# 1. Introduction

National Express is a notable and distinguished transportation purveyor operating an extensive scope of bus, coach, and train amenities throughout the UK. According to National Express Group PLC (2023a), the organisation was established in 1972 and holds a commendable record of furnishing reliable and cost-effective conveyance options to its clientele. National Express, with an aggregate of over 46,200 labourers, stands as one of the most significant job providers in the UK (National Express Group PLC, 2023b).

# 2. VMOST

National Express aspires to be the preeminent public transportation purveyor in the United Kingdom by bestowing cost-effective, secure, and dependable services to its clientele. Its objective is to connect individuals, communities, and enterprises through resourceful and sustainable transportation solutions (National Express Group PLC, 2023c). To realise this vision, National Express has explicitly outlined objectives, including enriching customer contentment, reducing expenses, and broadening its coverage. Its strategies encompass furnishing excellent amenities, investing in technology, and expanding its network. The measures include refining customer service, training personnel, and intensifying promotional campaigns (National Express Group PLC, 2023c).

# 3. Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis plays a pivotal role in comprehending the necessities, prospects, and apprehensions of a multitude of stakeholders capable of influencing an enterprise's triumph (Alhawari *et al*., 2021). National Express boasts of a vast assortment of stakeholders ranging from its clienteles, staff, stockholders, regulatory authorities, providers, to the societies it caters to. The company accedes that these stakeholders possess dissimilar and, at times, opposing interests, thereby devising stratagems to regulate and equilibrate them. To sustain affirmative relationships with its stakeholders, National Express accords top priority to customer contentment, employee involvement, and environmental sustainability.

# 4. External Analysis

## 4.1 Competitor Analysis

As indicated by FirstGroup plc (2022), Arriva (2023) and Stagecoach UK Bus (2023), National Express faces quite a competition from Stagecoach, FirstGroup and Arriva. These companies offer similar services, including coach, bus, and train travel throughout the UK. To maintain its competitiveness, National Express has implemented tactics such as investing in advanced technology and expanding its range of routes and services.

## 4.2 Porter’s Five Forces

National Express faces intense competitive pressures in the public transportation industry, including threats from new entrants and price rivalry from competitors like FirstGroup, Arriva, and Stagecoach UK Bus (FirstGroup plc, 2022; Arriva, 2023; Stagecoach UK Bus, 2023). Suppliers hold relatively low bargaining power due to National Express's vast and diverse supply chain, but buyers have high bargaining power due to the many options available for transportation services. In addition, it is indicated by Irawan *et al.* (2020) that the possibility of substitutes, such as taxis and private cars, is significant.

## 4.3 PESTLE Analysis

It is critical for National Express to maintain amicable relations with government regulators while ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations (Floridi, 2019).

National Express can be impacted in times of economic downturn, government funding for transport infrastructure tends to be reduced (Mattioli *et al.,* 2020).

As indicated by Cheng *et al.* (2019), the transport requirements of an ageing population would differ significantly from those of a younger demographic.

Technological advancements, such as the emergence of new transport technologies and the use of data analytics to enhance efficiency and customer experience, can significantly impact National Express' operations (Wang *et al.,* 2021).

National Express must conform to a slew of legal requirements, including health and safety regulations, employment laws, and competition laws (Singh, 2022).

National Express recognises the importance of environmental sustainability and has taken several measures to minimise its environmental footprint, such as investing in low-emission vehicles and utilising renewable energy sources (Ramzan *et al.,* 2023).Top of Form

# 5. Internal Analysis

## 5.1 FiMO

National Express has a robust finance capability with steady revenue growth and profit margins (National Express Group PLC, 2023b). National Express' marketing strategies are centred on providing high-quality customer service and promoting environmental responsibility (National Express Group PLC, 2023c). Additionally, the company boasts of a wide range of transportation services and a skilled workforce, which contribute to its operational capabilities. (National Express Group PLC, 2023b).

## 5.2 VRIO Analysis

National Express has valuable, uncommon, and difficult-to-imitate resources and capabilities, including an extensive transportation network, investment in sustainable vehicles, and a skilled workforce (National Express Group PLC, 2023b; National Express Group PLC, 2023d). However, some of these resources may require restructuring to maximise value creation. By identifying and capitalising on key resources and capabilities, National Express can maintain a competitive edge in the public transportation industry.

# 6. SWOT Analysis

National Express has several **strengths**, including a **strong financial position** and a **diverse network of transport services** (Alkharabsheh *et al.,* 2021). However, the company also has **weaknesses**, such as **limited global presence** and **reliance on government agreements for revenue** (Mattioli *et al.,* 2020). There are **opportunities** for National Express to grow, including **acquiring smaller competitors** and **entering new markets** (Akpan, Udoh and Adebisi, 2022). Nevertheless, the company faces **threats**, such as **growing competition within the industry**, **potential economic downturns**, and **changing regulatory measures and policies** (Brand-Correa *et al.,* 2020).

# 7. Strategy Options

Increase market share in existing markets by improving prices, marketing efforts and services (Nalmpantis *et al.,* 2019).

Expand into new markets or demographic segments with existing products or services (Patrick and Hollenbeck, 2021).

Implement new products or services in existing markets through new technologies or infrastructure (Hepburn *et al.,* 2021).

Pursue new markets or industries beyond public transport, such as ride-sharing or car-sharing services (Wilson and Mason, 2020).

# 8. SFA Analysis

National Express can leverage its expertise in managing large transport networks to expand into emerging markets (Gambo and Musonda, 2021). The company already has a presence in the tourism sector through its coach services (National Express Group PLC, 2023b). Finally, investing in more sustainable solutions could provide a competitive advantage in a market where environmental awareness is increasing (National Express Group PLC, 2023b).

# 9. Risk Assessment

To ensure success, National Express should assess potential threats and uncertainties. Risks include **increased competition from new entrants** and **disruptive technologies** like ride-hailing and autonomous vehicles, as well as **regulatory changes** that could impact the company's operations and profitability (Pangbourne *et al.,* 2020; Eisenmann *et al.,* 2021).

# 10. Conclusion

National Express faces considerable competition from Stagecoach, FirstGroup and Arriva and it needs to maintain amicable relations with the government regulators. However, the company has considerable strength in finance capability and marketing strategies and can sought much opportunities in expanding to new areas as well as by overtaking small competitions.

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