, and recommendations. • Discussed overall performance with supervisors. • Handed over data sheets, photos, and pending reports. • Concluded internship and finalized all documentation.

Table 2: Weekly Log of tasks done for the internship period

Appendix B: Internship Photos



Figure 6: Having a meeting with my Job Supervisor Mr. Navin Raj Saroj



Figure 7: Discussing with one of the marketing team Miss. Parisha Mahat



Figure 8: Taking Inventory and Organizing existing stock in one of the marts



Figure 9: Doing Field Research work for the Dark Fantasy Delight Pack