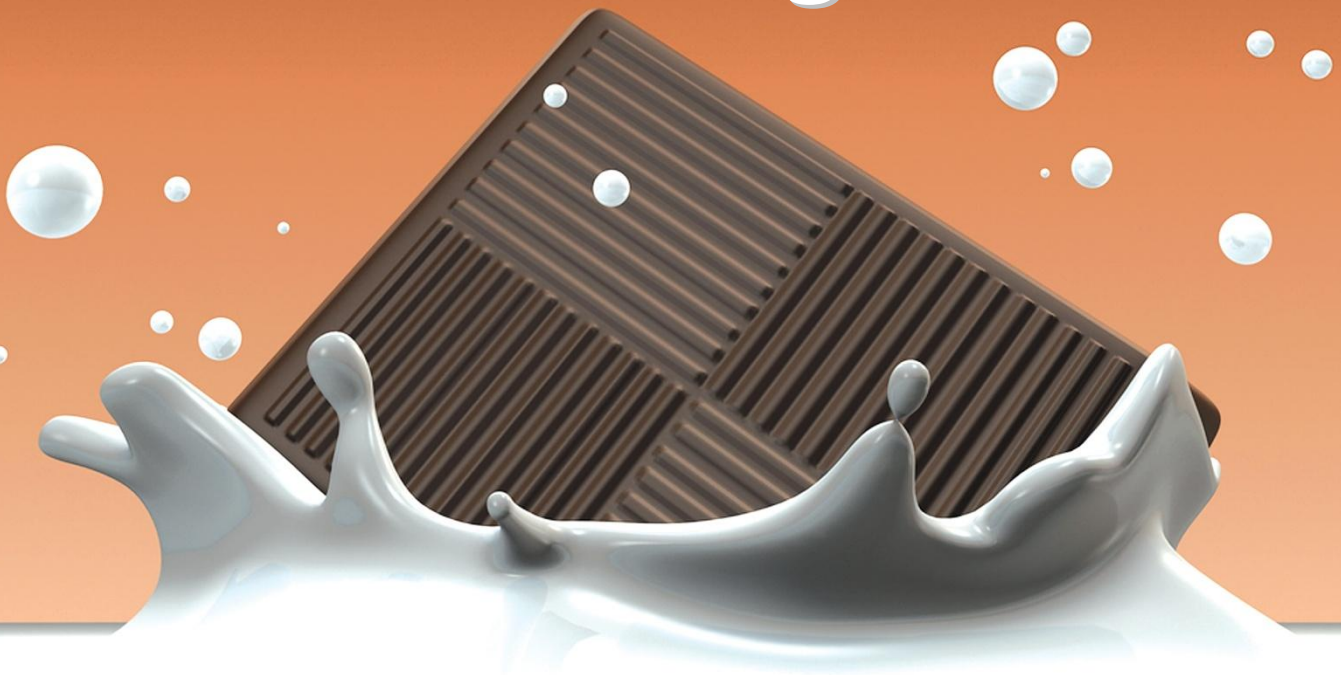




# **MARABOU**

## **Marketing Plan**



**Sasha Wallace**  
**Ashley Lanpher**  
**Courtney Coton**  
**Nicole Ferlita**

**MAR 4824**



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## Executive Summary

Marabou is a chocolate brand first created and developed in Upplands Vaspy, Sweden. Marabou chocolate offers a superior quality chocolate by using premium cocoa and a secret formula that gives the smooth chocolate a hint of caramel flavor. Marabou was purchased by Kraft in 1993 and is currently sold heavily in Finland and Denmark as well.

Marabou does not currently have a large presence in the United States; it markets heavily in its home country and neighboring nations. According to a survey given to consumers electronically, chocolate is most heavily consumed by females between the ages of 20-25 years old. Marabou consumers enjoy the smooth, rich taste as well as the convenient shape and packaging of the Marabou chocolate rolls.

Marabou has an opportunity to enter in the US market which shows potential to increase market share, profitability, brand awareness, customer acquisition and retention. Recovery in consumer spending during 2010 resulted in a quick rebound of chocolate sales. Currently the market share is divided into three major players; The Hershey Company (25.4%), Mars Inc. (20.6%), and Nestle SA (10.3%). Lindt and Guylian are two competitors from the European chocolate market and well known in the United States. The barriers to entry into the market are medium while initial start up is a substantial investment.

Marabou's marketing plan is to emphasize the great taste and quality of the chocolates when introducing it into the US market. Marabou will gain new customers and increase profitability by marketing itself as a quality chocolate that takes environmental sustainability into account and selling it at an affordable price. Marabou plans to see a growth of at least 5% per year in the US, and become one of the top 10 chocolate brands in the US by 2015.

We plan to increase brand awareness and gain new customers through in store promotions, print media, distributor discounts, end of aisle displays, and free samples during the first 5 years in the United States. We plan to aggressively achieve our goals through these promotional outlets throughout the United States.





## Company Description

Marabou is a major participant in the chocolate candy industry, and is based out of Upplands Vasby, Sweden. It was founded in 1916 by Johan Throne Holst, who already had a successful Norwegian chocolate company called Freia. Although both companies were successful on their own, the two companies merged and were then purchased by Kraft foods in 1993. Marabou was acquired for a record 3 billion Norwegian krone, and is one of Kraft's largest brands- being sold in Denmark and Finland as well.

Marabou got its name from their sister brand Freia's mascot: a stork. Marabou's famous melkesjokolade, or milk chocolate, is one of their most popular products and is what is associated with the brand. However, now the saying "Mmm... Marabou!" and the distinctive curly script 'M,' is the recognizable image of the brand.

## Strategic Focus and Plan

This section of the plan reviews three aspects of corporate strategy that influence the marketing plan for Marabou chocolates:

1. The mission
2. Goals
3. Core competencies and sustainable competitive advantage

### Mission

The mission of Marabou is to market and sell its line of specialty milk chocolates in a variety of flavors to consumers around the world outside its home base of Sweden, while focusing on natural ingredients and materials that promote environmental and social sustainability.

### Goals

A three year projection for Marabou includes the following goals:

1. Financial goals-
  - To have a real (inflation adjusted) growth in earnings per share of 5% per year over time.





- To obtain a return on equity of at least 10%
2. Nonfinancial goals-Act globally, think locally
- Increase market share by introducing an additional product from the Marabou line other than the rolls, into the US market in addition to current stores Marabou is sold such as; IKEA, and online retailers.
  - To be among the top 10 chocolate brands in the United States by 2015 in the foreign chocolate segment
  - Maintain the brand image of Marabou as a popular and flavorful Swedish Milk Chocolate
  - Increase awareness and retention by creating an English Facebook fan page, and twitter account.
  - To achieve national distribution in two supermarket chains in 2012 and five by 2013

### **Core Competency and Sustainable Competitive Advantage**

Marabou's core competency seeks to provide:

1. High-quality milk chocolate made from environmentally sustainable ingredients that will provide a more flavorful alternative to Swedish milk chocolate consumers in the United States market.
2. Distribution discounts to retailers and an efficient distribution system to that reflect Marabou Chocolate standards.

These core competencies translate into a sustainable competitive advantage as Marabou continuously monitors its distribution system and consumer attitudes toward Marabou in the US market in order to gain new long time consumers of the brand and maintain high customer retention.

### **Situation Analysis**

This situation analysis begins with a snapshot of the current environment of Marabou chocolates by providing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis that looks. Following the SWOT will be an in-depth look at other details regarding the environment surrounding Marabou: industry, competitors, company, and consumers.





## SWOT Analysis

Figure 1 shows the internal and external factors affecting the market opportunities for Marabou chocolate. The SWOT analysis emphasizes the efforts of Marabou chocolate has had on the chocolate market since first launched in Sweden in 1951. Marabou's internal strengths are considered to be their experienced management team, their innovative product offerings and developments that they have made in the last few years, the three major markets in Europe, and a strong manufacturing and distribution system from Kraft to assist in serve these large markets. Marabou's external strengths include the economy and consumer/social opportunities Marabou competes with, the competitiveness Marabou has in the chocolate market along with the high legal and regulatory trends in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Internal Factors	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Management</b>	Experienced and versatile food production company	European chocolate brand and not sold in American retail grocery stores, drug stores, or convenience stores
<b>Offerings</b>	Unique, high quality, European chocolate	Many competitors in the chocolate industry
<b>Marketing</b>	three major European markets; Sweden, Finland, Denmark	No national awareness only sold in Swedish store IKEA in the United States. Kraft will have a hard time separating all of their different chocolate brands.
<b>Manufacturing</b>	Owned by Kraft Foods	Other chocolate is made by Kraft foods as well.
<b>Finance</b>	Very successful in the European chocolate	Kraft Foods has many other successful





	market	chocolate brands already
<b>Research and Development</b>	Continuing efforts to ensure quality in delivered products	Not original from America so little research on the American chocolate consumption.
<b>Consumer/Social</b>	Chocolate consumption in the United States is very high which coincides with the high rate of obesity in America. American's view chocolate as an indulgence and do prefer high priced chocolates on special occasions.	Americans are focused heavily on healthier lifestyles which includes healthier indulgences.
<b>Competitive</b>	Distinctive name, packaging, and break off pieces of chocolate unlike competitors.	Competitors have stronger brand recognition.
<b>Economic</b>	People with extra disposable income will choose to indulge in chocolate.	The recession has limited consumer's disposable income.
<b>Legal/Regulatory</b>	High standards from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration allow a higher barrier to entry for chocolate companies.	Swedish based company and getting accustomed to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration standards.

**Industry Analysis: Trends in the Chocolate Industry**

*Chocolate Bars:* According to *Chocolate Production Industry in the US*, The chocolate industry in the United States has had to face some challenges. The increasing importance of healthy food has put a strain on the industry, as well as rising input prices and economic





decline. (Gotaas) Because of the recession consumers did not purchase discretionary products such as chocolate as often, therefore there was a dip in the industry. However, chocolate is also a comfort food and consumer spending in 2010 resulted in a recovery for the industry. Demand determinants in the chocolate industry are; changing consumer lifestyles, pricing and distribution, presence of substitutes, product innovation, and branding and advertising. (Gotaas)

Chocolate bars account for about 45% of the industry and based on the high growth other premium European chocolates are penetrating the US market such as Lindt and Guylian. In 2012, revenue in the industry is anticipated to grow to 3.0% and steadily increase by 1.5% over the next 5 years, during which time revenue is projected to increase to \$17.5 billion by 2016. The premium European chocolate segment is expected to grow in the next 5 years until 2016 as employment rates and disposable income increases. (Gotaas)

Barriers to entry in the chocolate market are medium and steady with a significant investment required for start up costs. The largest threat to new entrants is the positions of well known brands in the industry. These large companies have resources that allow them to invest heavily in advertising and promotions. Competitors also have strong relationships with suppliers that may be difficult for a new product to come in and create contracts with them.

Consumers are expected to purchase more chocolate because they want to indulge in inexpensive, feel good luxuries like candy. Sugar-free, organic, and free trade chocolates show considerable growth in the industry during the next five years. Major markets for the chocolate industry include; confectionary wholesalers (77%), supermarkets (15%), specialty retailers (7%), and direct consumers (1%) (Gotaas, IBISWorld ).

### **Competitors in the Chocolate Market**

Currently, Marabou has the leading market share in Sweden with 46.6%. In Sweden, it is trailed by Cloetta Fazer with 24.8% market share, followed by Mars, Nestle, and Cadbury, with 7%, 3%, and 2% respectively. However, since Marabou is planning on entering the U.S. market, we need to examine the competitors in this market. There are three major competitors in the U.S. chocolate industry: Mars Inc. with \$30 billion in sales, Nestle USA with \$10 billion in sales, and Hershey Company with \$5.1 billion in sales.







However, according to Business and Company Resource Center “it is unlikely that new entrants would be able to make much impact,” because Mars, Nestle, and Hershey take up most of the market. Therefore, we are planning on positioning Marabou as a luxury brand targeted at a smaller niche market (Chocolate and Cocoa Products).

Marabou will be competing against such brands as Lindt. Currently, Lindt is positioned as a premium chocolate in Europe and the U.S., and is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the world in market share. Ghirardelli and Lindor are a part of Lindt’s brand name and they share the positioning as a luxury chocolate. They keep their brand competitive by introducing new chocolates and flavors, as well as expanding their distribution channels. Innovative concepts they use for distribution are Lindt Chocolate Cafes in Australia, where they can distribute straight to customers who can enjoy the chocolate simultaneously. Lindt also spends considerable amounts on research and development to continue producing their high quality confectionary products (The Top 10).

### **Company Analysis**

Kraft Food Inc. is the second largest food distribution companies in the world. Since being established in 1903 (Datamonitor), it slowly grew and began acquiring other companies in the cheese industry. These acquisitions helped Kraft build a reputation in the business and have a wider spread to reach more customers. This is really advantageous for Marabou, since Kraft acquired them as well, so they can rely on Kraft’s enormous reputation and great brand image. Another reason it is beneficial that Marabou was acquired by Kraft is because Kraft has hundreds of distribution centers around the world (Datamonitor). These new factors, along with the extreme popularity Marabou has had in its home country of Sweden, should prove for a successful launch in America. Marabou provides a unique flexibility chocolate market by initiating a new design and spin on the typical candy bar style. Marabou’s break off candy bar style is innovative in the US chocolate market. With broadening the market share to the United States in other retailers other than IKEA Marabou will use their unique style and high quality product to market and make sure there is consistency throughout the brand.

### **Customer Analysis**





In the customer analysis section Marabou will be discussing the characteristics of the customers expected to buy Marabou chocolate products. We will also be discussing health and nutrition concerns as well as societal trends of Americans today. Based on the survey and focus group interviews consumers in the US market are not familiar with Marabou chocolates. Only 21% of people responded that they heard of the brand, and most consumers are loyal to brands they grew up with such as Hershey's. However, consumers are inclined to try a chocolate with rich taste like Marabou especially if they are given a free sample, and it is at a reasonable price.

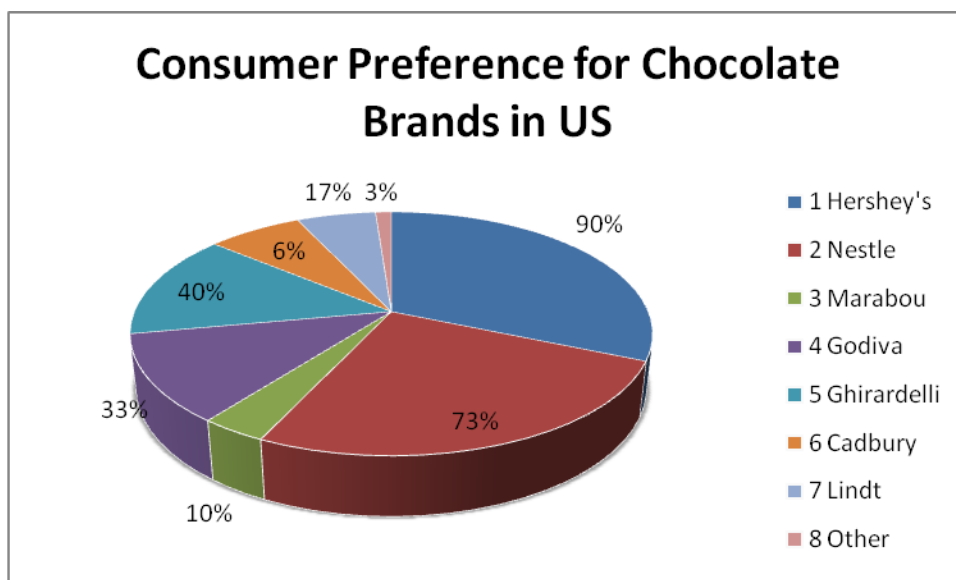


Figure 2: Consumer Familiarity with US chocolate brands

Customer Characteristics: Demographically, chocolate products in general are purchased by consumers that have a very large range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Since Marabou is an imported specialty chocolate from Sweden with a higher price than just generic chocolate we suspect that our consumers will have a more narrow range. We want to market Marabou as a more expensive specialty chocolate such as Godiva and Lindt. Because of that we can expect to have a narrower target market. Our target market will consist of individuals who have achieved higher education and whose income is \$45,000 or higher. The household who will be purchasing Marabou chocolate has one to three people living in it. We can expect that women will be our dominant consumer in this market.





Because Marabou is a specialty chocolate it tends to be used at parties as desserts and as small gifts to give for birthdays or the holidays. The chocolate is an easy way to make the occasion special especially when the consumers are pressed for time and do not have time to make their own dessert. Buyers range in age from 29 to 56 and typically reside in the eastern United States.

*Health and Nutrition Concerns:* Health and nutrition has started to play a major role in the decisions of American consumers. It is a major concern and issue for many Americans. Since the majority of Americans are concerned with their diet, this can have a major impact on the success of Marabou chocolate. Although sweets are known as being unhealthy there have been a number of reports showing that dark chocolate is healthy in moderation.

Marabou is individually wrapped so that consumers can measure their intake easier when consuming our product. From analyzing our in depth interviews I believe this could be a selling feature because the majority of participants were concerned about their health and preferred individually wrapped candies to help them control portions. Kraft Foods is making a significant effort in lowering their sodium and reducing fat in many of its foods. Kraft foods also promote a healthy lifestyle to its consumers and are educating consumers globally of healthy choices. Kraft makes its nutrition information very clear to its consumer so that they can make a knowledgeable decision when choosing their food.

*Societal Trends:* The major societal trend that should be considered in the launch of Marabou would be the current financial trend in America. Will Americans be willing to spend extra money on a more expensive chocolate? After performing our in-depth interviews and conducting our surveys I believe the answer to that question is yes, they will buy our chocolate. Of our survey participants 60% eat chocolate 1-3 times a week. 30% of those participants would be willing to try a new product. Although America's financial situation is not ideal, I do not believe that it will affect the launch of Marabou.

## Product-Market Focus

This portion of the marketing plan will describe the five-year marketing and product objectives for Marabou chocolate. We will also be discussing the target markets, points of difference and positioning of Marabou into the US market.





## **Marketing and Product Objectives**

The main goal of Marabou chocolate is to successfully enter into the American market. Currently Marabou is sold in IKEA and a few online retailers. Marabou would like to expand its market into more retail outlets. These are detailed in the areas below:

- Current markets. We would like to grow current markets by including different flavors of our chocolate. We would like to grow our sales by increasing brand awareness to our consumers and promote repeat purchases.
- New markets. By the end of our year 5, we would like to have grown our sales by 20% and have expanded into various retail outlets. We want our brand to be a common brand they people think of when wanting to buy chocolate.

The following chart is an overview of the goals and objectives that we want to accomplish by the end of year 5.

Goals	Objectives
Expand to new market	Raise brand awareness
Inform Consumers	Raise market share 20%
Improve customer satisfaction	92% initial customer satisfaction

## **Target Markets**

The primary target market for Marabou chocolate is women, households with one-three people, with household income above \$45,000 per year. These households contain consumers that eat chocolate one to three times a week, like to indulge by eating chocolate and are willing to try new brands of chocolate. These households will be in the North and Southeastern states.

## **Customer Value Proposition**

Marabou chocolate offers households' specialty chocolate imported from Sweden at the easy accessibility of their supermarket or local retail stores. Marabou can be a chocolate that the consumer can indulge in or give as a gift at a competitive price.





## **Points of Difference**

Some of the characteristics that differentiate Marabou chocolate from its chocolate competitors are that it is imported from Sweden, which is known for its chocolate candies. Marabou features an authentic quality product with a unique taste. When consumers eat Marabou they will be able to taste the superior quality of the chocolate and they will know they are not eating the average chocolate candy.

## **Marketing Program**

The four marketing mix elements of the Marabou marketing program are explained in detailed in the following strategies regarding product, price, promotion, and placement.

### **Product Strategy**

*Product Line:* Marabou chocolate is available in a variety of flavors, and types. However, a smaller product line will be introduced into the US market during the first 5 years that includes:

1. Marabou bar- milk chocolate, dark chocolate, hazelnut, caramel crisp, and peppermint for a seasonal flavor.
2. Marabou rolls- milk chocolate, hazelnut, and caramel

*Unique Product Quality:* Marabou chocolate gets its rich flavor and quality from using the cocoa bean and transforming it using a unique formula that gives the chocolate a hint of caramel flavor that melts in your mouth.

*Packaging:* Marabou chocolates are packaged in brightly colored wrapping with bold and animated replicas of the chocolate in the package. Holding a high standard of using environmentally sustainable products, Marabou has changed the materials in its twist bag, and changed the cardboard quality in the chocolate boxes to use more recyclable materials.

### **Price Strategy**

Marabou chocolate is priced at around \$5 for a bar of chocolate, and \$6 for the rolls in a 3.5 oz and 2.7 oz package respectively. Marabou is priced at the same margin as Lindt chocolate but significantly less than Guyliau chocolates (\$69.95). The taste,





environmentally sustainable ingredients, and affordable price give Marabou chocolate an advantage in the chocolate market of the US compared to other Premiere European chocolates.

### **Promotion Strategy**

The main promotional channels for Marabou will be through; in-store promotions, end of aisle displays, free samples, distribution discounts, and print advertising. All promotional items will have the signature phrase “Mmm...Marabou.”

*In-Store Promotions:* In-store promotions will be conducted in popular grocery stores (Publix, Sweetbay, etc.) our target market, as well as IKEA locations in our target markets. The promotions will consist of buy one get one free (BOGO), and 10%-20% discounts on chocolate bars. Promotions will take place every two months to increase awareness of the brand and purchases in the US.

*End of aisle Displays:* End of aisle displays will be put up in popular grocery stores in the target markets. These displays will have both rolls, and bars in milk chocolate and caramel, at a lower price. This will increase customer acquisition and purchases.

*Free Samples:* In order to get consumers familiar with the brand, Marabou will have a representative in grocery stores and IKEA chains in the target market giving taste samples to potential customers every month for five months. According to the survey Marabou conducted, consumers are most likely to purchase a new chocolate brand if they got a free sample of it first. These free samples will be given regularly in the targeted stores in order to increase purchases.

*Distributions Discounts:* In order for Marabou to get its products in the right locations the company will offer the confectionary wholesalers a discount on the products. Confectionary wholesalers currently account for 77% of the chocolate market in the US, making it the largest holder. If the wholesaler purchases at least 400 bars of milk chocolate, dark chocolate and caramel or hazelnut bars during, Marabou will provide 350 bars of peppermint at a 40% discounted price.

*Print Advertising:* To raise awareness about Marabou in the US, the company will advertise in popular magazines that are targeted more towards women. Based on the survey that was sent to consumers, there were more responses from females than males





which help to enforce the advertising decisions. Magazines that are being considered are; Good Housekeeping, Cosmopolitan, and Self.

- Self: Rate Base=1,475,000
  - 1 page=\$164,059
- Cosmopolitan: Rate Base=3,000,000
  - 4 color 2/3 page=\$183,100
- Good Housekeeping: Rate Base=1,000,000
  - 2 color Full Page ad=\$107,710

It is important to translate the message of great tasting chocolate but creating an appealing ad that uses bold imagery and scenes that tell the story of “Mmm...Marabou.”

### **Distribution Strategy**

Marabou will be manufactured in the Swedish plant then shipped to Kraft’s main warehouse in the US. After that the product will ship to distributors and retailers. The average cost will be \$.04 per roll and we plan to ship at least 1,000 bars and rolls. The majority of industry sales in the chocolate market in the US are derived from confectionary wholesalers who account for about 77% of the market (Gotaas). In turn the confectionary wholesaler supplies supermarkets, specialty stores, convenience stores, and drug/discount stores, making it the most important link in the supply chain. Marabou will identify a confectionary wholesaler who will identify supermarket chains, and specialty stores in the Northeast and Southeast states where consumption is heaviest (Gotaas, IBISWorld ). This would be the best choice when penetrating the market because it gives Marabou the greatest chance of reaching the target market in large numbers.





## Financial Data and Projections

Figure 3: Financial Data for Marabou Chocolate Roll including advertising costs

<b>Price to Consumers</b>	\$6.00
<b>Trade Margin</b>	40%
<b>Wholesale Price</b>	\$2.40
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>	\$0.70
<b>Distribution &amp; Shipping Costs</b>	\$0.04
<b>End-of- Aisle Display</b>	\$35,066,448.00
<b>Free Standing Display</b>	\$70,132,896.00
<b>Print Advertisements</b>	\$300,000.00
<b>Free Chocolate Promotion</b>	\$416,666.00
<b>Total Fixed Costs</b>	\$105,916,010.00
<b>Fixed Cost Contribution</b>	\$2.27
<b>Break-Even Volume</b>	46,659,035







Figure 4: Pro Forma Income Statement for the 12 month period ending December 31, 2012

<b>Total Market Share</b>	<b>\$15,049,977,770.00</b>
<b>Marabou Share 46.6%</b>	<b>\$7,013,289,640.00</b>
<b>At Wholesale Prices</b>	<b>\$2,805,315,856.00</b>
<b>Units Sold</b>	<b>6,732,758,054</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>\$4,207,973,784.00</b>
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>	<b>\$47,129,306.00</b>
<b>Gross Margin</b>	<b>\$4,160,844,478.00</b>
<b>Marketing</b>	
<b>Advertising</b>	<b>\$105,916,010.00</b>
<b>Distribution and Shipping</b>	<b>\$269,310,322.00</b>
<b>Overhead</b>	<b>\$84,159,475.00</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$3,701,458,671</b>





### **Three-Year Projections**

These projections reflect the continuing growth in the number of chocolate sold and increase production and distribution economies of scale as sales volume increases.

*Figure5: Three Year Projections: 2012-2015*

<b>Financial Element</b>	<b>Year 1 2012</b>	<b>Year 2 2013</b>	<b>Year 3 2014</b>
<b>Chocolate Sold</b>	6,732,758,054	6,934,740,795	7,142,783,018
<b>Net Sales</b>	\$40,396,548,324.00	\$41,608,444,773.00	\$42,856,698,113.00
<b>Gross Profit</b>	\$4,160,844,478.00	\$4,285,669,812.00	\$4,414,239,906.00
<b>Selling and General and Admin Expenses</b>	\$29,222,414,206.00	\$30,092,579,455.00	\$30,988,648,407.00
<b>Operating Profit</b>	\$7,013,289,640.00	\$7,230,195,506.00	\$7,453,809,800.00





## Implementation and Plan

Introducing Marabou Chocolate to the United States is a hard to reach task and requires an extensive marketing plan to make this a successful launch. The plan will consist of initial store aisle displays both freestanding and end of aisle. We will then move to promotional strategies releasing one million chocolate rolls into our promotional method. We will also advertise in media print to make sure our consumers are becoming aware of Marabou. The anticipated marketing plan can be seen in the chart below.

Year	Marketing Plan Procedure
<b>Year 1 (2012)</b>	Free Chocolate Promotion End of Aisle Display
<b>Year 2 (2013)</b>	Free Standing Displays
<b>Year 3 (2014)</b>	Print Media Advertisement

The diversity of the promotional activities involved in the Marabou Chocolate plan will allow for the United States consumer to get to know the brand in stages. It will let the consumer have a trial run and have trial brand recognition with the end of aisle display. Then it will move to a free standing display allowing the brand to “speak for itself,” in the retail stores. The brand will be able to compete against other top brand name chocolates such as Hershey, Godiva, and Cadburry. In the final stage of the marketing promotional plan we will have print media advertisement which will allow for full brand recognition and remind you to always indulge your chocolate cravings with Marabou Chocolate.

## Evaluation and Control

Monthly sales goals have been set for each retail chain and region of the United States that will be carrying Marabou Chocolate. The actual sales will be compared to the target sales goal we wish to accomplish each month. This information will then be compared and modified to the fluctuations in the environment of which retail chain or region we are looking at. This will determine if the marketing plan needs to be more or less accommodating to the markets that we are looking into.





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