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A Study of Field Marketing, Sales Development and Stakeholder Relationship Building: Evidence from a 45-Day Internship at Averonai – Co Brands (Jewellery Business)

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Abstract : *Field marketing and personal selling remain central to market development in relationship-driven categories such as jewellery, where trust, presentation and perceived value influence channel acceptance. This paper examines how marketing and sales concepts operate in practice, based on a 45-day Summer Internship Project at AveronAI with exposure to Co Brands, a jewellery business. The study uses a descriptive, internship-based design grounded in field observation and professional interactions with vendors, shopkeepers, prospects and prospective investors. Because confidential sales and financial data were not available for academic disclosure, the analysis is qualitative and uses clearly labelled illustrative data to demonstrate analytical logic. The findings indicate that (i) field selling is strongly relationship-oriented, (ii) stakeholder needs differ and require adaptive but consistent communication, (iii) lead generation should be managed as a qualified, staged process rather than a list of contacts, and (iv) questions and objections function as market feedback. The paper recommends a structured lead database, a standard but flexible presentation, a follow-up calendar, a referral mechanism, systematic feedback review and structured investor qualification.*

Keywords: field marketing, personal selling, lead generation, customer relationship management, stakeholder management, jewellery market, business development

I. INTRODUCTION

Marketing concepts such as segmentation, targeting, positioning and the marketing mix appear systematic in textbooks because the customer, product, price and channel are described in advance [1]. In the field, however, a salesperson must first understand the stakeholder before deciding which information is relevant. This makes observation, listening and adaptability central to the selling process, and it is the gap between classroom frameworks and market behaviour that motivates this study.

The study is based on a 45-day Summer Internship Project at AveronAI, with practical exposure to the marketing and sales activities of Co Brands, a jewellery business. The internship was field-oriented and involved direct interaction with local vendors, shopkeepers, prospects and investors. Three elements are treated as interconnected: field marketing creates access to the market; sales development converts access into qualified opportunities; and relationship management sustains those opportunities beyond the first interaction.

Jewellery is a useful context for such a study. It combines fashion, identity, gifting and financial considerations, so buyers and retailers weigh design, quality, price, service and trust together. Local vendors and shopkeepers act as important touchpoints because they understand neighbourhood demand and customer preferences. The study therefore asks how field-based selling activities, lead management and relationship practices can be understood and improved in a small, relationship-driven business setting.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Marketing mix, segmentation and positioning

The marketing mix of product, price, place and promotion, together with segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP), remains the foundational framework for market-facing decisions [1][2]. Segmentation divides a market into groups with similar needs, targeting selects those where the firm can create value, and positioning defines the intended perception of the brand. In jewellery, segments may be defined by customer profile, occasion, style, spending capacity and retail format. For business-to-business interactions with retailers and vendors, the same logic supports prioritising prospects by relevance and commercial fit.

2.2 Personal selling and adaptive selling

Personal selling enables two-way communication and immediate clarification, which is valuable when a proposition requires explanation and trust. The "seven steps of selling" have evolved from a script-driven view toward a more consultative, relationship-based process [3]. Weitz, Sujan and Sujan argue that selling effectiveness depends on a salesperson's knowledge and on the ability to adapt behaviour to the customer situation [4]. This supports the idea that a message should remain consistent in its core proposition while being flexible in emphasis for each stakeholder.

2.3 Relationship marketing and CRM

Morgan and Hunt propose that commitment and trust are central to successful relationship marketing [5]. Payne and Frow describe customer relationship management as a strategic, cross-functional process in which information about customers is used to create value over time [6]. In field practice, CRM translates into recording the last interaction, requirement, interest level, decision role and next follow-up so that conversations can continue with context rather than restart each time.

2.4 Networks, referrals and business development

Granovetter's work on the strength of weak ties shows that loose connections can provide access to information and opportunities that close ties may not [7]. In local business markets, this helps explain why a shopkeeper or professional contact may provide a referral, a market insight or an introduction even without an immediate transaction. Business development can therefore be viewed as cumulative network building rather than only immediate selling.

2.5 Negotiation and research gap

Interest-based negotiation emphasises understanding the underlying interests and constraints of each party instead of arguing over positions [8]. Although these streams are well established, relatively little accessible work documents how junior marketing and sales interns apply them together, in a small firm, across retailer, vendor and investor stakeholders at the same time. This study addresses that gap through a documented internship experience, while acknowledging the limits of a single-organisation, qualitative design.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The study follows a descriptive, internship-based research design. A descriptive approach is appropriate when the aim is to document, organise and interpret what happened, how activities were carried out and what patterns were observed [9]. The unit of observation is the business interaction: a market visit, a prospect conversation, a follow-up, a referral, a lead-qualification discussion or an investor introduction.

3.2 Data sources and sampling

Primary data were obtained through participant observation and conversations with vendors, shopkeepers, prospects and prospective business stakeholders during the 45-day internship. Sampling was purposive: contacts were approached based on business relevance rather than randomly selected. The variables noted for each interaction included business profile, need, interest level, decision role, questions or objections raised and the agreed next action. Secondary understanding was drawn from standard marketing and sales literature, which was used to interpret the field experience.

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3.3 Analysis and ethical safeguards

Analysis was qualitative and thematic, supported by tables and an illustrative lead-funnel model. Where verified numerical records were not available, values are explicitly marked as illustrative and are used only to demonstrate analytical logic. No confidential company database, private contact list, financial statement or investment term has been reproduced.

3.4 Limitations

The study is limited by its single-organisation setting, short duration, purposive sampling and lack of access to confidential performance data. Findings are directional and should not be generalised statistically to the wider jewellery industry.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives are stated using action-oriented phrases in line with the internship requirements:

- To study field marketing and selling practices in a jewellery-market context.
- To understand the requirements and concerns of vendors, shopkeepers and prospective investors.
- To know how leads are generated, qualified and managed through a staged pipeline.
- To study follow-up and relationship-management practices that sustain opportunities.
- To understand how business development and investor outreach extend beyond retail selling.
- To suggest practical recommendations for strengthening field-sales execution.

V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Field activity and stakeholder needs

Field visits generated information that is difficult to obtain from classroom examples. Preparation (purpose, stakeholder type, concise opening and discovery questions) improved the quality of each visit, and respect for the stakeholder's time supported credibility, in line with standard views of professional communication and workplace behaviour [10]. Stakeholder groups differed in what they sought, which is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Stakeholder Groups and Primary Concerns

Stakeholder	Primary concerns	Communication emphasis
Shopkeepers	Product fit, customer demand, price, service	Practical, commercially relevant
Vendors	Commercial viability, credibility, continuity	Clear and reliable
Prospective investors	Business potential, credibility, scalability	Broader business context
Internal team	Accurate hand-over and next actions	Structured reporting

5.2 Lead generation and pipeline analysis

Lead generation is best understood as the start of a funnel in which identification is followed by first contact, qualification, presentation, follow-up and potential partnership. Table 2 and Figure 1 present an illustrative funnel to show how a pipeline can be analysed. The values are academic illustrations, not company records.

Table 2: Illustrative Lead Funnel and Stage Conversion

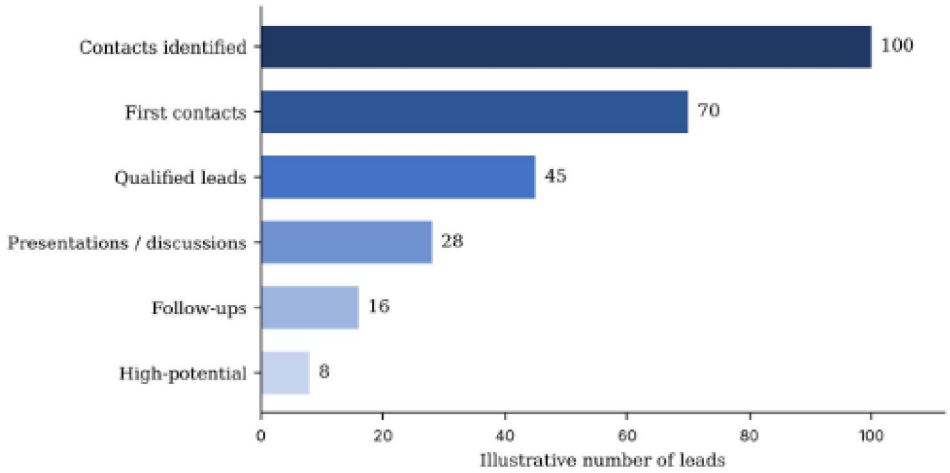
Stage	Leads	Stage conversion	Share of initial pool
Contacts identified	100	–	100%
First contacts	70	70.0%	70%

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Stage	Leads	Stage conversion	Share of initial pool
Qualified leads	45	64.3%	45%
Presentations / discussions	28	62.2%	28%
Follow-ups	16	57.1%	16%
High-potential	8	50.0%	8%

Source: Illustrative values prepared by the author. Stage conversion = leads at the stage ÷ leads at the previous stage.

Figure 1: Illustrative Lead Funnel



Illustrative academic data; not actual company performance.

The illustration shows that qualification, not raw contact volume, determines how many opportunities remain actionable. In this model, 45 of 100 identified contacts are qualified, and only a small priority group remains at the end. The managerial implication is that each lead should carry a source, a qualification status, an objection tag and a next action, so that attention can be directed to the contacts with genuine fit [6].

5.3 Objections as market feedback

Objections were treated as part of the sales process rather than as automatic rejection. Four recurring themes were observed, and each suggests a different response (Table 3). When similar objections recur across conversations, they indicate a need to refine targeting, communication or product presentation.

Table 3: Recurring Objection Themes and Interpretation

Theme	Possible meaning	Response approach
Price	Concern about value or customer fit	Clarify value, fit and affordability context
Product fit	Assortment may not match shop customers	Ask about requirement and target customer
Trust	Uncertainty about credibility	Share clear, verified information
Timing	Not ready to decide	Agree a specific follow-up

5.4 Relationship management, referrals and investor outreach

Relationship value was not limited to immediate transactions. A prospect that did not proceed could still provide a referral, market insight or introduction, consistent with the view that networks create access to opportunities [7].

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Continuity depended on recording context, honouring commitments and following up on the agreed next step, which reflects the trust-and-commitment logic of relationship marketing [5].

Investor outreach broadened the work beyond retail selling. It involved identifying relevant contacts, communicating verified business context and facilitating hand-over to the company, without making unsupported financial claims. Although the stakeholder objective changed, the same principles of relevance, clarity, trust and follow-up applied.

5.5 Marketing mix and STP interpretation

Applying the 4Ps showed that product and price could not be discussed in isolation from place and promotion: a retailer's acceptance depended on design, quality, price perception, access and the credibility of the person communicating the proposition. Qualification functioned as practical targeting, and message adaptation functioned as practical positioning, since the same core proposition had to be translated into the language of each stakeholder [1].

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Table 4: Summary of Findings

No.	Finding	Interpretation
1	Field selling is strongly relationship-oriented.	Access depends on professional conversations; opportunity depends on qualification and follow-up.
2	Stakeholder needs differ.	Communication should be adaptive but consistent in its core proposition.
3	Lead generation needs to be a managed process.	A contact list without status and next action gives little decision value.
4	Questions and objections are market signals.	Recorded systematically, they can improve targeting, pitch and presentation.
5	Relationships create value beyond immediate sales.	Referrals, market intelligence and introductions arise from continuity.
6	Business development is cumulative.	Retail and investor networks both contribute to long-term opportunity creation.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 5: Recommendations and Expected Benefits

Recommendation	Expected benefit
Structured lead database with defined stages	Better pipeline visibility and fewer missed opportunities
Standard core presentation with flexible discovery questions	Consistent message with stakeholder-specific relevance
Regular follow-up calendar	Reduced opportunity leakage
Referral programme	Expanded access through trusted introductions
Periodic review of objections and feedback	Improved targeting, pricing communication and presentation

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Recommendation	Expected benefit
Structured investor qualification and hand-over	More relevant introductions with adequate context

A simple pipeline structure may be used: identified, contacted, qualified, presentation/discussion, follow-up, high-potential, deferred and closed/not relevant. Each record should include the last interaction, requirement, interest level, decision role, next follow-up and remarks. Digital support such as a shared tracker or basic CRM tool can be introduced gradually without adding heavy administrative burden.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The 45-day internship at AveronAI, with exposure to Co Brands, demonstrates that field marketing and sales are connected processes. Effective execution begins with preparation, continues through need discovery and value communication, and depends on disciplined follow-up and relationship management. Lead generation becomes meaningful only when contacts are qualified, recorded and moved through clear next steps.

The study also shows the value of integrating MBA theory with practical observation: segmentation, targeting, positioning, personal selling, CRM, the marketing mix and business development became easier to understand when applied to real stakeholder interactions. Future research could extend this work with verified, anonymised sales records, a larger set of retailers and a comparison across jewellery categories or cities.

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