

Bringing an innovative product to market: Assure®

Introduction

Corus is a major steel manufacturer. It provides steel and aluminium solutions worldwide. Corus Colors is an international business manufacturing pre-finished steel for the building envelope, consumer products and manufactured goods markets.

A key market for Corus Colors is Controlled Environmental Surfaces. Some surfaces – in hospitals, food preparation, laboratories - have to be clean and free from any source of infection. In 2000 Corus identified a new opportunity. Previously it produced steel and sent it to another company for anti-bacterial coating. This wasted time and took possible income from Corus. It has developed a coating with antibacterial protection built in that can be added to the steel. This has been branded as Assure®.



Potential market

The potential market is in industrial sales such as walls, doors and ceilings, in food preparation and storage areas.

Distribution

The supply chain for steel products is long with many intermediaries such as architects and contractors. Corus must show the value of *Assure* to each. This is difficult because there are many intermediaries, contractors and sub contractors. A key factor in the process is the needs of the end user, for example, the food company.

Promotion

- ▶ Push – Corus highlights the benefits to the supply chain so that they can recommend *Assure* with their customers.
- ▶ Pull – Corus tells end users of *Assure* so that they can build into the specification.

Market growth

The market for pre-finished steel with anti-bacterial protection within the food sector is growing which is due to increased consumer demand for convenience foods; tougher legislation on health standards and

greater media focus and public awareness of food safety. There is also an increasing risk that customers will take legal action if they were ill following infection and a greater focus on risk management.

Research and development

Research and development uses scientific knowledge to develop new products and processes. Testing is necessary to ensure new products:

- ▶ can be manufactured
- ▶ are safe to use
- ▶ can deliver the required performance
- ▶ are desired by the market
- ▶ can generate a profit.

Corus adopts a Total Quality Management approach that aims to "get it right first time".

Possible marketing strategies

These can be summarized in the Ansoff matrix:

Product Market	Current product	New product
Current market	Market Penetration	New Product Development
New market	Market Development	Diversification

Assure is a new technology for existing customers in the food market. This is product development. Corus is now looking to target new sectors e.g. hospitals. This will be market development.

Conclusion

Assure meets a need in the market. Its launch is supported by the experience and backing of Corus.

