

# Playstation Marketing Summary



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B BUS 320: Marketing Management

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## **Table of Contents:**

### **1. History**

#### **1.1 Sony's Entry into the Videogame Industry**

#### **1.2 Release of the Playstation and Global Expansion**

#### **1.3 Evolution of PlayStation Hardware**

#### **1.4 Introduction of PlayStation VR**

#### **1.5 The PlayStation Network**

#### **1.6 PlayStation Store**

#### **1.7 PlayStation Plus**

#### **1.8 PlayStation Mobile**

### **2. Executive Summary**

### **3. Mission**

### **4. Vision**

### **5. SWOT Analysis**

#### **5.1 Strengths**

#### **5.2 Weaknesses**

#### **5.3 Opportunities**

#### **5.4 Threats**

### **6. Goals and Objectives**

### **7. Competition**

#### **7.1 Xbox**

#### **7.2 Nintendo**

#### **7.3 AlienWare**

#### **7.4 Oculus (Meta)**

## **8. Market Share Breakdown**

## **9. Female Gamer Demographics**

## **10. PlayStation Target Audience**

## **11. Competitive Advantage**

### **11.1 Market Penetration**

### **11.2 Product Development**

### **11.3 Diversification**

## **12. Market Penetration**

## **13. Product Development**

## **14. Diversification**

## **15. Product Positioning**

## **16. Industry Analysis**

### **16.1 Regional Analysis**

### **16.2 Application Analysis**

**History:**

Sony originally released the first Playstation console in Japan in 1994. It was created by Ken Kutaragi, who is now often referred to as “The Father of the Playstation.” Originally Sony’s only involvement in the videogame industry was supplying hardware and technology to other companies like Nintendo. However, Nintendo broke the partnership when the two companies couldn’t decide how to split profits for one of their joint products. To get back at Nintendo, Kutaragi was sent to work on building the first gaming console for Sony. The Playstation gained quick traction in Japan, so in 1995 Sony decided to release the Playstation worldwide.

The Playstation was the first gaming console to sell over 100 million units, which it was able to accomplish in less than a decade. Sony released the next version of the Playstation, the Playstation 2, in 2000. To this day the Playstation 2 is the best selling in-home console, selling over 155 million units. The Playstation 3 was released in 2006, and the Playstation 4 in 2013, which sold one million units in a day. This crowned the Playstation 4 as the fastest selling console in history. Finally, Sony released the PlayStation 5 in 2020, which has sold roughly 30 million units. The in-home consoles are not the only PlayStation hardware Sony ever made though.

In 2005 the first PlayStation Portable was released, and its predecessor was released in 2011. Sony also produced PlayStation TV, which was a microconsole, a digital video recorder called the PSX, and a TV with an integrated PlayStation as well.

In 2016 PlayStation also entered the VR headset races. This headset was designed specifically for use with the PlayStation, and allowed customers to enter a whole new world of gaming. This headset was fully compatible with the PlayStation 4, and new versions are compatible with the PlayStation 5 too.

Then there is the PlayStation Software. The PlayStation Network has roughly 100 million active users every month. This network is made up of the PlayStation Store, PlayStation Plus, and PlayStation Mobile.

**Executive Summary:**

Sony PlayStation, a leading brand in the gaming industry, has established a strong reputation for its high-quality gaming consoles and exclusive game titles. The brand's commitment to innovation and cutting-edge technology has resulted in advanced gaming consoles, such as the PlayStation 4 and PlayStation 5, with features like VR capabilities and high-quality graphics. With a large and loyal user base, PlayStation has a significant market share and benefits from consistent revenue streams from hardware sales and subscription services like PlayStation Plus.

Despite its many strengths, PlayStation faces challenges that include high console prices, limited backward compatibility, and heavy reliance on console sales. The brand also needs to adapt to the rapid pace of technological advancements in the gaming industry to maintain its competitive edge.

Opportunities for growth include expansion into emerging markets, capitalizing on the growing popularity of cloud gaming, and investing in new technologies such as AI, AR, and VR.

Diversification into new areas of the gaming industry, such as esports, gaming events, and game development, can also help broaden the brand's revenue streams.

However, threats such as intense competition from Microsoft's Xbox and Nintendo's Switch, piracy, and shifting consumer preferences towards mobile gaming and free-to-play titles pose challenges to PlayStation's market position. By addressing these weaknesses and capitalizing on growth opportunities, Sony PlayStation can continue to maintain its leadership in the gaming industry and drive future success.

**Mission:**

Sony: A company that inspires and fulfills your curiosity.

**Vision:**

Sony: Using our unlimited passion for technology, content and services to deliver groundbreaking new excitement and entertainment, as only Sony can.

**SWOT Analysis:****Strengths**

- Strong brand recognition: Sony PlayStation is a well-established and highly recognized brand in the gaming industry, known for its high-quality gaming consoles and exclusive game titles.

- Innovative technology: PlayStation consistently invests in R&D to develop cutting-edge technology, enabling the brand to create innovative gaming consoles with advanced features, such as VR capabilities and high-quality graphics.
- Exclusive game library: PlayStation has a wide range of exclusive game titles that have garnered critical acclaim and a loyal fan base, such as God of War, Uncharted, and The Last of Us.
- Large user base: PlayStation has a significant market share and a loyal customer base, ensuring a consistent stream of revenue from hardware sales and subscription services like PlayStation Plus.
- Strategic partnerships: PlayStation maintains strong relationships with game developers and other industry players, which helps it secure exclusive game titles and collaborations, enhancing its product offerings.

### Weaknesses

- High prices: PlayStation consoles are often more expensive than their competitors, which can be a barrier for entry for budget-conscious consumers.
- Limited backward compatibility: The brand has struggled with backward compatibility, which can make it difficult for gamers to play older titles on newer consoles.
- Heavy reliance on console sales: PlayStation's revenue is highly dependent on the sales of its gaming consoles, making it vulnerable to market fluctuations and the performance of individual consoles.
- Console life cycle: The typical console life cycle of around 5-7 years can result in periods of reduced revenue before a new console is launched.

### Opportunities

- Expansion into emerging markets: Sony PlayStation can tap into the potential of emerging markets, such as India, Brazil, and Southeast Asia, where gaming is on the rise, to further expand its user base.
- Existing product development: As in the past, Sony has released versions of its PS4 like the PS4 pro and slim that offered different features for gamers who prefer a different gaming experience. Sony could continue this trend by releasing a PC friendly version of the PS5 with completely upgradeable parts to begin taking some of the PC gaming market's large market share.
- Growth in cloud gaming: Cloud gaming is becoming more popular, and PlayStation can capitalize on this trend by expanding its PlayStation Now service or developing new cloud gaming solutions.
- Development of new technologies: Investing in new technologies, such as AI, AR, and VR, can provide PlayStation with a competitive advantage and attract more users to its platform.
- Diversification: PlayStation can diversify its revenue streams by exploring new opportunities in the gaming industry, such as esports, gaming events, or game development.

### Threats



- Intense competition: PlayStation faces strong competition from other gaming console manufacturers, such as Microsoft's Xbox and Nintendo's Switch, which can impact its market share.
- Rapid technology advancements: The fast-paced nature of technological advancements in the gaming industry requires constant innovation and adaptation, which can be both resource-intensive and challenging.
- Piracy: The gaming industry is susceptible to piracy, which can result in lost revenue for PlayStation and its game developers.
- Shifting consumer preferences: The rise of mobile gaming and the popularity of free-to-play titles can impact the demand for traditional gaming consoles and premium games, potentially affecting PlayStation's market position.

### **Goals and Objectives:**

Sony: “We determined that the driving purpose of the PlayStation brand is to 'push the boundaries of play' and that PlayStation must be seen as 'the best place to play – always extraordinary.’”

### **Competition:**

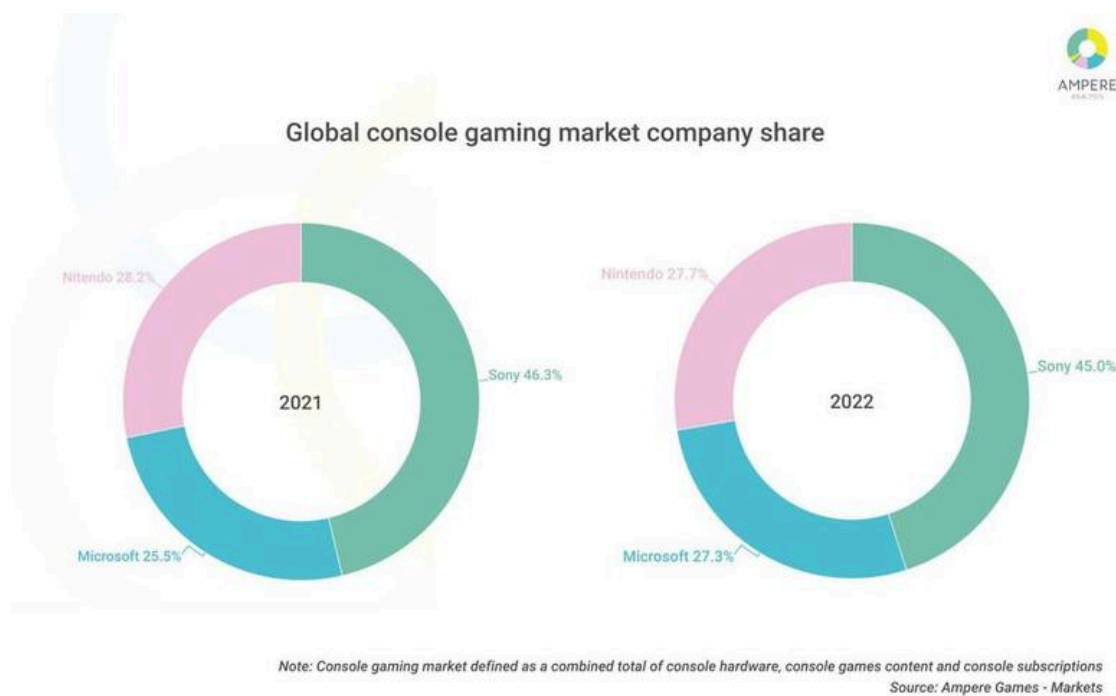
1. **Xbox**, The main competitor of Playstation, is owned by Microsoft and founded in the year 2000, The company provides a range of products and services including 5 different gaming consoles, Xbox exclusive games, and streaming services like Xbox Network allowing users to access online services and Xbox game pass which gives users access to over 300 games. One of their highest grossing titles “Halo 2”, an Xbox exclusive series,

sold 8.5 million copies. Their current console release, the Xbox series X/S released in November of 2020 and has sold around 18.5 million units.

2. **Nintendo**, which was founded in 1989 in Kyoto, Japan, is our next competitor and is responsible for many of the worlds most successful gaming devices including the Nintendo DS which sold 154 million lifetime sales and is the 2nd most successful console in history, The Game Boy and GameBoy Color which sold 118 million, and the Nintendo Wii which sold 101 million. Their most recent release is the Nintendo Switch is a portable hybrid console that can be docked and connected to a tv or taken with you anywhere you go. It makes it easy to play alongside others by connecting their switch screens.
  
3. **AlienWare**, founded in 1996 in Miami, Florida, is a subsidiary of Dell that creates desktops, computers, media centers, and accessories meant for gaming. They are distinguishable by their unique alien-themed logo and general appearance. As a subsidiary, AlienWare maintains its control over how it markets and designs its products which allows access to Dell's supply chain and purchasing power. Unfortunately there is minimal data on their number of sales
  
4. **Oculus**, released in 2019 by Facebook and is now rebranded as Meta, has a standalone device called the Oculus Quest Vr. This console is a Virtual Reality headset that uses internal sensors and multiple cameras allowing it to map your position and movements. They released new versions such as the Meta Quest 2 and Meta Quest Pro in September

2020 and now the company has sold 20 million headsets with the Quest 2 being their most popular. This is beyond any other headset maker but it is said that the company is not doing well in terms of growth and retention. The newer customers of the headset are simply not as engaged

### Market Share Breakdown:



As defined by Ampere Games, The console gaming market is one that consists of a combined total of consoles, console games, and console subscriptions. The graph above includes only Nintendo, Playstation, and Xbox as they dominate the market. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the overall console gaming market experienced a shortage of Playstation 5 and Xbox series X Console hardware. That along with many major anticipated game releases being delayed until

2023 or later, the overall market declined by around 7.8%. Fortunately the market performance is still 18% ahead of the pre-pandemic market in 2019.

In a recent press conference done by the president of Microsoft, Brad Smith, Smith presents data likely coming from cumulative and internal Microsoft data describing Sony's market share in Europe, Japan, as well as worldwide. The figures are as follows

- Europe: 80% Sony PlayStation and 20% Microsoft Xbox.
- Japan: 96% Sony PlayStation and 4% Microsoft Xbox.
- Worldwide: around 70% Sony PlayStation and around 30% Microsoft Xbox.

Due to where these figures were taken from, the data is not publicly accessible but they illustrate a very Sony dominated market and Smith claims these figures have remained extremely steady over the past 2 decades. Even during the Covid pandemic with many experiencing supply chain issues Sony was able to bounce back strong.

Playstation caters to the gaming market, and has a 64% share in the market. The gaming market demographics are split into female, male, younger, and older players. Playstation's specific consumer demographics have usually been made up mostly of men, recently however, it was reported by Sony that about 41% of Playstation owners are women. Although their consumer demographics have changed, Playstation still primarily targets single male, aged 17-40. This age range is around when men start having more freedom than children and teens, and because a majority of the popular Playstation games are rated M. Being M rated means they have to be 17

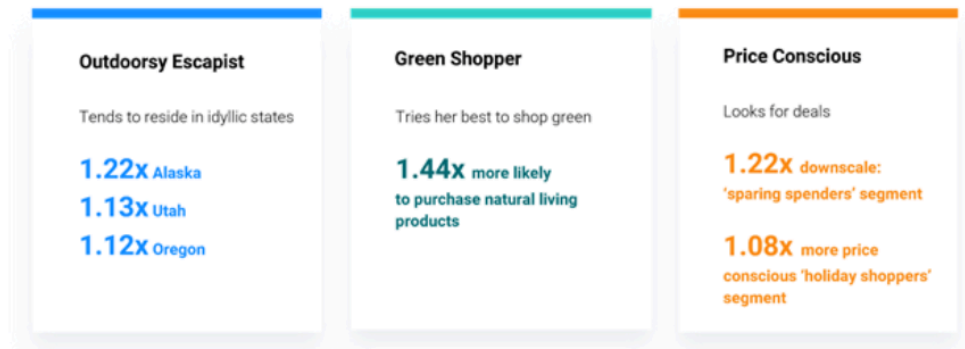
years old or older to purchase the game. Playstation also targets some in the middle class, but mainly higher class, as gaming is an expensive hobby to maintain.

### **Female gamer demographics:**

The gaming market has long been thought of to be made up of more male gamers than female gamers. However, the gender ratio has been growing closer, and closer to being equal in the past decade. The female gamer demographic are usually younger, being mostly in the age range of 18-29. Probably due to their youth, they are usually lower income, and in the process of getting a higher education. This is not very attractive for companies to spend time and money targeting, but it is in the industry's best interest to continue catering to them. Especially since this is the age range when most people are able to grow their purchasing power. A way gaming companies can continue to do this is to create games that incorporate more aspects female gamers value more such as escapism worlds, and interpersonal communication.



### Gamer Girl Mindset



### Playstation target audience:

With the release of the PS5, Playstation is able to target over 50% of the console game market.

The PS5 has advanced features, and is targeted towards more hardcore gamers. These players are looking for challenging, fast-paced games where they can compete with other players.

### Competitive Advantage:

As a general practice, Sony Corp. implements differentiation strategies as a means to gain competitive advantage making its products more attractive as well as more profitable for the company. Sony does this in a couple of different ways.

### Market Penetration:

Sony's main focus is on market penetration in which they focus on gaining larger shares in the market they already operate in. This is done by utilizing intense marketing campaigns and other commercial techniques in order to sell more units. In 2019 alone Sony had 3.31 billion US dollars on advertisements, they employ different means but the main focus is on digital marketing as social media in particular plays a significant role. Social media is heavily utilized to communicate with their customers.

### **Product Development:**

Product development is another main method of differentiation for Sony as continuing to innovate its products is a pivotal key in outperforming its competitors. In terms of hardware and performance, the PS5 has a close competitor in the Xbox series X but the PS5 outperforms in many important ways. SSD speed for example refers to the speed at which games will load. According to PSU, the Xbox Series X performs at 2.4 GB/s raw and 4.8 GB/s compressed with the PS5 is pushing 5.5 GB/s raw and 8-9 GB/s compressed which is a noticeable difference and an important selling point to a large portion of the gaming community.

The next feature that really puts Playstation ahead of the game is its new and innovative DualSense controller. It includes features like haptic feedback and adaptive triggers providing an immersive experience and its classic touchpad that has a variety of uses. Compared to the Xbox's controller which lacks all of these features and still uses AA batteries, the DualSense provides a superior gaming experience.

In terms of games themselves, Playstation offers a much larger library of games exclusive to the playstation meaning Xbox gamers are not able to play them. Not only is the library larger but the exclusives Playstation has to offer are critically acclaimed. Games like Gran Turismo 3 with 85 million copies sold, Shadow of the Colossus, Horizon Zero Dawn, Ghost of Tsushima, The Uncharted Series, The spiderman series, The Last of Us which remains one of the best action/adventure games of the decade, and God of War for example are all very well known and loved by the gaming community. While Xbox does have exclusives of its own like Forza and

Halo, it is generally agreed that Playstation offers an unbeatable collection of games that won't stop coming.

### **Diversification:**

Sony has de-emphasized diversification as an intensive growth strategy, instead focusing on new business development to drive growth. By narrowing its product offerings, Sony has increased the significance of products with the highest competitive advantage in its product mix. Presently, Sony concentrates on three main businesses: Devices, Game and Network Services, Pictures, and Music. Within this intensive strategy, Sony applies a differentiation generic strategy, leveraging product uniqueness to gain a competitive advantage that supports the expansion of its core businesses. The ultimate objective of this intensive growth strategy is to identify fresh business opportunities for the company's expansion.

### **Product Positioning:**

Sony uses aggressive promotional strategies for its products, Sony's use of social media for example is mainly through facebook. They have dedicated pages for each product they sell and the Playstation page has amassed quite a following and illustrates the brand devotion they have fostered in their customers. In the months prior to the release of the Playstation 5 alone, Sony had spent an estimated 26.2 million dollars on TV advertisements which was over half of the industry's total outlay. 12 commercials had aired 1400+ times, the top ad costing around 5.6 million. Sony marketed this particular ad towards sports lovers and pushed the slogan "Launch: Play has No Limits." NFL games accounted for over half of Playstation's spend followed up by sportscenter and college football.



In 2009 Sony began utilizing an all encompassing brand slogan that applies to all their products and services. “Make.Believe”, which symbolizes Sony’s innovative spirit and creativity, was the first time the company released a unified brand message. The “make” signifying the company’s unique ability to translate ideas into real life, the period in between the two words symbolizing where inspiration meets creativity and where creativity meets reality. Then there's the “believe”, representing Sony's ideals, being able to think, imagine, and dream. The slogan is meant to manifest itself through the creation of breakthrough products, compelling new content, innovative technology, and network services that provide an unparalleled gaming experience.



### **Industry Analysis:**

Based on the advancement of wireless technologies like Bluetooth 5.0, wi-fi, etc. there's a rising demand for game consoles and the top players in the industry including sony and microsoft are releasing consoles based off of these new technologies to provide an enhanced gaming experience.

### Regional Analysis

Under the scope of the study being referenced, there are five main regions globally including North America, the Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and Latin America.

Among these, the Asia Pacific is expected to lead the market share between 2020 and 2027. This is due to key players in the region like Sony and Nintendo. The number of active gamers is also contributing to their growth, in countries such as China, South Korea, Japan, India, and others, there's nearly five times the number of active gamers than in North America and they are more focused on seizing opportunities to integrate their consoles with a variety of new technologies like cloud-based streaming, 5G, and Blockchain. This is due to the increasing number of e-sport gaming events such as FIFA 20 Open Cup, MK11 Open Cup, Tekken 7 1on1 Open Cup, and much more. Europe is also expected to grow with a notable compound annual growth rate(CAGR). Their market share is largely due to the increasing amount of investments that consumers have put down in places like the U.K., Germany, France, Spain, and Italy. In the U.K. alone, consumer investments in games were estimated to be 7.4 billion in 2018. According to UK Interactive Entertainment(UKIE) there are upwards of 2,261 activating gaming companies in the region which has contributed to their growth as well. North America is also projected to grow with a remarkable CAGR and this growth is attributable to the rapidly increasing demand for game consoles based on newer technology like VR and 3D architecture as well as cloud services. Gamers in North America also tend to prefer home consoles over handhelds, further giving them the market share. Lastly, Latin America and the Middle East and Africa are expected to grow with a stable CAGR which is mainly due to the spending done by the local government and private organizations adopting new technologies like AI in these countries.

### Application Analysis

For this analysis the market is segmented into gaming and non-gaming applications. Of the both of these, the non-gaming segment is estimated to grow at a significant CAGR due to the rising demand for consoles with integrated and extensive content applications like youtube, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, etc. Key players in the market are focusing on launching consoles that accommodate this need so both gaming and non-gaming parties can make use of it. Nintendo for example launched the Wii U which helped users control the device as a handheld console while being able to browse the internet and applications, draw sketches, and even post to social media.

To ensure the growth and competitiveness of its PlayStation brand in the gaming industry, Sony must establish measurable objectives that provide a comprehensive framework for assessing its performance and progress. These measurable objectives serve as crucial benchmarks for monitoring success, guiding strategic decision-making, and aligning the brand's efforts with its long-term goals. By effectively measuring and analyzing key performance indicators, Sony can make data-driven decisions, identify areas for improvement, and capitalize on market opportunities. In this section, we will delve deeper into four essential measurable objectives for PlayStation: sales revenue, market share, brand awareness, and financial performance.

Sales Revenue stands as one of the primary measurable objectives for PlayStation. Sony aims to not only maintain but also increase the sales of its PlayStation consoles, gaming software, and subscriptions. Tracking the revenue generated by PlayStation products over a specific period enables Sony to assess the effectiveness of its sales strategies, product launches,

and pricing initiatives. By closely monitoring sales revenue trends and conducting thorough analysis, Sony can gain valuable insights into consumer preferences, market demand, and sales performance across different product categories. According to Smith (2019), analyzing sales revenue allows companies to evaluate the impact of marketing campaigns, identify consumer trends, and make data-driven decisions to drive further growth in the market. This objective provides Sony with a tangible measure of its success in generating revenue and serves as a foundation for financial planning and resource allocation.

Market Share is another vital measurable objective for PlayStation. Sony seeks to not only maintain its current market share but also expand its presence in the highly competitive gaming industry. This objective reflects the brand's aspiration to capture a larger portion of the consumer base and compete effectively with other gaming companies. By analyzing market data and monitoring the sales performance of PlayStation products relative to its competitors, Sony can gauge its market position and identify areas for improvement. A higher market share signifies a stronger presence in the industry and indicates a larger customer base.

Johnson et al. (2020) argue that tracking market share helps companies understand their competitive advantage, identify market trends, and make strategic moves to strengthen their position in the industry. By continuously monitoring and adjusting its strategies based on market share analysis, Sony can remain agile and responsive to evolving consumer needs and preferences.

Brand Awareness is an essential objective for PlayStation. Sony strives to enhance the visibility and recognition of the PlayStation brand among its target audience. Increased brand

awareness can positively impact sales and market share by creating a strong and positive brand image. To measure this objective, Sony can conduct brand recognition surveys, analyze social media engagement, and track the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Brand awareness encompasses consumers' familiarity with the brand, their ability to recognize and recall the brand, and their perceptions and associations related to the brand.

According to Wang and Sun (2018), brand awareness is a critical factor in consumer decision-making, as it influences trust, perceived value, and brand loyalty. By monitoring brand awareness, Sony can fine-tune its marketing strategies, allocate resources effectively, and create a strong brand image that resonates with the intended audience. Furthermore, by regularly assessing the impact of marketing efforts on brand awareness, Sony can identify areas of strength and weakness in its brand communication strategies and make necessary adjustments.

Financial Performance represents a crucial measurable objective for PlayStation. Sony aims to generate significant revenue and profit from its PlayStation products and services. Monitoring financial performance involves analyzing financial reports, tracking key metrics such as revenue, gross margin, and net income, and comparing them against predetermined targets. Ghosh and Mukherjee (2021) emphasize that financial performance indicators provide insights into the company's financial health, profitability, and return on investment. By evaluating financial performance, Sony can make informed decisions regarding investments, cost management, and pricing strategies to optimize profitability and ensure long-term sustainability. Financial metrics also serve as a measure of the brand's overall value and provide stakeholders with an understanding of the brand's financial viability and growth potential.

In conclusion, establishing measurable objectives is crucial for Sony to assess the success and progress of its PlayStation brand. Sales revenue, market share, brand awareness, and financial performance serve as key indicators of the brand's growth and competitiveness. Through diligent monitoring and analysis of these measurable objectives, Sony can adapt its strategies, capitalize on strengths, and address areas for improvement. This continuous improvement process will ultimately ensure the continued success of the PlayStation brand in the dynamic and competitive gaming industry. By leveraging data-driven insights derived from these measurable objectives, Sony can position itself as a market leader, enhance customer satisfaction, and drive sustainable growth in the ever-evolving gaming landscape (Anderson & Reynolds, 2017).

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