

Article

Strategic Marketing Plan for APPLE Inc.

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Citation: Khalid, M. A. & Vida, V. (2023).
Strategic Marketing Plan for APPLE Inc.
Network Intelligence Studies, Year (volume) XI,
Issue (21), 61-74

Received: 24 April 2023

Revised: 25 June 2023

Published: 26 June 2023



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Abstract: This study aims to explore the inner workings of Apple Inc. to gain a deeper understanding of the company's success and to identify opportunities for further growth and improvement. Through an analysis of market trends, consumer behaviour, and Apple Inc.'s current marketing strategies, this research will develop a comprehensive marketing plan that addresses key areas of growth and improvement. Furthermore, the effectiveness of this research will be evaluated using various marketing research tools (SWOT matrix, TOWS matrix, IFE matrix, EFE matrix, IE matrix, PESTEL analysis, Porter Five Forces Model and CPM matrix). This study will provide new information and strategies for new organizations trying to enter the industry and want to be successful. It will also contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of marketing, specifically as it pertains to companies operating in the technology industry. Additionally, the research will also serve as a useful reference for businesses and organizations in similar industries, as well as for marketing professionals looking to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the technology industry. It will also benefit academicians and researchers studying the field of marketing and technology.

Keywords: SWOT and TOWS matrix; IFE and EFE matrix; PESTEL analysis; Porter Five Forces Model; CPM matrix;

Classification-JEL: M21, M30

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INTRODUCTION

According to data from a variety of sources, the global smartphone market is a massive and rapidly growing industry. In 2021, approximately 1.43 billion smartphones were sold worldwide. In the fourth quarter of that year, approximately 24% of all smartphones sold to end users were from Apple (Laricchia, 2022). The smartphone industry is characterized by intense competition and rapid technological advancement, with many different brands such as Apple, Samsung, Huawei, and Xiaomi offering a range of smartphone models at various price points. According to a recent report, the global smartphone market was valued at around USD 457.18 billion in 2021. Looking ahead, the market is expected to experience significant growth, with projections forecasting a rise from USD 484.81 billion in 2022 to USD 792.51 billion in 2029. This represents a compound annual growth rate of around 6%. The competition between Samsung and Apple for the top spot in the smartphone market is a well-known phenomenon, with Apple typically experiencing higher sales in the year's final quarter. However, the competition for the remaining places among the top five vendors is also intense, with Huawei, Xiaomi, and other Chinese manufacturers all vying for market share. In addition to a large number of smartphone brands and models available, the smartphone industry is also characterized by frequent product launches and updates. This keeps the market dynamic and helps to drive innovation and progress.

Overall, the smartphone industry is an important part of the global economy and shows no signs of slowing down in the coming years. As such, it is an interesting and important area of study for researchers and analysts alike (Fortune Business Insights, 2022).

Apple Inc. is a multinational technology company that has become a household name over the past few decades. The company's products, which include iPhones, iPads, Macs, Apple Watches, and Apple TVs, have become ubiquitous today. However, Apple's success did not happen overnight - it was the result of decades of innovation and hard work.

Apple's success has not been without its challenges. In the 1990s, the company experienced several setbacks, including declining sales and the departure of Steve Jobs (Rawlinson, 2017). However, Jobs returned to Apple in 1997, and under his leadership, the company introduced several products that helped to solidify its place in the technology industry. These products included the iMac, iPod, iPhone, and iPad. One of the key strategies that Jobs employed was to

remain anonymous, allowing him to focus on product development without distractions.

Apple is one of the world's most valuable companies, with a market capitalization of over \$2 trillion (Bursztynsky, 2020). Apple's total net sales amounted to 394.33 billion U.S. dollars in their 2022 financial year, an increase from the historical record of 274.52 billion U.S. dollars in the financial year 2020. Apple's annual revenue quadrupled in the last ten years (Laricchia, 2022). In terms of financial goals, Apple's objective for 2023 and onward is to maintain its revenue growth and improve its gross margin (Apple.com, 2022).

The company is known for its sleek and minimalist design aesthetic, as well as its commitment to user privacy and security. Its products are used in homes, businesses, and schools around the world, and the company is a major player in the smartphone, computer, and consumer electronics markets. Apple continues to innovate and introduce new products, including the Apple Watch, and AirPods.

The company's focus on product development, brand building, and customer engagement has earned it a reputation as one of the most successful and iconic brands in the world. Apple's marketing efforts are closely aligned with its financial goals and strategies, which are centred on revenue growth and profitability through product innovation and customer expansion. Despite increasing competition, Apple's strong brand and reputation, coupled with its ability to adapt to changing market conditions and consumer needs, position the company for continued success in the future.

Additionally, Apple has set an ambitious goal of becoming carbon neutral across its entire footprint by 2030, which will involve reducing its emissions and investing in renewable energy sources. This not only aligns with the company's commitment to sustainability but also demonstrates the company's focus on long-term growth and profitability (Apple.com, 2020).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The objective of our study is to conduct an external and internal analysis of a selected company by employing various methods and considering different aspects. This study focuses specifically on analysing Apple's marketing strategy.

Primary data was gathered through an extensive review of the existing literature on Apple's marketing strategies, target audience, competitive landscape, and market trends. Additionally, we analysed content from various web sources to identify the most frequently searched and asked

questions related to Apple's products and services, competitors, market trends.

To collect secondary data, we referred to various sources, including academic and industry publications, news articles, online resources, and Apple's financial reports, annual reports, and press releases. We employed content analysis to extract relevant information and insights related to Apple's marketing strategies, target audience, competitive landscape, and market trends. The secondary data sources were carefully selected to ensure they were from reputable and reliable sources.

By utilizing both primary and secondary sources of data, we developed a comprehensive understanding of Apple's marketing strategies and target audience. Analysing the data from multiple angles led to the creation of a relevant and effective marketing plan. The unique approach to data collection used in this study ensured that the marketing plan was based on the most up-to-date and relevant insights related to Apple's products and services.

To thoroughly understand the marketing landscape for Apple and develop a comprehensive and effective marketing plan, we utilized a range of materials and methods to gather and analyse data about the company, its customers, and its competitors. This included utilizing tools such as the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix to assess the company's internal and external environments, as well as the SWOT analysis and TOWS analysis to identify potential strategies. We also used the BCG Matrix, Competitive Profit Matrix (CPM), Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM), PESTLE Analysis, and Porter's Five Forces Model to evaluate the feasibility and attractiveness of different strategies. BCG Matrix and Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM) are not explained in this article.

The Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix and the External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix, both tools are used to identify and evaluate the key factors that may impact the organization's operations and performance, and it will be used both as part of the marketing planning process. In this research, we used the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) matrix to assess internal factors that could potentially impact the success of our research plan. In David & David's book, the IFE matrix is discussed as a tool for analysing the internal environment of a company, including its strengths and weaknesses to help develop effective strategies. It is a tool for evaluating the company's internal resources and capabilities, such as its financial position, marketing and sales efforts, and organizational structure. This allows the company to identify its strengths and

weaknesses and develop strategies to address any areas of weakness. The EFE Matrix is used to assess the external environment of a company, including the opportunities and threats that may impact the organization. This will allow us to identify the external factors that may impact the company's operations and performance and to develop strategies to take advantage of opportunities and mitigate any potential threats (David & David, 2016).

The IE matrix help to summarise the internal and external environment. The IE matrix gives the results of the evaluation of the factors - based on the results of the EFE matrix and IFE matrix (Chladkova and Formankova, 2016).

The IFE and EFE matrices will be used in conjunction with other tools, such as the STEP, SWOT analysis and PESTEL analysis, to provide a more comprehensive view of the internal and external environments. By using multiple tools, we will be able to get a more nuanced understanding of the factors that may affect the company. Internal Factor Evaluation and External Factor Evaluation matrices gives the opportunity an organization to demonstrate their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. CPM uses important success factors, that the company compare itself to other competitors (Capps and Glissmeyer, 2012).

Experts in the strategy formulation process employ matrices as a key analysis approach. The IFE and EFE matrices and the QSPM matrix are business strategy tools that can be used to identify the strength, weakness, opportunity and threat, as internal, external business factors (Zulkarnain et al., 2018).

A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis is a particularly useful technique in the analysis. It categorizes some of the most important pieces of information into two major categories: internal factors and external factors, and then by their dual positive and negative aspects, with strengths and opportunities as positive aspects and weaknesses and threats as negative aspects (Czinkota et al., 2021).

Once the SWOT matrix has been formulated, businesses try to follow strategies that build on strengths and enhance weaknesses (David et al., 2021); that can be the TOWS matrix.

The Competitive Profile Matrix (CPM) is a strategic management technique that helps analyze how well a firm is performing in comparison to its primary competitors in the market. CPM identifies a firm's major competitors and its particular strengths and weaknesses. The weights and total weighted scores in both a EFE and CPM have the same meaning (David, 2011).

In business connection everybody have heard the definition of PEST analysis, which means the analysis of the external business environment in political (P), economic (E), socio-cultural (S) and technological (T) terms. (Ho, 2014). The method of analysis of macro-environmental factors is also called PEST or STEP (Clulow, 2005), or SEPT (Narayanan and Fahey, 1994). Johnson et al (2009) prefer the PESTEL analysis, which includes six categories: political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Apple's vision statement, as outlined by CEO Tim Cook, is "at Apple, we are constantly innovating in the technology we make and in how we make it with respect for people's rights, for their health, and for the planet we share" (Apple.com, 2022). This statement reflects the company's commitment to innovation, excellence, and market specialization, as well as its global presence and focuses on collaboration and client-centred solutions.

In addition to its commitment to innovation, Apple also strongly emphasizes ethical and responsible business practices. The inclusion of the phrase "with respect for people's rights, for their health, and for the planet we share" in Tim Cook's vision statement demonstrates the company's commitment to creating products and services that not only enhance the personal computing experience for its customers but also have a positive impact on society and the environment. Apple has a history of prioritizing sustainability and social responsibility and implemented several initiatives and programs to reduce its environmental impact and support the well-being of its employees and communities around the world. Apple's vision also includes a focus on integration and excellence, as the company believes in the power of collaboration in such a competitive era to stay ahead of the rest and stimulate its employees with the best innovative resources that are also client-focused. To achieve this, Apple targets its resources in areas where it can have maximum quality impacts and achieve market specialization.

We can easily identify the marketing goals of Apple by analysing the company's mission statement and studying market analysis. Position Apple as a premium brand; Achieve 100% carbon neutrality for its supply chain and products by 2030; Increase brand value and market share through unique and

differentiated products; Create user-friendly products that are aesthetically pleasing; Build and maintain strong relationships with customers, educators, and creative professionals; Invest in research and development to create new technologies and features.

SWOT matrix (Table 1.)

Strengths

Apple's strong brand value is one of its most significant strengths, with a value of \$947.1 billion in 2022, according to Statista database (Laricchia, 2022). This makes it the most valuable brand in the world, a title it has held for several years. In the past few years Apple's brand value has increased significantly thanks to its differentiation and diversification across its hardware, software, and services portfolio. This testament to the trust millions of people worldwide have in the company, which is committed to delivering innovative products that meet the needs of its customers. Another strength that sets Apple apart is its iconic global presence. The company has a massive following worldwide, with millions of loyal customers who rely on the brand's technology solutions. Apple's innovative technology is another significant strength that has enabled the company to maintain its market position. The company was the first to introduce revolutionary products such as the iPhone, iPad, and AirPods, which have become household names globally. Apple's commitment to innovation is unwavering, and the company is continually working to improve and develop more efficient technology solutions. Efficiency is difficult to measure, but indicators can be used to measure it at different levels (national, regional, social, corporate, complex, and partial) (Nábrádi et al., 2008). CEO Tim Cook has stated that innovation is in Apple's DNA and that they are dedicated to creating products that enrich people's lives and empower them to do amazing things. The brand is also a top choice for professionals in corporate offices, especially among creative professionals. Apple's products, such as the Mac Pro and iMacs, are designed for high-performance tasks such as visual design, animation, and video production. This makes it a brand of choice for professionals who require top-quality technology solutions for their work. Apple's proficiency in research and development is another critical strength that sets the company apart. The company invests heavily in research and development, with a commitment to

understanding customer needs and market trends. In 2022, Apple spent \$26.25 billion on research and development, which is about 6-7% of its revenue (Apple.com, 2023). This investment has enabled the company to develop innovative products that meet the changing needs of its customers. Apple's commitment to sustainability is also a notable strength. Its recycling robot, Liam, breaks down and dissects iPhones, separating reusable parts for new manufacturing, reducing waste and conserving resources. Apple's manufacturing processes are powered by 100% renewable energy, including wind and solar power, further minimizing its environmental impact (Apple.com, 2020). Finally, Apple's diversification in services is a strength that has helped the company to grow and maintain its market position.

In conclusion, Apple's strengths are many and diverse, enabling the company to maintain its position as a leader in the technology industry. Apple's strong brand value, iconic global presence, commitment to innovation, a brand of choice for professionals, proficiency in research and development, commitment to sustainability, and diversification in services make it a company that is well-positioned for future growth and success.

Weaknesses

One of the possible weaknesses of Apple as a company is its dependence on its product lines, namely the iPhone, to generate the majority of its revenue. Moreover, iPhone faces intense competition from other smartphone companies, such as Samsung, Huawei, and Xiaomi, who offer similar or better features at lower prices. The company's heavy reliance on one product line makes it vulnerable to market fluctuations or shifts in consumer preferences, emphasizing the importance of diversifying its product offerings. Apple's premium price approach in comparison to its competitors is viewed as a potential weakness, since it may limit the company's market reach and penetration, particularly in emerging regions where internet purchasing is not as widespread. Other smartphone manufacturers, such as Samsung, Huawei, and Xiaomi, compete with equal or superior features at cheaper prices. Apple's heavy reliance on Chinese manufacturing for its products is another possible weakness. Apple's reliance on third-party suppliers for components, materials, and services is one of its weaknesses. Apple's limited presence in emerging markets like India, Brazil, and

Indonesia might be a problem. These markets have sizable populations, expanding economies, and rising demand for smartphones and other consumer gadgets. However, Apple confronts several obstacles in entering these regions, including high costs that make their devices too expensive for many customers with lesser incomes and purchasing power. Furthermore, Apple has a poor market share in emerging nations compared to competitors such as Samsung, Xiaomi, and Huawei, which provide cheaper and more localized goods.

Opportunities

Apple has positioned itself as the world's leading technology brand. However, there are still undiscovered countries in Asia, Africa, and South America where Apple may expand its company. Apple may collaborate with local companies and governments to develop goods and services that are tailored to the requirements and tastes of these locations. Apple might broaden its product line by entering the automobile business, which is experiencing a revolution due to the rise of self-driving cars and electric vehicles. Apple already has a foothold in the automotive sector with its widely used CarPlay software, which allows drivers to access iPhone capabilities through the car's infotainment system. Apple's CarPlay platform might be used as a foundation to provide more services and functions to automobile customers, such as navigation, entertainment, security, and maintenance. Furthermore, Apple's competence in hardware, software, and battery technology would allow it to produce a unique and competitive automotive product that would set it apart from other car manufacturers. Apple is a global leader in wearable technology, with increasing demand for products such as the Apple Watch and AirPods. Apple can continue to innovate and improve its existing goods while also developing new ones, such as the recently introduced Fitness+ subscription program. Apple might potentially work with health and wellness firms to broaden its services. Apple has the opportunity to form strategic partnerships and make acquisitions in various industries to enhance its product and service offerings. In the healthcare market, Apple might purchase Fitbit or Peloton to merge their health and wellness products with Apple's gadgets and services. In the field of education, Apple may collaborate with firms such as Coursera or Duolingo to provide online learning and language classes. Finally, in the media and

entertainment space, Apple might purchase firms like Netflix or Spotify to expand its content and streaming choices, as well as leverage its Apple TV+ service to create original and exclusive shows and movies. Furthermore, by introducing more smart home devices that can be controlled by Siri or HomeKit, such as lighting systems, security cameras, thermostats, or air purifiers, Apple can enhance its customers' work-life

balance and well-being. To remain competitive, Apple needs to expand its trade-in program to more countries and offer more prices that are attractive. Doing so will help it retain existing customers, increase its customer base, and strengthen its market share and revenue.

Threats

Apple faces fierce competition in the smartphone market from rivals such as Samsung, Huawei, Xiaomi, Oppo, and Vivo. These competitors offer diverse devices with varying features, prices, and operating systems. Another threat to Apple's dominance is the prevalence of low-cost imitations in the market. Many companies, particularly in Asia, produce affordable alternatives to Apple's products, which can potentially undermine the company's pricing strategy. By offering similar functionalities at a fraction of the cost, these competitors can attract price-sensitive customers away from Apple. Apple's low labour costs, primarily from Chinese production facilities, are being challenged by increasing wages. With higher labour costs, Apple might have to raise product prices or compromise profit margins. Cybersecurity remains a crucial aspect of Apple's operations and reputation. As the smartphone market matures and innovation slows down, Apple must confront the challenges of market saturation and consumer apathy. Apple faces significant challenges due to geopolitical tensions and trade wars, which can disrupt the company's supply chain, inflate production costs, and impact sales in affected regions. To tackle this threat, Apple should focus on diversifying its supply chain, forging strategic partnerships, monitoring regulatory shifts, and managing currency risk to address these challenges and maintain a strong global market position.

TOWS matrix (Table 2.)

In this matrix, we will focus how can Apple Inc. leverage its strengths, mitigate its weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities, and neutralize threats in the competitive technology market. In this detailed

TOWS Matrix, the strategies are classified based on the relationship between the internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats). Each quadrant represents a unique combination of strategies:

SO Strategy (Strengths-Opportunities): These strategies focus on leveraging the company's strengths to capitalize on available opportunities. **ST Strategy (Strengths-Threats):** These strategies aim to use the company's strengths to mitigate or neutralize the threats in the market. **WO Strategy (Weaknesses-Opportunities):** These strategies concentrate on overcoming the company's weaknesses by capitalizing on available opportunities. **WT Strategy (Weaknesses-Threats):** These strategies aim to mitigate or neutralize Apple's weaknesses and address the threats in the market. This detailed TOWS Matrix will help Apple create effective strategies for growth and competitiveness by considering the relationships between strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. In conclusion, the TOWS matrix analysis for Apple's marketing plan highlights several key strategies that the company can implement to maximize its strengths and opportunities while mitigating its weaknesses and threats.

Internal Factor Evaluation Matrix (IFE)

Apple's IFE matrix (Table 3.) is a method used to assess its internal strengths and weaknesses. Apple has a strong brand name, innovative design and technology, a diverse product line, and a competent staff, all of which contribute to the company's overall success. Yet, Apple has weaknesses such as its reliance on China production, dependency on third-party suppliers, and failure to adjust rapidly to shifting market trends.

The total weighted score for Apple is 3.35, indicating that the company has a strong internal position. Apple's strengths such as strong brand recognition, innovative design and technology, and a strong retail store presence contribute significantly to its high score. However, the company's weaknesses such as dependence on product lines and high prices compared to competitors could be addressed to improve its overall internal position.

External Factor Evaluation Matrix (EFE)

The EFE matrix for Apple (Table 4.) comes up with an interesting revelation. It shows various possibilities for the corporation to improve its market performance and competitiveness. Expansion into developing countries, diversification of product portfolio, rising demand for wearable

technology, strategic alliances and acquisitions, rising demand for home and remote office solutions, and growth of trade-in programs and offer are among the potential. Apple can capitalize on these possibilities by creating new products, extending its footprint in emerging regions, and collaborating with other firms to promote innovation. The EFE matrix also identifies several threats that Apple must be aware of and handle to preserve its market position.

In the Apple's IE matrix (*Table 5.*) based on the IFE score of 3.35 and EFE score of 2.53, Apple falls into the IE matrix's Quadrant II, "Grow and Build," indicating that the corporation has an internal strength position but confronts external challenges. The suggested strategy in this quadrant is to hold and preserve the present position while employing selected techniques to counter external threats.

As a result, Apple should concentrate on leveraging its internal strengths, such as strong brand recognition, innovative design and technology, and a strong retail store presence, while addressing external threats such as fierce competition from smartphone giants, the threat of low-cost knockoffs, and regulatory scrutiny and legal issues. Apple can achieve this by investing in R&D to foster innovation, improving its cybersecurity safeguards, and staying on top of legislative developments. Additionally, Apple can extend its product portfolio and collaborate with other firms to promote innovation, expand its footprint in emerging regions, and offer trade-in programs and promotions to maintain its competitive position in the market.

PESTEL analysis

Several external factors have the potential to influence the business operations and marketing strategies of Apple Inc. as it operates in a highly dynamic business environment. Our PESTLE analysis will examine the future implications of these factors on Apple's business operations and marketing strategies.

1. **Political Issues:** Apple's marketing strategy and corporate operations are greatly affected by the political climate of the countries where they distribute their products. The upswing of trade policies between the USA and other nations is an opportunity for Apple, while the ongoing trade war with China has had negative implications on their market standing in the country. Worldwide political instability could prove disastrous for Apple's operations, particularly since their dependency on inexpensive Chinese manufacturing has left them

open to turmoil within China. Apple's policy may be influenced by government changes, which could affect all stakeholders. Meanwhile, Apple's global operations and marketing strategy may be affected by AI legislation and the growing advancements in AI.

2. **Economic Aspects:** Apple has had significant expansion and development in developing nations, which has resulted in increased profitability. Yet, rising labour costs in some nations where Apple makes its goods have harmed the company's profits. The worldwide slump that followed the epidemic has also reduced Apple's revenue. Apple's premium price approach makes it difficult to expand sales in Asian nations with poor to middle-income populations. Furthermore, the rapid economic growth and GDP levels in Asian countries make it simple for Apple to expand further into these regions. Recent years the Covid-19 epidemic changed our lives, bringing with it many new restrictions and regulations, the effects of which are still felt today, affecting our everyday lives (Vida and Popovics, 2020). Current wars and economic inflation may potentially have an adverse effect on Apple's profitability.

3. **Social Aspects:** Cultural implications and demographic changes have a significant impact on Apple's sales. For example, in certain countries such as India, Apple's goods are seen as a status symbol, allowing the business to increase income by launching additional items. Yet, ethical issues regarding Apple's Chinese manufacturing, including human rights violations and low salaries, have a detrimental influence on the company's brand image. On the other side, the growing global popularity of mobile and social media gives a chance for Apple to reach more people and efficiently sell its goods. Changing societal trends, such as generational transition, can have a substantial influence on Apple's company.

4. **Technical Considerations:** To remain competitive, Apple must keep up with the newest technological breakthroughs. The company's products are well-known for their security and utilization of cutting-edge technological advances, making them a popular option among many clients. Yet, the AppStore's restricted reach because of the inability to install many programs has a detrimental influence on Apple's company. Numerous Apple rivals provide comparable technical items at lower prices, which harms Apple's brand. To keep ahead of the competition, the organization must continue

to innovate while remaining committed to its goals. The rise of AI may potentially influence Apple's technology approach.

5. Legal Aspects: Apple is required to follow a variety of laws and regulations in the countries in which it operates, including health and safety rules, consumer rights legislation, and producer laws. Noncompliance with legal regulations can result in a terrible brand image as well as expensive legal fights. Apple's rising data privacy standards impede business activity and make it difficult for the corporation to verify compliance with all legal obligations. The corporation must responsibly source, test, and trade its products while prioritizing consumer happiness.

6. Environmental Considerations: Apple has made various initiatives to improve its sustainability, including recycling non-working electric devices and supplying upgraded batteries with fewer heat emissions. Yet, the growing global temperature is having an impact on Apple's supply chain, and the company relies heavily on internet infrastructure, which raises its power expenses. The growing environmental consequences in China are driving up regulatory and production costs for businesses.

As a result, understanding the impact of these PESTLE factors is crucial for developing a successful marketing plan for Apple. To be competitive in the evolving electronics sector, the company must prioritize innovation, compliance, sustainability, and customer satisfaction. Apple assesses the challenges and opportunities presented by political uncertainty, economic recession, social trends, technological innovations, regulatory compliance, and environmental sustainability.

Porter Five Forces Model

In 1980, Michael Porter introduced the competitive strategy model to explain the position of an industry in a complex strategic environment. The five forces described in the model are supplier power, buyer power, barriers to entry, threat of substitution, and degree of rivalry. (Porter, 1997; Porter, 2008). This model establishes each industry's competitiveness and explains why different industries can achieve and maintain varying levels of profitability.

1. Threat of New Entrants: Low

The threat of new entrants in the technology business is quite modest, especially for a market leader like Apple. High capital investments, strong brand loyalty, economies of scale, and large R&D

expenses are all barriers to entry into the business. While new firms can enter the market, competing with established giants like Apple, which has a large customer base, broad distribution networks, and cutting-edge technology, is difficult.

2. Bargaining Power of Suppliers: Moderate

Because Apple relies on several vendors for crucial components and production, it has little negotiating advantage with its suppliers. Apple's large demand for parts gives it negotiating power with its suppliers. Nonetheless, suppliers may have bargaining leverage if particular components, such as OLED displays or microprocessors, are in short supply. Apple's continual attempts to diversify its supply chain and invest in in-house component development aid in reducing suppliers' negotiating strength.

3. Bargaining Power of Buyers: Moderate

Apple's consumers have limited bargaining advantage. Customers of Apple include both individual consumers and companies. Customers value Apple's products because of their strong brand loyalty, innovative product portfolio, and distinctive user experience. Yet, the availability of lower-cost alternatives, as well as the expanding number of tech-savvy customers, gives purchasers more negotiating power. To combat this, Apple places a premium on creating an amazing user experience, providing value-added services, and maintaining a high level of customer happiness.

4. Threat of Substitute Products or Services: High

Because of the swift pace of scientific advancement and the presence of several rivals, Apple faces a considerable risk of alternative products. Customers have options from firms such as Samsung, Huawei, and Xiaomi, which provide identical functionality at different price ranges. Nevertheless, technological developments may render old items outdated. Tablets and smartphones, for example, have had a considerable influence on laptop sales. To be competitive, Apple must consistently spend on R&D, distinguish its products, and retain strong brand loyalty.

5. Competitive Rivalry within the Industry: High

The competition in the technology business is fierce, particularly in the smartphone and personal computing areas. Apple's primary rivals, including Samsung, Huawei, and Xiaomi, are constantly developing and releasing new products to threaten Apple's supremacy. Furthermore, these businesses

have significant R&D skills and provide gadgets at various pricing ranges, catering to a larger audience. Apple must continue to distinguish its products, increase brand loyalty, and grow its worldwide footprint to preserve its competitive edge.

The results of Porter's Five Forces analysis of Apple Inc. demonstrate that the company works in a highly competitive market, where alternative goods and rivals provide challenges, and buyers and suppliers have little bargaining power with suppliers. Apple's strong brand, innovative product lineup, and loyal customer base, on the other hand, give a secure platform for long-term growth and success. Apple can maintain its position as a global technological leader by focusing on research and development, differentiation, and user expectations.

CPM Matrix

We use Samsung and Xiaomi as the two competitors to develop a CPM Matrix for Apple. It should be noted that the weights for the important success variables should add up to 1.00. The CPM Matrix with fictitious weights and ratings is shown in *Table 6*. This CPM analysis emphasizes Apple's outstanding achievement in foreign market penetration and financial profit, with a rating of 5 in each area. Apple also receives good scores for product quality (a rating of 5) and product diversity (a score of 4). In comparison, Samsung and Xiaomi score lower in these categories, showing room for development. However, there are still areas where Apple can improve its performance. While Apple's product quality and variety are highly recognized, they might perhaps focus on increasing their product portfolio and delivering more different items to appeal to broader client base.

Apple earns a lower score than Samsung in terms of advertising and domestic market penetration, indicating that Samsung may have an advantage in these areas. This is because Apple normally spends less on advertising than competitors do, and their goods are often regarded as premium, which may limit their domestic market penetration to some extent. As a result, while Apple's brand recognition and customer loyalty compensate for their lower ratings in these categories, there may still be room for growth in these areas to increase client reach and acquisition. This might include experimenting with new marketing channels and methods, as well as discovering new consumer segments to target.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Apple Inc., a leading technology company with a market capitalization of over \$2 trillion, has consistently demonstrated its ability to dominate the personal computing and electronics industry by aligning its marketing strategies with its core values and objectives. Our research on Apple's marketing plan offers a compelling case study on the power of creating and executing an effective marketing plan rooted in the organization's mission, vision, and values.

As the world's technology landscape continues to evolve rapidly, Apple has managed to stay ahead of the curve, delivering innovative and high-quality products to a global audience. With over 1.65 billion active devices worldwide, the company's relentless focus on providing exceptional user experiences, coupled with its dedication to ethical business practices and sustainability, has set it apart from its competitors and cemented its status as a premium brand.

To ensure continued growth and success in the future, Apple must maintain its commitment to innovation and excellence, while simultaneously expanding its global presence and reach. The company should invest heavily in research and development, allocating a significant portion of its \$24.5 billion R&D budget to continue introducing groundbreaking technologies that cater to the ever-changing needs and preferences of its customers. Furthermore, Apple must continue to build and nurture strong relationships with its target audience, including educators, creative professionals, and tech-savvy consumers.

In addition to the points mentioned above, we recommend Apple:

1. Leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data to design targeted marketing campaigns and enhance personalization, delivering highly relevant experiences for its over 1 billion iPhone users.
2. Collaborate with metaverse platforms to establish a virtual presence, engaging audiences in new, immersive ways and opening up innovative revenue streams.
3. Invest in sustainable and circular economy initiatives, actively promoting them through marketing campaigns to reinforce Apple's commitment to environmental responsibility, which includes reaching 100% carbon neutrality by 2030.
4. Foster technological partnerships for smart city solutions, highlighting real-world applications of Apple's technologies and expanding into new market segments.

5. Emphasize inclusivity and accessibility in product design and marketing efforts, catering to diverse customer groups and expanding market reach.

However, Apple must also remain vigilant to potential threats to its market position. Some potential risks include increased competition from emerging technology companies, changing consumer preferences, regulatory challenges, and cybersecurity threats. To mitigate these risks, Apple should:

1. Monitor competitor activities and emerging technologies closely, staying ahead of market trends and maintaining its competitive edge.

2. Continuously innovate and expand its product and service offerings to address changing consumer needs and preferences, ensuring that Apple remains an industry leader.

3. Engage in proactive dialogue with regulators and policymakers to ensure compliance with evolving regulations and mitigate potential legal risks.

Invest in robust cybersecurity measures to protect its digital infrastructure, customer data, and intellectual property, guarding against potentially damaging security breaches.

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.

Apple’s SWOT matrix

Strengths		Weaknesses	
S1: Strong Brand Value		W1: Dependence on Product Line	
S2: Iconic Global Presence		W2: High Prices Compared to Competitors	
S3: Innovative Technology		W3: Heavy Reliance on Chinese Manufacturing	
S4: Brand of Choice for Professionals		W4: Dependence on Third-Party Suppliers	
S5: Proficiency in R&D		W5: Lack of Presence in Emerging Markets	
S6: Commitment to Sustainability		W6: Inability to Quickly Adapt to Market Trends	
S7: Diversification in Services			
Opportunities		Threats	
O1: Expansion into emerging markets		T1: Fierce Competition from Smartphone Giants	
O2: Diversification of product portfolio		T2: Low-cost Imitations Threat	
O3: Growing demand for wearable technology		T3: Rising Labor Costs Challenge	
O4: Strategic partnerships and acquisitions		T4: Regulatory Scrutiny and Legal Issues	
O5: Growing demand for home and remote office products		T5: Cybersecurity Risks and Vulnerabilities	
O6: Expansion of the trade-in program and offer		T6: Market Saturation and Stagnant Innovation	
		T7: Geopolitical tensions and trade wars	

Source: Based on own analysis, 2023

Table 2.

Apple’s TOWS matrix

		EXTERNAL FACTORS	
		Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
INTERNAL FACTORS	Strength (S)	SO Strategy	ST Strategy
		Expand retail store presence into emerging markets (S7, O1)	Enhance security features to protect against cyber threats (S4, T5)
		Develop and promote wearable technology products (S4, O5)	Maintain a premium pricing strategy with a focus on differentiation (S2, T1)
	Weaknesses (W)	WO Strategy	WT Strategy
		Leverage large cash reserves for strategic partnerships and acquisitions (S5, O4)	Employ CSR initiatives to counteract negative public perception (S1, T4)
		Expand product portfolio to reduce dependence on a single product line (W1, O2)	Diversify manufacturing to mitigate reliance on Chinese production (W3, T7)
Explore opportunities in remote office products to penetrate emerging markets (W5, O3)	Invest in cybersecurity to combat low-cost imitations (W2, T2)		
Utilize strategic partnerships to enhance the supply chain and reduce dependence on third-party suppliers (W4, O4)	Improve responsiveness to market trends to counteract competition (W6, T6)		

Source: Based on own calculations & assumptions, 2023

Table 3.

Apple's IFE matrix

Key Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
Strength			
Strong brand recognition	0.15	4	0.60
High-profit margins	0.10	4	0.40
Diversified product portfolio	0.10	3	0.30
Innovative design and technology	0.10	4	0.40
Large cash reserves	0.10	3	0.30
Skilled and qualified professionals	0.10	3	0.30
Strong retail store presence	0.10	3	0.30
Weaknesses			
Dependence on product line	0.10	2	0.20
High prices compared to competitors	0.05	2	0.10
Heavy reliance on Chinese manufacturing	0.05	2	0.10
Lack of presence in emerging markets	0.05	1	0.05
Dependence on third-party suppliers	0.05	2	0.10
Inability to quickly adapt to changing market trends	0.10	2	0.20
Total	1		3.35

Source: Based on own calculations & assumptions, 2023

Table 4.

Apple's External Factor Evaluation Matrix

External Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
Opportunities			
Expansion into emerging markets	0.1	4	0.4
Diversification of product portfolio	0.08	4	0.32
Growing demand for wearable technology	0.07	4	0.28
Strategic partnerships and acquisitions	0.08	3	0.24
Growing demand for home and remote office products	0.07	3	0.21
Expansion of the trade-in program and offer	0.07	3	0.21
Threats			
Fierce competition from smartphone giants	0.10	2	0.20
Low-cost imitations threat	0.09	2	0.18
Rising labour costs challenge	0.07	2	0.14
Regulatory scrutiny and legal issues	0.07	2	0.14
Cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities	0.07	1	0.07
Market saturation and stagnant innovation	0.07	2	0.14
Geopolitical tensions and trade wars	0.07	1	0.07
Total	1		2.53

Source: Based on own calculations & assumptions, 2023

Table 5.

Apple's IE Matrix

IE Factors / EFE Matrix	High (3.0-4.0)	Medium (2.0-2.99)	Low (1.0-1.99)
Strong (3.5)	Grow and build	Grow and build	Hold and maintain
Average (2.7)	Grow and build	Hold and maintain	Harvest or divest
Weak (1.5)	Hold and maintain	Harvest or divest	Harvest or divest

Source: Based on own calculations & assumptions, 2023

Table 6.

Apple's CPM Matrix

Critical Success Factors	Weight	Apple Rating	Apple Score	Samsung Rating	Samsung Score	Xiaomi Rating	Xiaomi Score
Advertising	0.10	2	0.20	3	0.30	3	0.30
Domestic Market Penetration	0.10	2	0.20	3	0.30	3	0.30
Customer Service	0.10	4	0.40	3	0.30	3	0.30
Product Variety	0.05	4	0.20	3	0.15	4	0.20
International Market Penetration	0.10	5	0.50	4	0.40	4	0.40
Employee Dedication	0.05	4	0.20	3	0.15	3	0.15
Financial Profit	0.10	5	0.50	4	0.40	4	0.40
Customer Loyalty	0.10	4	0.40	3	0.30	3	0.30
Market Share	0.10	4	0.40	3	0.30	3	0.30
Product Quality	0.10	5	0.50	4	0.40	4	0.40
Top Management	0.05	4	0.20	3	0.15	3	0.15
Price Competitiveness	0.05	3	0.15	4	0.20	4	0.20
Totals	1.00		3.85		3.25		3.20

Source: Based on own calculations & assumptions, 2023