

M91CS

An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta

Department of Education and Science

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Link Modules

**Case Study
2002**

Case Study

EntCo

EntCo is a business which operates from a Business Park, located 1 mile from Bailebeg, a town of 5000 inhabitants. Bailebeg is 40 miles from the nearest city and is situated along a motorway. The town had a tradition of textile based industries, but all of these are now closed down. The Business Park has attracted a range of industries, all of which are now successful.

Sister and brother, Maeve and Peter Ryan own and run EntCo. Maeve has a background in Business and Computers. After leaving College, she worked 8 years for firms in Ireland and London. Peter is a qualified chef and, before setting up the business, worked for a large city hotel for 5 years. Peter oversees production and new product development. Maeve has responsibility for the sales and marketing, and administration requirements.

EntCo is involved in the food business. It began as a catering company providing prepared meals for canteens in local businesses. Currently the company uses fresh ingredients in all its products. Ingredients are sourced locally, and, as the fruit and vegetables are readily available, the business does not have a problem obtaining raw materials.

The business has grown over the past two years and now employs 8 full-time and 20 part-time workers. The company aims to be adaptable and looks after customer needs at all times. Maeve is continually looking for new markets and ways to develop the business. As the market for its produce has expanded the company has extended its product range.

Maeve saw an opportunity in the retail sector brought about by the changing lifestyles of customers who demand good quality, convenience food. Maeve and Peter have worked to develop the range of products and to plan how a large number of orders could be met. Now EntCo supplies supermarkets and delicatessens in the area with prepared meals and individual dishes. The company also caters for individual party orders for special functions. This area of the business has expanded rapidly and Entco now caters for many of the large functions in the area.

Recently, one of the old textile factories has been bought by a large food production company which produces a wide range of frozen foods and vegetables. This company has three other large food plants in the country. Maeve and Peter are aware that they must be competitive and offer a unique service. They carry out market research regularly in order to come up with new ideas for products.

EntCo has been approached by a large supermarket chain to supply ready-made, easy cook meals. If Maeve and Peter are to begin supplying this supermarket chain they will have to expand and upgrade their production facility. They have started to draw up a plan so that they can set out the implications of this possible expansion.

1. State and briefly explain three positive features of Ent. Co. (6)
2. Complete a SWOT analysis of Ent. Co. (12)
3.
 - (i) Describe how Ent. Co. could overcome possible competition from the large food production company which has recently purchased one of the old textile factories.
 - (ii) Explain three implications for Ent. Co. of proceeding with its expansion plans. (12)