



MONITORING QUALITY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF FOOD ENTERPRISES

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Abstract *At international level, the question of providing a balanced diet, the intake of nutrients and its influence on the health status, is one of the main concerns of the legislative bodies, but it should also be of the food manufacturers. The present work represents a case study on the company Mc Donald's comprising in his viewfinder elements of monitoring and quality assurance and last but not least of compliance.*

Key words:

Quality assurance, quality monitoring, fast-food industry, Mc Donald's

JEL Codes:

M41

1. Introduction

"Dynamism of firms, especially of small and medium-sized ones, is a management capable to develop principles, practice and discipline. (Drucker, 1993) "

As a number, an absolute majority of catering companies belongs to categories of small business and in medium-sized enterprises to some extent.

"The number of big enterprises of public catering is very low in the world having a transnational character, as a rule, and is based exclusively on industrial and commercial catering. (Lagrange, 1995). "

Managerial concepts are different and reflected in a differential mode in the strategic plan depending on the type and size of the enterprise.

Small and medium-sized enterprises have a higher dynamism of quality and assortment structure, in particular in relation to large enterprises, due to their flexibility and adaptability to meet the smallest variations in the demand for consumption of some marginal segments of consumers, which constitutes true niches not covered by large firms nationally.

Since the essence of mutations hastening the process of globalisation of the market and an increasing diversification of transfrontier flows and a massive population, all these determine the placement of the SMEs in the field of the catering, in competition with large enterprises. The specific of catering enterprises lies in the fact that they are able to ensure an "internal" export.

With increasing globalization of competition pressure, driven by large enterprises, small and medium enterprises have a lot going on in their favour.

Big businesses adapt slower to mutations that occur in the social environment, but being open outwards, they have the ability and desire to cater to the vast markets.

If small and medium enterprises manage to have performances in the field of quality and great flexibility in adaptation to international market requirements, then they are capable, at least a part of them, to exceed the competitive large enterprises.

It is explicable, in this context, to realize the interest manifested by the UN International Trade Centre in Geneva to investigate the means to ensure effective assistance to the principal client, namely the small and medium enterprises.

The desired effect is to direct the trend of globalisation from large enterprises to top-performing businesses in the SME space.

High capacity for flexibility and adaptability of enterprises to satisfying consumer requirements is inversely proportional to the size of the enterprise resulting from the speed of response to consumer requirements.

The consumer is particularly sensitive to quality issues. The consumer reaction to the apparent quality is prompt because the apparent quality is perceived, received on a psycho- sensuous plan and in relation to the consumer's own experience more or less endorsed.

2. Monitoring quality. Case study: Mc Donald's

"Taking place in almost all districts of the country, the company had to adapt to the conditions of each region, while maintaining company standards, restaurants were still adapted to climatic conditions and possible environmental restrictions. In terms of natural resources, the company is trying to conclude contracts with local suppliers, but after they prove their capacity to comply with the standards and procedures required by McDonald's. (<http://www.zf.ro/companii/romdis-plus-32-pe-baza-cresterii-vanzarilor-mcdonald-s-3081625/>, accessed at 20.03.2014)

"McDonald's seeks to conclude contracts with local suppliers, but only after they prove and commit that they are able to supply raw materials that comply with the standards imposed by the company. For the

raw materials that are not found in our country, McDonald's uses suppliers utilized by the parent company for restaurants in other neighboring countries. Everything should be done in conditions of maximum transparency and legality, but also in terms of maximum efficiency for McDonald's. It is worthy of note the fact that McDonald's is a strategic partner of the Coca-Cola company, which gives the two companies mutual advantages, both locally (market), as well as globally. "For reasons of economic efficiency, the company is calling for Romania to market the services of "Romdis" Ltd., supplier of logistics and distribution for the McDonald's chain

(<http://www.corporatenews.ro/articol/FMCG/4026/McDonald-s-a-atins-o-cifra-de-afaceri-de-93-mil-euro-pe-piata-autohtona.html>, accessed at 24.03.2014).

Table 1. Main suppliers of goods of chain restaurants, "McDonald's" Romania

| Name of supplier | the raw materials provided by the supplier |
|--|--|
| Frisch&Frost Nahrungsmittel GES M.B.H. (Austria) | potatoes |
| Johnson Diversey România S.R.L. | cleaning and maintenance products |
| RAJO a.S (Slovakia) | milk |
| Berglandmilch (Austria) | milk |
| Red Co 80 S.R.L | fresh rolls |
| Esca Food Solutions GmbH&Co KG (Austria) | beef |
| S.C. Coca-Cola HBC România S.R.L. | fizzy and bottled drinks |
| Esca KFT (Ungaria) | chicken |
| Espersen Polska SP (Polonia) | fish |
| S.C. Eisberg S.R.L. | salad |
| Hochland Deutschland Gmb H (Germania) | cheese |
| Gerbeaud Cukrasz Erdmelo | muffins |
| S.C. AnnaBella S.R.L. | apple juice |
| East Balt Guenther BVBA (Belgia) | frozen buns |
| Hany Catering BG (Bulgaria) | cakes |

(Source: the collection of information from internal and external sources of the company)

McDonald's has been collaborating with local Employment Agencies, but much of the employment is performed directly, without intercession between individuals looking for a job and the employer, all the more so as those interested can apply directly for a job on the company's website. Currently McDonald's has about 4,300 employees, besides them being firms' employees and suppliers of raw materials, McDonald's is one of the most important employers in Romania. Those who apply for a job in the restaurants McDonald's have the opportunity to opt for the worker or trainee manager function. Regardless of the option, any member of the team of McDonald's has a real chance at promotion in the company, even speaking of "a life-long career".

In this category are included the specialized firms with which McDonald's concludes cargo distribution contracts between provider and restaurants, "Romdis" Ltd., the firms the company engages for handling garbage and refuse, and waste during production, various consultancy firms, telecommunications firms (Telecom and Vodafone), firms dealing with maintenance and servicing of equipment (Dacris Ltd.) the firm dealing with payroll, the firm dealing with IT in restaurants ("Infoserv Millennium III" Ltd.), the firm responsible for ventilation and air conditioning "Air System" Ltd.), etc.

The company has 62 restaurants (<http://mcdonalds.ro/pages/restaurante/harta-restaurante>, accessed date 14.03.2014) distributed throughout the country, fully equipped and located in a

continuous process of updating, as evidence of a strong research and development activities. In addition to the 62 restaurants, the company also has a fully equipped building for the office work.

At the level of productive capacity, McDonald's has given proof of professionalism, always with a qualified workforce (known in this area as an employer who invests heavily in employee training), with a yield of labour increased.

Quality is the most important principle of McDonald's. This is particularly highlighted in the selection and preparation of products. The restaurants offer fresh and 100% product quality in any place and at any time, that is why many restaurants are open until late and even on holidays.

McDonald's products consist of nutritious ingredients, such as beef, chicken, salad potatoes, and dairy products. These products retain the quality and natural elements throughout the cooking process.

To ensure complete quality control they begin with the raw materials up to each finished product. The restaurant has a very important role in ensuring the quality of a product, such as a Big Mac. This can be seen by following the procedures for control of slices of flesh: roasted burnt slices or not cooked enough are rejected when preparation times are not respected. Control of products (e.g. rolls) is also an essential element in the process of quality assurance by means of it the specifications and standards of McDonald's are applied, which is laid down in the operational manuals. Other quality control standards are established by measuring the temperatures and times for keeping and respecting the validity of products. Out of the kitchen and into the hands of customers, a whole series of checks are performed to ensure that all products comply with the international quality standards.

The product reviews is McDonald's Big Mac. It contains two slices of 100% beef meat, lettuce, onion, pickles, cheese and special sauce, all on a sesame seed roll. Hamburger and Cheeseburger are also classical McDonald's products. They all have one common feature: 100% beef without chemicals and not preserved.

The techniques used by McDonald's in order to ensure the quality of products are recognized by national institutions and, most often, are more strict than the limits set by the authorities.

Under the motto "same taste all over the world" ("One Key Worldwide"), the famous French fries, as well as tasty sandwiches from chain of McDonald's restaurants have the same flavor on all continents.

As a strategy for distribution through distribution is used properly by the manufacturer as a strategy involving a total control and direct channels.

Even the campaign slogans should correspond to the global marketplace. In this idea, McDonald's Romania has adopted since 1999 the slogan for Central and Eastern Europe, *Every time a good time*, which lasts until 2003, when it adopted the slogan of the next campaign which is also in progress at present: *I'm lovin' it*.

Although it is regarded as too big and strict, this marketing philosophy adopted and enforced uniformity of the global company, the reality proves that one of the reasons for the success of the chain of restaurants is just similarity of places, products, mainly savory of food.

Thus, the English-English Dictionary of the publishing house "Longman" appeared in 2003 provides readers the following definition of the noun 'McDonald's most famous fast food restaurant in the world, which sells hamburgers, fried chicken, French fries and other fast food. The most famous product of the restaurant is Big Mac. There are thousands of McDonald's restaurants in the world and, in particular, they are popular among children and young people. The company was founded in the United States and many people believe that McDonald's is the American way of life. (Longman, Dictionary of English Language and Culture, 2003) ".

However, the company has reduced its profit ten times in the past five years, from 9 million euros in 2007 to not even one million euros in 2012. The turnover was 89, 7 million euros, down to 5% from 2011; globally, McDonald serves 68 million customers daily. The company has more than 1.7 million employees in over 34,000 restaurants. (<http://www.wall-street.ro/articol/International/159742/mcdonald-s-nu-si-a-invata-lectia-un-nou-proces-din-cauza-unei-cafele-fierbinti.html#ixzz2yThVBkln>, accessed at 15.03.2014) ».

3. Conclusions

The current conditions of competition seen especially in the context of market globalisation require a continuous endeavor in raising quality and in ensuring the high performance of the offer.

Mc Donald's case is notoriously worth mentioning as it demonstrated a real virtuosity in securing a global quality management. The strategic concept that highlights this approach is the full satisfaction in meeting the explicit and implicit requirements of the consumer, reflected in all tactical components of the firm.

From the data collected, the current activity of all Mc Donald's commercial establishments is satisfied with the amount of psycho-sensuous (apparent freshness) and hygienic value at a high degree of safety.

Noteworthy is the promotional impact of the Declaration of nutrients in the food packages to Mc Donald's consumers, which through the use of special means shall inform the nutritional potential clientele in all products offered within the framework of its units; however they do not declare the components of their recipes.

Internationally, the issue of ensuring a balanced diet, the intake of nutrients and its influence on the health status, is one of the main concerns of the legislative bodies, but it should also be in the attention of the food manufacturers.

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