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## PARTNERS IN MARKETING

### **October 2009 - PIM rewards 'The Best Marketing Thesis of Flanders 2009'**

Partners In Marketing, the marketing consultancy firm from Lommel, gave out the prizes for The Best Marketing Thesis in Flanders, edition 2009 at Palm Breweries in Steenhuffel. Sharon Vandousselaere of the University of Ghent has won the first prize and received € 1.000 of Partners In Marketing. The finalists also got a driving ability training of GM Belgium and a subscription to BIZZ Magazine. The Best Marketing Thesis of Flanders 2009 is titled 'The influence of types of customer loyalty on price sensitivity and the willingness to pay more in the store'. The promoter of this extended essay is Prof. Dr. Patrick Van Kenhove.

The first selection of the marketing thesises took place at the universities. At the end of the academic year the professors of marketing selected the best extended essays for the contest. 11 finalists competed for the title of 'The Best Marketing thesis of Flanders'. After the academic pre-selection, a jury existing of the organizing parties and practicians, evaluated the thesises by means of 6 criteria: content, style and form, topicality, scientific substructure, practical feasibility and publicity value. This assessment provides an ideal mix between theory and practice.

The thesis of Sharon Vandousselaere deals with the relationship between different types of customer loyalty, price sensitivity and the willingness to pay more. In the current context of competition between companies, it is of important relevance to companies and stores to make a distinction between the different types of loyal customers. Through this study was confirmed that not every loyal customer brings added value to a company. Companies that are able to identify profitable loyal customers, will benefit most from their customer loyalty programs and efforts to build strong relationships with their customers.

To stimulate students to choose for the interesting marketing profession, Partners In Marketing organized the contest 'The Best Marketing Thesis of Flanders' for het 8th year'. By rewarding the Flemish students with the best marketing thesis, more attention is attracted to marketing as a strategic company function. For the final-year students of the Flemish universities this competition is the ideal opportunity to get rewarded for the masterpiece of their academic career.

This initiative of Partners In Marketing is supported by the business world. The past years we could count on the support of GM Belgium, Jobat, Bizz, Akzo Nobel and Rockfon. Palm Breweries took care of the hosting of the event.