

Strategic Management assessment

by Strategic Management Assessment Strategic Management
Assessment

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Strategic Management

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF APPLE INC



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Introduction

Strategic analysis is the specific procedure that involves in researching of the overall business environment of a company within that organization operates. The “strategic analysis” is crucial to formulate the overall “strategic planning” for smooth working and decision-making of the particular organization. Strategic analysis is the process of examining an organization's internal and external environment to identify opportunities and challenges that may impact its ability to achieve its goals. It involves the systematic gathering and analysis of information to develop a clear understanding of an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).

Strategic analysis typically includes a review of an organization's mission, vision, and values, as well as an assessment of its resources, capabilities, and competitive position. It also involves an evaluation of market trends, regulatory factors, and other external factors that may impact the organization's success.

The insights gained from strategic analysis are used to inform the development of a strategic plan that outlines the organization's objectives and the actions required to achieve them. Strategic analysis is an ongoing process, as organizations must continually monitor their environment and adjust their strategies in response to changing circumstances. Furthermore, this report will discuss the strategic analysis of Apple Inc. The typical customer profile of Apple is middle to high in their economic status.

Managing in a strategic way to maintain an organization and helps to achieve objectives and goals. This management involves evaluating strategies, the internal organization, and the competitive environment. The management of strategy is totally different and has different aspects. Strategic management is greater than operational management for any type of organization. The manager of strategic management has to handle all the problems and deal with the problems for the organization. Management is characterized by the complexity that is also necessary for the organization to make decisions.

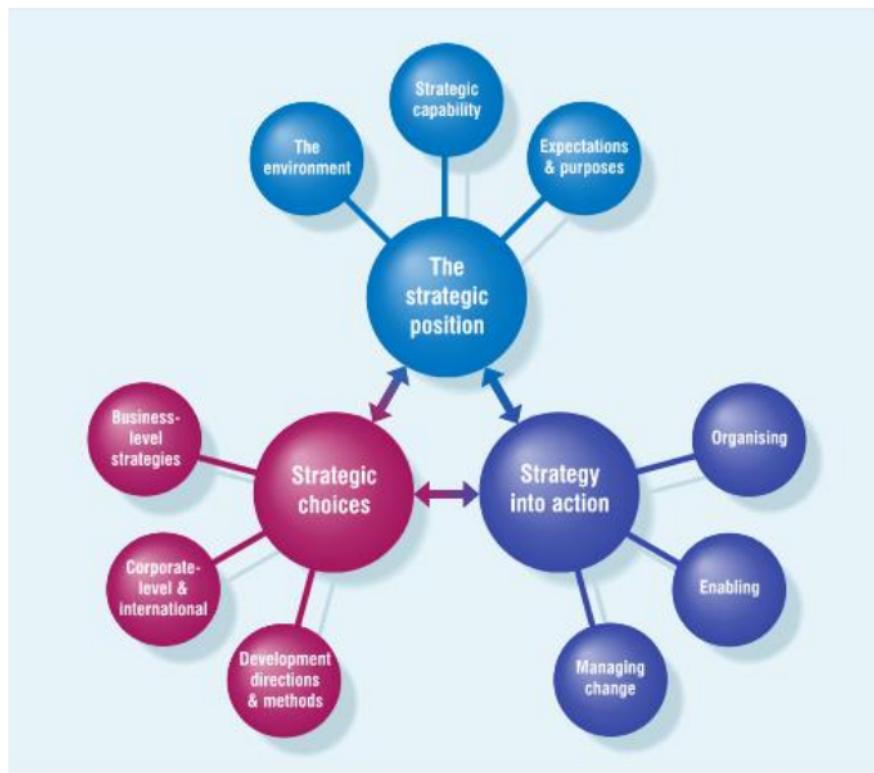


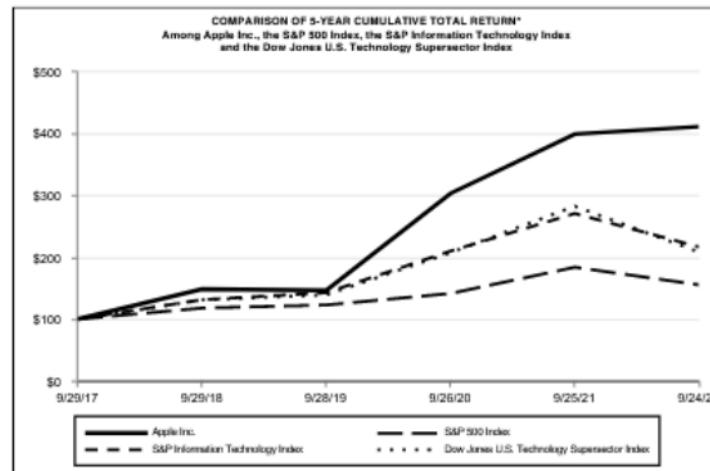
Figure 1 : Elements of the strategic positions

Source: (Morden, 2017).

The pieces of training of the managers are about taking action for the organization's growth. In this project, it has been discussed the analytical approaches and strategies. The management includes the strategic positions of an organization including understanding the condition and the necessity of an organization. The elements of strategic management have explained that a huge portion of the management is included and established by strategic management (Morden, 2017). In a business ground, strategic management plays a crucial role, and business statistic also depends on strategic management. Creating barriers and changing the business environment can be difficult for strategic management. The upper management is the ultimate responsible person of an organization and the management has made the decisions. In an organization strategic management plans to grow in the market and helps the business to be in a growth condition. Organizational leaders are trying to focus on their past strategies and apply them in a routine wise. On the other hand, strategic management is making the plan for the growth of the business

in a newly created way. Effective strategic management requires both perspectives such as outward and inward. Collective knowledge is used to develop the future scope of the organization and also examine the environment of the organization. The Strategic management guides maintain the atmosphere and the behavior of the employees.

In strategic management, the SWOT model has been recognized as the strengths have been building up for the strategies and the weakness of the organization has been solved by strategic management. The management has been notified as the multitasker and it plays an important role in the entire parts of organization. On the other hand, the opportunities that have been recognized by the organization are based on strategic management. Threats are the external forces that the organization has to face the business purpose. It is based on the atmosphere and the culture of the organization and it can be fixed strategically. Strategic management has the focus of the organization to build up the organization and solve all the problems of the organization.



* \$100 invested on September 29, 2017 in stock or index, including reinvestment of dividends. Data points are the last day of each fiscal year for the Company's common stock and September 30th for indexes.

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	September 2017	September 2018	September 2019	September 2020	September 2021	September 2022
Apple Inc.	\$ 100	\$ 149	\$ 146	\$ 303	\$ 400	\$ 411
S&P 500 Index	\$ 100	\$ 118	\$ 123	\$ 142	\$ 184	\$ 156
S&P Information Technology Index	\$ 100	\$ 131	\$ 143	\$ 210	\$ 271	\$ 217
Dow Jones U.S. Technology Supersector Index	\$ 100	\$ 131	\$ 139	\$ 208	\$ 283	\$ 209

Figure 2: Apple Inc. annual market report

(Source: Jafari-Sadeghi et al. 2021)

Background

Apple Inc. was known as “Apple Computer Inc.” and is an American consumer and computer electronics company. The former Apple Company was established on 1st April 1976 by Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs. Apple uses their brand idea “making technology so simple that everyone can be part of the future”. During the keynote speech of Steve Jobs at “Macworld Expo” on 9th January 2007, he announced the change of the company name to Apple Inc. from “Apple Computer Inc.” (Kyamko, 2022). Apple Inc. is a multinational technology company based in Cupertino, California, United States. The company was founded on April 1, 1976, by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne. The first product released by Apple was the Apple I personal computer, which was sold as a kit for \$666.66.

Apple gained popularity in the 1980s with the release of the Apple II and Macintosh computers. The Macintosh, in particular, introduced the use of graphical user interfaces and mouse-driven controls, which revolutionized personal computing. In the 2000s, Apple diversified its product line and released the iPod, which became the market leader in portable music players. This was followed by the iPhone in 2007, which transformed the smartphone industry and became Apple's flagship product.

The company has also expanded into other markets, including digital content and services, such as the iTunes Store, App Store, and Apple Music. Additionally, Apple has introduced other successful products, including the iPad and the Apple Watch. Apple is known for its design-focused approach to product development and its commitment to innovation. The company has a strong brand identity and is consistently ranked among the most valuable brands in the world. As

of 2021, Apple is one of the world's largest technology companies, with annual revenues exceeding \$300 billion. This company is famous for creating iPad, iPhones, and Macintosh computers. Globally, Apple is a large brand with a market cap of more than \$2 trillion(Kyamko, 2022).

Mission and objectives

The mission of Apple Inc is to take proper “user experience” to all consumers through “innovative software”, hardware, and services and make a contribution worldwide by making tools that advance humankind. To obtain stellar services and products within the timeframes. The statement of Apple's commitment offers the best products and services and meets up each customer's unique needs. The mission of the company has been notified as user-friendly and it has contributed to its success.

Apple Inc. is an established company that has the best experience for the consumers through this initiative, the mission has been made by the organization. The company has the feedback of feedback from best-used as the IPad, iPhones, and others (Jafari-Sadeghi et al. 2021). Apple-designed products have been made to be user-friendly. Apple Inc. does not compromise when it is to consumers' experiences. The privacy features help the personal and professional data from the criminals' offenses.

Innovative products

The company pushed the standard designed products in making the products and that is addressing the unique needs of the customers. The company has made the standard designed products for the market and the hardware and software situations cater to the different and various segments of the market (Dubey, 2019). The products of the company have been used by several ages of people including business, education, healthcare, and many more. The company has increased the presence of healthcare with innovative products such as Apple Watch that detect heart irregularities. Moreover, the Apple healthcare record features that allow one to check medical data through mobile devices.

Service Delivery Quality

The company is obsessed with the consumers' comfort zone and it oversees the development and designs for product sales, repairs, and development.

- To become a leading business in the mobile market worldwide
- To grow the market and sales share through quality and innovative leadership

Macro-Environment Analysis

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PESTLE analysis

PESTLE analysis is a strategic tool used to assess the external factors affecting an organization or industry. PESTLE stands for Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors, which are analysed to gain insight into the macro-environmental factors that may impact the organization's performance. The analysis is a concept of marketing and business and it has been used as a tool by the organization. The analysis has explained the political, Economical, Social, technological, legal, and environmental. The analysis gives a bird's view of the organization and guides it

In several areas of the organization. The analysis has explained everything about the organization and also collect all the information from all sides of the organization. The framework of the entire business has been generated by the strategic management of the organization. It is the backbone of the company that is playing the lead role in the organization. It does not define the way the organization should do such as it defines all the accounts of the organization's goals and the strategic strung. The necessity of every factor can be different for different types of industries such as the imperative of any strategy of a company that wants to develop and conduct the PESTLE analysis (Dubey, 2019). This is much critical to understand the actual depth of the PESTLE analysis in an organization however, the analysis covers all the parts of the organization.

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Here is a brief description of each of the PESTLE factors:

Political:

This factor considers the impact of political factors such as government policies, regulations, and political stability on an organization. It also includes factors such as taxation, trade policies, and government stability

The factor determines the extent of the Government's influence on the economy of an industry. The political factor of the PESTEL analysis explains the fiscal policy and trade tariffs and many more. This factor includes the tax policies of organization and the business of the organization (Nambisan et al. 2019). The political factors include the country in which the business operates

that is including the relationship between the foreign and home countries. The types of political factors affecting the analysis include government levies, policies, political stabilities, and many more. The external environment of Apple Inc is affected by the political factor as the operators in business in the environment of Government-Defined.

- Apple products makes political stability in most countries and present several opportunities.
- The trade war between the US-China affected business negatively and during that time Apple products in Chinese markets makes a reduced share.
- The products improve the policies between America and other countries and create opportunities in business.
- Apple products depend on manufacturing at low cost in China and political causes the negative impacts on the business of these products.
- The government of the USA has increased the tax on Chinese imports and the Apple products taxes have also increased and the supply products of Apple has decreased in China.

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Economic:

This factor includes economic factors such as inflation, exchange rates, economic growth, and unemployment rates that may impact an organisation's performance. The factor of Economics defines economic growth, rate of interest, rate of exchange, unemployment, and inflation as the common factors. The company Apple Inc. analyses the business strategies that help businesses function in economical changes.

- Apple Inc, makes rapid development and growth in developing countries that affect the businesses positively.
- The economic growth and GDP levels in Asian countries make the fastest growth in the Asian markets.
- The strategy of premium pricing makes challenging sales in the medium-income in Asian countries.
- Stable organizations and economic sound enable the increase of the business of Apple Inc.

- After the pandemic it has been notified that the global recession has impacted the sales of Apple Inc.

Sociocultural:

This factor looks at social and cultural factors such as demographic changes, lifestyle trends, cultural norms, and consumer behaviour. It also considers factors such as attitudes towards health, safety, and sustainability. The factor of society defines the mindset of a particular country including the culture, beliefs, and traditions that affect business sales. The company is operating the consistency studies, culture implications, gender rooms, and demographics that help the business understanding in the marketing. Moreover, sociocultural assist in the market of products that is better for different societies.

- In several countries Apple products are a status symbol that helps the business to generate revenue by introducing the products more.
- The young generations in the US market and other countries' markets increase the sales of the products easily.
- The smartphone overreliance has increased business opportunities.
- There is part of customers who have an attachment to the products and that is affected negatively enhances the sales of the products.
- The Apple business favors urbanization in growing and increasing the business in the market
- The Manufacturing in China is concerned about some ethical includes the human rights cheap wages and violations that impact negatively the business.
- The tab users from all over the world purchase iPods and increase sales rapidly in the market.
- Apple Inc. increasing social media and mobile popularity worldwide makes an opportunity for the brand.
- Apple had to continue the iPod series in sales and the decline of readily available apps that plays song free of cost. The company has failed in its strategy of marketing and failed in the segment.
- Both countries US and China are creating a tiff between the two countries. The close connection between them may offend others.

Technological:

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This factor considers the impact of technological advancements on an organization, such as automation, digitalisation, and innovation. In every business ground technology is the main attraction and a crucial aspect of the business. In this generation growing with technology is most important and valuable. Apple Inc. always integrated state-of-the-art technology (Munir, 2019). Including cloud computing, technical integration, and the growing market are the technological factors. The devices of Apple Inc. are the most significant competitive advantages that follow the best technologies. The safest in security and terms and updated technology are the advantages of the products.

- Several features such as voice recognition, face identification, find my phone and many more makes the product different in the market.
- It is not possible to install various applications in Apple products and it makes the Appstore limited and reaches.
- The brand has exploited the market by providing cloud-friendly in all countries.
- The competitors of Apple's advanced applications, programs quicker and systems develop the advanced system.
- The payment options of Apple's Pay are much more secure and it is not an easy payment option that is a challenge.
- The Apple alternative products are trying to reach the position by providing the same features.
- Several Apple products such as TV, Apple has a limited share in the market as several suitable products are available in the market at this present time.

Legal:

This factor includes legal factors such as regulations, employment laws, and intellectual property rights that may affect the organization. The impact of legal factors changes the business atmosphere and includes safety and health, producer laws, and the standards of products. The brand Apple has the proper idea and knowledge about the legal factors and it keeps the transporting of the products successful (Fuentes et al. 2020). Every country are having different

laws and regulations and operating a business in several countries deals with laws and rules as per the country.

- The brand tries to involve in the automobile industry or another highly regulated sector and the entrance can shift the business to another level.
- The products of Apple Inc. are dependent on the parts of the covered products under the intellectual laws of property.
- Apple hinders processing in a business are increasing data privacy regulation.
- Receiving any type of illegal state from Ireland Apple Inc has paid 13 billion euros to the EU with Unpaid taxes and interest.

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Environmental:

This factor considers environmental factors such as climate change, natural disasters, and sustainability that may impact an organisation's operations. Including sustainability, labor rights, product energy efficiency, and carbon emissions. The business negative and positive has already taken a reduced step by reducing production. Over the years the company has started to enhance its business sustainability. Apple Inc. is recycling and providing products with improved batteries.

- Apple's supply chain is affected by rising global warming.
- Changing the climate has an impact on the Apple supply transoceanic and changes manufacturing and regulation costs for business purposes.
- The brand depends on heavy infrastructure that increases the cost of electricity

To build up the sustainability programs Apple is recycling non-working items

With the help of analysing these external factors, organizations can identify opportunities and threats, and develop strategies to mitigate risks and take advantage of opportunities in the market. PESTLE analysis is a useful tool for organizations to assess the external factors and understand the macro-environment in which they operate.

PESTLE	Factors	Impact
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USA is 2nd largest country in the democracy• USA has a multi-party system• President of USA is their head who elected for a 4-year term	Positive

Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USA is the economically largest country in the world GDP of USA is projected to increase in 2023 is 3.1% (Cbo.gov, 2023b). USA has such a large manufacturing sector Global pandemic in 2020-21 has affected US economy 	Positive
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the population, USA is 3rd largest country Total population is around 336 million as of 2023 (Cbo.gov, 2023). USA culture is diverse 	Positive
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USA is the global leader in technologically Technological innovation rate is rapid in USA In 2023, total number of internet users in the USA will be around 311 million (Petrosyan, 2023). 	Positive
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every state of USA has its own legal system “Civil rights Act 1991” has prohibited employment discrimination Each business in USA has come under a regulatory environment 	Positive
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USA has a diverse climate, geography, and wildlife Millions of global tourists visit the USA each year. The USA sustained more than 220 climate and weather disasters in the last 40 years. 	Negative

Table 1: PESTLE Analysis

(Source: Self-Developed)

PESTLE analysis is very important for any kind of organization to find out the proper marketplace in a country. In every part of this analysis, the USA is very strong to make a proper business particularly; the USA is very rich economically.

Micro-Environment Analysis

Industry Life Cycle

The life cycle of industry indicates the business or industry evolution depending on the stages of decline and growth. The five different stages of the life cycle of industry are the decline phases, development, maturity, growth and introduction (Patricia Ordóñez de Pablos, 2014). The life cycle of industry indicated the company's duration in the field from starts to ends. It also resulted

in every stage of the emerging of business to the market and experienced the development and peak of the business' success and the divestment or decline. The life cycle of industry was introduced by Michael Porter in the year 1980 and it is the most regularly utilized model of a life cycle of industry. operates in the technology industry, which can be classified as being in the mature stage of its life cycle. However, Apple has been known for its continuous innovation and new product introductions, which have helped the company maintain a strong competitive position within the industry.

Here is a brief description of each stage of the industry life cycle and how it relates to Apple:

Introduction:

During the introduction stage, a new product or technology is introduced to the market. Apple was in this stage in the 1980s when it introduced the Macintosh personal computer. The stage of introduction is the startups phase, there a new businesses have emerged and opened within the market. It is a new brand that consumers might not be sensible of its extent and the services of products that are given. A goal of the owner may spread the data about the brand to the targeted customers, as they might fund the advertisements in order to widen the reach of their brand to the maximum number of people (Morden, 2017). They sometimes invest their money in the technology of the business and the process of manufacturing in distributing the products. Sometimes the companies might have limited their resources of finance that helps in earning the net profit.

Another categorization of the phase of introduction is the inventory that is limited. The startup of several businesses might have available a few products to purchase. That is especially happening due to they are assigning their resources of monetary value in order to open up the company.

As per example, a brand of skin care might start its life cycle of industry though launching a moisturizer and a cleanser. The company might have plans to introduce the same products to different types of skin as it becomes more famous.

Growth:

During the growth stage, demand for the product increases, and new competitors enter the market. Apple was in this stage in the 2000s when it introduced the iPod and iPhone, which quickly gained popularity and helped the company grow its market share. The second stage of the life cycle of the industry is the stage of growth there the newly developed business attains

recognition as a proper brand. The company giving more attention helps in increasing sales, generating the cash flow and revenue that enables the manufacture and development of new products that are more appealing to the customers (Patricia Ordóñez de Pablos, 2014). The inventory that is diverse contributes to the higher demands in the context of products and resulting in the business lowers its cost of products. More affordability indicates the demand heightens. As per example in the brand of skin care at the time of growth phase the consumers identify the beneficial items of the brand that it uses in its products and aesthetically attractive packaging.

Maturity:

During the maturity stage, the market becomes saturated, and growth slows down. The industry experiences increased competition and pricing pressure. Apple is currently in this stage, as the smartphone and personal computer markets are mature and saturated. The stage of maturity is that the company within the market attains more strength by defeating its competitors. Sometimes the competitors that are weaker might go down within the present market or close down due to the inability to cash flow or proper growth (Morden, 2017). At the time of any company goes down to the market, it might merge with any company with significant growth in the market that gives chance to that business to become stronger along with its new business partner.

Decline:

During the decline stage, demand for the product decreases, and sales decline. The industry experiences increased consolidation and exit by weak competitors. Apple has not yet experienced this stage in its core markets, but it has seen a decline in sales of certain products, such as the iPod. With the help of above discussion, it can be opined that Apple has been able to sustain its success by continuously introducing new products and services and investing in innovation(Kyamko, 2022). The company has also successfully diversified its product line, which has helped it to weather market changes and maintain its position as a leader in the technology industry.⁴¹

Every product Apple Inc. goes through a particular life cycle. There are four distinct stages in their life cycle of products such as prepare, evaluate, and submit as well rollout. Deploying its software update in the overall “software landscape”, it could no longer delay upgrading software

indefinitely because its system has been working fine in the past. Apple has delivered on their software updates for keeping their device safe as well optimizes their existing hardware.

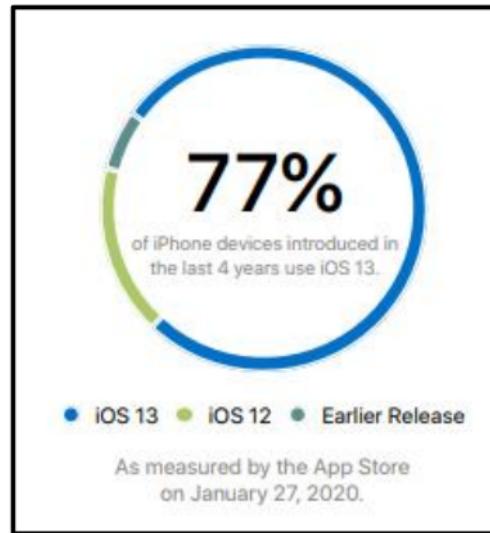


Figure 1: Lifecycle of iOS 12 and iOS 13

(Source: Apple Inc., 2023)

Deploying the software update is very crucial for maintaining the overall security as well as the integrity of Apple's platform. This does not just keep their environment secure, but also it allows their users to provide benefits.

Porter's Five Force Analysis

Bargaining Power of Buyers

Some specific points in this part are analyzed further in the force such as collective bargaining and individual bargaining. However, Apple implements “individual bargaining power” as the weak force (Ferguson, 2019). Apple has counters of the strong force through counting for making “substantial capital expenditure”.⁵⁹ Apple has a strong brand image and a loyal customer base, which gives it some leverage in negotiations with buyers. However, buyers have access to many alternative products and can switch to competitors if Apple does not meet their needs or if pricing becomes too high.⁴⁶

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

This is relatively a poor force for “Apple's products” in the marketplace. However, the supplier's bargaining position is weakened through a large potential number of suppliers. Apple is now free for choosing large potential suppliers for all kinds of parts. Apple has a strong bargaining position³⁹

with its suppliers due to its size and scale(Kyamko, 2022) However, the company has faced supplier dependency and risks related to supplier concentration, as a significant portion of its components are sourced from a limited number of suppliers.

The Threat of New Entrants

Any new entrants in the marketplace of the personal Smartphone or computers have been needed for having a huge capital amount for spending in R&D to improve and produce a “product portfolio” (Ferguson, 2019). Some entrants face strong competition in this industry that has existed between major competitors like Apple.¹⁹ The technology industry has a high barrier to entry due to the need for significant capital investment, economies of scale, and intellectual property protection. Therefore, the threat of new entrants in the industry is low. However, Apple continues to face new competition from existing players, such as Samsung and Huawei, and potential new entrants such as Chinese smartphone manufacturers.

The threat of Buyers

The overall market force for Apple is very low due to specific fact that most “potential products” have some limited abilities as compared to the product of Apple. For example, the substitute product of Apple is like the “Landline telephone” compared to the “iPhone”, that could do much just to make the “phone calls”(Kyamko, 2022) The technology industry is highly competitive, with many players vying for market share. Apple faces strong competition from rivals such as Samsung, Huawei, Google, and Microsoft. However, Apple's focus on design, innovation, and customer experience has helped it maintain a strong competitive position in the industry.²³

Industry Competition

The competition level among every major company related to similar industries that battle with Apple is too high. However, Apple has direct competition with “Google, Samsung, Amazon, and Hewlett-Packard”. All these companies are extending such significant capital in marketing and “research and development” as Apple(Haki *et al.*, 2022).The technology industry is characterized by constant innovation, and many substitutes are available for Apple's products. For example, smartphones from Samsung and Huawei can be seen as substitutes for Apple's iPhone. However, Apple's strong brand image and customer loyalty have helped to mitigate the threat of substitutes.

Besides that, it can be stated that, Porter's Five Forces Analysis suggests that Apple faces a moderate level of competitive rivalry and a low level of threat of new entrants, but must

carefully manage supplier and buyer relationships, and continue to innovate to stay ahead of substitutes and maintain its competitive position.

Internal Analysis

Strategic capabilities and resources

The core competency of Apple is “innovation” and they have a long history of improving “innovative and unique” “technology products”. This is as well including “iPod, Mac computer, iPad, iPhone, Apple Watch, and Apple TV”. Apple has been using the market penetration and product development strategy as the actual intensive strategy of Apple is growth. CO₂ and water are flow resources while steel is a non-renewable resource for Apple to use during making iPhones (Ma *et al.*, 2020). This organization has been built on the “management framework” for iPadOS, iOS, and tvOS, as well the macOS for enabling all the IT teams for configuring as well as updating all kinds of deploy apps. Dynamic abilities could categorize as per three functions that are directed on the strategic change (Haki *et al.*, 2022). These functions are to sense and threats and shape opportunity, to reconfigure the resource base and to seize the opportunities. The capabilities and resources are the core competencies of Apple if this is rare, valuable, and as well costly for initiating the products. On the other hand, its ecosystem of Apple is the main and solid competitive advantage that gives unprecedented strength in its market.

On the other hand, Apple Inc. has several strategic capabilities and resources that have contributed to its success in the technology industry. Here are some examples:

Brand Image:

Apple has a strong brand image that is associated with quality, innovation, and design excellence. This brand image has helped to create a loyal customer base and differentiate Apple's products from those of its competitors.

Vertical Integration:

Apple has a vertically integrated supply chain that enables it to control the quality and availability of its components, reduce costs, and improve its time-to-market for new products.

Research and Development:

Apple invests heavily in research and development to innovate and develop new products and technologies. This has led to the creation of new markets and product categories, such as the iPod, iPhone, and Apple Watch.

Design and Innovation:

31 Apple is known for its focus on design and innovation, which has helped to create products that are not only functional but also aesthetically pleasing. This focus on design has enabled Apple to differentiate its products from those of its competitors and create a unique customer experience.

30 **Intellectual Property:**

Apple has a strong portfolio of patents and trademarks that protect its products and technologies from imitation and copying by competitors.

10 **Financial Resources:**

Apple has significant financial resources, including cash reserves, that enable it to invest in research and development, marketing, and acquisitions. Besides that, Apple's strategic capabilities and resources have enabled it to differentiate its products from those of its competitors, create a unique customer experience, and maintain a strong competitive position in the technology industry.

Value chain Analysis

The value chain of Apple has been divided into two distinct parts, one is main and the other is supportiveactivities.

Value Chain Analysis is a framework for analyzing the activities that create value for an organization and its customers. Here is a brief overview of Apple's value chain:

2 **Research and Development (R&D):**

Apple invests heavily in R&D to innovate and develop new products and technologies. This includes hardware and software development, as well as design and user experience

Procurement:

Apple has a vertically integrated supply chain, which means that it controls the procurement of components and materials for its products. This enables it to ensure quality and availability while also reducing costs

Manufacturing:

Apple's products are manufactured by contract manufacturers, primarily in China. The company has strict quality control processes in place to ensure that products meet its standards

Marketing and Sales:

Apple markets its products through a combination of advertising, public relations, and word-of-mouth. Its products are sold through its retail stores, online store, and third-party retailers

Service and Support:

Apple provides service and support for its products through its retail stores and online support channels. It also offers extended warranty and repair services.

Logistics and Distribution:

Apple has a global logistics and distribution network to ensure that its products are delivered to customers on time and in good condition. This includes warehousing, transportation, and customs clearance

After-sales service:

Apple has an active after-sales service department. Apple stores offer customers Genius Bar and other technical support, training, and repairs. Moreover, with the help of analyzing each of these value chain activities, Apple can identify areas where it can add value, reduce costs, or improve efficiency(Haki *et al.*, 2022). This allows Apple to create products that are differentiated from those of its competitors, meet the needs of its customers, and maintain a strong competitive position in the technology industry.

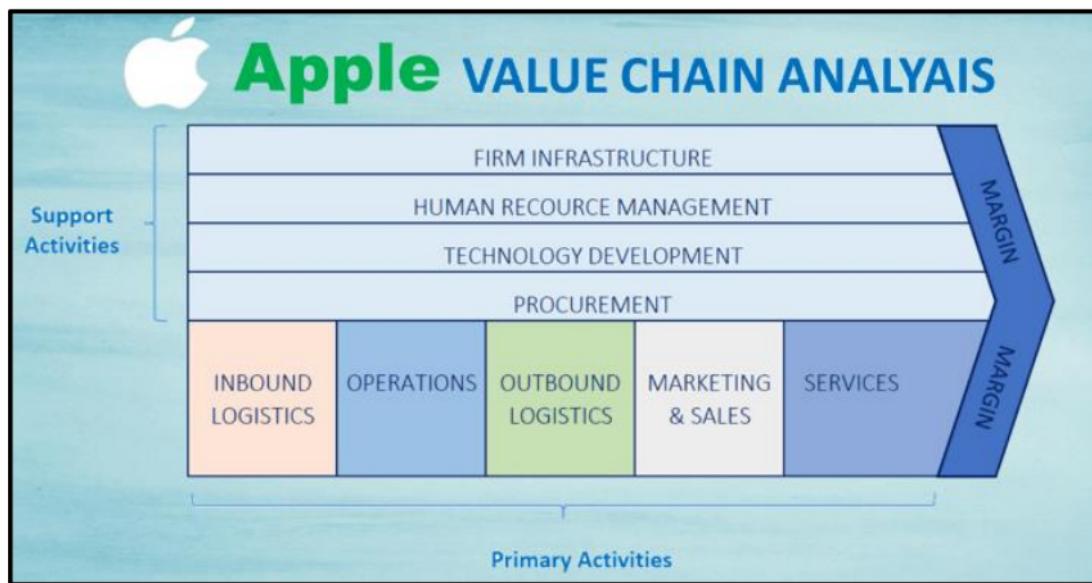


Figure 2: Value chain of Apple

(Source: B Strategy Insights, 2021)

Primary Activities

Apple Inc. is one of the most valuable technology companies in the world, and its success can be attributed in part to its effective management of primary activities in its value chain. In this response, we will discuss Apple's primary activities in detail. The primary activities of the

company is recognized as the manufacturing and producing , marketing the products in the market.

4

Inbound Logistics:

Apple's inbound logistics include the procurement of raw materials, components, and sub-assemblies for its products. Apple has a vertically integrated supply chain that enables it to control the quality and availability of its components while reducing costs(Haki *et al.*, 2022). Apple also has strategic partnerships with suppliers to ensure timely delivery of components. The inbound logistic has been recognized as the consists the associated activities such as storing and quality control and also the storing of the products from an particular brand or organization. From the manufacturing to the marketing entire process has been included in the inbound logistic. In an organization the part of inbound logistic is playing a crucial role in the marketing process no matter it is in the national or international transport logistic.

4

Operations:

Apple's operations include the manufacturing and assembly of its products. Apple products are manufactured by contract manufacturers primarily in China, and the company has strict quality control processes in place to ensure that products meet its standards. Apple also invests heavily in research and development to innovate and develop new products and technologies.

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Outbound Logistics:

Apple's outbound logistics include the distribution and delivery of its products. Apple has a global logistics and distribution network to ensure that its products are delivered to customers on time and in good condition. This includes warehousing, transportation, and customs clearance.(missing references)

38

Marketing and Sales:

Apple's marketing and sales efforts are focused on creating a unique customer experience and building a loyal customer base. Apple markets its products through a combination of advertising, public relations, and word-of-mouth. Its products are sold through its retail stores, online store,

and third-party retailers. Apple also offers financing options to customers to make its products more accessible.

Service:

Apple's service efforts include the provision of after-sales support, such as technical support, training, and repair services. Apple provides service and support for its products through its retail stores and online support channels. It also offers extended warranty and repair services.(missing references)

They have such a significant part of the assembly although a very minor part has been done in some of the other countries. Apart from that, Apple has a huge distribution network, which includes indirect and direct channels. However, Apple has extensive channels to distribute its all products to its clients and it particularly ranges from the retail shop to the internet and in its own branded shops. ¹⁸ Apple has such a huge "supply chain" and this has various alternatives for getting "raw materials". Apple has around 200 suppliers that include "component suppliers" and others, who accounted for a minimum of 97% of overall materials, assembly procurement, and manufacturing spending in the year 2016 (EdrawMax, 2023). Apple's primary activities are closely integrated with each other, creating a seamless customer experience from the initial purchase to after-sales support. This integrated approach has helped Apple to differentiate its ¹⁷ products from those of its competitors, create a unique customer experience, and maintain a strong competitive position in the technology industry.

One of Apple's primary activities that sets it apart from its competitors is its focus on design and innovation. This focus is evident in the design of its products, which are not only functional but also aesthetically pleasing. ³ Apple's design philosophy is to create products that are intuitive to use and that provide a superior user experience. This focus on design has helped Apple to create a loyal customer base and differentiate its products from those of its competitors. ³⁷

Another primary activity that sets Apple apart is its retail stores. Apple stores are designed to provide a unique shopping experience, with sleek and modern design, knowledgeable staff, and a range of services, such as technical support and training. Apple stores have become an iconic part of the Apple brand, and they help to create a strong emotional connection between Apple and its customers. ⁶

Apple's marketing and sales efforts are also an important primary activity. Apple has a strong brand image that is associated with quality, innovation, and design excellence. Its advertising

campaigns are focused on creating an emotional connection with its customers, rather than just promoting product features. This emotional connection helps to create a loyal customer base and differentiate Apple's products from those of its competitors.

Finally, Apple's service efforts are an important part of its primary activities. Apple provides after-sales support through its retail stores and online support channels, and it also offers extended warranty and repair services. This focus on customer service helps to create a positive customer experience and build loyalty. The goods of Apple are being manufactured in different and multiple countries. Moreover, Apple is in negotiations with the US government and its production might start shortly.

Secondary Activities

Apple has invested a lot of money in R & R&D and it is recognized for some of its technical innovations and distinctive and high-quality product design. Apple should invest heavily on R & R&D to preserve its competitive advantage. This organization spent over \$10 billion on R&D in 2016 and around \$11.6 billion in 2017 (Khadka and Øivind Solberg, 2020). However, Apple raised R&D investment by over \$5 billion since 2014 (B Strategy Insights, 2021b). The HRM is a crucial element of the value chain of Apple. In addition to its primary activities, Apple Inc. also manages a range of secondary activities that support and enable its primary activities. Here are some of the key secondary activities of Apple:

Procurement:

Apple's procurement activities involve identifying and selecting suppliers, negotiating contracts, and managing supplier relationships. Apple has a global supply chain that spans across multiple countries and involves many different suppliers. The company works closely with its suppliers to ensure that they meet its quality and ethical standards, and it invests heavily in supplier responsibility programs.

Technology Development:

Apple invests heavily in technology development to innovate and improve its products and services. The company has a large research and development team that is responsible for creating new products and technologies. Apple also acquires technology companies to accelerate its innovation efforts.

Human Resource Management:

Apple's human resource management activities involve recruiting and retaining talented employees, developing their skills, and creating a positive work environment. Apple has a reputation for being a great place to work, and it offers a range of benefits and perks to its employees. The company also invests in employee training and development programs.

Infrastructure:

Apple's infrastructure activities involve the development and maintenance of its physical and digital infrastructure. This includes its manufacturing facilities, data centers, and retail stores(Shamoutand Elayan,2020). Apple has a sophisticated logistics and distribution network that enables it to deliver its products to customers quickly and efficiently.

Procurement:

Apple's procurement activities involve identifying and selecting suppliers, negotiating contracts, and managing supplier relationships. Apple has a global supply chain that spans across multiple countries and involves many different suppliers. The company works closely with its suppliers to ensure that they meet its quality and ethical standards, and it invests heavily in supplier responsibility programs. In addition, Apple's secondary activities support and enable its primary activities by providing the necessary resources, infrastructure, and capabilities. These activities also help Apple to differentiate its products and services from those of its competitors and maintain a strong competitive position in the technology industry.

VRIO Analysis

This analysis is an internal tool of analysing the situation of an organization that categorize the resources that is based on the hold certains in the framework. This analysis has been recognized to explain the company resources that has provided in the competitive advantages.

A VIRO analysis is a strategic tool used to evaluate a company's resources and capabilities to determine its competitive advantage. VIRO stands for Value, Rarity, Imitability, and Organization. Here is an analysis of Apple Inc. using the VIRO framework:

Value: Apple's resources and capabilities provide the company with a significant competitive advantage. The company's brand is one of its most valuable resources, as it is widely recognized and respected around the world. Apple's innovative products, such as the iPhone, iPad, and MacBook, are also highly valued by consumers, and the company's ecosystem of software and services, such as the App Store and Apple Music, add significant value to its products.

12 Rarity: Many of Apple's resources and capabilities are rare and difficult for competitors to replicate. The company's design and engineering capabilities are highly specialized, and it invests heavily in research and development to create new products and technologies. Apple's supply chain is also highly integrated and sophisticated, which gives it a competitive advantage in terms of cost and speed.

26 Imitability: While Apple's resources and capabilities are valuable and rare, they are not completely immune to imitation. Competitors can attempt to replicate Apple's products and design, but they may struggle to achieve the same level of quality and user experience. Additionally, Apple's supply chain and logistics network are complex and difficult to replicate, which gives it a competitive advantage in terms of cost and efficiency.

Organization: Apple's organizational capabilities are a key source of competitive advantage. The company has a highly talented and innovative workforce that is dedicated to creating the best possible products and experiences for customers(Shamoutand Elayan,2020). Apple's culture of secrecy and product obsession also helps it to maintain a competitive advantage by keeping competitors guessing and constantly innovating.

In particular, it can be opined that, Apple's resources and capabilities provide it with a significant competitive advantage. The company's brand, innovative products, ecosystem of software and services, design and engineering capabilities, and supply chain are all valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate. Apple's organizational capabilities, including its highly talented workforce and culture of secrecy and innovation, also contribute to its competitive advantage.

Capability and Resource	Valuable	Rare	Inimitable	Organizational Support	Result
Business Process Automation	YES	NO	YES	NO	Competitive advantage as temporary
Product mix diversity	YES	YES	NO	YES	Competitive advantage as Sustainable

Innovation and Research	YES	NO	YES	YES	“Competitive advantage” as Sustainable
Global Recognition	YES	NO	YES	NO	Competitive Parity
Supply Chain	YES	YES	YES	NO	“Competitive advantage” as temporary

Table 2: VRIO Table

(Source: Self-Developed)

This analysis has been evaluated on “value, rarity, imitability, and the organization of a business (Newton, 2021). The overall internal analysis has been as well determined by every core competency and also the competitive advantage of Apple that is based on the VRIO variables.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis has been explained the organization’s strength, weakness, opportunities and the threats that is about the condition of the organization. The analysis has been recognized as the entire condition of an organization. Moreover, analysis is keepable to explain the entire process of the business and the outcome and also the feedback of the consumers that has been recognized in an organization

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong loyal customers and brand recognition High product quality and services Innovative services and product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The expensive service and product A discrepancy of innovation in current times The closed ecosystem
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporation of some new “product lines” to emerging market Enhanced focus in most content streaming products Advertisement market growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battle against the “counterfeit products” Enhance the competition in different industries The backdoor mechanism

Table 3: SWOT Analysis of Apple

(Source: Self-Developed)

Apple is a well-known brand and its loyal customers continue to grow its innovative product. However, the expensive cost of Apple is its weakness in making strong business. However, more than 1.8 billion active devices have been expected to be in use by the year 2023 (Pereira, 2023). Some cheaper hardware is now trending to mean decreased product quality and most customers might end up having a negative experience while using the device.

Sustain competitive advantage strategies

Apple reiterated the target of its “carbon neutrality” by 2030 and they plan for being 100% “carbon neutral” towards its overall “manufacturing supply chain” as well every “product life cycle” Furthermore, Apple Inc. has managed to sustain its competitive advantage over the years through a range of strategies, including:

Continuous Innovation:

Apple has built its reputation on its ability to innovate and develop new products that are unique and offer a superior user experience. The company invests heavily in research and development to create new products and technologies, and it is constantly looking for ways to improve its existing products. This focus on innovation has enabled Apple to stay ahead of its competitors and maintain its competitive advantage.

Vertical Integration:

Apple's vertically integrated business model, which involves owning and controlling all aspects of its supply chain, has been a key source of competitive advantage. By controlling its supply chain, Apple is able to ensure the quality and reliability of its products, as well as reduce costs and improve speed to market.

Marketing and Branding:

Apple's marketing and branding efforts are also a key source of competitive advantage. The company's brand is widely recognized and respected around the world, and its marketing campaigns are highly effective at creating hype and demand for its products.

Customer Focus:

Apple has a strong focus on customer experience, which is reflected in the design and functionality of its products. The company places a premium on creating products that are easy

7
to use, intuitive, and aesthetically pleasing. Apple's commitment to customer experience has helped it to build a loyal customer base and maintain a competitive advantage.

Strategic Partnerships:

Apple has developed strategic partnerships with a range of companies to enhance its products and services. For example, its partnership with Intel has helped it to develop faster and more powerful processors for its Mac computers, while its partnership with Nike has enabled it to integrate fitness tracking features into its Apple Watch.

Diversification:

Apple has diversified its product portfolio over the years to reduce its dependence on any one product line. The company now offers a range of products, including smartphones, computers, tablets, wearables, and services such as Apple Music and Apple TV. This diversification has helped Apple to mitigate the risks associated with being reliant on any one product or market. The service transition that implicitly includes the ghealth service that is inadequate to make up expected iPhone sales. No combination of the software services and the customers of the new credit cards will compensate for the problem. The installed new iPhones by upgrading the customers and the market that implies permanently reduced the share of market.



Figure 3: Sustainability of Apple

(Source: Counterpoint, 2022)

The iPhone 14 pro has been designed to reduce its overall impact in their environment that with the 100% recycled “rare earth elements” using including used in the MagSafe. This is also with 100% of recycled tungsten in their taptic engine. ⁵ The goal of Apple Inc. is to build its products by using just renewable and recycled materials. However, loop closing on used materials in every product of Apple is very important for the reduction of emissions and also for human safety. In the opinion of Mulumba, (2020), they have critical assets on the sustainable and competitive advantage of Apple.

Growth Strategies

An organization can pursue several types of business growth strategies and some strategies are in work tandem. The strategy of the growing business needs to be authentic and reasonable as making strategies is enlarging the business ground. Every type of business needs a strategy to lift up the levels of the business and there are different ways to grow in the business territory.

Growth Strategy Revenue

Pursuing business revenue growth can monitor cash flow and sales forecasting reports, diminish consumer acquisition costs, and the strategic partnership with other businesses that improve the bottom line.

- The strategies of using low-cost marketing and lower consumer acquisition cost.
- The training sales program to boost the close rates
- Collaborating with other companies that promote the products and services.

The Strategy of Consumer Growth

The plan of boosting new consumers over the time period and business pursuing a strategy of consumer large investments that lead to greater acquisitions. The strategy that makes the growth of the consumers has to focus on several sides for the purpose of the business.

- increment in marketing spend and advertising.
- Addition of new services and product lines
- Adoption of the strategy of freemium pricing
- Investing in the sales and marketing organization headcount

Growth Strategy of Marketing

A strategy of market growth is different from the market as it is an organizational plan to increase the total market and the existing market share. The market growth strategy will make

the research in different types of regions, audiences, customer types, and more measure the market expansion.

- Appeal launching new products the buyers in the new market
- Regions that opens new locations in other regions
- The local marketing and event marketing strategies to adopt a different marketing.
- To reach to the new audience and rebranching the new businesses.

Growth Strategy of Product

It is an organizational plan that has increase product usage and expand the product lines and this growth strategy type requires the significant in the organization product growth. The strategy of product growth looking for the partnering with the new products manufactures that expand the product catalog.

- Exciting products that benefits to add new features
- The pricing strategy of the product need to be authentic
- Providers and manufactures with the new partnering
- Increasing the product adoption with new markets and expanding new products.

The growth strategy is the proper strategic plan of an organization to overcome present and future challenges to realize the targets for explaining. Its growth strategy of Apple includes enhanced market revenue and share, acquiring assets, and developing services or products.

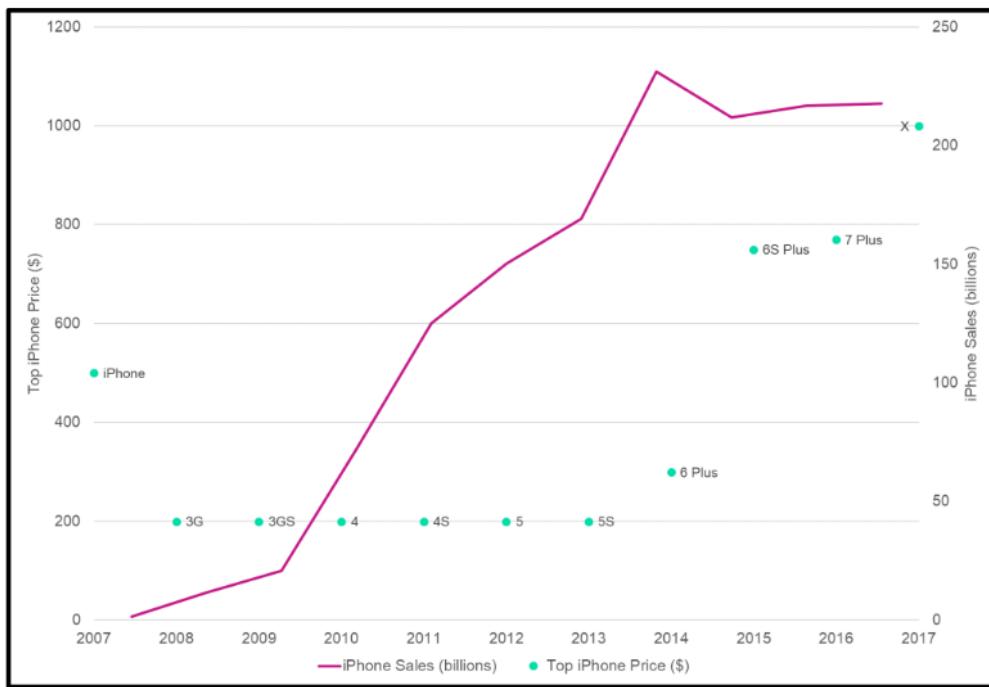


Figure 3: Growth rate of Apple products

(Source: MarketLine.com, 2022)

This figure has shown that iPhone sales have shown strong growth since the release of the model of iPhone 14 and it will begin to slightly slow down over the next few years (MarketLine.com, 2022). The revenue growth of Apple and its surface deliveries for Microsoft could be attributed largely to its "early-stage strategy" of its.

The 401(k) plan of Apple is deferred the salary arrangement that under 401(k) section of "internal revenue code". In this particular plan, participate of all US employees might defer the specific part of their pretax earnings, up to "internal revenue service annual contribution limit" of nearly \$19500 of 2021 FY (Washington, 2021). The fair value of Apple of RSUs vesting dates was around \$8.6 billion, \$10.8 billion, and \$19 billion for 2019, 2020, and 2021 as respectively.

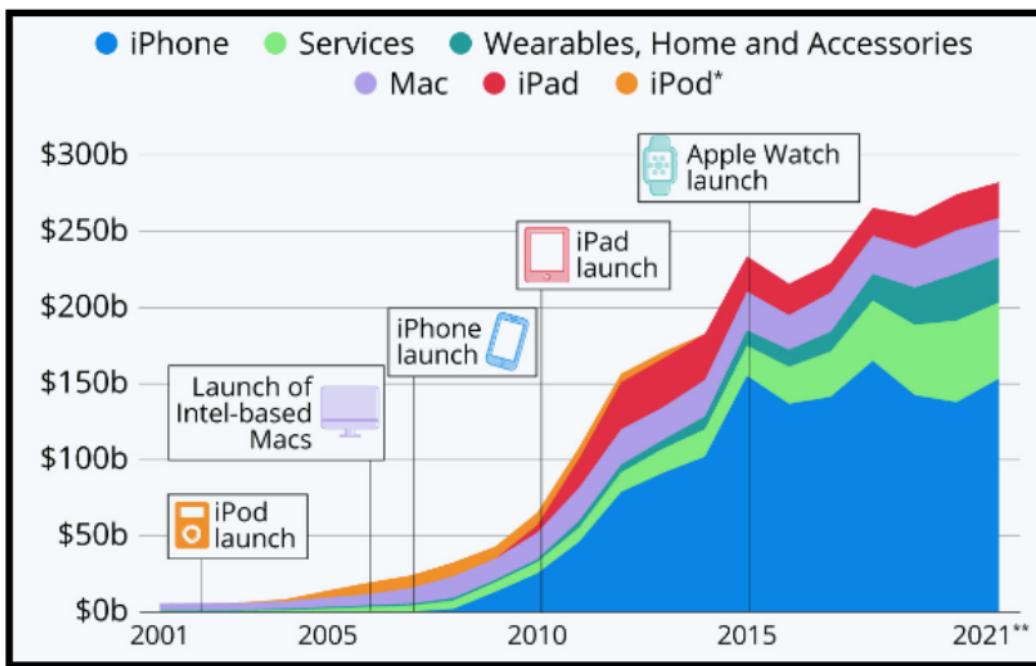


Figure 4: Growth of Apple in 21st Century

(Source: Statista, 2021)

iPhone maker has been generated of \$12.7 billion profit in their revenue of nearly 64.7 billion. The figure 4 has shown that the incredible transformation has undergone since starting of 21st century.

CSR and Green strategy

CSR Strategy

The CSR strategy of Apple Inc. has been addressing the interests of stakeholder groups in various industries and markets. Apple has been operating in the overall “consumer electronic industry”. The ethical issues of CSR strategies with Apple Inc are very poor working, child labor, and a poor environment (Apple Inc., 2022). The major four categories of CSR strategy in the Apple brand are ethical rights, environmental responsibility, economic responsibility, and philanthropic responsibility.

Green Strategy

The strategy of Green management is a business strategy that particularly includes the awareness about some perfecting business practices and policies, environmental issues, and initiatives some innovative programs that would create significance (Apple Inc., 2023b). Green innovation of

Apple is necessary for "sustainable development" and consumer satisfaction. However, this particular strategy has included software and hardware innovation (Shamout and Elayan, 2020). Apple Inc. has taken a number of steps to adopt a green strategy and reduce its environmental impact. Here are some of the key initiatives and practices that Apple has implemented:

²⁴

Renewable Energy:

Apple has made significant investments in renewable energy, including solar, wind, and hydro power. The company has set a goal to achieve 100% renewable energy for its operations, and it is on track to meet this target. Apple Inc. is powered by 100 percent of renewable energy from the multiple sources that is including onsite solar installation and also the four megawatts of the biogas fuel cells. It is also gives the clean energy to public grid in the period of low occupancy. The wind solar projects and the 485 megawatts has been developed on the six provinces of the China and manufacturing emissions. The company is partnering with the local solar company to install over 300 rooftop solar system that generates 18000 megawatts hours of the energy. The company is constructing with the two new data centers in Denmark that is running on the 100 percent energy of renewable from the first day. In Singapore, the company Apple Inc. has made around 800 rooftops of the renewable energy.

The company and the other partners are building the new renewable energy projects in all over the world that is improving the options of energy for the local communities. The company develops with the new utilities and new regional renewable projects including fuel cells and micro hydro system of generation and the energy storage.

In the present situation the company is having the 25 operational renewable energy in the world with 626 megawatts of the capacity in generation.

Energy Efficiency:

Apple has implemented energy-efficient technologies in its products, facilities, and operations to reduce its energy consumption and carbon footprint. For example, the company has developed a custom-designed power management system for its devices, which helps to reduce energy use. The report of environmental progress report has been highlighted the major steps of the taken energy efficiency and the carbon capture. The environmental process of Apple 2021, covers the 2020 year of fiscal. The brand has been successfully covered the and reduced the emission of

nine percent decrease. The company is minimizing the efforts on the packaging and recycle materials and they are giving their energy in improving the technologies for the future purpose business process. The Apple materials recovery is having the significance in Texas by producing the natural materials in the recycled iphone (Adham et al.2022) . The processor of the incorporating into the Mac Minis has helped the system footprint by 34 percent approx.

Sustainable Materials:

Apple has worked to develop sustainable materials for its products, such as recycled aluminum and plastic, and it has set a goal to use only recycled and renewable materials in its products. The company has also developed a robot called "Daisy" to disassemble iPhones and recover valuable materials for reuse(The company Apple reports the two thirds of the aluminium and three quarters of the rare earths and over 95 percent of the tungsten of the products that has been sourced from all 100% recycled materials. It is the best deal of the company that has been recognized for the sustainable materials in all the devices that is a crucial step and beneficial for the sustainable future. These materials are the useful things for the company and the brands of all the recognized company.

27 Recycling:

Apple has implemented a comprehensive recycling program, which allows customers to recycle their old Apple products for free. The company has also developed a closed-loop supply chain for certain materials, such as aluminum, which allows it to recycle and reuse materials from its products.; Apple Inc. being a brand it has been recognized to use the recycle products or excess products and make them use in to making of new things. The company has been used in the recycle process that makes the increase and make a boundary on the excess products. The process has been recognized one of the important process of recycling and this process has been mentioned as the most useful method for an organization (Teece, 2019). The products and the purposes of the products has been used in the process of making products. In every types of business this process has been recognized as the popular process that helps the business process more productive.

Green Packaging:

Apple has developed environmentally friendly packaging for its products, including using recycled paper and reducing the overall size of packaging to minimize waste. The company takes an initiative for the packaging of the products by launching green packaging in the product packages. The eco-friendly packaging that has made a boundary in the recycle products. The pacvkang style has been recognized in the brand that creates a big changes in the mindsets of the companies such as Apple Inc. the idea of green packaging has been recognizaed as a natural way to make the packaging and it will be beneficial for the reducing product materials. The way of making the packages is the way of reducing the waste products and make them use in the making of the product packaging. Green packaging makes the attraction a in the products and make them involve in the nature friendly atmosphere for the purpose of the business products and the enlarge the territory of the business.

Supplier Responsibilit:

Apple has implemented strict environmental and labor standards for its suppliers, and it works with them to improve their sustainability practices. The company has also developed a Clean Energy Supplier program, which helps its suppliers to transition to renewable energy. The company manages the employees by providing trainings and advancement opportunities and by other process to share the knowledge of the company and the products that develops the supply chain management of the company. The company is having the education and advancement opportunities to the employees. Apple suppliers code to conduct the commitment with the human rights and the sound business practices, environmental protections. In every year the company czech the quality of the supply chain management and upgrade the status of the management. A commitment to the consumers and also the planet makes the increasement of the business and also the supply chain management of the company.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, this can be concluded that “strategic analysis” is crucial to formulate the overall “strategic planning” for smooth working as well decision-making of the particular organization. Apple has a huge distribution network, which includes indirect and direct channels. Its ecosystem of Apple is the main and solid competitive advantage that gives unprecedented strength in its market. In addition, it can be mentioned that, Apple is known for its design-focused approach to product development and its commitment to innovation. The company has a strong brand identity and is consistently ranked among the most valuable brands in the world.²

Recommendation

It is recommended from an overall study that Apple should continue the rapid and aggressive innovation to develop the products of this organization. The technological innovation of the organization could reduce all kinds of adverse imitation effects (Zanetti *et al.*, 2020). It is also recommended to apply vast competencies to its manufactured hardware and software that would be compatible to increase product performance. The primary approach of Apple in finance should compress the profit in their every sale as possible. The brand has proposed the new strategies to make the business in the another level that hopes the significantly carbon reduce and taking out the power from iPhone packages. Apple Inc. has claimed to help 861,000 copper tons and allo more efficient shipping. Moreover, the company has to focus on the market strategies though it has already the impact in the marketing in several countries. It should be more attractive and valuable and also more acceptable responds for the consumers.

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