

**DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TO  
ENTER THE MARICULTURE MARKET**

**Joana Cardoso Fava Reis Pereira**

**Marketing Master Project**

Supervisor

Prof. Mónica Ferreira, ISCTE Business School, Marketing, Operations and General

Management Department

October 2017

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this master project is to develop a communication plan for a new Portuguese off-shore mariculture company called AtlanticPrime.

The ever-rising demand for good quality protein requires finding new sustainable alternatives to meat production and intensive fishing. Overfishing is one of the greatest challenges of our times. It threatens the survival of various marine species, the balance of the ecosystems and the living conditions of entire communities who depend on fishing to make a living.

Aquaculture is an industry that has been significantly growing in the last years. It has become a very competitive market that counts with multiple players from all parts of the world. The species produced and the methods used are extremely diverse.

Being so recent, AtlanticPrime does not have a communication strategy yet. Moreover, considering that mariculture is not a commonly known subject, it is extremely important to invest in effective and innovative communication ideas that generate brand awareness and differentiate the company right from the beginning of its activity.

AtlanticPrime's proposed communication strategy integrates both traditional and digital tools and is meant to be implemented during the period of one year. Prior to the creation of this plan, it was made an extensive research of external and internal factors related to the company, using different sources of information. The recommended ideas are directed to other businesses (buyers), as well as to end-consumers, and follow the latest communication trends.

**Keywords:** Marketing, Strategy, Communication, Media, Fish, Mariculture

**JEL:** M31 – Marketing, M37 – Advertising

## Resumo

O objectivo deste projecto é desenvolver um plano de comunicação para uma nova empresa portuguesa de Maricultura *off-shore*.

A crescente procura de proteína de qualidade requer que encontremos alternativas sustentáveis à produção de gado e à pesca intensiva. A sobrepesca é um dos maiores desafios que enfrentamos na actualidade, uma vez que ameaça a sobrevivência de inúmeras espécies marinhas, o equilíbrio dos ecossistemas e a subsistência de várias comunidades que dependem da pesca tradicional como forma de sustento.

A indústria da Aquacultura tem tido um crescimento significativo nos últimos anos. Tornou-se num mercado bastante competitivo que conta já com múltiplos concorrentes de diferentes partes do mundo. As espécies produzidas, bem como métodos de produção praticados são já bastante diversificados.

Sendo uma empresa recente, a AtlanticPrime ainda não desenvolveu a sua estratégia de comunicação. Tendo em conta que o tema da maricultura é ainda desconhecido para grande parte dos consumidores, é extremamente importante investir em ideias de comunicação eficientes e inovadoras que criem *brand awareness* e ajudem a empresa a diferenciar-se desde a sua entrada no mercado.

A estratégia de comunicação proposta para a AtlanticPrime integra ferramentas tradicionais e digitais e foi pensada para ter a duração de um ano. Antes da elaboração deste plano, foi feita uma extensa pesquisa de factores externos e internos da empresa, recorrendo a variadas fontes de informação. As ideias recomendadas estão direccionadas a outras empresas (compradoras), bem como a consumidores finais, seguindo as últimas tendências de comunicação.

**Keywords:** Marketing, Estratégia, Comunicação, Média, Peixe, Maricultura

## **Acknowledgements**

Most importantly I want to thank my family for all the moral support and for helping me feel motivated and optimistic throughout this process. You inspired me to do my best!

To my brother who, besides being a reference in terms of hard work and commitment, gave me vital advice and guidance from the beginning until the very end of this project.

To Professor Mónica Ferreira who shared her vast insight and experience in the Marketing field with me, as well as her contagious positivity and good mood.

Finally, I appreciate all my friends' encouragement, in particular Lucas and Pilar, whose kindness and loving attitude are always on my mind and in my heart.

## Table of contents

1. Context and problem definition .....	1
2. Literature Review.....	3
2.1. Marketing.....	3
2.1.1. Marketing as a concept .....	3
2.1.1.1. What is Marketing?.....	3
2.1.1.2. Holistic Marketing .....	4
2.1.1.3. The evolution to marketing 4.0.....	5
2.1.2. Marketing Strategy.....	7
2.1.2.1. What is Marketing Strategy? .....	7
2.1.2.2. Porter's generic strategies .....	7
2.1.2.3. Alternative Marketing Strategy.....	8
2.1.2.4. Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning.....	9
2.1.2.4.1. Segmentation.....	9
2.1.2.4.1.1. VALS system.....	10
2.1.2.4.1.2. Online segmentation .....	11
2.1.2.4.2. Targeting .....	12
2.1.2.4.3. Positioning .....	12
2.1.2.4.3.1. The golden triangle of positioning.....	13
2.1.2.4.3.2. Points-of-Difference and Points-of-Parity .....	14
2.1.2.5. Marketing Mix .....	15
2.1.2.5.1. The 4 Ps.....	15
2.1.2.5.2. The 4 extra Ps.....	16
2.1.2.6. Marketing Plan.....	16
2.1.2.6.1. Executing a Marketing Plan.....	17
2.2. Brand.....	17
2.2.1. Branding.....	17
2.2.1.1. What is a brand?.....	17
2.2.1.2. What is Branding?.....	18
2.2.1.3. The roles of a Brand.....	19
2.2.1.4. The brand as a competitive advantage .....	20
2.2.1.5. Branding in a B2B context.....	20
2.2.1.6. Branding at product or corporate level .....	22
2.2.2. Brand Equity .....	22
2.2.2.1. What is brand equity? .....	22
2.2.2.2. Sources of brand equity .....	23
2.2.2.3. Managing brand equity .....	24
2.2.3. Corporate identity .....	25
2.2.3.1. Managing corporate image and corporate reputation .....	26
2.2.3.2. Corporate Communication.....	26
2.3. Communication.....	27
2.3.1. Blended marketing and communications.....	27
2.3.2. Marketing Communications.....	28
2.3.2.1. What is Marketing Communications? .....	28
2.3.2.2. The role of marketing communications .....	28
2.3.3. The communication process .....	30
2.3.3.1. The elements of the communication process.....	31
2.3.3.1.1. Defining the message structure.....	31

2.3.3.1.2. The message appeal .....	32
2.3.3.1.2.1. Belief formation .....	34
2.3.3.1.2.2. Third party endorsement .....	35
2.3.3.1.2.3. Storytelling.....	37
2.3.3. Marketing communications strategy.....	38
2.3.3.1. The 3 Ps of marketing communications strategy .....	39
2.3.4. Integrated Marketing Communications .....	40
2.3.4.1. What is Integrated Marketing communications? .....	40
2.3.4.2. Decision-making .....	41
2.3.4.2.1. Cognitive decision making .....	41
2.3.4.2.2. B2B decision making.....	43
2.3.4.3. The communication mix .....	43
2.3.4.3.1. Tools .....	44
2.3.4.3.1.1. Traditional Tools.....	44
2.3.4.3.1.2. Digital Tools .....	45
2.3.4.3.2. Challenges and opportunities.....	46
2.3.5. Planning Marketing communications .....	47
2.3.5.1. Planning digital communication .....	49
2.3.5.2. Selecting communication tools .....	50
2.3.5.2.1. Communication tools in B2B .....	51
2.3.5.3. Communication Optimization Model .....	52
2.3.5.4. Cross-border Communication.....	55
2.3.5.4.1. Tools of the international communication mix.....	56
3. Methodology.....	57
3.1. Research purpose .....	57
3.2. Research approach .....	57
3.3. Data collection .....	58
3.3.1. Primary Data .....	58
3.3.1.1. Quantitative Research .....	58
3.3.1.1.1. Questionnaires.....	58
3.3.1.1.2. Qualitative Research .....	59
3.3.2. Secondary Data .....	59
3.4. Data Analysis techniques.....	60
3.4.1. Primary and Secondary Data .....	60
3.4.1.1. Primary Data .....	60
3.4.1.2. Secondary Data .....	60
3.4.2. Data Analysis.....	60
3.4.2.1. Primary Data .....	60
3.4.2.2. Questionnaire: results and analysis.....	60
3.4.2.2.1. Consumer Profile .....	60
3.4.2.2.2. Fish consumption habits .....	61
3.4.2.2.3. Mariculture.....	61
3.4.2.2.4. Advertising.....	62
3.4.2.2.5. Social Media .....	62
3.4.2.4. Questionnaire's final conclusions.....	63
3.4.2.5. Interviews.....	64
4. AtlanticPrime's communication plan .....	65
4.1. External Analysis.....	65
4.1.1. PESTEL analysis .....	65
4.1.2 Global market trends.....	69

4.1.2.1. B2B .....	70
4.1.2.1.1. Social media .....	70
4.1.2.1.2. Brand themes .....	71
4.1.2.2. Consumers.....	73
4.1.2.2.1. Ethnic food consumption .....	73
4.1.2.2.2. Healthy diet.....	74
4.1.2.2.3. Premiumization of products .....	75
4.1.3. Global Fishing Market .....	77
4.1.3.1. Fish consumption and main drivers .....	78
4.1.3.2. Labels and certification.....	79
4.1.3.3. The EU market.....	81
4.1.3.4. The Japanese market .....	83
4.1.4. Aquaculture.....	84
4.1.4.1. Consumers' attitude towards aquaculture.....	84
4.1.4.2. Aquaculture market.....	85
4.1.4.3. Aquaculture labels .....	85
4.1.4.4. Competition.....	86
4.1.4.4.1. Direct off-shore mariculture competitors.....	86
4.1.4.4.1.1. Digital presence .....	87
4.2. Internal Analysis .....	88
4.2.1. AtlanticPrime: business idea.....	89
4.2.1.1. Product .....	89
4.2.2. Vision and mission.....	92
4.2.3. SWOT analysis .....	92
4.2.4. Segmentation.....	95
4.2.4.1. End-consumer segmentation.....	95
4.2.4.2. B2B segmentation.....	96
4.2.5. Target .....	96
4.2.5.1. Targeted end-consumers .....	96
4.2.5.2. Targeted distribution channels.....	97
4.2.6. Positioning .....	97
4.2.6.1. Points of difference .....	97
4.2.6.2 Points of parity .....	98
4.2.6.3. The golden triangle of positioning.....	99
4.2.7. Price .....	101
4.5. Communication goals .....	101
4.6. Marketing Communications Strategy .....	102
4.6.1. Values and Brand image .....	102
4.6.2. Message.....	103
4.6.3. Content.....	103
4.6.4. Tone of voice .....	105
4.7. Selecting media and tools .....	105
4.8. Communication ideas.....	112
4.8.1. B2B commercial ideas .....	112
4.8.2. B2C ideas .....	113
4.9. Resources .....	121
4.10. Budget.....	123
4.11. Schedule.....	124
4.12. Evaluating results.....	126
5. Project conclusion.....	127

6. Project Contribution.....	128
7. Project Limitations.....	129



## **1. Context and problem definition**

### **Climate Change**

Presently, climate change is an undeniable issue that must continue to be addressed, as well as the depletion of natural resources, in an unstable economic and financial environment. According to “The state of the world fisheries and aquaculture” report (2016) by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), one of the biggest challenges we are facing today is how to feed over 9 billion individuals that are expected to exist by 2050. Over the last century, the world’s population has quadrupled and income levels in developing countries have risen, leading to changes in eating habits and to a higher protein intake (especially meat). Livestock production has a massive impact on the environment and has been pointed out as the main reason for global warming. The expansion of land for cattle production forces deforestation that causes irreversible damage to the environment, releasing tonnes of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere and leading countless species to extinction. In addition, the ruminant sector adds to the greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere by emitting methane and nitrous oxide originated by the waste of grazing animals. The antibiotics, hormones and chemicals used are also major polluting agents. Livestock requires a high and growing usage of water for animals to drink, for being washed, to clean production units and to produce feed, for instance. The water used returns polluted to the environment, causing surface and groundwater pollution. It can compromise the existence of other species, cause odours, spread infections and bacteria, becoming a danger to us all. Due to the negative impact that extensive meat production has been proven to have on our planet, it has been recommended that meat consumption should decrease.

**It is then necessary to find efficient and sustainable sources of protein for us to feed, creating opportunity for new businesses (such as AtlanticPrime’s) to develop.**

### **The Ocean**

The ocean covers around 71% of the planet’s surface but only 5% has yet been explored. It is a complex ecosystem that includes incredibly diverse species and some still remain unknown. Along the years, we have relied on the oceans for valuable natural resources such as energy, minerals and food, for instance. Fishing is an ancient practice that has always been important

for the existence and wellbeing of communities and the world economy. In 2012 approximately 85% of global fish stocks were overexploited, depleted, fully exploited or in recovery from exploitation, due to increasingly intensive fishing methods, such as bottom trawling (dragging a large fishing net along the sea floor), that are responsible for the collapse of fish populations (BBC, 2012)

## **Overfishing**

Overfishing is extremely disruptive to the food chain as the replenishment of some species is not assured and the balance of the ocean's biologic system is being disturbed. For instance, the removal (caused by overfishing) of sharks and tuna from their natural living areas can impact other sea creatures down the food chain. Besides, other species such as dolphins and turtles are unintentionally caught in the process but are not used as food, therefore dying in vain. Some communities in developing countries that rely heavily on fishing as their main source of food are threatened by the decrease in fish available in the sea. The main causes for overfishing are: a lack of resources such as tracking procedures and monitoring practices, making it difficult to regulate fishing and to control fishing fleets; little or inexistent regulation regarding fishing practices in international waters, meaning that fishing fleets can bypass areas that are not regulated; lack of knowledge concerning fish populations; problems related to importation, such as unclear provenance of fish (that can lead to farces); unreported fishing; the existence of subsidies for fishermen (in some countries) which contributes to an excessive number of fleets than are actually necessary.

A possible solution is responsible farming which, if done correctly, is a sustainable way of providing food and raising species that are prone to overfishing.

**Including these facts in the company's communication plan is vital as they support and raise awareness of the pertinence of the product (fish) that is going to be offered.**

## **Aquaculture**

*“Aquaculture (...) refers to the breeding, rearing and harvesting of plants and animals in all types of water environments including ponds, rivers, lakes and the ocean. (...) Stock restoration or “enhancement” is a form of aquaculture in which hatchery fish and shellfish are released into the wild to rebuild wild population or coastal habitats (...)”* (NOAA Fisheries, 2017).

The United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Morocco, Mexico Norway and Scotland are some of the countries that are practicing offshore farming. Its main appeal is sustainability as by being farther away from the coasts into a less protected marine environment, open-ocean farming may reduce some of the negative consequences related to nearshore alternatives. It is an ecologically sustainable production due to faster and stronger currents and deeper waters.

**AtlanticPrime needs a communication strategy that is efficient and innovative (improving buyers' purchasing experience and elevating the standards of the industry) and that simultaneously generates information or content that is relevant and impactful for end-customers.**

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Marketing**

#### **2.1.1. Marketing as a concept**

##### **2.1.1.1. What is Marketing?**

Kotler and Keller (2012) refer to marketing as the identification and fulfilment of human and social needs or as a means of meeting needs in a profitable way. In 2004, the American Marketing Association defined it as *“an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in a way that benefit the organization and its stakeholders.”* (AMA, 2008). Seth and Usley (2007) argue that this definition is not bold nor broad enough since it does not specifically refer the concept of value co-creation that implies that value is co-created by both the firm and the customer. Seth and Usley (2007: 305) refer that it *“(...) does not capture the prevalent, complex and dynamic nature of networks (...)”* and believe *“(...) it does not capture the intensity and value of interaction between marketers and customers (...)”*.

In 2007, the new AMA's definition (and still the latest) evolved to explaining marketing as *“the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large”* (AMA, 2008). Despite the changes, Seth and Usley still think it does not reflect value co-creation as it should. According to the authors (Seth and Usley, 2007:305), *“Value co-creation will inevitably transform marketing and become just as pervasive in business-to-customer markets as it is in business-to-business marketing” (...)* The revised definition is certainly a

*step forward. (...) However, we firmly believe that the future of marketing will increasingly involve value co-creation (...)*”.

Marketing management is considered by Kotler and Keller (2012:27) “*the art and science of choosing target markets and getting, keeping and growing customers through creating, delivering and communicating superior customer value*”. The authors (Kotler and Keller, 2012:27) argue that contrarily to what most people believe in, selling is not the most important part of marketing, quoting Peter Drucker: “*There will always (...) be need for selling. But the aim of marketing is to make selling superfluous (...) is to know and understand the customers so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself. Ideally, marketing should result in a customer who is ready to buy. All that should be needed then is to make the product or service available.*”.

### **2.1.1.2. Holistic Marketing**

This notion is based “*on the development, design and implementation of marketing programs, processes and activities that recognize their breadth and interdependencies. Holistic marketing acknowledges that everything matters in marketing – and that a broad, integrated perspective is often needed.*” (Kotler and Keller, 2012:40). Holistic marketing has four components: **relationship marketing, integrated marketing, internal marketing and performance marketing.**

**Relationship marketing** is based on building mutually satisfying and beneficial long-term relationships with customers, employees, marketing partners (suppliers, distributors, dealers, channels) and the financial community (investors, shareholders). The ultimate goal is to have a solid, enduring and effective network of relationships that will be profitable for the business. Doing so implies that companies deeply understand the other parties’ resources, needs, objectives and desires.

**Integrated marketing** implies that marketing activities and programs developed to create, communicate and deliver value to consumers is done in a way that “the whole is greater than the sum of the parts” (Keller, 2012:42). This means that all brand communications must be integrated so that the brand message transmitted is consistent and all communication efforts reinforce and complement each other (this topic will be further developed ahead).

**Internal Marketing** is related to hiring, training and motivating employees to serve costumers well. It is necessary to guarantee that everyone inside the company embraces the right marketing principles, especially senior management. “*(...) marketing activities within the*

*company are as important as those directed outside the company. It makes no sense to promise excellent service before the company's staff is ready to provide it" (Kotler and Keller, 2012:43). The authors reinforce that "Marketing is no longer the responsibility of a single department – it is a company-wide undertaking that drives the company's vision, mission and strategic planning. It succeeds only when all departments work together to achieve customer goals." (Kotler and Keller, 2012:44).*

**Performance marketing** involves understanding financial and non-financial returns, analysing the market share, customer satisfaction, product quality, among other measures, as well as considering the legal, ethical, social and environmental impact of marketing activities and programs.

#### **2.1.1.3. The evolution to marketing 4.0**

This concept was introduced by Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan in 2010. During the last decades, marketing revolved in turn of product management (in the 50s and 60s), customer management (during the 70s and 80s) and brand management (from 1990 to 2000). The authors point out three possible stages of the evolution of marketing: **Marketing 1.0** - more focused on the industry, products and sales, with a tactical nature; **Marketing 2.0** – during the information era, centred on the customer and customer satisfaction, with a strategic nature; and **Marketing 3.0** – that is all about values and transforming the world in a better place. It is suggested that companies should go beyond mere customer satisfaction and gain trust and influence over stakeholders by becoming value-driven and human-centric. Although marketing 1.0 and 2.0 are still important and relevant, companies are now dealing with much harder challenges: empowered consumers whose lives are affected by constant and rapid technological evolution, social media dominance, globalization and also environmental changes and concerns. Thus, companies ought to create corporate culture and offer products and services that inspire, include and reflect customers' values. By doing so, it is possible to differentiate from competitors and to give hope to consumers or society. Customers are considered multi-dimensional, value-driven and potential collaborators. More than looking for a product and service that satisfies their needs, customers strive for experiences and business ideas that touch their souls. Therefore, it is suggested that providing meaning is the future marketing proposition.

The three major forces that shape the business landscape towards marketing 3.0 are:

The age of **participative and collaborative marketing**, that is possible due to **technology and social media**;

The age of **globalization paradox and cultural marketing**, during which economy, cultural and political practices are heterogeneous;

The age of **creative society and human spirit marketing**, when values such as self-actualization have become a primary need.

The core of marketing 3.0 is to create a brand image, brand integrity and brand identity. Having a brand name and positioning is no longer enough. Companies should create life-changing stories, suitable business processes and jointly work with consumers to create a better world, through responsible practices directed to new markets and consumers, while contributing to social inclusion and sustainability. Sato (2011) states that marketing 3.0 translates the contemporary angst for humanizing personal relationships and organizations, in the increasingly rational, complex and technological environment we are living in. It is the solution for companies that need to grow in saturated or emergent markets that demand new and sustainable practices and vision.

Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan (2017) have already introduced the updated concept of **marketing 4.0**. This approach combines online and offline interaction between the company and customers, as now offline contact between them represents an important element of differentiation. Although brands must be flexible and have the ability to rapidly adapt to constant market evolutions, their authenticity (presented as, currently, their most valuable asset) and personality have never been more important. It is reinforced that today brands should behave similarly to humans, be more reachable, likeable and even vulnerable, having an honest attitude and admitting their flaws without trying to look perfect.

The same authors advise marketers to adopt a horizontal business structure that is more inclusive and social. As consumers are becoming horizontal-oriented (more connected) they rely more on the opinions of friends, family members, fans and online followers when in need for information or advice. This makes the purchasing process more social than before, changing brands' roles and influence. Youngsters, women and net-citizens are considered the most influential segments of the digital era and haven't been well explored yet: youngsters are the first ones to adopt new products, technologies and they set and follow trends; women are information seekers and have a unique role in the family context; net-citizens are social

connectors who create online content and actively communicate with their peers. The authors believe that together these three segments hold the key to marketing in the digital era.

## **2.1.2. Marketing Strategy**

### **2.1.2.1. What is Marketing Strategy?**

Marketing strategy is *“a statement (implicit or explicit) of how a brand or a product line will achieve its objectives. The strategy provides decisions and direction regarding variables such as the segmentation of the market, identification of the target market, positioning, marketing mix elements and expenditures. A marketing strategy is usually an integral part of a business strategy that provides broad direction to all functions.”* (AMA, 2017). Varadarajan (2010:128) defines it as *“an organization’s integrated pattern of decisions that specify its crucial choices concerning products, markets, marketing activities and marketing resources in the creation, communication and/or delivery of products that offer value to customers in exchanges with the organization and thereby enables the organization to achieve specific objectives.”*

Ramaseshan *et al.* (2013) reinforce the importance of marketing strategy claiming it is a crucial driver of business success. Still, simply making a plan is not enough to assure it. Effective implementation, evaluation and control mechanisms are also required. Frequent assessment and control oblige companies to keep in touch with the external environment, thus responding and reacting to a constantly-changing reality. Hence, the external environment (market attractiveness, technological change and market competitiveness) determines the formulation of the firm’s strategy and execution, which will sentence the firm’s level of performance or results in strategic and financial terms.

### **2.1.2.2. Porter’s generic strategies**

Concerning strategy formulation, Kotler and Keller (2012) mention Michael Porter’s generic strategies to achieve competitive advantage:

**Cost leadership:** consists of offering the lowest price by operating at lower production and distribution costs, to increase profitability and market share. This strategy is suitable when customers are sensitive to price variations and, therefore, opt for the cheapest option.

**Differentiation:** when companies aim to achieve a superior performance on a certain customer benefit that is valued by a large part of the market. In other words, it’s about finding a specific need that is under-served and, using the company’s unique resources and capabilities,

satisfying it in a way that is difficult for competitors to replicate. In this way, the company's offer will be perceived as better and consumers will be willing to pay a higher price. Therefore, it is an appropriate strategy in competitive and saturated markets. Differentiation can be based on brand image, product features, after-sale service, for instance.

**Focus or niche:** when the company follows either a cost leadership or a differentiation strategy, but focused on a distinct group of customers that has a specific need, thus requiring great customer knowledge.

### **2.1.2.3. Alternative Marketing Strategy**

Kotler and Keller (2012) make reference to Porter, according to whom, companies can only claim to have a strategy when they perform different marketing activities or the same type of marketing activities in a different way from competitors. Thus, the basis of a unique and valuable strategy is a differentiated set of marketing activities.

Khankaew *et al.* (2015:1) defines alternative marketing strategy as “*the ability of a firm in using new approaches that innovate, impress and surprise target groups by creating good memorization.*”. It is more advantageous than traditional marketing strategy since it implies new approaches to manage the business by using social media, guerrilla marketing (unconventional marketing tactics meant to get maximum results from minimal resources) and viral marketing (a phenomenon that enables and encourages people to pass along a marketing message), for example. The author believes that for a company to survive, improve business performance and ultimately achieve competitive advantage, it must understand the dynamic changes that keep occurring in terms of (1) customer demand and lifestyle; (2) stakeholders' economic, social and environmental concerns; (3) seller-buyer relationships and loyalty; (4) customer knowledge, as this is a resource to manage novelty and help develop customer satisfaction; (5) technology, internet and information technology.

As the marketing concept is changing from product-centric to customer-centric, the customer has become a key factor in marketing strategy. It is crucial not only to understand his needs and motivations, but also to interact with him. This customer-provided knowledge will help product development, the identification of valuable market segments and communication, which will reduce perceived risk and uncertainties that may arise from a constantly changing environment. Besides, it is suggested that educating customers by pre-introducing new products (making them more knowledgeable) can improve relationships between the customer and the company. The integration of modern technology facilitates communication and enables



customers to participate in the creation of new products or services by sharing opinions. This, not only expands the information and knowledge companies have regarding customers, the market and competitors, but also improves customer satisfaction, sales and relationship development.

#### **2.1.2.4. Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning**

The STP is one of the most important steps in defining a marketing strategy. It is a three-step process that leads companies through the development and implementation of the appropriate Marketing Mix (that will later be explained).

##### **2.1.2.4.1. Segmentation**

*“Market segmentation divides a market into well-defined slices. A market segment consists of a group of customers who share a similar set of needs and wants. The marketer’s task is to identify the appropriate number and nature of market segments and decide which one(s) to target.”* (Kotler and Keller, 2012:236). Keller (2013:79) also defined it as the division of the market *“into distinct groups of homogeneous consumers who have similar needs and consumer behaviour and who thus require similar marketing mixes.”* Consumer segments can be set based on different characteristics: behavioural (user status, usage rate, usage occasion, brand loyalty and benefits sought), demographic (income, age, gender, race and family), psychographic (values, opinions, attitudes, lifestyle and activities) and geographic (international, regional). Business-to-business segments (B2B) can be based on: the nature of the product (kind, where it is used, type of purchase), the buying situation (purchase location, who is the buyer, type of purchase) and demographic (number of employees, number of production workers, annual sales volume and number of establishments). The bases for segmentation can be classified as **descriptive or customer-oriented** – when related to the type of person or organization the customer is – or as **behavioural or product-oriented** – when related to the way customers think of and use the brand or product). *“Behavioural segmentation bases are often most valuable in understanding branding issues because they have clearer strategic implications. (...) defining a benefit segment makes it clear what should be the ideal point-of-difference or desired benefit with which to establish the positioning.”* (Keller, 2013:79).

### 2.1.2.4.1.1. VALS system

The VALS (Values and Lifestyles) system - created by Arnold Mitchell (1978) and transported by David Riesman and Abraham Maslow to the marketing field - is a methodology used for psychographic market segmentation. There are two dimensions in this framework: (1) resources, such as income education, as well as self-confidence and innovation (vertical); and (2) motivation driven by ideals, demonstrating success, achievements, social activity and self-expression, for instance (horizontal).

According to Kotler and Keller (2012), each segment can be characterized as follows:

**Survivors:** they are the oldest segment, aged around 60, value simplicity, “fit-the-purpose” products and tend to be loyal to brands.

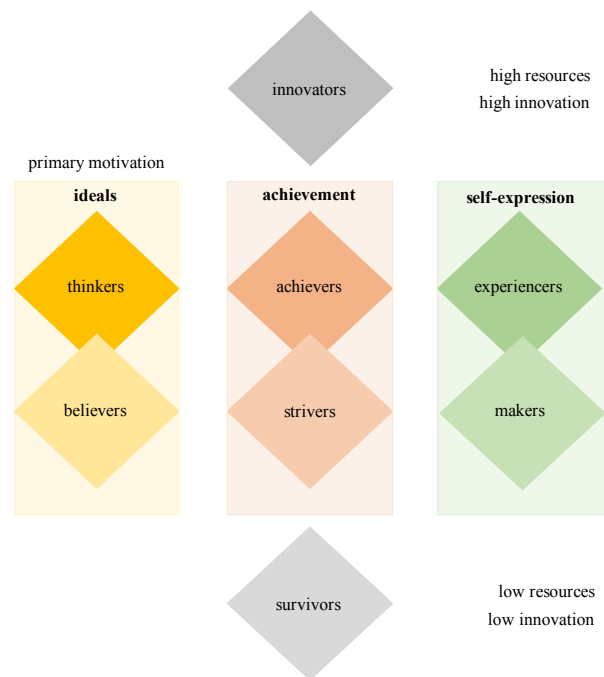
**Makers:** they are practical, appreciate functionality, value self-sufficiency, are focused on family and work and are not interested in the broader world.

**Strivers:** they are similar to achievers but have lower economic, social and psychological resources. They value inspiration and style is extremely important to them as they aspire to be and look like people they admire.

**Believers:** consumers that are conservative, predictable and prefer local products and established brands. They are centred on their families and communities and value sharing and social bonds.

**Experiencers:** they are the youngest of all segments, aged around 25. These consumers are energetic and enjoy physical and social activities. They are keen on spending on clothing, fast-food, music and new products or services. They value moods, emotions and inner expression.

Figure 1 – VALS system



Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from Kotler and Keller, 2012

**Achievers:** they are successful and work-oriented, value achievements and functionality and get satisfaction from their families and jobs. These consumers are conservative, respect authority and the status quo. They prefer established brands that transmit success to their peers.

**Thinkers:** These consumers are mature, well-educated and responsible. They value knowledge and creativity and, despite preferring calmer leisure activities, they are aware of what happens around the world and are open to new ideas and to change. They are practical and rational.

**Innovators:** They are on the leading edge of change, have high self-esteem, like to indulge and enjoy the finest things. They value independence, taste and character and express that through their image.

#### **2.1.2.4.1.2. Online segmentation**

Dionísio *et al.* (2011) believe there are limitations regarding traditional segmentation. For instance, a segment may include a heterogeneous individual to whom the value proposition is not suitable or appealing enough; the company can mistakenly allocate individuals to the wrong segments; some consumers that are relevant may be ignored and left out and it is a static approach. The authors consider that in the online world, technology makes segmentation as we know it, obsolete.

Technology allows companies: to obtain relevant, specific and detailed information about each individual; to use that information to create differentiated value propositions to each person; to manage clients along the different stages of relationship with the company/brand in real time; to enable individuals to willingly provide information about themselves, “auto-segmenting” themselves or determining the segment to which they belong. In order to do so, it is necessary to create points of contact between the company and customers. In addition, online technology used in both collecting and processing information has a lower marginal cost, being possible to treat each client in a unique way and to generate an unlimited number of different value propositions. In the online segmentation process, segmentation and targeting (that is explained ahead) are done by the consumer himself. Using the personal information provided by the consumer, it is possible to identify an individual profile in real time and, based on it, develop a value proposition that is adequate to that specific consumer. Online segmentation is presented as a more operational and dynamic approach that collects feedback and is adaptable.

It is considered that combining traditional and online segmentation may generate positive synergies, such as the identification of behavioural patterns or the use of online means as a low-cost lab to test initiatives that are meant to be implemented offline (Dionísio *et al.*, 2011).

#### 2.1.2.4.2. Targeting

Once a company has identified the market-segment opportunities, it has to decide how many and which of them to target. In practical terms, it consists of “*Narrowly focusing ads and keywords to attract a specific, marketing-profiled searcher and potential customer.*” (AMA, 2017). When selecting market segments to target, they must fulfil the following criteria: **identifiability** (is the segment easily identified?); **size** (is there adequate sales potential in the segment?); **accessibility** (are there specialized distributors and communication means available to reach the segment?) and **responsiveness** (how positively will the segment respond to a tailored marketing program?) (Kotler and Keller, 2012).

AMA adds that three distinct market segmentation strategies that can be adopted: **undifferentiated marketing**, if the company tries to go after the whole market with a product and the marketing strategy is intended to have a mass appeal; **differentiated marketing**, if the company operates in several segments with offerings and marketing strategies tailored to each of them; **concentrated marketing**, if the company is focused only on one or a few segments with the intend of capturing a large share of those segments. Nowadays, new advertising technologies and software focus on behavioural targeting that is based on web activity and behaviours that are predictive for potential customers who might be more receptive to certain ads.

#### 2.1.2.4.3. Positioning

According to Keller (2013:79), “(...) *brand positioning is at the heart of marketing strategy* (...)” and consists of designing the company’s offer and image in a way that it occupies a unique and valued place in consumers’ minds. It means finding the right “location” in the minds of a group of consumers so that they think about the product or service in the desired way, maximizing possible benefits to the company. Good brand positioning helps to clarify what the brand represents, its uniqueness and the reasons why consumers should purchase and use it. To define a positioning, it is necessary to identify the target, competitors, similarities to other brands and how the brand differs from them. Competitive analysis involves multiple factors such as resources, capabilities and likely intentions of other companies. It is important not to define competition too narrowly, otherwise compelling threats and opportunities may be ignored. As mentioned before, if an online segmentation process is followed, the positioning

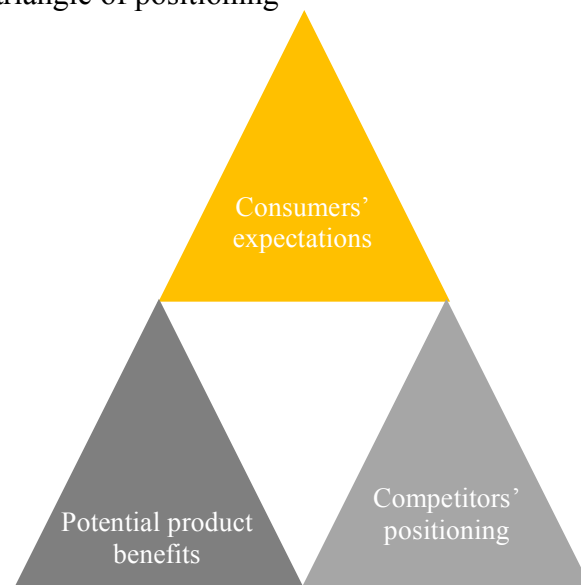
will be built by each consumer based on different value propositions. Hence, there will literally exist a different positioning for each consumer (Dionísio *et al.*, 2011).

#### 2.1.2.4.3.1. The golden triangle of positioning

When selecting the attributes that support the brand's positioning, it is helpful to use this framework that involves three main dimensions: **consumers' expectations** regarding the product category; the **potential benefits of the product** and the **positioning of competitors' offers**.

If marketers know consumers' expectations and what aspects they value the most, then it is possible to strategically position the product to meet or exceed those expectations. Regarding the product's benefits, these should be relevant, unique and credible. When it comes to competitors, it is crucial to know how they position their offer in order to understand if they are, indeed, addressing consumers' needs. This allows us to opt for a strategy that differentiates and elevates our product (Dionísio *et al.*, 2015).

Figure 2 – The golden triangle of positioning



Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from Mercator da Língua Portuguesa, 2015

#### **2.1.2.4.3.2. Points-of-Difference and Points-of-Parity**

According to Keller (2013) defining the target and the nature of competition will determine the breadth of brand awareness (that will be defined ahead) and the cues that should be closely linked to the brand, as a basis of the positioning itself. To achieve the right positioning, it is required to establish the accurate points-of-difference (PODs) and points-of-parity (POPs).

PODs are the attributes or benefits strongly associated with the brand that are evaluated in a positive way and are believed to be unique (not possible to be delivered by other brands). They may rely on performance attributes or performance benefits that act as “proof points” or reasons to believe (RTBs). Such “proof points” can be a functional design, a special ingredient or an endorsement, for instance. However, PODs can also be abstract or imagery-related (luxury and status, for example).

On the contrary, POPs are the attributes shared with other brands. They are important as they undermine PODs. Achieving a POP on a certain attribute means that a group of consumers considers the brand good enough on that aspect. POPs are easier to achieve since, in the case of PODs, the brand must demonstrate to be superior. Many times, the key to positioning does not imply as much achieving a POD as achieving POPs. A brand must offer compelling and credible reasons to be chosen over others. Brand associations must be seen as desirable (determined by consumers), deliverable (based on the company’s capabilities) and differentiating (in comparison to competitors). To constitute a POD, consumers should see the attribute as very important and feel confident that the company is able to deliver it better than any other. If these criteria are fulfilled, the brand association is strong enough, favourable and unique to be an effective POD.

When entering a category in which other brands are already established, the challenge is to find a viable and long-term basis for differentiation. The positioning should be pre-emptive, defensible and difficult to attack. If the brand association can be strengthened over time, then the positioning is likely to last for many years. Brands can associate themselves to other entities that possess the right equity (a person, another brand, an event) as a way to establish an attribute as a POP or a POD, lending some credibility. A good positioning should also be somewhat aspirational for the brand to have room to grow and improve, without being unrealistic.

Finally, Keller (2013:93) suggests that a “(...) *good way to uncover key competitive points-of-parity is to role play competitor’s positioning and infer their intended points-of-difference, competitor’s PODs will, in turn, become the brand’s POPs.*”.

## 2.1.2.5. Marketing Mix

### 2.1.2.5.1. The 4 Ps

The marketing mix is “a mix of controllable marketing variables that a company uses to pursue a desired level of sales in the target market” (AMA, 2017). It is normally classified by four factors – the four Ps – which are **product**, **price**, **place** (also called distribution) and **promotion**. In other words, it consists of putting a certain product in the right place, at the right time and price.

The **product** is the item the company offers to satisfy the consumer’s need. It can be tangible – a good – or intangible – a service. To ensure the success of the product among consumers it is necessary to make extensive market research, attempting to answer the question “what can I do to offer a better product than my competitors’?” Some of the aspects to take into consideration when developing the product are variety, quality, design, features, brand name, packaging, size, service, warranties and return.

When it comes to **price**, it is important to remember that it also shapes the perception consumers have of the product. Therefore, companies should carefully examine competitors pricing accordingly. To establish it, it is necessary to know production costs, perceived product value and the impact of price variations on the market share, for instance. This factor includes issues related to discounts, allowances, payment period and credit terms.

**Place** or distribution determine the accessibility of the product to potential buyers. In order to define the right distribution channels to efficiently reach the target, it is crucial to understand their behaviour, habits and preferences. Some important questions should be answered: where do the clients look for the product or service? What kind of store do potential clients go to? Where do they shop? How is my distribution strategy different from my competitors’? Should I have a sales force? Should I sell online?

**Promotion** is very important since it can increase brand recognition and sales. It includes communication methods or elements such as sales promotion, advertising, sales force, public relations and direct marketing. When creating an effective and consistent product promotion strategy, the following questions should be answered: how can I send the marketing message to potential buyers? When is the right time to promote the product? Will I reach the target audience through this type of communication? How are competitors promoting their products? The combination selected for a promotional strategy will depend on the budget, the type of message and the target audience (behaviour, habits and preferences).

#### 2.1.2.5.2. The 4 extra Ps

According to Kotler and Keller (2012: 47) *“Given the breadth, complexity and richness of marketing, however – as exemplified by holistic marketing – clearly these four Ps are not the whole story anymore. If we update them to reflect the holistic marketing concept, we arrive at a more representative set that encompasses modern marketing realities: **people, processes, programs and performance** (...)”*.

**People** is related to internal marketing and to the critical role and contribution of employees to marketing success. As the authors (Kotler and Keller, 2012:47) refer *“Marketing will only be as good as the people inside the organization.”*. Besides, it also reflects that marketers must view consumers as individuals whose lives should be broadly understood and analysed.

**Processes** refers to creativity, discipline and structure involved in marketing management. Kotler and Keller (2012:47) argue that *“Marketers must avoid ad hoc planning and decision making and ensure that state-of-the-art marketing ideas and concepts play an appropriate role in all they do. Only instituting the right set of processes to guide activities and programs can a firm engage in mutually beneficial long-term relationships. Another important set of processes guides the firm in imaginatively generating insights and breakthrough products, services and marketing activities.”*.

When it comes to **programs**, it reflects all the company’s consumer-directed activities and includes the original four Ps, as well as other marketing activities. Despite being online or offline, traditional or not, such activities must be integrated in a way that, all together, they enable the company to accomplish its multiple goals.

Finally, **performance** captures various outcome measures that have financial and nonfinancial implications (like profitability, brand and consumer equity) and others that go beyond the company itself (such as social responsibility in legal, ethical and community terms). *“(...) these new four Ps actually apply to all disciplines within the company and by thinking this way, managers grow more closely aligned with the rest of the company.”* (Kotler and Keller, 2012:48).

#### 2.1.2.6. Marketing Plan

The marketing plan – that has both strategic and tactical components - is a vital tool to direct and coordinate marketing activities. Strategic marketing planning addresses the target market and the company’s value proposition, after identifying and analysing market opportunities.



### **2.1.2.6.1. Executing a Marketing Plan**

A marketing plan summarizes what has been learnt about the market where the company operates, as well as how the company expects to reach its marketing goals. Kotler and Keller (2012) suggest the following steps to execute a marketing plan:

1. To analyse the market environment. This includes: making a PESTEL analysis, which consists of studying the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal drivers of change to which the company is exposed to; defining the market size and growth; evaluating sales, costs and competitors. Marketers should also perform a SWOT analysis in order to identify the company's strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and threats in the market;
2. To formulate goals. These should be specific in terms of magnitude and time. Only after the previous step it is possible to realistically determine what the company aims to achieve. Goals are usually related to increasing sales, brand awareness, improving product features, for example;
3. To define a marketing strategy. This means defining the most effective approach to pursue the goals established. It involves selecting the target audience and defining the company's value proposition;
4. To define marketing tactics. This step requires specifying various aspects related to the company's offer – the marketing mix - such as product characteristics, promotions, prices, service, sales channels, among others;
5. To define a budget and make financial projections of sales and expenses required to meet the marketing objectives;
6. To control, monitor and adjust the implemented plan, taking corrective action if needed. This consists of measuring the firm's progress towards the achievement of the goals that were previously set.

## **2.2. Brand**

### **2.2.1. Branding**

#### **2.2.1.1. What is a brand?**

The term “brand”, as we traditionally know it, is defined by the American Marketing Association as *“a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from*

*those of competitors*” (AMA, 2017). Still, Neumeier (2006:2) believes a brand represents much more than its mere elements. The author refers to it as “*a gut feeling about a product, service or company*”, given the fact that we are emotional and intuitive beings. Thus, each individual creates his own version of a brand. In other words, as each person is different and has his own experiences and background, his perception of a brand may differ from another’s. Neumeier (2006: 2) also states that “*while companies are not able to control this process, they can influence it by communicating the qualities that make this product different than that product. When enough individuals arrive at the same gut feeling, a company can be said to have a brand.*”. This vision reinforces the importance of investing in consistent products, communication, behaviours and environment, in terms of purpose, performance and appearance. “*This consistency of purpose derives from the vision, or the core idea, and is almost always the base from which a successful branding programme can be developed. The core idea drives the organization. It is what the organization is about, what it stands for, what it believes in*” (Wally Olins, 2010: 28).

#### **2.2.1.2. What is Branding?**

Kotler and Keller (2012:265) define branding as the process of “*endowing products and services with the power of a brand. It’s all about creating differences between products.*”. It is added that marketers must teach consumers who the product is (through the brand name and other brand elements), what are its functionalities and why should consumers care for it. In this way, branding helps consumers organize their knowledge about products and services, clarifying decision-making and ultimately bring value to the firm.

According to Fill (2009), brands are the result of two main constructs: an identity that managers want to portray and the images created by consumers according to the identity they perceive. “*The development of Web 2.0 and user-generated-content in the form of blogs, wikis and social networks has added a new dimension to the managerial-driven perspective of brands. Consumers are assuming a greater role in defining what a brand means to them and now they are prone to sharing this with their friends, family and contacts rather than with the organisation itself.*” (Fill, 2009: 355). Hence brand managers have less influence over the way their brands are perceived which in turn affects managing corporate reputation (that will be defined ahead). Both managers and consumers participate in the branding process, as consumers redefine what brands mean to them and how they differentiate among similar offers and associate specific attributes or emotions with particular brands.

*“Consistent quality, fulfilled brand promises and customer satisfaction through time can help buyers to learn to trust a brand. This may lead customers to prioritise a brand within their evoked set for that product category. The acceptance of buyers as active problem-solvers means that branding can be seen as a way in which buyers can reduce the amount of decision-making time and associated perceived risk.”* (Fill, 2009:355). This is due to the information regarding content, taste, durability, quality, price and performance that brand names provide. In this way, the time the buyer would spend comparing brands and their similar offers is eliminated or reduced, making the decision-making process simpler.

Branding is a long-term task that requires an important contribution from marketing communications. Fill (2009:359) further explains: *“Brands are said to develop personalities and encapsulate the core values of a product. They are a strong means by which a product can be identified, understood and appreciated. Marketing communications play an important role in communicating the essence of the personality of the brand and in providing the continuity for any relationship, a necessity for a brand to be built through time.”*. This is possible by developing emotional links and supporting product symbolism.

### **2.2.1.3. The roles of a Brand**

Fill (2009) mentions that, from a strategic point of view, brands play one of the following roles: they can be used to defend market share; to attack competitors and win market share or they can act as an entry barrier to prevent new companies to enter the market. Three elements are needed to enable these roles:

**Integration**, which can lead to the two other elements. It is related to the importance of developing meaningful and consistent communications for a brand to survive. Messages should be consistent, uniform, reinforcing and should convey the brand’s values. Hence, good branding depends on effectively integrated marketing communications.

**Differentiation**, as branding is a way of separation and positioning that allows consumers to recognise and understand what the brand stands for. Nevertheless, not all brands need to be different. Sometimes it is beneficial for new or smaller brands to imitate the market leader (for example, Coca-Cola).

**Added value**, as brands provide extra benefits that result in advantages for the consumer. These advantages can be rational attribute-based (when related to the functionality, performance or features of the product) or emotionally based, that arise from the augmented characteristics of

the product (feelings towards the brand and what it represents). Value is added through perceived performance (that derives from consumer perceptions of relative quality and perceived associations regarding key attributes), psycho-social meanings (immaterial associations made about brands from which consumers infer meanings about personality and expressions of individuality) and brand-name awareness (that triggers feelings of familiarity and reduced risk or uncertainty).

#### **2.2.1.4. The brand as a competitive advantage**

According to Keller (2013) in some markets competition revolves around the product augmentation level (that includes additional product attributes, benefits and services that set the brand apart). To reinforce the importance of branding, the author quotes Ted Levitt who argues that *“the new competition is not between what companies produce in their factories but between what they add to their factory output in the form of packaging, services, advertising, consumer advice, financing, delivery arrangements, warehousing and other things that people value.”* (Keller, 2013:31). Some brands create competitive advantage based on product performance. *“Steady investments in research and development have produced leading-edge products, and sophisticated mass marketing practices have ensured rapid adoption of new technologies in the consumer market.”* (Keller, 2013:32). Others achieve competitive advantage through non-product related means, by understanding consumers’ motivations and desires. These brands create relevant and appealing images around their products that may be the only way of distinguishing them in their product category (perfumes, for example). Creating perceived differences through branding and by developing a loyal consumer base translates into financial profits. Hence, Keller (2013) believes the brand itself is the most valuable intangible asset that a company can have.

#### **2.2.1.5. Branding in a B2B context**

Along the years, branding has been considered irrelevant in the B2B context - when the business transaction occurs between two companies - due to the more rational component that characterizes the decision-making process: in this type of market the setting is more formal and buying decisions are made by a group of individuals (the decision-making unit or DMU) (Robinson, Farris & Wind, 1967). They rely more on product or service information and benefits (Huang, 2014), are *“profit-motivated and budget constrained”* (Leek and

Christodoulides, 2011:832), which increases the level of involvement, making the process longer and more sophisticated.

Nevertheless, the market environment has changed and because of an increased similarity between products and a decrease in personal relationships caused by the rise of the digital, B2B branding has started to receive more attention from marketers and researchers (Baumgarth, 2010). It has been proven that branding has a positive impact on the perceived quality of products or services (Cretu & Brodie, 2007). Besides, it confers an identity, consistency and uniqueness to companies' offers which contributes to increase the buyers' acceptability towards brands' communications (Michell, King & Reast, 2001). Similarly to B2C – business-to-consumer - markets, building a strong B2B brand can also: increase the company's power or influence in the distribution network; allow it to get more opportunities (Ohnemus, 2009); create challenges or barriers to competitors (Michell *et al.*, 2001) and rise the company's value (Low and Blois, 2002). It is also stated that branding reduces perceived risk and uncertainty, making buyers feel more confident and satisfied in the moment of purchase.

Regarding the decision-making process, Leek and Christodoulides (2011) believe that the nature and characteristics of the buyer and the nature of the purchase situation determine the importance of branding. Smaller companies (buyers) that face greater risk when purchasing are more influenced and receptive to brands. It is once again reinforced that *“It is necessary to understand the structure of the decision-making unit and the evaluative criteria used to make purchase decisions. It is also necessary to understand the characteristics of the purchase situation and the nature of the organizational buyers. An understanding of these aspects of organizational buying will enable marketers to determine how branding can be successfully implemented.”* (Leek and Christodoulides, 2011:831). According to Webster and Keller (2004), branding is useful in the early stages of the decision process – when determining the characteristics of the needed product, in the search for suppliers, in the evaluation of suppliers' proposals, for instance. *“Branding is potentially used only at the beginning of a relationship when the buyer is evaluating suppliers and differentiating between offerings. (...) the brand may be particularly important when the buyer lacks knowledge and experience of the supplier as it may be perceived as reducing risk and providing confidence in the purchase decision.”* (Leek and Christodoulides, 2011:833). After the relationship is established (becoming long-term) the importance of branding decreases as other factors (reliability and trust, for instance) become more important.

According to Bendixen *et al.* (2004) when making a purchase decision, it has been found that the delivery period is the most important factor (27%), followed by price (24%), technology

(19%), branding (16%) and availability (14%). The role of each member of the decision unit also influences the importance given to each criteria.

For “technical specialists” and “users” the brand name and the price are the most important attributes. “Buyers” tend to value more quality, reliability, performance, post-sales service, ease of operation, ease of maintenance, price, reputation and relationship with the supplier’s employees (Bendixen *et al.*, 2004). Global and successful B2B brands have built an identity that revolves around being adaptable to customer needs or requests and to the provision of solutions (Beverland, Napoli and Lindgreen, 2007).

#### **2.2.1.6. Branding at product or corporate level**

There are doubts if B2B companies should brand at product or at corporate level. Baumgarth (2010) argues that branding at product level is not adequate due to product variations, short product life cycles (only in certain industries) and product customization. Moreover, having a strong brand at corporate level will contribute to the buyers’ positive perception of the qualities and values that the company wants to transmit. It also increases confidence regarding the brand’s quality, reliability and integrity, leading to a sense of trustworthiness (Bengtsson & Servais, 2005). In this process, it is vital that the employees share the company’s values and convey them, in a consistent way, to buyers. Their knowledge, skills and ways of dealing with customers influence the way the brand is perceived. Therefore, training is very important (Roper & Davies, 2010).

Bendixen *et al.* (2004) agree that *“Industrial marketers have something to gain by investing into building a likeable, strong and positive brand image among all stakeholders. (...) the supplier company must look beyond marketing communication and develop a total corporate communication program to build up the corporate brand.”* (Bendixen, Bukasa and Abratt, 2004:379). Despite the advantages, the lack of investment in branding in B2B companies is mainly due to being impractical to brand an extended variety of products (that these companies normally offer) and to the uncertainty of its financial return. (Bendixen *et al.*, 2004).

### **2.2.2. Brand Equity**

#### **2.2.2.1. What is brand equity?**

Keller (2013) presents brand equity as a concept that (1) **elevates the importance of the brand in marketing strategy** and (2) that **provides focus for managerial interest and research**. *“(...) branding is all about endowing products and services with the power of brand equity.*

*Despite the many different views, most observers agree that brand equity consists of the marketing effects uniquely attributable to a brand. (...) brand equity explains why different outcomes result from the marketing of a branded product or service than if it were not branded.*" (Keller, 2013:57). It is added that brand equity may influence how consumers think, feel and act towards the brand, as well as the price, market share and profitability of the brand (Kotler and Keller, 2012).

According to AMA, the concept is related to "*(...) the value of having a well-known brand name, based on the idea that the owner of a well-known brand name can generate more money from products with that brand name than from products with a less well-known name (...)*" (AMA, 2017). In other words, consumers perceive well-known branded products as being better than less-known branded ones.

According to Keller (2013) most marketing researchers agree on the following principles regarding branding and brand equity: (1) different outcomes are originated by the value added to a product as a result of past marketing activity for the brand; (2) value can be created in various ways; (3) brand equity acts as a common denominator for interpreting marketing strategies and appraising the value of a brand and (4) a brand's value can be manifested or exploited in multiple ways to benefit the company in terms of greater profits or lower costs or even both.

#### **2.2.2.2. Sources of brand equity**

Aaker (1996) identifies four main sources of brand equity: brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality and brand associations. Keller (1998) reduces the sources of brand equity to **brand image** and **brand awareness**. "*Consumers must not think all brands in the category are the same. Establishing a positive **brand image** – strong, favourable and unique brand associations – in consumer memory goes hand-in-hand with creating brand awareness to build customer-based brand equity.*" (Keller, 2013:73). **Brand awareness** consists of brand recognition and brand recall. Keller (2013) defines brand recognition as the consumer's ability to recognize the brand as one of which he has been exposed to in the past. Brand recall is the consumer's capability to retrieve the brand from memory when thinking of the product category, the need it fulfils or the purchase or usage context. Keller (2013) also states that raising brand awareness increases the probability of a brand being part of a consumer's consideration set (the group of brands a consumer seriously considers for purchase) and, hence, of being chosen (purchased).

Kotler and Keller (2012) further explain that the process of building brand equity relies on all brand-related contacts. Hence, three main drivers of brand equity are presented: (1) the brand elements or identities that make up the brand, such as the brand name, logo, symbols, characters, endorsers, slogans, packaging, among others; (2) the product, service and all complementary marketing activities and supporting programs; (3) other associations that are indirectly transferred to the brand through the linkage to other entities (people, a place, another brand, an event, for instance).

According to Kotler and Keller (2012) brand elements should be:

**Memorable** – consumers should be able to recall and recognize the brand elements easily, before purchase, at both purchase and consumption.

**Meaningful** – brand elements should be credible and transmit clues, suggesting the corresponding product category or the type of person who might use the brand, for instance.

**Likeable** – brand elements should be aesthetically appealing.

**Transferable** – brand elements should be able to still be used if the brand introduces a new product in the market (in the same or in a different category). Besides, they should add to brand equity across geographic boundaries or, in other words, ensure that the brand will be well perceived in a different cultural background (in a different country).

**Adaptable** – in the sense that brands often update their brand elements (like the logo, for instance) along the years. Therefore, brand elements should be flexible and adjustable.

**Protectable** – brand elements should be legally and competitively protected. Some brand names become synonymous with product categories (such as Kleenex or Gillette) and therefore should keep their trademark rights and not become generic.

The selection of brand elements will influence how easily brands will be set in consumers' minds and how brand equity will be built. In strategic terms, **memorability**, **meaningfulness** and **likeability** help building the brand, whereas **transferability**, **adaptability** and **protection** are “defensive” and help leverage and preserve brand equity.

### 2.2.2.3. Managing brand equity

To reinforce brand equity, it is necessary to ensure that the brand is moving forward, in the right direction, by developing new exciting and valuable offers. Kotler and Keller (2012) also suggest that brand reinforcement requires consistent marketing support, which is not synonym with “no change”. To maintain strategic thrust, many tactical changes may be needed, yet

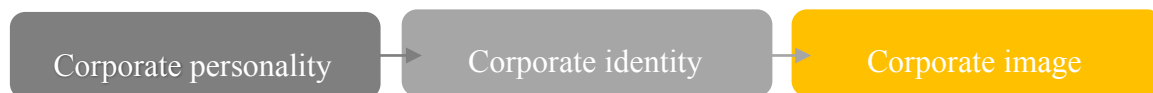


marketers must preserve and protect sources of brand equity. Failure to reinforce the brand (through certain marketing activities such as campaigns, product alterations) may decrease brand awareness and weaken brand image. *“As a company’s major enduring asset, a brand needs to be carefully managed so its value does not depreciate.”* (Kotler and Keller, 2012:280).

### 2.2.3. Corporate identity

Fill (2009) presents a model developed by Shee and Abratt in 1989 that explains how corporate image is developed. There are three central elements in this process: **corporate personality**, **corporate identity** and **corporate image**. According to the authors, companies reflect their personalities through their identity that is transmitted through the company’s communications, symbols and behaviours. The way the company’s identity is perceived will generate the image consumers have of the corporate body.

Figure 3 – Corporate identity



Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from Fill, 2009

According to Fill (2009) **corporate personality** derives, partially, from the cultural characteristics of the company: its core values and beliefs that build corporate philosophy. **Corporate identity** consists of the cues that allow stakeholders to recognise and identify the company. Gray and Balmer (1998) define it as the distinct characteristics of a company, its reality and uniqueness. *“The management of a corporate identity involves the dynamic interplay amongst the company’s business strategy, the philosophy of its key executives, its corporate culture and its organizational design. It (...) results in differentiating the firm from all others, making (...) its ‘corporate brand’ distinct”* (Gray and Balmer, 1998:695). The company conveys its identity to stakeholders by using several types of media and communication tools. **Corporate image** consists of the mental picture the audience has of the company. In other words, it is what comes to the minds of consumers when they hear the name or see the logo of the company. It is a judgement of its attributes (Gray and Balmer, 1998).

### 2.2.3.1. Managing corporate image and corporate reputation

According to Gray and Balmer (1998) developing corporate image and corporate reputation can lead companies to achieve competitive advantage. *“An organisation should seek to enhance its reputation with its various stakeholders at every opportunity.”* (Fill, 2009:508). Both corporate identity and corporate image are managed with two goals in mind: (1) *“(…) to create a wide-spread name recognition among the company’s target stakeholders along with immediate identification of the firms’ business field and principal products (…)”* and (2) *“(…) to create a favourable **reputation** in the minds of the important stakeholders (…)”* (Gray and Balmer, 1998: 696). It is also stated that a noticeable corporate image is easier and quicker to create than a good reputation. According to Fill (2009), from a strategic point of view, a strong reputation can be an important means of differentiation (especially if there is little difference at product level), an element of support in moments of instability and a measure of corporate value.

### 2.2.3.2. Corporate Communication

Building a strong image requires a coordinated communication system (from the brand name to the logo, advertising and public relations, for instance). Communication, which basically includes everything the company does, is thus a critical element in the process of translating corporate identity into corporate image and reputation. However, a favourable corporate reputation involves much more time and effort to develop: *“(…) a meritorious identity that can only be moulded through consistent performance, usually over many years.”* (Gray and Balmer, 1998:696).

Corporate communication includes three main elements: symbolism, behaviour and various forms of planned communication (management and marketing communications) (Fill, 2009). Symbolism consists of the visual part of identity. The author makes reference to Dowling (1994) who presents four key elements that constitute visual identity: corporate name, logo and symbols, typefaces and colour. It is believed that by using symbolism it is possible to achieve a level of harmony, bringing all identity cues together. When companies want to become international, it is important to consider that its visual identity will be perceived in different cultural backgrounds. Hence, it may be necessary to make adjustments. Behaviour is concerned with internal (employees-managers) and external (employees-customers, for instance)

interactions. It includes the company's actions, the attention given to customers' needs and the brand's tone of voice when communicating to the different stakeholders.

An appropriate communication strategy can reinforce and contribute to the achievement of a positive reputation. In addition, *"To make a new brand attractive (...) communications will have to highlight product quality and augmented services, as well as the company's reputation."* (Bendixen *et al.*, 2004:379). A strong corporate image and reputation can increase employees' motivation, morale and productivity, influencing the way they represent the company when dealing with external parties.

## **2.3. Communication**

### **2.3.1. Blended marketing and communications**

Dionísio *et al.* (2011) explain that today managers face several macro-tendencies that are shaping the market environment and that seem to divide it into two different realities that are actually blended: traditional and digital. Companies are used to managing competitive, yet stable environments based on theories, methods and frameworks developed to address the challenges that characterized the marketplace prior to this digital revolution.

Now, the pace of change and instability brought by the digital creates tension and forces companies to quickly adapt to a new reality. Blended marketing is then defined as the integration or fusion of traditional marketing and the digital (Dionísio, 2009).

It is impossible to ignore the power of social media and online platforms used by consumers. Marketing managers have come to the realization that the marketing techniques used in the past no longer suit the current context we live in today – moulded by the Internet. *"(...) the usual consumer is, himself, changing, using different means, becoming more powerful, buying in different markets, comparing information in more sophisticated ways."* (Dionísio *et al.*, 2011:44).

Communication has become **bidirectional**, since it is possible to systematically reach customers and know their opinions, shifting from a monologue perspective (done by the company through advertising) to a dialogue (interaction using social media). Consumers – that are blended as well - are empowered, having countless opportunities and means to speak their minds (social media, blogs, YouTube, review sites, among many others). Companies find people quite disperse, making it more difficult to get their attention and to be noticed.

Hence, as we witness an undeniable constantly-evolving technological reality, Dionísio (2009) suggests companies to take advantage of the great ubiquity and mobility potential of

communication as a way to mark their presence in the market. Besides, blended marketing will allow to attain new clients and to retain the existent ones more effectively, either in a B2C as in a B2B context, with interesting returns and lower investment. For Portuguese companies that are looking for new international markets, this approach presents added interest, since it facilitates the development of the internationalization in those markets (Dionísio, 2009).

In strategic terms, it matters to define in which activities the Internet will play a relevant role and how it should be articulated with the traditional way of doing business, either by replacing or complementing it. The blended marketing strategy should be formulated based on the analysis of the company's consumers, channels and products, not only the actual, but also the potential ones. In this way, it will be possible to identify new opportunities and threats (Dionísio *et al.*, 2011).

## **2.3.2. Marketing Communications**

### **2.3.2.1. What is Marketing Communications?**

*“Marketing communications are coordinated promotional messages and related media used to communicate with a market”* (AMA, 2017). *“(…) marketing communications can be used to differentiate, reinforce, inform and persuade audiences to think or behave in a particular way (…) to enable individuals to progress through the decision-making process.”* (Fill, 2009: 233).

### **2.3.2.2. The role of marketing communications**

Batra & Keller (2016) present the following possible outcomes that may result from the exposure of a consumer to marketing communications:

**To create awareness and salience:** *“The foundation of all brand and marketing efforts is creating awareness and ensuring that the brand is sufficiently salient and thought of in the right way at the right times and right places.”* (2016:131). Keller (2001) defines salience as the association of a brand to a wide variety of cues such as situations, product categories and needs, for instance, in a way that the brand is easily and often recalled.

**To convey detailed information:** After raising awareness, marketers must convince consumers to choose the brand based on the product's advantages. Persuading consumers requires making them understand why the brand is better in delivering the product's benefits than competitors. Thus, product attributes and features work as “proof points” or evidence of

a superior performance. Nowadays, as the communication environment is saturated and consumers' attention-spans are limited, it is quite challenging to convey this type of information.

**To create imagery and personality:** Different types of user or usage imagery can be created: the type of person who uses the brand, in what situation (when) and where.

**To build trust:** Source credibility, expertise, likeability and similarity facilitate the acceptance of messages. Today, consumers are more knowledgeable and sceptical and have an increasing desire for product and message authenticity (Brown *et al.* 2003). Batra & Keller (2016) point out the growing usage of social media by friends and peers as evidence of the greater importance of messages transmitted by similar and trusted sources.

**To elicit emotions:** It is known how important emotional, social and symbolic benefits are for purchase motivations (Batra & Ahtola, 1990). By adding such benefits to functional characteristics, it is possible for brands to increase their total perceived value.

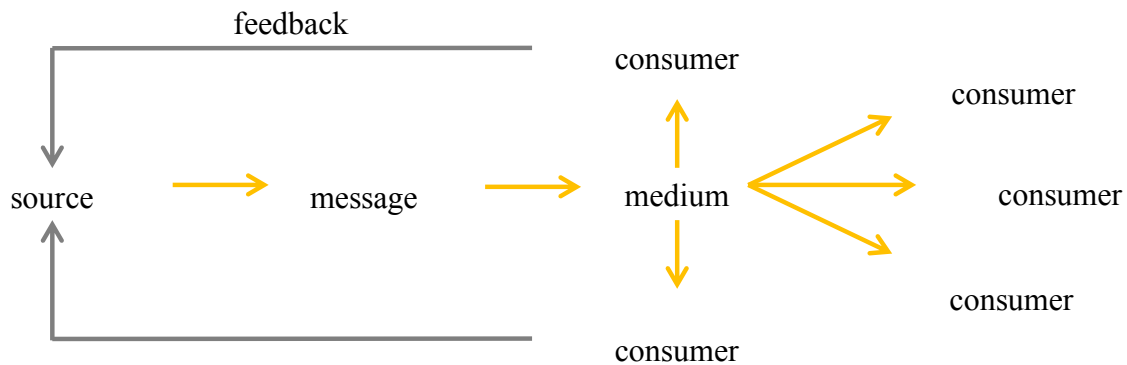
**To inspire action:** When a brand's message is received, processed and accepted, it may lead to preference but not to action. So, "*particular kinds of messaging are often required when the goal is the inducement of action and behaviour from consumers who are already favourably predisposed to the brand.*" (Batra & Keller, 2016:132).

**To instil loyalty:** In a post-consumption stage, consumers form their opinion regarding their level of satisfaction, comparing their initial expectations with their actual consumption experience. Therefore, shaping satisfaction is part of the goal of reinforcing loyalty (Park *et al.*, 2010).

**To connect people:** high satisfaction should lead to brand repurchase and loyalty. Still, by itself, this might not be enough for a consumer to become a brand advocate. Brand advocacy and word of mouth play an important role especially for services for which consumers cannot get tangible and credible proof of quality and trustworthiness (Berry, 2000). Batra *et al.* (2012) refer that for consumers to enrol in word-of-mouth and brand advocacy, they have to engage and frequently interact with the brand, developing a sense of "brand love". At this stage, the brand carries a special, symbolic and emotional meaning for the consumer that surpasses functionality. It is the highest level of a brand-consumer relationship. Nevertheless, Berger (2014) stresses that the type of messages that the brand sends to consumers should also motivate them to pass it along to other people.

### 2.3.3. The communication process

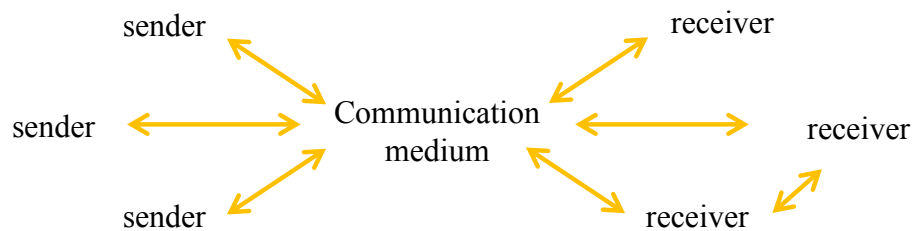
Figure 4 – The communication process



Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from Solomon, 2015

This model presents the elements that marketers must define when communicating with customers (Solomon, 2015). The main elements are: the source (or sender), the message, the medium and the consumer (or receiver). Still, this traditional view does not take into account the dynamic interaction between consumers, nor the greater control they have over the messages they choose to receive. The communications that occur between consumers (illustrated below) and other agents, such as competitors and influencers, create “noise” that may interfere with the message the brand is trying to transmit.

Figure 5 – An updated communications model



Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from Solomon, 2015

Communications between brands and consumers have become permission-based: “(...) *the focus is on communications with members of an audience who have already expressed an interest in a particular offering.*” (Fill, 2009:21). Now the consumer has the power to decide which messages he/she wants to receive, as well as when and how (Solomon, 2015).

### 2.3.3.1. The elements of the communication process

The **source** is the sender of the message. According to Solomon (2015) the source can have a big influence on the probability of the receiver accepting it.

The **medium** represents the tool or platform used to disseminate the message and make it reach consumers. The range of tools available will be described in the chapter regarding “Communications mix”.

The **message** consists of the information the company wants to convey to the target audience. Fill (2009) presents two elements that are very significant for the receiver (the consumer) to perceive the message effectively: the amount and the quality of the content of the message (the information) and the judgement each individual makes about the way the message is being sent. Hence, it is suggested that the style of the message should show a balance between the need for information and the need of enjoyment the receiver gets for receiving the message.

They can be rational (product-oriented) or emotional and based on feelings (customer-oriented). When decision-making requires high involvement, the message should focus more on the information content (the key attributes and benefits of the product). In case it is a low-involvement decision, the message should focus on the images created in consumers’ minds, in order to elicit an emotional response. In many situations messages have both dimensions.

Messages can be perceived in various ways and this process is influenced by several factors, such as the level of credibility of the source of the message, for instance. “(...) *credibility is derived from the image, which in turn is a composite of many perceptions.*” (Fill, 2009:508). This will be further explained ahead.

#### 2.3.3.1.1. Defining the message structure

There are some features that Fill (2009) believes should be taken into consideration when structuring a message: **conclusion drawing; one or two-sided messages and the order of presentation.**

Regarding **conclusion drawing**, it is necessary to decide if the message should draw a firm conclusion for itself or if the receivers should be allowed to draw their own conclusions from the information provided. Explicit conclusions are understood more easily and are more likely to be effective. Still, the effectiveness of conclusion drawing is affected by the nature of the issue, the situation, the composition of the target audience.

In some cases, the complexity of the information requires that conclusions are drawn for the receiver, due to his/her lack of knowledge or even education, experience, cognitive ability or even motivation. Even well informed and motivated audiences may need help if the product is new or the issue is unfamiliar. When an urgent action from the receiver is required, the conclusions should be provided in a very clear way. In high involvement situations, consumers normally prefer to make up their minds and may react negatively to having conclusions being drawn for them.

Messages are **two-sided** when they present the case for and against an issue. Fill (2009) states that **one-sided** messages (that expose the positive aspects of an issue) are stronger. This type of message is more effective when receivers also favour the opinion provided by the message and when their education level is lower. Two-sided messages are more effective when the receiver's initial opinion is contrary to the one that is provided by the message and when he/she has a higher education level. Normally, the source of the message tends to be more positively perceived when it sends two-sided messages.

In terms of the **order of presentation**, when messages present the strongest points right at the beginning it is called the primacy effect. This choice depends on the level of involvement of the audience. When involvement is low, it is necessary to get the audience's attention at the beginning. Also, if the target has an opinion that is opposite to the one expressed in the message, a weak stand may result in a higher level of counter-argument.

Placing the strongest arguments at the end assumes that the recency effect will be more persuasive. This is appropriate when the receiver shares source's opinion or when the level of involvement is high and positive.

To conclude, the order of the arguments presented is more significant in personal selling, rather than in TV advertising, for instance. Still, as learning through television is quite passive, as involvement and interest are both low, presenting the key selling points at the beginning, as well as at the end of the message, enhances reception and recall.

#### **2.3.3.1.2. The message appeal**

*"The appeal is important, because unless the execution of the message appeal (the creative) is appropriate to the target audience's perception and expectations, the chances of successful communication are reduced."* (Fill, 2009:518).



The choice of presentation style is related to the degree of factual information the message contains, against the level of imagery that may be necessary to make enough impact for the message to grab the receiver's attention and to be processed.

There are different types of **information-based appeals**, as follows:

- **Factual:** when providing detailed information. It is associated to high involvement situations, when receivers are motivated, interested and able to process that information. In this case, ads should be rational and present logical, founded arguments that help consumers in their decision-making process.
- **Slice of life:** by presenting the message in a way that makes the receiver relate and identify with what is being transmitted. It is about creating similarity.
- **Demonstration:** this consists of presenting the problem to the audience and demonstrating how to solve it using the product. The focus is to depict the brand as vital and instrumental in the resolution of the problem. The level of credibility and similarity to real life (expressed by the dialogue or the copy that is used) determine if the execution of the demonstration is believable or not.
- **Comparative advertising:** this technique is applied when a brand compares its product to the competitor's with the goal of expressing superiority regarding one or more key attributes.

Taking into account the industry this project is inserted in (fishing), the most relevant **emotions-based appeals** are:

- **Fear:** when the negative aspects or dangers associated to a specific behaviour or product usage are demonstrated. It can also be represented by a threat of disapproval or social rejection in case the brand is not chosen by the consumer. Fill (2009) states there is evidence that exerting fear can increase the receiver's attention and interest, motivating him/her to take action. Yet, if the level of fear is too high, it may become inhibiting for consumers and lead to an undesired outcome for the brand.
- **Humour:** using humour attracts attention, stimulates interest and generates a positive mood, which helps processing advertising messages since less cognitive effort is required. This technique is more suitable and effective for low involvement contexts.

Some media tools such as television and radio are more appropriate to deliver humorous messages.

- **Music:** music provides continuity between advertisements and through repetition can become a good cue of the brand and its advertisements. Music can draw attention, has the power to create a certain mood, can be used to signal a lifestyle and express brand personality. Hence, it is a differentiation element.
- **Fantasy and surrealism:** in this case, the goal is to use fantasy and imagery to create associations with the product. It consists of engaging the receiver in a story, providing an experience that should positively affect his/her attitude. Fill (2009) suggests that challenging consumers by presenting questions and visual stimuli that require attention and cognitive response can be a good strategy. If consumers have a positive reaction this, brands can either provide an answer or let consumers answer the questions themselves, based on their interpretation of the message.

Summing up, *“The message appeal should be a balance between informative and emotional dimensions. Furthermore, message quality is of paramount importance.”* (Fill, 2009:523).

Understanding the following topics is very important when defining the source and structuring the message that will be communicated.

#### **2.3.3.1.2.1. Belief formation**

Beliefs symbolize the information a consumer has about an object and therefore link an object to some attribute (Fishbein *et al.*, 1975). Thus, *“belief statements represent an individual’s perception (opinion) of a relationship between the given object and the particular attribute associated with the object.”* (Claret *et al.*, 2014: 26).

Belief formation can occur by (1) **direct observation** – through the experience the consumer has with the product – (2) by **information** – based on information provided by different sources such as media, relatives, friends and others – (3) by **inference** - inferential connections based on prior experience and knowledge (Fishbein *et al.*, 1975). As a result, *“beliefs are loosely encompassed by aspects such as experiences or acquired knowledge and personal characteristics that determine consumer attitudes, buying intention and preferences”* (Claret *et al.*, 2014: 26).

*“The effects of perceived quality on evaluative judgements are partially mediated by product beliefs.”* (Frank *et al.*, 2014: 581). Social recognition and product usage patterns were

identified as additional drivers of product beliefs in general. When planning marketing communications, it is recommended that managers should focus on meeting consumers' preferences and helping them meet the preferences of their social environment. *"Moreover, the influence of product usage patterns on product beliefs indicates that educating customers to use products effectively empowers them to co-create value that propagates through the chain of effects to customer loyalty and thus carries long-term benefits."* (Frank *et al.*, 2014: 581).

It is known that the general attitude an individual has towards a certain product is a result of various evaluative beliefs and factors such as the consumer's mind-set, endorsement, interactions with employees and the country of origin. But consumers' attitudes towards product categories can also influence attitudes towards brands. It has been discovered that the appraisal of an individual brand is partially determined by evaluations of the category it belongs to, as well as the level of affinity the consumer has with the product category. Therefore, advertising can be strategically used to positively affect opinions regarding a certain category, having a subsequent impact on purchase intentions of an individual brand (Posavac *et al.*, 2014). Comparative ads that do not abash/defame competitors are more effective than negative ones. Referring to competitors in a negative way can trigger undesirable associations to the product category, reducing the advertisement's effectiveness as well as consumers' purchase intentions. Hence, to maximize consumers' attitudes towards a brand and increase the potential sales, it is necessary to ensure a favourable attitude towards the product category it belongs to (Posavac *et al.*, 2004).

#### **2.3.3.1.2.2. Third party endorsement**

A common way of establishing credibility is through third party endorsement. In this case, a person (a consumer, an expert, a celebrity) or an institution approves and supports a product or a brand. Celebrity endorsement is a brand image building strategy in which *"a famous person can draw attention to a brand and shape the perceptions of the brand, by virtue of the inferences that consumers make based on the knowledge they have about the famous person. The hope is that the celebrities' fans will also become fans of their products or services."* (Keller, 2013: 279). It enables transferring meanings to brands and to create a congruent image. To do so, there are three important attributes that endorsers must fulfil: credibility, attractiveness and power.

Credibility determines the effectiveness of the message being transmitted. It is related to the perceived level of expertise (knowledge, skill and experience) and trustworthiness the endorser

has. When the information provided by the endorser is accurate and convincing enough, the receiver's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours are positively influenced and ultimately changed/improved. When consumers have a negative opinion of a brand, the persuasive counterarguments presented by a highly credible endorser can result in acceptance.

Attractiveness consists of similarity – resemblance between the endorser and the consumer; familiarity – knowledge that arises due to repeated exposure to the endorser and likeability – affection the consumer feels for the endorser due to his physical appearance, behaviour and personal characteristics. Brands want consumers to identify themselves with the endorser so that they feel motivated to adopt a similar position regarding beliefs, attitudes, preferences and behaviours towards the brand.

Power is the ability the endorser has to induce the consumer to take action and create a purchase intention. To guarantee a successful communication and that the message is understood, marketers should ensure a perfect fit between the brand and the endorser. In other words, the brand's image should match the endorser's personality and the target's characteristics (Byrne *et al.*, 2003).

*“A series of studies provided support for the positive influence of celebrity-product value congruence on attitudes towards ad, attitudes towards brand, purchase intentions and word-of-mouth intentions. Support for the effectiveness of a low-familiar celebrity over a well-known celebrity was also found.”* (Atay, 2011: 125). Atay also recommends companies to analyse whether to use low-familiar or well-known celebrities in their advertising campaigns, since there is evidence that unfamiliar celebrities can be even more effective than well-known ones. There are less *“(...) previously established thoughts, associations and feelings (...) making manipulation of the celebrity's values to create celebrity-product value congruence easier.”* (Atay 2011:126).

Zahaf *et al.* (2008) found that if a celebrity is considered trustworthy, similar and credible, it may increase willingness to buy. Still, the celebrity status by itself will not. Researchers have found that celebrities influence consumers in low involvement and re-purchase situations such as grocery shopping (Callcoat *et al.*, 1996). Expertise *“(...) is more effective in generating favourable attitudes towards ads and brand than the attractiveness dimension.”* (Atay, 2011:118)

### 2.3.3.1.2.3. Storytelling

Storytelling is defined as “*sharing of knowledge and experiences through narrative and anecdotes in order to communicate lessons, complex ideas, concepts and casual connections.*” (Sole and Wilson, 1999:6). Enabled by the new digital media, this has become an important skill to use in brand communication.

In both B2C and B2B markets, Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) argue that it should be used by companies to attract customers and increase the number of visits to their websites. Liu and Wu (2011) highlight the relevance of storytelling in communication given its emotional and symbolic nature, a direction that (as mentioned before) B2B companies are increasingly following. When properly used, it can rise marketing power in the areas of sales, branding, relationship building and social marketing (Liu and Wu, 2011). Frenzel *et al.* (2006), also point out connectivity, information, intensity, complexity, emotionality, concretization and memorability as some advantages of using it to communicate with customers or other businesses. It allows to differentiate a certain product beyond its functionalities or attributes. “*Products and services without stories, however, do not always attract customers to buy them in a competitive environment.*” (Liu & Wu, 2011:1172).

From a branding perspective, well-defined values are an important foundation to build a strong brand, which also relies on emotional ties between consumers and the brand itself. Stories can be used to transmit those values in an understandable way, while driving emotional bonds or connection with customers. By using this tool, companies can sell (indirectly) through dialogues that capture customers’ attention, triggering desire to buy (Godin, 2005). “*The core message (...) tends to go beyond the word, and needs to be interpreted by the audiences from contexts.*” (Huang, 2014: 66). Therefore, the content of the story should be appealing (so that customers want to read or hear them). It should also be based on facts that are believable and founded, but always in tune with customers’ feelings. Woodside *et al.* (2008), reinforce the application of storytelling in the business context due to its potential contribution to convey a brand concept, to enrich customer experience, as well as to evoke emotions and increase brand visibility. Branding can be seen as the goal, being storytelling the mean to achieve it (Fog *et al.*, 2005). Still, in terms of practical application, Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) state that story contents on websites are often confusing (which is worsened by the existence of a big variety of information shared by the company) becoming less appealing for visitors.

At the initial stage of the industrial purchasing process, it can be used to introduce personal selling and boost sales. Storytelling can be an effective way of engaging consumers in brand

communication. In building relationships, stories can generate connection between the customer and the company through experience, while achieving a better communication and relationship management between both parties. In terms of social marketing, storytelling is assisted by word-of-mouth and social media, bringing attention to the brand or company, for instance (Liu & Wu, 2011).

Fog *et al.*, (2005) present four basic elements that should be considered when using storytelling to develop corporate stories: the message, the conflict, the characters and the plot.

The message – that should be clearly defined – is a moral statement that is the central theme of the story; the conflict is the essence of excitement that captures people’s interest in their search for harmony; the characters, that should be compelling, are the participants in the conflict and the plot consists of the way the story progresses. In B2B companies, employees and customers can be good sources of story content as employees, for instance, embody the company’s culture and values. Still, as this group of companies is normally far from the end consumers, dialogue is required to gather information for customer-based stories. Therefore, it is important to create contact opportunities. *“No matter in employee stories or in customer stories, the conflicts are basically around various difficulties and challenges at work or in life. The hero to settle down these conflicts may be the employee or customer, while the company involves in the problem-solving process in any forms. The corporate products or services can serve as attributes of the hero; or the industrious and professional employees themselves are the core strength of the company.”* (Huang, 2014:66). Hence, the author refers the importance of companies being attentive to difficulties and struggles at work or in life.

In addition, it is stated that besides story creation, the choice of channels to implement storytelling is also crucial. In B2B, the most popular means to do so is social media and the company’s website. It is recommended that companies continue taking advantage of these two tools, given their economic benefits (low costs) and effectiveness to reach broader audiences and assure quality in communication. To increase coverage, other media channels can be used.

### **2.3.3. Marketing communications strategy**

*“Marketing communications strategy is concerned with two key dimensions. The first dynamic is concerned with who, in broad terms, the target audience is. End-user customers need to derive particular benefits on perceived value, from the exchange process (...) The second dynamic concerns the way in which an audience understands the offering they are experiencing either through use or through communications. The way in which people interpret messages*

*and frame objects in their mind is concerned with positioning. Marketing communications strategy, therefore, is concerned with audiences and positioning.*” (Fill, 2009:293).

The author also suggests that “(...) *the communication strategy should be customer- not method/media-oriented*” (Fill, 2009:312). The strategy may differ if the target audience is a consumer segment, a distributor or dealer network, for instance. Besides, the strategy must be connected to the communication requirements of the target, which is revealed during the context analysis. Then it is possible to choose the type of positioning strategy to apply. Chlebisová *et al.* (2011:1233) consider that the most important part in planning a B2B communication strategy is to choose the right message that will position the brand image in buyers’ (and potential ones) minds “(...) *because the knowledge and image of the brand precede the efforts to obtain additional information. If customers know the brand as a quality manufacturer with good reputation, have mediated or own positive experience, they will be more likely interested in buying (...)*”.

The concept of integrated marketing communications will be discussed ahead, given the multitude of changes and opportunities technology is creating in the way communicate.

### **2.3.3.1. The 3 Ps of marketing communications strategy**

Fill (2009) presents three main marketing communication strategies – the 3 Ps.

A **pull-positioning strategy** is intended to influence the end-user customers (consumers and B2B), encouraging them to “pull” products through the channel network. The communication flow is directed to the customer and is accomplished through the use of mass media advertising and sales promotions.

A **push-positioning strategy** consists of presenting information directly to wholesalers and distributors to influence them to take stock or to allocate resources. The aim is to push the product down the channel towards the end-user.

A **profile-positioning strategy** is used to influence a wide range of stakeholders, besides customers and intermediaries, by providing information that helps them perceive and position the organisation.

Fill (2009:305) believes that to understand strategy it is necessary to answer the following questions: “*First, how are the communication goals that have been set going to be achieved? Second, how are they going to be accomplished in terms of complementing the business and marketing strategies? Third, can current resources and opportunities support the strategy and do they encourage target audiences to respond to the communications?*”. To find the answers

more easily, the author recommends that it is important to reach an agreement between everyone involved in the development of the marketing communications campaigns and to prioritise activities as well.

If a new brand is going to be launched, it is recommended to start by informing and differentiating the brand before proceeding with a pull strategy (to inform and differentiate the brand for the end-user). These strategies are not mutually exclusive. In some campaigns, it is possible to use more than one strategy, depending on the branding approach.

## **2.3.4. Integrated Marketing Communications**

### **2.3.4.1. What is Integrated Marketing communications?**

*“Integrated marketing communications are the coordinated, consistent means by which firms attempt to inform, incentivize, persuade and remind consumers – directly or indirectly – about the products and brands they sell.”* (Batra & Keller, 2016:137). *“The role is to enable coherent and meaningful engagement with target audiences. In an age when consumers can touch brands across a range of channels it is important that each contact reinforces previous messages and facilitates the development of valued relationships.”* (Fill, 2009:280). Due to the wide range of elements that should be integrated (communication tools, messages, marketing mix, branding, strategy, employees, agencies and technology) most companies haven’t been able to achieve total integration.

Regarding marketing communication tools, it is stated that the messages transmitted by each type of tool should be harmonised, so that the audiences perceive a consistent set of meanings. Fill (2009:258) adds, *“the key visual triggers (design, colours, form and tag line) used in advertising should be replicated across the range of promotional tools used (...) Integration is about bringing together the communication tools.”*. Based on the range of media available today and the diversity of tasks assigned to IMC campaigns, it is suggested that a single hierarchy- of-effects model – according to which purchase disposition moves along six steps: awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and purchase (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961) - is no longer suitable. IMC campaigns are expected to be more strategic and to achieve multiple goals in all stages of the purchase process.

*“To develop a fully integrated marketing communication program, it is first necessary to understand how communications “work” over a consumer’s decision journey – specifically, the resources and mind-sets a consumer brings to the reception and processing of different*



messages, as well as the outcomes these messages can lead to in terms of consumer knowledge, attitudes and action tendencies.” (Batra & Keller, 2016:129) that were previously exposed.

### 2.3.4.2. Decision-making

Consumer decision journey is defined by Court *et al.* (2009) as a circle in which consumers start by considering an initial set of brands (the consideration set) and modify this consideration set (often by adding more brands to it) as they gather and evaluate brand information. Then they select a brand at the moment of purchase. The post-purchase experience will shape or influence their following purchase decisions.

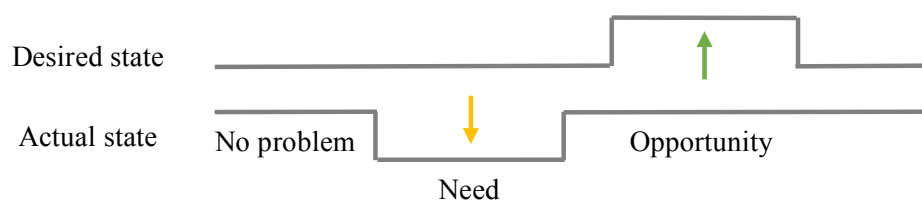
#### 2.3.4.2.1. Cognitive decision making

“A cognitive purchase decision is the outcome of a series of stages that results in the selection of one product over competing ones.” (Solomon, 2015:69). Based on an information-processing perspective, consumers tend to integrate as much information as they possibly can about a product, before making their purchase decision. Consumers normally start by collecting the most valuable pieces of information and only assimilate additional ones if they believe it will add to the knowledge they already have. Thus, it is important that marketing managers understand how consumers process information, form their beliefs or opinions and what criteria is used for choosing one product over others.

The steps in the cognitive decision-making process are presented as follows:

**Problem recognition:** occurs when there is a difference between the consumer’s current state of affairs and the ideal or desired one. It is the moment the consumer realizes he must take action.

Figure 6 – Cognitive decision making



Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from Solomon, 2015

**Information search:** is the process of searching for appropriate data that will support a reasonable decision. It can be internal – when consumers simply rely on their own memory or past experiences, recalling brands they associate with that need – or external – when consumers resort to external sources of information such as advertising, friends, bloggers or experts, for instance.

**Evaluation of alternatives:** comparing the different options available in terms of price, quality and trustworthiness (Batra and Keller, 2016), thinking about the pros and cons of each of them.

**Product choice:** the selection (purchase) of the product that better satisfies the consumer's needs.

**Post-purchase evaluation:** understanding if the purchase decision met the consumer's expectations, which will determine repurchase intentions and loyalty (Batra and Keller, 2016). Batra & Keller (2016) believe that although consumer-media interactions are nonlinear, consumers still go through this sequence of steps when engaging with a specific brand. Yet, two other important steps are added:

**Engagement in post-purchase interactions with the brand.**

**Becoming loyal and a willing advocate for the brand** (to the extent of recommending it).

In each step, the consumer is in a specific information-processing state of mind which makes the type of media appropriate or not to satisfy consumer's information needs and help him move to the next step. It must be mentioned that a successful decision journey may be disrupted at any stage of the process as, for instance, the consumer may have a bad trial experience and reject the brand. Consumers may also backtrack or skip some steps of the process (Batra and Keller, 2016).

Research has proven that consumer **motivation, ability** and **opportunity** to process a communication situation state the intensity and course of that processing, as well as the outcomes that arise (Batra & Ray, 1986). If, for any reason, the consumer lacks motivation, ability or opportunity, the processing of that communication can be compromised and may not even occur. Motivation and ability are consumer-level factors, while opportunity is greatly determined by the nature of the type of media itself, as well as the context and conditions under which the message is received. The level of motivation (or desire) to process incoming information varies according to how consumers view it as potentially helpful in selecting a brand. Other situational factors may also affect consumers' mood or spirits and consequently their willingness to seek information. Ability depends on familiarity and prior knowledge regarding the brand and its category. When consumers are at an early stage of category search,

they might find it difficult to process deep attribute-level brand comparative information (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987).

*“Interactions across motivation, ability and opportunity factors can have important implications for IMC planning. (...) mobile messages may tap into high-motivation processing situations but be low in processing opportunity; alternatively, social media messaging from trusted peers might be very high in credibility but low in its ability to convey detailed information.”* (Batra & Keller, 2016:130).

#### **2.3.4.2.2. B2B decision making**

In B2B communication the contextual conditions under which messages are received by the target and ascribed meaning is very different from consumer-oriented markets. *“The aim of marketing communication in B2B markets may be the change of attitudes and opinions of the DMU members with the use of a mixture of personal and impersonal communication tools aimed at an organizational purchase unit.”* (Chlebiová *et al.*, 2011:1231). In this case, it is stated that it is necessary to understand who the B2B communication is focused on. If it seems difficult to predict how individual customers will respond to certain types of messages and how they will process them and behave, it is even more difficult when the decision-making process occurs in group (Chlebiová *et al.*, 2011). Although it is presumed that decision making in organizational purchase situations is more influenced by rational arguments, an emotional message plays an important role in forming individual attitudes, perception of a trademark and a product (Gilliland & Johnston, 1997). Solomon (2015:398) agrees: *“(...) there are actually more similarities between organizational buyers and ordinary consumers than many people realize (...) emotional aspects do play a role (...) they base their decisions on brand loyalty, on long-term relationships with particular suppliers or salespeople, or even aesthetic preferences.”*

#### **2.3.4.3. The communication mix**

According to Fill (2009), the traditional mix of marketing communications involves three main elements: the **message** (already presented in the communication process elements), the **media** (the means by which the message is transmitted, such as broadcast, print, outdoor, digital or in-store) and the tools (that will be analysed in detail in the next chapter). Before, the mix was based on an intervention approach, according to which companies used to seek the attention of

customers who, perhaps, were not even interested in that communication. Today, there is a wide variety of media available and thus companies have developed fresher combinations of the communication mix to effectively reach the audience. Now, the **media** and the **message** (instead of the tools, as in the past) are the key to “hook” consumers. Based on permission marketing (that has been mentioned before), the seedling for the development of a closer relationship (consumer-brand) is manifested by the audience, instead of the brand.

#### **2.3.4.3.1. Tools**

The mix of **tools** (which includes advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing and personal selling) can be combined in different ways and used with levels of intensity, depending on the target audience.

##### **2.3.4.3.1.1. Traditional Tools**

In terms of traditional communication, it is important to consider the following tools that are defined by Fill (2009):

**Advertising:** used to send messages that present compelling opportunities and therefore engage the audience. The main goal is to build or maintain awareness of a brand or product. It is the major form of mass persuasion hence emotions represent a crucial role.

**Sales promotion:** consists of an incentive to encourage the audience to buy. It persuades customers to behave and stimulates the action of purchasing. In the short-term, it induces trial of new products.

**Public relations:** help developing and maintaining relationships with a wide range of stakeholders. It is a very cost-effective for transmitting a message in a credible way. It is a proactive form of communication that increases brand identification and comprehension and that allows to achieve media visibility and to mediate relationships.

**Sponsorship:** is a form of collaborative communication that consists of benefitting from an association with another firm or entity, adding value to the brand. The main advantages are: reaching a wider audience; gaining exposure; conveying brand messages and increasing awareness. In order to be successful, there needs to be a good fit between the two parties (the greater the compatibility, the more rapidly accepted by the audience it will be). In addition, it

enables the brand to communicate without the clutter and noise associated to advertising. Fill (2009) recommends this method to prepare the market for the arrival of a new product.

**Personal selling:** allows the customer (the message receiver) to focus on the salesperson, providing for fast and direct feedback. The vendor (or salesperson) has a greater participation in the decision purchase benefitting from a reduced likelihood of distraction and “noise”. The reach and control over message delivery are low and costs are extremely high.

**Exhibitions and trade fairs:** enable companies to meet customers and potential ones in an agreeable environment where both have willingly volunteered their time to be present. The main advantages are to establish contact with an interested audience, to promote products, to make demonstrations, to build industry-wide credibility in a short period of time. Besides, face-to-face communication and dialogue with customers, suppliers and competitors (that may be involved in the same trade fair, for instance) reinforce positive relationships and presence in the market.

**Product placement:** is the inclusion of a product or service on the media (such as TV shows) for deliberate promotional exposure. In other words, the brand (the advertiser) pays a third party to expose the product in their channel.

**Direct marketing:** consists of communicating directly with individual customers (by e-mail, letter, phone call, face-to-face), carrying a behavioural message (call-to-action). It offers the possibility to gather, measure and use customer data. Therefore, it allows firms to personalize marketing activities with more accuracy, minimal wastage and reduced costs.

#### 2.3.4.3.1.2. Digital Tools

Regarding digital communication, Batra and Keller (2016) highlight six options that include:

**Search ads**, that appear when internet users type specific keywords while searching for a product or service. Higher stands of paid search ads can generate a higher click rate and conversion rate (the percentage of users that actually take action by making a purchase, for instance) (Jerath, Ma & Park, 2014).

**Display ads** – conveying a message visually, using text, logo, animation, videos or pictures - that can induce visiting the company’s website in most stages of the purchase process (Danaher, Lee and Kerbache, 2010). Still, “(...) *it may not do so for those who preciously visited the site without creating an account. In one application, expected visits increased by almost 10% when display ad impressions were partially reallocated from non-visitors and*

*visitors to authenticated users.*” (Batra & Keller, 2016:126). Knowing that Internet users only spend 5% of their time looking for information, display ads - that should be more appealing, influential, better targeted and closely tracked to understand their potential - seem to be a better option than search ads (Urban *et al.*, 2014).

**Websites**, that can be more appreciated and increase sales when its characteristics correspond to the customer’s cognitive style (for example, more or less analytic). Users’ demographic differences (age, gender, location) can influence successful website characteristics (Hauser *et al.*, 2009). Fill (2009) highlights that design is crucial in determining the length of the visits to the website, the actions undertaken (such as consulting information, ordering or purchasing products) and propensity to return.

**E-mail**, which is a form of direct marketing. Its effectiveness has been demonstrated to improve with personalization (although repeated e-mails may be counter-productive) and with the customization of landing pages when clicking (Li and Kannan, 2014). It allows firms to build awareness, to reinforce brand messages, to induce action (trial or purchase) and to retain customers (Fill, 2009).

**Social Media**, consisting of well-known networks like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, dedicated to interaction, sharing content and collaboration between users. *“Three key characteristics of firm-generated content – valence, receptivity and customer susceptibility – have been shown to positively affect customer spending, cross-buying and profitability, though the effect of receptivity was shown to be the largest.”* (Batra and Keller, 2016:127).

**Mobile**, as consumers can purchase using their mobile phones. It has been proven that mobile consumers are more likely to go directly to the firms’ website or app instead of using a search engine. Besides, they deliberate less and purchase more by impulse rather than carefully analysing product features (Hwang, McInerney and Shin, 2015).

#### **2.3.4.3.2. Challenges and opportunities**

Although digital media has tremendous potential by offering greater versatility and precision, it also requires greater integration due to “blended” consumers’ behaviours (who present shifting media usage patterns and whose attention is divided) (Dionísio *et al.*, 2011). Batra & Keller (2016:122) claims that *“The consumer “path to purchase” is also fundamentally different today – often shorter in length, less hierarchical and more complex. (...) Because of*

*increased social influences on purchase, word of mouth (WOM) and advocacy have become especially important; brand messaging is even less under the marketer's control."*

Still, these new powerful ways of communication allow greater personalization of the message content, timing and location. Besides, marketers can combine different types of media to quickly direct consumers along their decision journey and to achieve the company's goals. Since influencing consumers is a complex process, integrating multiple communication efforts help *"to inform, persuade, or propel action or advocacy, pushing consumers on to the next stage in the process."* (Batra & Keller, 2016: 123). Osinga *et al.* (2011) argues that successful integration of various marketing communications highly contributes to drive short-term sales and long-term brand building.

### **2.3.5. Planning Marketing communications**

Fill (2009) highlights the importance of developing a marketing communications plan stating that it helps reduce errors and provide efficiency and effectiveness. The context in which communications are supposed to occur influences what and how messages are defined and transmitted, as well as the way they are perceived and interpreted. This means that the intended positioning that companies want to establish can be missed due to poorly planned communications.

Fill (2009) suggests the following elements that should be part of a marketing communications plan that are similar to the marketing plan's.

**1. Context analysis:** The main goal of making a context analysis is to understand the market and communication drivers that will probably affect the brand or company and that will help or impede the achievement of the company's long-term goals. This analysis provides information and clues regarding what the promotional plan should accomplish. It should include market research about the target (their needs, perception, motivation, attitudes and decision-making), the media, marketing goals, resources, the social, political, technological and economic environment, among other factors. It provides the rationale for the marketing communications plan. It is from the context analysis that the marketing and marketing communications goals should be established.

## 2. Communication objectives, that should include these three dimensions:

- **Corporate objectives:** related to the mission and the business area in which the company wants to be.
- **Marketing objectives:** output-oriented, as they are usually related to sales, market share, revenues and profitability, for example.
- **Marketing communications objectives:** derive from understanding the context in which the company is operating and the future context the company expects to reach. These objectives are related to awareness, the way the brand is perceived, knowledge and attitudes and preference for the brand. Therefore, the choice of communication goals depends on what needs to be accomplished. Most commercial and brand-oriented communication plans need to transmit a clear position in their market. Positioning intentions will be related to the market, the customers and the context analysis itself. (Fill, 2009).

According to Belch and Belch (2015) companies struggle with the most important step in the promotional planning process: defining realistic objectives that will guide the development of an IMC program. This is due to the complexity of certain marketing situations, to conflicting views in terms of what advertising and other promotional mix elements should accomplish and to the uncertainty regarding resources. Patti *et al.* (2015) believe that although there have been some improvements in the assessment of communication effectiveness (due to digital marketing, scanning and tracking data), the same has not happened in terms of integrating communication goal setting. *“The lack of clear, specific, and complete objectives will very likely lead to results that are unexpected and probably distant from the desired outcome. (...) it is possible that a new objective-setting framework is needed.”* (Patti *et al.*, 2015:14).

It is recommended the adoption of the following checklist to ensure the definition of good objectives: “(1) objectives should be communication-oriented, specifying one or more of the steps in a hierarchy-of-effects model; (2) objectives should be quantifiable in terms of desired outcome, e.g., ‘...20% increase in awareness’; (3) objectives should contain specific details about the target audience and the time period in which the objectives are to be accomplished.” (Patti *et al.*, 2015:16). In addition, marketers are mentioned to be more focused on the media instead of the message itself.

**3. Marketing communications strategy:** At this stage, it is necessary to take the information collected from the context analysis and, based on the goals previously established, start



planning a line of action. This requires identifying the target audience and then strategically defining the most appropriate positioning for the brand to succeed in the market it belongs to. Once this is done, it is possible to determine the brand image, the values and the message that should be transmitted to appeal to consumers and make the offer relevant for them.

**4. Coordinated promotional mix (methods, tools and media):** After formulating and justifying the desired position, it is necessary to decide the form and style of the message that will be conveyed and how to tie it with the appropriate strategic orientation. It is recommended that the selection of the promotional methods should clearly indicate the methods and the media means meant to be used. The media will depend on the nature of the goals, the target and resources. It is crucial that they provide message consistency and a measure of integration.

**5. Resources (financial and human):** Good planning is very important at this stage - assessing the amount and the type of resources needed to implement the strategy defined.

**6. Scheduling and implementation:** The deployment of the methods and the media should be done according to the goals and the strategic thrust.

**7. Evaluation and control:** the performance of the tools and the media implemented should be evaluated. The most important aspect is to understand if the objectives established, as this determines if a promotional strategy is successful or not.

**8. Feedback:** of the overall outcome of a certain campaign, but also the performance of individual tools (if enough resources were invested, if the strategy is appropriate, problems regarding the implementation). This type of information is very useful when anchored to the context analysis. It provides opportunity to learn and make adjustments in future marketing communications activities.

#### **2.3.5.1. Planning digital communication**

Dionísio *et al.* (2011) recommend that, when planning digital communication, the firm must consider some criteria included in the following areas: **strategy, nature of the actions, monitoring and analysis and budget.**

Regarding **strategy**, the importance of integrating online communication will depend on (1) the relevance of the online channel for selling the company's products; (2) the affinity between the targets and the communication mean; the brand's positioning in the market (for instance, it is expected that a leading brand shares content online about new products); (3) the tactical nature and speed in updating content; (4) the complexity of the messages and the desired cross-media synergetic effects.

The **nature of the communication actions** is also relevant as online platforms can simply be used to get feedback or rapidly update messages; to support contests that imply the provision of personal data; to take advantage of making content (information, messages or actions) viral. In terms of **monitoring and analysis**, online communications may be useful to build and update customer databases, as well as assess immediate results of certain campaigns. Finally, the **budget** is a critical factor when choosing which types of means to invest in. It is necessary to evaluate the communication ROI. The efficiency of each mean depends on the target, product category and selling channel. The online consists of a good solution, especially when the budget is low and the firm must focus only on one mean.

### 2.3.5.2. Selecting communication tools

It is argued that even in today's highly developed media environment, traditional advertising is still enduring (Nunes & Merrihue, 2007). According to some research, the content of a message – emotional versus attribute-based, whether on ad copy or online word-of-mouth (WOM) – is normally more relevant than the number of times it is communicated or repeated (due to exposure or online WOM conversation) (Gopinath, Thomas and Krishnamurthy, 2014). *“Because of its pervasiveness and expressive nature, TV advertising is highly effective at creating awareness, interest and consideration – the front end of the funnel or consumer decision journey. (...) print advertising allows for detailed exposition and is well-suited for mid-funnel information provision.”* (Batra & Keller, 2016:126).

Today there are multiple online communication options that serve the purpose of transmitting tailored messages or information that reflect consumers' interests and behaviours, as an attempt to promote mutual engagement. Even if traditional media enables placement in specific magazines or TV channels, for instance, *“(...) online media offers even more targeted placement, through the placement of ads on sites related to the company's offerings and the ability to place ads on the basis of search engine keywords, to reach people who have started the buying process.”* (Batra & Keller, 2016:127). Moreover, marketers can easily assess the effects of online marketing efforts by knowing how many users clicked on an ad, how long they spent on it and even what they looked for afterwards.

Nevertheless, it is argued that social media shouldn't be the only source used in marketing communications. Even though online communications are more influential for many consumers, mass media might be the greatest stimulator behind it (Gopinath, Thomas and

Krishnamurthy, 2014). In addition, social media may not be as effective as more traditional means in attracting new customers and driving brand penetration.

Secondly, consumers prefer engaging (online) in the areas of media, charity and fashion rather than consumer goods. Hence, not all brands and products are equally social online (Schulze, Schöler and Skiera, 2013).

Finally, only a small percentage of customers really wants to engage in a two-way communication with brands via social media, despite using it widely. Still, online WOM (opinions and recommendations) can influence consumers. It is believed that informal social networks act as a complement in product communication (Goldenberg, Oestreicher-Singer & Reichman, 2012).

#### **2.3.5.2.1. Communication tools in B2B**

The tools that are mostly used in B2B communication are personal selling, e-mail or phone contact, direct marketing, trade fairs or exhibitions, public relations, sponsorship and advertising in specialized media (Vysekalová & Mikeš, 2010). These are more targeted and personal methods that create opportunities for building relationships. Normally, different information sources are used at different stages of the decision-making process. In B2B, advertising is used to generate interest and awareness, thus being more appropriate to disseminate intangible and emotional messages. Personal sale is considered the most important one when team negotiation is required (De Pelsmacker *et al.*, 2003). Generally, social media – that enables instant and quick communication with customers - is more often and widely used in B2C. B2C online communities, that allow interaction between customers, are normally created around brand promotion for products and services. Nevertheless, social media has become increasingly relevant in the B2B context, with the development of similar B2C online campaigns (Katona & Sarvary, 2014; Crain, 2014). Online communities – that may act as professional networks where content and collaboration opportunities can be found based on business experience - started to appear and grow.

The range of B2B social media users - that are interested in information, news and interaction - includes employees, customers, experts and consumers. It is estimated that 98% are “spectators”, 75% are “critics”, who make comments, post ratings and reviews and 56% are “creators” who share posts and media (Katona & Sarvary, 2014). Christine Moorman and T. Austin Finch are quoted regarding the challenges that B2B companies face: *“The biggest challenge is that many companies see social media as a cute promotional activity when it can*

*be a strategic marketing activity*” (Katona & Sarvary, 2014:145). It is further argued that B2B companies themselves might consider social media as unnecessary and boring. Still, the ones that have used it successfully have considered end-users as consumers or individuals who can be influenced and/or engaged. In these cases, *“B2B social media can increase brand awareness, humanize B2B companies, establish companies as though leaders, and connect with customers, prospects and industry influencers, and potentially even increase sales.”* (Katona & Sarvary, 2014:145).

It is also believed that even though B2B customers are organizations, these are formed by people, who value interaction just as consumers in a B2C context. Therefore, social media should be about communication and engagement, instead of being seen as just another way of pushing products to consumers. It is then suggested that the focus of social media communication should be the end-user and the relevance of the content for both parties. Chlebisová (2011) highlights that despite online social networks’ advantages in terms of costs, the reluctance showed by some individuals to accept them as a promotional tool can be a limitation in terms of communication. So, B2B companies should find online marketing communications planning and prioritising methods, just as B2C companies use today. Besides the challenges related to developing effective online communications, managers must also integrate and ensure a consistent communication in their working models, which requires, in most cases, reviewing processes and systems.

### **2.3.5.3. Communication Optimization Model**

This model includes seven criteria – the 7 Cs – that should be fulfilled and analysed when establishing an integrated marketing communications plan. It *“(…) takes more of a “top-down” view of communications program as a whole to consider how efficiently it has been assembled and how it has been integrated overall.”* (Batra & Keller, 2016:132). The seven criteria are:

**1. Coverage:** it is the proportion of the target audience that is actually reached by the communication options, as well as the overlap that exists among them. *“In other words, to what extent do different communication options reach the designated target market and the same or different consumers making up that market? (...) If there is some overlap (...) marketers must decide how to design their communication program to reflect the fact that consumers may already have some communication effects in memory prior to exposure to any*

*particular communication option.*” (Keller, 2013:248). A communication option can reinforce associations that are the focus of other communication options, or it can introduce other linkages.

**2. Cost:** it is necessary to assess the cost of all communication options to ensure an effective and efficient communication plan, according to the budget.

**3. Contribution:** it reflects how communication affects consumer’s awareness, how it enhances brand or product image, how it induces sales and if it influences consumers’ decision journey. It “(...) *describes the main effects of a marketing communication option in terms of how it affects consumers’ processing of a communication.*” (Keller, 2013:249).

**4. Commonality:** “*Regardless of which communication options marketers choose, they should coordinate the entire marketing program to create a consistent and cohesive brand image in which brand associations share content and meaning. (...) determines how easily consumers can recall existing associations and responses and how easily they can link additional associations and responses to the brand in memory*” (Keller, 2013:249). Commonality is the extent to which common associations are reinforced by all communication means. “(...) *with inconsistent associations and a diffused brand image, consumers may overlook some associations or, because they are confused about the meaning of the brand, form less strong and less favourable associations.*” (Keller, 2013:249).

**5. Complementarity:** it is the extent to which different associations can be emphasized by other communication means. “*The ideal marketing communication program would ensure that the communication options chosen are mutually compensatory and reinforcing to create desired consumer knowledge structures.*” (Keller, 2013:250). “*For effective competitive positioning, brands typically need to establish multiple brand associations. Different marketing communication options may be better suited to establishing a particular brand association (e.g., sponsorship of a cause may improve perceptions of a brand’s trust and credibility (...))*” (Batra & Keller, 2016:136).

**6. Conformability:** it refers to the extent to which certain marketing communications are effective for many target consumers, at so many different times and places. It is about how well communication conforms to distinct characteristics and to communication needs of numerous consumers. “(...) *when consumers are exposed to a particular marketing communication, some consumers will have already been exposed to other marketing communications for the brand, and others will not. The ability of a marketing communication to work at two levels – effectively communicating to both groups – is critically important. We consider a marketing*

*communication option conformable when it achieves its desired effect regardless of consumers' past communication history.*" (Keller, 2013:250).

**7. Cross-Effects:** back in 2013 this criteria had not yet been presented by Keller (only in 2016 in his article with Batra). *"Communications used in tandem are more powerful when they interact and create synergistic cross-effects with other communications through proper sequencing."* (Batra & Keller, 2016:136). For example, the awareness and attitudes that arise due to advertising campaigns can increase the success of sales pitches (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010).

Although it is not included in this model, Batra and Keller (2016) also consider consistency an important factor. In order to enable learning and encourage action, it is necessary to reinforce the exact same persuasive message across the different communication means.

Keller (2013) adds that communication options vary in terms of breadth and depth of audience coverage. In terms of commonality and conformability, they differ according to the number of modalities they employ: the more modalities available with a communication type, the greater its potential commonality and conformability. The author also presents three possible trade-offs of the 7 IMC choice criteria:

**Commonality and complementarity will often be inversely related:** the more multiple marketing communication options emphasize a certain brand attribute or benefit, all else being the same, the less they effectively emphasize other attributes or benefits.

**Conformability and complementarity will also often be inversely related:** *"the more a communication program accounts for differences in consumers across communication options, the less necessary it is that any one communication be designed to appeal to many different groups."* (Keller, 2013: 252).

**Commonality and conformability do not share an obvious relationship:** Brands can develop a sufficiently abstract message (for example, "Our brand is contemporary") to effectively reinforce the brand across different communication options.

*"One of the main organisational drivers for IMC is the need to become increasingly efficient. Driving down the cost base enables managers to improve profits and levels of productivity. By seeking synergetic advantages through its communications and associated activities and by expecting managers to be able to account for the way in which they consume marketing communication resources, so integrated communications become increasingly attractive."* (Fill, 2009:267). From a market perspective, the most important driver is the re-orientation from transactional (focused on sales) to relationship marketing (focused on brand-customer

relationship). *“By adopting a position designed to enhance trust and commitment, an organisation’s external communications need to be consistent and coordinated, if only to avoid information overload and misunderstanding.”* (Fill, 2009:267).

From a communication perspective, the author believes the key driver is the provision of cues by which consumers are able to understand the values the brand stands for. It is also a way of using certain messages to influence actions within the relationships that brands want to develop. So, companies can attain advantages by differentiating marketing communications, while providing clarity and simplicity (Fill, 2009).

#### **2.3.5.4. Cross-border Communication**

Companies that intend to pursue a cross-border strategy are faced with the dilemma of standardizing or adapting communications to suit local or regional requirements.

Hence, it is important to consider both advantages and disadvantages of both possibilities:

**Adaptation:** As referred by Fill (2009), consumers’ ability of processing information and ascribing meaning to stimuli varies across countries and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it can be assumed that a message generated centrally may be inappropriate in other cultural contexts. For the same reason, the complexity of the message content should be low so that its dissemination and comprehension is successful.

**Standardization:** The cost savings and message consistency make this approach very appealing. A standardized message enables building a strong brand image. Besides, it is believed that, despite geographical dispersion, in many product categories, buyers have a few similar characteristics. Hence, as brand images can have a universal meaning, the development of adjusted messages may not be a necessity. Another argument presented in favour of standardization is the poorer quality of certain locally-adapted campaigns, due to lack of resources, experience or expertise. Standardization allows greater control of the whole process. The economies of scale that can be achieved when it comes to packaging, media buying and message creation and production can also be seen as a benefit.

Normally companies base their choice on the impact that both strategies are likely to have on their performance and profit. *“Organisations rarely decide on a polarised strategy of total adaptation or complete standardization. In practice, a policy of “globalisation” seems to be preferred.”* (Fill, 2009:249). So, firms develop standard messages centrally, but expect other

countries to adapt them in order to meet cultural needs (by adjusting the language and media components, for instance).

#### **2.3.5.4.1. Tools of the international communication mix**

Fill (2009) identifies some implications of going international, regarding communication tools: International public relations seek to build bridges (culturally, geographically and linguistically) between stakeholders outside the firm's country of origin. Public relations must be based on willingness to share information, to behave ethically and to make adjustments in the light of feedback.

Packaging is important, not only to preserve the products quality and characteristics, but also to communicate and influence decision-making (especially in low-involvement purchases). It must be persuasive and reinforce the brand's positioning. According to research by Berg-Weitzel and Laar (2000), when opting for standardization, packaging design should be neutral. In case of adaptation, local matters regarding design should be used to gain consumer's confidence. In both cases, firms are advised to carefully consider colour, shape and language issues.

Due to the importance of trade shows and exhibitions, especially in the B2B market, it is essential to show compatibility with the local environment and other visitors.

Regarding personal selling, it is required that the sales force understands the different countries and the cultural environment in which it is operating. Companies may also establish a marketing channel and collaborate with distributors or dealers from the targeted countries or regions. Another possibility is to establish a sales force in each country or region. Despite being expensive, it allows greater control.

In terms of direct marketing, language is an important factor. Translation costs, humour and tone of voice should be considered. The quality, availability and effectiveness of the media (that vary across regions) must also be evaluated when developing an international campaign. The internet's extended access enables the development of a network of communications, sales promotions and marketing activities. Companies are recommended to determine the role of their websites and how it will interact with their already established communication strategies.



### 3. Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the reasoning behind the research made, the techniques used and how data was analysed to be later used in the execution of the company's communication plan.

While developing it, there was a need to get more information regarding aquaculture and brand-consumer communication and interaction. This is extremely important to effectively design communications in a way that all efforts (across different tools) fulfil consumers' and buyers' needs, exceed their expectations and improve their experience.

#### 3.1. Research purpose

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) present three main purposes of doing research:

**1. exploratory:** when we want to look for new insight, ask questions and investigate something from a different perspective. It involves literature, interviewing experts and conducting focus group interviews.

**2. descriptive:** which consists of accurately portraying the profile of people, events or situations.

**3. explanatory:** when we are studying a situation or problem that shows a relationship between variables.

The research purpose of this project is descriptive as it involves understanding fish consumption patterns, communication needs and preferences, based on which a consumer profile will be drawn.

#### 3.2. Research approach

There are two research approaches to consider: **deduction** and **induction**. The first one involves developing a theory that is subjected to rigorous testing, whereas the second consists of understanding the nature of a problem and making sense of collected data. (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In this case, it is more appropriate to follow an inductive approach.

Among the different research methods, the online survey was considered the most appropriate when addressing consumer-related issues, due to its reachability and practicality.

When it comes to information related to the company, it was preferable to hold several personal meetings, being more suitable for discussing strategic issues and defining goals.

### **3.3. Data collection**

Data can be categorized as primary – when it is attained by the researcher himself through the development of surveys, focus groups or interviews – or secondary – if the data resulted from other source’s research and, hence, is already available and sharable.

#### **3.3.1. Primary Data**

The data used to execute this communication plan was collected through several personal interviews with the company’s team and an online questionnaire directed to end-consumers.

##### **3.3.1.1. Quantitative Research**

Quantitative methods are useful to understand how to analyse data in a meaningful way. The behaviours observed must be transformed into data and the data should be described and used to test hypothesis. Quantitative methods can be: (1) based on meanings derived from numbers; (2) collected results in standardized and numerical data; (3) analysis based on diagrams and statistics (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

###### **3.3.1.1.1. Questionnaires**

The strength of a questionnaire depends on the capacity to draw inferences about a large population based on the information collected from a small group (sample) of that same population. Still, the validity of the inferences made significantly depends on the process through which the group of respondents is selected (Levine & Hogg, 2010).

There are two sampling methods: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The first one implies working with a random population (that doesn’t know the researcher), whilst in the second the respondents are previously chosen by the researcher.

For this study, the goal was to reach not only the Portuguese, but also people from different countries and different ages. Therefore, the questionnaire was disseminated online, via email and via Facebook, due to their wider reach and easy accessibility. Regarding Facebook, the link of the questionnaire was shared among friends (that also shared it with their friends) and it was posted in survey exchange groups as well. Hence, it can be concluded that this questionnaire uses a non-probabilistic sample as the researcher knows or is connected in some way to some of the respondents.

The questionnaire includes several types of questions: yes or no, multiple choice, linear scale, checkboxes, grids and open questions (for nationality, age and when the option selected was “other”). Some contingency questions (meaning that they are only answered based on the respondent’s previous answer to another question) were used in order to understand the different preferences between, for instance, fish consumers and fish buyers who aren’t fish eaters.

### **3.3.1.2. Qualitative Research**

A part of the qualitative data used in this project was attained during personal meetings with the founders of the company, Fernando Monteiro (CEO) and José Miguel Reis Pereira (COO), as well as through email communication. They shared information about the industry which enabled the development of the external and internal analysis of the company with more accuracy, as well as the company’s goals and expectations for the future.

### **3.3.2. Secondary Data**

The external analysis, that included (1) assessing current market trends related to the food industry, (2) characterizing the European and the Japanese markets, (3) as well as the fishing and aquaculture sectors, required consulting the following sources:

- B2B Social Media Report from Brandwatch (2015)
- Global Health & Wellness Report, by Nielsen (2014)
- Global ingredient and dining-out trends around the world report, by Nielsen (2016)
- Global Premiumization Report, by Nielsen (2016)
- A pocket guide to EU’s new fish and aquaculture consumer labels, by the European Commission (2014)
- EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products report, by the European Commission (2017)
- Livestock’s long shadow environmental issues and options, by FAO (2006)
- The state of the world fisheries and aquaculture – Contributing to food security and nutrition for all, by FAO (2016)
- Inside Japan: The Fish and Seafood Trade Report, by Karen Guilbault (2015)
- The competitors’ websites.

### **3.4. Data Analysis techniques**

#### **3.4.1. Primary and Secondary Data**

##### **3.4.1.1. Primary Data**

The data collected through the questionnaire was interpreted and organized in graphs and tables in order to be perceived more visually and in a simple, direct way.

##### **3.4.1.2. Secondary Data**

The research made concerning the market, competitors and consumer behaviour lead the researcher to analysing both quantitative and qualitative information in the reports and documents previously mentioned.

#### **3.4.2. Data Analysis**

##### **3.4.2.1. Primary Data**

This chapter exposes the analysis of the results attained from the quantitative research made (the questionnaire). The main goals were:

- To learn about consumers' preferences and purchasing habits regarding fish;
- To assess consumers' level of receptivity towards mariculture and how they perceive his activity;
- To assess willingness to buy the company's fish (more specifically Charuteiro);
- To understand consumers' interactions with food producers on social media platforms and how this type of communication can be improved;
- To understand what type of content (provided by food producers on social media) is more useful and appealing to consumers;
- To know what consumers value the most in fish producers' advertisements.

The results of the questionnaire will now be analysed. The questionnaire's form (as it was presented to respondents) is in the appendix.

##### **3.4.2.2. Questionnaire: results and analysis**

###### **3.4.2.2.1. Consumer Profile**

256 answers were collected online. The proportion of males and females is almost the same, the majority of respondents are young adults and most are from Portugal.

Most respondents are single, which is probably related to age. Still, 68,4% of the people inquired is employed and around 80% do not live alone. The vast majority believes they have at least some influence on deciding what food products are bought for their households. So, the opinions collected through this questionnaire are valid and provide valuable insight for the development of a consumer-directed communication plan.

#### **3.4.2.2.2. Fish consumption habits**

The vast majority (96,1%) of the respondents eats fish and 20% of the ones who don't, at least, buy it for someone else. One third admits to consume low levels of fish ( $\leq 25\%$ ) in comparison to other animal proteins. It is possible to conclude that only a minority (16,7%) expresses a strong preference for eating fish at restaurants. Hence, it can be assumed that, in general, the majority doesn't strictly depend on restaurants to eat well-prepared fish.

Salmon and tuna (that are high in fat, have a characteristic flavour, are very used in Japanese dishes and are eaten raw or undercooked) are the most appreciated and purchased species. The differences registered between the species more commonly purchased and the ones preferred are probably related to price and to the availability of the fish in the point of sale.

There is a preference for buying fresh fish, especially at the supermarket. Frozen fish is also very popular, probably due to convenience.

When choosing fish, the factors that seem to be more relevant are: the appearance of the fish, affordability and quality and sustainability certification. In general, these three aspects are indicators of the product's quality but the first two are also critical clues in assessing the freshness of the fish. The factors that are considered more irrelevant are the brand or producer and the country of origin. This may be due to the fact that we live in a globalised world and therefore consumers have become used to a great variety of options available, from different sources. The production method ends up not having a significant relevance.

#### **3.4.2.2.3. Mariculture**

Only half of the participants assumed to have heard of mariculture before. Only half of them (63 people or roughly a quarter of total respondents) knows a mariculture company. Hence, either consumers are uninformed about the industry due to a lack of interest on it, or mariculture companies are not investing (enough) in consumer-directed communication.

In general, consumers' opinions regarding mariculture are quite positive. The factor towards which consumers expressed a stronger negative opinion was "safety in terms of disease and contamination control".

There is still a big proportion of people who doesn't know if the fish they buy or eat is wild or farmed. Around 40% has bought or eaten fish from mariculture production and almost 95% of them would do so again. The ones who don't wish to repeat that experience justified it with the poor quality and health of the fish itself, as they don't trust the production method. Consumers who have never tried it before state that it was due to lack of opportunity and information.

People seem to prefer fish raised on the ocean, as wild fish and mariculture fish were the two most popular answers. This is probably due to an association to a more natural and clean environment. There are also more consumers indifferent to the origin of the fish they eat than the ones who express a clear intention of buying fish produced in tanks (using an inland aquaculture system).

Confirming the spread of different cultural habits, around 69% of respondents enjoys eating raw or undercooked fish.

Approximately 94% would try Charuteiro produced by AtlanticPrime and the ones who wouldn't are driven by a lack of information regarding: the species, how to prepare it and the country where it is produced.

#### **3.4.2.2.4. Advertising**

Advertisements from fish brands don't seem to be that memorable. Yet, respondents remember seeing them more often on TV during breaks, at the supermarket, magazines and TV shows. It is interesting to know that social media has scored higher than radio.

The content that respondents consider more important, either for those who remember fish brands advertisements or for the ones who don't, is the same. In general, it is mostly related to facts associated to the quality of the fish: the environment in which it is raised, nutritional information, sustainability certification and the appearance of the fish before being cooked.

#### **3.4.2.2.5. Social Media**

Only around 42% of respondents uses social media to interact with food brands. The majority agrees that it is important to have easy ways to communicate with them. Although users assume to enjoy the content shared by food brands on social media, they admit to not react (clicking "like", commenting or sharing) a lot to those posts.

When asked about the type of content shared by a fish brand on social media, it was found that consumers are more interested in knowing fun facts about marine life, recipes, nutritional information, news related to marine life and cooking tips and ideas. In general, practical and less complex information seems to be more appealing. Respondents are less curious about news related to the fish industry, contests and, surprisingly, tips from famous chefs.

#### **3.4.2.4. Questionnaire's final conclusions**

In general, there is potential in exploring mariculture. Consumers seem to be receptive to novelties, as they have adopted the consumption not only of raw or undercooked fish, but also of imported species such as salmon, breaking traditions. This is favourable for the entry of AtlanticPrime in the market. Moreover, the fact that the vast majority of consumers enjoys eating fish at home means that experimenting while cooking may be a popular trend. Hence this is an opportunity for introducing a new, less known, yet versatile fish species in the market. Although the company intends to export the majority of its production, it is useful to understand the Portuguese receptivity towards mariculture fish. Portugal is a very traditional and quite conservative country. Moreover, it is known for being a great fish producer and consumer. Hence, if this questionnaire shows that Portuguese consumers - who are not very familiarised with the species *Seriola*, nor with mariculture, despite their background in fishing - believe that this fish is potentially good and want to try it, it is likely that other countries (even those that share similar ideals and values) perceive it in the same positive way.

Regarding mariculture, respondents expressed a positive attitude towards it, even though it is not a commonly known subject. Hence, it is necessary to “spread the word” about it, raising awareness and educating consumers on the advantages when compared to inland aquaculture and the positive impact it can have on wild fish stocks. As consumers don't seem to be very acquainted with mariculture companies, there is an opportunity for AtlanticPrime to be on the spotlight (with the right communication strategy) when entering the market.

In terms of social media, it makes sense to invest in a more informal type of communication, using appealing visuals that allow to transmit a message in a quick and simple way. Consumers seem to prefer less complex, more practical and useful information, just to keep themselves updated. Although they are interested in brand-consumer communication, they don't show much intention to interact with the content shared by food brands on social media. Hence, these online platforms should be used just as a way of keeping consumers interested, aware of the brand's existence and bringing them a sense of belonging to a conscious community.

### 3.4.2.5. Interviews

During the development of this project, the two founders of the company were always available to communicate with the researcher via email and, sometimes, in person. As the work progressed and validation or clarifications were needed, four meetings/interviews occurred. These encounters represented, not only a vital source of information, but also of support, guidance and even motivation. Each meeting is described as follows:

The **first meeting** took place in September and the main topic discussed was the possibility of the researcher developing a communication plan for the fish company, as the two parties had already collaborated in the creation of some brand elements. Only the company's COO and the researcher were present. They both tried to determine (1) what steps needed to be taken to develop the communication plan, (2) what should be analysed and (3) what type of information would be necessary to properly develop it. The company's business plan was analysed in detail and some clarifications were provided.

The **second meeting** (that occurred in December) counted with the CEO and the COO's participation and was totally related to marketing and communication issues. It involved discussing the target audience and the distribution channels aimed to be used, based on the type of fish the company is going to produce (high quality and priced above average) as well as the type of consumption occasion. The communication objectives were also debated, as well as future product developments and consequent adjustments in the marketing and communications strategy. This meeting was particularly important as it gave the researcher a clearer vision of the type of communication that would be most suitable.

The **third meeting** (in late April) concerned the questionnaire and the main topics that should be covered by it in order to collect useful data. It involved establishing the type of information needed (about consumers, their preferences and knowledge regarding mariculture and fish origin), analysing the type of questions that would be suitable and choosing adequate vocabulary to avoid misunderstandings across respondents from different countries. After the questionnaire was created, it was reviewed and re-approved by the company.

The **fourth and last meeting** (in late June) was held to present and analyse the questionnaire's results. Based on them, it was possible to draw some interesting conclusions that somehow confirmed the marketing and communications strategy the company was already planning to pursue. The researcher shared some of her communication ideas. The majority was accepted and others were discussed in order to be improved or conceptualized in a more realistic way.



## **4. AtlanticPrime's communication plan**

After doing a literature research and analysing the results of the questionnaire, it is now possible to start executing AtlanticPrime's communication plan. The structure of the plan will consist of the steps described previously under the title "Planning Marketing Communications", presented in the literature review.

### **4.1. External Analysis**

#### **4.1.1. PESTEL analysis**

Although AtlanticPrime intends to pursue an international strategy, as the company is established in Portugal, it is appropriate to analyse the Portuguese market environment by performing a PESTEL analysis.

#### **Political Context**

Regarding fishing policies, as Portugal is part of the European Union, the Portuguese fishing activity and industry is controlled according to the European Commission's legislation. In order to ensure that the European fishing industry remains sustainable and that fish stocks continue to be renewed (avoiding overfishing), rules related to the size of fishing fleets, the size of the fish that is captured, the areas where fishing is allowed, among other matters, have been implemented along the years. Hence, the European Commission supports environmentally, economically and socially sustainable fishing alternatives – such as aquaculture – that provide a source food for EU's citizens (European Commission, 2017).

In order to prevent the expansion of the obesity epidemic, governments are developing policies and promoting a healthier diet (including more vegetables and protein and cutting on salt and sugar ingestion) and physical activity. According to the World Health Organization, worldwide obesity has more than doubled in the last 30 years. Shockingly, in 2014, 41 million children aged under 5 were overweight or obese. As it is known, obesity may lead to serious health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes that compromise people's quality of life. In addition, the unhealthier a country's population is, the more the government has to invest in health care services. Thus, encouraging good eating habits is in the governments' best interest (World Health Organization, 2017).

## **Economic Context**

Despite the strict requirements and impositions made by the European Commission, Portugal has been slowly recovering from the financial crisis that has been affecting European countries since 2008. Over the years, there has been an effort to draw investment that stimulates the Portuguese economy. Portugal has a quite extensive Free Trade Zone – in the Atlantic Ocean – that has been agreed to have great potential for the country’s economic development. As a source of a wide variety of products, exploring the ocean consists of a good opportunity for creating new businesses and increasing Portugal’s relevance as a producer and exporter.

Recently, the Portuguese have received back part of their salaries taken by the government as a recovery measure towards the country’s unstable financial situation. Hence, due to an increased purchasing power, it is likely that the Portuguese have restarted practising some habits such as eating out at restaurants and spending more on food, for instance. In addition, the tax applied in the restaurant industry is now lower which contributes to the growth and development of the sector.

## **Social Context**

According to FAO (2016) developed countries mainly located in Europe and others such as Japan, China, the Southeast Asia and the USA register the highest fish consumption levels. In developing countries, as the middle class becomes more health conscious and educated, it is expected that the consumption of good proteins (such as fish) will also increase.

In Nielsen’s Global Health and Wellness Report (2015) it is stated that consumers around the world are trying to be more responsible regarding their eating habits. There is a higher interest in being healthier and, therefore, “good-for-you” products are strongly positioned for growth. FAO (2016) predicts that global meat and fish consumption (per capita) will almost double during the next 40 years. Moreover, there is a worldwide increasing trend of consuming more fish and less meat.

49% of respondents in Nielsen’s survey consider themselves overweight and 50% are actively trying to lose weight by choosing healthful foods. The majority is including more natural and fresh foods on their diets. Apparently, consumers are restarting to value more foods that are fresh, natural and minimally processed.

The agency’s executive vice president, Susan Dunn, believes “There is a tremendous opportunity for food manufacturers and retailers to lead a healthy movement by providing the

products and services that consumers want and need. (...) back-to-basics foods that taste good, are easy to prepare and provide healthful benefits will have staying power.”

Health and wellness consumers are increasingly influencing and redefining food culture by sharing their habits, knowledge and enthusiasm to regular consumers who are open to some guidance. Their focus is on real food and good nutrition, moving away from fat and sugar-free processed diet products. Consumers are also using foods and beverages in order to fight diabetes, for instance, avoiding ingredients such as sweeteners, sodium, trans fat and cholesterol. For instance, one quarter of Nielsen’s respondents intends to buy more fish and seafood in the next six months. *“Visionary food companies will develop a passion for food culture and will understand the progressive health and wellness consumer so they can authentically speak to mainstream consumer aspirations.”* (Forbes, 2015).

According to Nielsen (2015), eating out (including restaurants, fast food chains, street food vendors and cafés) has become common as, globally, 48% of consumers do so on a weekly basis or more frequently. This habit is more frequent in North America and the Asia-Pacific. Lunch and dinner are the meals that consumers eat the most out of home. Two of the main factors when choosing a restaurant or a dining establishment are reasonable prices and food quality.

## **Technological Context**

Due to technology and social media people are much more informed and aware of what is happening around the world. The Internet has led to the emergence of different groups or communities that share common concerns or interests and, therefore, support several causes based on their beliefs. Moreover, as generations succeed each other, behaviours and attitudes change. The Millennials (the children of baby boomers), for instance, are more conscious of environmental issues and sustainability. Hence, they present great potential in helping spread and support AtlanticPrime’s message and product.

According to Hootsuite’s (2017) statistics, there are 3 773 billion internet users worldwide. This figure corresponds to 50% of the global population and has grown around 10% since 2016. Moreover, there are 2 789 billion active social media users (that increased in 21% since 2016), 4 917 billion unique mobile users and 2 549 active mobile social users (that increased in 30% in comparison to last year). Internet penetration rates are higher in North America (88%), followed by West Europe (84%), Oceania (68%), East Europe (67%), South America (66%),

Middle East (60%), East Asia (57%), Southeast Asia (53%), Central America (53%), Central Asia (48%), South Asia (33%) and finally Africa (29%).

As the adoption of social media continues to grow globally, there has been a decline in the role of traditional websites for both brands and consumers. Brands such as Vox and BuzzFeed are exploring content distribution without the website at the centre, which, as social behaviours keep increasing, is an interesting and viable strategy. In 2016 social video became an extremely popular trend. Cisco predicts that in three years-time, 82% of all consumer internet traffic will be in the format of video. Hootsuite predicts that brands will strategically focus on social video advertising, using Facebook, Snapchat and Periscope and 70% of marketers are planning to use social video advertising in 2017 (Hootsuite, 2017)

According to the same source, regarding social media penetration, North America registers the highest rate (66%), followed by South America (59%), East Asia (57%), West Europe (54%), Oceania (52%), Central America (51%), Southeast Asia (47%), East Europe (44%), Middle East (38%), South Asia (15%) and Africa (14%). The statistics indicate that 83% of B2B North American marketers already use social media as a marketing tactic (Statista, 2017).

### **Environmental Context**

In terms of the environment, the challenges we face remain the same along the years (despite some advances and improvements): water scarcity, green-house gas emissions, waste disposal, water pollution, soil contamination, deforestation, including many others, such as overfishing. It is pertinent to add that, from a consumer's perspective, it is believed that due to the alarming state of depletion of certain natural resources of our planet, increasingly more people are aware and concerned with environmental matters, hence looking for environmental ideals to be reflected on brands' values. So, green marketing has started to receive more attention in the last years, having become an important part of brand image to trigger a more sympathetic attitude and positive feelings from consumers towards the brand.

Governments are also being pressured by institutional organizations and higher political forces to decrease their country's ecological footprint and to actively contribute to the preservation of our planet by supporting sustainable investments or projects and complying with environmental laws related to pollution-control, conscious energetic usage and resource wastage, for instance.

The fact that the occurrence of uncontrollable natural catastrophes is becoming more frequent is worrying due to the terrible impact they can have on people's lives and, of course, businesses that provide vital resources (such as food) for human survival.

## **Legal Context**

As mentioned before, the Portuguese fishing activity has to oblige the laws implemented by the European Commission in terms of capture and production of fish. Regarding commercialization, there is mandatory information that must be included in the products' labels, varying if they are processed or not. According to EU's guide for aquaculture consumer labels, for processed aquaculture fish, it is necessary to include the commercial designation and scientific name of the fish, the list of ingredients and quantities, the net weight, the "best before" date, the name and address of the food operator, the country of origin, conditions for storage, for instance (A pocket guide to the EU's new fish and aquaculture consumer labels, 2014). It is also possible to include voluntary information as long as it is clear, based on scientific proof, does not mislead consumers and does not interfere with the space available for mandatory information. AtlanticPrime intends to go beyond the standards.

In Portugal, ASAE – *Autoridade de Segurança Alimentar e Económica* - is the authority responsible for assuring food safety, by assessing and communicating risks related to the industry's practices and guaranteeing that the legislation is respected. As AtlanticPrime is going to have an operational facility for filleting and packaging the fish produced, the sanitary laws presently in force must be rigorously obeyed.

### **4.1.2 Global market trends**

The market environment is constantly changing on both sides: companies' and consumers'. As consumers' interests and habits change, so do the communication strategies that companies opt to follow. It seems that now trends spread more rapidly and globally. So, all sorts of topics or things can easily become popular and transition to consumers' minds as needs. Besides, now consumers are influenced by more reliable sources of information and pass their increasingly diverse concerns onto their purchase decisions, looking for the most ideal solutions for their daily problems. From the researcher's perspective, as the market environment becomes increasingly competitive due to these changing dynamics, companies rely more and more on a

well-sustained brand image based on strong values and communications to stay relevant and effectively get their messages across.

This chapter aims to analyse some relevant and contemporary market trends related to the type of product AtlanticPrime wants to sell (which will be explained in more detail ahead) and that the brand should be informed about. Knowing this will make it possible to develop a properly appealing and efficient communication plan. From a B2B perspective, the topics presented will be social media (that B2C companies are more prone to use) and brand themes buyers value the most in B2B communication. Regarding consumers, the topics selected were the consumption of ethnic food, healthy eating and the premiumization of products.

#### **4.1.2.1. B2B**

As B2B communication follows B2C's "footsteps", it is very helpful to understand how our company can make improvements (based on actual studies) when using communication tools like social media and benefit from them by performing better than competitors and hence differentiating.

##### **4.1.2.1.1. Social media**

According to Brandwatch's report from 2015, 76% of B2B brands own at least one account on Twitter or Facebook. It is stated that conversations about B2B brands do not occur simply on social media, but also on news sites, forums and blogs. Still, most B2B companies are reluctant towards using social media and other non-social platforms to communicate with consumers. Taking this into account, companies seem to be missing important consumer conversations regarding customer service, intention to buy and product feedback that take place in these platforms. It is possible take insight from these online conversations to identify, understand and adapt to customers' concerns. Brands can use this information to optimize the purchase experience and gain advantage over competitors regarding these topics. Moreover, they are missing the opportunity of using brand advocates to lead engaged prospects toward sales. *"The magnitude of B2B discussion online is unprecedented, presenting extraordinary opportunities to affect the way entire industries function. However, only a few select few B2B brands are really striving to leverage this current opportunity."* (Brandwatch, 2015:7). Moreover, it is stated that *"As evidenced by the rapid progression of B2C brands' social presence, investing*

*in social before competition is advantageous in the long run.*” (Brandwatch, B2B Social Media Report, 2015:50).

Performing a demographics analysis of B2B communications can be useful for sales, marketing and product development as it allows companies to identify the target audience and its interests. Brandwatch found out that 65% of B2B conversations comes from males and 35% from females. Culture, geography and the socio-economic situation of countries also influence the content of conversations. The price and the value of a potential purchase are the most discussed topics pointed out by Brandwatch. It is also stated that it is crucial that B2B brands match their language and tone of voice with their customers’. By using social data, it is possible to analyse how effectively brands are aligned with their audience. B2B brands should identify the type of content that the audience finds more appealing in order to boost and benefit from their online presence. Brandwatch even analysed the presence of B2B brands on Facebook and discovered that over half of their posts contain a photo, due to the higher level of engagement generated by images. Videos are the most shared and commented type of content, while photos tend to register more likes.

So, it can be assumed that videos excel at creating conversation, while images are best at spreading sharable information. *“(...) many brands are capitalizing on the added engagement images provide, with the quantity of visual posts increasing by 50% in just two months.”* (Brandwatch, B2B Social Media Report, 2015:18). Status updates and posts with links register the least volume of reactions.

The value of social communications goes beyond creating buzz and promoting brands’ offers. Most brands use Twitter for broadcasting and engagement, proving that it is considered more than just a one-way communication platform. Still, 42% of B2B brands don’t have accounts, missing out on all the possibilities that are provided (like generating leads or recruitment, for example). B2C brands have adapted their social media strategy in order to improve customer service by being available 24/7. Still, it is suggested that being present online is not enough, as it is necessary to engage and respond directly to mentions related to the brand (Brandwatch, 2015).

#### **4.1.2.1.2. Brand themes**

Research by McKinsey (2013) suggests there is an unexpected gap or divergence between the core messages communicated by B2B brands and the characteristics their customers value the

most. Apparently, the topics of social responsibility, sustainability and global reach, that B2B companies tend to use to build a better brand image, have a really low influence on buyers' perceptions of the brand's strength. Open and honest dialogue, the effectiveness of the supply chain management and specialized market knowledge (which are the most valued factors) are among the least mentioned or emphasized aspects by B2B brands.

Figure 7 – Brand themes and their importance for B2B brand imaging

Brand theme	Top global B2B companies stated affiliation with theme (%)	Theme's contribution to perceived brand strength (%)
Cares about honest, open dialogue with its customers and society	0	17
Acts responsibly across its supply chain	4	16
Has a high level of specialist expertise	36	15
Fits in well with my values and beliefs	0	11
Is a leader in its field	0	10
Provides a broad product portfolio	43	8
Is a driver of innovation	66	7
Role-models corporate social responsibility in its work	86	
Shapes the direction of the market	72	
Has global reach	79	Not statistically relevant
Promotes diversity and equal opportunity	64	
Promotes and practices sustainability in its products or services	84	
Has low prices	19	-4

Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from McKinsey, 2013

Moreover, McKinsey's analysis indicates that there is a tendency to imitate competitors rather than develop strong and differentiated brand messages. *“Consistently gathering information (...) and evolving in response are valuable ways of closing any gaps that may be opening up between your brand messaging and your customers' needs.”* (Freundt, Hillenbrand and Lehmann, McKinsey, 2013).

According to McKinsey (2013), personal interactions with salespeople are the most influential factor for B2B buyers. Hence, the sales force remains an important source of information through which buyers see the brand's offer as differentiated and worth a premium. The sales force can also provide strategically useful input regarding customer needs and perceptions.



#### **4.1.2.2. Consumers**

On the consumers' side, it is important to understand their present behaviour and where consumption is headed to in order to position our brand more effectively and in a way that is relevant to them.

In recent years, people's relationship with food and dieting has evolved a lot. Today, showing concern about the type of products we eat is synonym of being informed, trendy, having a good lifestyle and valuing ourselves. We will now see the topic of food in more detail.

##### **4.1.2.2.1. Ethnic food consumption**

Considering that the fish produced by AtlanticPrime is mainly used in Japanese dishes, it is interesting to understand consumers' attitudes towards ethnic food.

Globalization has contributed to the spread of cultural habits, including foods. Today it is common to find different ethnic restaurants (normally Chinese, French, Greek, Indian, Italian Japanese, Mexican, Middle Eastern and Thai, for instance) in urban areas and especially big, cosmopolitan cities all over the world. As populations become more diverse, the nature and the quantity of what is shared between cultures has expanded. Moreover, travelling has become cheaper and, in general, less complex. These facts have led to a greater consumer interest in trying new ingredients and ethnic or foreign cuisines, which is actually boosted by media coverage (Roseman *et al.*, 2013), for instance through international TV cooking shows and social media.

Nowadays, consumers' decisions when eating out are influenced by health and wellness, value for money, social needs, food quality, flavour and experimentation. Consumers' preference for safe and high-quality ingredients also have an impact on this choice (Reynolds, 2004).

Based on other sources, Roseman *et al.*, (2013) refer that the need for (1) healthy alternatives, (2) new flavours, (3) saving time and (4) convenience are the main factors that affect consumers' choices when deciding what and where to eat. It is also stated that ethnic foods are appealing to consumers for being unique, nutritious, convenient and for being connected to socializing environments. Still, the quality of the food and its authenticity are crucial to meet consumers' expectations (Tsai & Lu, 2012).

Roseman *et al.*, (2013) found that, when it comes to ethnic food, it is a matter of finding if consumers can accept new flavours and tastes to the point of becoming frequent consumers. It

is also suggested that when ethnic food evokes a sense of comfort and healthfulness, consumers' willingness to buy it increases. The same authors also point out some important variables that influence consumers' attitudes towards ethnic food and their intention to eat at ethnic restaurants: the variety of different and new flavours; the fact of being different from the food eaten at home and being from a different culture. Moreover, consumers say they will consider eating more ethnic food (whether or not it is out) if they perceive it as being significantly different from the food they usually eat.

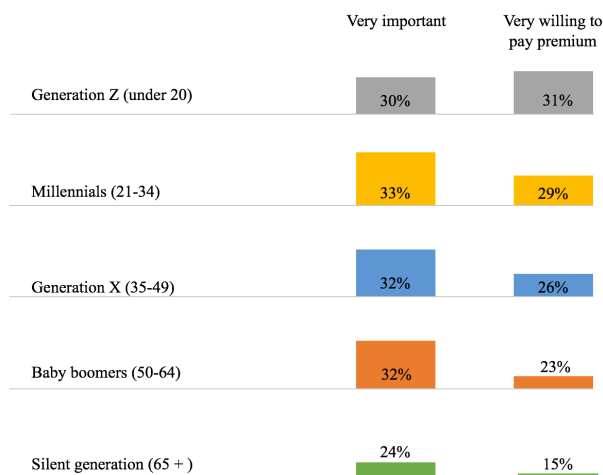
These findings definitely support the success of AtlanticPrime's fish that is meant to be sold to the best Japanese restaurants in Europe, in the USA and in Japan.

#### **4.1.2.2.2. Healthy diet**

The willingness to pay more for health benefits is higher in developing markets. Consumers from Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Africa/Middle East manifested a greater intention of paying a premium for such attributes (higher than 90% in all three regions), compared with North America (80%) and Europe (79%) (Nielsen, 2015).

In terms of age, it is interesting to know that although millennials prefer buying cheap, convenient food, they are willing to pay a higher price for health attributes (Nielsen, 2015). The same occurs in relation to ethnic and speciality foods. Moreover, this age group is the one for whom health is more important. These young adults are more supportive of the "food movement" that is based on organic, good-for-you and artisanal products, that can lead to important market changes.

Figure 8 – Gap between those that think healthy attributes are even more important and their willingness to pay a premium for them \*



\*Percentages are an average of all 27 health attributes in the study

Source: Nielsen Global Health & Wellness report

Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from Nielsen Global Health & Wellness report, 2015

Health labels are claimed to have a stronger impact when added to products that are already considered healthy. *“When adding health and wellness claims to products, manufacturers must first understand how consumers perceive their products (...) If the product is perceived as healthy, any claims regarding the health benefits of a product are likely to resonate with consumers.”* (Dunn, Nielsen, 2015). Labels are an important source of information for consumers, 75% of respondents admit to read packaging labels attentively. Purchasing decisions are becoming more complex due to the information (such as nutritional content, environmental and social impact, production method, health benefits) consumers take into consideration. Hence, producers and retailers must do it in a way that consumers can easily read and understand the different types of information and make wiser decisions. Globally, 63% of respondents trust health claims on packages. Nielsen also advises that given consumers’ sceptical eye towards food, producers should be more transparent about the content and source of the products offered, providing scientific support when making health claims. In this way, it is possible to build trust among consumers. About 80% of respondents actively use foods to prevent health problems or medical conditions.

#### 4.1.2.2.3. Premiumization of products

According to the Global Premiumization Report by Nielsen (2016), the sales of premium products are growing at a rapid pace all around the world. *“With many consumers saying they*

*have at least some discretionary income, the premium segment is rife with opportunity.”*

Nielsen’s vice president Liana Lubel states that nowadays consumers crave products that provide them total experiences, hence placing a greater relevance on how products make them feel. The most successful premium products are the ones that perform better at an important task for which the already existing products were unsatisfactory or even inexistent.

It was found that big manufacturers struggle more to keep up the pace with smaller companies, when it comes to introducing premium products. Small players build brands and product perceptions simultaneously, thus it is easier to adapt to consumers’ demands. On the contrary, established brands have already built a certain brand image and associations and therefore may find it challenging to establish a new offer as premium.

Approximately only 31% of consumers consider a product to be premium due to its expensive price. In fact, the superior quality of the raw materials or ingredients, functionality, superior performance and experience were the most pointed out aspects that characterize a premium product. This may mean that value is becoming more important than price. Consumers are more willing to purchase a more expensive product if the claimed benefits are confirmed. Therefore, it is suggested that brands must exceed consumers’ expectations and demonstrate why it is reasonable or fair to charge a higher price. Premium products must live up to the brand’s promise, as consumers are less tolerant towards poor performance or undesirable attributes. Besides demonstrating a technical benefit, it is also important to communicate a relevant emotional benefit that is associated to the consumer’s aspirations and needs. According to Nielsen (2016) differentiation is very important for premium products, as uniqueness tends to lead to less price sensitivity. It also is important to enhance the package design since the perceptions of a product begin as consumers lay their eyes on it. Packaging not only helps the product to get noticed, but also elevate product perceptions. Further research by Nielsen has proven that optimized package design can increase sales by 5,5%. Modern, yet simple and uncluttered design and functionality help signal that a product is premium.

Nowadays, conscious consumption is becoming common and products that offer an environmental benefit are considered to have a fair added value. 42% of consumers are highly willing to pay more for organic/all-natural ingredient products, followed by environmentally friendly or sustainable materials and social responsibility claims. The country of origin is the least valued attribute. Environmental factors are particularly persuasive in emerging-market consumers (Nielsen, 2016).

In most regions, consumers are willing to pay more for better meat or seafood. This is the main category in which Portuguese consumers, for instance, agree to pay more. This product category was referred most often in developed markets and is among the top five categories for which consumers would consider trading up in Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Latin America.

Regarding the information sources that mostly influence consumers to try new premium products, recommendations from friends and family are the most considered source (45%) followed by the consumer’s own research (37%). In developed markets, research is the main driver. In central and eastern Europe, for instance, this figure accounts for 53%. In developing and emerging markets, consumers rely more on advertising. In advanced Asian markets, the most important driver is research, especially in Japan (61%). It is recommended that *“When launching new products, brands need to align their media tactics with the product’s core value proposition and the target audience.”* (Global Premiumization Report, 2016: 21).

Figure 9 - “Green” attributes that have premium potential - Global average percentage who are highly willing to pay a premium for attribute



Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from The Nielsen Global Premiumization report, 2016

#### 4.1.3. Global Fishing Market

In 2014, total capture production was 93.4 million tonnes (still, several countries do not report their annual catch statistics to FAO on a regular basis). The countries that registered the highest captures were China, Peru, Indonesia, Japan and the United States. The countries that presented the most significant increments were China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Norway, Chile and Peru.

Therefore, the main fishing areas were the Pacific (Norwest and Western Central), the Atlantic (Northeast) and the Indian Ocean (Eastern).

#### **4.1.3.1. Fish consumption and main drivers**

There is evidence that the main driver for fish consumption is the positive ideal of eating fish. It is considered a healthy habit for its nutritional benefits: it is high in protein, Omega-3 and low in fat. However, this healthy image of fish is not sufficient to explain fish consumption variations (Birch *et al.*, 2012). Studies developed in Belgium and Denmark have indicated that high fish consumption is the expression of a pre-existing habit performed with a lack of awareness and control, instead of being the result of reasoning. Consumer choice is strongly influenced by habits that arise and are reinforced from accumulated experiences. According to previous studies, knowledge, skill and self-confidence when selecting and preparing fish have an effect on how frequently it is consumed (Birch *et al.*, 2012, 2014).

High consumption of frozen packaged fish is mainly driven by convenience. The easiness in terms of preparation coupled with a busy lifestyle may be detrimental for fresh and unprocessed fish consumption (Brunso *et al.*, 2009).

Numerous studies point out the country of origin as one of the most relevant fish attributes in the selection process. There is also a clear preference for domestic fish that is normally considered better than imported fish in terms of quality, safety and also freshness (Birch *et al.*, 2012; Lawley *et al.*, 2012; Nichols *et al.*, 2014). Hence, consumers' perception can also be influenced by the image they have of the country of origin. A high sense of patriotism probably induces consumers to support local economy by purchasing domestic products (Birch *et al.*, 2012).

Packaged fish – that is more convenient - normally provides detailed and useful information about the production method, freshness, country of origin, quality and pricing. Therefore, is presented as more reassuring for consumers in the moment of purchase (Birch *et al.*, 2012).

Consumers consider the production method less relevant than other characteristics. Still, in many countries, for older consumers (for whom tradition is important) and for people who live in coastal areas (that have a high availability of wild fish) (Cardoso *et al.*, 2013), the latter is perceived as superior to farmed fish regarding taste, safety, healthiness and nutritional value. Research by Kole *et al.*, (2009) has provided evidence that choice between wild and farmed fish is strongly related to stereotyping, emotional feelings and incorrect information. Factors

such as the educational level, retail format and advertising credibility affect consumers' beliefs regarding aquaculture production systems (Férrandez-Polanco and Luna 2012).

Recent studies developed in Spain confirmed the preference for wild fish due to its quality. Regarding farmed fish, taste and texture are depicted as the main off-putting factors for its acceptance (Claret *et al.*, 2014). Despite some lack of knowledge, farmed fish is considered safer than wild fish due to a higher control of diseases and well-adjusted feeding. It is perceived as less affected by marine pollution, heavy metals and parasites. Still, the way consumers select fish seems to be more related to quality and price, rather than safety.

The naturalness or artificiality of food is another important factor in food consumption, especially when it comes to specific products like fish. The manipulation of fresh foods is negatively perceived as it affects its "natural" character (Pieniak *et al.*, 2009). In this case, wild fish is obviously thought of as more natural, nutritious and healthier than farmed fish. Yet, when raised under proper conditions, farmed fish is at least as beneficial as wild fish, in terms of nutrition. Besides helping to prevent cardiovascular diseases, it also has the advantages of freshness and apparent non-toxicity (Cahu *et al.*, 2004).

Aquaculture has been agreed to be the best alternative available to preserve and protect marine resources and fish stocks to satisfy global seafood demand. In addition, there is the conviction that, over time, "*(...) consumers will get used to the sensory characteristics of farmed fish and value it in a more positive light.*" (Claret *et al.*, 2014:29). Women show more openness to aquaculture due to their role in food shopping and meal preparation within the household. Besides, women are very participative and influential in the transmission of eating habits to other family members – especially to the spouse and children. Thus, they represent an important target for the aquaculture sector (Claret *et al.*, 2014). It is suggested that "*(...) effective information strategies about farmed fish and its production system might help to increase its image and acceptance. The goal is not to confront both kinds of fish but to provide consumers with information that helps them value the two kinds of fish based on objective facts and not on preconceived ideas and unfounded beliefs.*" (Claret *et al.*, 2014: 30).

#### **4.1.3.2. Labels and certification**

Labels are typically related to nutrition, country of origin, production method, animal welfare, fair trade and sustainability. Depending on their ownership, labels can be classified as third-party labels – usually voluntary and related to production practices or improved product

features - or government labels - usually mandatory and related to nutrition, production method, dates and additives, among others. Labels can act, not only as a differentiator in the highly competitive seafood market, but also as a cue for consumer decision-making. Therefore, several voluntary labels have been recently created regarding sustainability – The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Friend of the Sea; farmed fish – the Best Aquaculture Practices and Aquaculture Stewardship Council and wild fish – Dolphin Safe (Chen *et al.*, 2015).

Certification for sustainability, responsible production and animal welfare is essential due to the reduction of negative preconceived ideas regarding the seafood sector. Besides, it also fulfils the corporate social responsibility requirements that are highly valued by end consumers these days.

In fact, a study developed in the UK market revealed that consumers paid an additional of 14% for fish products labelled by MSC that has certified 255 fisheries around the world (Roheim *et al.*, 2011). MSC labels were stated to be beneficial for both producers and retailers due to the positive effect they have on demand and brand image (Roheim *et al.*, 2008). It was also found that for UK consumers *“(...) the more significant effects on the probability of choice derive from the inclusion of quality and sustainability labelling and from labelling the origin of the fish. A label conveying that the fish is either produced or caught abroad is shown to reduce the probability of a product being chosen by between 3.31% and 6.31% (...) sustainability would appear to have the greatest positive influence on the probability of choice. The presence of a label conveying that the fish comes from a sustainably managed fishery (...) increases the probability of that product being chosen by 6.61%.”* (Jaffry *et al.*, 2004: 225).

As mentioned before, voluntary labels provide information, benefiting consumers (that are enabled to make a more informed decision) and also producers and retailers that obtain a premium price (that should compensate the costs incurred from sustainable practices). *“However, because voluntary labels are largely driven by self-interest of the industry, they only certify attributes that have positive impacts on consumer preference.”* (Chen *et al.*, 2015: 24). The same authors even suggest that there is a need for more mandatory labels that provide information about negative attributes like, for instance, the presence of heavy metals, that are harmful.

The success and the benefits of certification rely on the objectivity of the labels (Jaffry *et al.*, 2004) and credibility of the labelling organizations (Wessels *et al.*, 1999). Moreover, it is necessary to complement it with educational campaigns in order to increase consumers' awareness regarding marine issues (Jaffry *et al.*, 2004), to guarantee a clear understanding of



the meaning of the certifications attributed and of the relation between product choices and environmental impact (Wessels *et al.*, 1999).

#### **4.1.3.3. The EU market**

According to the European Commission (2017), the average per capita fish consumption in the EU is approximately 25,8 kg (on average, during the period between 2005 and 2014). The countries that registered the highest fish consumption in 2014 were Portugal (55,3 kg), Spain (46,2), Lithuania (44,7), France (34,4), Sweden (33,2), Luxemburg (33,1), Malta (32) and Italy (28,9). The EU fish market report (2016) states that seafood supply in the EU increased by almost 650 000 tonnes between 2013 and 2014 mainly due to a rise in internal production. Hence, the EU's self-sufficiency improved from 44,5% to 47,5% in that time period.

Fish represents around 20% of the 120-billion-euro worth of food imported by the EU. In 2015 the value of imported fish grew 6% in comparison to the previous year, mainly driven by increased imports of cod, shrimps and salmon. Contrarily, in 2015, the value of EU's exports of fishery and aquaculture products decreased 11% in relation to 2014.

The EU also reports that the market share for farmed fish products will continue to increase, while wild fish consumption will decrease, despite consumers' preference for the latter. This tendency can be reinforced if economic stagnation persists as consumers are mostly driven by price and aquaculture fish tends to be cheaper than wild fish. It is also stated that per-capita fish consumption is expected to grow, especially in countries where it is low. The report suggests that this can be supported and continued through price reductions, promotional initiatives, stimulation of consumers' interest (especially those who are inclined to try new products), national campaigns that address issues such as health and sustainability, for instance. Regarding socio-demographics, it was found that the people that consume more fish are older and belong to higher socio-professional class. They also have preference for wild fish. So, it is suggested that campaigns and communications that are meant to encourage consumption of aquaculture fish are tailored to this consumer segment. AtlanticPrime believes the quality of its fish (that will be reflected on the price) is a strong selling point that will conquer these demanding consumers, despite being from mariculture production.

Regarding the information provided in labels, the aspect consumers consider more relevant (besides the information that is already mandatory according to EU's legislation) is the "date of catch or production".

Figure 10 – Consumers’ attitude towards FAPs (fish and aquaculture products) according to their socio-demographic category

	Youngsters / students	Old/retired	High socio-professional classes
<b>Consumption frequency</b>	low	high	high
<b>Preference: wild or farmed</b>	farmed	wild	wild
<b>Preferred type of product</b>	processed products	fresh products	fresh products
<b>Preferred type of presentation</b>	pre-packed	loose	both
<b>Propensity for experimentation</b>	high	low	high
<b>Personal key-factor</b>	none	welness and health	hedonism
<b>Product factor</b>	cost	appearance and origin	origin
<b>Sources of info on FAPs</b>	Internet, friends, family	store employees, television	Internet

Source: Own elaboration. Adapted from EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products final report, 2017

It is also presented an important analysis of fish and aquaculture products (FAPs) consumption, structured by sub-regions. This information can be helpful in identifying potential targets for Charuteiro produced in Madeira.

**Eastern EU countries (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania, Bulgaria and Poland)**

In this group, internal supply is important and influences consumers’ habits due to traditional and local or regional fisheries. Still, this tendency for tradition is decreasing, particularly among younger generations. Consumptions of fishery and aquaculture products is low and is largely limited to local species. Price is important in the moment of purchase and many consumers believe FAPs are not affordable. The demand for fresh and convenient products is increasing and there is a growing focus on health benefits driven by fish consumption. Imports are rising, leading to an increasing availability and consumption of FAPs.

**Central EU countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary)**

Consumption of FAPs is increasing, despite being low. As the previous group, consumption is connected to strong traditional habits and hence locally produced species (such as carp) are important. The availability of salty water fish depends on imports from other countries. As imports grow, the availability of FAPs increases and consumer habits change. Consumers are price sensitive and, due to urbanization, are demanding more convenient products.

**Western EU countries (Ireland, UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg and Germany)**

These countries have a substantial supply from fisheries and aquaculture as well and consuming FAPs is part of their culinary traditions. Consumption of fish is relatively high and aquaculture products are trending upwards. Consumers are sensitive to price variations and increasingly prefer buying fish at super and hypermarkets (purchasing in traditional fish markets or specialized fish stores is losing popularity). The higher availability of fresh fish and convenience products, such as sushi, are shifting consumer habits, as meals are becoming less traditional, especially among the youngsters. Consumers are more concerned with health and sustainability. Brands are increasingly communicating with consumers through social networks.

#### **Northern EU countries (Denmark, Sweden and Finland)**

Fish consumption (which is low, below the EU average) highly depends on imports. In general, consumers consider FAPs expensive, yet there is a growing interest in them due to higher availability that is accompanied by an increase of fresh fish consumption. There is an increasing awareness regarding sustainability issues.

#### **Southern EU countries (Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Croatia, Greece, Cyprus and Malta)**

Fish consumption diverges a lot among this group's countries: Portugal has a consumption level way above the EU average, while Croatia is well below. All of them have an important self-supply of FAPs. Price is considered a relevant driver.

#### **4.1.3.4. The Japanese market**

It is necessary to understand fish consumption habits in Japan, as it is AtlanticPrime's main target. To do so, the Canadian global analysis report "Inside Japan: The Fish and Seafood Trade" (2015) was carefully analysed and some interesting facts were found.

Japan is the world's second largest importer of fish and seafood and is the top one in the Asian market. In 2013, its main suppliers were China (17.9%), Chile (8.7%), Thailand (8.1%), Russia (7.8%) and the United States of America (7.8%). With a population of 127 million and with a traditional diet that favourably includes fish and seafood, Japan is a major market in the fishing industry. In 2012, the Japanese per capita consumption of fish and seafood was 33kg. Still, there is evidence that it decreased around 30% since its peak in 2001, getting close to the levels registered in the early 60s. The same source states that the Japanese government has created measures to make fish more appealing. Apparently, the younger generations prefer opting for meat and fish consumption is particularly low among people up to their 40s. Dairy products

consumption has also increased. Another important factor to have in mind is consumers' concerns about food safety, due to the Fukushima nuclear power plant meltdown and the reduced fishing capacity caused by the earthquake and tsunami in 2011. The fact that the country's population is declining and lifestyles are changing may also explain changes in fish consumption. The popularity of a meat-centred diet led to the rise of grilled meat restaurants, as well as fast-food chains, as currently Japan is the second largest host of McDonald's restaurants, in the world.

Nevertheless, along the years, fish is still the category of fresh fish and seafood that has had the greatest volume sales in Japan and the one that decreased the least between 2007 and 2012. Moreover, fish provides 40% of the protein in the Japanese diet. Regarding distribution channels, the majority of fresh fish and seafood is destined to the foodservice channel.

Japan is also a heavy importer of premium seafood products and is a good target for consumer-ready products that are convenient and easy to prepare and eat. The Japanese truly believe in the philosophy "You are what you eat" and eating good and expensive products is not just a pleasure, but a token of success as well.

#### **4.1.4. Aquaculture**

##### **4.1.4.1. Consumers' attitude towards aquaculture**

Many authors have studied the way food products are perceived as well as the process by which they are accepted or rejected by consumers. Sheperd and Sparkes (1994) named a series of important aspects such as context, food's characteristics, consumer's environment (family, cultural habits, education, religion, convenience) and personal traces (genetic, age, gender, state of mind). Consumers' attitudes and opinions concerning the nutritional value (Bruhn *et al.*, 1992), safety (Wilcock *et al.*, 2004) and the trademark (Guerrero *et al.*, 2000) or price (Caporale *et al.*, 2001) of the product have also been pointed out. Preconceived ideas (attitudes and beliefs) about a product are particularly relevant in dictating the acceptance of a new one (Pearson, 2002).

It was found that in general people have a positive attitude towards aquaculture. Still, maybe due to a lack of knowledge or misunderstanding, offshore aquaculture is negatively perceived. In the USA, for instance, the main reasons that trigger concern – mainly manifested by environmentalists and some citizens - are environmental disturbances caused by escapes (such as oil spills that are not related to the activity itself) or pollution, parasites and diseases. Still, these only occur in case of poor managed of the facilities. In New Zealand, public hesitation is

related to the impact it has on wildlife, more specifically protected areas and sensitive species. It is suggested offshore aquaculture is still a quite unknown and not fully understood reality for both the public and the media (Froehlich *et al.*, 2017).

**Clarity and enlightenment are crucial to ensure that this industry continues to grow towards the most sustainable and beneficial direction.**

#### **4.1.4.2. Aquaculture market**

In 2014 the fish harvested from aquaculture reached 73.8 million tonnes and an estimated value of US\$160.2 billion (FAO, 2016). In contrast with capture fisheries that have stagnated or declined, aquaculture is one of the most rapidly growing industries worldwide (Froehlich *et al.*, 2017). The importance of aquaculture fish in terms of global fish production has been rising along the years and represented 44.1% (including for non-food usage) in 2014. In fact, for the first time, in that year, aquaculture provided more fish for food supply than capture fisheries did.

A group of 35 countries that combined account for 45% of the world's population, produced more farmed than wild-caught fish. The 5 biggest aquaculture producers (of not only fish, but also molluscs, crustaceans, other aquatic animals and aquatic plants) are China (58 795.3 thousand tonnes), Indonesia (14 330.9 tt), India (4 884 tt), Vietnam (3 411.4 tt) and the Philippines (2 337.6 tt). In general, the share of aquaculture has been increasing in all continents except for Oceania (where it decreased in the last three years). Marine aquaculture (also known as offshore aquaculture or mariculture) only represents one third of current production (FAO, 2016).

#### **4.1.4.3. Aquaculture labels**

Aquaculture labels are increasingly gaining more recognition and already count with the participation of several countries from every continent, except for Africa. *“The goal of eco-labelling programmes is to create market-based incentives for better management of the environment”* (Roheim *et al.*, 2011: 656). Still, farmed seafood is not as much eco-labelled as wild seafood is. The development of aquaculture has increased consumers' concerns when it comes to the environment and animal welfare. The Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) - similar to the MSC - is the top international organization that is devoted to an environmentally and socially responsible activity and a safe supply of seafood. To get a GAA's certification

companies must respect a number of rules related to the sustainability of the production sites (Chen *et al.*, 2015).

Seafood is an excellent source of essential nutrients, such as omega-3, that are essential in our diets. Research by Nichols *et al.*, (2014) suggests that some farmed fish species are richer in omega-3 than the same fish caught in the wild. “*The nutritional attributes of farmed seafood provide an opportunity for the industry to certify seafood and to increase per unit profit, particularly on the content of omega-3. Certification of omega-3 content is likely to promote the market opportunity for seafood with a healthy profile.*” (Chen *et al.*, 2015: 21).

#### **4.1.4.4. Competition**

The top ten fish and fishery products importers are the USA, Japan, China, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the UK and the Republic of Korea.

The main exporters are China, Norway, Vietnam, Thailand, the USA, Chile, India, Denmark, the Netherlands and Canada (FAO report, 2016). As production continues to increase, so does the amount of fish exported.

There are countless seafood producers selling different marine products, with different levels of quality, distinct production methods, origins and purposes, investing in different communication strategies according to their target. Given this vast diversity, it makes sense to closely analyse companies that operate similarly. AtlanticPrime is developing an innovative and sustainable open ocean farm, with the intent to produce good quality and nutritious *Seriola*, entering the premium or high-quality market segment, exporting its fish mainly to Japan, where this species is much appreciated.

##### **4.1.4.4.1. Direct off-shore mariculture competitors**

Two companies that AtlanticPrime has been using as main references are **Clean Seas** and **Open Blue**.

**Clean Seas** is Australia’s leading producer in the aquaculture industry. It is globally known for its aquaculture premium Yellowtail Kingfish production, which has been increasing due to a rising worldwide demand. Sustainability earned the company certification by Friend of the Sea, being the first aquaculture producer in the Southern Hemisphere to get it.

**Open Blue** is established in Panama and is the single largest supplier of fresh Cobia to Europe and to the United States. It is a pioneer and world leader in offshore, open-ocean farming. In

March of 2017, the company has won the “Best new food service product” award at the Seafood Expo in North America. It is also certified by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council for its high standard sustainable practices and food safety excellence; by Friend of the Sea; GLOBAL GAP – related to food safety, animal welfare, environmental care, workers safety – and BAP – Best Aquaculture Practices. In 2017, it also achieved the British Retail Consortium certification – the leading trade association for retail in UK - for delivering the freshest, highest quality products.

Another player (not as good as the previous two) is **Blue Ocean Mariculture**, a *Seriola rivoliana* (another type of *Seriola*) mariculture producer that calls its fish “Hawaiian kanpachi” (with an “n” instead of an “m”). This can be misleading for consumers as *Seriola dumerili* is the authentic/original kanpachi. Blue Ocean was founded in 2009, is located in Hawaii and is the only open ocean mariculture producer in the USA. Regarding certification, the company claims to apply a range of sustainable practices to reduce their impact on the quality of the ocean’s water, wildlife and health and has only certified by two organizations: Whole Foods and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch.

#### **4.1.4.4.1.1. Digital presence**

The competitors were analysed in terms of their activity on digital platforms as this is the only type of communication that it was possible to have access to. This allows us to know what type of information competitors are already sharing with their followers and how the company can innovate and make its own pages more appealing and relevant. It is a good means to differentiate and make a stand in the market.

Across all platforms used, the main topics addressed can be grouped into 3 categories: **environment and sustainability** (presenting aquaculture as a solution in today’s context and sustainable practices), **production** (location, method and processes, innovation) and **fish quality** (characteristics such as taste and texture, nutrition, recipes and chefs’ testimonials as approval).

#### **Website**

The emphasis given to each topic varies from one company to another. On its website, CleanSeas essentially only highlights fish quality, making little or no mention to the other two categories. Nonetheless, these are somewhat covered on their Facebook page (the only social

network used by the firm). OpenBlue gives a greater importance to “environment and sustainability”, as well as “production”, by sharing a detailed video about their production site and method on their homepage. In addition, all the other content available is much more appealing to read and to consult than the one shared by CleanSeas. In general, the website is a bit more modern, dynamic and consumer-driven. Blue Ocean has a very clean, modern and straight forward website. The visuals are very appealing and exert feelings of freshness and quality. When opening the website, the main focus is the fish itself. Still, the company explores the production category, particularly the farm’s location, in other sections of the page, always using photos. There is a special section dedicated to social media where visitors can see what is posted on the company’s pages.

## **Social media**

Besides Facebook, OpenBlue is also present on YouTube (with the same videos shared in the other networks), Instagram and Twitter (same content shared on Facebook) and has developed an App. The type of Facebook posts made by both companies is very similar. Still, OpenBlue has more followers and registered more interaction (likes, comments and shares) with them. It was concluded that videos normally get more attention and interaction from visitors and followers, especially when related to cooking (like recipes) or underwater footage that unveils the fish in the environment in which is growing. Innovating initiatives or events are also much appreciated by OpenBlue’s followers.

The OpenBlue’s App seems to not have been completely thought through as very little is offered. Nevertheless, it is given the possibility to make an underwater 360° tour (using virtual reality) inside the cages where the fish is being raised. It is an innovative, exciting and enlightening experience.

Blue Ocean is present on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, although the company is not very active. From the 3 players examined, Blue Ocean has the smaller number of followers, posts and reactions (from consumers) in all platforms. The type of content shared is similar to the other two companies’.

## **4.2. Internal Analysis**

This analysis will provide important information regarding the company, its activity and product. Knowing and understanding these elements well is crucial in order to develop an



adequate communication strategy. As the company is very recent, it does not have a marketing nor communications strategy defined yet. Therefore, only a few basic internal aspects can be analysed.

#### **4.2.1. AtlanticPrime: business idea**

AtlanticPrime is a Portuguese mariculture company founded in 2016 by Fernando and José, aged 40 and 60 years old, who share a passion for marine life. They believe Portugal has major potential in the fishing sector that could be maximized through innovative and bold projects, such as this one. Moreover, as it has been proven by History, our country's privileged geographic position – facing the Atlantic – favours our economic growth based on the sea.

As active entrepreneurs seeking to develop profitable businesses, the two Portuguese have conceived this ambitious project: to create a fish farm in the open ocean (the Atlantic), in Madeira island.

Together, they spent months investigating, travelling around the world and meeting with experts in the field. They went to the best and most famous fish market in Japan, where tuna is auctioned for incredibly high prices; visited fish hatcheries in Europe; participated in conferences in Norway to learn more about mariculture and explored our country's coast in search for the best location. After gathering the necessary information and getting valuable advice from different sources, they opted for producing two different species: Gilthead seabream (Dourada) – in the first year, as an experiment - and *Seriola Dumerili*, due to their market value (medium/high priced fish), characteristics and adaptability to the waters of the Atlantic. Afterwards, they analysed which location (in the Portuguese territory) would be better for them to grow. The final choice was Madeira island, with an average water temperature of around 21°C. Although producing and selling *Seriola* represented a greater challenge (since it is not a very popular species in Europe, therefore requiring more effort in terms of communications) the two business partners still decided to take the risk, mainly influenced by its popularity and high demand in Japan.

##### **4.2.1.1. Product**

Firstly, AtlanticPrime is going to start by producing Gilthead seabream (Dourada, in Portuguese) and then *Selriola dumerili*, Charuteiro in Portuguese, commonly known as Greater Amberjack or Kanpachi in Japan. Charuteiro (the main focus of the company and this

communication plan) can weigh up to 70 kg and is normally found in the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans and the Indian coasts, living in 20 to 70 meters of depth. It is an extra lean white meat with a firm texture and mild flavour. Hence it is a very versatile ingredient adaptable to different cuisines. Still, it is mostly used and appreciated in Japanese dishes such as sushi and sashimi.

Figure 11 – *Seriola dumerili*

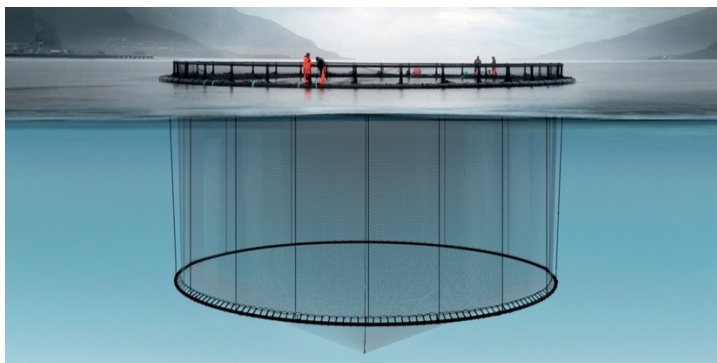


Source: Queensland Government website, 2017

As consumers who enjoy eating good quality fish, Fernando and José both agreed that AtlanticPrime would operate in a premium market tier, reflecting their own quality standards on the company's offer. To achieve this, AtlanticPrime will use the latest technologies, the best materials, production and working methods available, standing up for ideals of sustainability, health, high quality protein/food supply, safety, social responsibility and operational excellence. It will own and control the hatchery and nursery (located in Spain), the offshore operations and the processing unit, both in Madeira.

Contrarily to other fish farms, AtlanticPrime's fish will be free of pollutants and dangerous added substances that have been proven to be extremely harmful for human health. The fish will grow inside 16 round cages. Each cage has a 29m diameter and will be placed far away from the coast, where the currents are strong enough to maximize the water flow and take sediments and other substances away. This will maintain the water clean. The cages and nets used are produced in Scotland and Japan, are more algae and fouling-resistant and present lower risk for parasites and lice to adhere and develop, which can negatively affect the fish. The nets of the cages are also recyclable and do not require chemical anti-fouling paints. Although intensive fish farming allows growing generally up to 25 kg of fish per cubic meter of cage capacity, the company has opted for growing only 14 kg of fish per cubic meter of cage capacity, so that there is more space for the fish to swim, to grow faster and better and present less skin/body lesions when caught.

Figure 12 – Off-shore mariculture production



Source: Akva Group's website, 2017

The company plans to increase the range of species produced in the future, adding other unusual species such as Mahi-Mahi and Bluefin tuna.

The company also expects to evaluate the production of smoked Charuteiro, as a future product development and line extension. The fish will be sold fresh or frozen, whole or filleted, according to the buyers' wishes. Transportation can be made by boat, truck or plane, depending on the destination (Continental Europe or Japan or USA). Still the proper temperature and hygiene requirements must be assured so that the product is in perfect condition when it arrives to its destiny. It is extremely important to keep the product's high quality regardless the location it is sent to. Besides leading to customer satisfaction, this will give credibility to the brand and, consequently, help build trustful and loyal long-term relationships with buyers, as well as other agents involved (the staff from operations, logistics, finance, among others).

Sales are expected to reach 2,5 to 3 M€ in the first year, with the majority of revenues coming from *Gilthead seabream* sales. In the following years, revenues will also come from *Seriola Dumerili* sales through the export to Japan, the world's greatest *Seriola* consumer. The company expects to expand the business to other regions in the globe.

In terms of human resources, the company plans to employ around 50 people that should include (besides administration): marine biologists to make sure the fish are raised in proper conditions, people responsible for feeding the fish, keeping the cages clean, transporting the fish from the cages to the filleting units, fileting and packaging the fish, distributors, sales experts among many other important functions/roles. The majority of them will probably be

from Madeira. AtlanticPrime will also make sure to include disabled individuals as a way of setting an example and contributing for their integration in society.

As part of its social responsibility program, AtlanticPrime will provide a percentage of its production to institutions that provide food or meals to people in need. The company is also strongly committed to helping preserve the island's biodiversity, reducing water pollution and respecting all species in their natural habitat. It is in the company's best interests to make sure the environment in which the fish is produced is not disrupted, keeping its natural characteristics and balance.

#### **4.2.2. Vision and mission**

The company's vision is **to build a global fish-provision network to feed current and future generations.**

Based on the extensive research done while creating AtlanticPrime's, Fernando and José became aware of how valuable fish will be in a recent future due to a combination of, essentially, a fast-growing population that needs to be fed and the overexploitation of the seas for fishing. The following statement resumes the company's mission: ***“Our business aims at addressing this compelling and pressing need of growing high quality proteins, in an environmentally sustainable manner and in vast and pristine conditions of the ocean to feed the world's increasing population.”*** (AtlanticPrime)

The company plans to extend the business by opening more fish farms around the world while remaining true to its methods, values and quality proposition.

#### **4.2.3. SWOT analysis**

After knowing all this information about the company, it is time to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats AtlanticPrime faces when entering the mariculture market. In order to do this analysis, it is necessary to keep in mind the present context we are living in.

## Strengths

- Location (Madeira Island) that has a great reputation due to tourism, the island's natural beauty and practice of Mariculture;
- The perfect conditions under which the fish will grow: a rich ecosystem, adequate water temperature (21°C), depth (between 40 and 80 meters) and currents;
- The characteristics of the fish *Seriola*: the taste, texture and colour of the meat, as well as its versatility, making it a high value species;
- Sustainability: mariculture is a solution to control overfishing, desertification of the land and water scarcity due to in-land animal production, which are serious threats to the survival of millions of people and the planet.

## Weaknesses

- New brand: unfamiliarity;
- The fish species (*Seriola dumelrili*) is not as known around Europe as it is in Japan;
- Controversy around aquaculture (versus wild fish);
- The logistic process: from an isolated island in the Atlantic to around the world, requiring proper transportation conditions, great time management and planning skills (to avoid delays in terms of delivery);
- Start-up company; no past experience in this business.
- The fact that the company has only invested in personal communication, so far.

## Opportunities

- Increasing need for food supply due to the expected growth of population worldwide;
- *Seriola's* popularity in Asian countries, especially Japan;
- The diffusion of different *cuisines* (including the Japanese) and ingredients;
- Growing openness and acceptance towards new products and experiences;
- General growing interest in food, cooking and eating healthy;
- Expected growth of fish consumption;
- Growing interest in being well informed;
- Potential supportive platforms (such as TV shows) and endorsers (famous chefs);
- The tendency of businesses going digital (websites, social media, apps);
- Growing importance of social media in B2B and B2C communication;
- New company: can stand out from competitors through innovation;
- Supportive institutions and ONG's that are trying to raise awareness regarding overfishing and the importance of finding viable alternatives to extensive fishing;
- Aquaculture Stewardship Council certification.

## Threats

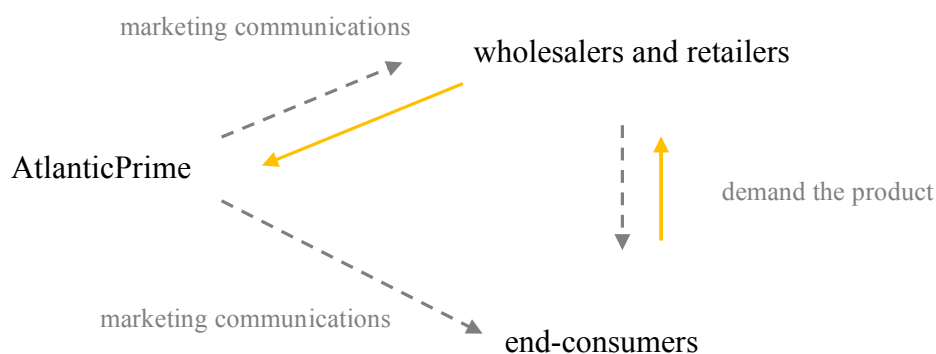
- Consumers' lack of knowledge regarding aquaculture produce;
- Unfounded preconceived ideas regarding aquaculture produce versus wild produce;
- Scepticism;
- Easy-access to online sources of information; that disapprove aquaculture and may negatively influence consumers' opinions;
- Consumers' low awareness of the species *Seriola dumerili*;
- Unexpected fish health issues like viral and parasitic epidemics;
- Extreme oceanographic and/or meteorological conditions or episodes that may affect operations.

Now, it is possible to select some of the most attractive opportunities that will help define a marketing strategy for AtlanticPrime. From the ones presented above, it is suggested the company focuses mainly on: the **increasing demand for fish and protein**; the **diffusion of Japanese cuisine**; the **healthy diet trend** and, finally, the **need for sustainable food-production methods**.

#### 4.2.4. Segmentation

Before starting to define specific communication ideas, it is necessary to know exactly to whom they should be directed to. So, in this case, segmentation will be made both in B2C and B2B perspectives as the company wants to communicate to buyers and end-consumers, following the strategy illustrated in the scheme presented below:

Figure 13 – AtlanticPrime’s communication strategy towards buyers and end-consumers



Source – Own elaboration

On a B2B context AtlanticPrime will use a pull strategy, communicating directly to specialized buyers and convincing them to buy *Seriola*. On a B2C context, the company will follow a push strategy and, through communications specifically designed for end-consumers using content that is relevant and appealing to them, make them want and look for the company’s fish in the market (when they go to restaurants, to fish markets, to gourmet food stores, for instance). Still, more details are required about them.

##### 4.2.4.1. End-consumer segmentation

In order to have a clearer idea of the profile of the typical AtlanticPrime’s consumer, it is useful to characterize him/her according to the following dimensions:

**Geographic:** urban, can be found in big cosmopolitan cities, in the best-frequented city areas.

**Demographic:** Male or female, aged between 26 and 70. Has a medium-high purchasing power. Race and marital status are irrelevant.

**Psychographic:** is confident, open-minded, likes to experience different cultures and trying new things brings a sense of fulfilment, pride and joy to his/her life. Maintains an active lifestyle, enjoys eating out and socializing. Spends money on good products, likes to shop at delicatessen or gourmet stores and indulge. Expresses his/her social status through his/her image.

**Behavioural:** consumes the company's product in special occasions, believes it adds more satisfaction to those moments and is loyal to the brand due to the guaranteed quality of the product, that never disappoints.

According to the VALS framework, AtlanticPrime's consumer can be considered an **innovator**.

#### 4.2.4.2. B2B segmentation

**Nature of the product:** processed or unprocessed fish (depending on the buyer's will) that needs to be transported and handled under special conditions in order to guarantee the quality of the product. It might be sold in the best fish markets, high-end supermarkets or the finest restaurants. The quantity purchased will vary according to the buyers' needs, depending on the end-consumers satisfaction and repurchasing intentions.

**Buying situation:** as mentioned above, the type of buyer can vary. The people involved in the purchasing process might range from big fish wholesalers and fish trade specialists to Michelin-star chefs. The purchase may occur through personal contact (face-to-face), phone call or e-mail, or through the company's website or app (which is one of the recommendations made in chapter 7).

**Demographics:** the number of employees involved in the process is unpredictable. It may be only one or a group of people.

#### 4.2.5. Target

##### 4.2.5.1. Targeted end-consumers

The company's target are males and females, aged between 30 and 70, with a medium-high income, who appreciate well-prepared and presented high-quality fish and are willing to pay a premium for it. It is someone who seeks the finest products to complement his/her lifestyle and provide him/her pleasant and delightful moments.



#### 4.2.5.2. Targeted distribution channels

The targeted distribution channels are wholesalers, food processors, top Michelin-star restaurants, luxury hotel groups and airlines (like Emirates) and high-end retail chains (such as El Corte Inglés, Galeries Lafayette, Manorfood and Harrods) located in Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, the UK, Portugal, Japan and the USA.

This great cultural diversity must be taken into consideration when implementing communications.

#### 4.2.6. Positioning

AtlanticPrime wants its fish – *Seriola dumerili* – to be perceived just as salmon was some years ago, before its consumption became ordinary: as an exquisite delicacy meant to be relished. It is meant to be seen as the new top-quality fish, only available at the best restaurants and some of the most prestigious retail chains throughout Europe, the USA and Japan. It should be perceived as a luxury product, having nothing to do with some of the fish that is normally sold at the supermarket, whose origin and quality are questionable.

Among buyers, the company also wants to be considered the most efficient (the easiest, quickest and most practical) and innovative in terms of the purchasing process, communication and delivery.

##### 4.2.6.1. Points of difference

The main **PODs** are:

- the quality of this specific fish species (*Seriola dumerili*) in terms of taste, texture, colour, smell;
- the location of the farm (the exact spot in Madeira Island), selected according to important criteria, making it the best spot in the world to grow *Seriola* with unmatched quality;

The reasons to believe (RTBs) that support these two PODs are the ideal characteristics of the environment in which the fish will grow. This has been previously explained when the product was presented. It includes the temperature of the water, the intensity of the currents, the depth at which the cages will be located, the quality of the cages and materials used. In addition, the company is interested in scientifically testing the quality of the fish

and the water, to prove the absence of water and fish contamination. Later on, testimonials given by renown chefs (after tasting and experimenting with the fish) will also serve as quality approval.

- the island's reputation. Due to tourism, Madeira is already known around the world for its natural beauty and richness, good gastronomy and fish quality, as well as peaceful environment. The island has actually been distinguished as one of the best destinations in Europe. Being associated to these ideas benefits the company's brand image as, in consumers' minds, they are transmitted to the product, improving the way it is perceived, making the fish distinct from the competitors'.
- the implementation of innovative initiatives that reflect openness and transparency regarding the production process, allowing the establishment of a closer and more honest relationship with the audience.
- a more active role regarding sustainability and the protection of the oceans, by working together with the Ministry of the Sea.
- the creation of an App that buyers can use to place orders, give feedback to the company about the quality of the fish, the delivery process, among other issues. This idea will be further explained but the main purpose is to develop a more efficient and rapid way of exchanging information between the brand and the buyer, improving the overall purchasing experience. As communication was found to be one of the most valued aspects in the B2B industry it is something that the company can improve as a differentiation strategy.

The last POD was conceived with buyers in mind. Innovating will enable the company to stand out from competitors and revolutionize the industry, setting higher standards. This POD will support the company's commitment in delivering the best service possible and being ahead of competition.

The PODs can also be considered the company's critical success factors (CSF), as they represent the characteristics that will sustain the business's success, viability, effectiveness and efficiency. In other words, they represent the areas in which having satisfactory results will ensure that the company has a successful competitive performance.

#### **4.2.6.2 Points of parity**

The **POPs** identified are:

- the state-of-the-art methods and technology used, that may be similar to other farms'.

- Aquaculture Stewardship Council certification that has been attributed to other important competitors, especially Salmon growers.
- strong online presence using social media platforms as a means to promote the company's activities (including innovative initiatives) and to be closer and more reachable to consumers in general.

The RTBs for these POPs are the certification labels that both buyers and consumers may find in the company's website, in the packaging of the fish or by visiting the farm in Madeira.

#### **4.2.6.3. The golden triangle of positioning**

##### **Consumers' expectations**

Based on the market trends previously exposed, today, consumers want to be informed and feel confident about the food choices they make, including when buying fish. As it is known, they are increasingly aware and conscious about issues such as food safety, production methods and health. So, when they choose a brand, they expect honesty and reliability. Consumers want to get the product benefits they pay for or, in other words, what the brand promises to offer. So, as the fish market becomes more competitive, trustworthiness is an important characteristic that brands should ensure in order to have satisfied and loyal customers. Considering the numerous fish options available today (from different countries, origins, capture methods, species.) consumers expect to have the information needed to make the best and most well-grounded choice. Ahead, with the data collected through the questionnaire developed for this project, it will be possible to know exactly what are the factors that consumers value the most when choosing fish. In this way, the company will meet their expectations more effectively and provide the information that is most relevant to them.

When it comes to buyers (the distribution channels), it is believed that, just as end-consumers, they expect value for money and quality. Yet, as mentioned before, they want brands to communicate better (more efficiently), which will consequently improve service and the overall purchase experience.

## Potential product benefits

The main benefits of the fish produced by AtlanticPrime are quality, which is represented by the freshness, taste and texture of the fish, as well as safety and health ensured by the production method (as explained before, the water depth at which the cages are located, the exposure to constant currents of the Atlantic Ocean that will keep the water and the soil clean). These are definitely differentiating factors because a lot of aquaculture fish that is sold today comes from polluted waters that may contaminate the fish. These are cheap, poor quality options that have nothing to do with the fish AtlanticPrime is going to produce.

Moreover, nowadays eating represents much more than simply ingesting food: it has become an experience, a way of socializing, of enjoying the moment and feeding, not only our body, but also our soul. The company's fish represents all of this. Being a species that is not very common in certain countries will provide consumers an exciting novelty for their senses.

The fact that the company uses a sustainable method is also a very important benefit. In this way consumers can feel like they are supporting the alternative against overfishing, which is a serious issue that everyone should be aware of. So, AtlanticPrime will provide consumers, not only a conscious and responsible choice, but also a way of having an active role in facing this great challenge, bringing a sense of community and belonging.

With the help of digital platforms, the service provided to buyers is going to be easier and based on a more accessible and open communication system. So, for sure, innovation will be one of the elements that is going to positively set this new brand apart.

## Competitors' positioning

Based on the information provided on their websites, the three off-shore mariculture competitors previously analysed position themselves as follows:

**Clean Seas:** the company uses renowned chefs to make its positioning statement. The consistency of the quality of the fish (firmness, freshness, nutrition and versatility) and supply, as well as, implicitly, the chefs' approval, are the main points the company uses to differentiate.

**Open Blue:** *"We take total care in raising our fish – and it shows. Open Blue Cobia is an impressive fish in quality, taste and versatility. We take pride in every step of the process, ensuring we bring you the best possible fish. What you get is the purest, healthiest, best tasting white fish on the market."*

**Blue Ocean Mariculture:** “*Hawaiian Kanpachi is a farmed fish of exceptional quality, grown with care in the clear, oceanic waters of Hawaii island.*”

We can conclude there are similar aspects in the positioning of these players, namely the quality and the characteristics of the fish.

#### **4.2.7. Price**

FAO (2014) predicts that the growing population and demand for fish will generate an increase in fish pricing. In August 2016, FAO reported *Seriola*'s selling price to consumers in Japan to be 27€/kg if filleted and 17€/kg if whole and fresh. British and German wholesalers and food processors buy it from Japan at a price that can reach up to 45€/kg, approximately (AtlanticPrime's business plan).

The company is planning to use a selling price (to buyers) free on board (FOB) of around 25€/kg. So, the selling price to buyers will be higher. It is likely that it will vary when negotiating with buyers, depending on the quantity they want to order and purchase. This high price is meant to signal that this fish is a premium product.

#### **4.5. Communication goals**

The main goals the company is expecting to reach by implementing a strong communication strategy can be divided into the following groups:

##### **1. Corporate:**

- to be a highly recognized company in the fish industry, worldwide;
- to become the main reference in the aquaculture market;
- to build a sustainable fish farm network around the world.

##### **2. Marketing and Marketing communications:**

- to reduce the public's scepticism regarding aquaculture fish and to clarify some of the myths around this industry, increasing acceptability and understanding;
- to increase awareness of how important it is to support sustainable fishing practices;

- to create brand awareness not only among direct buyers (restaurants, dealers, wholesalers and retailers) but also the end-consumer;
- to encourage the general public to learn more about mariculture and what the company does;
- to encourage interactivity between the company and the buyers and end-consumers (similar to type of contact established in a B2C context);
- to encourage potential buyers to visit the company's website and to place orders or request to be contacted;
- to provide an improved and distinct sales and after sales experience based on efficient communication and focused on the buyer and his interests;
- to appropriately develop adjusted communication messages, as the company is expecting to sell its fish in various countries that have different cultural backgrounds and influences.

#### **4.6. Marketing Communications Strategy**

The main starting points to design the marketing communications strategy that is the basis of this communication plan are the target and the positioning that have been previously described in the internal analysis. The insights obtained from the questionnaire will also be used as a reference when conceptualizing the communication ideas.

##### **4.6.1. Values and Brand image**

Considering the challenges that the company will face, as well as buyers' and consumers' expectations, the core values based on which the brand image should be built are the following:

**Honesty:** The firm must be open and transparent when communicating with the audience. As many consumers are sceptic about aquaculture and others do not even know what mariculture is, it is important to support the claimed quality of the fish using real facts such as showing how production works, explaining the "journey" of the fish from the ocean to the plate and testing the quality of the water and fish contamination, for instance. Honesty will be reassuring for buyers and end-consumers.

**Reliability:** Not all fish sold is grown under the most adequate conditions (leading to contamination and the spread of harmful substances into the fish) and this is becoming a greater

concern for human health. AtlanticPrime wants buyers and consumers to trust the brand, knowing they can count on a consistent high quality and responsible actions as well.

**Sustainability:** As mentioned before, the impact of overfishing might be tragic at different levels and it is an issue that must be urgently addressed. Hence being part of the solution is important to positively change people's attitudes and for the planet.

**Innovation:** To be competitive companies must be able to adapt to an ever-changing reality, keeping up with consumers' demands, setting new standards and trends. AtlanticPrime wants to mark the fishing industry by innovating not only in terms of processes and production methods, but also communication.

**Commitment:** the company is committed to acting responsibly and being future-oriented, keeping in mind the well-being of the planet and its resources, as well as the subsistence of future generations.

As mentioned before, another important element to build the right brand image is Madeira. Being associated with the island will transfer positive associations to the brand and its fish. In this way, when buyers or consumers think about the brand, they will relate it to the beautiful landscapes and rich environment of the island. The country's popularity as an enjoyable and cultural touristic destination represents an opportunity for the brand to become known and well-considered among foreigners.

#### **4.6.2. Message**

As AtlanticPrime is going to communicate to two different types of audiences (buyers and end-customers) the message must be adjusted according to their distinct characteristics (such as the level of knowledge concerning the fishing industry, for instance) as well as to the tools they use to communicate and learn more about brands. The details of the message will now be explained. (imagery)

#### **4.6.3. Content**

The main topics that should be included in the company's message are:

- Madeira island, as the conditions and natural characteristics of the location determine the quality of the fish. As mentioned before, this is a differentiating element and should

therefore be explored. For buyers, location is an important factor to take into consideration due to costs, delivery time, accessibility and so on.

- Presenting the fish, as it is not equally known in different regions of the world. It is important to explain the type of meat (texture, colour, flavour, fat percentage and other nutritional facts), how to prepare it, how it is used in Japanese cuisine, for instance, and how it can substitute other fish species that are becoming more difficult to find due to overfishing (such as tuna, for instance).
- Explaining the production process and how it is better and safer, resulting in a top-quality source of protein. For buyers, facts (that, as seen before, are crucial in B2B decision-making) such as the cages' materials, the type of feed given to the fish and how contamination is prevented must be provided. This type of information will be taken into consideration during the purchasing process and is determinant to set the company apart from competitors.
- Explaining the terrible consequences of overfishing and how important it is to contribute to solve this problem by consuming consciously-produced fish, reducing the dependency on intensive fishing methods. Educating end-consumers about this and sustainability is mandatory, not only for the company to be well perceived but also for the sake of the planet.

The information should be:

- factual, presenting credible statistics that will alert people about the importance of making conscientious choices. Buyers will require more technical details about production that are too specific for end-consumers;
- demonstrational as the problems are (1) overfishing (and the consequent scarcity of certain fish species) and (2) the growing demand for good sources of proteins, for which AtlanticPrime has a solution: mariculture.

The company should use the Storytelling technique mentioned in the literature review. It is possible to do so presenting overfishing as the conflict and the company as the hero. The production process (mariculture) can be easily explained as a story that takes place in the beautiful scenery of Madeira island, surrounded by the pristine waters of the Atlantic Ocean.



#### **4.6.4. Tone of voice**

The tone of voice should create a certain proximity between the brand and the audience. It should still sound sophisticated and smart. Honesty and openness transmit the confidence that reassures buyers and consumers when making a purchase decision. The brand should also transmit an active spirit as a reflection of its will to help avoid overfishing and to contribute to the evolution of sustainable fish production. It is important to transmit a positive attitude towards these challenges, as well as a modern mind-set.

#### **4.7. Selecting media and tools**

Taking into consideration the changes and evolution in B2B communication, the company should definitely adopt an integrated communication strategy that combines both digital and traditional tools.

The digital will be very important, especially in the beginning of the company's activity, in order to provide information and to raise brand awareness. It will increase the company's reach and help spread the brand name. Social media will be a good way to interact with end-consumers, keeping them updated and interested in the company's activity. Besides all the advantages related to reach and costs, it is also a way of innovating and an opportunity to be more active and dynamic than competitors, breaking the molds of the B2B industry, in terms of communication. The **digital tools** the company should invest in are:

##### **1. Website**

The website will be a vital tool as it is a way for buyers and end-consumers to have easy access to credible information provided by the company. The information will be mostly directed to buyers (because it will be exposed in greater detail), but should also be relevant to end-consumers. The fact that the competitors' websites are not ideal (meaning that they could be improved) gives AtlanticPrime the opportunity to set itself apart by building one that is more modern, appealing and intuitive. Taking the previous comparison into account, it is recommended that the company invests in good visual content. It should take advantage of the reputation Madeira Island has around the world for its natural diversity and beauty and use it to build brand image and enhance the concept of aquaculture. AtlanticPrime should display a promotional video (described ahead) in its home page, to stun visitors just as they enter the website. The main idea should be to make them feel involved and to provide a dynamic

experience while they are visiting the website. Besides “Madeira Island” (that reveals the farm’s location, its benefits and other characteristics) and “Our fish” (which includes nutritional information about the fish produced, the production method and other related matters), the other main topics that should be presented in the menu bar are: “Certification” (including sustainability accreditations) so that, as soon as the visitor enters the page, immediately feels reassured about the company’s responsible and conscious practices; “Chefs choice” (which includes recipes – that are very appreciated by consumers – and testimonials; “How to buy”, where visitors can learn more about distribution and submit contact requests. To contribute to the website’s appeal, it is suggested that the company transmits, during the day, real time footage of the fish underwater, captured by cameras installed inside the cages. On the website, AtlanticPrime should also include a digital counter that continuously registers the amount of garbage (in kilos) collected from the ocean by the company itself, as this is one of the actions AtlanticPrime is committed to undertake. In this way, visitors can have a precise idea of the company’s contribution to improve the condition of our planet.

## **2. Social media: Facebook, Instagram and YouTube**

Concerning Facebook, it is suggested that the company uses it to try to reach end-consumers. The main purposes of investing in social media are: (1) to raise awareness among end-consumers; (2) to be closer to consumers; (3) to stimulate consumers’ interest (4) to make consumers visit the website and become more informed. The question is “How can AtlanticPrime reach end-consumers if it is mainly focused on communicating and selling in a B2B market? How will end-consumers end up in the company’s website or Facebook page if they don’t know about its existence?”. It is suggested to invest in search ads that appear online after consumers type certain expressions or words on Google. These ads can get consumers’ attention and lead them to the company’s website that will make reference to the company’s Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as other contacts.

Considering the analysis of the questionnaire made, the company should:

- share fun facts about marine life, such as curiosities about marine animals;
- celebrate special dates, especially if they are related to Nature (such as animal’s day, planet’s day and so on);
- inform followers about the discovery of new animal species;
- share videos of cooking tips (described below) and easy recipes;

- share nutritional information of different species of fish;
- share the updated situation of the garbage collected from the ocean, by the company.

The posts should be as visual as possible as they are simpler for consumers to interpret. The visual content shared on Instagram should be the same that is shared on Facebook. It is really important to use popular hashtags related to what is shared. In this way, Instagram users who are interested in fish, marine life, Madeira island or other subjects related to the picture or video posted, will find the company's page. Hence, it is a way of increasing brand awareness and popularity. It is important to keep both pages active, interesting, inspirational and appealing. All videos shared should also be on the brand's YouTube channel.

### **3. Video content**

#### **1.1. Promotional video**

AtlanticPrime should make a promotional video that could be disseminated using different means. This video should start by showing Madeira island and its natural richness. Then, the focus should be the fish farm and the methods used, explaining what mariculture is and how the fish is raised and treated throughout the whole production process. Highlighting sustainability and a future-oriented attitude is vital in order to transmit the relevance of AtlanticPrime's business and to inspire consumers to support this type of produce. To finalize and induce people to try the fish, it should be shown *Seriola* being prepared, cooked and tasted (with people's testimonials as proof). The main goals of this video are to raise brand awareness, to educate people about mariculture, to create interest on trying the fish produced, to promote Madeira and Portuguese fish.

#### **1.2. Cooking tips videos**

Videos are one of the most popular types of content shared on social media as they transmit an idea in an easy and effective way. Hence, and as consumers have shown interest in it, the brand could create short videos showing how to filet the fish, cut it, prepare it and cook it. These videos must have a really short duration (no more than 1:30 minutes), be visually appealing, yet clean (showing only a close-up of the hands preparing the fish and some key words), to the sound of a classy instrumental jazz song, for instance. The type of music chosen should be sophisticated, modern and upbeat, reflecting the brand personality and inducing good feelings among viewers. They would be posted on the brand's Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. This

would allow the company to reach a broad range of consumers. Not only them, but also other Facebook pages related to cooking (like Tasty, for example) could share it, contributing to achieving a greater number of visualizations.

#### **4. Photo booth**

The company should create a photo booth and take it to events. The idea is to attract people to the brand's stand and keep them entertained and feeling good, while taking pictures with the beautiful landscapes of Madeira island in the background, as well as the logo of the company in the corner. The picture would be posted on the brand's Facebook page (and later could be shared by people on their personal page, if they wanted) and printed (like a polaroid) so that visitors could keep it as a souvenir.

#### **5. Mobile App**

It is suggested that AtlanticPrime develops a Mobile App exclusively directed to buyers (restaurants, wholesalers, retailers and distributors) that improves brand-buyer communication and, therefore, the service provided during and after purchase. It would work as a personal area for buyers that would allow them to: place orders; keep a record of previous orders (including quantities, dates, prices); track orders in real time; evaluate the fish ordered (in terms of size, colour, texture, weight, smell); evaluate the delivery service. In this way, the company would be able to efficiently receive feedback regarding important components of the business that are crucial to build success. It would also show the company is interested in providing buyers a good experience and that their opinions are highly considered.

**Traditional tools** are indispensable to create empathy and build long, trustful relationships with buyers and suppliers. Some tools will be used from the beginning to establish contact with buyers and make deals, while others (like TV, for instance) will only be implemented after the company reaches a satisfactory level of popularity among buyers. This will be exposed in the plan's timeline. At this stage, it is important to invest in more direct and personal options that, not only transmit the value of what the company is offering, but also help build credibility and trust. The traditional tools recommended for now are:

### **1. Direct e-mail**

This will be the main form of communication with potential and actual buyers and suppliers.

### **2. Telephone contact** (with the same purpose of the previous tool)

### **3. Face-to-face communication**

This type of communication will occur mainly during visits to the fish farm, at events and business trips.

### **4. TV**

The company should work with both generalist and speciality (cooking, travelling and lifestyle) channels to reach the desirable audience.

### **5. Events**

The events selected range from tastings at high-quality food stores to aquaculture fairs, as it will later be explained.

### **6. Magazine articles**

The company should prepare two types of article: one that is more technical (to be used in B2B communication) and one more directed to the general public. The latter could start by presenting breath-taking views of Madeira island, then explaining how AtlanticPrime uses a sustainable off-shore mariculture system (and how important it is for the planet) and finishing with beautifully presented dishes using Charuteiro. It should be extremely visually appealing.

### **7. Merchandise**

As AtlanticPrime is a sustainable company, the merchandise should also be sustainable and eco-friendly. The items should be used by the company's staff and be offered to buyers in sales meetings, as well as when visiting the farm. The items should be:

- pens
- notebook
- fish-shaped pen drive
- caps
- t-shirts
- sweaters
- cloth bags
- umbrellas
- rain coats

- aprons
- water bottle
- key holder
- refrigerated bag
- super absorbent towel

Figure 14 - Summary of aspects related to the tools selected

		TOOLS	PURPOSE									
B2B	B2C		Educate	Present the product	Create brand awareness	Generate WOM	Keep the audience interested	Maximize reach	Induce trial or purchase	Establish close contact	Receive feedback	
✓	✓	Website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	Social media: Facebook, Instagram and YouTube	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	Promotional video	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
✓	✓	Cooking tips videos	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
✓	✓	Photo booth								✓		
✓	✓	App								✓		
✓	✓	Magazine articles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
✓	✓	Merchandise										
✓	✓	Direct e-mail		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	Telephone contact		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	Face-to-face	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	TV	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	Events	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

## **4.8. Communication ideas**

The ideas were separated according to whether they are directed to buyers or to end-consumers. As they ought to be efficient it is expected that they fuse, in times, especially because nowadays brands can withdraw digital content from every circumstance. When implementing the following initiatives, the company will have to use different combinations of the tools that have just been described.

### **4.8.1. B2B commercial ideas**

#### **A. Product packaging**

The company must include the mandatory information (established by the EU) on the package of the fish, as well as the ASC label (signalling sustainable practices). As it was learned that labels have a positively reinforce good product features, AtlanticPrime is suggested to create a special label logo that indicates that the fish produced is from Madeira or from the Atlantic, signalling positive associations towards buyers.

#### **B. Speciality promotional and brand activation events**

##### **1. Seafood Expo Global**

It is the world's greatest seafood trade fair, with more than 1850 exhibiting companies from 79 different countries, taking place in Brussels, Belgium in April 2018. The main goal is to promote and sell seafood products, processing equipment and services. It is the perfect opportunity to establish direct contact with potential seafood buyers, suppliers and other players in the industry. Moreover, a group of seafood experts will evaluate each participant's offer in terms of eating experience, innovation, health, nutrition and market potential and attribute the Seafood Excellence Global awards to the best candidates. The brand should have screens showing live footage of the fish inside the cages and provide 360° virtual tour of the farm.

##### **2. Restaurant Week**

This is an event that takes place in Lisbon and Oporto and offers consumers the chance of eating at the cities' best restaurants for more affordable price. It is a very popular initiative due to the exciting gastronomic experience provided. AtlanticPrime should sponsor it and partner up with some of those restaurants that would have to include Charuteiro on their menu. This



would make chefs experiment with the fish and possibly turn them into regular buyers. Moreover, it would be a good way of presenting the fish to consumers. The fish would be well prepared by renowned chefs and would be part of a different experience. So, the chances of creating a positive reaction in the audience would be quite high.

### **C. Partnerships**

#### **1. Cooking lessons**

It is suggested that the company provides cooking students from the most prestigious schools around Europe the opportunity of learning how to cook Charuteiro from renowned chefs who are specialized in different types of gastronomy (like Japanese, for instance). These lessons would occur virtually as the company would fly a camera crew to the chef's location to film the lesson and transmit it (live or not) to the students. Besides showcasing the fish and its quality, this initiative would increase brand awareness among chefs and other professionals in the industry. It would even contribute for building a positive corporate reputation for the company due to its efforts in educating aspiring chefs.

### **D. Press**

#### **1. World Fishing and Aquaculture**

In order to reach other players in the fishing industry, the company is suggested to post an article on the World Fishing and Aquaculture magazine, website and e-newsletter, presenting the new Charuteiro farm in Madeira island. This magazine is dedicated to all aspects related to commercial fishing, providing readers the latest product launches, country profiles, interviews and columns from experts in the industry. It is a highly trusted and respected channel in the field. Hence, this is a good way of introducing AtlanticPrime to competitors, buyers and suppliers, triggering their interest and creating sales opportunities.

## **4.8.2. B2C ideas**

### **A. Point-of-sale promotion and brand activation**

#### **1. Tastings at El Corte Inglés**

As the fish produced is aimed to be sold at the best retail chains, the company should hire a chef specialized in Japanese cuisine to prepare the fish and do a tasting at Lisbon's El Corte Inglés gourmet shop and supermarket. It would be a good way of seeing consumers' reactions

and getting their feedback. The same idea of the screens showing the fish in real time should be implemented. As the product would later be available at those selling points, this initiative would induce trial, as well as create brand awareness.

## **2. Tastings at restaurants**

The idea consists of providing *Seriola* to some top-quality restaurants to prepare the fish and offer it as a starter or an “amuse-bouche” to their clients, as a courtesy. This is a good opportunity for consumers to try the fish and for restaurants to become regular buyers. The company can start by implementing this in Portugal and later, in other countries as well.

## **B. Partnerships**

### **1. Airline magazines: such as TAP and Emirates**

The company should also try to post an article about Madeira and the fish farm in the magazine of the Portuguese airline TAP that makes connection to different parts of the world. The same could be done with Emirates’ airline magazine. Besides being a way of presenting AtlanticPrime to a really broad audience, as Emirates is one of the most expensive airline companies and a lot of its clients have a high financial power it would be a way of attracting potential investors and buyers.

### **2. Hotel chains: Pestana Hotel Group**

Hotels usually have promotional videos of the country or city where they are located, as well hotel tours, on the televisions available in the rooms to entertain guests. As the owner of Pestana Hotel Group is from Madeira and certainly wants the island to thrive, AtlanticPrime should partner up with this renowned hotel chain to promote the fish farm. In this way, it would be possible to reach people from all over the world as there are Pestana hotels in a wide variety of countries (the UK, Spain, Germany, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, the USA, Cuba, Mozambique, South Africa, Morocco, São Tomé e Príncipe and Cape Verde). Having the Pestana brand name associated to the fish produced would be extremely beneficial as it would strengthen AtlanticPrime’s values of quality and excellence. The hotel group can also be a potential buyer.

### **3. Cruise Boats**

Many cruise boats anchor in different Portuguese ports. As passengers spend a lot of time on the boat and need to be entertained, it would be a good opportunity for AtlanticPrime to reach that audience. Hence, similarly to the previous suggestion, the company should partner up with travelling agencies that arrange or plan cruising trips to transmit the company's promotional video when heading to Portugal. It would be a way of endorsing Madeira, the new Portuguese fish farm and the species *Seriola*. AtlanticPrime could even target cruise boats as potential buyers that would then prepare a meal using *Seriola* and serve it to the passengers on board.

### **4. Masterchef**

Masterchef is popular TV cooking contest that is very popular around the world, being a success in Portugal as well.

The idea consists of taking the Portuguese contestants to Madeira island to visit the production facilities and use the brand's fish in a cooking challenge. In this way, it would be possible to reach a really broad audience (the people who enjoys watching the show, that is transmitted at prime time in one of the most popular Portuguese TV channels). They would learn about mariculture, about AtlanticPrime and how to cook Charuteiro. The contestants (and the audience at home) could be given a master class on how to prepare Charuteiro and use it in different ways. The company should also try this product placement strategy in other countries where the show is aired. Summing up, it would create brand awareness and induce trial.

### **5. 24 Kitchen**

AtlanticPrime should invite popular chefs (like Anthony Bourdain, who travels the world, Jamie Oliver, Ljubomir Stanisic, who has filmed a show while travelling around Portugal) who have TV shows transmitted on 24 Kitchen that have become really appreciated around the world. They would do the tour around the farm and then prepare some recipes using the fish, outdoors, with Madeira island as the scenery. This would also be advertised on the company's and the chef's social media pages.

## **6. Recycling stations for fishing residue materials**

This idea is related to the importance of keeping the oceans clean and setting an example. In partnership with the Portuguese government and the Ministry of the Sea, AtlanticPrime should invest in creating Recycling Stations for fishing residue materials such as nets, hooks, buoys and cables that fishermen and fishing crews can't or don't want to use anymore. Instead of depositing these items on the beach and in the ocean, they would place them inside appropriate separate bins near ports and marinas throughout the country. In this way, it would be possible to reduce the amount of garbage that ends up threatening the life of different marine species. Moreover, it would be possible to transform these materials into new ones or to reuse them, even for a different purpose. The bins would have AtlanticPrime's logo and this campaign would be communicated in the press and on social media to show end-consumers the company's commitment. It would also be necessary to educate fishermen about the importance of this issue and how their contribution can have a great impact in solving it. To do so, these bins (one for nets, one for cables, one for buoys and one for metals) would display the necessary information to teach fishermen and others how to act.

### **C. Online brand activation**

#### **1. Contest on Facebook**

The company should create a contest on the brand's social media pages offering a weekend for 2 in Madeira island (with payed flights and accommodation). The participants (Facebook users) would have to start following the brand's Facebook and Instagram pages, click like on the post regarding the contest, share it with their friends on their personal page using the hashtag #atlanticprimemadeira. This would help increase brand awareness and spread the brand name on social media. Although the questionnaire respondents did not reveal much interest in contests, since this one consists of offering a fun yet relaxing short vacation, it is quite appealing. Hence, the likeability of triggering people's reactions is higher. Moreover, it is important to invest in dynamic initiatives that generate content, keep the brand's pages active and the audience attentive. The winners' experience on the island would be photo/video-documented and then shared on the brand's Facebook page.

## **2. Advertising on Instagram**

Now it is possible to make advertising on Instagram on the feed or on Instastories (temporary video). The company should invest on this type of strategy as consumers do not need to follow the brand's Instagram page in order to see these advertisements. The company could create quick videos of footage of the island, local marine life and recipes using the fish produced. The brand would also request users to visit and start following the brand's page on Instagram and make rhetoric questions to keep the audience curious.

## **3. Live-streaming**

Live-streaming is becoming an increasingly popular trend that brands have been using more frequently. This idea consists of transmitting on the brand's website and Facebook page live footage of what is happening inside the cages, underwater, as well as other parts of the production process, facilities and even Madeira island. Consumers are interested in learning more about the environment in which the fish grows. Moreover, it would help demystify mariculture, by educating both buyers and consumers, who would feel more reassured about the quality of the fish and methods used. It would be a way of proving the company's transparency, honesty and promoting proximity between the brand and the audience.

## **D. Third-party endorsement**

### **1. Sponsoring YouTubers**

YouTube has become a very popular platform to share knowledge and experiences. The company should sponsor YouTube channels such as Tastemane (that has almost 900 000 subscribers). This channel, in particular, is a global community of food and travel lovers that posts videos of recipes, food and trips around the world, on a daily basis. The idea is to make an episode (a 10-minute video) about Madeira island, AtlanticPrime and its fish. Tastemane is present on other social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter), reaching a really broad audience, hence being a good way of increasing brand awareness. Another option would be Mark Wiens, a YouTuber (with around 930 000 subscribers) who travels the world in search for delicious food. Many of his videos include fish and Asian cuisine.

## **2. Celebrities taking over the brand's Instagram**

The company should invite celebrities (TV personalities, internationally-known chefs) to visit the company and the farm in Madeira and take over the brand's Instagram page, posting pictures, making videos throughout the day. When the guest announces this initiative on his/her personal social media page, his/her followers will visit the brand's page to learn more about it. Hence, it will raise brand awareness and the product will benefit from transferred associations.

### **E. Tours around the fish farm**

This consists of opening the company's doors to students from all ages. The idea is to show them how the fish is produced and all the work that is involved before the final product is ready to be sold. As the youngsters of today are the adults of tomorrow it makes total sense to educate them on how important it is to support the production of sustainable healthy proteins. Some merchandise could be offered to them. Although this initiative would end up being limited to the people who live in Madeira island the company could also do a virtual tour that could be transmitted in schools in Portugal or even in other countries if that interest was manifested.

To conclude, as Japan is already a heavy consumer of *Seriola*, the communication ideas based on the farm's location and production method (both related to the company's credibility and the quality of the fish) are more appropriate to this specific target. The other ideas related to the preparation of the fish, sustainability and importance of supporting mariculture are more adequate for European countries and the USA that are not so familiarized with this species.

### **B2B commercial ideas:**

#### **A. Product packaging**

#### **B. Speciality promotional and brand activation events**

1. Seafood Expo Global
2. Restaurant week

#### **C. Partnerships**

1. Cooking lessons

#### **D. Press**

1. World Fishing and Aquaculture

## **B2C ideas:**

### **A. Point-of-sale promotion and brand activation**

1. Tastings at El Corte Inglés
2. Tastings at restaurants

### **B. Partnerships**

1. Airline magazines: such as TAP and Emirates
2. Hotel chains: such as Pestana Hotel Group
3. Cruise Boats
4. Masterchef
5. 24 Kitchen
6. Recycling stations for fishing residue materials

### **C. Online brand activation**

1. Contest on Facebook
2. Advertising on Instagram
3. Live-streaming

### **D. Third-party endorsement**

1. Sponsoring YouTubers
2. Celebrities taking over the brand's Instagram

### **E. Tours around the fish farm**

Figure 15 – Summary of aspects related to the communication ideas

	B2B	B2C	TARGET	IDEAS	PURPOSE																
					Educate	Present the product	Create brand awareness	Generate WOM	Keep the audience interested	Maximize reach	Induce trial or purchase	Establish close contact	Receive feedback								
	✓	✓	Japan	Product Packaging	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Seafood Expo Global	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	Japan	Lisbon Restaurant Week	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Cooking lessons	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	World Fishing and Aquaculture	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Tastings at El Corte inglés	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Tastings at restaurants	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Airline magazines: TAP and Emirates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Pestana Hotel Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Cruise boats	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Masterchef	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	24 Kitchen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Contest on Facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Advertising on Instagram	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Live-streaming	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Sponsoring YouTubers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Celebrities taking over the brand's Instagram page	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Tours around the farm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	EU and USA	Recycling Stations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



#### **4.9. Resources**

The following list of resources only includes those that are external to the company itself.

##### **Seafood Expo Global:**

- 2 promoters
- promotional stand
- uniforms for the promoters
- chef
- cooking equipment
- ingredients
- accommodation and flights
- transportation
- photographer

##### **Restaurant Week:**

- transportation
- merchandise

##### **Tastings at restaurants:**

- transportation
- merchandise
- photographer

##### **Tastings at El Corte Inglés:**

- 2 promoters
- promotional stand
- uniforms for the promoters
- chef
- cooking equipment
- ingredients
- transportation
- photographer

**Cooking lessons:**

- photographer and camera crew
- ingredients
- flights and accommodation
- merchandise

**Masterchef and 24 Kitchen:**

- photographer and camera crew
- merchandise

**Live-streaming:**

- photographer and camera crew
- underwater cameras

**Sponsoring YouTubers and celebrities taking over the brand's Instagram page:**

- flights and accommodation
- photographer and camera crew
- merchandise

**Tours around the fish farm:**

- photographer
- merchandise

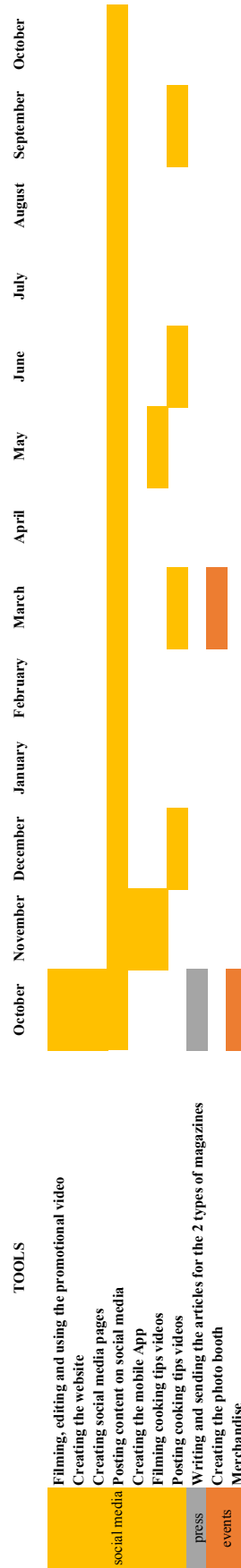
**Recycling Station:**

- bins
- informative signs
- informative flyers
- Ministry of the Sea

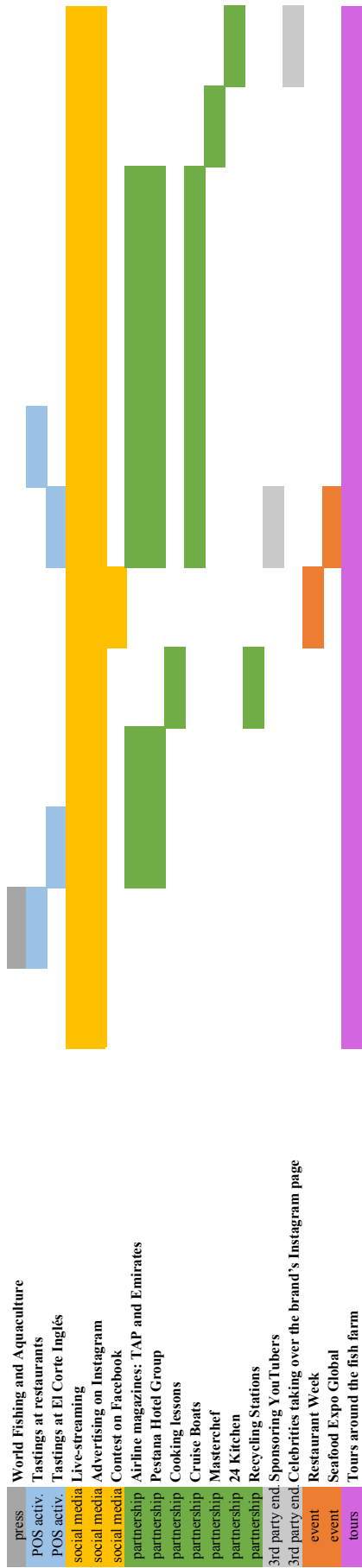
## 4.10. Budget

<b>Tools</b>	
Website (digital media agency)	
Social media: Facebook, Instagram and YouTube - management of the pages (digital media agency)	
Mobile App (digital media agency)	
Photo booth (digital media agency)	
<b>Digital media costs</b>	<b>€ 8,000.00</b>
Promotional video (photographer)	€ 2,000.00
Cooking tips videos (chef, ingredients and space)	€ 2,750.00
Articles (photographer and OceanPrime)	€ 1,500.00
Merchandise	€ 2,500.00
<b>Total cost of all tools (digital + others)</b>	<b>€ 16,750.00</b>
<b>Communication ideas (other costs besides the tools')</b>	
Seafood Expo Global	€ 20,000.00
Restaurant Week	€ 10,000.00
Tastings at restaurants	€ 7,500.00
Tastings at El Corte Inglés	€ 10,000.00
Cooking lessons	€ 12,500.00
World Fishing and Aquaculture (magazine)	€ 2,500.00
Airline magazines: TAP and Emirates	€ 65,000.00
Pestana Hotel Group	€ 40,000.00
Cruise Boats	€ 15,000.00
Masterchef	€ 12,500.00
24 Kitchen	€ 15,000.00
Live-streaming	€ 1,250.00
Sponsoring YouTubers	€ 7,000.00
Celebrities taking over the brand's social media pages	€ 4,000.00
Tours around the fish farm	€ 1,500.00
Recycling Stations	€ 55,000.00
<b>Total cost of the communication ideas</b>	<b>€ 278,750.00</b>
<b>Total budget (all tools + communication ideas)</b>	<b>€ 295,500.00</b>

## 4.11. Schedule



IDEAS



#### **4.12. Evaluating results**

As the company is just starting its activity is not possible to measure results by comparing them to the ones from previous years.

Despite being traditional or digital, the company must measure the effectiveness of all communication efforts through reactions on social media (in this case, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube), as buyers and end-consumers tend to use it to learn more about brands after hearing or knowing about it. Hence, the company should track the number of likes, shares, comments and visualisations the content posted (like the cooking tips videos) had. The level of brand awareness and popularity can also be seen by the number of followers the company's pages have. In order to gain followers quickly the brand must be active and post appealing content as previously described.

The website is also a vital indicator. The company must monitor if after implementing a certain communication initiative the number of orders and sales volume increased. This will tell if the company is being successful in reaching the audience effectively. The website also enables to know how much time each person spent while visiting it and what type of information was most required.

One of the advantages of using these digital platforms is that if the audience is not actively reacting to the content shared, it can easily be altered and see if there were improvements. So, in this case, measuring results is quite simple.

When it comes to the App, the number of downloads and the amount of information (or feedback) exchanged will reveal if users find it useful and if the company is succeeding in reaching them.

Besides adopting this social media monitoring strategy, there are also other ways to know if communications are leading to good results.

Regarding the participation on TV shows, reach can be measured by the number of viewers that TV channels regularly monitor.

When it comes to tastings and events that involve personal contact with consumers or buyers (Lisbon Restaurant Week, tastings at El Corte Inglés and restaurants, the Aquaculture International Fair and tours around the fish farm) people's reactions and feedback right after trying the fish will indicate if they liked it or not. The company could also have a digital system (as the ones used in museums, for instance) for people to express their appreciation for the fish, just by pressing a button (yes or no). It would only take a second and would automatically register people's opinions. The number of professional contacts and actual new clients can also

be assessed. These last two indicators can be used regarding communication actions in press as well.

## **5. Project conclusion**

The aim of this master's project was to create a communication plan for a new Portuguese mariculture company that is planning to produce Charuteiro to export to different parts of the globe.

The researcher started by doing the literature review covering important marketing and communication concepts that must be understood before executing a communication plan. As the company firstly plans to communicate more directly to buyers, it was necessary to research how communications work in a B2B context. Hence, there are both B2C and B2B perspectives regarding certain subjects included in the literature review. The communication plan was then developed according to the steps and recommendations made by the authors studied.

The first part of the communication plan consisted of a context analysis that was divided in two perspectives: external and internal. The external analysis covered the market environment, which includes communication trends, consumer and buyer behaviour, the evolution of the fish industry and competitors' communication strategy. The internal analysis included an overview of the company and its marketing strategy, which was discussed with AtlanticPrime's founders during the meetings held throughout the execution of this project.

Despite having a great amount of valid information, the researcher still lacked some insight needed to conceive effective communication ideas for the new fish producer. An online questionnaire was made to assess consumers' receptivity towards mariculture fish and to try to understand what type of content is most valued by consumers on brands' social media pages. The results were quite positive and favourable to the entry of the company in the market. Regarding communication content, consumers valued practical factors related to quality, functionality and nutrition. Although they might appreciate simple yet useful and interesting information about marine life, they are not keen on interacting a lot with brands on social media. Still, they assume it is a means they would use to reach brands as they believe it is important to have easy ways to do so.

Based on all the data collected, as well as on the marketing and communication goals established by the company, it was possible to start thinking of an adequate strategy to be implemented. It was necessary to define more clearly some branding aspects such as brand values and image, according to the company's positioning, mission, vision and overall

philosophy. Then, the message was designed, the tools to transmit it were selected and the communication ideas (for both buyers and end-consumers) were created and described in detail. Besides investing in traditional communication (that is highly valued in a B2B context), the researcher also recommended following a digital-based strategy. Digital tools are undoubtedly indispensable in B2C communication and, as it was discovered, more B2B companies are also following this trend. So, in order to create brand awareness, it was suggested that, as a new-comer in the industry, AtlanticPrime should adopt a modern approach that transmits an innovative attitude.

## **6. Project Contribution**

This project provides an efficient communication strategy which includes specific communication ideas meant to be implemented by AtlanticPrime that has just entered the mariculture market. The work developed is supported by recent studies as well as market research mainly regarding B2B communication, consumers' eating habits and the future of the fish industry.

A questionnaire was also made in order to collect more information. The analysis of the results obtained provided interesting insight regarding fish consumption habits, receptivity towards mariculture fish and brand communication in both traditional and digital channels, including consumers' interaction with brands on social media and the type of content they value the most on fish brand communication. Still, it would be interesting to implement it among a wider group of respondents and analyse the relationship between different variables in order to attain deeper insight.

This communication plan was based on the latest trends on brand communication, hence including social media and live-streaming, for instance. It was created to target both businesses and end-consumers. Although it was specifically conceived to match the company's vision and meet its own strategic goals, it may inspire marketers that work in other industries.

Finally, this body of work consists of a good starting point for other researchers to further analyse the fishing industry, marketing strategies of mariculture brands or even the progress in B2B communications.



## **7. Project Limitations**

During the execution of this project, the researcher faced some challenges. It was difficult to find information about Portuguese consumers' perceptions in relation to aquaculture, as well as their consumption habits. This issue was solved by including questions about these topics on the online questionnaire implemented. In the literature review, some studies made in other countries were used as a reference to define current fish consumption drivers.

It was also difficult to find specific information about the fish industry, such as aquaculture producers' market share. Therefore, the researcher focused on the FAO's aquaculture report that analyses the industry according to the countries that contribute the most to it (the most productive, as well as the ones that import and export the most). Moreover, three off-shore mariculture companies (indicated by the company's founders) were used as an example to make a comparative analysis regarding marketing and communication strategies. It was only possible to evaluate what these three players do in terms of digital communication as it was the only type of content the researcher had access to. Part of the communication that occurs is held directly with buyers.

Regarding the questionnaire, it was difficult to reach a considerable number of responses from people from other nationalities. Language was a major limitation as it made it impossible to send the form to China and Japan, two countries that would have been interesting to study.

Finally, it was difficult to find accurate information to calculate the budget of the communication ideas suggested. The researcher used other similar projects' budgets as a reference, as well as insight from personal sources related to digital marketing planning.

## 8. References

- Aaker, D. A. 1996. *Building strong brands*. New York: Free Press
- Alba, J. & Hutchinson, W. 1987. Dimensions of Consumer Expertise. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13 (4): 411-454
- Altintzoglou, T., Heide, M. 2016. Fish Quality and Consumers: How Do Consumers' Knowledge About and Involvement in Fish Quality Define Factors That Influence Fish Buying Behaviour? *Journal of Aquatic Food Product Technology*, 25 (6): 885-894
- Atay, E. G. 2011. *Celebrity endorsements and advertising effectiveness: the importance of value congruence*, Dissertation, University of Oregon, United States of America
- Batra, R., Ahuvia, A. & Bagozzi, R. P. 2012. Brand Love. *Journal of Marketing*, 76 (March): 1-16
- Batra, R. & Ahtola, O. T. 1990. Measuring the Hedonic and Utilitarian Sources of Consumer Attitudes. *Marketing Letters*, 2 (2): 159-170.
- Batra, R. & Ray, M. L. 1986. Situational Effects of Advertising Repetition: The Moderating Influence of Motivation, Ability and Opportunity to Respond. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12 (4): 432-445
- Baumgarth, C. 2010. "Living the brand": brand orientation in the business-to-business sector. *European Journal of Marketing*, 44 (5): 653-671
- Bendixen, M., Bukasa, K. A. & Abratt, R. 2004. Brand equity in the business-to-business market. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 33: 371-380
- Bengtsson, A., & Servais, P. 2005. Co-branding in industrial markets. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 34: 706-713
- Berg-Weitzel, van den, L. & Laar, R. van de. (2000) Local or global packaging. *Admap*, (June): 22-25
- Berger, J. 2014. Word-of-mouth and Interpersonal Communication: A Review and Directions for Future Research. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 24 (4): 586-607
- Berry, L. L. 2000. Cultivating Service Brand Equity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing*

*Science*, 32 (4): 644-651

Berthon, P. & John, J. 2006. From Entities to Interfaces: Delineating Value in Customer-Firm Interactions. In Lusch, R. F., & Vargo, S. L. (Eds.), *The Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing*: 196-207. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe

Beverland, M., Napoli, J. & Lindgreen, A. 2007. Industrial global brand leadership: a capabilities view. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 36:1082-1093

Birch, D., Lawley, M. 2012. Buying seafood. Understanding barriers to purchase across consumption segments. *Food Quality and Preference*, 26 (1): 12-21

Birch, D., Lawley, M. 2014. The role of habit, childhood consumption, familiarity and attributes across seafood consumption segments in Australia. *Journal of Food Products Marketing*, 20 (1): 98-113

Brandwatch. B2B Social Media Report. <https://www.brandwatch.com/reports/b2b-social-media-report/>. 2015

Brown, S., Kozinets, R. V. & Sherry Jr., J. F. 2003. Teaching old Brands New Tricks: Retro Branding and the Revival of Brand Meaning. *Journal of Marketing*, 67 (July):19-33

Bruhn, C. M., Cotter, A., Diaz-Knauf, K., Sutherlin, J., West, E., Wightman, N., Williamson, E., Yafee, M. 1992. Consumer attitudes and market potential for foods using fat substitutes. *Journal of Dairy Science*, 75 (9): 2569-2577

BrunsØ, K., Verbeke, W., Olsen, S. O., Jeppesen, L. F. 2009. Motives, barriers and quality evaluation in fish consumption situations. Exploring and comparing heavy and light users in Spain and Belgium. *British Food Journal*, 111 (7): 699-716

Byrne, A., Whitehead, M., 2003. The naked truth of celebrity endorsement. *British Food Journal*, 105 (4/5): 288-296

Cahu, C., Salen, P., de Lorgeril, M. 2004. Farmed and wild fish in the prevention of cardiovascular diseases. Assessing possible differences in lipid nutritional values. *Nutrition, Metabolism and Cardiovascular Diseases*, 14: 34-41

Callcoat, M. F., Phillips, B. J. 1996. Observations: Elves make good cookies. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 36: 73-79

Caporale, G., Monteleone, E. 2001. Effect of expectations induced by information on origin and its guarantee on the acceptability of a traditional food: olive oil. *Sciences des Aliments*, 21 (3):243-254

Cardoso, C., Lourenço, H., Costa, S., Gonçalves, S., Nunes, M. L. 2016. Survey Into the Seafood Consumption Preferences and Patterns in the Portuguese Population: Education, Age and Health Variability. *Journal of Food Products Marketing*, 22 (4): 421-435

Carlucci, D., Nocella, G., Devitiis, B., Viscecchia, R., Bimbo, F., Nardone, G. 2014. Consumer purchasing behaviour towards fish and seafood products. Patterns and insights from a sample of international studies. *Appetite*, 84: 212-227

Caswell, J. A., Anders, S. M. 2011. Private versus Third Party versus Government Labelling. In Lusk J. L., Roosen J., Shogren J. F. (Eds.), *Oxford University Press*: 472-498. Oxford University Press

Chlebišová, E., Kyzeková, J. & Zajarošová, M. 2011. New approaches to the business-to-business marketing communication. *Economics and management*, 16:1231-1237

Chen, X., Alfnes, F., Rickertsen, K. 2015. *Labelling Farmed Seafood*, Working paper no. 10, Norwegian University of Life Sciences School of Economics and Business

Claret, A., Guerrero, L., Ginés, R., Grau, A., Hernández, M. D., Aguirre, E., Peleteiro, J. B., Fernández-Pato, C., Rodríguez-Rodríguez, C. 2014. Consumer beliefs regarding farmed fish versus wild fish. *Appetite*, 79: 25-31

Costell, E., Tárrega, A., Bayarri, S. 2009. Food acceptance: The role of consumer perception and attitudes. *Chemosensory Perception*, 3 (1):42-50

Court, D., Elzinga, D., Mulder, S. & Vetvik, O. J. The Consumer Decision Journey; McKinsey

Quarterly. <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/the-consumer-decision-journey>. June 2009

Crain, R. 2014. “Why Can’t B-to-B Advertising Be More Like B-to-C? It Already Is.” *Advertising Age*, 85 (15): 44

Cretu, A. E. & Brodie, R. J. 2007. The influence of brand image and company reputation where manufacturers market to small firms: a customer value perspective. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 36: 230-240

Danaher, P. J., Lee, J. & Kerbache, L. 2010. Optimal Internet Media Selection. *Marketing Science*, 29 (2): 182-194

De Pelsmacker, P., Geuens, M. & Van Den Bergh, J. 2003. *Marketingová komunikace*. Prague: Grada Publishing

Dionísio, P. Blended Marketing. *Jornal de Negócios*. [http://www.jornaldenegocios.pt/opiniaodetalhe/quotblended\\_marketingquot](http://www.jornaldenegocios.pt/opiniaodetalhe/quotblended_marketingquot). 2009

Dionísio, P., Levy, J., Vicente Rodrigues, J., Lendrevie, J. 2015. *Mercator da Língua Portuguesa*. Alfragide: Publicações Dom Quixote

Dionísio, P., Rodrigues, J. V., Faria, H., Canhoto, R., & Nunes, R. C. 2011. *b-Mercator*. Alfragide: Publicações Dom Quixote

Dowling, G. R. 1994. *Corporate Reputations: Strategies for Developing the Corporate Brand*. London: Kogan Page

European Commission. A pocket guide to the EU’s new fish and aquaculture consumer labels. [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/docs/body/eu-new-fish-and-aquaculture-consumer-labels-pocket-guide\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/docs/body/eu-new-fish-and-aquaculture-consumer-labels-pocket-guide_en.pdf). 2014

European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products, European Commission. EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products final report. [http://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/84590/EU+consumer+habits\\_final+report+.pdf/5c61348d-a69c-449e-a606-f5615a3a7e4c](http://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/84590/EU+consumer+habits_final+report+.pdf/5c61348d-a69c-449e-a606-f5615a3a7e4c). January 2017

Fernández-Polanco, J., Luna, L. 2012. Factors affecting consumers' beliefs about aquaculture. *Aquaculture Economics & Management*, 16: 22-39

Fill, C. 2009. *Marketing Communications. Interactivity, Communities and Content*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

Fishbein, M., Azjen, I. 1975. *Belief, attitude, intention and behaviour. An Introduction to Theory and Research*. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub

Fishbein, M., & Azjen, I. 1975. Belief, attitude, intention and behaviour. In P. Addison-Wesley (Eds.). *Introduction to theory and research*. Massachusetts

Fog, K., Budtz, C., & Yakaboylu, B. 2005. *Storytelling. Branding in Practice*. Berlin: Springer

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Livestock's long shadow environmental issues and options. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/a0701e/a0701e00.HTM>. 2006

Food and Agriculture Organization. The state of the world fisheries and aquaculture. Contributing to food security and nutrition for all. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5555e.pdf>. 2016

Food and Rural Development, Government of Alberta, CA. [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis8437?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis8437?opendocument). 2004

Frank, B., Torrico, B. H., Enkawa, T., Schvaneveldt, S. J. 2014. Affect versus Cognition in the chain from Perceived Quality to Customer Loyalty: the roles of product beliefs and experience, *Journal of Retailing*, 90 (4): 567-586

Frenzel, K., Müller, M. & Sottong, H. 2006. *Storytelling. Das Praxisbuch*. München: Carl Hanser Verlag

Froehlich, H. E., Gentry, R. R., Rust, M. B., Grimm, D. & Halpern, B. S. 2017. Public Perceptions of Aquaculture: Evaluating Spatiotemporal Patterns of Sentiment around the World. *PLoS ONE*, 12 (1): 1-18

Gilliland, D. I. & Johnston, W. J. 1997. Toward a Model of Business-to-Business Marketing Communications Effects. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 26:15-29

Godin, S. 2005. *All marketers are liars: Telling authentic stories in a low-trust world*. New York: Portfolio Hardcover

Goldenber, J., Oestreicher-Singer, G. & Reichman, S. 2012. The Quest for Content: How User-Generated Links Can Facilitate Online Exploration. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49: 452-468

Gopinath, S., Thomas, J. S. & Krishnamurthi, L. 2014. Investigating the Relationship Between the Content of Online Word of Mouth, Advertising and Brand Performance. *Marketing Science*, 33 (2): 241-258

Guerrero, L., Colomer, Y., Guardia, M. D., Xicola, J., Clotet, R. 2000. Consumer attitude towards store brands. *Food Quality and Preferences*, 11 (5):387-395

Gummesson, E. 2006. Many to Many Marketing as Grand Theory: A Nordic School Contribution. In *The Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing*. New York: International Service Quality Association.

Gummesson, E. 1993. *Quality Management in Service Organization*. New York: International Service Quality Association

Gray, E. R. & Balmer, J. M. T. 1998. Managing Corporate Image and Corporate Reputation. *Long Range Planning*, 31 (5): 695-702

Huang, L. 2014. Storytelling as a Success Factor in Chinese B2B Marketing Communication. *International Journal of China Marketing*, 4 (2):50-75

Hwang, H., McInerney, P., & Shin, J. Learning from South Korea's Mobile-Retailing Boom. McKinsey Quarterly. <http://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/learning-from-south-koreas-mobile-retailing-boom>. May 2015

Jaffry, S., Pickering, H., Ghulam, Y., Whitmarsh, D., Wattage, P. 2004. Consumer choices for quality and sustainability labelled seafood products in the UK. *Food Policy*, 29: 215-228

Jerath, K., Ma, L. & Park, Y-H. 2014. Consumer Click Behaviour at a Search Engine: The Role of Keyword Popularity. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 51 (August): 480-486

John, M. H, Bhullar, N. 2016. To buy or not to buy: The roles of self-identity, attitudes, perceived behavioural control and norms in organic consumerism. *Ecological Economics*, 128: 99-105

Karen Guilbault. Inside Japan: The Fish and Seafood Trade Global Analysis Report. <http://www5.agr.gc.ca/resources/prod/Internet-Internet/MISB-DGSIM/ATS-SEA/PDF/6692-eng.pdf>. April 2015

Katona, Z. & Sarvary, M. 2014. B2B Social Media – “It’s Communication, Not Marketing”. *California Management Review*, 56 (3): 142-156

Keller, K. L. 2013. *Strategic Brand Management. Building, Measuring and Managing Brand Equity*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

Khankaew, C., Ussahawanitichakit, P. & Raksong, S. 2015. A conceptual framework of alternative marketing strategy and marketing outcomes. *Academy of Marketing Studies*, 19 (2): 1-16

Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H. & Setiawan, I. 2010. Marketing 3.0 – From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit. *South Asian Journal of Management*, 21: 178-180

Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H. & Setiawan, I. 2017. *Marketing 4.0: Mudança do tradicional para o digital*. Coimbra: Actual

Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L. 2012. *Marketing Management*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

Kole, A. P. V., Altintzoglou, T., Schelvis-Smit, R. A. A. M., Luten, J. B. 2009. The effects of different types of product information on the consumer product evaluation for fresh cod in real life settings. *Food Quality and Preference*, 20 (3): 187-194



- Lavidge, R. J. & Steiner, G. A. 1961. A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing*, 25 (6): 59-62
- Leek, S. & Christodoulides, G. 2011. Literature review and future agenda for B2B branding: Challenges of branding in a B2B context. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 40:830-837
- Levine, J. M. & Hogg, M. A. 2010. *Encyclopaedia of Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*. Sage Publications
- Li, H., & Kannan, P. K. 2014. Attributing Conversations in a Multichannel Online Marketing Environment: An Empirical Model and a Field Experiment. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 51 (February): 40-56
- Liu, H-Y., & Wu, C-Y. 2011. Storytelling for Business Blogging: Position and Navigation. *International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering*, 5 (9): 1171-1176
- Low, J. & Blois, K. 2002. The evolution of generic brands in industrial markets: the challenges to owners of brand equity. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 31: 385-392
- Michell, P., King, J. & Reast, J. B. 2001. Values related to industrial products. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 30: 415-425
- Neumeier, M. 2006. *The Brand Gap*. Berkeley: New Riders
- Nichols, P. D., Glencross, B., Petrie, J. R., Singh, S. P. 2014. Readily Available Sources of Long-Chain Omega-3 Oils: Is farmed Australian Seafood a Better Source of Good Oil than wild-caught Seafood? *Nutrients*, 6: 1063-1079
- Ohnemus, L. 2009. B2B branding: a financial burden to shareholders? *Business Horizons*, 52: 159-166
- Olins, W. 2010. *The Brand Handbook*. London: Thames & Hudson
- Nunes, P. F. & Merrihue, J. 2007. The Continuing Power of Mass Advertising. *MIT Sloan Management Review* (Winter): 63-69

Osinga, E. C., Leeﬂang, P. S. H., Srinivasan, S. & Wieringa, J. E. 2011. Why Do Firms Invest in Consumer Advertising, with Limited Sales Response? A Shareholder Perspective. *Journal of Marketing*, 75 (January): 109-124

Park, J. K. & John, D. R. 2010. Got to Get You into My Life: Do Brand Personalities Rub Off on Consumers? *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37 (4): 655-669

Patti, C. H., Hartley, S. W., Van Dessel, M. M. & Baack, D. W. 2015. Improving integrated marketing communications practices: A comparison of objectives and results. *Journal of Marketing Communications*

Pearson, D. 2002. Marketing organic food. Who buys it and what do they purchase? *Food Australian*, 54: 31-34

Pfeiffer, M. & Zinnbauer, M. 2010. Can Old Media Enhance New Media? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 50 (1): 42-49

Pieniak, Z., Verbeke, W., Vanhonacker, F., Guerrero, L., Hersleth, M. 2009. Association between traditional food consumption and motives for food choice in six European countries. *Appetite*, 53: 101-108

Pohar, J. 2011. Detection and comparison of the sensory quality of wild and farmed brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) by consumers. *Acta Agriculturae Slovenica*, 98: 45-50

Posavac, S. S., Sanbonmatsu, D. M., Kardes, F. R., Fitzsimons, G. J. 2004. The Brand Positivity Effect: When Evaluation Confers Preference. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31: 643-651

Posavac, S. S., Sanbonmatsu, D. M., Seo, J. Y., Iacobucci, D. 2014. How Attitudes Toward Product Categories Drive Individual Brand Attitudes and Choice. *Psychology and Marketing*, 31 (10): 843-852

Pulizzi, J., & Barrett, N. 2009. *Get content get customers: Turn prospects into buyers with content marketing*. New York: McGraw-Hill

Ramaseshan, C., Ishak, A., & Kingshott, R. P. J. 2013. Interactive effects of marketing strategy formulation and implementation upon firm performance. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 29: 1224-1250

Reynolds, I. Z. Understanding consumer trends can present new opportunities: Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis8437?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis8437?opendocument) . 2004

Robinson, P. J., Faris, C. W., & Wind, Y. 1967. *Industrial and creative marketing*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Roheim, C. A., Asche, F., Santos, J. I. 2011. The Elusive Price Premium for Ecolabelled Products: Evidence from Seafood in the UK Market. *Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 62 (3): 655-668

Roheim, C. A., Sudhakaran, P. O., Durham, C. A., 2012 Certification of Shrimp and Salmon for Best Aquaculture Practices: Assessing Consumer Preferences in Rhode Island. *Aquaculture Economics and Management* (16): 266-286

Roseman, M. G. 2013. A Study of Customers' Intention to Purchase Ethnic Food When Eating at Restaurants. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 16: 298-312

Sato, S. K. 2011. Marketing 3.0: Um novo conceito para interagir com um novo consumidor. *Signos do Consumo*, 3 (2): 243-245

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. 2009. *Research Methods for Business Students*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

Schulze, C., Scholer, L. & Skiera, B. 2013. Not All Fun and Games: Viral Marketing for Utilitarian Products. *Journal of Marketing*, 78 (January):1-19

Shee, P. S. B. & Abratt, R. 1989. A new approach to the corporate image management process. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 5 (1): 63-76

Shepherd, R. & Sparks, P. 1994. *Measurement of Food Preferences*. London: Blackie Academic & Professional

Sheth, J. N. & Usley, C. 2007. Implications of the Revised Definition of Marketing: From Exchange to Value Creation. *American Marketing Association*, 26 (2):302-307

Sole, D. & Wilson, D. G. 1999. Storytelling in Organizations: The Power and Traps of Stories to Share Knowledge in Organization. *LILA*: 1-12

Solomon, M. R. 2015. *Consumer Behavior. Buying, Having and Being*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

SRI Consulting Business Intelligence. VALS. The Framework. <https://www.d.umn.edu/~rvaidyana/mktg4731/VALSFramework2002-09.pdf> . 2002

The Hartman Group. Consumer Trends in Health and Wellness. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/thehartmangroup/2015/11/19/consumer-trends-in-health-and-wellness/#790613a3313e> . 2015

The Nielsen Company. We are what we eat. Healthy eating trends around the world. Global Health and Wellness Report. <https://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/niensglobal/eu/nielseninsights/pdfs/Nielsen%20Global%20Health%20and%20Wellness%20Report%20-%20January%202015.pdf>. January 2015

The Nielsen Company. What's in our food and on our mind. Global ingredient and dining-out trends around the world report. [http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/niensglobal/eu/docs/pdf/Global%20Ingredient%20and%20Out-of-Home%20Dining%20Trends%20Report%20FINAL%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/niensglobal/eu/docs/pdf/Global%20Ingredient%20and%20Out-of-Home%20Dining%20Trends%20Report%20FINAL%20(1).pdf) . August 2016

The Nielsen Company; Moving on up. Premium products are in high demand around the world. Global Premiumization Report. <http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/niensglobal/de/docs/Nielsen%20Global%20Premiumization%20Report%20December%202016.pdf>. December 2016

Tsai, C. T. & Lu, P. H. 2012. Authentic dining experiences in ethnic theme restaurants. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31 (1): 304-396

- Uchida, H., Onozaka, Y., Morita, T., Managi, S. 2014. Demand for ecolabelled seafood in the Japanese market: A conjoint analysis of the impact of information and interaction with other labels. *Food Policy*, 44: 68-76
- Urban, G., Liberali, G., Macdonald, E., Bordley, R., & Hauser, J. 2014. Morphing Banner Advertising. *Marketing Science*, 33 (1): 27-46
- Vysekalová, J. & Mikes, J. 2010. *Reklama: jak delat reklamu*. Prague: Grada Publishing
- Varadarajan, R. 2010. Strategic marketing and marketing strategy: domain, definition, fundamental issues and foundational premises. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38:119-140
- Webster Jr., F. E. 1992. The changing role of marketing in the corporation. *Journal of Marketing*, 56:1-17
- Webster, F. E., & Keller, K. L. 2004. A roadmap for branding in industrial markets. *Journal of Brand Management*, 11 (5): 388-402
- Wessells, C. R., Johnston, R. J., Donath, H. 1999. Assessing Consumer Preferences for Ecolabelled Seafood: The influence of species, certifier and household attributes. *American Journal of Agriculture Economics* 81: 1084-1089
- Wilcock, A., Pun, M., Khanona, J., Aung, M. 2004. Consumer attitudes, knowledge and behaviour: a review of food safety issues. *Trends in Food Science and Technology*, 15: 56-66
- Wolff Olins. 2011. *The new guide to identity*. Surrey: Gower Publishing Limited
- Woodside, A. G., Sood, S. & Miller, K. E. 2008. When consumers and brands talk: Storytelling theory and research in psychology and marketing. *Psychology and Marketing*, 25: 97-145
- Zahaf, M., Anderson, J., 2008. Causality effects between celebrity endorsement and the intentions to buy. *Innovative Marketing*, 4 (4): 57-65

## Websites

<http://www.akvagroup.com/products/cage-farming-aquaculture/nets>

<https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B>

<https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=M>

<https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=T>

<https://archive.ama.org/archive/AboutAMA/Documents/American%20Marketing%20Association%20Releases%20New%20Definition%20for%20Marketing.pdf>

<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20120920-are-we-running-out-of-fish>

<http://blogs.opentext.com/future-information-impact-digital-revolution/>

<http://www.bofish.com>

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/search-advertising.html>

<http://www.cleanseas.com.au>

<http://www.conserve-energy-future.com/causes-effects-solutions-of-overfishing.php>

<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/fisheries/species-identification/inshore-estuarine-species/trevally-queenfish-kingfish/amberjack>

[https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp_en)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/thehartmangroup/2015/11/19/consumer-trends-in-health-and-wellness/#790613a3313e>

<http://healthland.time.com/2011/01/31/new-dietary-guidelines-cut-salt-and-sugar-eat-more-fish/>

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/05/17/business/japans-fish-consumption-shrinks-lowest-since-1960s/#.WT1ZCcaZN-U>

<http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/how-b2b-companies-talk-past-their-customers>

<http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2016/dining-without-doing-dishes-almost-half-globally-eat-away-from-home.html>

[http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/aquaculture/what\\_is\\_aquaculture.html](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/aquaculture/what_is_aquaculture.html)

<http://www.openblue.com>

<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/tokyo-drifts-from-seafood-to-meat-eating>

[http://overfishing.org/pages/why\\_is\\_overfishing\\_a\\_problem.php](http://overfishing.org/pages/why_is_overfishing_a_problem.php)

<http://rcc.harvard.edu/news/digital-revolution-its-impact-everyones-profession-business-and-daily-life>

<https://www.slideshare.net/wearesocialsg/digital-in-2017-global-overview?ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.linkedin.com%2F>

<https://www.statista.com/topics/2057/brands-on-social-media/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/10/japan.foodanddrink>

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/>

## Appendix

### 1. Questionnaire

## Assessing fish consumption habits and receptivity to Mariculture

My name is Joana Reis Pereira, I graduated in Business Administration at Católica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics and I am currently finishing my master's degree in Marketing at ISCTE, in Lisbon.

I am creating a communication plan for a new Portuguese Mariculture fish producer. This questionnaire aims to understand consumers' preferences regarding fish consumption, as well as their receptivity towards Mariculture fish, that will be responsibly and sustainably raised in the pristine waters of Madeira Island, in the Atlantic Ocean.

Your opinion and insight are very important for the development of this project.

It takes less than 10 minutes and all answers are anonymous.

Thank you so far !

Let's get started !

**\*Required**

### Demographics

1. **Gender \***

*Mark only one oval.*

Male

Female

2. **Age \***

---

3. **Nationality \***

---

4. **Marital status \***

*Mark only one oval.*

Single

Married

Divorced



5. **Occupation \***

Mark only one oval.

- Student  
 Employed  
 Unemployed  
 Retired

6. **How many people live in your household? \***

\_\_\_\_\_

7. **Please evaluate your position in the following situation: "I am responsible for choosing the food products bought for my household." \***

Mark only one oval.

- 1      2      3      4
- never               always

### Fish consumption habits

8. **Do you eat fish? \***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes      Skip to question 10.  
 No      Skip to question 9.

### Fish consumption habits

9. **Do you buy fish even if you don't eat it? \***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes      Skip to question 13.  
 No      Stop filling out this form.

### Fish consumption habits

10. **Regarding the consumption of animal protein in your diet, what proportion of fish do you consume (approximately)? \***

Mark only one oval.

- <= 25%  
 25 - 75%  
 >= 75%

11. **Where do you prefer to eat fish? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- at home  
 at restaurants  
 both

## Fish consumption habits

12. **Which fish species do you appreciate the most? You can choose more than one option.**

\*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Tuna (Atum)  
 Salmon (Salmão)  
 Cod (Bacalhau)  
 Sardine (Sardinha)  
 Horse mackerel (Carapau)  
 Sea bass (Robalo)  
 Sea bream (Dourada)  
 Sole (Linguado)  
 Hake (Pescada)  
 Swordfish (Espadarte)  
 Grouper (Cherne)  
 Greater Amberjack (Charuteiro)  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. **Which fish species do you buy the most? You can choose more than one option.**

*Tick all that apply.*

- Tuna (Atum)  
 Salmon (Salmão)  
 Cod (Bacalhau)  
 Sardine (Sardinha)  
 Horse mackerel (Carapau)  
 Sea bass (Robalo)  
 Sea bream (Dourada)  
 Sole (Linguado)  
 Hake (Pescada)  
 Swordfish (Espadarte)  
 Grouper (Cherne)  
 Greater Amberjack (Charuteiro)  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Fish purchasing habits

**14. Where do you usually buy fish? \***

If you eat fish but don't usually buy it, what would you prefer? You can choose more than one option.

*Tick all that apply.*

- Frozen, at the supermarket
- Fresh, at the supermarket
- Fresh, at the local market
- Fresh, directly from the producer

**15. Please rate the following factors according to their importance when buying or choosing fish: \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Not important	Slightly important	Very important	Extremely important
Country of origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fish origin (wild or aquaculture)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Affordable price	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Convenience (fileted fish or whole)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appearance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nutritional value	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brand or producer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality and sustainability certification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

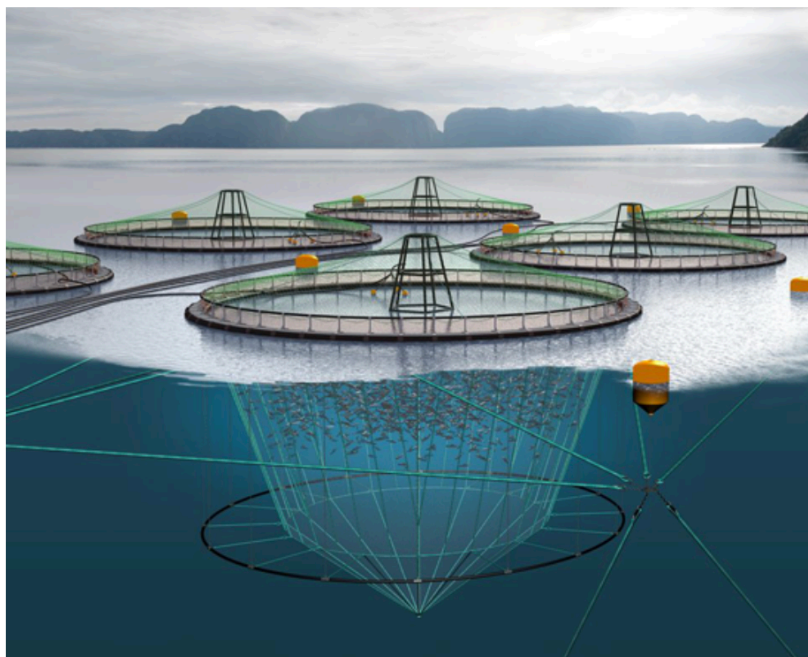
### Mariculture

Mariculture is a specialized branch of aquaculture that consists of the cultivation of marine species in their natural environment – the open ocean – inside an enclosed area that is delimited by nets or cages.

As the cages are located in the open ocean (where the currents are strong) the intense water flow ensures the area where the fish grow is clean.

Mariculture decreases the impact of overfishing and helps guarantee the existence and growth of wild fish stocks. Hence, it is a viable solution for producing high quality proteins.

### Illustration of a mariculture production system



16. **Had you heard of this system before? \***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes  
 No Skip to question 19.

## Mariculture

17. **Do you know or have you heard of any mariculture company? \***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes  
 No

## Mariculture

18. **Based on what you know, do you consider mariculture to be: \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree
a high quality method	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
conscientious	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
safe in terms of disease and contamination control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Wild fish vs aquaculture fish

19. **Do you normally know the origin of the fish you buy or eat? (if it is wild or not) \***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes  
 No Skip to question 24.

## Mariculture

20. **Have you ever bought or eaten fish from mariculture production? \***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes Skip to question 21.  
 No Skip to question 23.  
 I don't know Skip to question 24.

## Mariculture

21. **Would you buy or eat it again? \***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes Skip to question 24.  
 No Skip to question 22.

**22. Why not? You can choose more than one option. \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- I don't trust the production method.
- The quality is not good.
- The fish is not healthy.
- The water is contaminated.
- Aquaculture fish is harmful to our health.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Skip to question 24.*

## **Fish preferences**

**23. Why not? You can choose more than one option. \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- Lack of opportunity
- Lack of trust in this production method
- Influence of others
- Lack of information
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Skip to question 24.*

## **Fish preferences**

**24. Which type of fish would you buy? You can choose more than one option. \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- Wild
- From aquaculture production (inland tanks)
- From mariculture production (open ocean)
- Indifferent

## **Portuguese mariculture fish**

Soon a new certified Portuguese mariculture company, established in Madeira Island - located in the Atlantic Ocean - will start producing high quality fish.

## **Madeira Island, Portugal**



**The fish that will be produced: Charuteiro, also known as Greater Amberjack or Kanpachi**



**It is extra lean, has a firm texture and mild flavour. This species is highly appreciated in Asian cuisine, especially Japanese. It is used for sushi and sashimi. Still, it is very versatile and can be cooked in various ways.**



**25. Do you like to eat raw or undercooked fish (as in sushi, sashimi or ceviche, for instance)? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

**26. Regardless of how you prefer to eat it (raw or cooked), would you consider trying the fish (Charuteiro) produced by this Portuguese mariculture company? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes     *Skip to question 28.*  
 No     *Skip to question 27.*

**27. Why not? You can choose more than one option. \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- I don't know this species.
- I don't like this species.
- I don't like the production method.
- It is not produced in my country.
- I need more information.
- I don't know how to prepare it.
- I don't eat fish.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Fish brands & advertising**

**28. Do you remember ever seeing or hearing advertisements of fish brands? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No     *Skip to question 31.*

## **Fish brands & advertising**

**29. Where? You can choose more than one option. \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- TV shows
- TV, during breaks
- Radio
- Magazines
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
- YouTube
- Blogs
- Supermarket
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

30. **What do you like to see in advertisements of fish brands? You can choose more than one option. \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- The environment in which the fish grows.
- How the fish is captured.
- What the fish looks like before being cooked.
- What the fish looks like after being cooked.
- The fish being prepared by a chef.
- The fish being prepared at home.
- The versatility of the fish.
- The occasion in which the fish is consumed (everyday use, festive seasons).
- The type of consumer that eats the fish.
- Nutritional facts about the fish (rich in omega-3, for example)
- If the producer has any sustainability certification.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Skip to question 32.*

## **Fish brands & advertising**

31. **What would you like to see in the advertisement of a fish brand? You can choose more than one option. \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- The environment in which the fish grows.
- How the fish is captured.
- What the fish looks like before being cooked.
- What the fish looks like after being cooked.
- The fish being prepared by a chef.
- The fish being prepared at home.
- The versatility of the fish.
- The occasion in which the fish is consumed (everyday use, festive seasons).
- The type of consumer that eats the fish.
- Nutritional facts about the fish (rich in omega-3, for example).
- If the producer has any sustainability certification.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



## Social media & food brands

Today food brands use social media to be closer to consumers.

32. Do you use social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and so on) to learn more about or interact with food brands? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Yes  
 No Skip to question 34.

## Social media & food brands

33. Express your opinion regarding the following statements: \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree
It is difficult to communicate with food brands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important to have simple and easy ways of communicating with food brands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would use social media to communicate directly with food brands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy seeing content shared by food brands on social media (pictures, videos, tips, events, product demonstrations, contests, for example).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I engage with food brands on social media (by commenting, sharing or "liking" the content posted, by participating in contests, etc).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Social media & fish brands

Last question !

34. What type of content would you like to find on the social media pages of a fish brand? \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Irrelevant	Slightly irrelevant	Slightly relevant	Relevant
News related to the industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
News related to marine life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Innovations or advances in the industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Campaigns, promotions and events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"Behind the scenes" footage of the company or production process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interesting information or fun facts about marine life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recipes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cooking tips and ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nutritional facts about the fish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tips and testimonials from famous chefs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 2. Questionnaire results

Figure 1 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable Gender (256 responses)

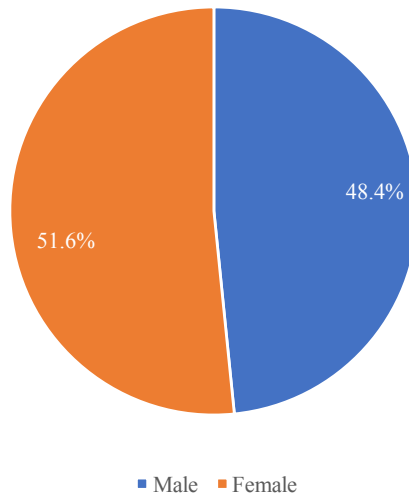


Figure 2 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable Nationality (256 responses)

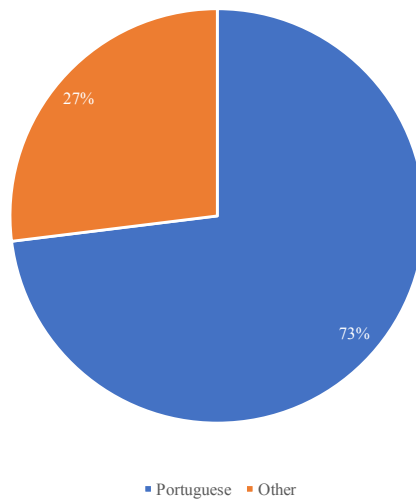


Figure 3 – Bar chart (in percentage) of the variable Age group (256 responses)

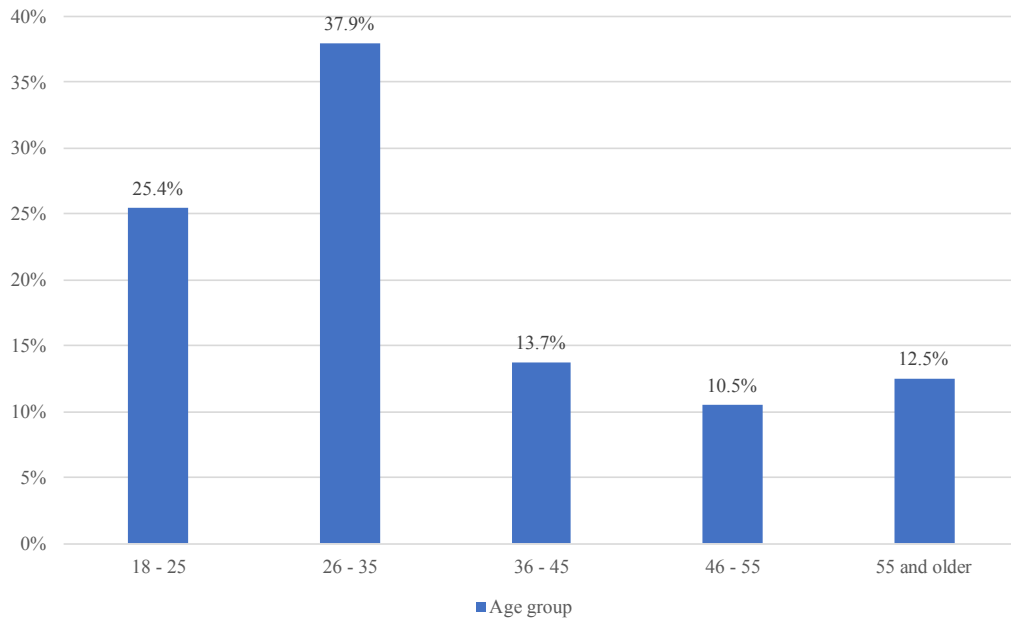


Figure 4 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable Marital Status (256 responses)

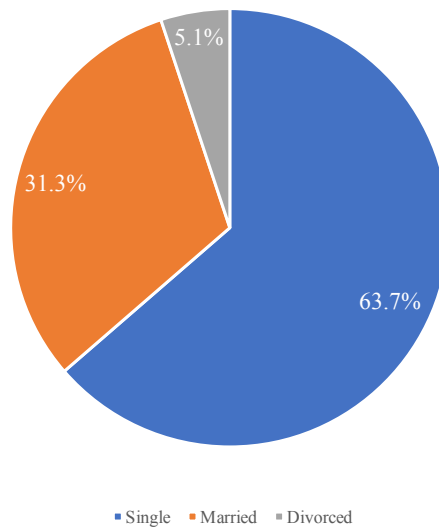


Figure 5 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable Occupation (256 responses)

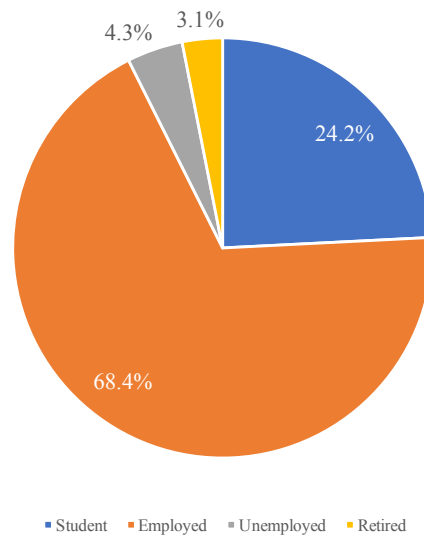


Figure 6 – Bar chart (in percentage) of the variable "How many people live in your household?" (256 responses)

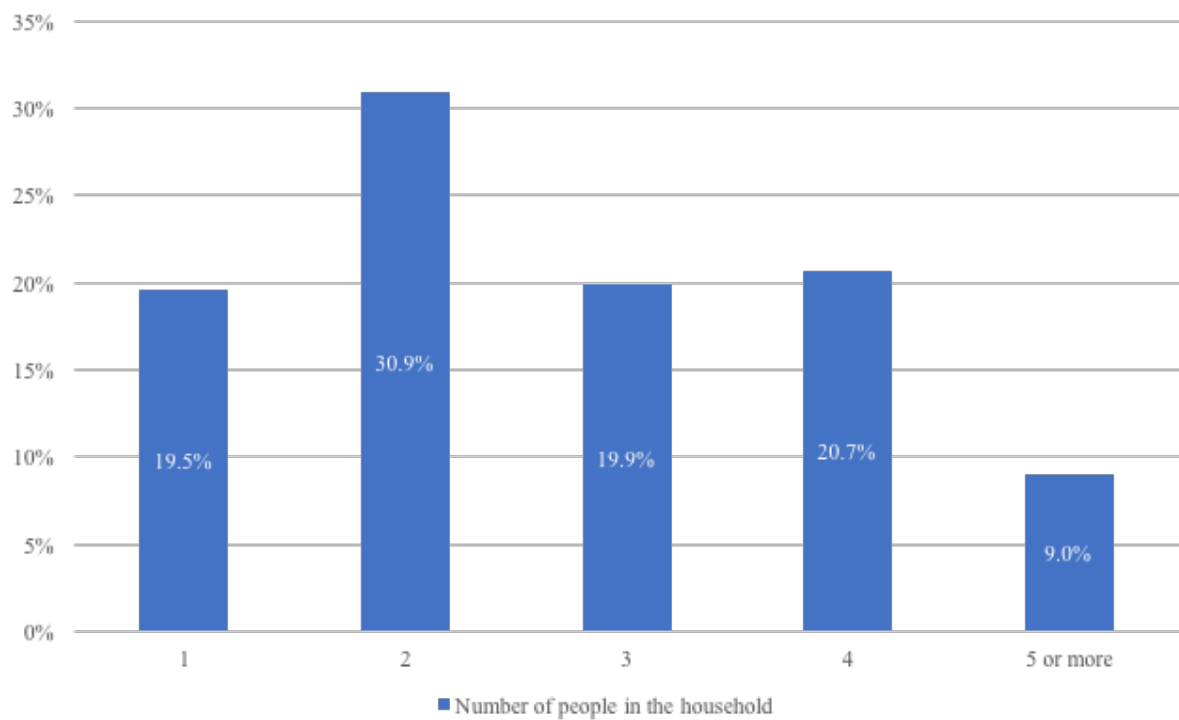


Figure 7 - Bar chart (in percentage) of the variable “Please evaluate your position in the following situation “I am responsible for choosing the food products bought for my household.”” (256 responses)

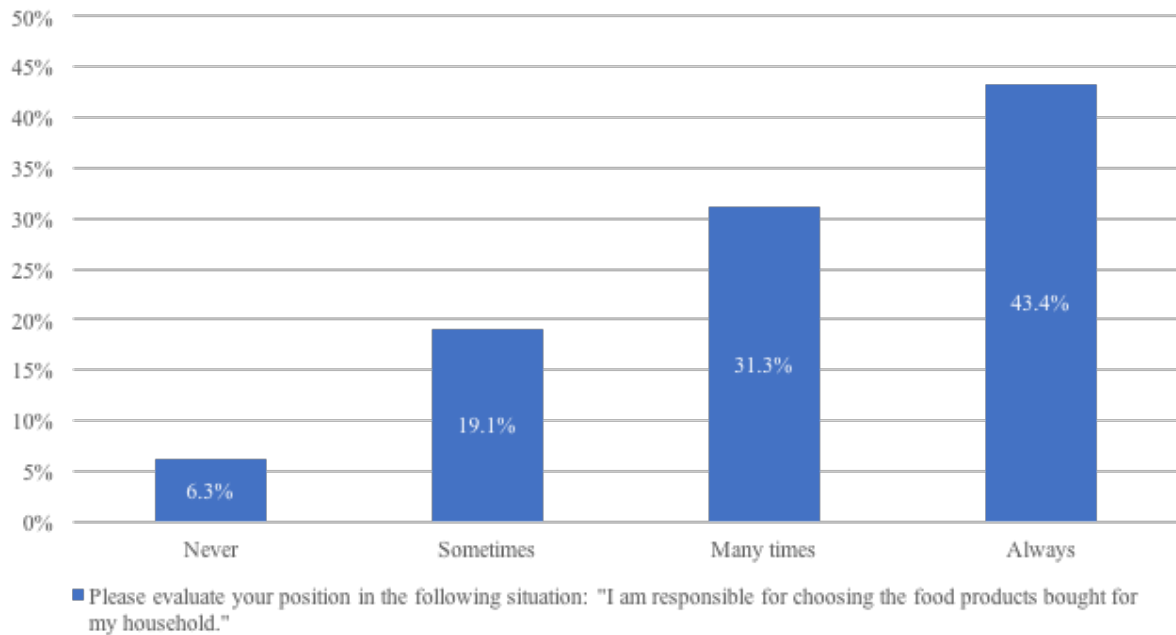


Figure 8 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Do you eat fish?” (256 responses)

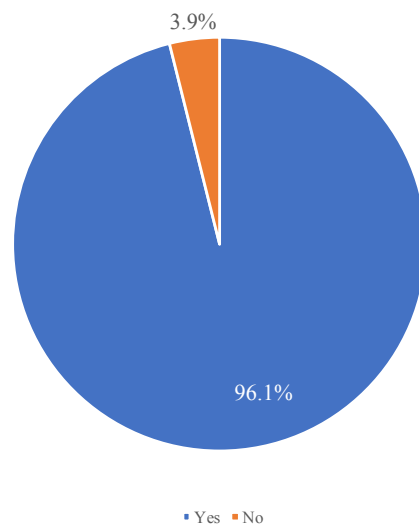


Figure 9 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Do you buy fish even if you don’t eat it?” (10 responses)

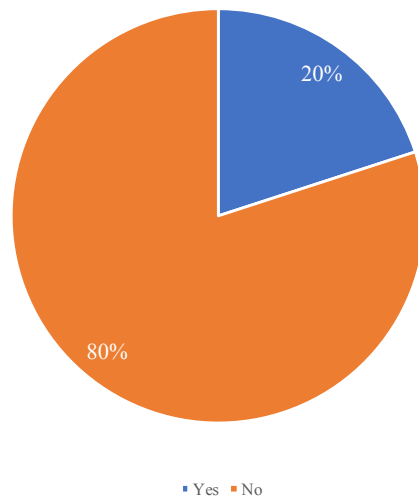


Figure 10 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Regarding the consumption of animal protein in your diet, what proportion of fish do you consume (approximately)?” (246 responses)

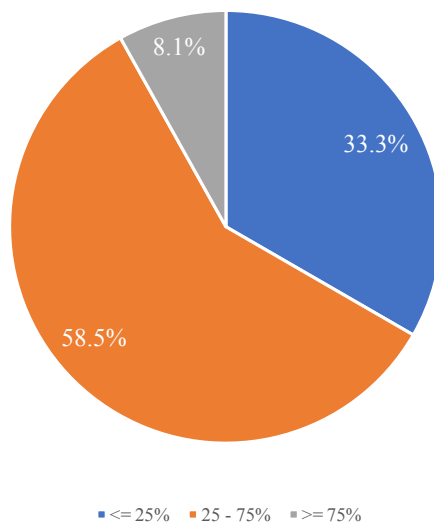


Figure 11 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Where do you prefer to eat fish?” (246 responses)

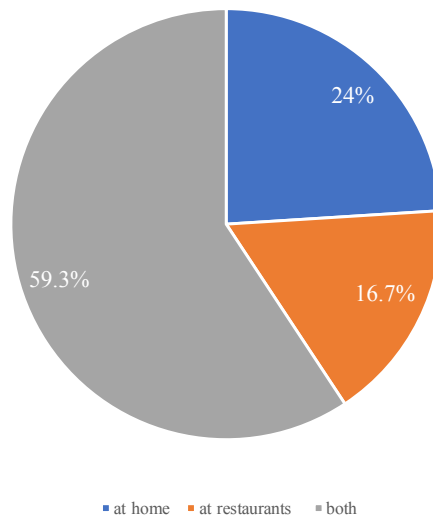


Figure 12 – Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Which fish species do you appreciate the most? You can choose more than one option.” (246 responses)

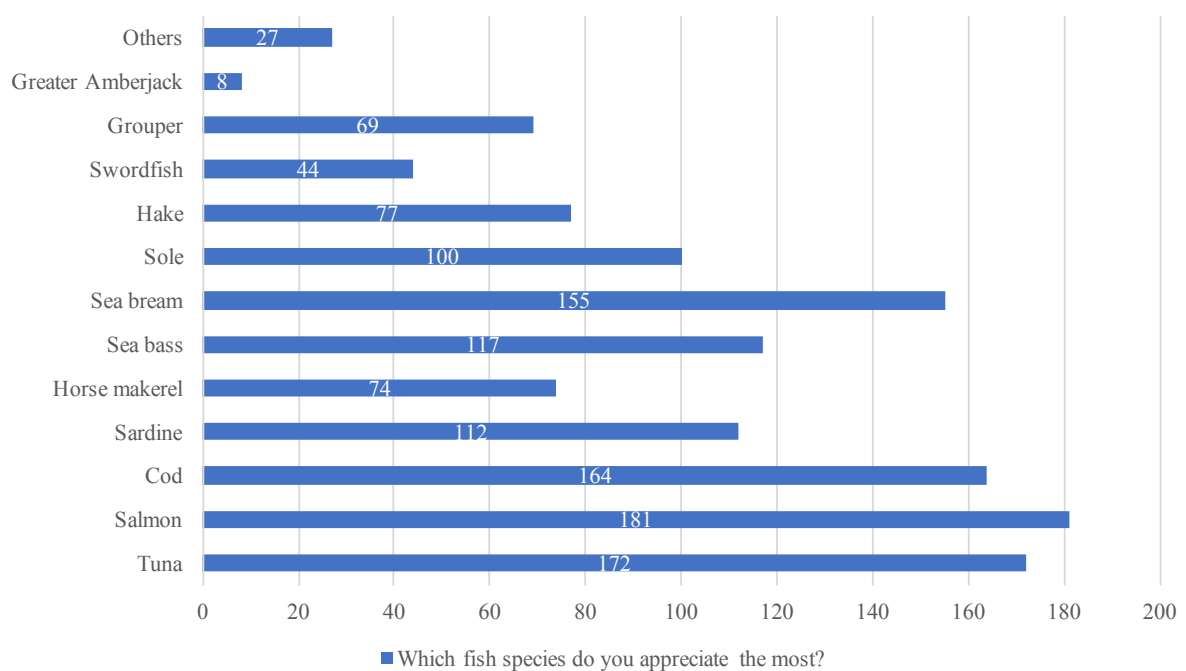


Figure 13 – Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Which fish species do you buy the most? You can choose more than one option.” (246 responses)

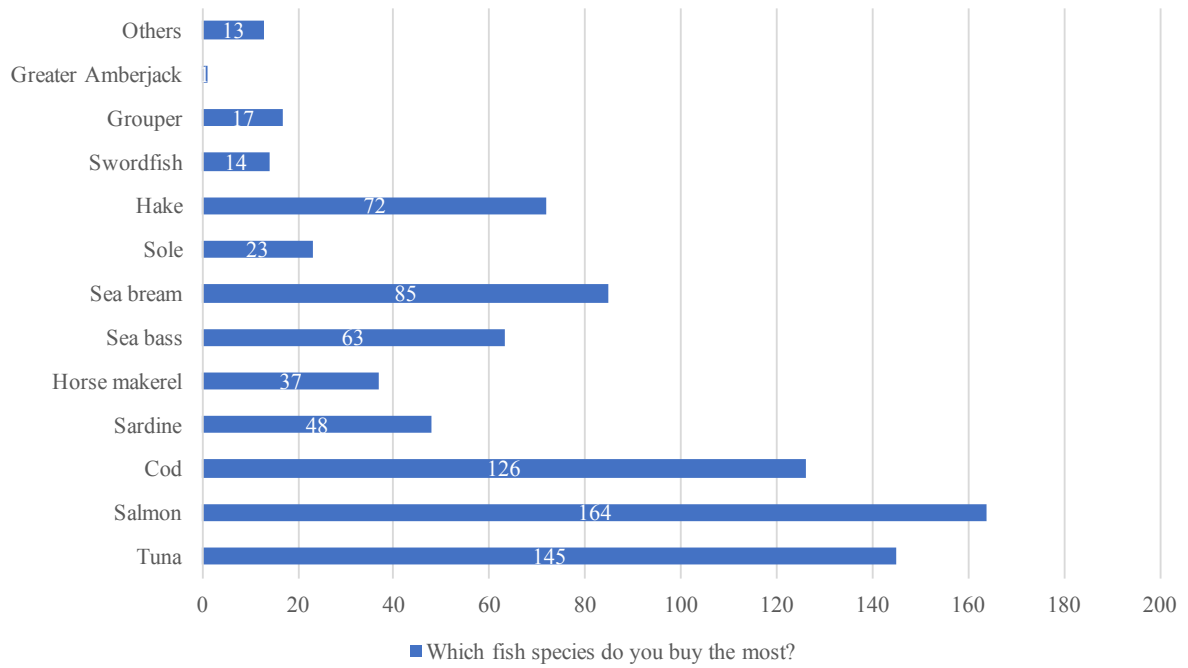




Figure 14 – Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Where do you usually buy fish? You can choose more than one option.” (248 responses)

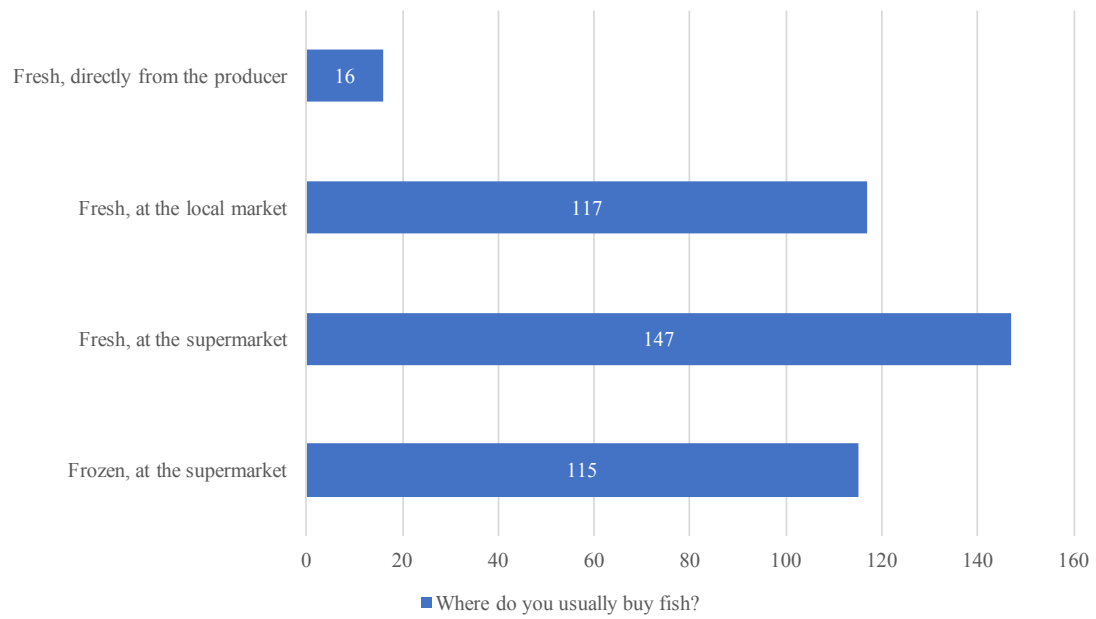


Figure 15 – Table of scores of the variable “Please rate the following factors according to their importance when buying or choosing fish.” (248 responses)

	Not important	Slightly important	Very important	Extremely important	Total score
	-2	-1	1	2	-57
Country of origin	53	88	77	30	12
Fish origin (wild or aquaculture)	40	83	75	50	163
Affordable price	12	38	131	47	17
Convenience (fileted fish or whole)	29	86	105	28	271
Appearance	5	33	106	104	12
Nutritional value	23	101	89	35	-168
Brand or producer	69	112	52	15	63
Quality and sustainability certification	17	90	95	46	

In order to make a more accurate analysis of the answers to this type of question, it was decided to attribute values (-2, -1, 1 and 2) to each level of relevance (or, in other cases, agreement) to then calculate each category's final score.

Figure 16 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Had you heard of this system before?” (248 responses)

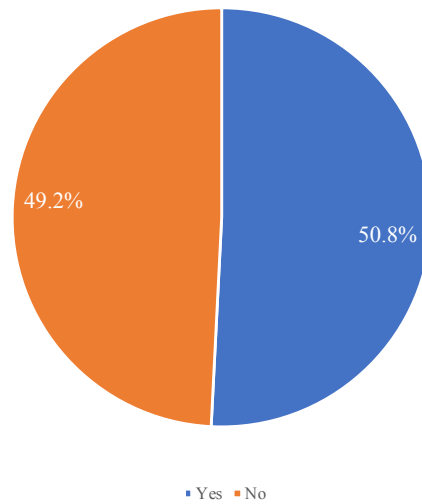


Figure 17 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Do you know or have you heard of any mariculture company?” (126 responses)

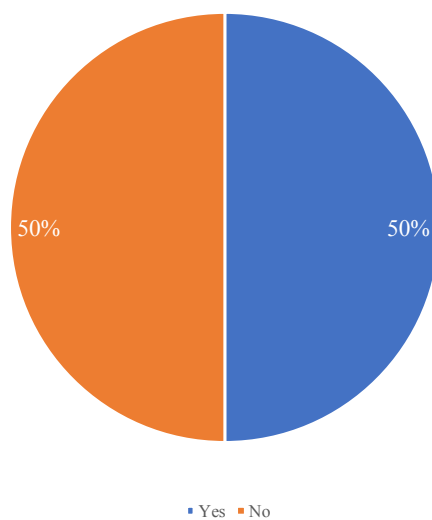


Figure 18 – Table of scores of the variable “Based on what you know, do you consider mariculture to be:” (126 responses)

	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Total score
A high quality method	-2	-1	1	2	109
Trustworthy	5	24	51	46	100
Conscientious	3	27	59	37	103
Safe in terms of disease and contamination control	4	28	49	45	75
	12	26	51	37	

Figure 19 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Do you normally know the origin of the fish you buy or eat (if it is wild or not)” (248 responses)

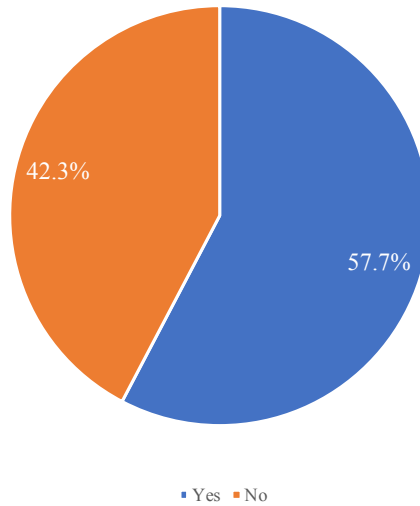


Figure 20 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Have you ever bought or eaten fish from mariculture production?” (143 responses)

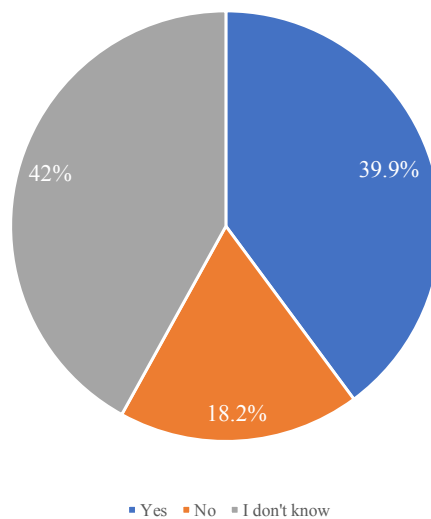


Figure 21 – Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Why not? (if the previous answer was “no”)” (26 responses)

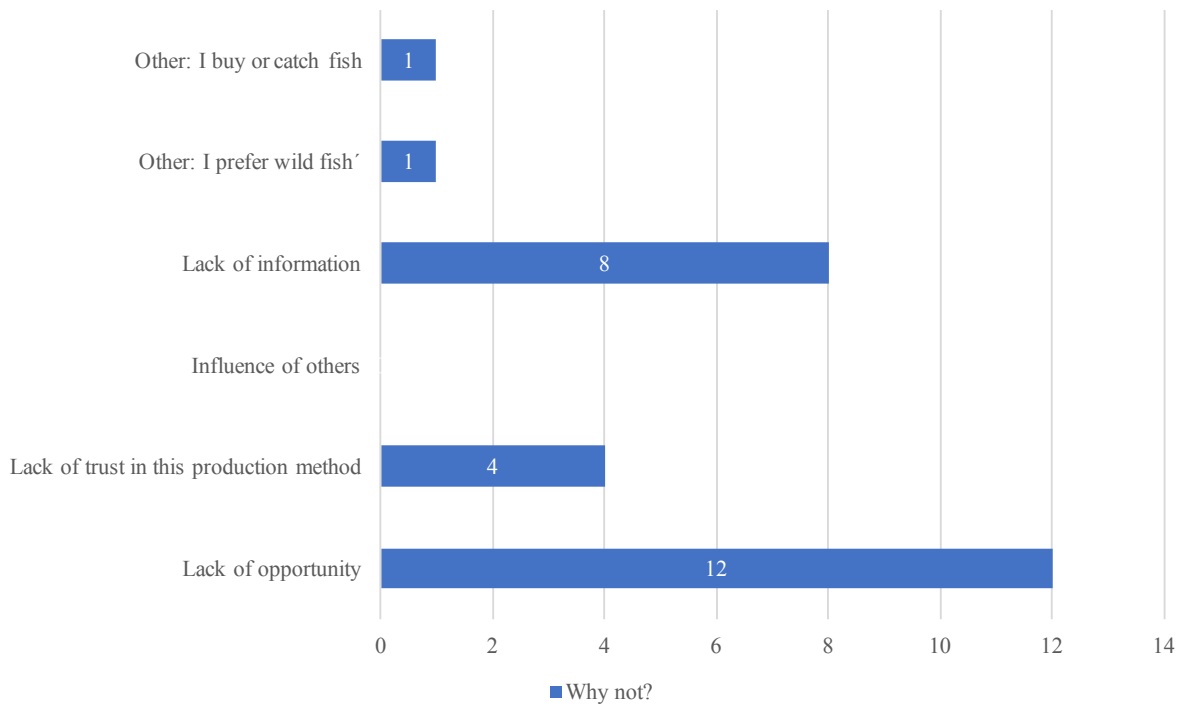


Figure 22 – Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Would you buy or eat it again?” (57 responses)

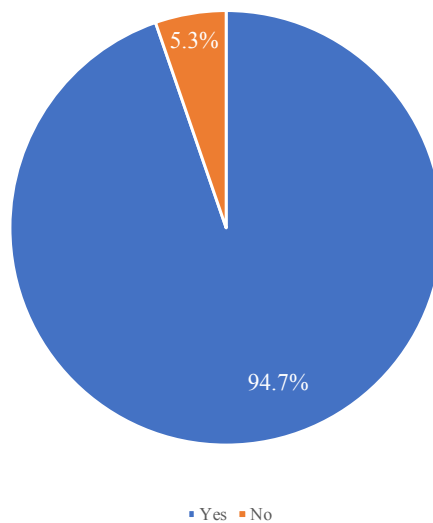


Figure 23 – Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Why not? (if the previous answer was “no, I wouldn’t buy or eat it again”)” (5 responses)

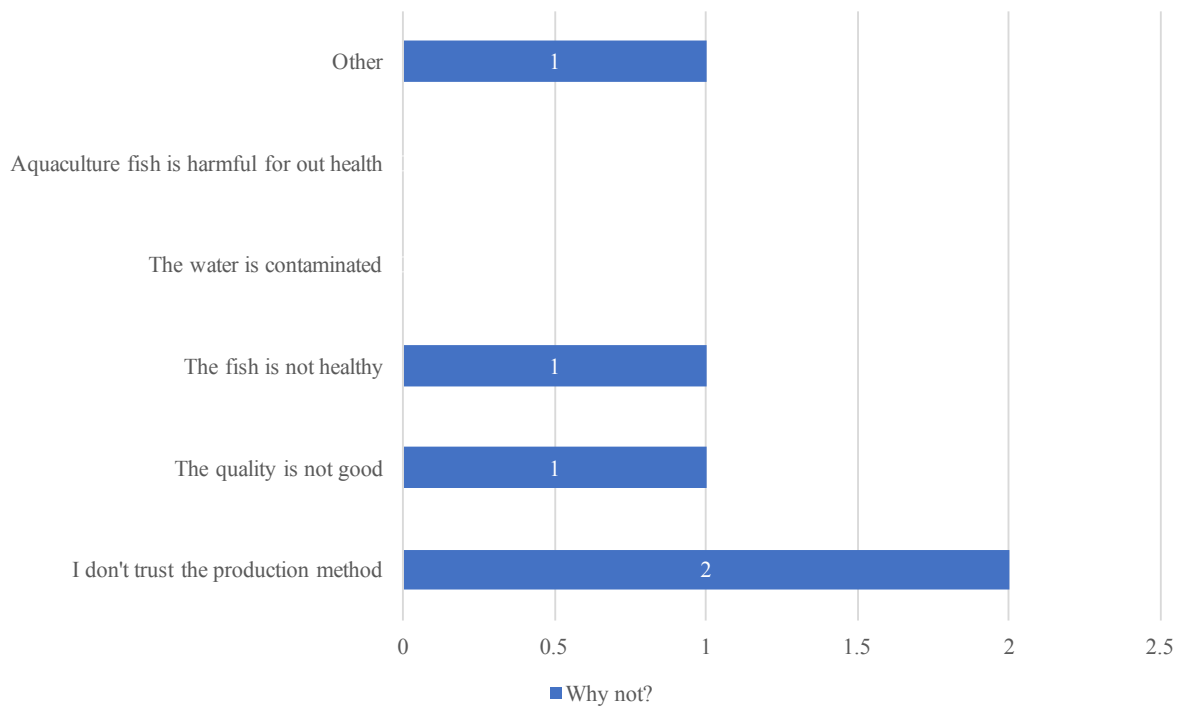


Figure 24 - Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Which type of fish would you buy? You can choose more than one option” (248 responses)

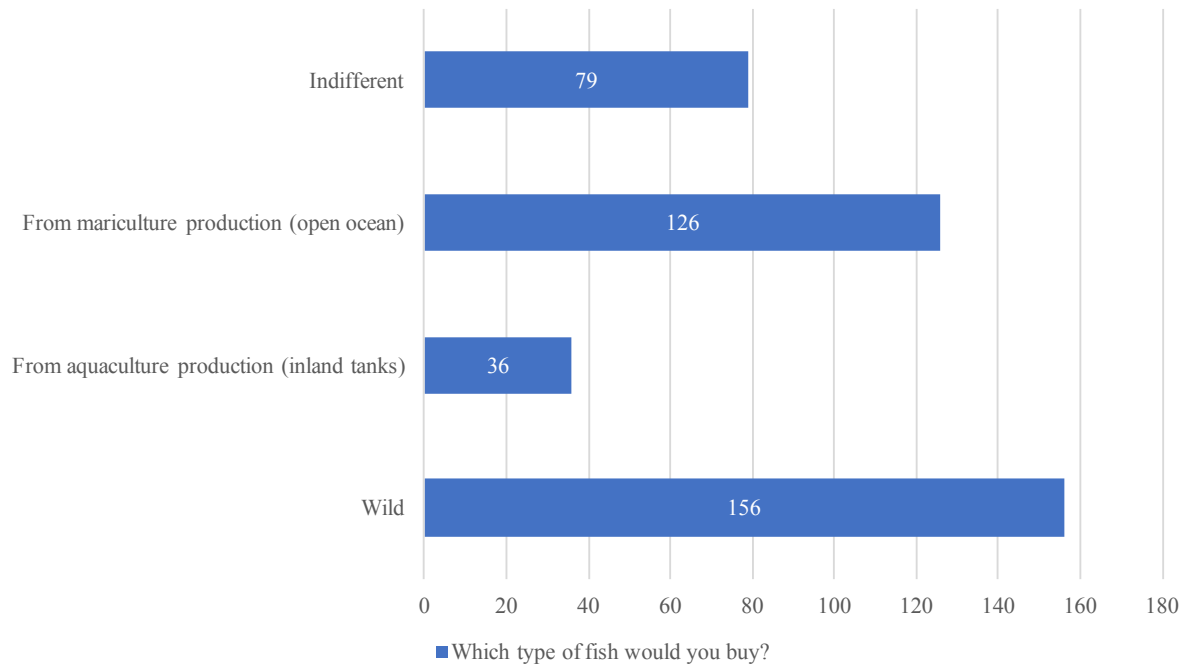


Figure 25 - Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Do you like to eat raw or undercooked fish (as in sushi, sashimi or ceviche, for instance)?” (248 responses)

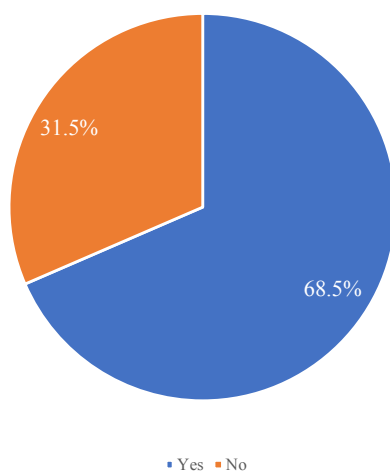




Figure 26 - Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Regardless of how you prefer to eat it (raw or cooked) would you consider trying the fish (Charuteiro) produced by this Portuguese mariculture company?” (248 responses)

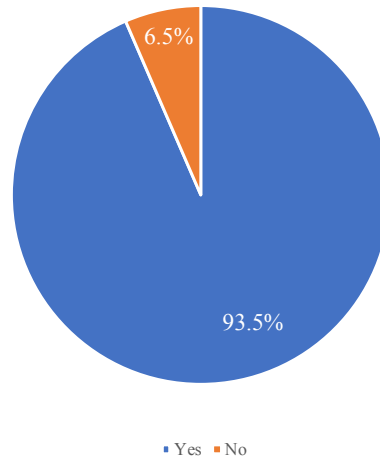


Figure 27 - Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Why not? (if the previous answer was “no”)” (26 responses)

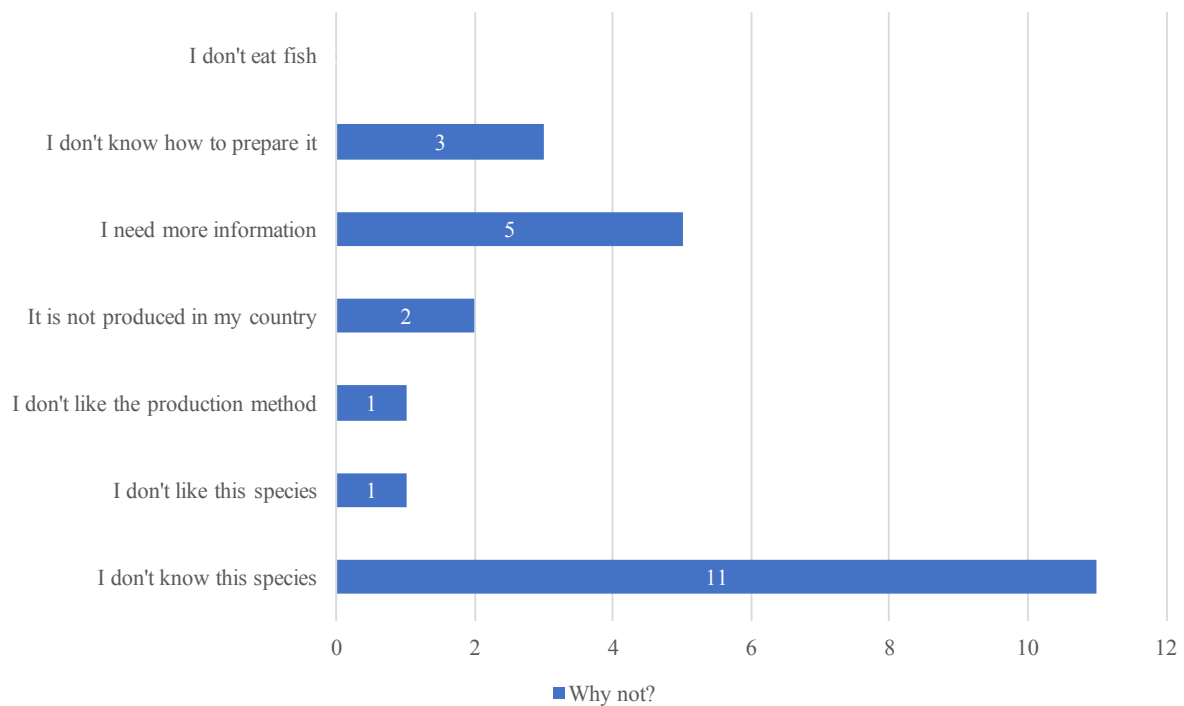


Figure 28 - Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Do you remember ever seeing or hearing advertisements of fish brands?” (248 responses)

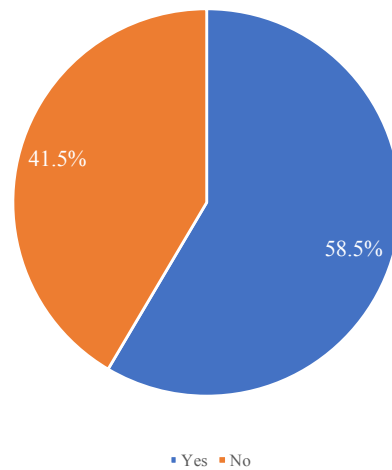


Figure 29 - Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “Where? You can choose more than one option. (145 responses)

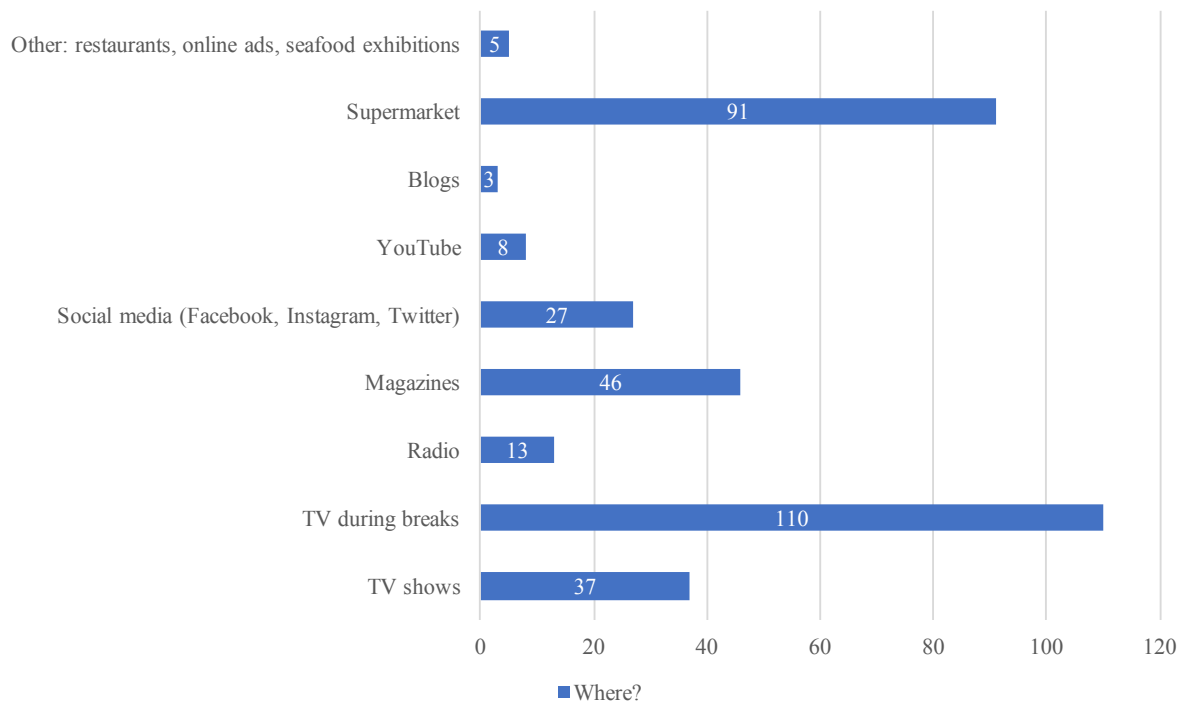


Figure 30 - Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “What do you like to see in advertisements of fish brands? You can choose more than one option. (145 responses)

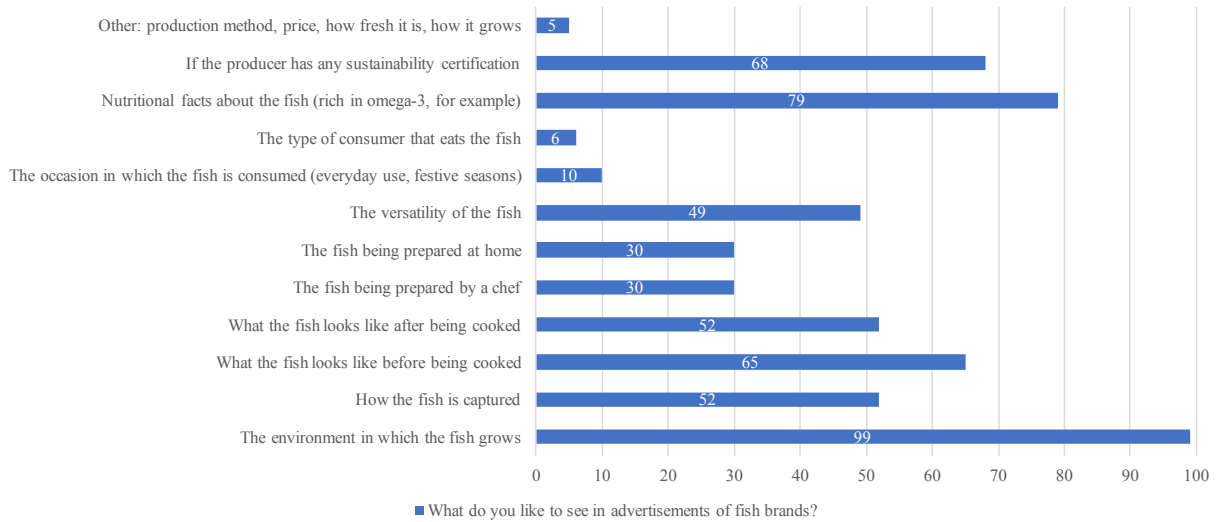


Figure 31 - Bar chart (in frequency) of the variable “What would you like to see in advertisements of fish brands? You can choose more than one option.” (145 responses)

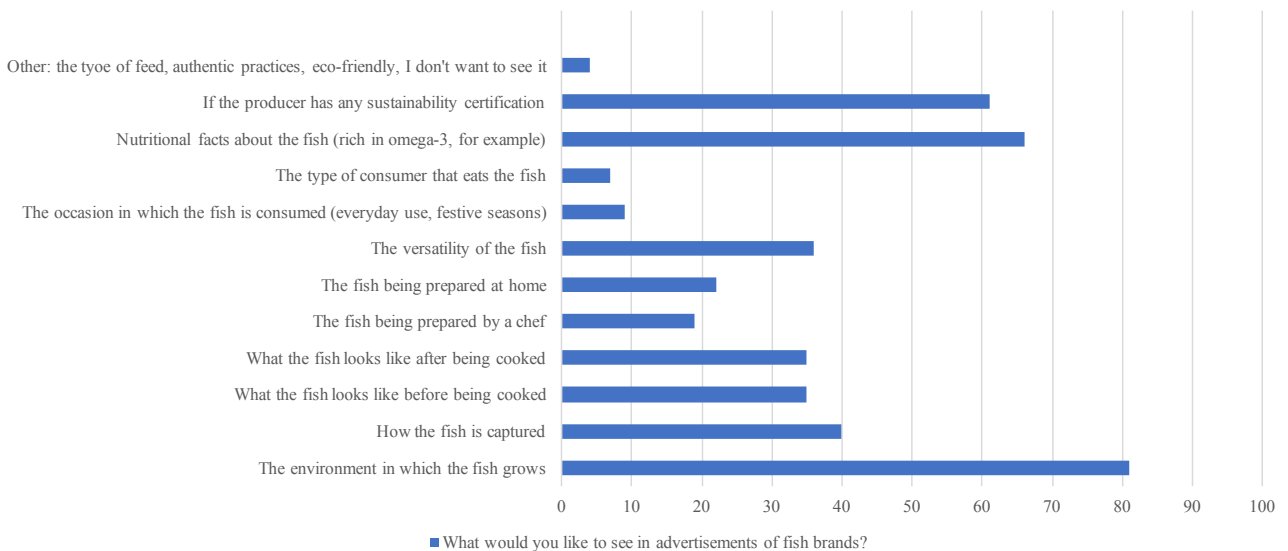


Figure 32 – Table of scores of the variable “Express your opinion regarding the following statements:” (103 responses)

	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Total score
It is difficult to communicate with food brands	-2	-1	1	2	37
It is important to have simple and easy ways of communicating with food brands	5	34	47	17	128
I would use social media to communicate directly with food brands	2	10	40	51	81
I enjoy seeing content shared by food brands on social media	3	20	53	27	131
I engage with food brands on social media	1	6	53	43	22
	18	23	43	19	

Figure 33 - Pie chart (in percentage) of the variable “Do you use social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and so on) to learn more about or interact with food brands?” (248 responses)

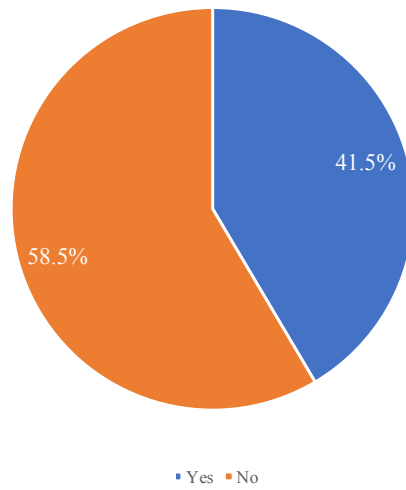


Figure 34 – Table of scores of the variable “What type of content would you like to find on the social media pages of a fish brand?” (248 responses)

	Irrelevant	Slightly irrelevant	Slightly relevant	Relevant	Total score
	-2	-1	1	2	
News related to the industry	42	74	87	45	19
News related to marine life	26	55	110	57	117
Innovations or advances in the industry	19	50	103	76	167
Campaigns, promotions and events	29	56	97	66	115
Contests	62	95	67	24	-104
Behind the scenes footage of the company or production process	23	45	108	72	161
Interesting information or fun facts about marine life	23	55	116	54	123
Recipes	14	43	101	90	210
Cooking tips and ideas	14	31	108	95	239
Nutritional facts about the fish	12	30	103	103	255
Tips and testimonials from famous chefs	41	82	93	32	-7

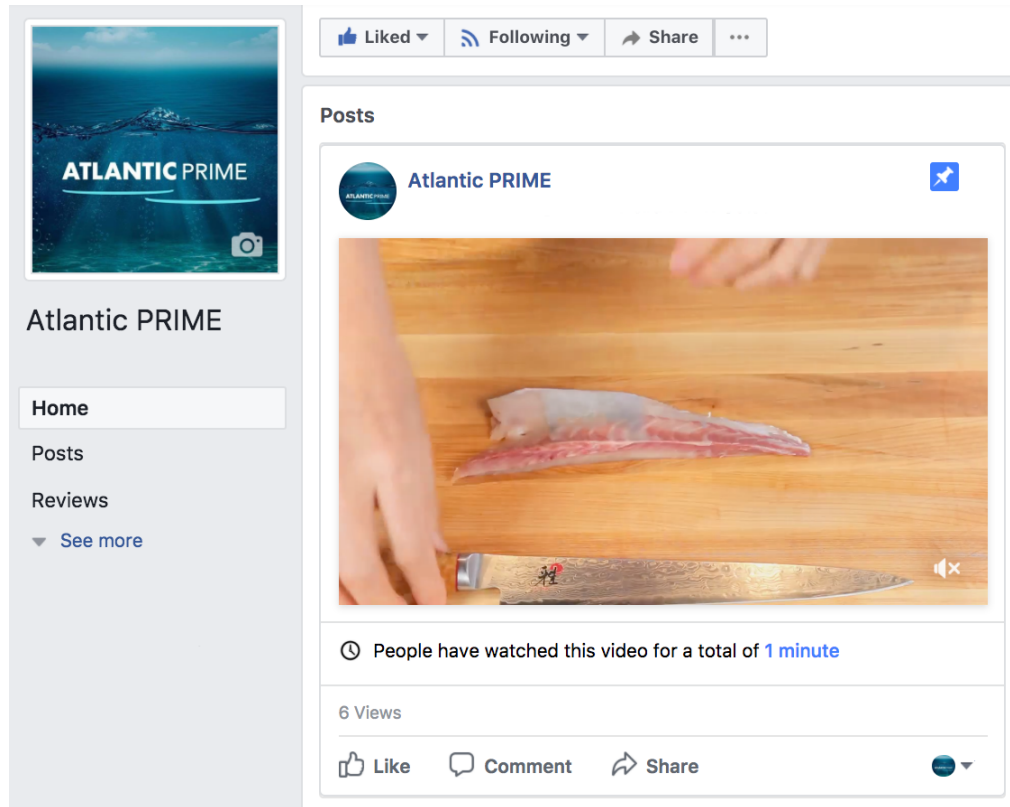
### 3. Communication ideas - illustrations

Figure 1 – Facebook posts (example)



Source: Own elaboration

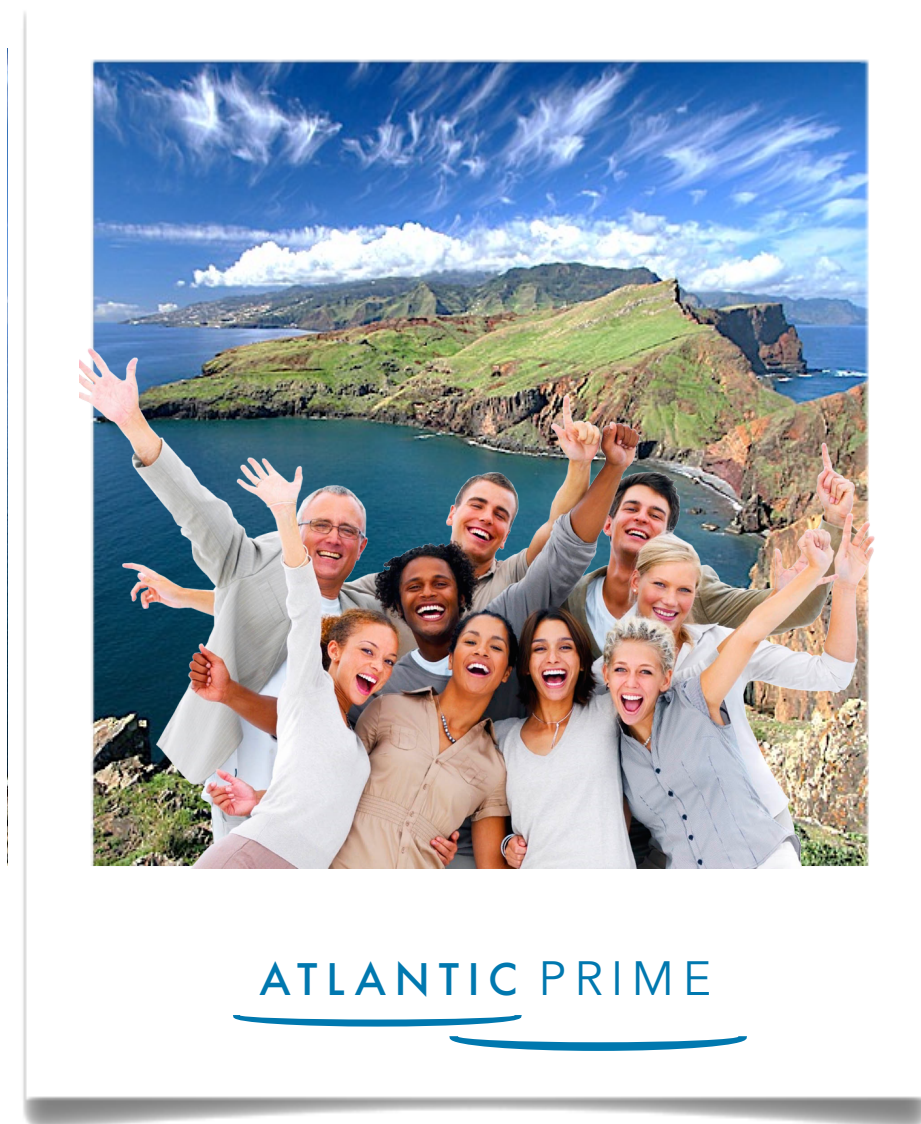
Figure 2 – Video posted on Facebook (example)



Source: Own elaboration

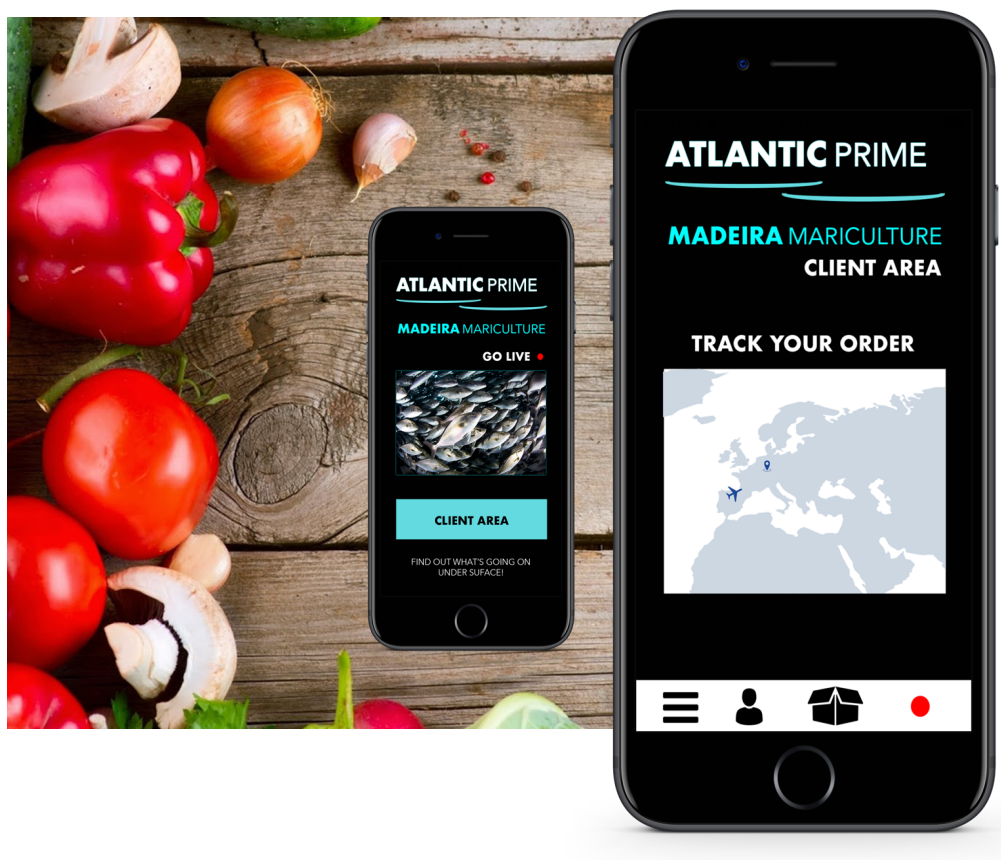


Figure 3 – Photo taken at the photo booth (example)



Source: Own elaboration

Figure 4 – AtlanticPrime’s app (example)



Source: Own elaboration

Figure 5 – Article about the company (example)



Source: Own elaboration

Figure 6 – Promotional video at Pestana Hotel (example)



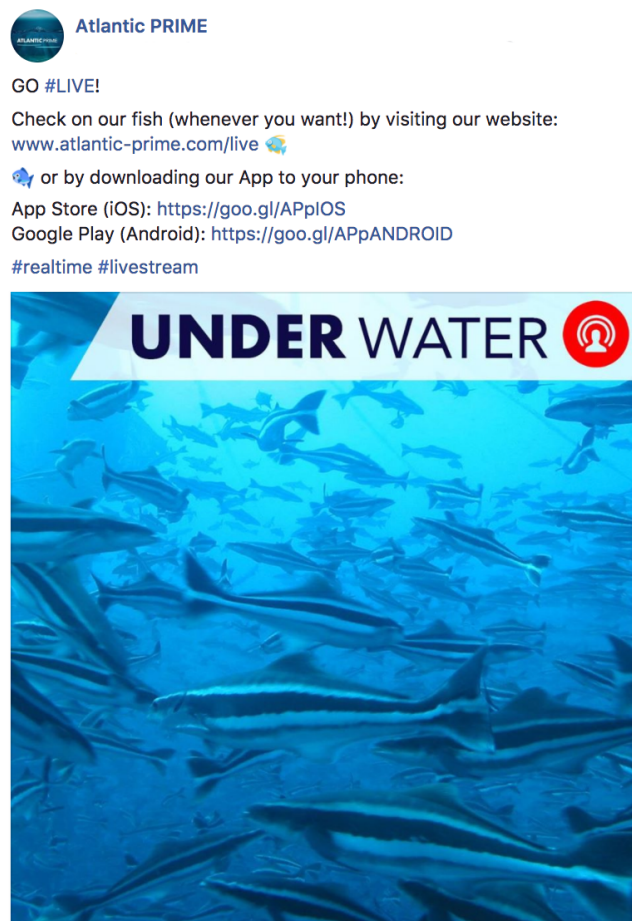
Source: Own elaboration

Figure 7 – Instagram stories (example)



Source: Own elaboration

Figure 8 – Post on Facebook about underwater live-streaming (example)



Source: Own elaboration