

# PRI-AIN764

*by* Plagi Check

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**Submission date:** 24-Apr-2023 08:11AM (UTC-0700)

**Submission ID:** 2074082804

**File name:** PRI-AIN764.docx (77.79K)

**Word count:** 3743

**Character count:** 24870

## **INDIVIDUAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT**

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## 1. Introduction

Amazon is an elaborated internet-based firm selling music, books, house ware, movies, toys, electronics, and other household products either through middlemen or directly. The website has numerous loyal and potential customer bases globally focusing at fulfilment of customer needs and providing effective customer service. The company is an American tech multinational, business model of which comprises cloud computing, artificial intelligence, e-commerce, and digital streaming. Amazon has been a leading retailer operating globally by collaborating with numerous suppliers in order to provide effective customer services and wide product range. Additionally, workforce of Amazon has ballooned at the time of the pandemic as a large number of people preferred staying at home, ordering essentials from online sites.

Amazon to fulfil sudden expansion in demand and delivery recruited a large number of employees to operate smoothly and efficiently. Amazon in recent years has been influenced by high customer demand and lack of workforce. This study focuses on identifying the internal and external environment of Amazon along with CSR with ethical business value. Moreover, this study also highlights UN SDGs adopted by Amazon to attain retail market competitiveness. Impact of COVID-19 and coping of firms with pandemic complexities has also been evaluated in this study. The external analysis has been conducted by Porter's five forces and PESTLE analysis to evaluate both environmental and competitive market evaluation.

## 2. Main body Part 1

### 2.1 Competence of company (Internal analysis) and global market positioning (External analysis)

#### SWOT Analysis

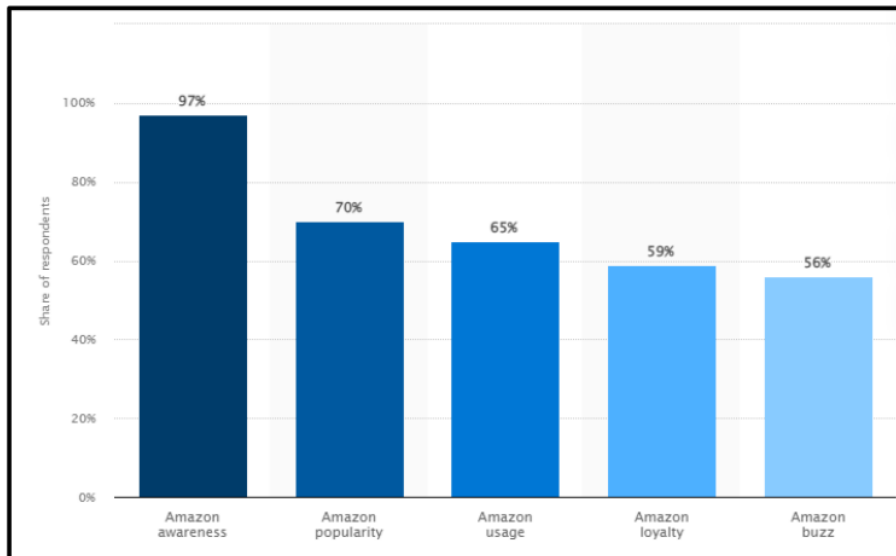
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Strong brand reputation and recognition</li><li>● Diversified product varieties</li><li>● Edge-cutting technology</li><li>● Well-established network of distribution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Excessive third-party seller dependency</li><li>● Regulatory issues</li><li>● Limited product control</li><li>● Restricted customer loyalty</li></ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emerging market expansion</li> <li>New venture investment</li> <li>Expansion of physical stores</li> <li>Planned crypto entry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intensive market competition</li> <li>Cyber security threats</li> <li>Natural disasters</li> <li>Economic recession</li> </ul>

**Table 1: SWOT Analysis of Amazon.com**

(Source: Created by Author)

Amazon in recent years enjoys core strength of effective global brand awareness and reputation leading to increased purchases and expanded potential customer base. The company enjoys a significant market establishment and growth opportunity. In 2022, brand value of Amazon has been recorded to be \$705.65 billion which is evidently high as compared to its competitors (Statista, 2023). The company despite COVID-19 pandemic impact experienced constant revenue growth. The revenue grew by 70% in 2021 as compared to 2020 (Statista, 2023). On other hand, the company faces a significant weakness of extensive dependency on third-party sellers. Amazon.com due to global market operation also faces a significant issue of regulatory differences.



**Figure 1: Brand profile of Amazon**

(Source: Statista, 2022)

The SWOT analysis has led to identification of the fact that Amazon has a key strength of edge-cutting technology. The brand awareness of Amazon in respect of electronic shopping

in the US is 97% which is significantly high (Statista, 2022). A survey was conducted in 2022 based on brand recognition, highlighting that participants effectively recognised both written brand name and logo. It has been reported that Amazon is 70% popular and 65% usage share with 59% loyal customer base (Statista, 2022). Therefore, the SWOT Analysis evaluates that Amazon has an opportunity of expanding in emerging economies to improve its revenue and loyal customer structures.

## 2 VRIO Analysis

<u>Competency</u>	<u>Valuable</u>	<u>Rare</u>	<u>Imitability</u>	<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Conclusion</u>
Brand Recognition	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Sustainable competitive advantage
Technically skilled employees	Yes	No	Yes	No	Temporary competitive advantage
Delivery flexibility and strategies	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Temporary competitive advantage
Digitalised supply chain	Yes	No	Yes	No	Sustainable competitive advantage

**Table 1: VRIO Analysis of Amazon**

(Source: Influenced by White, 2019)

The VRIO analysis of Amazon has permitted identification of the fact that artificial intelligence capacity and digitised supply chain are core competencies of the company. Technological advancements like AI application and supply chain digitisation help Amazon to attain sustainable competitive advantage (amazon.com, 2023). Employees and workforce of retail or e-commerce businesses are considered to be essential assets. According to Jacques and Kristensson (2021), technically skilled workforce of Amazon is a significant reason that has led to the firm's success during Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, technically skilled employees are a factor that provides temporary competitive advantage to the business. The VRIO analysis has also led to identification of the fact that Amazon enjoys effective brand recognition in global e-commerce sector providing sustainable competitive advantage to the business.

#### ***PESTLE Analysis***

<b>Political Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political stability of US is 0 points which is higher as compared to average of -0.07points in 2021 (theglobaleconomy.com, 2023).</li> <li>• Restriction imposed by Federal Trade Commission political body through fixed-term contract (ftc.gov, 2023)</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GDP of US accumulated \$25.46 trillion in 2022 with an increase of 10.7% as compared to 2021 with \$2.25 trillion (bea.gov, 2023).</li> <li>• The inflation rate of US in 2022 was 8.3% (Statista, 2023)</li> </ul>
<b>Social Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of US on January 2023 was 334,233,854 (census.gov, 2023)</li> <li>• The unemployment rate of US increased by 3.5% in 2022 with 5.8 million unemployed individuals (bls.gov, 2023).</li> </ul>

<b>Technical Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• US businesses invest nearly 3% to 6% of their total budget on IT (spadetechnology.com, 2023).</li> <li>• Technology market of US captures 35% of total business market (bls.gov, 2023)</li> </ul>
<b>Legal Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 section 68 (ncdrc.nic.in, 2023).</li> <li>• Equal Protection Act 14th Amendment (constitution.congress.gov, 2023).</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon emission in the US is reduced by 50-52% in 2022 as compared to 2021 (rhg.com, 2023).</li> </ul>

**Table 2: PESTLE Analysis**

(Source: Created by author)

High political stability of the US has provided significant growth opportunities to Amazon with effective market sustainability. A major population of US demand for flexible e-commerce selling and purchasing that has led to growth of Amazon. Increasing usage of online shopping and e-commerce operation demand has led to revenue growth of Amazon accumulating \$513.983 billion in 2022 with an increase of 9.4% as compared to 2021 with \$469.822 billion (macrotrends.net, 2023). Therefore, indicating that the company in US has a significant growth opportunity due to economic and political stability of the US. The legal policies help Amazon to construct its business performance.

## **2.2 Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) with ethical business values**

Amazon is a global technological giant headquartered in Seattle, US that concentrates on providing service to the customers in different areas. Amazon extensively expands their business in areas of retail, database, software, electronics, toys, music, movies, books, home decor and accessories. Amazon operates both offline and online catering to their customers to suit their requirements. This puts the company on a global landscape to follow and meet the requirements of Corporate Social Responsibility or CSR worldwide. The company has to follow and meet these specific CSR requirements. Amazon in 2023 saw a sharp rise in customer involvement giving them an investment rate of 23.58% by January 2023 (cnn.com, 2023). Amazon has been able to use this progress to make amendments to their already existing CSR policies.





**Figure 2: CSR values of Amazon**

(Source: Created by author)

Corporate Social Responsibility is a compilation of policies a company takes to implement better ways and methods to contribute to the society, the customers and the environment in general. Amazon globally rectifies their policy based on the country's sanctions regarding CSR and their laws on implementing them. For example, Amazon in Ecuador amended their CSR policies in accordance with the Ecuadorian government's neoliberal policies. These policies aided Amazon Ecuador to improvise their resource extraction policies (Pearson *et al.*, 2019). The example aligns with the fact that corporate giants like Amazon have to constantly update, rectify and improvise their CSR policies. Corporate Social Responsibility aids a company to implement social, moral and ethical values among its employees and strengthen their organisational growth.



**Figure 3: Rate of Investment**

(Source: cnn.com, 2023)

The Corporate Social Responsibilities acquired by Amazon include promotion of local businesses on their online platforms. This helps the businesses to grow socially and the relevance of these local businesses increases economically from that. The CSR policies by Amazon also include incorporating local sellers and highlighting products that are locally made. Small and medium businesses reflect on Amazon's website by approximately 60%

(amazon.com, 2023). Small and medium businesses allow the company to source their investment on a larger scale globally.

Corporate Social Responsibility improvises companies to manoeuvre their resources and development of products using sustainable methods. This enlists Amazon's buyers to engage in sustainable purchasing. For example, Amazon has actively created approximately more than 250,000 climate friendly programs and has received over 36 certificates for such participation in improvising the environment (amazon.com, 2023). The example also suggests that Amazon actively encourages products that have sustainability certifications either by the government or by a registered environmental committee. Amazon also encourages investments that encourage diversity by empowering sellers of all kinds to exist under one platform. This increases supplier intensity for the company internationally. Amazon also encourages their products to be diverse in nature and inspires products to hold diversity certifications in them. The 2021 Amazon Consumer Behaviour Report provides a concise study that states more than 92% of customers who engage in online shopping prefer Amazon's online portal to shop (amazonaws.com, 2023). Diversity certification allows product authenticity to grow giving the company economic and ethical growth.

Amazon has a vibrant and young working sector and that allows the company to efficiently utilise their resources and realise their growth potential. This helps to realise the rate of suppliers in enhancing the quality of products. Amazon's CSR policies are also inclusive of efficiently incorporating suppliers that enhances their business perspective (amazon.com, 2023). Amazon is one of the very few multinational companies that have a wide range of active suppliers. This attests to the fact that the existing supplier rate is an effect of an active CSR policy. More than twenty one companies that are public in nature are generating more than 10% of their usual revenue using Amazon's platform (cnbc.com, 2023). Amazon therefore, enjoys a better market grip than its competitors. Amazon stresses on the analytics of Corporate Social Responsibility prevalent in their existing system. This is done to make any new strategies or amendments to their already existing policy on human resource policies (amazon.com, 2023). Amazon strictly strengthens the inclusion and protection of employees of alternate sexualities and genders which stabilises their ethical, moral and social values.

### **3. Main Body Part 2**

#### **3.1 UN SDGs**

United Nations Sustainable Development Group or UN SDG is the foremost leading group and forum that makes the policies on Sustainability. UN SDG also supervises the quality of sustainably developed operations for 162 countries (unsdg.un.org, 2023). Headed by the

chairmanship of The Deputy Secretary General, this forum oversees the policies each country and international companies are executing to reach a sustainable growth overall.

In context to the provisions of UN SDG, this study is going to assess the sustainable measures Amazon has integrated in their business approach. The sustainability aspect of any company is pivotal to their business operations and also emphasises on the responsibility of contributing to the planet. Amazon has undertaken sustainable growth goals to strengthen their operational policies. These include Amazon's pledge for a better climate by reducing carbon emission to zero by 2040. Amazon has also stressed on using 100% renewable energy by 2025 (amazon.com, 2023). This pledge taken by Amazon has also stated that the company will invest over \$2billion in companies that have an aim of creating sustainable products.

Amazon has also declared plans to operate sustainably worldwide especially in the African nations and areas where there is a dearth or shortage of water supply. Amazon strategically engages in partnerships and investments that focus on reducing water usage. Amazon has also integrated action plans to use sustainable aviation fuel, energising the automobile industry to shift to electric powering (amazon.com, 2023). Amazon has also improved their sustainable methods to contribute to the environment. Amazon has constantly attracted stakeholders based on their sustainable development growth which is in alliance with UN SDG (Li 2023). Amazon has ensured a smooth and sustainable supply chain in their mode of operations. Amazon ensures to provide a positive employee experience globally and also ensures that the supply chain partners are also treated with dignity (amazon.com, 2023). Amazon also ensures that their global partners ensure their respective suppliers with human rights benefits.

The packaging aspect of a product is an essential part of customer satisfaction. Amazon takes this very effectively by improving packaging and eliminating production waste. Therefore, integrating recyclable packaging minimises disposable waste and free of any damage while delivering them to the customers. Amazon has also taken into the design factor in sustainable packaging to appeal to new customers. This design factor aids a customer to open the package of the product without any hassle. Amazon hence has strategically reduced the waste produced globally from packaging. Amazon has also improvised on the structural integrity of their packaging by making new investments in both their product and packaging industry. This study thus asserts that Amazon as a company has taken sustainable methods to improvise waste management from a company and their intention and acknowledgement to do so is almost 64.9% (McCullough and Trail 2022). Amazon as a company in accordance to the UN SDG policies has implemented sustainable policies to enhance their market growth and reach a position in the global sustainable market.

### **3.2 Coping with COVID-19 impact**

#### ***Building best customer experience***

Amazon.com to combat the complex COVID-19 implication and closure of physical stores focused on providing improved customer experience to retain them and product revenue minimisation due to pandemic impact. The company undertook a strategy of imparting large selection with expanded product line and variety availability (Amazon.com, 2023). The closure of physical retail stores led to increased demand for Amazon by customers. The sales of toilet paper increased by 186% in 2020 as compared to previous year sales along with growth 862% of old and cough medicines (Amazon.com, 2023). Therefore indicating that Amazon significantly coped with COVID-19 compilation by building customer experience.

#### ***Hiring extensive warehouse staff***

Amazon to cope with issue of delay in delivery due to lack of sufficient delivery partners planned to recruit numerous employees. Despite US faced a widespread economic and unemployment turmoil, Amazon constantly hired. The company bought over 175,000 new warehouses and recruited 36,400 people within three months (Palmer, 2022). The increasing demand for home delivery of grocery and other essential merchandise compelled Amazon to improve its delivery services and employees. The recruitment was followed by hiring 876,800 more people with an increase of 34% per year (Palmer, 2022). Thus, Amazon coped with issue of drastic demand increase by hiring employees and buying warehouses.

#### ***Implementation of Project Ultraviolet***

The online order flood propelled Amazon to record sales at the time of second quarter of 2020. Amazon expanded its investment in COVID-19 aid like providing safety gears to employees and initiated internal testing under Project Ultraviolet (Amazon.com, 2023). The company focused on providing employee safety from COVID-19 pandemic to improve its market reputation and positioning, attaining competitive advantage. This process have been able to enhance organisational profitability and quality of organisational operation successfully. The company struggled to meet vaunted delivery window promised by it to prime members as part of annual membership of \$119 (Palmer, 2022). Amazon quickly ran out of highly-demanded products like paper towels and hand sanitiser, combating price gouging widespread. Additionally, the company rushed to adjust operations inside Amazon's warehouse for keeping employees safe without evident slowing down of work pace.

#### ***Improved delivery services***

Amazon.com improved its delivery services by collaborating with numerous third-party supplies to expand its product variety and range. The company identified the needs for

increased paper towels and toilet papers leading to expansion of both product ranges. Additionally, the company hired a total of 876,800 people in 2020 to cope with increasing orders through Amazon application (Amazon.com, 2023). Hence, the company focused on achieving extensive customer satisfaction to cope with COVID-19 complexities. Amazon also emphasised after service offerings to improve its customer engagement in a post-pandemic environment.

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

##### **4.1 Recommendation**

###### ***Application of Blockchain technology***

Amazon has a suitable opportunity of applying blockchain technology in its supply chain processes to reduce CO2 emission. Blockchain technology helps businesses to improve stakeholder's engagement by making supply chain activities transparent (Onik and Miraz, 2019). Moreover, blockchain also permits companies like Amazon to automate their operations by transforming manual data into computerised information. The company has an opportunity of improving stakeholder engagement along with improved supply chain resource usage. Therefore, application of blockchain technology can help Amazon eliminate the issue of increasing CO2 emission from supply chain processes in recent years.

###### ***Increasing online delivery efficiency***

Amazon has an opportunity of increasing online delivery facilities for its potential customers to improve loyal customer base enhancement. Thus, providing customers with quality product with appropriate authenticity, this company has been able to enhance organisational value using online delivery facility. Furthermore, the company can also develop correlation between departments through improved online delivery efficiency. Online campaign and selling can also be implemented by Amazon to improve the revenue structure of the company (Jindal *et al.* 2021). Therefore, increased online delivery efficiency can help Amazon to improve its customer engagement and sales.

##### **4.2 Conclusion**

This study concludes that Amazon has a suitable strength of effective brand recognition and awareness in US market and globally that helps the company to improve its revenue growth. Moreover, the company has efficiently coped with the complexities of COVID-19 pandemic by recruiting more employees and expanding stock keeping by building new warehouses. Despite of the pandemic and downfall of competitor's revenue, experienced constant sales and revenue growth Amazon has been able to retain organisational progress and success. Thus, implementation of sustainable approaches and processes, this company has been able to

enhance success and effectiveness while operating in a complex and competitive market. The company extensively focused on improving its customer services and enhancing delivery facilities to attain competitive advantage and efficiently cope with pandemic impact. It has also been concluded that Amazon focuses on environmental sustainability by aiming to reduce CO2 emission through supply chain processes.

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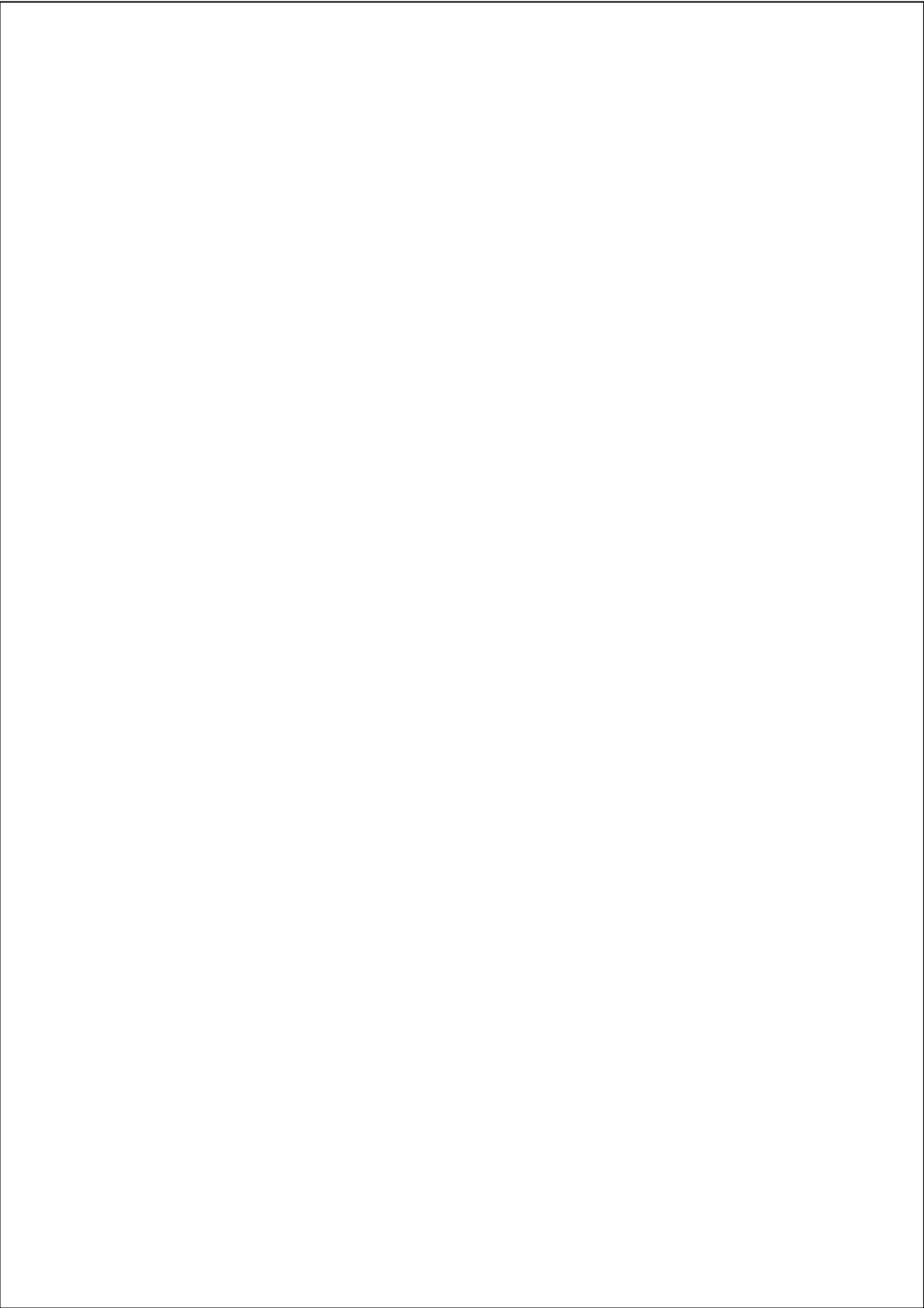
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