

Title: Make or Buy Advice Verosol Hardware

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Topic or subject: Analysis

Relevance: The assignment can be used as a guideline for the department Product Management.

The company Verosol makes functional indoor solar shading fabrics and blinds. They are the inventor of metallized fabric, this causes the products keep out both heat and light, while remaining view through. The fabric of the products has been further developed in the past years to offer the highest performance. Meanwhile the hardware (profiles, controls and mechanisms) is not changed since 1996. Because of this, the company wonders if this hardware has to change and, if this is the case, new hardware must be improved, purchased or developed by the company itself. The main question is: 'must Verosol improve, purchase or develop their hardware?'

To achieve this goal, analyses have been conducted on the Verosol products, the consumer's needs, the assembler's experiences, the competitors of Verosol and their products via retail dealers (who sell sunblind products).

During the research it was found that the hardware of Verosols pleated blinds should be improved. Pleated blinds can be divided into three parts: the fabric, the upper profile including controls and a lower profile.

Fabric

The high-performance fabric is the main selling point of the Verosol products. The identity of the company relies completely on this fabric. Therefore the advice is to keep the fabric the same.

Upper profile including controls

The given advice is to purchase a new upper profile with controls. The Verosol control system is child safe, because they use a temporary solution. This solution does not work optimally, it easily disassembles accidentally and is hard to put back together for consumers. Currently almost every brand of solar shading on the Dutch market has a better child safe control system than Verosol. They use a braking system with a single cord which is developed by competition of Verosol. For this system, only one single retractable cord is used, which maintains a constant cord length when it is not being pulled. To ensure that Verosol no longer lags behind in this area, Verosol has to go along with a single-corded braking system. This system does not fit in the existing upper profile of Verosol. The costs to develop such a system in-house are high. Therefore it is sensible to purchase these products from the competition.

Lower profile

The given advice is to produce an improved lower profile. Creating a better environment is part of Verosols mission, which is to support sustainable environments, where people can live and work comfortably. Sometimes a pleated blind starts to hang askew. This can be fixed by a small repair, but some variants of the pleated blinds are not easy to disassemble. In that case, the product is often removed from the window by a serviceman to be sent back to Verosol for repairs. That is why a lower profile has been proposed, which makes on-site repairs by a serviceman possible. The lower profile can be developed by Verosol, so the company can keep the hardware appearance the customers appreciate. This development makes the product more sustainable, which fit the mission of the company.

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