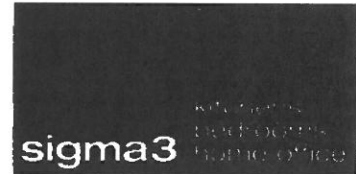


## 2. Sigma3

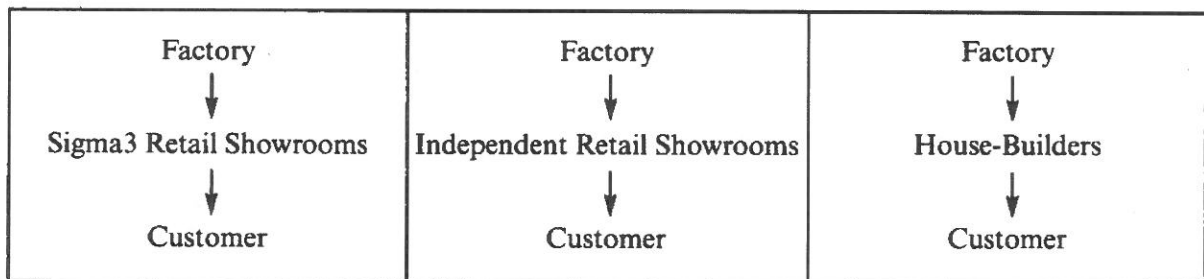
Sigma3 is the largest manufacturer and supplier of fitted kitchens and bedrooms in Wales, employing more than 160 people at its headquarters in Llantrisant. It has built up a reputation for quality since it first started in 1975 and operates at the more expensive end of the market.



Currently it has a total of eleven prestigious retail showrooms across South Wales, Lancashire, Surrey and Sussex. It also has a well-designed website and some impressive brochures for potential customers to read.

In addition to its own retail operation, Sigma3 kitchens and bedrooms are sold nationwide through a variety of independent retail showrooms. The company also sells through well-known house builders and distributors, such as Charles Church, Bellway and Barratt Homes. Its products may also be used in the show homes that these builders use.

### Sigma3 Distribution Channels



'With free design as part of the service, the company prides itself on delivering truly made-to-measure furniture and creative solutions for every lifestyle need. Quality is central to the company's success. Customer service remains a top priority, along with a high-quality product offering. Together this provides the cornerstone upon which Sigma3 has been built and continues to grow'. ([www.sigma3.co.uk](http://www.sigma3.co.uk))

Bethan Banfield, Sigma3's marketing manager states 'I want to ensure that our product range, service and technical support are among the very best in the industry'.

- (a) (i) What is a distribution channel? [2]
- (ii) Explain the possible benefits to Sigma3 of the distribution channels that it uses. [6]
- (b) How can a business, such as Sigma3, ensure that it maintains its reputation for providing 'quality' products and services? [9]
- (c) Evaluate the view that the provision of quality goods and services is by far the most important element of Sigma3's marketing mix. [8]