

MS682

Marketing Strategy Questionnaire

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Purpose

Use this worksheet to capture the key information that you need to develop a thorough marketing strategy. Then use the information that you collect, along with other development tools, to build your key marketing strategy for your Strategic Plan.

Complete all section of this worksheet.

1. Market

- A. What is the market opportunity? What is the market size? Be sure to look at market size with respect to geography and to industry.

The US gaming market has more than 214 million players, and there are billions across the globe. Over 60% of people in the US play video games, a number which skews slightly higher for those under 18. Average age of a player is 35-44, but there is a significant distribution across age ranges.

- B. How can the market be segmented into logical customer groupings?

The logical segments of customers in the gaming market are genre, platform, and age. Genre is meaningful because certain customers are inclined to purchase and play only games in one genre. Platform is meaningful because it acts as a functional limiter to market penetration (an extremely small fraction of games are 'console sellers' and can actually move customers between platforms). Age is meaningful because certain age ranges are more likely to be interested in certain genres and certain platforms.

- C. What are the key industry trends that are fueling our success? What industry trends can inhibit our success?

The market is growing rapidly and has done so for decades. Emerging markets like Africa, India, and others are exploding, especially in mobile platforms and lifestyle games.

- D. What is the economic climate now and in the next couple of years? How will the economic climate affect our business?

The overall economic climate is tight due to COVID-19, but is growing back to pre-pandemic levels. Game sales have peaked and are continuing to grow due to being both an escape and a communication/gathering tool for distant friends and family. New platform adoption has slowed due to chip shortages and supply chain issues, but is expected to speed up in the coming years.

- E. Is our business or market affected by business cycles or seasons? If so, describe how it is affected.

Not really. There are minor trends and cycles around the big release windows and holidays, but they aren't significant factors overall. There are other even broader cycles relating to the releases of new platforms and the falloff of older platforms, but that becomes less and less of a pattern as time goes on.

2. Target Audience

- A. What market segments are we targeting (list segment name and characteristics)? What segments are we not targeting?

Targeting:

Niche audiences. Small market segments with little to no service from current providers.

Not targeting:

Mass market. Overserved genres and those claimed by massive corporate developers.

- B. What kind of audience are we targeting? What are its members' demographics and psychographics (for example, what keeps them awake at night, including both fears and opportunities)? List multiple audiences in order of priority.

Niche audiences. Demographics depend on specific title/release.

- C. What is our customer's primary reason for buying or wanting to use our product or service?

Entertainment and lack of comparable offering.

- D. Why would someone prefer our offering versus that offered by the competition? (You might want to answer the section on competition and then come back to this question.)

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The goal is that the offerings are not comparable to the competition. More niche and more specific to the target audience than what is viable for the larger mass market companies.

- E. Are there any issues or concerns that the target audience might have regarding this type of product or service?

Scale of company would be a concern. Ability to support products going forward and keep promises.

3. Competition

- A. What categories of competition threaten our success? Label each category, and identify its key characteristics. Prioritize the categories from greatest to least threatening.

Mass market competition. Huge companies, huge budgets, huge reach. Willingness and capability to clone and release any game that becomes popular.

Successful indie competition. Die-hard fans and moderate budgets from previous successes and ease of crowdfunding.

- B. Which companies pose the greatest threat, and how do they differentiate themselves? What strategic or tactical elements do they use that threaten our success? List the strengths and weaknesses for each of these elements.

Too many to meaningfully list. There are an incredible number of studios and companies that are all in the same market(s). All have their groups of fans, and many have signature franchises that are staples and guarantee continued profitability.

- C. Which competitors have the largest market share within our target market segments? Which competitors have the greatest visibility with our target audience?

Within the target niche segments there aren't any standout competitors with significantly large portions of the market, and since games are infrequently released and non-consumable there's not a clear distinction of what capturing market share even means. Almost no one purchases games exclusively from a single developer, and many don't even care who the developer is in the first place.

- D. How will we differentiate ourselves to best combat competition?

The communication strategy of being hyper-communicative with the customers of the target audience and using their feedback and ideas to drive development. Large companies have almost no two-way customer communication, small companies have more but still not much.

- E. What barriers to entry into the marketplace are we creating for ourselves?

No existing userbase, no 'big names' on the team to draw an audience.

4. Messages

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- A. What does each of our identified target audiences know and believe about us today?

Nothing. No market penetration or audience positioning.

- B. What is the single most important message that we must communicate to ALL of our target audiences?

We are listening. Communication is two-way and we can't succeed without the active participation of the target audience.

- C. What evidence can be used to support the claim that we make in our single most important message?

Ease of communication. Availability of development team. Consistent responses and consideration of input.

- D. List the single most important message that we must communicate to EACH target audience. (This might or might not be the same answer as in item B.)

SAME AS B

- E. What evidence can be used to support the claims for each message listed in item D?

SAME AS C

- F. What happy clients do we have today that we can reference in our communications? What did they buy from us, and why are they happy?

None. No market penetration.

- G. What kind of personality do we want to portray in our communications? What tone? What flavor?

Friendly and congenial. Relaxed but respectful.

- H. What is the net impression about our company or offering that we want clients and partners to take away after each interaction with our company?

That the company is listening and considering all input. No interaction is a dead-end; the loss of a customer or a deal falling through is as important a lesson as the biggest success.

References

2020 essential facts about the video game industry. Entertainment Software Association. (2021, July 9). Retrieved October 21, 2021, from <https://www.theesa.com/resource/2020-essential-facts/>.