

1. Nature of Corporate Business

I.C.C. International Public Company Limited is the leader in distribution of fashion brands, both domestically and internationally, as well as brands developed by innovation of the Company and its affiliates. The corporate main industries are cosmetics and perfumeries, hair and skin care products, full line of textile and apparel including underwear, outerwear, sportswear, apparel for physical exercise, fabric care and leather goods, etc.

The Company also conducts wholesale business through shops and department stores both in domestic and international markets. Most of our company's products are in the line of fashion and beauty as can be described in our slogan "We make people happy and beautiful".

- Cosmetics and Perfumeries Industry

From its incorporation in 1964, the Company's core business has been in the sale of cosmetics under the Japanese brand name PIAS. Since then, the Company has expanded our cosmetic business by continuously introducing various other brands, such as BSC Pure Care, Sheene', Arty Professional, Honei V. In October 2005, the Company introduced a new cosmetic brand - BSC Cosmetology, under Saha Group brand for international marketing. Compact powder is the main product for advertising to create brand awareness within the target group. The celebrity and testimonial marketing approaches have been adopted by using celebrities as its presenter to generate trial interest. Consumer behaviors have changed considerably in line with advancement of technology, especially in the use of Social Media including Facebook, Line, IG, Twitter. The introduction of new communication system information dissemination channels has enhanced more rapid communication and access to consumers immediately, as well as providing new additional online sales channels.

- Women's Wear Industry

The Company has been continually promoting every brand of women product groups of which we have dealership. There are 5 main brands: Wacoal, BSC, BSC Signature, Elle and Kullastr. Strategies have been adapted for each of these brands to enhance their marketing competitiveness in terms of product variety options. Through manufacturing innovation, a wide diversity of designs and fabrics are available to increase functionality of the products that enables customers to simply dress for any occasions and ensures customers of our continued product development in response to their lifestyles in the digital era.

- Men's Wear Industry

The Company is the distributor of men's wear under such brands as Arrow, Excellency, Daks, Guy Laroche, Guy Guy Laroche, Elle Homme, Lacoste, Getaway, BSC Cool Metropolis, Hornbill, Le Coq Sportif, Maximus and Felix Buhler. The main distribution channels are department stores in Bangkok and upcountry, with regular sales personnel providing product advice and after-sales service. A new distribution channel has also been opened in discount stores, as well as in shops that have opened in shopping malls, TV channel and E-Commerce

2. Revenue Structure

The Company classified revenue as 3 principal segments are as follow:

(Unit: million baht)

Product Line	2019	%	2018	%	2017	%
Cosmetics, toiletries & perfumeries	1,027.27	8.35	1,142.32	8.54	1,273.62	9.44
Women's apparel	4,039.57	32.83	4,587.85	34.30	4,491.63	33.31
Men's apparel	3,021.02	24.56	3,131.27	23.41	3,211.01	23.81
Others	3,221.36	26.18	3,488.20	26.08	3,470.71	25.74
Other income						
Dividend income	531.07	4.32	528.01	3.95	469.66	3.48
Gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment and investment properties	157.24	1.28	33.62	0.25	82.48	0.61
Gain on disposal of investments held as available for sale	-	-	169.20	1.26	242.62	1.80
Share of profit investment in associates	25.04	0.20	48.55	0.36	28.73	0.21
Others	280.49	2.28	247.79	1.88	215.85	1.60
Total Revenue	12,303.06	100.00	13,376.81	100.00	13,486.32	100.00

3. Major changes and activities in 2019

• BSC Cosmetology

Established : October 2005

BSC Cosmetology has seen the change in Thai consumers' behavior toward a preference to search for information through social media and the Internet more than previously. They spend more time each day surfing the Internet and are more confident to buy goods online or through E-Commerce than ever before as especially evident by the considerable feedback for the big campaigns 9.9, 10.10, 11.11 where our existing and prospective customers look forward to make their purchases. This led to sales increase in leaps and bounds whether in Lazada, Shopee, JD Market, Shopback, etc. Additionally, the end-of-the-year campaign "gifts on 12.12" the target growth of our sales was achieved especially in cosmetics products of BSC Cosmetology which reached the top best-sellers list of cosmetics in Thailand; inter alia there was the launch of special campaigns "Saha Day" and "Beauty Day" and the online livestream sale of BSC Cosmetology through Lazada and Facebook, that resulted in ongoing increase in our sales. This is not only achievement in building such commercial alliance but also expanding our online business to reach a wider variety of target groups and render actual sale whether via Shopee, Convey, JD Market, Seven-Eleven Online Catalogue, O-Shopping, etc., including www.eThailandBEST.com, which are the main online sales channels of the Company where ThailandBEST has a very favorable response from consumers. At the same time, the Company simultaneously widened its online customer base to include new target groups of all ages and genders. In the past year, the Company's cosmetics products hit sales growth up to the Top of Best-selling Brands of ThailandBEST channel. BSC Cosmetology, consequently, shifted its marketing strategy to satisfy the requirements of target groups by proportionately increasing its marketing communication via online digital media to enhance the brand image and brand recognition to be widely known among consumers, as well as increasing focus on reviews of the products by bloggers and influencers whom consumers trust and rely on. With respect to the upgrading of product quality, BSC Cosmetology has continually developed several innovations. In 2019, BSC Cosmetology successfully maintained its consecutive sales growth in the cosmetics market. To this end, every marketing communication channel is applied aiming to maintain the Company's original customer base and reach prospective customers so as to encourage them to gain more collective experience with our brand.

- **Arty Professional by BSC : Presented the Concept "Yourself Your Style"**, the make-up technique which is the solution to every skin problem suiting all activities and features colors for every self-confident girl striving to uniquely enhance their beauty, so they will feel confident everywhere and on every occasion. With comprehensive solutions to all skin problems ensuring confidence in every activity, whether outdoor, indoor or even under water activity. This product is created by specialists who are specifically expert at skin problems that Thai women actually face.
- **'Sheene' : Presented the Concept "Sheene' All About Eyes"** under the slogan "only once applied to your eyes ensures total beauty...confirmed", with the launch of its "fake eyelash formula" mascara to satisfy any girl who requires distinction in terms of naturally long or dark and thick eyelashes which can be adjusted to the desired length and thickness. These products are waterproof, sweat-proof, and tear-proof, providing long-lasting beauty for one's eyes.
- **Pure Care : Presented "Facial Mask" Products.** It is an innovative compound of natural extract from Thai herbs and new technology creating skin nourishment products that provide solutions to all skin conditions. This is a vitamin rich facial mask product for distinctive skin nourishing, available in the form of mask cream in portable containers, convenient for use. After applying the product, your face will become smooth and retain moisture, resulting in healthier skin immediately after use.
- **Wacoal Lingerie**

From the Company's success in the launch of its marketing activities under the concept "Beauty Inside" during the previous 3-4 years, in 2019 the Company continued forward to promote the concept of beauty from within. As Wacoal believes that beauty which arises from within can make women happy and confident, their beauty then can shine outward and be perceived by all the people around them. In that connection, the campaign "Don't Stop Me Being Beautiful" was subsequently conducted in 2019 to emphasize Wacoal as a leading popular brand of lingerie in Thailand, including an active marketing plan to penetrate the wireless lingerie market by introducing Wacoal Wireless Bras under online and offline strategies aiming to maintain our existing customer base and gain prospective new generation customers of all age groups with active, modern and comfort-loving lifestyles which Wacoal Wireless Bras are certainly well suited to provide form-fitting beauty. Another product line which was launched was the "Smart Size" product line which facilitates selection for customers under the concept "Wacoal Smart Size: the new generation bra, easy to choose, beautiful to wear". In this connection, Wacoal is the first to market Smart Size products and received very positive feedback and brand recognition among the new generation target group who value beauty as well as ease

in making their choices for purchase.

In addition, the Company has continually implemented marketing promotion of products for other customer groups such as “Wacoal Bloom” for adolescents, focused on customers aged 8-14 years, “Wacoal Curve Diva” for plus size ladies, “Wacoal Mood” responsive to teenagers’ requirements through development of outstanding function and design which display the modern and cheerful character of the wearers. It fully satisfies modern day teens or Generation Z. As the leading distributor in the lingerie market, Wacoal has upgraded its products to be even more distinctive whether in terms of cloth texture, design or functionality, while at the same time continuing innovation development to be more responsive to consumers’ changing lifestyles, especially their preference to select consumer goods via the digital world thereby allowing multiple purchase options available for them in both online and offline sales channels. To this end, the Company has therefore launched proactive marketing in both such channels to directly and precisely gain access to the relevant groups of modern customers.

- **Arrow : Fabric-Design Innovation**

- **Arrow X-Dimension :** Arrow has released a new collection “Arrow X-Dimension” under the slogan “Extreme Differentiation... Beyond Normality”. It is a new dimension of stylish dressing as Arrow believes a man’s charm arises from his dressing style. Gone are the traditional dressing rules and replaced by a distinctive and eye-catching look, with colors and features bound to satisfy men of all age groups, with a vast array of product lines ranging from chic shirts and trousers, overcoats, oversized shirts, T-shirts, skinny trousers, etc. Arrow has Ice-Paris Intarakomalyasut, a famous teenage star, as brand ambassador to enhance the modern image of the brand.
- **Arrow Upcycling :** The innovation of Arrow Upcycling is the cooperation between Arrow and PTT Global Chemical Plc. through the upcycling innovation to reduce plastic bottles in Thailand and add value to the products whereby the fiber from plastic bottles (the clear PET bottles for containing water) is mixed with cotton thread to produce apparel. 12 plastic bottles will, after going through the upcycling process, will produce 1 shirt.
- **Arrow Upcycling Collection :** This collection has distinctive characteristics derived from the special quality of the fabric which is soft to the touch, provides cool comfort wearing and easy ironing, created especially for that chic and modern look to satisfy customers for both its all-in-one design and functionality.

- **Lacoste : Creative Innovation**

Lacoste Le Club Flagship Store has upgraded its look to fully assemble the most updated collections whether clothes, bags, shoes or accessories at Central World, 2nd floor. It is the largest flagship store in the world on 500 square meters of space at the center of Bangkok Metropolis. It was created with the aim of implementing the brand’s concept store inspired by a tennis court harmoniously integrated with other components of the store. The inner part of the store is designed by using natural wood in a cozy and modern ambience. The store additionally serves as the venue to organize events and activities of Lacoste Thailand. It is decorated with large polo bars with polo shirts in several shades of color and various designs responding to requirements of customers. With a wide variety of product lines inter alia the very classic polo shirts (L.12.12) integrating innovation with its uniqueness of modernity which emphasizes its status as the leading brand of very classic polo shirts in the hearts of people around the world. There are additionally numerous other products available including embroidery service provided for customers to have their monogram embroidered on Lacoste polo shirts; representing its status as a high-end lifestyle brand from France. Moreover, surprise delivery is another service rendered for delivering Lacoste as a gift to any customer’s special person. The brand also provides online shopping service for customers to purchase Lacoste products through its website which is quicker and more convenient. To this end, customers can select and follow up on various collections of Lacoste at www.lacoste.co.th, and www.facebook.com/lacostethailand.

Industry Conditions and Competition

1. Cosmetics and Perfumeries Industry

- **State of Competition**

State of Competition can be considered according to the following distribution channels :

1. **Counter sale :** The marketing of cosmetics is highly competitive and more intense due to the increasing new brands.

Nevertheless, the cosmetics market continues to grow every year despite growing fierce competition, resulting in more competitors in the market while consumer loyalty to the brand has steadily declined. Furthermore, in spite of the prevailing economic and political problems, there is still growth potential for cosmetics business due to the fact that Thai women continue to attach great importance to taking care of themselves and looking beautiful. In 2019, BSC Cosmetology modified the form of advertising and public relations to reach the most consumer groups as most people presently tend to closely follow the news of stars and celebrities. Such behavior significantly impacts on

the sales of products. Therefore, in response to such consumer preference and behavior, and in order to ensure effective and efficient communication for optimal access to consumers, the Company has implemented the strategy of having Miss Universe Thailand 2019 “Fahsai Paweensuda Drouin” as the BSC Cosmetology brand ambassador. Based on the number of hashtags measured in Twitter, this campaign hit the No. 1 ranking of the country at the time during Fahsai Paweensuda Drouin’s participation in the beauty contests in Thailand and abroad. However, television remains a significant channel for advertising the brand to promote brand recognition to a wide audience, combined with online advertisement aimed at gaining fast access to customers. Movie theatre media, billboard media, as well as electronic media at airports, BTS sky train and MRT subway stations are also significantly taken into account because they are easily accessible to the public. The counter brands have additionally implemented further marketing strategies by organizing vigorous sales promotion activities, which stimulate sales in alignment with the change in consumer behavior aiming to attract prospective customers and promoting trial of the products. The key factor of counter sale is still the service rendered by salespersons who enhance brand impression among customers for the purpose of repeat purchases by creating a feeling of worthwhile spending on the products.

2. Discount Store Presently, discount stores implement intensive and tough strategies in terms of pricing and expanding branches into large communities whether in Bangkok or the surrounding areas or the major provinces in all regions nationwide. This widely impacts on manufacturers, original market intermediaries or traditional trade, both wholesalers and retailers as well as smaller community stores. With respect to wholesalers and retailers, the Company has modernized administration and expanded branches to rural areas outside provinces and districts serving as their wholesale and retail representatives in each community particularly aiming at real customers under the one-by-one marketing basis. BSC Cosmetology implemented said strategies to seize opportunities in advantageous geographical areas before its competitors by widely expanding branches into communities or various areas with the intention to create “Economy of Scale”, partnering with local retailers and releasing new products particularly suited to the discount stores, as well as to vet and select products in which it is confident of quality, so that the products can be rapidly sold and highly competitive compared with its rivals.

- Product Acquisition

In terms of production, currently 90% of all of the Company’s cosmetic products are manufactured domestically, mostly by International Laboratories Corp. Ltd., and S & J International Enterprise Plc., both of which belong to the Saha Group and are under the quality management of ISO 9001. Another 10% of the Company’s products are imported.

In terms of product development, global sourcing involves the search for ingredients and packaging from all over the world.

- Industrial Trend and Future Competition

Cosmetics remain the fifth requisite of women, especially in the make-up market. The main products promoted to enhance the growth of the make-up sector are those in regular use such as eyebrow pencils, foundation powder and lipsticks, of which such growth can be attributed to demand for emotional fulfillment because make-up helps users feel more self-confident. Therefore, there remains large growth potential for make-up products in comparison with the entire market share of the beauty sector. In addition, the market trend focuses on online sale as it is apparent that such sale channel has dramatically grown in leaps and bounds. In the future, this channel is likely to become another major distribution channel.

2. Women’s Wear Industry

- State of Competition

1. Competitive Situation

Competitive strategies in 2019 included the following:

- R&D for Women’s Lingerie

Due to rapidly changing consumer behavior, it was important that the Company focused on consumer behavior research and analysis to improve and develop products. Big Data has been developed to enhance production planning to more efficiently meet consumers’ demand, both in terms of sufficient quantity of products available as well as product development to more effectively satisfy the target groups. Additionally, the Company has taken consumers’ needs into account for the launch of new products. The factory, merchandiser and sales department have worked together as One Body, starting from brainstorming to design products to meet consumers’ needs in every age group, size, cup and lifestyle in terms of functionality and fashion based on good quality products. In the meantime, the Quick Response Management System (QRMS) was applied which resulted in more effective product management in shops as goods are sufficiently available and coincide with customers’ demand to ensure customer satisfaction, while reducing lost opportunity for sales, expediting transportation and distribution to shops, as well as promoting more efficient and effective inventory management. As a result,

the lead time for delivery and lost opportunity for sales decreased, hence product management is more effective.

- New Consumer Expansion and Maintain existing Consumer

To systematically retain existing customer base, the Company focused on giving customers continuing satisfaction through a variety of activities that impressed its existing customers of all ages ranging from counter sales promotion activities or giving special privileges.

In addition, the Company has implemented efficient administration of existing customer base through His & Her Plus Point card, in order to build up good relationships with customers. Interesting activities are created so as to encourage participation of customers and render good impressions of the brand, as well as introduction of good service standard system in Customer Relationship Management (CRM), whereby customers are provided with several benefits either discount in purchase of products or premium items that continuously increase sales each year from the points accumulated by His & Her Plus Point card membership.

New Customer Acquisition Strategies have been mapped out in 3 parts :

- Maintaining existing customer groups and expanding to potential new customer groups : The Company has continually marketed products among their long-time loyal customers under the strategy of original customers recommending our good quality products to a younger generation of customers to build market share among female teenagers. The Company has undertaken re-branding of First Bra products for young women, becoming “Wacoal Bloom” via multiple advertising media, effectively achieved through fast communication with accessible and easily understood information gradually resulting in new customers. Moreover, sales promotion activities to customers’ liking were launched to stimulate purchases and favorable communication by key influencers on social media was promoted to prospective customers.
- General customers, having never used the Company’s products : The Company focused increasing efforts on more modern product design and manufacture to appeal to fashionable customers. In this connection, Wacoal Mood launched 3 new pattern design collections “Wacoal Mood x Oh Futon season 2” the beautiful shape wireless bra with very lovely patterns designed by the famous painter Oh Futon.

In addition, the company has developed the collection “Wacoal Smart Size” lingerie focusing on modern girls as the target group under the concept “the bras simply selected, beautifully fitted, wireless enhancing comfortable wear with the slogan “New Generation Bras: Easy to Choose, Beautiful to Wear”, innovatively manufactured using 3D Fit Function, 3- dimensional breast mold, wireless breast base, bending to the body contour, fitting every cup size rendering comfortable wear. There are 4 sizes available, namely S, M, L and LL, featuring adjustable bra hooks in 4 levels. Wacoal Smart Size has “Binko” Parpfa Puttaraksa or Binko Art Illustrator as collaborator in designing “Wacoal x Binko” to add variable patterns and colors that attract teenagers who prefer novel distinction of design and function, Also utilizing multiple marketing strategies in line with people’s modern lifestyles through both offline and online media such as advertisements on television, newspapers and magazines. In addition, out-of-home media, media in department stores, media in movie theatres, social media channels such as Facebook, Fan Page, IG, Line, Email have also been used, which can save more time, expenses and provide ready access to targeted customers. This also includes building up relationships with TV Shopping channels for digital and cable TV advertisements. Giving special privileges to targeted customers for brand experience through physiological expertise and good services enabling increase in sales of every product line according to the set targets. Additionally, Wacoal has expanded markets to new customers in AEC, namely Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos through the online channels, i.e. Facebook so as to communicate with prospective customers, thereby expanding its customer base in AEC.

- Consumers with Cross Product Experience : The Company has offered special prices for some recommended items for buyers in order to create brand awareness and trials of other products of the Company.

- Omni Channel Marketing

Nowadays, fierce competition in ladies lingerie is found in various distribution channels, starting from traditional channels such as department stores, discount stores, the Company’s shops, necessitating the extension of sales to multiple online channels or TV Shopping. Growth in these new channels is expected to increase yearly due to its easy access and ability to meet customers’ demand more rapidly and completely. As such, the Company has partnered with famous online sales websites, TV shopping channels or catalogue sales as the channels are those whereby producers can communicate their product innovations more completely while allowing consumers to be familiarized about the innovation of products before connecting them to visit the points of sale at Department Stores to see the real products. Such are components of Omni Channel marketing is expected to post further growth in line with the changing consumers’ behavior in this modern age.

2. Number and Size of Competitors

Only integrated business can survive in the various industries. Nonetheless, women’s lingerie is a specific industry, which has many challenges in entering the market, starting from importing raw materials, local production of some raw materials, sewing technique and distribution method that requires agents such as department stores or discount stores. The Company continues to place significance on all trading partners whether old channels or new, allowing it to retain and develop its potential to expand its customer base to all

consumer groups and effectively respond to customer needs.

3. The Company's Competitive Status and Potential

The Company pays careful attention to new distribution channels as well as the purchase behavior of customers that is different in each channel. During the past year, the Company has adjusted its approach to proposing contents that are more appealing to the target groups, especially online customers who are likely to grow rapidly. In this connection, the Company uses integrated communication tools via 360° of online channels such as employing influencers of its business alliance media to assist in disseminating contents, adapting online communication methods to gain access to target consumers, resulting in the Company getting good feedback as evident from growing sales, both in terms of number of pieces and amount of monetary gain. To this end, the Company additionally aims at further extending its market base in the future. In the past year, the Company collaborated with Lazada, the major E-Commerce organization in South East Asia, by fully taking products to sell via this online channel in order to widen the distribution base of the Company to rapidly increasing online customers.

- Product Acquisition

ICC is currently carrying five lingerie brands, produced by two major manufacturers:

- 1) Thai Wacoal Plc., manufacturer of Wacoal.
- 2) Pattaya Manufacturing Co., Ltd., manufacturer of Kullastri, BSC, BSC Signature, Elle.

Suppliers of raw materials for both these companies are A Tech Textile Co. Ltd., G Tech Material Co. Ltd., Champ Kabin Co. Ltd., Thai Gunze Co. Ltd., Erawan Textile Co. Ltd., Textile Prestige Plc., Thai Naxis Co. Ltd., Thai Takeda Lace Co. Ltd., Thai Sakae Lace Co. Ltd. and Fujix International Co. Ltd., all of which belong to the Saha Group with manufacturing standard accreditation of ISO 9001. Research and development of new materials have consistently been undertaken resulting in an advantage over competitors in terms of having a wide and diverse range of raw materials and also lower production costs.

- Industrial Trend and Future Competition

The overview of overall trends for the textiles and garment industry shows possible growth in both production and export sectors. Most of the production is for ASEAN markets, due to the advent of the ASEAN Economic Community since the end of 2015, rendering increasing opportunity to expand production capacity, not to mention the increasing size of consumers' market from a population of 60 million to 600 million, which is a huge market with high potential.

In 2019, the Company still focused on research and development of new innovations and technology in designing women's apparel suitable for Asians and coinciding with consumers' behavior for every age group, lifestyle and fashion. This is based on creating good and quality products at worthwhile prices, using integrated product management systems to retain reasonable level of inventory to balance with sales volume—not too much nor too little, while also increasing transportation channels to distribute products to shops more rapidly instead of retaining large amounts of inventory at shops, as well as implementing strategies to create effective production to meet consumers' lifestyles in this Digital Age as much as possible.

3. Men's Wear Industry

- State of Competition

In 2019, menswear sales in department stores have decreased marginally in comparison with the previous year with continued decline in spending among consumers due to economic factors. Consumers were deliberately more selective to choose good quality products than previously, and continued taking into account the ongoing innovation of goods.

In addition, most producers emphasized pricing methods whether offering discounts, redemptions, giveaways and distribution of premium goods to stimulate sales and minimize products in their stocks, but rarely conducted new marketing campaigns. Many had to develop their production efficiency to achieve lower costs, and to ensure flexibility in management for higher competitiveness. In addition, they have to set aside budget for marketing activities for competitive advantages in the long run.

As far as the state of competition is concerned, some advantages still prevailed, namely:

1. The Company's menswear has created a wide range of product lines (portfolio) which can cover the whole target market in many various segments, resulting in wide distribution and a strong market share as well as the balance of negotiating power in distribution.
2. The Company's products are well-known and well-accepted for their reputation and high quality.
3. The Company's products have undergone development and it had successfully and consistently launched innovations into the market owing to support from major suppliers (belonging to the Saha Group). There is an expansion of factories to cater for this growth, from the thread-spinning factory, dyeing factory, cloth decoration factory to ready-made shirts manufacturing

factories, to support the Company in its potential to create a constantly growing market share.

4. The Company has strong personnel with good habits of thought and the determination to achieve corporate targets and they are consistently ready to learn and improve.
5. The Company has a Big Data policy to analyze relevant data and customer behavior (Descriptive Analysis) and to make projections into future trends of customer demand (Predictive Analysis) in order to be able to better respond to consumers' needs.

- **Product Acquisition**

The Company has acquired products from 3 major suppliers, namely :

1. Thanulux Plc., manufacturer of shirts, T-shirts, suits, bags and leather goods.
2. People's Garment Plc., manufacturer of T-shirts and trousers.
3. Bangkok Tokyo Socks Co.Ltd., manufacturer of socks.

Manufacturing technology used is medium-ranged, with a fair number of workers and the modern use of automated machinery for higher production efficiency.

Moreover, the manufacturing group has established factories within a BOI-promoted Industrial area (Zone 3), resulting in a decisive advantage in production costs.

- **Industrial Trend and Future Competition**

Although the market remains sluggish, the industry at large tends to remain stable and continue growing because consumers still continue to pay more attention to their dress. Meanwhile, fierce market competition is expected to rise due to foreign rivals including influx of cheap products from the People's Republic of China. Local producers will have to analyze the market and consumer behavior in each area, create innovations in various forms in terms of products, marketing channels and develop strengths of each product for each target group of buyers in order to survive in the market amid the more intense competition.