

UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN FACULTY OF ACCOUNTANCY AND MANAGEMENT (FAM) FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE (FBF)

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2022/2023 JANUARY 2023 TRIMESTER

UKMM1011/UBMM1011 SUN ZI'S ART OF WAR AND BUSINESS STRATEGIES

GROUP ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET

Course details

Faculty: Faculty of Information, Communication and Technology

Year and Trimester of study : 2023 / October 2023

Lecture Group: $\underline{L4}$, 4-6 am, $\underline{Tuesday}$

(Eg: L1, 8 – 10 am, Monday)

Lecturer's Name: Dr Tee Chee Wee

Assignment Details

Company's Name : Nestle Company

Due Date : Week 6 (08 March 2023, Wednesday) by 5pm.

Important Note : Submission of assignment is the responsibility of the students

Students' Details

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	(Arrange by alphabetical order)	ID No.		(L1, L2)
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Note: Arrange name according to alphabetical order and course

Assessment	Overall marks (%)
Group Assignment	



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MARKING SCHEME FOR WRITTEN GROUP ASSIGNMENT

No.	Assessment	Marks Allocation (%)	Marks Given (%)
1.	 Section A: Organization Background Brief introduction of the company (full company name, location, business, products, brands, competitors, performance, etc.) 	10	
2.	 Section B: Sun Zi's Art of War Theories: Provide critical elaborations on the following theories: Theory 1: Those who arrive first at the battleground will have sufficient time to rest and prepare against the enemy and those who arrive late at the battleground will have to rush into battle when they are already exhausted Theory 2: The general is like the guardian of the nation. If the guardian is a thoughtful and detailed person, the nation will be strong and mighty. However, if the guardian is full with character flaw, the nation will be weak and vulnerable Theory 3: In war, it is better to go for swift victories rather than engage in prolonged military campaigns Theory 4: In the conduct of war, there is no fixed situation and condition, just like water has no constant shape and configuration 	20	
3.	Section C: Contents Explain your chosen company's practices for each of Sun Zi's theories provided. - Please provide detailed explanations concerning critical incidents that happened in the company. - Please mention how the company overcame the challenge for each of the incidents encountered.		
4.	Section D: Recommendations - Based on your point of view, please recommend the solutions which used by the company in Section C		
5.	Section D: Conclusion - Summarize the report and explain what you have learned from this assignment.		
6.	Quality of the written assignment - Format, layout, idea flow, languages, references, word count and structure.	10	
	Total Marks	100	
	 (-) Minus (Non-compliance to structure/formats/instructions as stated in the Course Plan 2021 Oct) NOTE: A total of 30 marks can be deducted due to non-compliance. Marks should be deducted from the total marks of the assignment (if any). NET MARK AFTER DEDUCTION OF NON-COMPLIANCES 		

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Section A: Organization Background

The selected company that we will applies Sun Zi's Art of War will be Nestle Malaysia. Nestle Malaysia is a subsidiary of Nestle S.A, a multinational food and beverage company from Switzerland. Nestle Malaysia was first established in 1912 under the name Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company in Penang, Malaysia. (NEW STRAITS TIME, 2016) Starting in 1939, it opened its first factory in Petaling Jaya, Selangor, which is still in operation today and had become one of the headquarters of the organization. As from 1950s to 1970s, Nestle Malaysia began to take some actions which will enhance their growth and ingratiate itself into the local and market including invested in research and development to improve its products and developed new ones, established a training centre for its employees, expanded its distribution network throughout Malaysia and so on. As of now, Nestle Malaysia has over 5000 employees, several manufacturing facilities throughout the country and making its products available in over 190 countries worldwide. (UKEssays, 2018)

The company only started with the production of condensed milk and infant food products which is different from nowadays. As for today the company's main business is taking parts in manufacturing, marketing, and sale of food and beverage products. Nestle Malaysia produces a wide range of products, including instant coffee, powdered milk, chocolate, confectionery, cereals, and culinary products. (TheEdge, 2010) Some of the well-known brands owned by Nestle Malaysia include NESCAFE, MILO, MAGGI, KIT KAT, NESPRAY and so on.

Even though Nestle Malaysia is one of the biggest and most successful company for now, the organization is still facing competition from both local and international food and beverage companies operating in Malaysia, including Dutch Lady Milk Industries Berhad, F&N Holdings Berhad, Coca-Cola Refreshments Malaysia Sdn Bhd, and PepsiCo Malaysia Sdn Bhd. These competitors are challenging the organization since all of them are targeting the same consumer groups and providing the similar products.

In terms of performances, Nestle Malaysia has been one of the food and beverage company from Malaysia that is leading in financial. In 2022, the company recorded a revenue of RM 6.66 billion (up 16% from 2021), net profit of RM 620.3 million (up 8.9% from 2021) and recorded 9.3% of profit margin (in line with 2021). (Simply Wall St, 2023) The organization is also succeed being standing out in providing world-class products of highest compatible standard and reliability which make it known to be the top of food and beverage company.

Section B: Sun Zi's Art of War Theories:

Theory 1:

It can be defined as those that arrive early to the battlefield will have plenty of time to rest and prepare, while those who arrive late will have to rush into battle when they are already worn out (Ng, 2017). In business, being the first company to introduce a new product can have long-term or competitive advantages. A late entrant can find it challenging to stand out in a crowded market or to persuade clients to move from a product they are already familiar with and engaged in. Not only that, but customers' preferences can also be shaped by the first mover and being the first to deliver a product of acceptable quality will increase brand loyalty.

For example, one of the "first mover" company is Toshiba Corporation. Toshiba is formed by 1939 and it is one of the oldest and biggest manufacturers of consumer and commercial electric devices in Japan is Toshiba Company. In 2006, Reader Digest Malaysia gave Toshiba a Gold Award for being the most dependable brand in two categories which are LCD Televisions and washing machines. As a result, Toshiba can improve its market position and successfully handle the rivalry that results from its rivals and gain many loyalty customers (UKEssays, 2018).

Theory 2:

Business leadership is the ability of an organization's management to define and achieve hard goals, move swiftly and decisively, when necessary, outperform the competition, and motivate employees to perform to the best of their abilities. (Alexandra Twin, 2022) This theory said that a good leader is a must, and it plays a vital role in a business or company. If he or she is a thoughtful and detailed person, the company will be strong and mighty. However, if the leader is full of character flaw, the company will be weak and vulnerable. Besides, a good leader is the people who will do things not for himself but for his people and company.

Effective leaders are a must for all organisations and enterprises to succeed. To set a shared objective for the company's success, effective and well-trained leadership is crucial (The CEO Institute, 2023). For instance, Bill Gates. He is the founder of Microsoft, which is the largest PC software firm in the world, and he routinely ranks among the world's wealthiest individuals. (CMOE,2022) This mega-billionaire of Microsoft has a unique take on failing and dealing with dissatisfied customers. He views them as a resource and the greatest approach to discover the truth about the shortcomings of your company or product. Beside that, he also said: "Your most dissatisfied customers are your best teachers." (Eggcellent Work, 2022)

Theory 3:

This theory values quick and efficient actions to win, rather than prolonged campaigns. This applies to both battle and business, where short-term gains and quick wins are often prioritized over long-term initiatives.

To apply the idea of "swift battles" in business, it's important to prepare and strategize beforehand, but also act quickly to coordinate the battle. Delay can result in failure. In the fast-paced business world, it's important to seize opportunities quickly, but revealing too much information can make pre-planned strategies fail as any tactical strategies are only effective for a certain period.

One of the most recent examples would be Tesla. The pioneer of EV manufacturer has been through a major reorganization and cost cutting initiative in 2018 as they're facing problems over its production schedule. On their official email, company CEO Elon Musk explained that the reorganization included "flattening the management structure to facilitate communication, consolidating operations where appropriate, and reducing activities that are not crucial to the accomplishment of our goal." (Reuters, 2018) As part of the restructuring, Tesla also lay off 3,000 people, or 9% of its workforce, in response to investor pressure to boost cash flow and speed up new car production (Nouri, 2018). On 2020 it was revealed by the company CEO that Tesla was "about a month" from bankruptcy during the surge in Model 3 manufacturing from the middle of 2017 to middle of 2019.(Kolodny,2020) After surviving the manufacturing hell, the results shown that the reorganization paid off as the Model 3 became the best-selling electric vehicle of all time until the later released of its Model Y.(Johnson,2023)

Theory 4:

This theory highlights the need for flexibility and adaptability in war. The idea is that war is constantly changing, and strategies must be adjusted to respond to new conditions and situations. The situation is constantly changing and there are no fixed rules or conditions that can be relied upon. Like water, the situation can be fluid and unpredictable, and the most successful strategies will be those that can adapt and respond quickly to changing circumstances. Businesses must be agile, innovative, and able to pivot quickly as they must be able to anticipate changes in the market and be prepared to respond proactively.

All of us can confidently say that McDonald's would be one of the most noticeable when it's come to product adaptation. McDonald's global adaptation marketing skills are so well known, it's almost becoming an attraction for tourists to try out them specialize local menu when they

visit foreign countries and places. Successful menus such as Teriyaki Burger for Japan, Taro Pie for China and Hong Kong, Poutine for Canada, Panzerotti for Italy, Kaprao Crispy Chicken for Thailand, McVegan for India, Finland, Sweden, Nasi Lemak for Malaysia, Kiwiburger for New Zealand and so much more.(Lovefood,2020) They even do certain customizations to feed local needs such as prohibit pork in regions which practice Halal diet, serves beer in Germany, switch out chicken breast with chicken thighs which are preferred in China locals, utilizing local materials in New Zealand, . (Racoma,2019) All of these customizations are key factors for McDonald's to expand their business in the foreign market by taking into considerations with all the nuances and sensitivities of a region's culture which includes their customs, preferences, religious beliefs, habits, values and attitudes. By keeping on track of cultural trends and modifying their product offerings and advertising methods to fit cohesively with these trends and local needs and culture specialty, McDonald's were able to achieve significant global sales while providing a customer-centric experience and staying true to their brand values. (Catalyst Agents, 2020).

Section C: Content

Theory 1:

Sun Zi have been stated, the first troops which involved in the battleground have the most advantages than other troops that arrive later. This is because the troop which arrived earlier can obtain more resources, time, and strategics preparation that kinds of advantages able to fight against to their enemy troops. Nestle had already began their business in Malaysia since 1912 as the named of Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company in Penang. Due to the growth of revenue and net profit of the company growth rapidly then decided to move the company to Kuala Lumpur where is the economic centre of Malaysia in 1939. Until today, Nestle Malaysia had operated 6 factories and employed almost more than 5000 employees in the whole Malaysia. Many of the subsidiary brand of Nestle had become a part of necessity item of every Malaysian household for generations such as Milo, Maggi, Nescafe, and Kit Kat (Nestle, n.d).

Instead, Malaysia is a Muslim majority country that let Nestle found a great business opportunity. They have been manufacturing more than 300 halal products that had been released to the market. The most popular must be the Maggi instant noodles, Nestle had built the largest noodle factory Batu Tiga Maggi Line in Shah Alam (Yeap, 2016).

Critical Incident 1:

Although Nestle have earn many consumer confidence from worldwide, but they do something unethical in the third-world countries and low-income developing countries. According to Andrei (2021), most of the place in Africa is still in the situation of low water sanitation. So it was necessary to encourage them to boil the water before mixed with the baby formula, but Nestle company pretend just to ignore it. They also encouraged mothers can directly mixed the baby formula without boiled the water. That will increase the risk of baby infect other kinds of diseases.

Theory 2:

After that, Sun Zi have been emphasized that the general is like the guardian of a nation. If the guardian is a thoughtful and detailed person, the nation will become strong and mighty. This is also the way of China government always remind their people, a strong country must have a strong central government. This is because a strong central government able to maintain the political stability in the country and able to lead the country moving forward. According to Yu and Litman (2020), Nestle Company can become the largest food and beverage company is because the contribution of founder of Nestle, Mr. Henri Nestle always emphasize to inspire the people to have a healthier lifestyle among the society. This is to make sure they can reach a long-term strategic plan with earning consumer confidence for their products and maintain their global leadership in the global food and beverage industry (Yu & Litman, 2020).

Moreover, the Managing Director of Nestle Malaysia Mr. Alois Hofbauer was having an interview session with Astro Awani Tamu Awani programme and also share about the successful strategy of their company in Malaysia. Mr. Alois Hobauer said Nestle always put their customer as the first and it is important to build a trusting relationship between customer and the company to give a good impression to the customer about the good quality of Nestle products. For example, Nestle Malaysia have produce a wholegrain MILO Nutri-G that on exclusive in Malaysia, this is because Nestle Malaysia had already built a common memories and good relationship of Malaysian people to Milo. He also have stated Nestle still have a lot of employee are willing stayed in Nestle for a lifetime this is a phenomenon that is likely happen in the society as many people wouldn't stay in a same company in their lifetime (Nestle, 2015).

Critical Incident 2:

According to US Department of Agriculture (2021), Nestle USA have release about 27872 pounds of frozen DiGiorno Crispy Pan Crust pepperoni pizza without labelling and

declaring the ingredients contain allergens. That the pizza contained soy protein that will make people allergen which is not labelling on the box of the product.

Theory 3:

The third theory from Sun Zi's Art of War is emphasizing the importance of swift victories in warfare, as long, drawn-out campaigns can be costly in terms of resources, morale, and lives lost. This principle can also be applied to business strategy, where it is often preferable to achieve quick results rather than engage in prolonged efforts. For example, Nestle is a multinational food and beverage company. In the early 2000s, Nestle identified a number of underperforming businesses and decided to divest them, focusing on their core brands and businesses instead (Pursuing our value-creation strategy, 2021). This strategy allowed Nestle to concentrate on their strengths and quickly improve their financial performance, resulting in higher profits and a stronger market position.

Additionally, Nestle has pursued a strategy of acquiring companies that complement their existing businesses, such as the 2018 acquisition of the vitamin and supplement maker Atrium Innovations (Nestlé extends consumer healthcare portfolio by agreeing to acquire Atrium Innovations, 2018). Nestle is able to generate synergies and realize cost savings more quickly than if they had engaged in a more protracted acquisition process.

In short, Nestle's focus on swift victories through divestitures and targeted acquisitions has allowed the company to adapt to changing market conditions and improve its competitive position.

Critical Incident 3:

Nestle has encountered some challenges over the year and one of the challenges is the 2010 Maggi Noodles Controversy. In 2010, Nestle's popular Maggi noodles were found to contain excess levels of lead and monosodium glutamate (MSG) in India (IndiaToday, 2021). The controversy resulted in a nationwide ban on the product and Nestle faced criticism from both consumers and government officials (Chatterjee, 2015).

Theory 4

The fourth theory from Sun Zi's Art of War means that successful strategies must be adaptable and responsive to changing conditions, just as water can flow and adapt to its surroundings. This theory suggests that Nestle must be able to adapt to changing market conditions and consumer preferences in order to remain competitive. First of all, Nestle has provided an array of diversification of product offerings because Nestle has a long history of diversifying its product portfolio to meet changing consumer demands and market conditions (Harriet, 2020). For example, when Nestle recognized a growing demand for health and

wellness products, they launched a range of products that catered to this market, such as Nestle Fitness cereals and Nespresso's Vertuo coffee system that offers larger cup sizes (Our business principles, 2019). This diversification has allowed Nestle to remain relevant and competitive in a constantly evolving market.

Moreover, there is an investment in sustainable practices as Nestle has recognized the importance of sustainability in today's market and has invested heavily in responsible sourcing, reducing their carbon footprint, and minimizing waste (_TylerTheTyler_, 2021). This investment has also improved their brand image and helped them meet the growing demand for environmentally-friendly products.

In short, Nestle has applied Sun Zi's principle of adaptability and responsiveness to remain competitive and succeed in the marketplace. By staying flexible, responsive to change, and willing to invest in new strategies and technologies, Nestle has been able to stay ahead of competitors and maintain its position as a leader in the food and beverage industry.

Critical Incident 4:

Nestle faced some critical incidents in 2020 which is the COVID-19 pandemic presented numerous challenges for Nestle, including disruptions to their supply chain, changes in consumer behaviour, and economic uncertainty. To address these challenges, Nestle implemented several measures to ensure the safety of their employees and maintain business continuity (Wheeler, 2020).

Solution to Overcame the Challenges for the Incidents Encountered Solution for Incident 1:

According to Krasny (2012), Senator Edward Kennedy hold a U.S Senate Hearings section on the industry that doing some unethical marketing behavior, especially against to Nestle Company. After that, another international conference with World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and The International Baby Food Action Network followed. Live up to expectation, the 34th World Health Assembly had adopted Resolution WHA34.22 and carried out a policy which is the International Code of Marketing Breast-Milk Substitutes in the year of 1981. This is because Nestle Company always promote their baby formula as same as breast milk. This kind of policy is to avoid a particular use some irresponsible slogan to mislead the consumers (Neslen, 2018).

Solution for Incident 2:

After the incident happen, Nestle USA had been revoking back the almost 27872 pound of frozen DiGiorno pepperoni pizza and also company have been inform the affected batch of pizza have the label with manufacturing date of 30 June 2021 and a 'best by' date of March 2022 and the most important is labelling with the batch code on the pizza is 118157021. Nestle have been friendly reminding that if the customer is not allergic to any soy, it is safe to have the pizza (Bronner, 2021).

Solution for Incident 3:

The 2010 Maggi Noodles Controversy: Nestle responded swiftly to the controversy by recalling all affected products and launching a thorough investigation into the matter. By taking immediate action to address the issue and implement corrective measures, Nestle was able to limit the impact of the crisis and rebuild consumer trust.

Besides, in order to overcome the issue, Nestle conducted a thorough investigation into the matter and implemented a number of corrective actions. The company worked closely with regulatory authorities to ensure that their products met all safety standards, and they also launched an extensive advertising campaign to rebuild consumer trust. Additionally, Nestle made significant investments in their supply chain and manufacturing processes to ensure the safety and quality of their products (Quint, 2017).

Solution for Incident 4:

The 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic: Nestle responded quickly to the pandemic by implementing a range of measures to ensure the safety of their employees and maintain business continuity. By adapting their operations and investing in e-commerce and online channels, Nestle was able to meet changing consumer demands and stay ahead of competitors.

Furthermore, these measures included enhanced safety protocols in their factories and distribution centres, as well as increased investments in e-commerce and online channels to meet changing consumer preferences. Nestle also provided financial support to their suppliers and partners, recognizing the importance of a resilient supply chain during a crisis.

Section D: Recommendations

According to Sun Tzu's theory, "The first who arrives at the battlefield have more time to prepare than those who arrived late and exhausted will not have prepared well.", it proposes a vivid concept to those involved in business areas. It distinctly provides the initial hypothesis for business starters to discover a new need for the marketplace and grasp the opportunity in front when the new need is detected without hesitation. Similar to the quote from Sun Tzu,

"The quality of decision is like the well-timed swoop of a falcon which enables it to strike and destroy its victim." The beginning of a new business is not always about the enormous starting capital, without the right timing and providing new need for the marketplace, eventually possessing enormous amounts of money will result in a total loss in business. That said, as a product or service provider, we must remember that the business must ensure consumer health and safety and prioritize it to maintain a sound reputation.

"Now the general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple where the battle is fought. The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and few calculations to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose." Sun Tzu clearly indicates that a leader who is cautious and plans thoroughly beforehand succeeds in any event. Taking considerations of any possible challenges and obstacle into mind, foresee any solutions to overcome the obstacle which causes a hindrance to succeed in business. Moreover, even when an unexpected event emerges, managerial positions of a business must act calmly and make predictions towards the consequences of the lists of actions taken to resolve that said unexpected event. However, a business involving chaos internally between the managerial positions will cause the business to suffer.

The Art of War presented the idea, "In war, then, let your great object be victory, not lengthy campaigns.," business companies must understand the risk and losses when having to be in prolonged competition with another business company. A centralized business company will be in a state of reacting to a decentralized business company as a decentralized company distributes its decision-making authority throughout the company. The decentralized business company will have a more instant judgement, and the centralized company must delay its actions until one leadership team concludes. The principle of rapid decision making is crucial to a business company as it determines its tempo of productivity and quality of the business, a rapid one possesses the chance of success. A fast tempo of decision making will provide a business company the time to recover after an unexpected event in comparison with a slow-paced decision-making business company, the slow-paced business company will have to sustain unnecessary loses.

A renowned quote from Bruce Lee, "You put water into a bottle, it becomes the bottle. You put it in a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Water can flow, or it can crash. Be water, my friend." is like Sun Tzu's saying, "He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be called a heaven-born captain." A business company

operates based on their business plan and structure, otherwise, a successful business company operates depending on the conditions of the marketplace, the demand and need from the consumers. A successful business company has the capabilities to address the changing behavior in the marketplace and rapidly acts when an opportunity arises. In contrast, a business company which remains in a constant state and is not reacting to the changes in the marketplace will eventually lose the opportunity to make a breakthrough in the business. Having a business plan and structure which can reconstruct and reorganize in condition to the changes in the marketplace is of high priority to be successful and be of example to other business companies in the same industry.

Section E: Conclusion

In conclusion, Nestle Malaysia is a well-established subsidiary of the multinational food and beverage company, Nestle S.A, and has been operating in Malaysia since 1912. Over the years, the company has taken various strategic actions such as focusing on the company's commitment to research and development, employee training, and expanding its distribution network has helped it to grow and expand over the years, making it one of the leading companies in the industry and successfully enhance its growth and market presence in worldwide by providing high-quality products to consumers. Despite facing competition from local and international food and beverage companies, Nestle Malaysia has been leading in financial performance and providing high-quality products to its customers as the company continued maintaining a strong brand reputation and earn trust from consumers.

Over the years, Nestle have been facing various kinds of issues, incidents, and challenges such as unethical charges on user manual, product contains allergens without any notice or caution note, excessive amounts of additives and harmful substances found in products and supply chains challenges due to pandemic. Nestle have reacted quickly and resolved the matter through conducting investigation and implementing corrective actions towards the issue. Other than that, Nestle also adapted their company operations using online channels, utilizing e-commerce platforms, and conducting safety protocols in their factories and distribution centers while operating smoothly and fulfilling consumer demands. Nestle also provided financial support to their suppliers and partners to help cope with the crisis and is trying their best to maintain the business chain during pre-pandemic state. Through the application of Sun Zi's Art of War to their business strategies, Nestle Malaysia can continue to strategize and maintain its position in the market.

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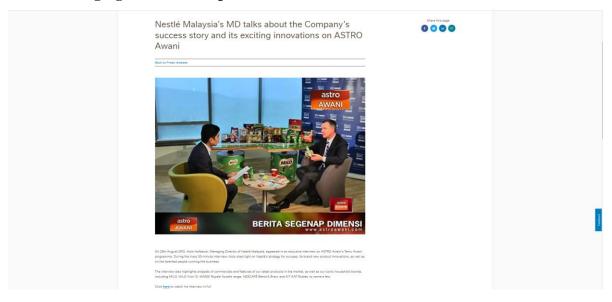
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Appendixes

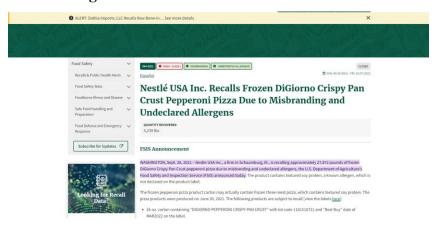
Nestle Managing Director accept interview from ASTRO Awani



The Edge Billion Ringgit Club 2016 (Company of the Year)

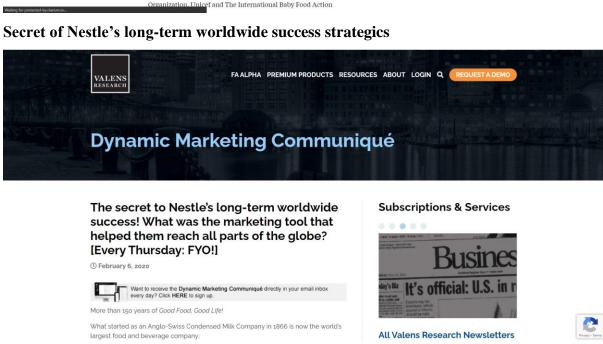


Nestlé USA Inc. Recalls Frozen DiGiorno Crispy Pan Crust Pepperoni Pizza Due to Misbranding and Undeclared Allergens

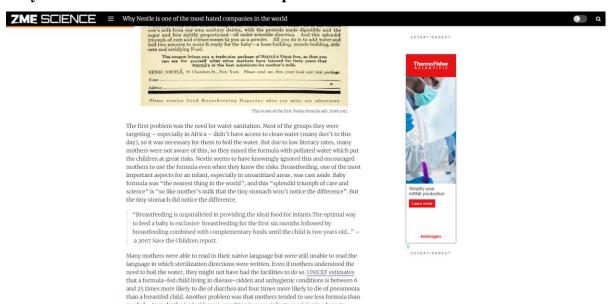


International Code of Marketing Breast-Milk Substitute





Why Nestle is one of the most hated companies in the world



Nestle recalls over 27,000 pounds of frozen DiGiorno pepperoni pizza

