ATMA RAM SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI
ACCREDITED GRADE 'A++' BY NAAC (CGPA 3.77/4.00)
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THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT CELL (FIC)

presents

Consulting CaseBook

2024-25

ISSUE DETAILS & COPYRIGHTS

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This casebook has been carefully curated to aid students and consulting aspirants in preparing for consulting interviews by providing access to frameworks, solved and unsolved guesstimates, industry analyses, transcripts, and valuable preparatory material.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the successful creation of this Casebook.

This project has been the result of months of dedication, collaboration, and hard work by the entire Consulting Department of FIC ARSD. Each page reflects the countless hours spent in research, discussions, and meticulous editing by our team. From compiling consulting frameworks and analyzing top consulting firms, to curating over 35+ solved and unsolved guesstimates, detailed industry analyses, and valuable interview transcripts — every effort has been aimed at providing the most comprehensive and insightful resource possible.

We extend our sincere thanks to the core team members, content writers, editors, and peer reviewers who worked tirelessly to ensure the quality and accuracy of this book. Special appreciation goes to our seniors and mentors, whose guidance and feedback throughout this journey have been invaluable.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College (ARSD) for providing us with the platform, resources, and environment that constantly encourage learning, innovation, and excellence.

Team FIC Consulting Department
FIC ARSD, 2025

PRINCIPAL'S NOTE

PROF. GYANTOSH KUMAR JHA
PRINCIPAL, ARSD COLLEGE

I wish the very best of luck to the team of the Finance and Investment Cell of ARSD in their endeavour to create financial awareness at the college level.

In today's fast-paced world, where financial literacy is of utmost importance, such initiatives are much-needed. I believe that your initiative will not only benefit the students of our college but also have a positive impact on the broader community. By equipping young people with financial knowledge and skills, you are empowering them to make informed decisions about their financial futures, which will lead to a more financially responsible society.

I am confident that this team will lead society to great heights and make our college proud.

MESSAGE FROM TEACHER-IN-CHARGE

DR. SIVACHANDER.G
CONVENER

MR. UTTAM KUMAR
MEMBER

MRS. ANUPRIYA ARORA
MEMBER

FIC, ARSD has done a commendable job in and outside the college with educating and engaging students in matters of finance and investment. By providing workshops, seminars, and other educational opportunities, FIC has helped students understand the complexities of investing, budgeting, and managing debt. I commend the dedication of the FIC team for their efforts in spreading financial knowledge among students and economically weaker sections. I wish for them to always move ahead in their journey of making a financially aware community.

I wish the very best of luck to the team of the Finance and Investment Cell of ARSD in their endeavour to create financial awareness at the college level. This is a much-needed initiative in today's time to tackle the challenges of daily life. I am confident that this team will lead society to great heights and make our college proud.

The FIC of ARSD College has provided huge career-growth opportunities to the students. It is constantly evolving and changing the personality of each and every individual through various exercises. Therefore, the members of FIC will be professionals and certainly, this field has high chances of realising career development in a short period of time, as students can keep shifting to new roles based on their strengths and interests, shining better with every passing day. I hope that this cell shall continue to elevate itself onto higher benchmarks..

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Established in 2019, Finance and Investment Cell, ARSD (FIC ARSD) is a student-driven body with a vision to create and cultivate financial awareness amongst the student community and to provide a common platform for all the finance and Investment enthusiasts to express, share, and enhance their practical knowledge and prowess in the fields of finance and investment.

It aims to be a catalyst in developing practical financial knowledge and instincts amongst young minds through regular workshops, research sessions, webinars, and regular student discussions and making earnest efforts towards bridging the gap between classroom learning and practical application of financial knowledge to realize the variety of financial goals and aspirations of the students.

VISION

Grounded in the understanding that being financially literate is one of the most important things a student can do to ensure prolonged financial stability, FIC envisions a world where Gen-Z establish the foundation of their relationship with money and embark upon the beautiful and lifelong journey of learning.

MISSION

Our mission is to empower college students to make better financial decision making and ensure they are better equipped to face and navigate inevitable financial roadblocks throughout their life leading to financial solidity, and reduced anxiety.

CONSULTANCY DEPARTMENT

Established in August 2023, the Consultancy Department of the Finance and Investment Cell (FIC) at ARSD delivers exceptional consultancy services to NGOs and relevant institutions. The department bridges the gap between academic knowledge and real-world consultancy, focusing on building consultancy skills, fostering analytical thinking, and providing practical exposure for its members. FIC ARSD creates a vibrant ecosystem for students to learn, grow, and contribute effectively to the consultancy field.

CASE COMPETITIONS

FIC ARSD organizes various case-based competitions to challenge and improve the problem-solving abilities of its members and participants. The events are a culmination of various informative and helpful sessions, panel discussions and cutthroat competitions.

REGULAR SESSIONS

Regular sessions are conducted to enhance case-based awareness and consultancy skills among FIC ARSD members. These sessions focus on developing practical skills in case analytics and problem solving, ensuring that members are well-equipped to tackle real-world consultancy challenges.

GUEST SESSIONS

FIC ARSD regularly invites industry leaders and experts to the campus to share their knowledge and experience in the consultancy field. These guest sessions cover various aspects of consultancy, including client acquisition, client relations, and case management.

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WHAT IS CONSULTING

Consulting is the business of helping organizations solve problems, improve performance, and achieve their goals. Companies hire consultants when they need expert advice, fresh ideas, or specialized skills to deal with challenges or opportunities.
Consultants work closely with businesses to analyze their current situation, identify problems, create strategies, and recommend solutions that can lead to better results.
In short, consulting is all about problem-solving and helping businesses succeed.

What Consultants Typically Do:

- Conduct research and market analysis
- Diagnose problems within the organization
- Develop strategies and action plans
- Present findings and recommendations
- Assist in implementing solutions

KEY SERVICE AREAS

- Management Consulting: Focuses on improving the overall performance of a company.

- Strategy Consulting: Helps businesses plan their future direction.

- Operations Consulting: Works on improving processes and efficiency.

- Financial Consulting: Deals with financial planning, budgeting, and investment strategies.

- Human Resources Consulting: Focuses on improving employee management, recruitment, and training.

- Technology Consulting: Advises companies on IT, software, and digital transformation.

SKILLS THAT WILL HELP YOU TO ACE CONSULTING INTERNSHIP

Problem-Solving and Structured Thinking

- The core of consulting — breaking down complex problems into clear, logical parts.
- Helps in case interviews, real client work, and strategy formulation.

Analytical Skills

- Ability to work with data, interpret numbers, and draw actionable insights.
- Essential for market sizing, financial modeling, and business analysis.

Communication Skills

- Clear and structured verbal and written communication.
- Crucial for presenting findings to clients, preparing decks, and collaborating with teams.

Business Acumen

- Understanding how companies operate, make money, and compete.
- Makes you better at tailoring solutions that align with business realities.

Teamwork and Collaboration

- Consulting is team-driven: being able to work efficiently with diverse teams under pressure is a must.
- Strong teamwork often determines project success and client satisfaction.

The Case Interview Deep Dive

What is a Consulting Case Interview?

A consulting case interview is a real-world simulation where candidates are presented with a business problem and are asked to solve it through structured thinking, smart analysis, and clear communication.

It mirrors the work consultants do with actual clients — breaking down complex challenges, identifying key drivers, analyzing data, and recommending actionable solutions.

Unlike typical job interviews, a case interview doesn't focus on your resume — it tests how you think, how you approach problems, and how you communicate under pressure.

1

Cracking the Case Starts Before You Speak

- When you are given the case, pause for 5 seconds.
- Write down the problem statement clearly in your own words.
- Firms love candidates who show control and don't rush into speaking.

2

Your Structure is 80% of Your Success

- Good candidates don't "solve" the case immediately — they frame the problem smartly.
- Always break your structure into 3-4 big buckets — not 7-8 small ones (shows strategic thinking).

3

Show "Hypothesis-Driven Thinking"

- Always have a working theory ("I believe the drop in profits is likely due to falling volume, but I'll test it").
- Interviewers love candidates who think like real consultants — not just ask random questions.

4

Client-Centric Thinking

- Clarify facts like a client would: "Do we have recent data on this market?"
- Challenge assumptions politely: "Would it be okay to assume distribution costs are constant across regions?"

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Frameworks

Profitability Framework

Profit

- Revenue
  - Price/Unit
    - Internal
      - Pricing strategy
    - External
      - Substitute
      - Competition
      - Government policies
  - # of Units
    - Supply
      - Value Chain of producers to identify bottlenecks
    - Demand
      - Customer Journey
- Cost
  - Value Chain/ Operations
  - Miscellaneous

- **R&D :** *Equipment, human capital*
- **Demand Forecasting:** *Software Driven, or Human Driven*
- **Raw Material :** *Cost Price & Logistics*
- **Processing :** *Employees, Utilities, Packaging, Maintenance*
- **Warehousing :** *Logistics & Storage Cost*
- **Distribution**
- **Marketing**
- **After Sales**

Fixed Costs + Variable Costs ✖ # of Units

Preliminary Questions

- Are we trying to increase profits, fix losses, or improve margins?
- Are we looking at the overall company or a specific product, region, or segment?
- Is this a current profitability issue or a future projection?
- What industry are we operating in? (Margins, customer behavior, and costs vary widely.)
- Any recent changes in competition, regulation, or market dynamics?
- Any recent changes in pricing, operations, supply chain, or management that might have affected profits?
- Do we have access to revenue breakdowns, cost structures, and unit economics?

Market Entry Framework

- **Market Entry framework**
  - **Company Analysis**
    - Objective — Aim of the company? Evaluation metric?
    - Resource assessment — Core competency? Any patents / licenses?
    - Org. readiness — Any previous experience? Skills? Risk appetite?
  - **Industry Analysis**
    - Market attractiveness — Market size? Profit margin in the industry? Growth rate?
    - Customer analysis — Customer needs / preferences? Do we meet them?
    - Competitor analysis — Competitor strategy? Use 7Ps framework
  - **Implementation feasibility**
    - Financial feasibility — Does the company have financial strength to back this growth?
    - Operational feasibility — Sales & distribution strategy? Logistics & supply chain?
    - Regulatory factors — Any regulatory barriers?
  - **Mode of Entry & Risks**
    - Market entry options — Organic / Inorganic? Exporting / Licensing? JVs / Acquisition?
    - Risk analysis & mitigation — PESTEL analysis & determine mitigation strategies

STEPS FOR MARKET ENTRY

1. Company Readiness Check
2. Market Sizing
3. Feasibility Study
4. Entry Mode Selection
5. Risk Mitigation Plan

Pricing Framework

Overview

While pricing cases can be added on a standalone basis, they also be asked in conjunction with market entry cases to estimate the potential revenues generated by the client upon entry. Your objective is to identify the best approach to estimate the price of the product.

- Pricing
  - New product (Innovation)
    - Value based pricing
    - Cost based pricing
  - Existing product (Modified)
    - Competition exists
      - Cost based pricing
      - Comp based pricing
    - No competition
      - Value based pricing
      - Cost based pricing

Value based

- Willingness to pay
- Benchmark against similar products
- Opportunity Cost

Cost based

- R&D Cost
- Production Cost
  - Fixed Costs
  - Variable Costs
- Breakeven Period, Margin

Competitor based

- Existing Products
- If new product, NPV of substitutes
- Supply-Demand Considerations

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER*

- What business is the client operating?
- What is the product or service that is being offered?
- What are the various uses of the product?
- How is it different from what is being offered by the competitor?
- Who are the competitors and what are their prices?
- Expected margin
- Substitute products
- Capital investments and expected payback period

Pricing Process:

Define Product → Analyze Costs → Study Market → Select Pricing Strategy → Test Pricing → Launch

Key Decision Factors:

- Customer willingness to pay
- Competitive intensity
- Product differentiation
- Cost structure robustness

Growth Framework

Overview

In growth cases, the client is typically expecting to see some year on year growth. You are expected to understand growth targets, evaluate methods, and suggest recommendations to achieve the targets.

- Revenue growoth target
  - Existing market
    - Increase volume
      - Increase customer base
      - Increase product mix
    - Increase Price
      - *Considering Price Elasticity*
  - New market
    - Geographic expansion
      - Domestic
      - International
    - Diversification
      - Horizontal diversification
    - Inorganic Growth
      - Mergers
      - Acquisition
    - Business integration
      - Vertical integration

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER*

- What is the growth objective/target of the client?
- What is the time-period in which the client wants to achieve the target?
- How has the client's industry been performing?
- Where does the client stand vis-à-vis competitors (number and respective market shares)?
- Does the client have the capacity to meet increase in demand?
- Does the client have any financial constraints for investment?

Each L3 unit (Merger, Acquisition, etc.) requires additional considerations.

Note:
In case, the prompt asks you to analyze profit growth opportunities, all you need to do is individually analyze the revenue prospects using the framework on left and then also analyze the cost prospects using value chain analysis.

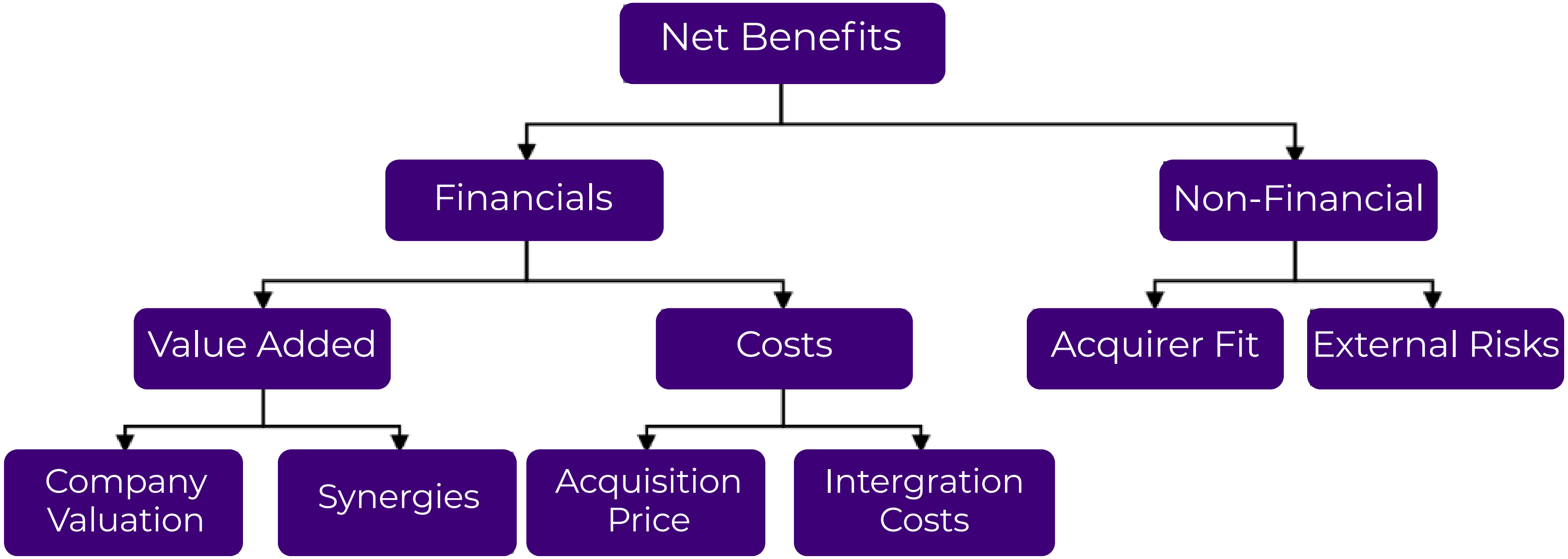
Key Metrics to Track

- Revenue Growth %
- Market Share %
- Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC)
- Lifetime Value (LTV)

Formula:

Revenue Growth Rate = (Current Revenue - Past Revenue) ÷ Past Revenue × 100
Market Share = (Client Sales ÷ Industry Sales) × 100

Mergers & Acquisition Framework



Preliminary Questions to Consider:

- Why is the company considering M&A? (Growth, Market Share, Technology, etc.)
- Is it a friendly or hostile acquisition?
- What is the timeline for realizing synergies?
- What are the key cultural and operational differences between the two companies?
- What regulatory or legal risks exist?

Key Metrics:

- **EBITDA Multiples** (Valuation metric)
- **Deal IRR** (Internal Rate of Return from the deal)
- **EPS Accretion/Dilution** (Impact on Earnings Per Share)
- **Payback Period** (How long till the investment pays off)

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Know your Companies

Mckinsey & Company

Overview

McKinsey & Company was founded in 1926 by James O. McKinsey. Their headquarters are situated in New York. They have over 38,000 employees working for them globally and have 130+ offices across 65+ countries. Their current Global Managing Partner is Bob Sternfels.

Culture

Long hours and early mornings are part of the package when you sign on with McKinsey, but there are also some really cool opportunities that you'll have access to like pro bono work, office transfers, dynamic externships, and amazing mentorships. Because of McKinsey's staffing model, the world is at your fingertips. McKinsey staffs globally, which means that you'll work on project engagements with 5-6 member teams pulled from locations around the world. As such, sign up for your favorite frequent flyer programs and expect to travel 100% - even if a client doesn't demand your presence on site, you'll need to fly to connect with your team. McKinsey people are fun and dynamic, but not in a fraternal way - the firm is more formal than its counterparts. It's definitely a work hard culture with a little play thrown in.

Interview Process

The McKinsey interview process is held in 3 phases: • Round 1 - PST and 1-2 group interviews and/or 1-case phone screen • Round 2 - 1-2 1:1 case interviews with ~5 minutes of fit • Round 3 - 2 1:1 case interviews with ~15 minutes of fit and 1 1:1 deep-dive fit interview McKinsey differentiated its recruiting process when it introduced the McKinsey PST - a 26-question numerical and business reasoning test that they give you a fast paced hour to crush

Industries Served

- Aerospace and defense
- Automotive
- Chemicals and advanced materials
- Future mobility
- Industrial products
- Mobility lens suite
- Transportation
- Consumer Products
- Retail Transformation
- Future Consumer
- Sustaibability
- Customer experience transformation
- Digital operations services for oil and gas
- Energy industry cloud for SAP solutions
- Global renewables
- Energy and Resources
- Strategy Consulting
- Banking & Capital Markets
- Insurance
- Wealth and asset management
- Sustainable finance
- Fintech and ecosystems
- Data and technology

Practice Areas

- Accelerate
- Digital
- M&A
- Marketing & Sales Operations
- Organization
- Risk & Resilience
- Strategy & Corporate Finance
- Sustainability Transformation

Career Path

- Principal/Partner
- Associate Principal
- Engagement Manager
- Associate
- Business Analyst

BAIN & COMPANY

Overview

Bain & Company was founded in 1973 by William W. Bain Jr. Their headquarters are situated in Boston, Massachusetts. They have approximately 19,000 employees working for them globally and have 64 offices across 40 countries. Their current Worldwide Managing Partner is Christophe de Vusser.

Culture

Being a "Bainee" involves working in a really fun, creative, and a close-knit kind of environment. Known as the most "fratty" of the top firms, Bain is a firm that embraces authenticity, camaraderie, and entrepreneurship. They have beer Fridays, some quirky events like the Bain World Cup, and even its own band. It has a local staffing model which ensures a strong regional office culture and limited travel, something that helps keep teams tight and grounded. Bain values telling clients the hard truths, maybe not just what they want to hear, and also looks for authenticity through curveball interview questions. They have a "True North" philosophy and also a bold culture, which helps them stand out from McKinsey and BCG in both vibe and values.

Interview Process

Interviewing at Bain is fairly straightforward. The first round usually consists of 2 interviews. The second round will have 2-3 total interviews. In 2021, all US and Toronto interviews for 2Y MBAs were in the Power Round format (one first and final interview round), consisting of a total of three 40-minute interviews. Recently, the firm has introduced the Bain Online Test as a screening tool similar to the McKinsey PST. In addition, the firm may test for English proficiency in non-U.S. offices.

Industries Served

- Aerospace and Defense
- Automotive
- Banking
- Capital Markets
- Chemicals
- Communications and Media
- Consumer Goods & Services
- Aerospace & Defense
- Automotive & Mobility
- Real Estate
- Retail
- Social & Public Sector
- Technology
- Telecommunications
- Transportation
- Utilities & Renewable
- Financial Services
- Forest Products, Paper & Packaging
- Healthcare

Practice Areas

- Cost Transformation
- Customer Experience
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Learning & Development
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Operations
- Organization
- Private Equity
- Procurement
- Sales & Marketing
- Strategy
- Sustainability & Responsibility

Career Path

PARTNER

PRINCIPAL

MANAGER

CASE TEAM LEADER

CONSULTANT

SENIOR ASSOCIATE CONSULTANT

ASSOCIATE CONSULTANT

Boston Consulting Group

Overview

BCG was founded in the year 1963 by Bruce Henderson. Their headquarters are situated in Boston, MA. They have over 36,000 employees working for them globally and have 128 offices across 45+ countries. Their current Chief Executive is Christoph Schweizer.

Culture

BCG says they look for "curiosity, talent, and the ability to lead" in their new hires. You'll find all this and more in consultants at BCG. If you like to work around super smart people, have access to opportunities for work and travel in foreign countries, and enjoy frequent company-sponsored outings and excursions, then BCG is the right place. Talk to any BCGer and you'll notice 3 things:

1. A BCGer has the ability to look creatively at any problem.
2. A BCGer does not accept the status quo - ever.
3. A BCGer is a true academic who always gets the big picture.

Interview Process

Typically, candidates go through 2 rounds of BCG case interviews, with 3 separate interviews in the first round and 2 additional interviews in the second round. In general, interviews are divided into 3 parts: personal background, case study, and Q&A from the candidate. Most time is spent on the first 2 parts. Screening interviews are used for non-traditional candidates, and can be short market sizing or mini- cases just to see if you have what it takes.

Industries Served

- Industrial Products & Processes
- Media & Entertainment Travel, & Tourism
- Private Equity
- Public Sector
- Social Sector
- Retail
- Technology & Telecom
- Transportation
- Automotive
- Consumer & Retail
- Energy & Environment
- Financial Services
- Healthcare

Practice Areas

- Change Management
- Corporate Development & Finance
- IT
- Innovation & Growth
- Marketing & Sales
- Operations
- People & Organization
- Post-merger
- Integration
- Strategy
- Transformation & Turnaround

Career Path

Kearney

Overview

Kearney was founded in 1926 by James O. McKinsey, with Andrew Thomas Kearney joining as the first partner in 1929. After McKinsey's death in 1937, the firm split, and in 1947, it was renamed A.T. Kearney. In 2020, it rebranded to Kearney. Their headquarters are situated in Chicago, Illinois. They have over 5,700 employees working for them globally and have more than 60 offices across over 40 countries. Their current Managing Partner is Alex Liu.

Culture

One of the greatest perks of being an Kearney employee is the Global Mobility Program, which is very similar to Bain's transfer or externship option in the 3rd year. Under it, you have the opportunity to live and work abroad. There are 3 options that you get to choose from: 1. Transfers 2. International Assignments 3. Exchanges Unfortunately, there are some downsides that you have to be aware of when working for Kearney. A big concern is the work - life balance. You have to be prepared for Sunday - Friday travel, which is the flip-side of client exposure - you get to meet and collaborate with the client, but you are NEVER at home. Employees also bemoan the lack of variety of projects assigned to them.

Interview Process

As a general rule, there are two rounds of interviews. Within the first round of your interview, you will participate in two sets of interviews. As a standard, in each interview, you will be asked to complete a short case study that measures your communication and problem-solving skills. In the other part of the interview (either before or after the case), the interviewer assesses your overall fit - based on your experience, core competencies, and potential client impact. The final rounds will typically consist of two case/fit interviews and, for Associates, one structured case presentation. For the case presentation, you will be given a case with a lot of data included and will be offered time to prepare on your own. You will then present the case to at least one interviewer, but usually for a panel, in one of your interviews (not always the last one).

Industries Served

- Aerospace and Defense
- Automotive
- Chemicals
- Communications
- Consumer and Retail
- Technology
- Metals & Mining
- Oil & Gas
- Private Equity
- Public Sector
- Healthcare and Life Sciences
- Industrial Goods and Services
- Infrastructure
- Media
- Energy
- Financial Institutionsand Travel

Practice Areas

- Analytics
- Digital Business
- Innovation
- Marketing & Sales
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Operations
- Organization & Transformation
- Procurement
- Strategic IT
- Strategy
- Sustainability

Career Path

PARTNER

PRINCIPAL

MANAGER

ASSOCIATE

SENIOR BUSINESS ANALYST

BUSINESS ANALYST

L.E.K. Consulting

Overview

L.E.K. Consulting was founded in 1983 by James Lawrence, Iain Evar and Richard Koch. Their headquarters are situated in Bosto Massachusetts. They have approximately 2,300 employees working f them globally and have 25 offices across 12 countries. Their current Chi Executive is Clay Heskett.

Culture

Two things that stand out about L.E.K are the amount of responsibility Consultant level hires are given from the get go and the low amount of travel their employees do. In terms of responsibility, Consultant hires are brought in after their MBAs and are expected to manage projects of their own, so it's very much sink or swim. Some people love this responsibility-heavy approach to life and some people find it daunting. Either way, you'll have to ramp up hard and ramp up quickly. With regards to travel requirements, L.E.K is very unusual in that it is a very low travel firm. This approach has at least two very positive outcomes. The first effect is it helps promote a healthy work-life balance and the second effect is it helps create an unusually strong bond of unity within the team because, by and large, they see each other every day.

Interview Process

Generally speaking, interviews are held across two rounds. The first round can be done on campus or over the phone, with second round taking place at their offices with senior staff members. In the interviews themselves, you can expect to deal with cases in both rounds, with a particular focus on both market sizing and strategy questions. For the fit portion of the interview, be prepared to answer questions about working in teams, resolving conflict and building expertise.

Industries Served

- Biopharma & Life Sciences
- Business Services
- Consumer Products
- Education
- Energy & Environment
- Financial Services
- Healthcare Services
- Industrials
- Media & Entertainment MedTech
- Private Equity
- Retail
- Technology
- Travel & Transport

Practice Areas

- Business Unit Strategy
- Corporate Strategy
- Data & Analytics
- Digital
- Disruptive Management
- Major Capital Projects Advisory
- Marketing & Sales
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Organization & Performance (e.g., Performance Improvement, Post-Merger Integration)
- Private Equity Consulting
- Strategy
- Sustainability

Career Path

PARTNER

PRINCIPAL

MANAGER

ASSOCIATE

SENIOR BUSINESS ANALYST

BUSINESS ANALYST

Accenture

Overview

Accenture was founded in 1989. Their headquarters are situated in Dublin, Ireland. They have approximately 7,20,000 employees working for them globally and operate in 56 countries, with over 200 cities. Their current Chair and Chief Executive Officer is Julie Sweet.

Culture

New hires fit the typical consulting profile - type A personality, well rounded, outgoing, etc. - and perks and travel at the firm fit the profile as well. Long hours, nice benefits, and 4-days-a-week travel characterize the experience. While Accenture core values are solid, firm culture, historically, is not as strong as it is at, say, Deloitte, where you're likely to spend time with your coworkers outside of work. This disconnectedness flows over into firm loyalty as well. Accenture consultants don't think of themselves as an Accenture person like a "Bainee" or "McKinseyite" would. They're a consultant who works for Accenture, and they don't necessarily bleed Accenture red. Given the large size of the company, it's no surprise that the company has a challenge maintaining a cohesive culture like smaller firms do - which is one reason why they strategy to woo former employees back to the firm later in their careers is important.

Interview Process

First round interviews are held on campus or over the phone during the fall recruiting season. This first round is really a screening round to weed out anyone who isn't a fit (even if you're technical, you still need to have a high EQ) or doesn't make the grade on legit business area understanding. Remaining candidates are invited to a second round interview, which is usually held on campus or in a local Accenture office. Interviewers use the second round to test your case interview skills and situational responses. In fact, the Accenture case interview is largely situational - "what would you do in XXX scenario?" - and while it might be less prescribed than a McKinsey interview, a structured answer still wins the day. In the final round, you're given another set of interview questions and a chance to meet analysts and consultants from the local office.

Industries Served

- Aerospace and Defense
- Automotive
- Banking
- Capital Markets
- Chemicals
- Communications and Media
- Insurance
- Life Sciences
- Natural Resources
- Public Service
- Private Equity
- Retail
- Consumer Goods and Services
- Energy
- Health
- High Tech
- Industrial
- Software and Platforms

Practice Areas

- Artificial Intelligence
- Automation
- Business Process Outsourcin
- Business Strategy
- Change Management
- Cloud
- Customer Experience
- Data & Analytics
- Digital Commerce
- Ecosystem Services
- Finance Consulting
- Industry X
- Infrastructure
- Marketing
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Operating Models
- Security

Career Path

EY-Parthenon

Overview

EY-Parthenon was founded in 1991 as The Parthenon Group by William "Bill" Achtmeyer and John C. Rutherford. In 2014, it merged with Ernst & Young (EY) to form EY-Parthenon. Their headquarters are situated in London and New York. They have over 25,000 employees working for them globally and operate in more than 150 countries.

Culture

Parthenon-EY prides itself on its tight-knit and familial culture; the firm's genial atmosphere is no accident, and giving back to the community has always been a core value at Parthenon and EY since the beginning, with EY having a stated goal of "changing the world of work. Compensation and benefits at Parthenon-EY are above industry-average (base salary is even higher than MBB). Once hired, Parthenon-EY places an emphasis on quickly getting you in to the training program and then on to projects. Due to the firm's private equity focus, you will be traveling less than you would at other strategy firms. With more time spent in the office together, you will have more of an opportunity to build meaningful connections with your fellow team members.

Interview Process

The typical hiring process from application to offer will vary largely depending upon the position that you are applying for, but you can expect the timeline to take anywhere from 2-12 weeks. Be prepared for 2-3 rounds of interviews. The first one will generally be a behavioral (fit) interview, with maybe a small case thrown in at the end. The second will be a full case interview (EY Parthenon case interviews usually consist of either market sizing or profitability cases). The final round will look like your typical final round interview - a combination of fit and case interviews, and then a group presentation thrown in at the end for good measure. The fit interview here will usually be with a Partner, and the final case interview will usually be conducted by a Consultant.

Industries Served

- Aerospace and defense
- Automotive
- Chemicals and advanced materials
- Future mobility
- Industrial products
- Mobility lens suite
- Transportation
- Consumer Products
- Retail Transformation
- Future Consumer
- Sustainability
- Customer experience transformation
- Digital operations services for oil and gas
- Energy industry cloud for SAP solutions
- Global renewables
- Energy and Resources Strategy Consulting
- Banking & Capital Markets
- Insurance
- Wealth and asset management
- Sustainable finance

Practice Areas

- Consumer Products
- Diversified Industrial Products
- Education
- Financial Services
- Healthcare
- Information and Media
- Life Sciences
- Oil & Gas
- Private Equity
- Technology

Career Path

DIRECTOR

CONSULTANT

SENIOR ASSOCIATE

ASSOCIATE

ASSOCIATE ANALYST

Deloitte

Overview

Deloitte was founded in 1845 by William Welch Deloitte. Their headquarters are situated in London, United Kingdom. They have approximately 40,000 consulting employees working for them and they have 80+ offices across the US. Their current Global CEO is Joe Ucuzoglu.

Culture

Like any consulting firm, Deloitte Consulting offers great benefits and perks, plenty of opportunity to learn and grow, and lots of travel. In fact, while MBB usually runs on 4-days-a- week with Fridays in the home office, because of Deloitte S&A's operational nature, the firm is on a standard 5-day-a- week travel program - so they push the travel-heavy end of the spectrum. When it comes to local office culture - a huge draw at places like Bain - Deloitte fails the test. Because the firm is so gigantic - you'll find 1000 people at a Deloitte office and 50-100 at a typical BCG office - local office culture and connectivity are almost non-existent at Deloitte. The repercussions extend to a weaker mentoring/coaching environment and no clear bond among Deloitte alum.

Interview Process

Interview Process Expect at most 2 quantitative cases at a max of 30 min (more often around the 20-minute mark), and a heavy emphasis on market sizing - with an even heavier emphasis on fit questions. Deloitte interviewers are usually more interested in your upfront case structure and your answer as opposed to your mental math and quantitative horsepower. Deloitte is conducting all interviews via Zoom and will require both video and screen sharing functions. In addition, most Deloitte interviewees will see a 45min client presentation interview in their final round, where they will:

- Discuss a specific client situation/business problem
- Review and deliberate a set of exhibits/charts with the interviewer
- Organize a short verbal presentation

Industries Served

- Automotive
- Consumer Products
- Retail, Wholesale & Distribution
- Transportation, Hospitality & Services
- Industrial Products & Construction
- Insurance
- Power & Utilities
- Private Company Industries
- Private Equity
- Public Sector
- Retail & Consumer
- Technology
- Energy & Chemicals
- Mining & Metals
- Banking & Capital Markets

Practice Areas

- Tax
- Audit and Assurance
- Risk and Financial Advisory
- Consulting :
  1. Core Business Operations
  2. Customer & Marketing
  3. Entreprise Technology & Performance
  4. Human Capital
  5. Strategy & Analytics

Career Path

DIRECTOR

SENIOR MANAGER

MANAGER

CONSULTANT

ANALYST

PWC

Overview

PwC was formed in 1998 from a merger between Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand. Their headquarters are situated in London, United Kingdom. They have over 330,000 employees working for them globally woth operations across 800+ locations globally. Their current Chief Executive is Robert E. Moritz.

Culture

PwC has a great scorecard on diversity. The firm offers a competitive benefits program and employees at PwC have access to programs that can be tailored to meet their personal health and financial needs. PwC even provides free 24/7 access to a coach or therapist through a mental health app, access to meditation apps, and racial trauma counselling. However, One key issue is work/life balance. You should take responsibility to manage and proactively plan your approach to work/life balance in any industry, but in PwC consulting culture, it seems to be more of a constant tension and challenge especially during peak seasons (which differ depending on your assignment and field) - expect some nasty 7-day week stints.

Interview Process

If you are selected, you will be scheduled for what is commonly known as the "superday." Prepare yourself for up to 3 rounds of interviews within the same day - each with one person. The first round might be with a Manager; second, a Director; third, a Senior Partner. Questions will range from technical to behavioral, depending on your position and the practice you are applying for. PwC case interviews are loosely organized. They focus on a simple question and highlight your ability to focus on key issues, solve basic math, and collaborate. They are not as complicated (or difficult) as McKinsey cases, and not as quantitative as cases for firms such as Accenture or Deloitte. Don't expect major case interview tricks - but do be prepared to have a fast-paced business conversation. Be prepared to answer business case questions, regardless of the position you are applying for.

Industries Served

- Automotive
- Banking & Capital Markets
- Communications
- Energy & Mining
- Entertainment & Media
- Financial Services
- Health Industries
- Asset Management
- Insurance
- Law Firm Services
- Pharmaceuticals & Life Science
- Healthcare Payers
- Healthcare Providers
- Hospitality & Leisure
- Industrial Products
- Power & Utilities
- Private Company Industries
- Private Equity

Practice Areas

- Tax
- Business Services
- Audit
- Advisory :

1. Cyber, Risk& Regulatory
2. Deals
3. Managed Services
4. Technology & Transformation
5. Strategy

Career Path

PARTNER

DIRECTOR

SENIOR MANAGER

MANAGER

SENIOR ASSOCIATE

ASSOCIATE

FTI Consulting

Overview

Overview FTI Consulting was founded in 1982 by Dan Luczak and Joseph Reynolds. Their headquarters are situated in Washington, D.C., United States. They have over 8,300 employees working for them globally and operate in 84 cities and 31 countries. Their current President and Chief Executive Officer is Steven H. Gunby.

Culture

Culture Generally, consultants tout the potential for career growth and challenging but rewarding learning environment, as well as strong support from upper management. Peers are smart and motivated, and like all consulting projects, there is a heavy teamwork aspect to the culture. Management promotes flexibility (remote work, schedule) and compensation is fair. However, like all consulting firms, work/life balance can get out of whack – it's normal to work 60+ hours per week during critical weeks of a project.

Interview Process

Interview Process The FTI Consulting interview process consists of two parts. The first round will be one 30-minute virtual interview to discuss your experiences and qualifications. The second round Super Day interview consists of three 30-minute interviews with additional team members. These interviews will be a mix of behavioral and technical questions. We often recommend professional case interview coaching to adequately prepare for this rigorous process.

Industries Served

- Aerospace & Defense
- Agriculture
- Airlines & Aviation
- Automotive & Industrial Construction
- Energy, Power, & Products
- Environmental Solutions
- Financial Services
- Healthcare & Life Sciences
- Hospitality, Gaming & Leisure
- Insurance
- Mining
- Private Equity
- Public Sector & Government Contracts

Practice Areas

- AI Managed Services
- Antitrust
- Blockchain and Digital Assets
- Business Transformation & Strategy
- Cybersecurity
- Data & Analytics
- Dispute Advisory & International Arbitration
- E-Discovery & Managed Review
- ESG & Sustainability
- Information Governance, Privacy & Security
- Investigations & Monitorships

Career Path

SENIOR MANAGING DIRECTOR

MANAGING DIRECTOR

SENIOR DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR

SENIOR CONSULTANT

CONSULTANT

THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT CELL, ARSD

Guesstimates

GUESSTIMATE 1

Number of packages delivered by Amazon India in a Year

Framework

India's Population
140 CR

Internet Penetration (60%)
84 CR

Amazon Users
(30% of Internet Users)
25 CR

Normal Buyers
(90% of Amazon users)
22.5 CR

Frequent Buyers
(2.25 CR) at 4 orders a month =
9 CR Orders

+

Moderate Buyers
(6.75 CR) at 2 orders a month =
13.5 CR Orders

+

Rare Buyers
(13.5 CR) at 1 order a month =
13.5 CR Orders

=

Total **36 CR Orders a Month**

Total Yearly Orders (36 CR × 12)
= 432 CR Orders

+

Business Orders
(10% of Amazon users)
2.5 CR Orders a Month

Total Yearly Business Orders
(2.5 CR × 12)
= 30 CR Orders

+

Special Day Orders

Prime Day
(Extra 8-9% of Total Monthly Orders)
36 CR × 8-9% = **3 CR Orders**

+

Diwali Special
(Extra 50% of Total Monthly Orders)
36 CR × 50% = **18 CR Order**

+

End-of-Year Sale
(Extra 25% of Total Monthly Orders)
36 CR × 25% = **9 CR Orders**

=

Total Extra Orders on Special Days
(30 × 12)
= 360 CR Orders

=

Total Yearly Orders (432 CR + 30 CR + 360 CR)
= 822 CR Orders

Case Facts/Assumptions

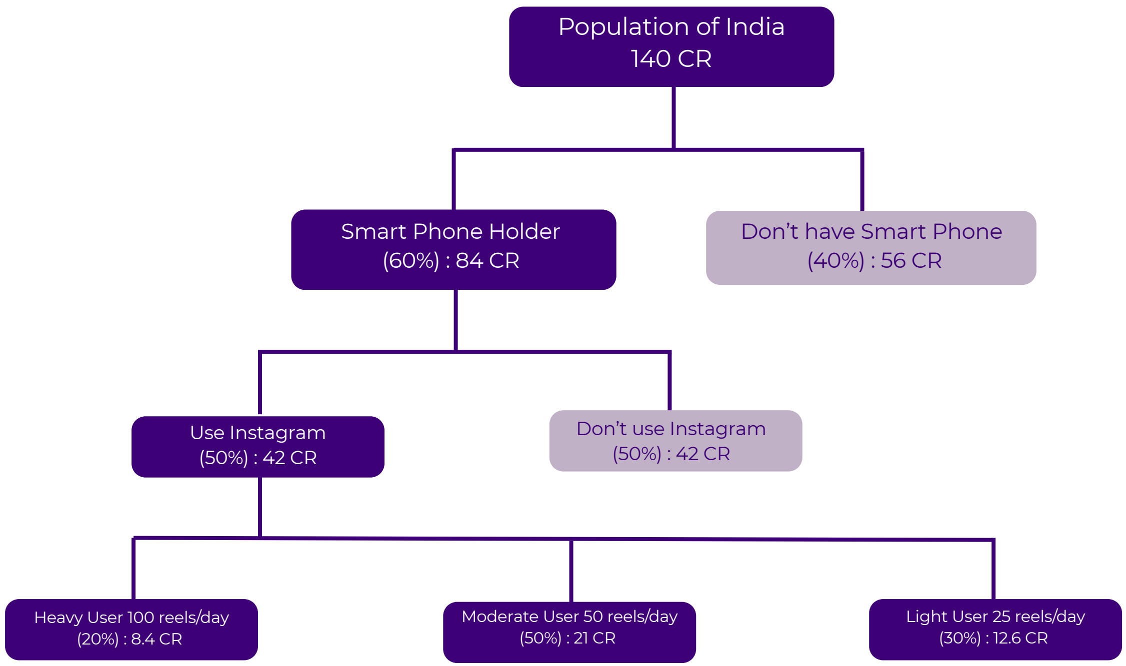
- India's population: 140 cr
- Internet penetration: ~60% (~84cr)
- Amazon users: ~30% of internet population (~25cr)
- Frequent buyers (10%): 4 orders/month
- Moderate buyers (30%): 2 orders/month
- Rare buyers (60%): 1 order/month
- Business orders (sellers): 10% of total orders
- Special Day Order :
- Prime Day : Extra 8-9% of monthly orders
- End-of-the-Year Sale : Extra 25% of total monthly orders

Interviewee Notes

- Break population into frequent, moderate, and rare buyers by income and geography.
- Include business shipments for sellers.
- Factor in sales events (Prime Day, Diwali) and returns.

Number of Instagram reels watched daily in India

Framework



8.4 x 100 + 21 x 50 + 12.6 x 25 = **2,205 Crore reels watched in India daily**

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Assume that 60% of the total population has smart phone.
- Assume that 50% of the smart phone holder uses Instagram.
- Heavy users(20%) watch 100 reels a day while moderate(50%) and light(30%) users watch 50 and 25 reels a day respectively.

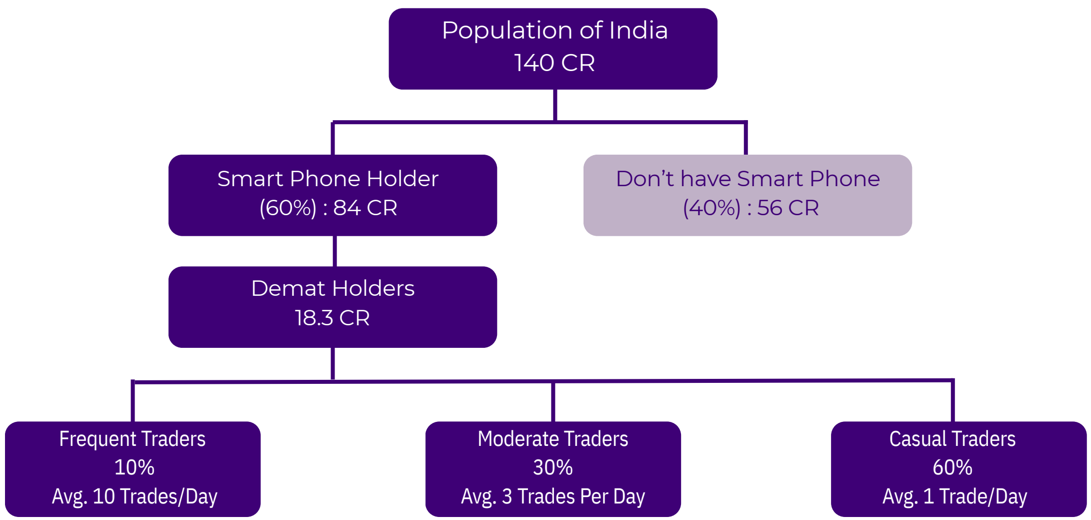
Interviewee Notes

- Begin by estimating the smart holders in India.
- Segment the population into those who use Instagram and those who don't.

- This has been solved using the Top-Down approach

Number of online stock trades made in India daily

Framework



18.3 x 10% = 1.83 CR
1.83 x 10 = **18.3 CR**

18.3 x 30% = 5.5 CR
5.5 x 3 = **16.5 CR**

18.3 x 60% = 10.97 CR
10.97 x 1 = **10.97 CR**

18.3 + 16.5 + 10.97 = **45.77 Crore trades made in India daily**

Case Facts/Assumptions

- There are 18.3 crore people who holds a demat account.
- Assume that frequent are active intraday and F&O traders who do 10 trades per day, moderate are saving short term traders who do 3 trades per day while casual are long term, occasional traders who do only 1 trade a day.

Interviewee Notes

- Begin by estimating the smart holders in India.
- Then segment the population who holds demat account and their activeness.

- This has been solved using the Top-Down approach

Estimating the revenue of a toll plaza yearly

Framework

Vehicles passing each day
10,000 Vehicles

Percentage of Cars
70%

Toll price for Cars
Rs. 60/Each car

10,000 x 70% = 7000
7000 x 60 = 4.2 lakh

Daily revenue
Rs. 4.2 lakhs

Percentage of Trucks and Buses
30%

Toll price for trucks and buses
Rs. 100/Each car

Daily revenue
Rs. 3 lakhs

10,000 x 30% = 3000
3000 x 100 = 3 lakh

Total daily revenue
Rs. 7.2 lakhs

4.2 lakh + 3 lakh =Rs. 7.2 lakh

Total yearly revenue
₹26.28 crores

7.2 lakh x 365 = Rs. 26.28 crores

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Assume the number of vehicles passing each day at a toll plaza is 10,000 vehicles
- Assume that 70% of the total vehicles passing each day is cars and rest is for trucks and buses.
- Assume that toll price for cars is Rs. 60 and for trucks and buses, Rs. 100

Interviewee Notes

- Start by estimating the percentage and price of each vehicle type
- Calculate the daily revenue and then add the numbers.
- Subsequently convert the daily revenue into years

- This has been solved using the Top-Down approach

How many cups of coffee are consumed in New York City in a day?

Framework

Total population in NYC
80 lakhs

Tourists in NYC per day
5 lakhs

Regular Coffee drinkers
50% x 5 = 2.5 lakhs

Average cups per coffee drinker = 1 cups

Cups consumed per day
2.5 lakhs

Population of adults
75% x 80 = 60 lakhs

Regular commuters
70% x 6 = 42 lakh

Average cups per coffee drinker = 1.5 cups

Cups consumed per day
63 lakhs

Total Consumption
65.5 lakhs cups

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Assume that the number of population in NYC is 8 lakh people.
- Assume that tourists in NYC per day are 5 lakh people and regular commuters are 1.5 lakh
- Assume that only 50% of tourists and regular commuters drink coffee regularly.

Interviewee Notes

- Start by estimating the percentage and of population in NYC
- Calculate the estimate tourists and regular commuters
- Add the daily consumption from tourists, NYC citizens, Regular commuters

- This has been solved using the Top-Down approach

Average Number of wine bottles purchased in a day in Delhi

Framework

Delhi population
= 32 Million

Wine consumer
= 5% Of population

Wine Drinkers
=1.6 million

20% Daily Buyers
=3,20,000

30% Daily Buyer
=4,80,000

50% Occasional Buyer
=8,00,000

0.7 Bottles/Day
=2,24,000

1.5 Bottles/week
0.2/Day
=1,02,000

2 Bottles/Month
0.7/Day
= 53,300

Seasonal occasions
20% Extra purchase

Total Purchase a day
3,50,000

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Total population of Delhi: 32 million
- Legal drinking age (21+): 50% → 16 million
- Alcohol-consuming population: 50% of above → 8 million
- Wine-drinking subset: 20% of alcohol consumers → 1.6 million)

Interviewee Notes

- Objective: Estimate daily wine bottle purchases in Delhi.
- Approach: Top-down method using population → legal age → alcohol consumers → wine consumers.
- Population base: 32 million.
- Segmented wine drinkers into 3 behavior groups:
- Casual (occasional, 1–2 times/month)
- Moderate (weekly)
- Frequent (multiple times/week)

Number of orders delivered by Zepto annually

Framework

- Operation in 40 cities
  - Tier 1 cities (5 cities)
    - 30 dark stores in each city (150 dark stores)
    - Orders received per dark store each hour (30 orders)
    - Total orders delivered by a dark store each day(20 hours operational) (30 X 20= 600)
    - Total orders delivered by a dark store in a year 600 X 365 = 2.19 Lakhs
    - Total orders delivered in Tier 1 cities in a year 2.19 Lakhs X 150 = 3.28 CR
  - Tier 2 cities (35 cities)
    - 10 dark stores in each city (350 dark stores)
    - Orders received per dark store each hour (10 orders)
    - Total orders delivered by a dark store each day(20 hours operational) (10 X 20= 200)
    - Total orders delivered by a dark store in a year 200 X 365 = 73,000
    - Total orders delivered in Tier 2 cities in a year 73,000 X 350 = 2.55 CR

Total orders delivered by Zepto in a year is **5.83 CR**

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Company operating in 40 Cities in India comprising of 5 tier 1 cities and 35 tier 2 cities.
- Company has 30 dark stores in each tier 1 city and 10 dark store in each tier 2 city.
- Each dark store fulfils around 30 orders per hour in tier 1 cities and 10 orders in tier 2 cities.
- Operating time for each dark store is 20 hours.

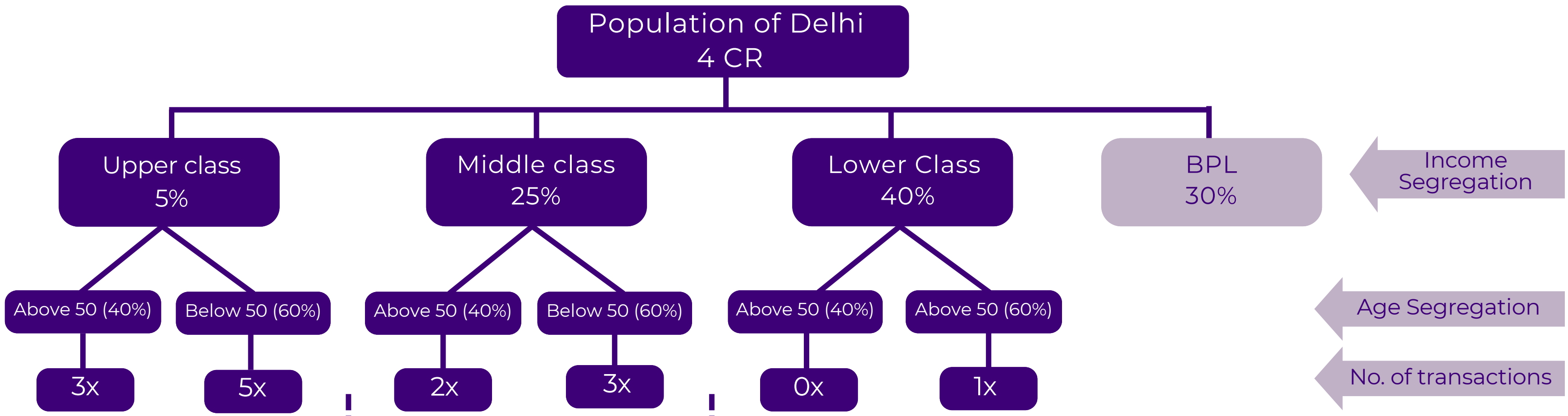
Interviewee Notes

- Company's focus is currently on Tier 1 cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and developed tier 2 cities.
- People in tier 1 cities are adopting Quick commerce due to the convenience it provides with 10 minutes delivery more than tier 2 people.

GUESSTIMATE 8

Number of daily UPI transactions in Delhi

Framework



4 CR x 5% = 20 lakhs
20 lakhs x 40% = 8 lakhs
8 lakhs x 3 = **24 lakhs**
+
4 CR x 5% = 20 lakhs
20 lakhs x 60% = 12 lakhs
12 lakhs x 5 = **60 lakhs**

24 lakhs + 60 lakhs

= 84 lakhs

4 CR x 25% = 1 CR
1 CR x 40% = 40 lakhs
40 lakhs x 2 = **80 lakhs**
+
4 CR x 25% = 1 CR
1 CR x 60% = 60 lakhs
60 lakhs x 3 = **1.8 CR**

80 lakhs + 1.8 lakhs

= 2.6 CR

4 CR x 40% = 1.6 CR
1.6 CR x 40% = 64 lakhs
96 lakhs x 0 = **0 lakhs**
+
4 CR x 40% = 1.6 CR
1.6 CR x 60% = 96 lakhs
96 lakhs x 1 = **96 lakhs**

0 lakhs + 96 lakhs

= 96 lakhs

Total transactions in a day

84 lakhs + 2.6 CR + 96 lakhs = **4.4 CR Transactions daily**

GUESSTIMATE 8

Number of daily UPI transactions in Delhi

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Population of Delhi is 4 CR.
- Distribution of people according to income in 4 categories:
  1. Upper class 5%
  2. Middle class 25%
  3. Lower class 30%
  4. Below poverty line 30%.
- Distribution of these people according to age Age ratio.
- Age criteria taken- above 50, below 50 taken- 2:3 It is also assumed that people below the poverty line do not engage in online or digital transactions due to poor financial situations and lack of resource. On the other hand, we can observe a reluctance .

Interviewee Notes

- Majority of the population of Delhi is unaware of the usage and benefits of UPI.
- The use pf UPI is more prevalent in the younger generation, resulting in more transactions through UPI by them. Upper- and middle-class population is showing a gradual shift towards digital transactions
- On the other hand, we can observe a reluctance towards use of UPI in older generations because of various reasons such as
  1. Cyber crime
  2. Lack of awareness.,

GUESSTIMATE 9

No. of license plates in Delhi

Framework

No. of Vehicles
50 Lakhs

Here,
- UIG- Upper income group
- MIG- Middle income group
- LIG- lower income group

	UIG HH (20%) 10 Lakhs	MIG HH (50%) 25 lakhs	LIG HH (30%) 15 Lakhs
	x	x	x
Ownership (in %)	100%	60%	30%
	x	x	x
Vehicles/HH	2	1.5	1
	=	=	=
= Vehicles in Delhi	20 lakhs	22.5 lakhs	4.5 lakhs

No. of license plates in Delhi = 47 Lakhs

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Calculation for Private vehicles only
- Population = 2 Crores
- Avg. size of family = 4
- Ownership –
  HIG- 100%
  MIG- 60%
  LIG – 30%
- Vehicles/HH –
  HIG – 2
  MIG – 1.5
  LIG - 1

Interviewee Notes

- HHs divided on the basis of Income levels.
- **Formula used-** (n*o*v) where, n = No. of HH
  o = ownership
  v = vehicles/HH

- This has been solved using the Top-Down approach

GUESSTIMATE 10

How many Bumble right swipes happen in Delhi every day

Framework

- Population of Delhi 2 CR
  - Age group (18-28) 30% = 60 lakhs
    - People who use dating apps (35%) = 21 lakhs
      - People who use Bumble (40%) = 8.4 lakhs
        - Active users on Bumble (50%) = 4.2 lakhs
          - Avg right swipes/person = 25/day
        - Non-active users on Bumble (50%) = 4.2 lakhs
      - People who don't use Bumble (60%) = 12.6 lakhs
    - People who don't use dating apps (65%) = 29 lakhs

4,20,000 x 25 = **1.05 CR Right swipes daily in Delhi**

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Population of Delhi is 2 CR.
- 30% people are aged between 18-28.
- 35% people use dating aps in which 40% use Bumble.
- Active Bumble users are 50%.
- Avg right swipes 25 times a day.

Interviewee Notes

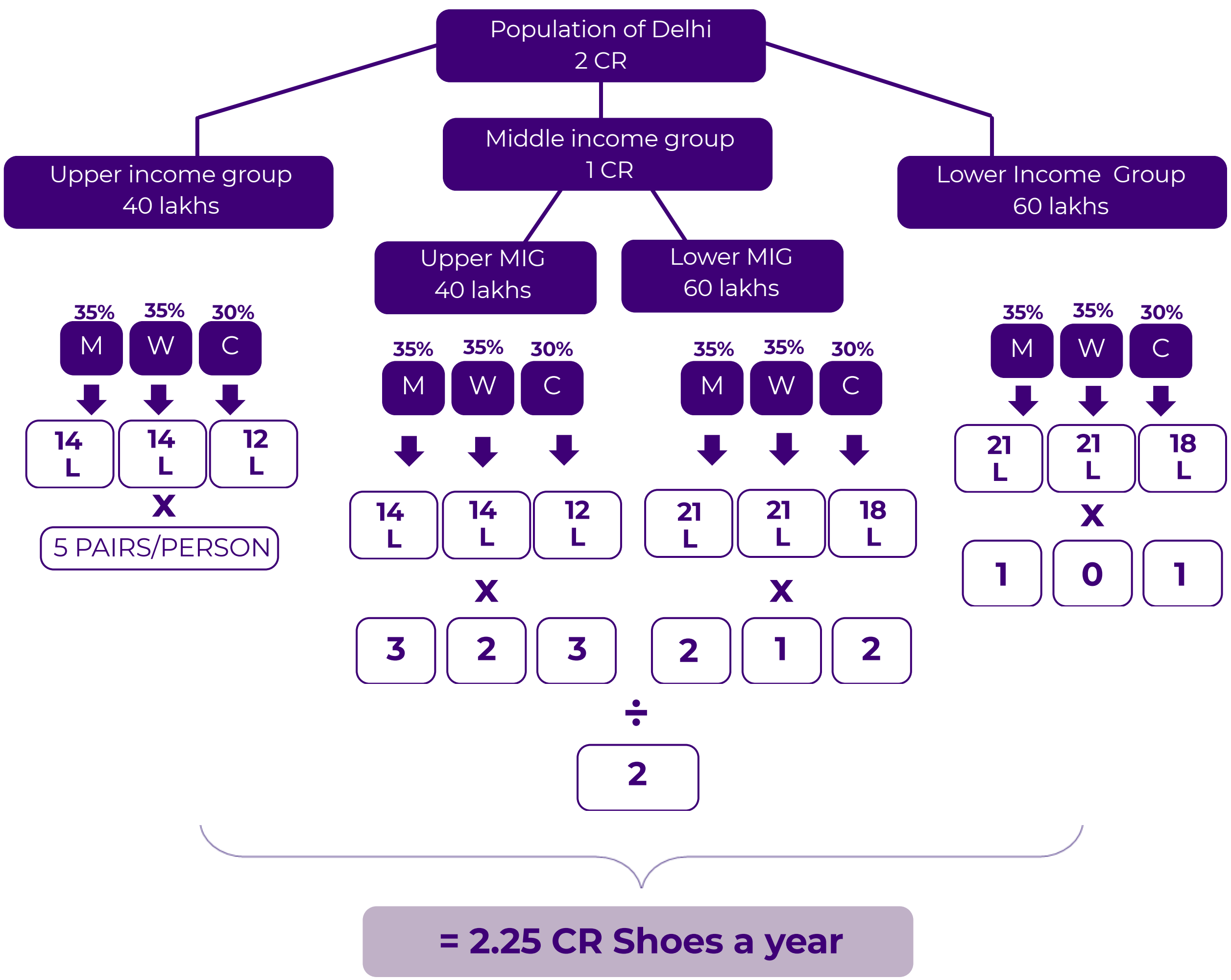
- Start by estimating the population of Delhi.
- Consider the age groups which are involved in dating apps.
- Then try to come down on a specific number by estimating the Bumble users and their activeness.

- This has been solved using the Top-Down approach

GUESSTIMATE 11

Number of Shoes sold in Delhi every year

Framework



Case Facts/Assumptions

- Population = 2 Crores
- Men:Women:Children = 35:35:30
- Upper Income = 20%
- Middle Income = 50%
- Lower Income = 30%
- Avg. no. of pairs/ person is also a variable assumption

Interview Notes

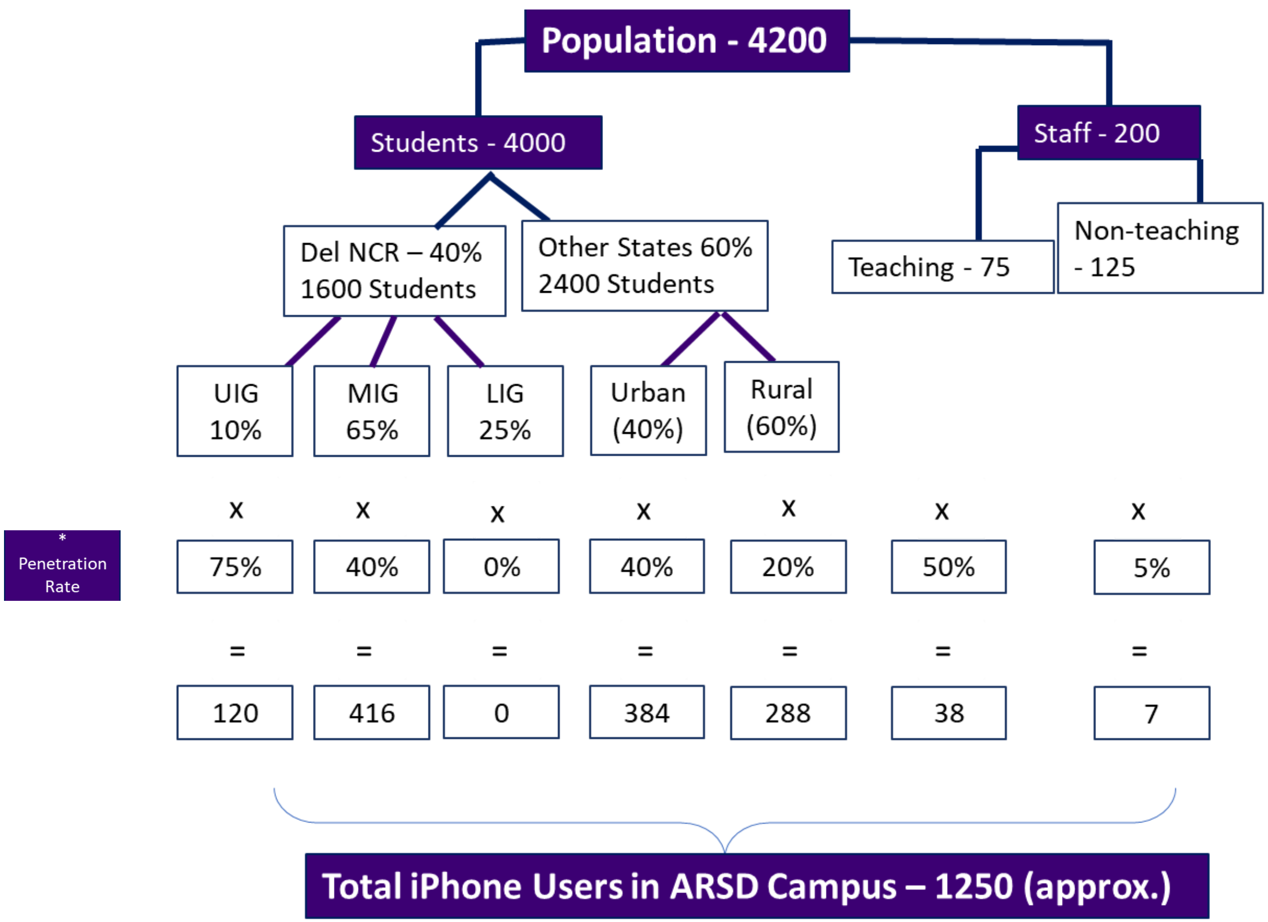
- Population is divided on the basis of Income.
- Segment the income groups.
- Then divide it into men, women and children's.
- Divide the no. of pairs by 2 as an average life span of a Shoe.

- MIG : Middle income group
- M : Men
- W : Women
- C : Children's
- L : Lakhs

GUESSTIMATE 12

Number of iPhone users in ARSD Campus

Framework



Case Facts/Assumptions

- For U.G. students and Staff only
- Students – 4000
- Staff - 200
- 40% student hail from Delhi NCR, 60% from Other states
- 75 Members of Staff are Teaching and rest 125 Non-Teaching

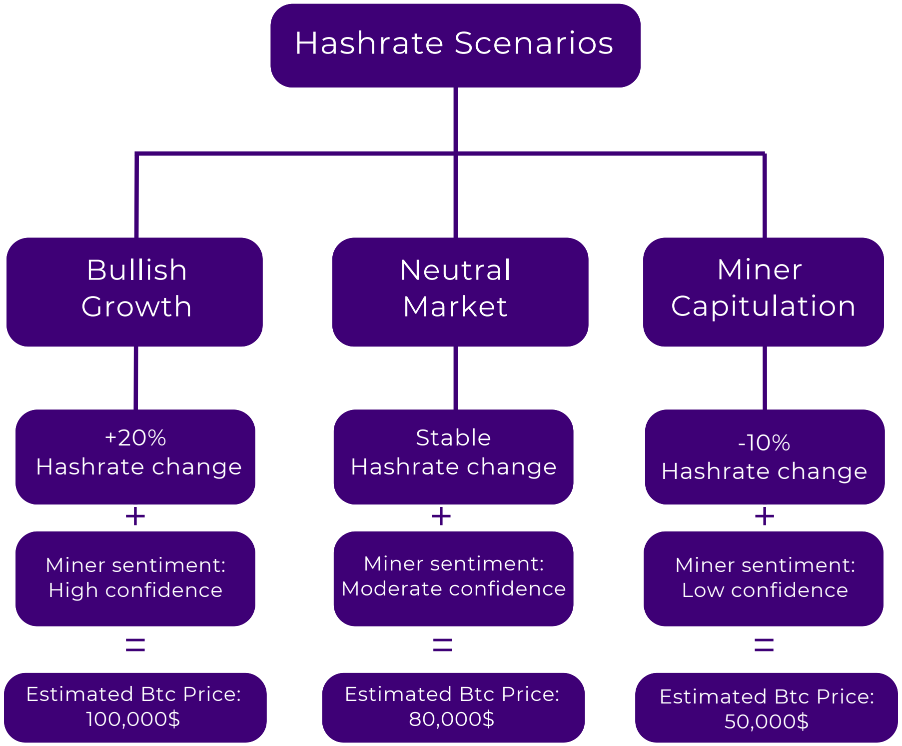
Interview Notes

- Staff is divided on the basis of Teaching and Non-Teaching.
- Students are initially divided on the basis of domicility and later on in the following manner-
- Delhi NCR students – Income basis
- Other State students – Rural-Urban Basis
- Formula used –
- **iPhone users-** (n*p)
- where,
- n = No. of people
- p = penetration Rate

GUESSTIMATE 13

Bitcoin price based on Hashrate Growth

Framework



Case Facts/Assumptions

- Bitcoin block reward halved in April 2024 from 6.25 BTC to 3.125 BTC.
- As of April 2025, Bitcoin hashrate is at 972 EH/s, the highest in history.
- Estimated break-even mining cost has increased due to halving:
  1. Low-cost miners: ~$45,000
  2. Mid-tier miners: ~$65,000
  3. High-cost miners: ~$80,000
  4. Weighted average miner cost = $58,000
- No major black swan events assumed (e.g., ETF bans, global recessions).

Assumes electricity and hardware costs remain relatively stable over the next 6 months.

Interviewee Notes

- Interviewee is a crypto analyst tracking macro trends post-Bitcoin halving (April 2024).
- Believes hashrate is a strong proxy for miner sentiment and network health.
- Emphasizes that hashrate increases are often leading indicators for bullish price action.
- Notes that rising hashrate after a halving suggests miners expect significantly higher BTC prices to justify the reduced block reward.
- Warns that a sustained drop in hashrate can indicate miner capitulation and lead to short-term downward price pressure.

GUESSTIMATE 14

Tea consumption in India daily

Framework

Population of India
140 CR

Tea drinking age (15+)
75% = 105 CR

Don’t drink tea (0-15 yrs)
25% = 35 CR

Tea drinkers
(90%) of 105 CR = 94.5 CR

Urban population (35%)
33 CR

Avg cups/day = 1.5

Total cups = 49.5 CR

+

Rural population (65%)
61.5 CR

Avg cups/day = 2

Total cups = 123 CR

=

Total cups/day =
172.5 CR

Price Segment Split

Street Vendors
80% of tea sales
Avg price = ₹10

Tea Stalls
10% of tea sales
Avg price = ₹20

Premium cafes
10% of tea sales
Avg price = ₹40

Weighted Avg Price = ₹10 x 0.8 = 8 + ₹20 x 0.1 = 8 + ₹40 x 0.1 = 4 → ₹20

Total spending = 172.5 CR Cups x 20 = *₹3,450 CR/day*

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Assume that all the people who drinks tea are aged above 15, and are 75% of the total population.
- 90% people of the total eligible tea drinkers drinks tea.

Interviewee Notes

- Segment the market into those people are appropriate to drink tea.
- Then sort the population into urban and rural.
- Also, find out the average cups drunk in a day by both the groups.
- At last split the price segmentation so to calculate the daily total spending of tea.

GUESSTIMATE 15

Number of students who pursue professional courses after getting admitted to Delhi University

Framework

- Total number of students in DU 2,20,000
  - Relevant students* 35% = 77,000
    - Students willing to pursue professional course 50% = 38,500
      - C.A. 50% = 19,250
      - C.F.A. 25% = 9,625
      - C.S. 10% = 3,850
      - C.M.A. 10% = 3,850
      - Others 5% = 1,925
    - Students not willing to pursue any of the professional course 50% = 38,500
  - Irrelevant students 65% = 1,43,000

38,500 students who pursue professional course

Relevant students*
Professional courses like CA, CFA, CS, CMA are mostly pursued by students who are in Commerce, Economics, Business Studies, Accounts field .

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Assume that the total number of students studying at a particular point of time is 2.2 lakhs.
- Assume that 35% of the total students are relevant as they have the subject background.
- There are 50% students who are willing to pursue professional course.

Interviewee Notes

- Start by estimating the total number of students in Delhi University(Both UG and PG students) take 2 lakhs as UG students & 20 thousand as PG students.
- Then take the estimate of the students who have the same background which requires in these professional courses.
- Thereafter, calculate students who are willing to pursue professional courses.

THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT CELL, ARSD

PROFITABILITY

Profitability – Customer Economics (Industry : Telecommunications)

Interviewer: Thanks for joining. Today's case is about a telecom provider that's been aggressively growing its customer base over the past year. They're acquiring more users than ever, but oddly, their bottom line hasn't improved. They've asked us to figure out why.

Candidate: Got it. Just to clarify — revenue is increasing from customer growth, but profitability is not?

Interviewer: Correct. In fact, their margins are shrinking despite user growth.

Candidate: Understood. To structure this, I'd like to break it down into three main areas:
Revenue per customer – Are customers contributing enough to justify acquisition and servicing costs?
Cost side – Is acquisition cost or servicing cost unusually high?
Churn and retention – Could the company be losing customers before they break even?
Would you like me to start with revenue?

Interviewer: Yes, please.

Candidate: Great. What's the average revenue per user (ARPU)?

Interviewer: For new users, ARPU is around ₹1,200/month. That's down from ₹1,620/month two years ago.

Candidate: That's a significant drop. Is this because of pricing promotions or customers choosing lower-tier plans?

Interviewer: A mix of both. Most new users are on discounted entry-level plans. Also, less than 25% upgrade to premium plans over time.

Candidate: Interesting. That suggests a potential underutilization of upselling opportunities. Are there value-added services, like streaming bundles or family plans?

Interviewer: Yes, but adoption is low. Only about 8% of customers opt in.

Candidate: Got it. Let's now move to customer acquisition cost (CAC). What does it look like?

Interviewer: CAC is roughly ₹10,000 per customer — driven by digital marketing, retail commissions, and SIM activation bonuses.

Candidate: And what's the average customer lifetime?

Interviewer: On average, customers stay for 14 months. But the company breaks even on a customer only after 10 months.

Candidate: So there's a slim 4-month profitability window per customer. Do we know what drives churn?

Interviewer: Price-based churn is the top reason. Many users switch to lower-cost competitors after the promotional period ends.

Candidate: Does the company have loyalty programs or long-term lock-in incentives?

Interviewer: They're limited. Most promotions expire after 3 months, and there's no contract model for entry-level plans.

Candidate: Alright. Just to recap — the telecom company is seeing strong user growth, but most customers come in on discounted plans and don't upgrade. CAC is high, and churn kicks in shortly after break-even. Premium offerings are underutilized, and retention levers are weak.

Interviewer: Yes, that's accurate.

Candidate: Let's consider the profitability equation. With a ₹1,200 ARPU and a 14-month lifecycle, that's ₹16,600 revenue per user. But CAC is ₹10,200, and I assume there are ongoing servicing costs?

Interviewer: Correct. Monthly servicing cost is about $5 per user — customer service, infrastructure, and billing.

Candidate: So servicing cost over 14 months is ₹6,000. Add ₹10,200 CAC, and total cost per customer is ₹16,200. That leaves ₹500 profit — essentially negligible.

Interviewer: Exactly. The CFO's concern is that at this rate, more customers don't mean more profit — just more operating strain.

Candidate: I agree. Here's my recommendation
To first improve upselling - Only 25% of customers upgrade. That's a missed opportunity. Introduce automated nudges, usage-based plan recommendations, and better bundling of entertainment, cloud storage, and family packages.

Also, reduce CAC - Shift from high-cost retail acquisition to more digital, referral-based, and self-serve channels. Consider retention over raw growth.

Then, Churn Mitigation - Introduce loyalty discounts after 6 months or roll out flexible contracts that offer stability without scaring off customers.

And, Segment Smartly - Not all customers are equal. Focus acquisition on high-LTV segments — e.g., families, business users, or streamers — rather than discount hunters.

Interviewer: Solid points. Would you lean toward cutting marketing spend overall?

Candidate: Not necessarily. I'd recommend reallocating it. For example, invest in win-back campaigns for recent churners or upgrade incentives for existing users. Marketing doesn't have to mean new acquisition only — retention marketing is often more profitable.

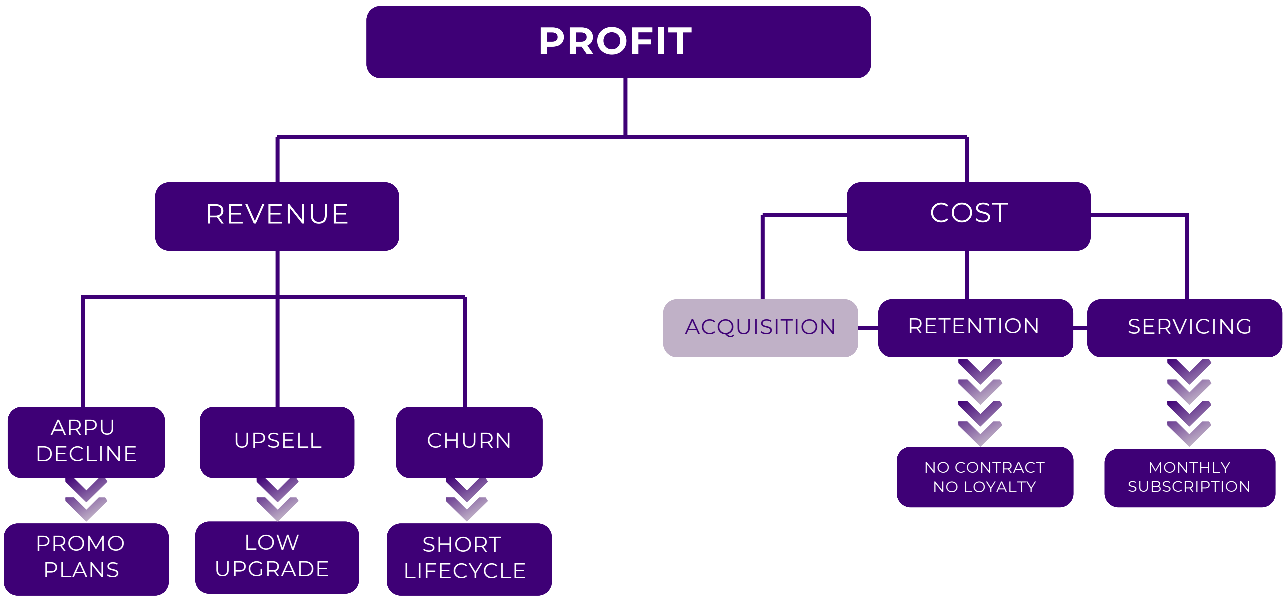
Interviewer: Makes sense. One last thing if the company had to choose only one lever to pull immediately, what would you prioritize?

Candidate: I'd go with upselling and plan optimization. These customers are already acquired, and incremental revenue from upgrades flows straight to the bottom line. Improving even a small percentage of upgrades could significantly widen profit margins without additional CAC.

Interviewer: Excellent. That concludes the case. Thank you!

Profitability – Customer Economics (Industry : Telecommunications)

Framework



INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- The telecom company is rapidly growing its customer base, but profitability is shrinking, not improving.
- ARPU has dropped from ₹1,620 to ₹1,200 over two years, mainly due to discounted entry-level plans and low upgrade rates.
- Only <25% of users upgrade to premium plans over time.
- Adoption of value-added services (e.g., streaming, family plans) is very low — around 8%.
- CAC is high at ₹10,200/user, driven by digital ads, retail commissions, and SIM activation bonuses.
- Average customer lifetime is 14 months, but break-even occurs only after 10 months, leaving a slim margin.
- Price-based churn is a major issue — users often leave when introductory promotions expire.

Case Facts

- Industry – Telecom
- Business Model – Subscription-based mobile service
- Customer Base – Rapidly growing, high volume of new users
- ARPU (Average Revenue per User) – 1,200/month (previously ₹1,620/month)
- Customer Lifetime – 14 months (on average)
- Break-even Point – 10 months
- Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) – ₹10,200
- Monthly Servicing Cost – ₹420/user → ₹6,000 over 14 months
- Revenue per Customer (Lifetime) – ₹1,200× 14 = ₹16,700
- Total Cost per Customer (Lifetime) – ₹10,200 (CAC) + ₹6,000 (Servicing) = ₹16,200
- Net Profit per Customer – 500
- Upsell to Premium Plans – <25%

Profitability - New Product Performance (Industry Technology / SaaS)

Your client is a mid-stage tech startup. They launched a SaaS product nine months ago. While user engagement is strong, the product is losing money. The client wants to know Should they continue investing in it, pivot, or shut it down altogether?

Got it. Just to clarify, the product is popular in terms of user uptake, but it's financially underperforming?

Exactly. Users love it, but it's draining the company's cash. They need a clear recommendation on next steps.

Understood. Before I dive in, I'd like to structure my approach. I'll first look into the revenue side — how the product is monetized and how much it's generating. Then, I'll examine the cost structure to understand the main drivers of the losses. Finally, I'll assess strategic factors like market positioning, long-term potential, and alternatives such as pivoting or shutting it down. Does that sound okay?

Sounds good. Go ahead.

Starting with revenue — how is the product currently monetized?

It's a freemium model. The basic features are free, and users pay for advanced analytics, integrations, and automation. About 12% of users convert to the paid version.

And what's the pricing for the paid tier?

₹4,200 per user per month. Some larger accounts negotiate discounts.

Thank you. And how many active users are there currently?

Around 120,000 users. About 14,000 are paying.

So roughly ₹5.88 crore in monthly recurring revenue.

That's a strong start. Now let's move to the cost side. Can you break down the primary costs?

Sure. The biggest cost buckets are:

Cloud infrastructure and hosting ₹2.55 crore/month

Customer support and success team ₹1.70 crore/month

Sales and marketing (focused on customer acquisition) ₹3.82 crore/month

Product and engineering (including maintenance and updates) ₹2.98 crore/month

Total monthly cost roughly ₹11.05 crore.

So with ₹5.88 crore in revenue and ₹11.05 in monthly costs, we're losing about 5.24 crore/month.

That's right.

Okay, digging deeper — is customer acquisition cost (CAC) high?

Yes. Average CAC is ₹9,350 per acquired user. Most of that spend is on paid search, influencer partnerships, and targeted content.

And what's the average customer lifetime value (LTV)?

Currently ₹34,850, based on a 9-month average customer lifespan and average monthly revenue of ₹3825/user.

That's helpful. Now, if we zoom out — how does this product fit into the startup's broader portfolio?

It's their only product for small and mid-sized businesses. Their main revenue comes from enterprise-level services and custom software.

So this product is aimed at a new customer segment — SMBs?

Yes, and the founders saw this as a scalable growth engine, unlike their more manual enterprise offerings.

Understood. Let me summarize quickly before making a recommendation.

The product has strong initial traction and a reasonable conversion rate, but costs — especially acquisition and support — are significantly higher than revenue. Also, churn is high due to limited long-term value, and the current model puts pressure on cash flow.

Strategically, the product opens up a new market segment but competes in a crowded space and doesn't yet offer differentiated value to sustain retention.

Agreed. So what would you recommend?

I'd advise against shutting it down immediately — it has too much early traction. However, I wouldn't recommend doubling down on the current model either.

Instead, I'd propose a targeted pivot:

Product- Enhance long-term value by adding deeper features that grow with users — possibly tiered plans for different maturity stages.

Pricing- Consider bundling or usage-based pricing to increase LTV.

Cost- Cut acquisition costs by focusing on organic growth — community, referrals, and onboarding flows.

Customer Success- Automate common queries to reduce support load and scale efficiently.

Monitor results over the next 3–6 months. If unit economics don't improve, the company should consider sunsetting the product and reallocating resources.

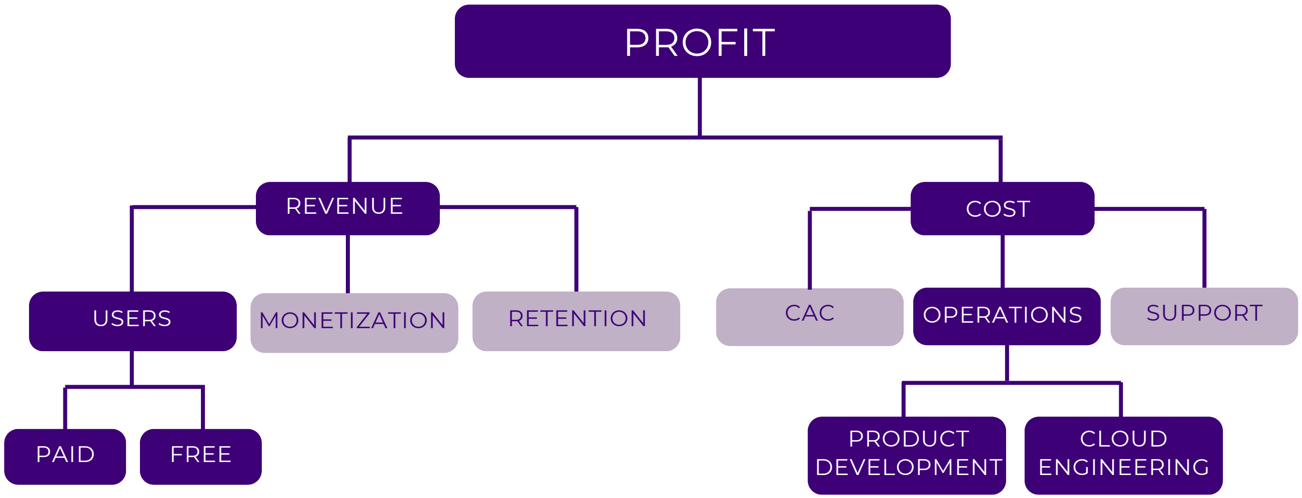
That's a well-structured and realistic recommendation. Thanks. One last question — if they had to raise prices, what risks should they be aware of?

Primarily price sensitivity and churn. Since many customers leave due to lack of long-term value, a price hike without added features could accelerate churn. A smarter move might be to introduce premium tiers while keeping entry-level pricing stable.

Excellent. That wraps up the case. Well done!

Profitability - New Product Performance (Industry Technology / SaaS)

Framework



Case Facts

- Freemium model with 12% conversion rate is sustainable if LTV improves
- Churn reduction is possible through product evolution
- CAC can be reduced via organic/low-cost channels
- Company has ~3–6 months cash runway to experiment with pivot
- Market still holds potential if product matures

Interviewee Notes

- ClientMid-stage tech startup
- ProductSaaS, 9 months old
- IssueStrong engagement, but large monthly losses

User Base:

- 120,000 active users
- 12% conversion → 14,000 paying
- Revenue:
- ₹4,200/user/month → 5.82crore MRR

Costs:

- Cloud ₹2.55 crore
- Support ₹1.70 crore
- Marketing
- Product/Engineering ₹3.83 crore
- Total ₹11.05 crore/month
- Churn High (~6–9 months avg lifespan)
- Churn Reason: Short-term use cases, users outgrow product
- Portfolio Context: Only SMB-focused product; core business is enterprise services

Profitability – Revenue Decline (Industry: E-commerce / Marketplace Platform)

Welcome! Let's start talking about the case for today. Your client is an e-commerce major, somewhere in between being an Amazon and being a Flipkart. For the last two quarters, the sellers on the platform have noted a decline in their revenues by 20%, which is alarming because this platform is earning commission from all the sales that a seller does. The CEO now wants to know the causes of this decline and, more importantly, how to reverse it.

So, the client earns a percentage of seller revenue, and that revenue is down 20% in the last six months?

Yes.

To approach this, I'd like to bucket the problem into two groups:

External demand-related factors – all factors external to the platform that may affect the demand, such as consumer spending trends on the whole or seasonality will mostly fall into this category.

Internal platform-related factors – changes to the website, competitive pressure on the platform, or changes to the algorithm that could adversely affect product visibility may fit in here.

Would you prefer me to start with external considerations?

Sure.

First, do we have any external consumer spending data in this period? Is the trend of the broader e-commerce market down?

No, that is indeed not the case. Reports industry-wide have rated online consumer spending flat to slightly positive.

That invalidates a broad demand decline. Could it be seasonality? Were the last two quarters, in general, the weaker?

Traditionally, yes - the sense of weak. But a 20% drop is steeper than the norm. In previous years, the decline from Q4 to Q1 was more or less 7-9% on average.

Perfect; I see. Let's now move in for internal factors. Have there been any changes made recently to either the site's layout or the user interface, or to the search algorithm?

Sure. Three months ago, a new search algorithm was put into place that was intended to maximize the relevance to customers.

Interesting. Is that beneficial to certain sellers or product categories?

The new model emphasizes sponsored listings and puts greater importance on products that offer faster shipping and better ratings.

Got it. Is it possible that sellers with less ability to comply with sponsored placements or fast logistics, that is, small- and medium-sized sellers, got pushed down the visibility ranking?

Exactly, indeed, some sellers have complained about that. They say their impressions have gone down since the change by 30 to 40%.

That seems to explain quite a bit of the revenue drop. Less visibility means fewer views, which means fewer conversions. Now, moving on to competitors: have there been any major influx of sellers lately?

Yes. The seller base has grown by 18% in the last six months, with more buyers particularly in fast-moving consumer goods and electronics.

Now, more irony. More sellers, more internal competition — and then visibility becomes even more tougher. Well, it seems some sellers might be just losing out on sales as a combination of this and the algorithm change.

Indeed. A seller dubbed it a "race to the top of the search bar."

That's really cool. Do we know if sales are down for the whole platform or just unevenly distributed?

For the entire platform, the gross merchandise value is flat, yet the top 10% of sellers now accounts for 65% of total sales—up from 50% last year.

Thus, the algorithm change and increased competition have made the platform more inequitable than it used to be for smaller sellers. This is why seller revenues are down, even though GMV is stable.

Exactly. Now, how would you approach solving this?

I would propose my recommendation now:

First one would be-

Calibration of Algorithm: Measure if the existing algorithm overemphasizes speed and ads to the detriment of breadth. Introduce a relevance-balancing metric to ensure exposure for the middle-tier sellers. Algorithms have to optimize for conversion and ecosystem health and not just immediate click-throughs.

Second would be-

Tiered Seller Programs: Start support programs for small sellers to be able to compete: discounted sponsored listings for new sellers; fulfillment-as-a-service for quicker delivery; and training on customer reviews and product optimizations. This allows for competitiveness without heavy lifting in algorithms.

And the next would be-

Communication and Trust-Building: Most sellers caught unaware. Transparency in the algorithm changes. Dashboards to show how sellers rank and where they can improve - turning frustration into something actionable.

Solid recommendations. How would you prioritize them?

Begin with algorithm calibration. Causes- even slight tweaks can tilt balances in visibility. At the same time roll out support programs to fast track sellers' adaptation. Communication is key throughout but should suffice once fixes are in motion or risk sounding like a spin.

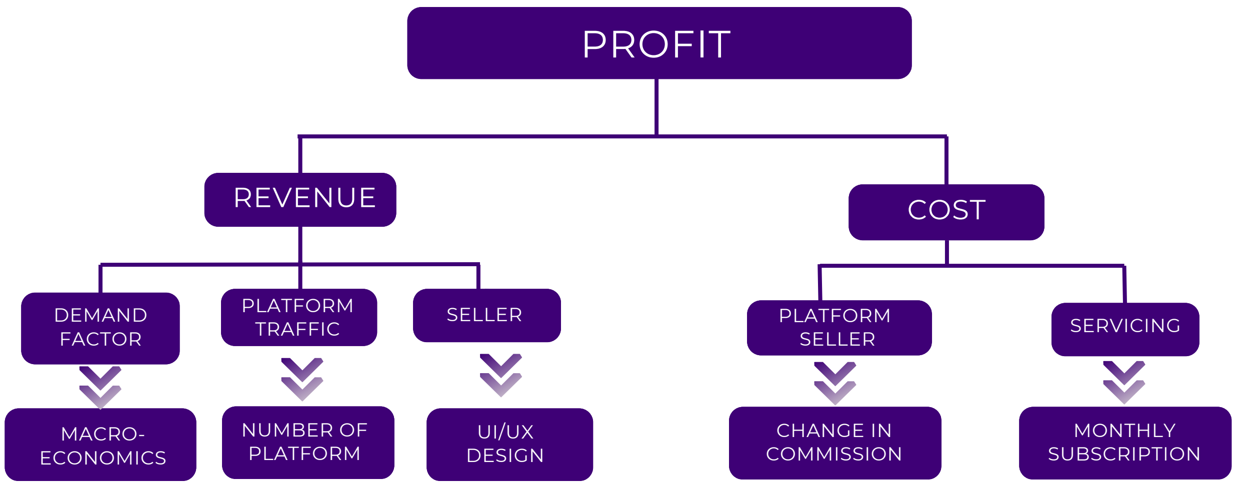
Very well put. One last question — so, if the platform gives higher sales by big sellers, why not keep the algorithm just as is?

True. Short-term commissions may appear to be more lucrative. Long term, however, overdependence on big sellers results in risk of a concentrated base. Should these sellers pack up their bags, delay shipments or hike prices, the platform suffers. A thriving and diverse ecosystem is far more resilient and scalable than that.

That's a brilliant perspective. Thus, this wraps up the case. Good job.

Profitability – Revenue Decline (Industry: E-commerce / Marketplace Platform)

Framework



Case Facts

- Seller revenue declined 20% over two quarters.
- Platform earns money via commission from seller sales.
- Industry demand is stable, not responsible for the drop.
- Algorithm change made recently to improve customer relevance:
- Prioritizes sponsored listings, delivery speed, ratings.
- 30–40% drop in impressions for smaller/mid-tier sellers.
- 18% increase in total number of sellers → higher competition.
- GMV (total platform sales) is flat.

INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- Client: Leading e-commerce marketplace (like Amazon/Flipkart).
- Problem: 20% decline in seller revenue over the last two quarters.
- Platform earns commission based on seller revenue → direct impact on business.
- Initial Framework:
- External Factors (demand, consumer spending, seasonality)
- Internal Factors (platform changes, competition, algorithm)
- External Analysis:
- Industry-wide online spending: Flat to slightly positive.
- Seasonality: Q1 is usually slower, but historic drop is only 7–9%, not 20%.
- Internal Analysis:
- Search algorithm updated 3 months ago:

Profitability – Declining Operating Margin (Industry: Fashion & Luxury Goods)

Interviewer: Your client is Rolex, which has been seeing its revenues grow slightly in the last two years. But, the problem is that its operating profit margin has reduced. Now, they are looking for help to understand what is driving the profitability decline, and what steps can be taken about it.

Candidate: Thankyou. So just to confirm, although revenues have increased slightly, but profitability, and especially the operating margin, has dropped very significantly, correct?

Yes, that is correct. The revenue has grown from Rs. 8.5 Billion to Rs. 9 Billion, while the Operating Profit has declined from 32% to 26%.

That's a nice question. Well, yes. Thee costs of raw materials like gold and platinum have increased by around 15% in the last two years. The labor costs have also gone up by about 10%. Moreover, the marketing spend of Rolex has increased from around Rs. 700 million to about Rs. 950 million a year.

That's a nice question. Well, yes. Thee costs of raw materials like gold and platinum have increased by around 15% in the last two years. The labor costs have also gone up by about 10%. Moreover, the marketing spend of Rolex has increased from around Rs. 700 million to about Rs. 950 million a year.

Well, that is very helpful. Now, on the revenue side, has there been any change in their product mix? For instance, are they now selling more of the lower-priced models?

Yes, exactly. A couple of years ago, the lower-priced models like the Oyster Perpetual had accounted for about 40% of unit sales. Today, they have moved up to 55%.

That is a very noticeable shift. Thinking aloud, it sounds like three main things are happening. Firstly, the input costs have risen, which would tend to squeeze the gross margins. Secondly, the marketing spend has also increased by around 35% while the revenue has only grown by about 6%, which would ensure great pressure on operating margins. Thirdly, shifting the mix toward lower-priced models would quite obviously drag down average selling price and profitability. Is that something that sounds reasonable to you?

Yes, that is quite accurate. How would you like to try quantifying the impact?

Okay! So two years ago, Rolex had Rs. 8.5 billion of revenue with a 32% operating margin, which gives us somewhere about Rs. 2.72 billion in operating profit. Now, with Rs. 9 billion in revenue and a 26% margin, he operating profit is down at Rs. 2.34 billion. That's a drop of about Rs. 380 million, which is pretty much a 14% decline in the absolute profit, even though the revenue has grown.

That's pretty good quick math. Please continue!

Starting with marketing — their spend went up by about Rs. 250 million. That's already explaining a pretty major chunk of the Rs. 380 million profit drop. Then, if gross margins fell even by 3–4 percentage points due to factors like maybe cost inflation, or a weaker product mix, that could probably account for another Rs. 200–Rs. 300 million. So, now, between the marketing overspend and the gross margin pressure, we should be very close to understanding the full decline.

That makes sense. What would you like to explore next?

Next up, I would think about the solutions. Just to check, how much pricing power does Rolex really have? Can they pass on some of these costs to customers without losing too much demand?

Well, they have pretty strong pricing power, especially for their popular models like the Submariner, Daytona, and GMT-Master II, which often have really long waitlists.

That looks good. If Rolex selectively raised their prices by 5% on the highly demanded models, and we assume price elasticity to be at around 0.9, they would barely be losing any volume, but that would help them gain on the margin. So even if only half of the Rs. 9 billion revenue base gets a 5% hike, that is an extra chunk of Rs. 225 million in revenue, most of which would flow straight to operating profit.

I Agree. What else can you suggest?

I will also recommend trying to rebalance the product mix. If they can move customer preferences slightly back towards their higher-end models, maybe through limited edition models or maybe exclusive launches, and manage to bring the premium mix back from 45% to 55%, that will push the gross margins by about 2 percentage points. That would have a real significant impact on overall profitability.

Interesting point. So any ideas on the marketing front?

Definitely. Since the marketing spend has grown by more than 35% while revenue has barely moved, Rolex should review its channel performance. If they identify the low-performing sponsorships or events, they could reallocate that budget more effectively. Even reducing marketing costs by around $100 million while maintaining their brand presence could help in lifting the operating margins by more than 1 percentage point.

Good. Any risks if they go ahead with price increases?

Yes, there are two major risks. Firstly, the volume risk! Even though Rolex is a pretty strong brand, a 5% price hike may reduce demand slightly, especially in the more price-sensitive regions like parts of Asia. Secondly, there lies a brand risk. If Rolex prices too close to the ultra-luxury players like Patek Philippe or Audemars Piguet without providing any equivalent perceived value, it might end up eroding their market positioning over time. So, the price increases should be very carefully targeted, mainly on the models where the demand significantly exceeds supply.

That is an excellent analysis. We can wrap up here. Very sharp link between the business realities and the numbers.

Profitability – Declining Operating Margin (Industry: Fashion & Luxury Goods)

Framework

Profitability

Revenue

Costs

PRICING

Introduce a 5% price increase on highly demanded, low-elasticity models like Submariner, Daytona, and GMT-Master II to boost revenues without significant volume loss.

PRODUCT MIX

Shift the sales mix back toward higher-margin premium models (targeting 55% contribution), improving overall profitability.

MARKETING COSTS

Shift the sales mix back toward higher-margin premium models (targeting 55% contribution), improving overall profitability.

Case Facts

- Rolex's profitability declined by 4% YoY despite steady sales volumes.
- Revenue stands at Rs. 10 billion; net profit dropped from Rs. 2.5 billion to Rs. 2.4 billion.
- Heavy demand for popular models like Submariner and Daytona.
- Increased sales of lower-margin models reduced overall margins from 25% to 24%.
- Marketing spend increased by Rs. 100 million YoY.
- Production capacity is fully utilized; waitlists for high-end models are growing.

INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- Despite revenue growth of 6%, operating profit fell by approximately 14% (from Rs. 2.72 billion to Rs. 2.34 billion).

- Key causes of margin decline:

· Rs. 250 million increase in marketing spend.
· Gross margin pressure due to higher material and labor costs.
· Shift toward lower-margin, lower-priced models.

- Potential solutions:

· Implement a 5% price increase selectively on highly demanded models.
· Estimated additional revenue: ~Rs. 225 million.
· Shift product mix back towards premium models (from 45% to 55%).
· Could lift gross margins by ~2 percentage points.
· Optimize marketing spend:
· Cut inefficient marketing by Rs. 100 million without harming brand presence.

- Risks:

· Slight volume decline in price-sensitive regions.
· Potential brand repositioning risks if priced too closely to ultra-luxury competitors.

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MARKET ENTRY

Market Entry – Pricing Strategy (Industry: Skincare / D2C)

Your client is Lumin – a premium D2C men's skincare brand in the USA. They're thinking about venturing into Indian markets with a personalized skincare line and need advice on how to price the offering and position themselves well. What approach would you take on this?

Thank you! Before getting into pricing, may I ask a few clarifying questions to better understand the client's aims and market?

Sure, go ahead.

First, what are Lumin's primary objectives regarding this launch? Is it max revenue, max market share, or trying it out?

They would like to create a vociferous premium voice among urban men in India and of course profitability, and beyond that, long-term brand recall.

I understood. Now, who exactly is the target audience for Lumin's products in India?

Urban men, aged 20 to 35 mostly from professional or student backgrounds, living in tier 1 and tier 2 cities - these people are comfortable with online shopping and ready to spend on self-care.

Alright, another thing: are they going to manufacture in India or import?

They will import the products first, then later check for local manufacturing once they have a good scale.

Good, thanks. Based on that, I would like to look at the price analysis in three major strokes.
Cost-Based Pricing - Cover-all costs with a targeted profit margin.
Competitor-Based Pricing - Compare with Indian men's skincare players.
Value-Based Pricing-Evaluate the willingness to spend according to the perceived quality and brand image.
Which one do you want me to start with?

Let us go on with cost-based pricing.

Okay, so for that I will need the landed cost per unit product + shipping + customs and where the desired margin is.

Sure. Lumin's product costs ₹400 per unit (including international shipping/customs). They would like a margin of 50 percent profit.

Therefore, the cost-based floor price comes to ₹400 ÷ (1 - 0.50) = ₹800. Shall we go with competitor pricing now?

Yeah. Please go ahead.

As per research, below are the primary competitors for the given segment:
-The Man Company (₹300 to ₹500)-Affordable Premium
-Beardo (₹250 to ₹600)-Mass Premium, good availability across channels
-Forest Essentials for Men -Ultra-premium Ayurvedic play (₹900+).

With the clinical, minimalistic US branding, Lumin could quite comfortably position itself above Beardo and TMC but slightly below Forest Essentials-say, around ₹750-₹850.

That sounds reasonable. But more on value-based pricing?

Lumin has everything from personalization and nice branding to being a U.S. brand, so the perceived value is really going to be pretty high. Younger urban Indian male consumers are certainly going to be keen on trying international, D2C-style brands, especially within skincare, so round about ₹850 maybe would work as a pricing point that denotes quality and exclusivity.

Fair enough. What would be your final recommendation?

Based on the analysis:
Cost-based floor price would be ₹800
Competitor benchmark ₹750–₹850
and value perception supports would be ₹850

I recommend launching at ₹849 per kit, with a first-time offer at ₹749 to encourage trials. This supports premium perception while allowing a strong entry hook.

This strategy also allows Lumin to:
Maintain premium perception, ensure profitability and give and advantage to tap into India's growing male grooming market and differentiate from local D2C players.

Thank you! We conclude the case here.

Market Entry – Pricing Strategy (Industry: Skincare / D2C)

CLIENT OBJECTIVES

CLIENT OBJECTIVES
- Grow revenue
- Build long-term brand recall
- Establish premium positioning

MARKET ANALYSIS

Target Audience
- Urban men, 20-35 years (Tier 1 & Tier 2 cities)

Market Growth
- Male grooming and skincare market

COST-BASED PRICING
Landed cost ₹400
Target price ₹800

COMPETITOR PRICING
₹750-₹850
Premium perception supports

Go-TO-MARKET STRATEGY

Launch Pricing
- ₹849 per kit
- ₹749 first-time offer

IMPORT PLAN
- Import initially
- Shift to local manufacturing later

Premium differentiated from local D2C brands

Digital-first marketing

Case Facts

- Landed cost per unit: ₹400 (including shipping/customs).
- Target floor price based on margin: ₹800.
- Competitor pricing range: ₹750–₹850.
- Target audience: Urban men, 20–35 years, Tier 1 & Tier 2 cities.
- Initial market entry via imports; shift to local manufacturing later.
- Strategy: Premium positioning with digital-first marketing.

INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- Client: Lumin – a premium D2C men's skincare brand from the USA
- Objective: Enter the Indian market with a personalized skincare line
- Primary Goals:
  - Grow revenue
  - Build long-term brand recall
  - Establish premium positioning
- Market Entry Mode:
  - Import products initially
  - Shift to local manufacturing once scale is achieved
- Target Audience:
  - Urban men aged 20–35 years
  - Primarily Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities
  - Comfortable with online shopping and self-care
- Go-To-Market Strategy:
  - Launch pricing at ₹849 per kit
  - First-time offer at ₹749 to encourage trials
  - Digital-first marketing
  - Premium branding to differentiate from Indian D2C brands

Market Entry – Pricing Strategy (Industry: FMCG / Beverages)

Your client is Starbucks — the global coffeehouse chain. They plan to debut ready-to-drink cold coffee in India, and they need advice on how to price it. How would you go about it?

Thanks! Before I can put out the pricing strategy, I would like to ask a couple of clarifying questions to better understand the objectives of the client and the market context.

Sure, proceed.

First of all, what is Starbucks' primary goal from this launch? Is it about maximizing the revenues, gaining market share, or just testing waters?

Their main market share objective is in the premium RTD segment with healthy profitability.

Okay, understood. Who would the target consumer be for this product's consumption? Are we going for something mass-market or niche?

The target audience includes individuals aged 18 to 35: college students and urban professionals with some disposable income, valuing convenience but also placing a premium on quality.

That fully clarifies it. Just one more thing - do we know how the product will be manufactured and distributed? Will Starbucks import it, or is it to be produced locally?

It will manufacture it locally, by partnering with a domestic F & B firm, expected to keep production and logistics costs at reasonable levels.

Understood. Thank you for that, so based on all that we have discussed, I would like to divide pricing analysis into three approaches: Cost-Based Pricing to ensure price covers all costs and allows for a target profit margin; Competitor-Based Pricing against existing players in the RTD space; and Value-Based Pricing, estimating how much the customer would be willing to pay factoring in the brand of Starbucks and perceived quality.

So once we assess each by triangulating, we can arrive at the recommended optimum price. Where would you like me to start?

Well, let's start with cost-based pricing.

Great. For that, I'll need data on unit production costs, distribution, and marketing spends.

Sure. The production cost per bottle is ₹ 30, distribution costs are ₹ 10, and marketing costs come to ₹ 5 per unit. Starbucks is targeting a profit margin of 30%.

Thanks. This takes total costs per bottle to ₹ 45 (₹30 + ₹10 + ₹5). With 30% margin applied, the cost-based price would be about ₹59. Shall we move on to competitor pricing?

Yes, please proceed.

In order to assess competitors, who are the key players in the RTD coffee market and what are the price points and positionings?

The main competitors include Nescafé, which is priced between ₹50–60, and Amul, priced around ₹30–40. Nescafé is a premium yet accessible brand, while Amul provides value-for-money and mass-market appeal.

Got it. Given this, Starbucks can confidently price itself as aboveNescafé, i.e., ₹65–₹70. This reinforces the brand's premium identity while staying within an acceptable range for the target consumer.

Seems fair. Value-based pricing next?

We could, but considering the strong brand perception that is already factored into competitor pricing and premium positioning, I believe that the current analysis gives us a good basis.

Fair point. Let's move to your last recommendation.

The data shows:

Cost-based floor price, ₹59

Competitor-based pricing suggests ₹65-70 for premium positioning.

Therefore, I recommend a launch price of ₹75. It enables Starbucks to:

Maintain its premium perception

Ensure profitability

Leverage loyalty and perceived quality

And signal differentiation from both Nescafé and Amul.

Now clear. Before we close, what risks could Starbucks be exposed to with this strategy?

The key risks include:

Competitive pricing pressure - If Nescafé or Amul are lowering their price or putting more pressure on promotion, Starbucks will feel the pressure to react.

Market adoption - RTD coffee remains a niche market in India, and sluggish consumer adoption might creep in as a risk.

Regulatory changes - Regulations regarding changes in packaging, labeling, and FSSAI have added prospects for increased compliance costs.

Distribution risk - Connecting to the right outlets with visibility throughout the modern retailing and easy outlets is going to be crucial.

Very good. That, in a way, is a structured risk assessment. We can conclude there.

Market Entry – Pricing Strategy (Industry: FMCG / Beverages)

Framework

Market Entry
Pricing Strategy

MARKET ANALYSIS

- Target Audience:Urban college students and young professionals(age 18-35)
- Disposable income: value convenience+quality

PRICING ANALYSIS

- **Cost based pricing:** Cost per bottle 45(production) + 10(distribution) + 5 (marketing)
- **Competitor-Based Pricing**: Nescafe 50-60, Amul 30-40
- **Value-Based Pricing:** premium pricing justified by brand loyalty

RISKS & CHALLENGES

- Competitive price pressure (Nescafe/Amul promotions)
- Sluggish market adoption(RTD coffee niche)
- Regulatory risks (labelling, compliance)
- Distribution risks (modern retail, visibility

MANUFACTURING

- Local production via domestic partner

RECOMMENDED

Launch Price: 75

Case Facts

- Cost per bottle: ₹45 (production) + ₹10 (distribution) + ₹5 (marketing).
- Marketing margin aimed: ~30%.
- Premium brand positioning to be maintained.
- Local partnership to avoid high import duties and logistics costs.
- Digital-first marketing approach assumed for launch.

INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- Client: Starbucks planning RTD (Ready-to-Drink) coffee launch in India.
- Primary Objective: Capture premium RTD segment profitably.
- Target Audience: Urban college students and young professionals (ages 18–35) with disposable income valuing convenience and quality.
- Production Plan: Local manufacturing through a domestic partner to optimize costs and logistics.
- Pricing Strategy:
  Cost-Based Pricing: ₹45 (production) + ₹10 (distribution) + ₹5 (marketing).
  Competitor-Based Pricing: Nescafé ₹50–60, Amul ₹30–40.
  Value-Based Pricing: Premium pricing supported by brand loyalty.
  Recommended Launch Price: ₹75 to balance premium positioning and cost recovery.
- Key Risks:
  Competitive pressure from Nescafé and Amul.
  Sluggish consumer adoption of RTD coffee in India.
  Regulatory risks (labeling, FSSAI compliance).
  Distribution challenges in modern retail visibility.

Market Entry – Strategic Feasibility (Industry: Food & Beverage / AgriTech)

Your client is a U.S.-based food-tech startup specializing in plant-based meat alternatives. They've had strong traction in North America and parts of Europe. Now, they're evaluating an entry into the Chinese market. They've asked for your help in assessing feasibility and formulating a go-to-market strategy. How would you approach this?

Great; thanks! So, before leaping into a structured approach, I would like to ask some clarifying questions related to the client's current positioning and the Chinese market.

Go ahead.

First, is the client targeting a specific segment (cities, health-conscious consumers, younger demographics, and so on) within China?

Good question. The focus is on urban, upper-middle-class consumers in Tier 1 cities like Shanghai, Beijing, and Shenzhen—people who are more open to Western trends and willing to experiment with health-conscious or sustainable food options.

That makes sense. Second, what would the client want to achieve with this expansion? Are they after long-term market capture, brand awareness, or immediate profitability?

Their goal is to establish some strategic foothold and create brand equity in the growing alternative protein segment. Short-term profitability is not as important, but in the long term, economic sustainability is crucial.

Understood. Do we have information on whether the product is to be manufactured locally or imported from the U.S.?

In the initial phase, they plan to export the product. However, should demand scale up, they are open to establishing local production or entering into a joint venture.

That helps. One last question: Has any testing of the product been conducted in China? We mean testing in terms of pilot or online channels?

No. They are still in the strategic assessment phase, where you come in.

In terms of broader market trends, China has the largest per capita meat consumption in the world—and an increasing concern about health issues, food safety, and sustainability. Hence, there is some infant demand for plant-based meat substitutes among discerning, younger, urban consumers there. Local startups like Zhenmeat and global players like Beyond Meat entering the space are telling signs of a competitive yet emerging market.

Fair. So how would you assess consumer receptivity?

Awesome. In light of this, I would go on to structure four main areas to cover:

-Market Attractiveness: Is there demand for plant-based meat in China, and is it growing?

-Consumer Behavior: How receptive is the target demographic to this category?

-Go-to-Market Strategy: What channels, pricing, and partnerships should be considered?

-Risks and Barriers: What kind of challenges could hinder market entry?

Do you want me to start with Market Attractiveness?

Yes, please do.

Consumer behavior presents opportunities and challenges. In particular:

-Health consciousness is trending up, as is eco-consciousness, particularly amongst Gen Z and millennials.

On the contrary:

-Traditional Chinese cuisine is strongly meat-based, making the "fake meat" concept culturally doubted across China, particularly amongst the older customers.

-Then there are the taste and texture expectations, which might also prove difficult to obtain as well.

Therefore, I believe localization of flavor, format, and even branding for the product is critical to gaining traction.

Very interesting. Other than this, what are the risks?

Here are some:

The first one would be-

Cultural mismatch – A Western-centric product would probably find itself struggling without localization.

Then,

Regulatory hurdles – Food safety regulations and labeling laws in China can be troublesome and unpredictable.

Competitive response – Zhenmeat and others might be faster to adapt and well connected locally.

I agree. What would you suggest in terms of market-entry strategy for the client?

Now, I would advise a phased entry:

In Phase 1 we would do Soft Launch like: Partner with high-end restaurant chains and online grocery platforms to target the early adopters.

In Phase 2 we will try to build the brand: Spend money on influencer marketing and education to dismantle skepticism and begin building credibility.

And in

Phase 3 we will scale big: Once some traction is visible, consider setting up local production or collaborating with others for cost and distribution optimization.

With a health-conscious and premium target market, pricing should fall slightly above the local substitutes but below imported high-end meat products like I would see the cost structure – Higher costs mean slighter competitiveness, due to exporting at the beginning.

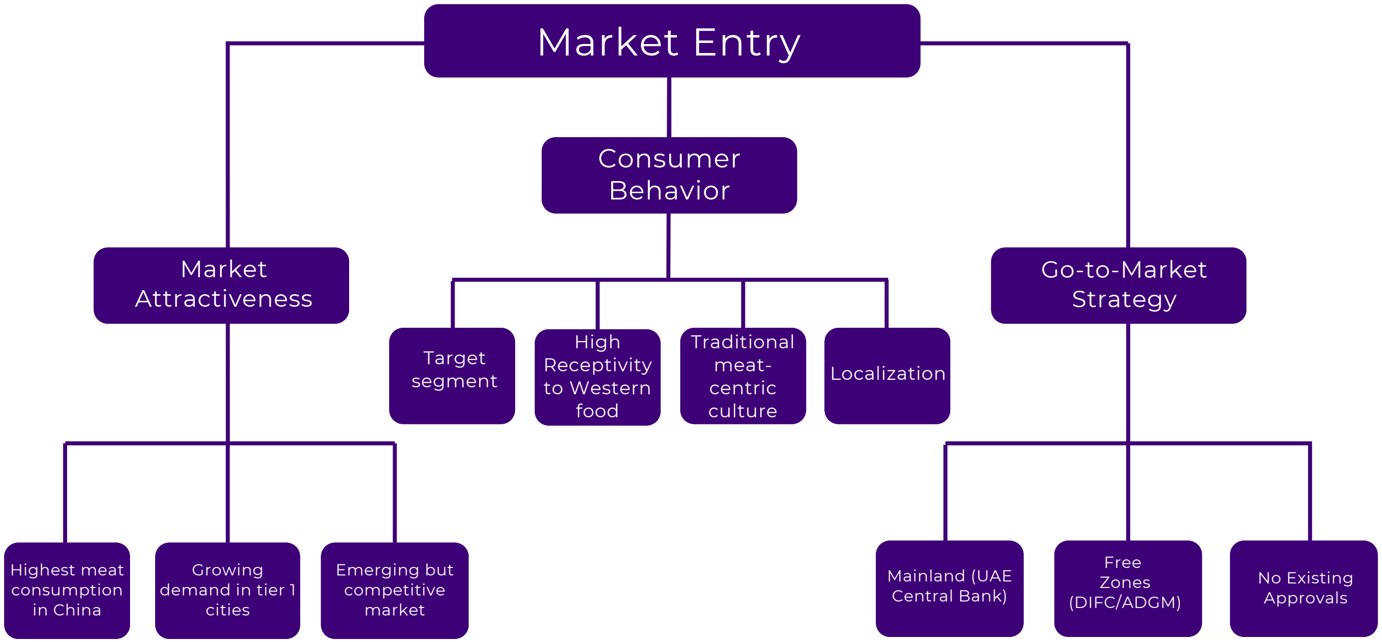
That is inclusive. So what would be your final recommendation?

I would suggest that the client conduct a soft launch in Tier 1 cities, leveraging partnerships in the food service sector to establish early demand and brand recognition. It could also invest in localized branding, taste testing, and consumer education. If the early-market signals are encouraging, it could ramp up through local manufacturing, further curtailing costs, thus boosting competitiveness. China is a challenging market, but potentially a very rewarding one if approached cautiously and strategically.

Good analysis. That brings the case to a close.

Market Entry – Strategic Feasibility (Industry: Food & Beverage / AgriTech)

Framework



Case Facts

- Consumer base is familiar with meat and open to international food brands.
- Urban demand (tier 1 cities) is the initial focus area.
- Competitive environment expected; differentiation needed.
- Regulatory frameworks vary between mainland and free zones.
- No regulatory barriers currently; faster time-to-market possible.

Interviewee Notes

- Context: Client exploring international market entry, likely in food sector (meat-related product).

Key Considerations:

- Market Attractiveness:
  China has highest meat consumption globally.
  Tier 1 cities showing growing demand.
  Market is emerging but competitive.
- **Consumer Behavior:**
  Defined target segment needed.
  High openness to Western food trends.
  Traditional preference for meat-centric diets.
  Localization will be crucial for acceptance.
- **Go-to-Market Strategy:**
  Entry options include:
  Mainland (regulated by UAE Central Bank).
  Free zones (DIFC/ADGM) for easier setup.
  No existing approvals needed currently.

Market Entry – Strategic Viability (Industry: Financial Services / Fintech)

Your client is a UK-based digital-only bank — a challenger brand that has grown rapidly across Europe by targeting tech-savvy millennials with mobile-first banking. The client is now considering expansion into the UAE, particularly targeting the large expat population. They want your help evaluating whether this is the right move. How would you approach this?

Thank you! Before I lay out a structured approach, may I ask a few clarifying questions to better understand the client's objectives and the target market?

Of course, go ahead.

First, what are the client's primary goals with this expansion — is it about building market share, revenue generation, or testing new international waters?

The focus is on gaining a strong foothold in the GCC region, using the UAE as a launchpad. Profitability is secondary in the near term — the goal is market capture and brand visibility.

Understood. Is there any specific customer segment they're targeting within the UAE?

Yes — the client is aiming to serve tech-savvy expats, especially professionals between the ages of 25 to 45, who often feel underserved by traditional banks.

Makes sense. What about the current offerings in the UAE market? Are there already strong digital banking alternatives or is this a white space?

Traditional banks dominate, but many still rely heavily on in-branch services and outdated apps. Some local banks are rolling out digital arms, but the market remains under-digitized, despite high smartphone penetration.

Got it. Lastly, how familiar is the client with the regulatory landscape in the UAE? Are there existing licenses or partnerships in place?

Not yet — that's a key concern. The UAE's central bank is supportive of fintech innovation, but regulatory approvals can be time-consuming and require strong local presence or sponsorship.

That's helpful. Given this, I'd like to break down the analysis into four key areas:

- Market Attractiveness – Is there a sizable, underserved digital banking customer base?
- Competitive Landscape – Who are the key players and how entrenched are they?
- Regulatory Feasibility – What are the barriers to entry and compliance requirements?
- Strategic Recommendations – Should the client enter, and if so, how?

Would you like me to start with market attractiveness?

Yes, let's begin there.

From a demographic standpoint, the UAE has a large, mobile-first expat population, with over 85% of residents being non-citizens. Smartphone penetration is extremely high, and digital payments are growing. However, traditional banking is often rigid, bureaucratic, and not always expat-friendly. This creates a strong pain point, and therefore, a potential opening for a digital bank offering frictionless onboarding, international transfers, and 24/7 app-based support.

Makes sense. And what does the competitive landscape look like?

There are a few digital offerings — for instance, Liv. by Emirates NBD and Mashreq Neo, but these are extensions of legacy banks, not pure digital players. Some fintech apps like YAP are gaining traction, but the overall space isn't saturated with standalone neobanks. That said, brand loyalty is low, and trust is critical when it comes to handling personal finances — especially in a region where cash still plays a role.

Good point. Now how would you evaluate the regulatory side?

This could be the most difficult step of all. Basically, the regulations followed by the UAE include two broad sections:

For example Mainland. Here, all rules are set and decided by the UAE Central Bank.

And Free zones like ADGM (Abu Dhabi Global Market) and DIFC (Dubai International Financial Centre) which allow having regulations for fintech in their regulatory sandboxes.

To legally accept deposits and fully provide banking services, the client would probably have to partner with a licensed local bank or apply for a digital banking license which is quite a long a costly endeavor. Without a local sponsorship or strategic partnerships, entry would risk being delayed or blocked outright.

Fair enough. So what would be your very last recommendation?

The UAE presents an attractive opportunity but needs to be approached strategically, an underserved segment, high mobile penetration, and weak digital competition. A phased entry is recommended from my side and which is as follows:

First is partnership-led Entry: Start with a partnership with a local bank in a Freezone (e.g. ADGM) for co-branded digital accounts or remittance services for expats. This limits regulatory exposure while testing demand.

And the second one is to build local presence: Set up a UAE-based team on compliance, relationships, and market-specific product design — crucial for trust and regulatory advances.

Then, Gradual Scaling: Following proof-of-concept and some traction, apply for full digital banking licenses, expand product offerings (e.g., personal loans and wealth products), and scale to other GCC countries including Saudi Arabia.

Such a thoughtful and very pragmatic recommendation. Any risks you would flag?

Definitely:

The first and foremost is regulatory complexity — delays and/or changes in policy can really end up stalling the whole deal.

Then comes cultural adaptation — the product features, no matter how global their branding, must be local (e.g., Arabic language, need to comply with Islamic finance).

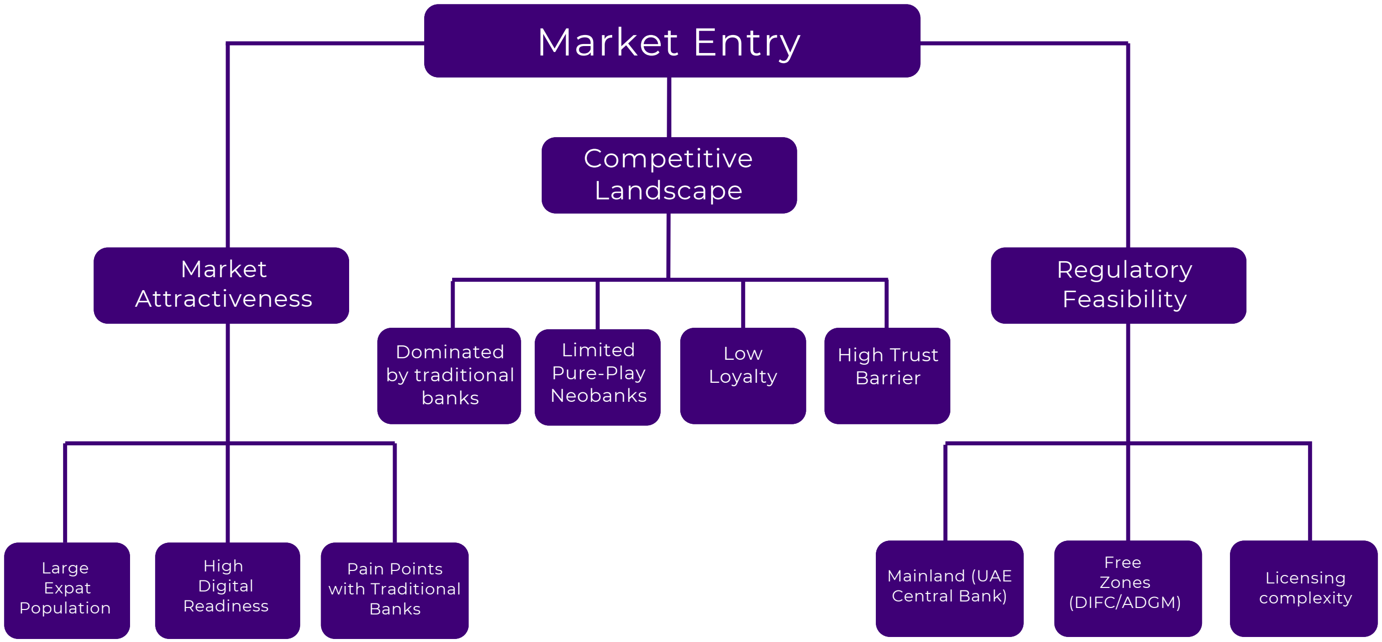
Also, Trust and security — in an overbanked market, the burden of proof is higher for newcomers.

And, acquisition cost — marketing to expats in a competitional environment will, in the short term, increase CAC.

Excellent analysis. That brings the case to a close — well done.

Market Entry – Strategic Viability (Industry: Financial Services / Fintech)

Framework



Interviewee Notes

- **Market Attractiveness**
  Large expat base (~85-90%).
  High digital adoption (~99% smartphone use).
  Pain points: slow, poor service from traditional banks.
- **Competitive Landscape**
  Dominated by old banks, limited neobank presence.
  Customers have low loyalty → easy to switch.
  High trust barrier → credibility is key.
- **Regulatory Feasibility**
  Mainland (strict UAE Central Bank rules).
  Free Zones (DIFC/ADGM) = easier, faster.
  Fresh license needed (no prior approvals).

Case Facts

- Digital-first audience.
- Expats are early adopters.
- Fintech regulation favorable in Free Zones.
- Strong trust-building strategy required.

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GROWTH STRATEGY

Growth – Brand Positioning (Industry: Fashion & Luxury Goods)

Interviewer: Thanks for joining. Let's dive into today's case. Your client is a 100-year-old luxury fashion brand known for its timeless leather handbags and couture apparel. The brand has a loyal customer base and strong heritage. They want to grow revenues, but they're extremely cautious — they don't want to dilute their luxury image. Your job is to advise them on how to grow while maintaining exclusivity.

Candidate: Interesting. Just to clarify — the client is not struggling, but wants to unlock additional growth opportunities without compromising the brand's perception?

That's right. They're financially healthy but feel they're leaving growth on the table.

Great. To structure this, I'd think about three broad paths: looking at geographic and retail expansion, considering product innovation, and working on customer strategy — basically deepening relationships and increasing how much each customer spends. Would you like me to explore each path or begin with some fact-finding?

Let's start with fact-finding.

Sure. First, what's the brand's current revenue breakdown? For example, how much comes from handbags versus apparel or other categories?

About 65% comes from handbags, 25% from apparel, and 10% from accessories like belts and scarves.

Thank you. And geographically — are they global?

Primarily Europe and North America. Asia is underpenetrated — accounts for only 15% of sales, mostly in Japan.

Interesting. And what's the current store strategy? Do they sell online or just through boutiques?

Flagship boutiques in major cities and a tightly controlled online store. They do not sell through third-party platforms — brand control is very important.

Makes sense. Do they run seasonal collections or limited drops?

Seasonal collections, yes. Limited drops are rare, but whenever they do, they generate a lot of buzz and usually sell out quickly.

Helpful. Last question: what's the average customer profile?

Mostly high-net-worth women aged 30–55. Many are repeat buyers — loyalty is strong.

Understood. Based on what we've discussed, it sounds like the brand is heavily dependent on handbags and established markets. There's also significant untapped opportunity in Asia, and product innovation seems underutilized. So, growth could come either by expanding geographically, introducing carefully crafted new products, or creating strategic "moments" — like limited edition releases — that maintain the aura of exclusivity.

Agreed. What would be your recommendation?

I believe a multi-pronged approach would work best — one that drives growth while preserving their luxury image.

First, they should introduce limited-edition collections: small seasonal drops of premium, co-branded, or archival-inspired pieces. These would create urgency, generate buzz, and deepen brand desirability. Using a waitlist model or private previews for loyal clients would reinforce exclusivity even further.

Alongside that, I'd suggest selective geographic expansion. Instead of a broad rollout, the brand could open a few flagship boutiques in luxury hubs like Seoul, Shanghai, and Singapore — focusing on iconic destinations to enhance prestige. Each store could blend local cultural elements while staying true to the brand's European roots.

Finally, as an optional move, they could explore high-margin accessories and luxury home goods, like leather tech accessories or travel gear. This would increase customer spend without overlapping core products, while keeping full channel control through boutiques and their online store.

Very thorough. Are there any risks with limited editions?

Absolutely, there are risks. The biggest one is the temptation to overdo it. If they release limited editions too frequently, it could dilute the perception of scarcity and hurt the brand. Another risk is misjudging demand — if a collection doesn't resonate, it could impact how the brand is seen. To manage these risks, they should rely heavily on data — using insights from their loyal customers to shape the collections. Also, tying these limited drops to meaningful milestones, like anniversaries or collaborations with celebrated designers, would add more weight and storytelling value to each release.

Interesting. How would you track the success of this growth strategy?

I would suggest tracking three key metrics. First, revenue growth per customer, to ensure they're successfully encouraging deeper spending. Second, the sell-through rate of limited-edition collections — ideally, they'd want to see rates above 85%, signaling strong demand and brand heat. And third, ongoing brand equity surveys would be critical to monitoring how the brand is perceived by its core audience over time.

Great. And would you advise them to relax any brand controls — like selling on high-end third-party sites?

Honestly, no. I would advise them to continue maintaining full control. In luxury, perception is everything, and the channels you use send strong signals about your brand. Having that tight control helps support pricing power, protects exclusivity, and keeps the brand's integrity intact. Growth should always move in a way that follows and strengthens the brand, not the other way around.

Excellent. That wraps up the case. Great analysis, and I appreciate how you balanced growth with brand preservation.

Growth – Brand Positioning (Industry: Fashion & Luxury Goods)

Framework

GROW REVENUE
without diluting luxury image

Multi-Pronged Approach

Limited-Edition Collections

- Launch seasonal artisanal capsule collections
- Use waitlists and private previews for exclusivity

Selective Geographic Expansion

- Open a few curated flagship boutique in luxury hubs (Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore
- Focus on iconic, culturally thoughtful locations

Expansion into Accessories and Home Goods (Optional)

- Introduce fine leather tech accessories, travel gear, luxury home decor
- Only sell through boutiques and controlled online channels

Interviewee Notes

- Recommend a multi-pronged growth strategy to maintain luxury image.
- Limited-Edition Collections:
  Launch seasonal artisanal capsule collections.
  Use waitlists and private client previews for exclusivity.
- Selective Geographic Expansion:
  Open few curated boutiques in luxury hubs (Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore).
  Focus on iconic, culturally thoughtful locations.
- Expansion into Accessories & Home Goods (Optional):
  Introduce fine leather tech accessories, travel gear, luxury home décor.
  Sell only through boutiques and controlled online channels.

Case Facts

- Brand Health: Financially strong, loyal customer base, rich heritage.
- Revenue Split: 65% handbags, 25% apparel, 10% accessories.
- Geographic Presence: Europe & North America strong; Asia only 15% (mostly Japan).
- Sales Channels: Own boutiques and online store; no third-party selling.
- Customer Profile: High-net-worth women, aged 30–55, strong loyalty.

Assumptions:

- Limited editions drive urgency and exclusivity.
- Selective expansion preserves brand prestige.
- Accessories/home goods increase spend without cannibalizing core products.

Growth – Market Expansion (Industry: Food & Beverage)

Interviewer: Your case is about a fast-casual restaurant chain. The company has seen strong growth in the last five years, with a loyal customer base and profitable operations in three states. They're now evaluating how to expand nationally. The leadership is considering three options:

- Franchising
- Raising capital for owned expansion
- Optimizing current markets before expanding further

They've brought us in to assess the best path forward. Let's explore what they should do.

Understood. Before diving into the analysis, I'd like to break the problem down into three major considerations. I would look at internal readiness, including operational scalability, brand consistency, and supply chain flexibility. Then, I would examine market dynamics, such as saturation in current markets and demand potential in new regions. Finally, I would consider strategic trade-offs like growth speed versus control, capital requirements, and risk tolerance. Would it be alright if I asked a few clarifying questions?

Please go ahead.

Great. First, what's the current footprint of the chain?

They operate 47 company-owned outlets across three states: California, Nevada, and Arizona.

And how is performance in those markets?

Performance is strong. The average unit economics show ₹15.35 crore in annual revenue per store with a 15% EBITDA margin. Most new stores break even within 12–15 months.

That's impressive. Do they have standardized processes and systems in place to ensure consistency across locations?

Yes. They have centralized procurement, in-house training programs, and a robust kitchen operations manual. Their technology adoption is strong as well, including POS integration, loyalty apps, and online delivery systems.

That's helpful. Regarding franchising — have they explored it previously in any form?

Not yet. The current model is fully company-owned, but the CEO is open to controlled franchising if it helps scale without overextending capital.

Understood. Lastly, what is their capital position? Could they raise funds if needed?

They're profitable, with modest debt. They have received interest from private equity firms, but the leadership team is wary of losing strategic control.

Makes sense. Thank you — I have enough context to begin evaluating options. Here's how I would think about it.

When it comes to franchising, the key advantages are lower capital needs, faster expansion, and better access to local market knowledge. However, there are real risks around losing operational control, brand quality issues, and franchisee management. That said, given their strong operational playbook, a limited franchise pilot in adjacent, demographically similar markets like Texas or Colorado makes sense.

For raising capital and pursuing owned expansion, the main benefit is maintaining full control over brand and operations, but it comes with slower growth, higher capital requirements, and operational strain risks. Still, considering their strong performance and investor interest, they seem well-positioned to raise a growth equity round and expand into Tier-1 cities over the next three to five years.

Optimizing existing markets would reduce risk, strengthen brand equity, and improve store profitability, but it would slow down scale and open the door for competitors to move faster. While boosting same-store sales through digital ordering, catering, and partnerships is valuable, it likely won't match the growth impact of entering new markets.

Okay, based on your evaluation, what would you recommend?

I would recommend a phased hybrid approach. First, focus on optimizing current markets over the next three to six months to strengthen the operational playbook, improve store margins, and test customer acquisition strategies. After that, launch a controlled franchising pilot in a new state like Texas, with rigorous franchisee selection and operational audits to protect brand standards. In parallel, raise a growth equity round to fund a strategic, city-by-city, company-owned expansion over the next two to three years. This approach balances speed and control, de-risks franchising, strengthens the investor story, and protects brand quality.

That's a well-structured approach. How would you measure success in the early stages of this strategy?

For franchising, I would look at revenue consistency across franchised locations, franchisee Net Promoter Scores, and brand adherence scores.

When it comes to capital deployment, I would track the cost of capital versus the revenue uplift and monitor ROI for each new location.

For market optimization, I would measure same-store sales growth, improvements in customer retention, and the uptake in digital ordering.

Ideally, I would create a rolling dashboard to track all these operational and financial metrics in real time and ensure tight execution.

Great. That concludes the case. You demonstrated a solid balance of strategic reasoning and practical execution planning. Well done.

Growth – Market Expansion (Industry: Food & Beverage)

Framework

Growth Strategy Framework

INITIAL DIAGNOSIS

- Market readiness (scalability, brand consistency, supply chain flexibility)
- Strategic trade-offs (speed vs control, capital requirements, risk)

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- Franchising
- Raising Growth
- Capital Owned
- Expansion

PARALLEL ACTION

- For Franchising

RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

Phased Hybrid Approach

- **For Franchising:**
  Revenue consistency across locations
  Franchise NPS
  Brand adherence scores

SUCCESS METRICS

For Franchising

- Revenue consistency across locations
- For capital deployment
- Track cost of capital vs revenue location

FULL MARKET OPTIMIZATION

- Same store sales growth
- Customer retention
- Digital ordering uptake

Interviewee Notes

- Assess scalability, brand consistency, supply chain.
- Trade-offs: speed vs control, capital, risk.
- Recommend phased hybrid:
- Optimize current markets (3–6 months).
- Pilot franchising (Texas).
- Raise equity for owned expansion.
- Success metrics: revenue consistency, NPS, cost vs revenue, same-store sales growth.

Case Facts/Assumptions

- 47 company-owned outlets (California, Nevada, Arizona).
- Average unit economics: ₹15.35 crores revenue/store, 15% EBITDA margin.
- Most stores break even in 12–15 months.
- Strong centralized operations and tech adoption.
- Profitable, low debt, interest from investors.
- Leadership concerned about losing strategic control.
- Competitors could move faster if growth is too slow.

Growth – Growth Strategy (Industry: Beauty & Personal Care)

Interviewer: Let's get started. Your client is a direct-to-consumer (D2C) skincare brand that launched three years ago. They saw rapid growth in the first two years, driven by social media buzz and influencer marketing. However, in the last two quarters, growth has stalled.

The leadership team is evaluating three paths to reignite momentum:

- Expanding into new product categories
- Entering international markets
- Going omnichannel — launching in retail stores

They've asked us to assess which strategy will deliver sustainable growth.

Thanks for the overview. To structure my thinking, I'd look at three core dimensions:

Customer and demand analysis – Who are the customers, and what's driving (or stalling) purchases?

Business capabilities – Supply chain, operations, and readiness for scale

Strategic trade-offs – Between reach, margin, complexity, and brand positioning

Would you mind if I ask a few clarifying questions?

Please do.

Great. First, what's the brand's current product portfolio?

They sell skincare basics — cleansers, moisturizers, and serums — all clean, cruelty-free, and moderately priced. It's a tightly curated line with around 12 SKUs.

Understood. What's their primary customer profile?

Mostly women aged 20–35, urban, digitally native, and conscious about ingredients and sustainability.

Thanks. How are current sales channels performing?

All sales are through the brand's website. Social and search ads were key drivers, but customer acquisition costs (CAC) have risen significantly in the past two quarters. Return customer rate is 35%.

Helpful. Have they explored retail partnerships or wholesale before?

No, but they've had inbound interest from boutique retailers and one national chain.

Understood.. Lastly, do they ship internationally?

Only to Canada. No broader international operations yet.

Based on the information, here's my analysis:

For product line expansion, it could increase average order value (AOV) and deepen customer relationships. However, there's a risk of diluting the brand if not executed well, and product development can be slow. Feasibility is moderately high due to the loyal customer base, but the new products must align with the brand's DNA.

International expansion could unlock new markets and leverage digital infrastructure. The downside is the high complexity — regulatory issues, logistics, and language barriers — and low brand awareness outside the current market. Feasibility is medium because of these challenges.

Going omnichannel would boost visibility, reduce reliance on digital ads, and attract walk-in traffic. However, retail margins are lower, and there's potential for channel conflict. The feasibility here is high, especially with selective retail partnerships or pop-up shops in high-traffic areas.

In short, omnichannel seems the most feasible option in the short term, while international expansion would require more resources and planning.

That's thorough, very impressive. Do you have any recommendations for the client?

Based on the client's current position — a strong brand with loyal early adopters but rising CAC — I would recommend the following phased growth strategy:

Phase 1: Pursue limited product line expansion, focusing on natural adjacencies like sunscreens, eye creams, or travel kits.

Phase 2: Pilot omnichannel through retail partnerships with boutique stores or pop-up counters in beauty retailers. Prioritize locations where digital engagement is already high.

Phase 3 (Longer-term): Prepare for international expansion, starting with English-speaking, regulatory-aligned markets such as the UK or Australia.

This approach allows the company to deepen relationships with existing customers (via new products), reach new audiences offline, and build brand equity before committing to complex international operations.

That's a clear plan. Any key risks you see in this approach?

Yes. A few:

1. Product expansion could miss if not aligned with brand values or customer needs — validate via surveys or waitlists.

2. Retail could lead to inconsistent brand experiences — mitigate with strong staff training and brand guidelines.

3. International scaling may strain customer support — start small and build scalable infrastructure.

Solid risk assessment. That wraps the case — nicely done.

Framework

Growth Strategy Framework

Strategic Options Identified

- New product categories
- International markets
- Omnichannel expansion

3-Dimensional Analysis

- Customer needs
- Capabilities
- Growth trends

Gather Clarifications

- Products
- Target Audience
- Sales trends

Analyze Feasibility

- Expansion benefits
- Complexity
- Time to market

Give Recommendations

- Phased expansion
- Key risks

Interviewee Notes

1.Client Overview:

- Direct-to-consumer (D2C) skincare brand.
- Launched 3 years ago; early growth driven by social media and influencer marketing.
- Growth has recently stalled.

2.Product Portfolio:

- Cleansers, moisturizers, and serums.
- Clean, cruelty-free, affordable, mid-priced.

3.Customer Profile:

- Women aged 20–35.
- Urban, digitally native, environmentally conscious.

4.Current Sales Channels:

- Primarily own website.
- Social/search ads were key drivers.
- Customer acquisition costs (CAC) have risen significantly (return customer rate: 35%).
- Limited presence in retail and no international expansion yet.

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Client: D2C skincare brand, launched 3 years ago.
- Products: Clean, cruelty-free cleansers, moisturizers, serums.
- Customers: Women 20–35, urban, eco-conscious.
- Sales: Mainly online (own site); rising CAC; 35% repeat rate.
- Current Gaps: No retail presence, no international expansion.
- Expansion Options:

1. New product categories.
2. International markets.
3. Retail (physical stores).

- Challenges: Logistics, brand dilution, customer experience risks.

THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT CELL, ARSD

PRICING STRATEGY

Pricing – New Product Line (Industry: Fashion and Luxury Goods)

Interviewer: Your client is Adidas. They are currently planning to launch a new line of gymwear targeted at the regular fitness enthusiasts in urban areas of India. They want your help in finalizing the right pricing strategy for the collection. How would you be going about it?

Candidate: Well, thanks for the context. To start off, I would like to ask a few questions. Is the gymwear line focusing only on the performance and the functionality, or does it also emphasize the style and branding?

Well, both! It is currently being designed to combine both the performance materials along with some of the stylish cuts and branding.

Got it. Now also, are we supposed to be targeting the casual fitness enthusiasts or the really serious athletes?

A little bit more towards the casual to semi-serious fitness customers, so basically the regular gym-going audience.

I have understood this. And lastly, is this gymwear supposed to be lined up as a premium line as compared to the regular Adidas apparel?

Well yes, in fact, slightly more premium, but not really luxury.

Alright then. I'll think about this across three major aspects: first, the cost of production, second, the competitor pricing, and third, the customer willingness to pay based on the brand equity and features.

That sounds pretty good. So let's go ahead.

Will you be willing to share what the production cost is for, for instance, let's say, a set comprising a t-shirt and shorts?

On an average, it will cost at around ₹1,000 for every set.

Thankyou. Based on market observations, some similar Nike and Puma gymwear sets are retailed at between ₹2,500 and ₹3,500. Are we fine with that estimate?

Yes, that is consistent.

Given strong brand pull and the stylish focus of Adidas, I believe we can price toward the higher end of the range, maybe somewhere around ₹3,200 per set. So does that seem reasonable from the client's side?

Well, yes, that is in line with their thinking.

In that case, I would be willing to suggest a retail price point of ₹3200. With a ₹1,000 cost, it would comfortably allow for a gross margin of over 65%, which is pretty healthy for apparel retail. Additionally, the brand can also introduce bundling offers like "buy two get one at 50% off" in order to encourage some higher basket sizes.

Alright. What would your final recommendations be?

I would recommend to price the new gymwear set at ₹3,200, where they can initially focus on urban metro cities through some flagship stores and online platforms. Adidas could also collaborate with the fitness influencers, which would help in reinforcing the brand's premium but accessible positioning.

What risks should the client be watching out for?

One major risk is the aggressive discounting by competitors like Nike during the seasonal sales, which could be forcing Adidas to cut their prices and hurt the margins. Another one is the changing customer preference toward more homegrown brands that are more affordable. In order to manage this, Adidas should keep on refreshing their designs quarterly and also maintain a strong brand visibility through their fitness partnerships.

Thank you. That will be all for now.

Pricing – New Product Line (Industry: Fashion and Luxury Goods)

Framework

Pricing

PRICING ANALYSIS

- **Cost based pricing:** Production Cost : Rs. 1000 per set
- **Competitor-Based Pricing**: Nike and Puma's retail prices ranging between Rs. 2500 and Rs. 3500
- **Value-Based Pricing:** Strong brand pull and stylish focus

RISKS & CHALLENGES

- Competitive Pricing Pressure
- Market Saturation
- Shift to Affordable Brands
- Seasonal Demand Volatility
- Brand Fatigue

RECOMMENDED PRICE : Rs. 3200

Case Facts

- Client is Adidas India, planning to launch a new premium gymwear line.
- They want help in setting the right pricing strategy.
- Target market is young professionals and fitness enthusiasts in metros.
- Expected positioning: Premium but accessible.
- Key competitors: Nike, Puma, Under Armour.

INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- Cost per set (manufacturing + logistics) is around ₹2,000.
- Competitor price range: ₹3,000–₹4,500 per set.
- Adidas brand equity allows a slight premium over Puma but should stay under Nike's pricing.
- Target margin expected around 30–35%.
- Consumer willingness to pay tested through limited surveys: around ₹3,500–₹3,800.
- Assumed marketing spend relatively high for brand repositioning.
- Recommendation: Price around ₹3,700 to balance competitiveness and profitability.
- Risks include competitive discounting, economic slowdown, and seasonal sales volatility.

Pricing – New Product (Industry: Hospitality and Tourism)

Interviewer : Your current client is Royal Caribbean, a leading global cruise line. They are planning to launch a new mid-sized luxury cruise ship which will be targeted at high-income vacationers. They want your help in finalizing at the apt pricing for a 7-day cruise trip. How would you be looking to approach this?

Candidate: Thank you. To start off, could I ask a few clarifying questions? First, which are the geographies that we would be focusing on? Are we talking about the U.S., Europe, or Asia?

That is a pretty good question. This ship will be primarily operating in the Mediterranean region, and it will also look at targeting the customers from the European regions and North America.

Understood that. Also, will this ship be looking to offer a completely renewed or unique type od experience, maybe like any new kind of entertainment options, or maybe look to provide an upgrade in luxury as compared to their existing ships?

Yes, it will offer certain upgraded luxury experiences, which will be including larger suites, some new fine-dining restaurants, and also personalized services for passengers, but it is not exactly a completely different business model.

I have got it. Finally, are we looking to aim at a certain rate of occupancy or maybe utilization rate while considering our price?

They are aiming for an average occupancy of about 85% over the year.

Thanks. I will look to frame my approach around the following three steps: first is understanding the cost per customer; second would be to analyze the competitor based pricing; and third is assessing the willingness of the customers to pay, given that the differentiated features are taken into account.

That sounds good. Let us move ahead.

First, could you share what would be the estimated operating cost per guest per a 7-day trip is?

The operating cost is estimated to be around Rs. 1,12,000 per guest for a trip supposed to last a whole week.

Alright. Based on my understanding, cruise lines in the Mediterranean luxury segment, that can be some competitors, like the MSC Cruises or the Celebrity Cruises, usually charge anywhere between Rs. 1,60,000 to Rs. 2,00,000 for trips that are of similar kind. Is that somewhat broadly accurate?

Yes, that's about right.

Since the Royal Caribbean is bringing in some of the upgraded luxury features, I would expect that the brand will look to command a slight premium. Tentatively, I would think that pricing at around 10% higher than competitors is somewhat acceptable. Would that be reasonable in this case?

Yes, that sounds reasonable.

Perfect. So if we apply a 10% premium, the price range could be falling around Rs. 2,20,000 for a 7-day trip.

Also, given the Rs. 1,12,000 cost, this would yield a gross margin that is roughly around 49%, which is a pretty healthy looking one for the cruise industry.

Therefore, I would recommend setting the base price at around Rs. 2,00,000 for each guest, with upsells such as premium dining packages and excursions being optional add-ons.

Alright. What would be your final recommendation?

My final recommendation would be to keep the base 7-day cruise package at a price of Rs. 2,20,000, which will offer early-bird promotions at Rs. 2,00,000, that will help create initial traction. I will also suggest creating bundled packages, in which spa services or certain premium experiences are included, at an additional cost of around Rs. 40,000–Rs. 64,000, which will help to drive revenue per customer at a higher range.

Sounds good. What risks do you anticipate with this approach?

The major risks involved would be a slowdown in international travel demand, especially considering the uncertainties in Europe, on the geopolitical landscape. Also, if competitors run some aggressive price promotions, the Royal Caribbean might well have to match their discounts, which will squeeze the margins. Additionally, the premium might be perceived as unjustified by the customers, in case the upgrades do not visibly exceed the competitors' offerings.

To mitigate these, the Royal Caribbean should be focusing quite heavily on marketing the aspects of the ship that are unique, before its launch and selectively discount only during the off-peak months.

Thank you. That's all from my side.

Pricing – New Product (Industry: Hospitality and Tourism)

Framework

Pricing

PRICING ANALYSIS

- **Cost based pricing:** Operating Cost : Rs. 1,12,000 per set
- **Competitor-Based Pricing**: MSC Cruises and Celebrity Cruises' trip prices ranging between Rs. 1,60,000 and Rs. 2,00,000
- **Value-Based Pricing:** 10% higher than competitors due to luxury features

RISKS & CHALLENGES

- Risk of international travel slowdown due to geopolitical issues.
- Risk of margin pressure if competitors run aggressive price promotions.
- Risk of customers finding the premium pricing unjustified if upgrades aren't clearly superior.

RECOMMENDED PRICE : Rs. 2,20,000

Case Facts

- Client: Royal Caribbean, a leading global cruise line.
- Context: Launching a new premium cruise ship aimed at affluent travelers.
- Objective: Determine an optimal pricing strategy for the new ship's offerings.
- Challenge: Maintain profitability while ensuring competitive positioning in a sensitive global environment (geopolitical tensions, travel demand uncertainty).

INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- Clarify ship's USP compared to competitors (amenities, experience).
- Understand target customer segment (affluent travelers, loyalty customers).
- Estimate fixed and variable costs per trip (fuel, staff, maintenance, food).
- Determine average occupancy rates expected.
- Benchmark competitor pricing for similar luxury offerings.
- Calculate breakeven occupancy and margin at different price points.
- Factor in potential risks: travel slowdown, competitive discounts, customer perception.
- Suggest strong pre-launch marketing and selective discounting during off-peak.

Pricing – New Product Line (Industry: Automotive)

Interviewer: Your client is LG Electronics. They are planning to launch a new line of premium energy-efficient air conditioners for the Indian market. Your help is desired by them to decide what the appropriate retail pricing can be. How will you try to approach this?

Candidate: Thank you. To begin with, could I ask a few clarifying questions? First, is this target segment of the AC meant to be residential or commercial customers?

It will be primarily the residential customers.

Understood. Also, can you tell me if the AC has any features thay have a unique appeal as compared to products already existing in the market?

Yes, it is highly energy-efficient with a 5-star rating. Smart controls through the mobile apps ate also supported by it, and on top of it, it carries a faster cooling mechanism.

Got it. Finally, are we targeting the mass-market customers or a slightly premium segment of customers?

Definitely a premium audience, majorly the upper-middle class and above.

Alright. I want to move ahead now by first estimating the costs involved, then looking at competitor benchmarks, and finally understanding what the premium customers will be willing to pay in reality.

Sounds good, please proceed.

Could you share what the approximate manufacturing cost is for one unit?

The manufacturing cost is at about ₹25,000 per unit.

Thank you. Now, based on my knowledge, in India, the premium brands like Daikin and Hitachi are pricing their top-end 1.5-ton 5-star ACs at around ₹50,000 to ₹55,000. Is that range somewhat correct?

Yes, that is broadly accurate.

Considering strong brand of LG, and the added smart features, I believe that a slight premium of about 5–10% can be commanded by us over the competitors. Would that be acceptable?

Yes, that aligns with what the company is aiming for.

In that case, I would suggest that the AC is positioned at ₹57,000. This will allow LG to maintain a gross margin of over 50%, which is healthy for durable goods, and yet it will be able to remain competitive enough against Daikin and Hitachi.

Alright. What would your final recommendation be?

My final recommendation is to launch the product at ₹57,000 with introductory offers of limited-time nature at ₹53,000, that would allow us to quickly build a market share. LG can also look to bundle the installation and a free one-year extended warranty, something that would definitely make the proposition a lot more attractive.

What risks do you anticipate?

The biggest risk is customer price sensitivity in India. Even premium customers often hunt for discounts, so adoption may be delayed by a higher starting price. Also, the energy efficiency alone might not be a strong enough differentiation if the features are quickly matched by the competitors. I would suggest that LG continuously keeps highlighting the 'smart cooling' and 'connected home' aspects in its marketing to justify the premium.

Thank you. That is all from my side.

Pricing – New Product Line (Industry: Automotive)

Framework

Pricing

PRICING ANALYSIS

- **Cost based pricing:** Manufacturing Cost : Rs. 25,000 per unit
- **Competitor-Based Pricing**: Dalkin and Hitachi per unit prices ranging between Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 55,000
- **Value-Based Pricing:** 5-10% higher than competitors due to added smart features

RISKS & CHALLENGES

- Intense competition affecting market share.
- Demand fluctuates with seasonal changes.
- Increased production costs due to inflation.
- Consumers' sensitivity to higher prices.
- Rapid technological advancements and obsolescence.

RECOMMENDED PRICE : Rs. 57,000

Case Facts

- Client: Daikin, premium AC manufacturer in India.
- Objective: Launch new premium AC model for middle-to-high-income households.
- Market: Competitive, with brands like LG, Samsung, Voltas.
- Product Features: Energy-efficient, smart controls, air purifiers, eco-friendly refrigerants.
- Current Position: Strong in premium segment, weaker in mid-range.
- Price Sensitivity: Consumers seek value but are price-sensitive.
- Brand Image: Premium quality, needs expansion into mid-range market.

INTERVIEWEE NOTES

- Initial Understanding: The air conditioner market in India is primarily price-driven, with competition from both premium and budget segments. The company's new model fits into the premium segment but must be priced correctly to meet revenue goals.
- Price Sensitivity: While Daikin is known for premium quality, it is essential to understand the level of price elasticity in this segment.
- Consumer Preferences: Most consumers are looking for energy efficiency, advanced features, and value for money. Understanding these preferences can guide the optimal pricing decision.
- Competitor Pricing: LG, Samsung, and Voltas dominate the market and offer competitive pricing with similar features. Daikin must find ways to differentiate through pricing and value.
- Cost Structure: Daikin's production costs are increasing, especially due to the rise in raw material prices. A balance must be struck between profitability and competitiveness.
- Discount Strategy: Discounting in the premium segment can harm the brand image. However, promotional offers or bundling options could be explored without hurting the brand's value perception.

THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT CELL, ARSD

MERGER & ACQUISITION

Your client is NimbusCloud, a leading cloud software provider primarily serving enterprise clients. NimbusCloud is considering acquiring Databricks, a niche startup that offers machine-learning-powered analytics tools. NimbusCloud is looking to expand its product capabilities and reach new customer segments, particularly tech startups and mid-sized SaaS players.

What would you want to explore to advise them on this potential acquisition?

Thank you! This sounds like an exciting case. Before diving into my approach, may I ask a few clarifying questions?

Of course, go ahead.

What stage is Databricks in—are they pre-revenue or already generating income?
Does NimbusCloud have experience with previous acquisitions or integrations?
Is the goal solely capability expansion, or are there financial return expectations as well?

Good questions. Here's what you know:
Databricks is generating around ₹213 crore in annual recurring revenue (ARR) and growing at 40% YoY.
NimbusCloud has done two prior acquisitions, both relatively successful.
The primary objective is product expansion, but management is also conscious of ROI.

Understood. To evaluate the acquisition, I'd break it down into four areas:
Strategic Fit – Does Databricks align with NimbusCloud's vision and long-term roadmap?
Synergies – What value can be created post-acquisition (both revenue and cost)?
Financial Viability – Does the deal make financial sense—pricing, returns, and funding?
Risks & Integration – Are there any red flags culturally or operationally?
Would you like me to start with the strategic fit?

Yes, let's go there.

Looking at strategic alignment, NimbusCloud is strong in cloud infrastructure and platform services but lacks deep AI capabilities. Databricks's tools could:

- Enhance current offerings with intelligent analytics, potentially improving customer retention.
- Help NimbusCloud appeal to startups and mid-market SaaS firms seeking smarter, nimble solutions.

Does NimbusCloud currently have a product roadmap that includes AI integrations

Yes. They've been working on internal prototypes, but progress is slow. The CTO sees this acquisition as a leapfrog opportunity

That strengthens the case for acquisition. Databricks' integration could accelerate time-to-market significantly.

Next, I'd assess synergies. On the revenue side:

- Cross-selling Databricks' tools to existing enterprise clients.
- Bundling offerings to upsell or differentiate from competitors.

On the cost side:

- Shared infrastructure, combined R&D, and eliminating redundant back-office functions.

Are there any cost savings or synergies already identified by NimbusCloud?

They estimate about ₹43 Lakhs per year in cost savings, mostly from shared DevOps and customer support functions.

Great. That's material, especially with scalable products.

Moving to financials—can I ask the deal price being considered?

NimbusCloud is considering a ₹1707 crores all-cash acquisition.

To test financial viability, I'd look at:
Valuation multiples – Databricks' ARR is ₹213 crores; so the deal is at 8x ARR, which is within range for high-growth SaaS.
Growth prospects – At 40% YoY, in 3 years they'd be near ₹597 crores ARR, which improves the multiple considerably.
Return on investment (ROI) – If NimbusCloud can unlock revenue synergies and reduce churn, this could yield strong returns.
Assuming 5-year revenue synergy of ₹128 crores/year and ₹43 crores in cost synergy, that's ₹170 crores/year added value. That's a 10% return per year, not counting Databricks' organic growth.

Sounds promising. But what about the risks?

Key risks could include:
Cultural mismatch: Databricks is a startup, NimbusCloud is a large enterprise—this can create friction.
Tech stack integration: Merging platforms might delay product rollouts.
Talent retention: Startups are team-dependent; losing key engineers could destroy value.
NimbusCloud should consider earn-outs or retention bonuses to mitigate that.

Nicely structured. How would you summarize your recommendation?

Given the strong strategic fit, attractive growth, realistic synergies, and a valuation that's within reason, I would recommend proceeding with the acquisition, provided:
A robust integration plan is prepared.
Retention of key Databricks personnel is ensured.
Synergies and cultural alignment are tracked with KPIs post-acquisition.

Excellent summary. That concludes the case. Great job navigating the qualitative and quantitative aspects.

Merger & Acquisition – Strategy For an FMCG Firm

Framework

ACQUISITION ANALYSIS

Clarify Objective

- Product expansion
- ROI- conscious

Strategic Fit

- Alignment with long-term vision
- AI intergration into existing products

Financial Viability

- Deal value=₹ 1710 crores
- 5 year added value= ₹170 crores/year
- 100% return per year

Synergies

- Revenue Synergies
- Cost Synergies

Risks & Integration

- Cultural mismatch
- Tech stack integration delay
- Talent retention risks

Recommendation

- Proceed with acquisition
- Prepare integration & retention plans
- Tracks synergies via KPIs

Interviewee Notes

- Acquisition of Databricks by NimbusCloud (enterprise SaaS).
- Main goal: Product expansion (AI analytics); ROI also important.
- 4 areas to assess:
  1. Strategic Fit
  2. Synergies
  3. Financial Viability
  4. Risks & Integration
- Recommendation structure: evaluate qualitative + quantitative factors.

Case Facts/Assumptions

- Databricks ARR: ₹213 crores; growing 40% YoY.
- Purchase Price: ₹1707 crores (≈8x ARR, reasonable for SaaS).

- Synergies:
  1. Revenue: Upsell, cross-sell, bundling.
  2. Cost: ₹43 Lakhs/year in back-office savings.

- NimbusCloud:
  1. Strong in infra/platforms; lacks AI capabilities.
  2. Two previous acquisitions – successful but slow integrations.

- Risks:
  1. Cultural mismatch (startup vs enterprise).
  2. Tech stack integration delays.
  3. Talent retention critical.

- ROI estimate: 5-year value creation of ₹170 crores/year (100% return/year).

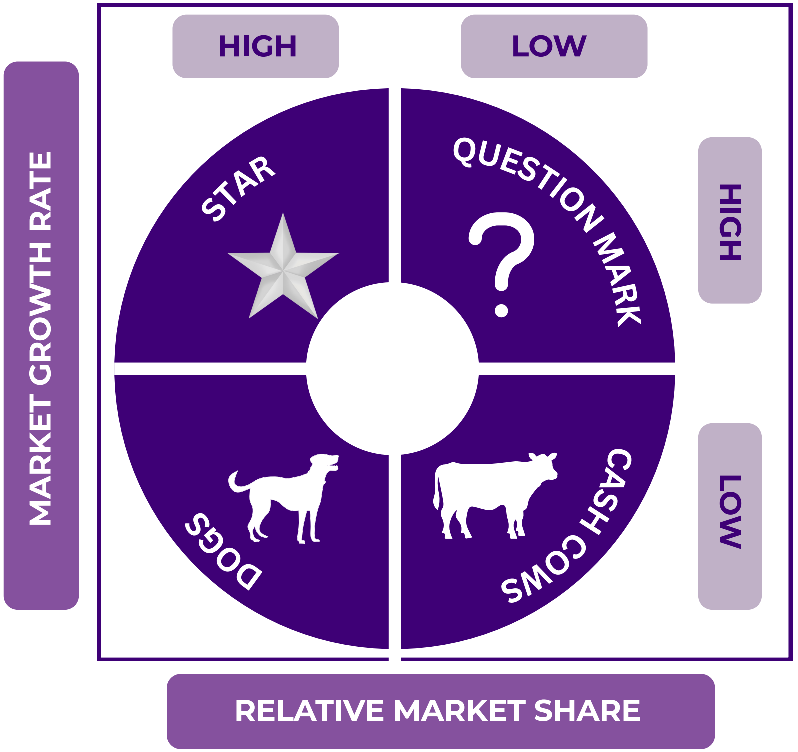
THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT CELL, ARSD

Fundamental Concepts

BCG MATRIX

Star: Products with high market share in a high-growth industry. They are market leaders and require significant investment to sustain their position. If managed well, Stars can become future Cash Cows.

Dogs: Products with low market share in a low-growth industry, that has a very less potential for profit and often considered for disinvestment.



Question Mark: Products with low market share in a high-growth industry. They have potential but need substantial investment to grow. Their future is uncertain—they could become Stars or fail and turn into Dogs.

Cash cows: Products with high market share but are in a slow-growth industry, but are potential products that generates steady cash flows with less investment.

Helps address different aspects of the marketing mix.

5M Model

5M

MANPOWER
This refers to the human resources, including employees, their skills, and their ability to perform tasks effectively.

MATERIALS
This encompasses the raw materials, components, and supplies used in the production process or project execution.

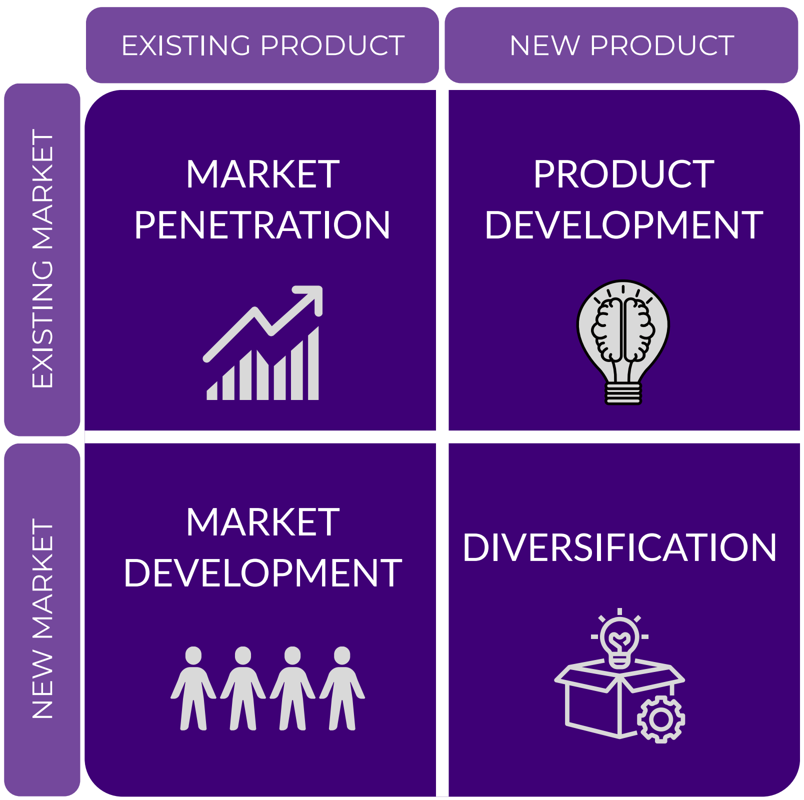
MACHINES
This includes the tools, equipment, and technology used to carry out the work or achieve project goals.

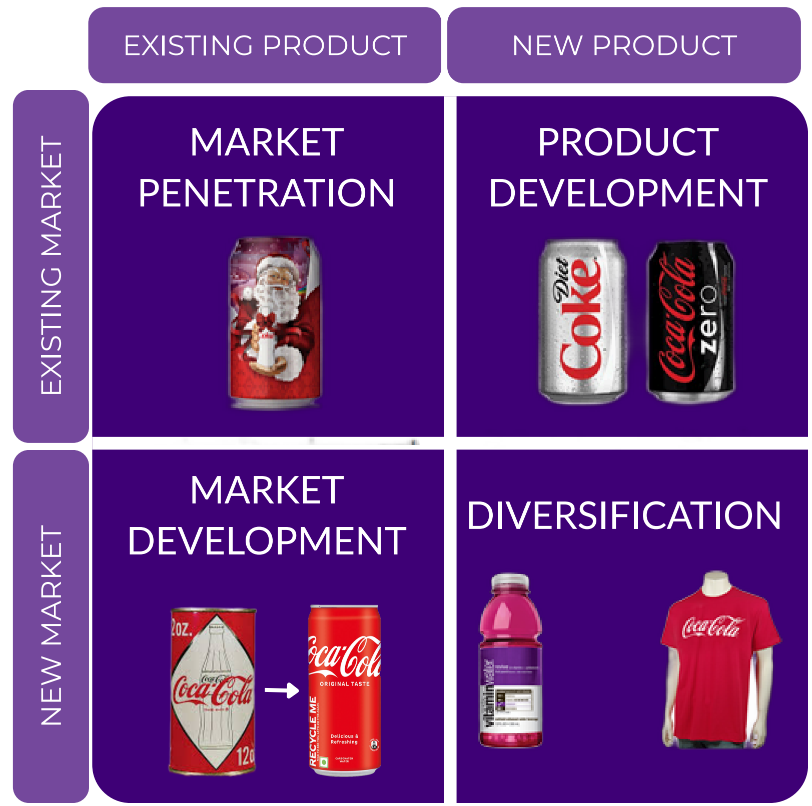
METHODS
This refers to the procedures, techniques, and processes used to perform tasks or complete projects.

MONEY
This encompasses the financial resources, budget, and investment required to support the operations or project.

Helps focus on the most critical areas that impact performance.

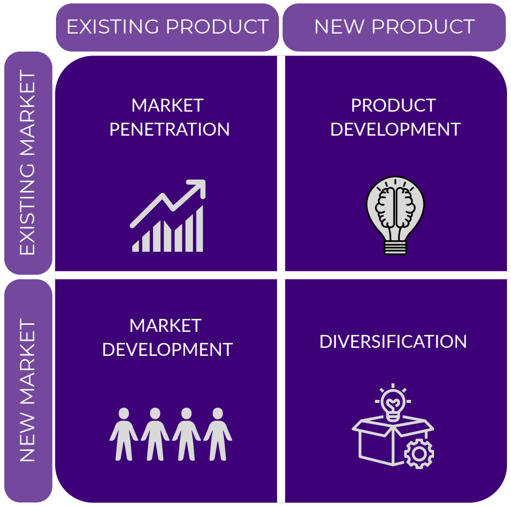
ANSOFF MATRIX





Provides a detailed framework for evaluating company growth strategies

ANSOFF MATRIX



Market Penetration (Existing Product, Existing Market)

- Focus: Increase sales of current products to current customers.
- Methods: More advertising, promotions, loyalty programs, price cuts.
- Risk: Low (since both product and market are already known).
- Example: Coca-Cola increasing advertising to sell more Coke in the U.S.

Product Development (New Product, Existing Market)

- Focus: Offer new products to current customers.
- Methods: Innovate new versions, upgrades, or new product lines.
- Risk: Medium (product risk exists, but customers are familiar).
- Example: Apple launching AirPods for existing iPhone users.

Market Development (Existing Product, New Market)

- Focus: Find new customers for current products.
- Methods: Enter new geographical areas, target new age groups, or different industries.
- Risk: Medium (new customers are involved).
- Example: McDonald's expanding to new countries like India.

Diversification (New Product, New Market)

- Focus: Create new products for entirely new markets.
- Types:
  - Related Diversification: New product somewhat linked to existing business.
  - Unrelated Diversification: Totally different product in a totally new area.
- Risk: High (because both product and market are new).
- Example: Amazon starting AWS (cloud services) beyond retail.

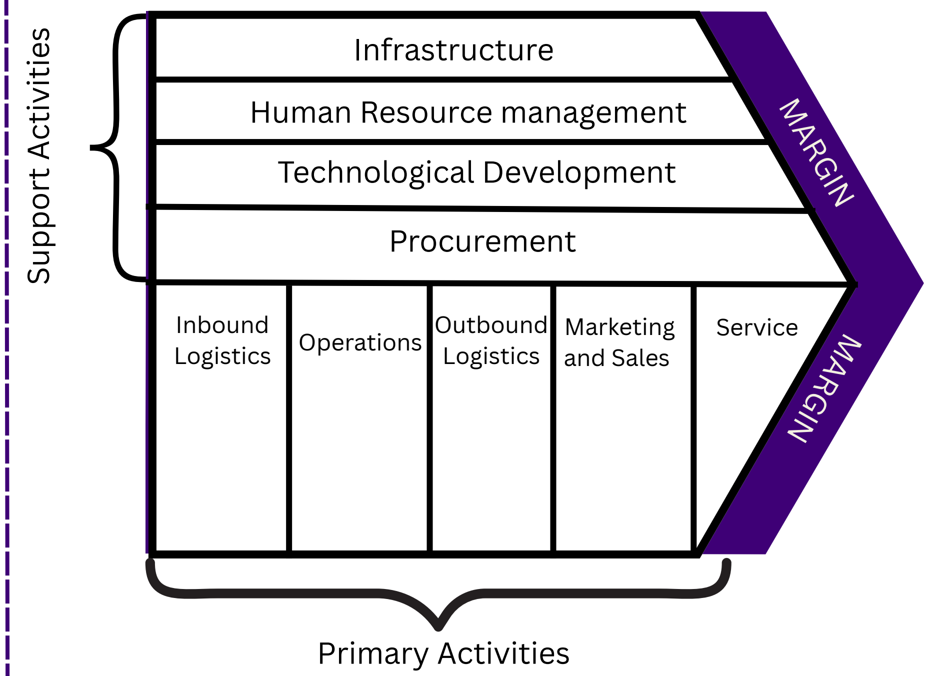
Porter's Value Chain & Process Mapping

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES

Inbound Logistics - involve relationships with suppliers and include all the activities required to receive, store, and disseminate inputs.
Operations - are all the activities required to transform inputs into outputs (products and services).
Outbound Logistics - include all the activities required to collect, store, and distribute the output.
Marketing and Sales - activities inform buyers about products and services, induce buyers to purchase them, and facilitate their purchase.
Service - includes all the activities required to keep the product or service working effectively for the buyer after it is sold and delivered.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Procurement - is the acquisition of inputs, or resources, for the firm.
Human Resource management - consists of all activities involved in recruiting, hiring, training, developing, compensating and (if necessary) dismissing or laying off personnel.
Technological Development - pertains to the equipment, hardware, software, procedures and technical knowledge brought to bear in the firm's transformation of inputs into outputs.
Infrastructure - serves the company's needs and ties its various parts together.



Useful for portfolio analysis, investment decisions, growth strategies.

4 P's Model

Product

Questions answered -
1.What problem is your product solving?
2. How does it target customer's needs?
3 What does it offer that competitors' products do not?

Price

Questions answered –
1. What do competing products cost?
2.How much are your customers willing to spend?
3. What does your product cost to create?

Place

Questions answered –
1.What distribution channels does customer use?
2. Are you B2C or B2B?
3. Where channels are used by competitors?

Promotion

Questions answered –
1.How do you want your brand to be perceived?
2.How are our competitors promoting their products?

Useful for analyzing and optimizing marketing strategies

4C Model

4Cs

CUSTOMER

Customer - What customer wants and needs.
Ways to know what customer wants and needs:

- Social media interactions
- Market research
- Competitive analysis

COST

What is Cost to Satisfy the customer.
ways of fixing a cost to satisfy the customer:

- Easy-to-use payment service
- Bundle discount offers
- Quick customer support

CONVENIENCE

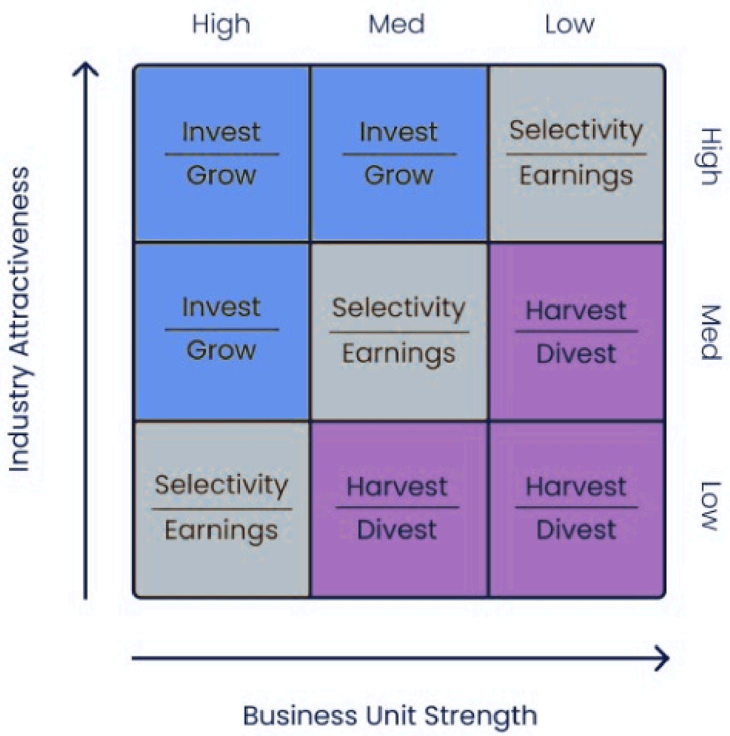
How customers interact with a brand during the buying process, ease of browsing products, personalized online shopping experience etc

COMMUNICATION

A two-way street, where brands can easily engage and communicate with their customers.

Helps focus on the most critical areas that impact performance

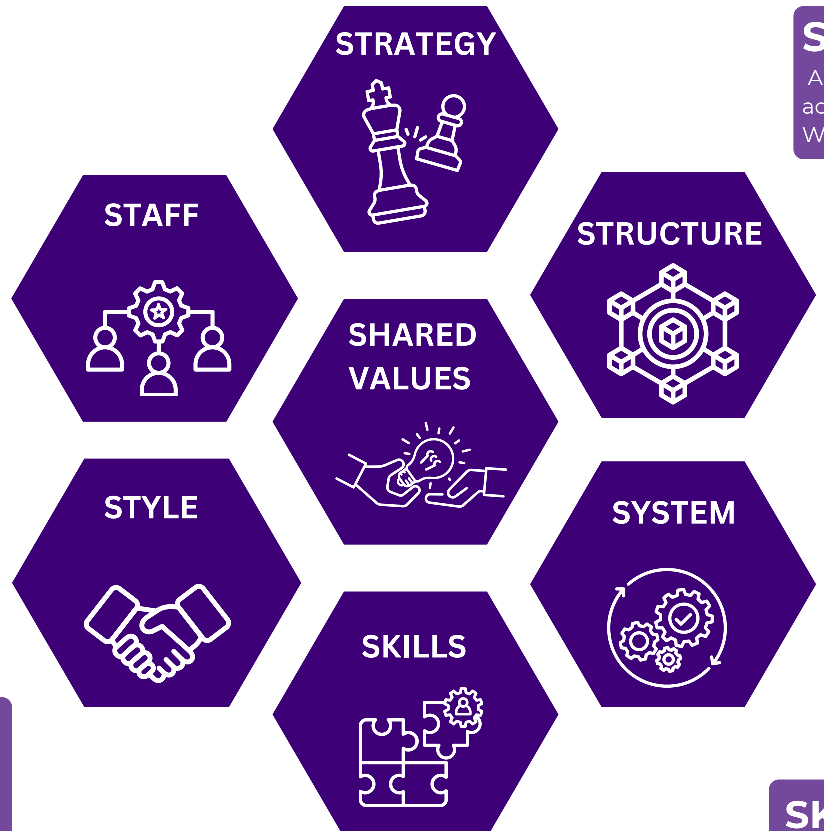
G.E. Matrix



The GE Matrix looks at two factors: the competitive strength of an SBU and the attractiveness of the market in which it operates. It Helps answer the following questions –

1. How to allocate capital throughout the organization's portfolio of companies?
2. What products or additional strategic business units are needed in their portfolio?
3. Which strategic business units should be divested?

7S MODEL



SHARED VALUES
The principles of the company that are evidenced in the corporate culture and the code of ethics.
What values guide decision-making and behaviour in our organisation.

STAFF
The pool of people mainly considering human resources and specifying how they will
be recruited, trained and motivated.
How do we retain, develop and attrac
our top talent.

STYLE
The leadership style adopted by the company and how the company is managed by
top level managers. What leadership style is dominant in our organisation.

STRATEGY
A blueprint to build core competency and achievement competitive advantage.
What is the gameplan of the company?

STRUCTURE
The way the organisation is structured depending on the availability of resources.
What is the degree of Centralization/Decentralisation

SYSTEM
The processes, procedures, and technologies used within the organization to support its operations.
How effectively and efficiently daily tasks and operations

SKILLS
The abilities and competencies of the workforce and a way to develop it.
What are the core competencies of our work

Helps in analyzing organizational design, alignment, and performance.

SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis is framework used to evaluate a company's competitive position and to develop strategic planning.
An effective organisational strategy is that which capitalises on the opportunities through the strengths and neutralises the threats by minimising the impact of weakness.

STRENGTHS Factors providing a competitive advantage to the company against its competitors. What do you want to build on?	**WEAKNESS** Factors resisting a company against operating at an optimum level in the market. What do you need to shore up?
OPPORTUNITIES External factors favourable for the company to build a sustainable competitive advantage. What do you want to capitalise on?	**THREATS** External factors which can harm the company's profitability or operations in general. What do you need to mitigate?

Helps to assess an organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

RAPID FRAMEWORK

The RAPID framework, developed by Bain & Company, is a decision-making and accountability tool that streamlines the process of making choices within an organization.

RECOMMEND

Involves making the proposal (80% of the work happens here). Includes assessing the relevant facts and obtain input from relevant parties.

AGREE

Involves providing input that must be considered in making the recommendation (within bounds of individual expertise)

PERFORM

Individuals or teams tasked with implementing the decision. Involves executing the decision, once it is made.

INPUT

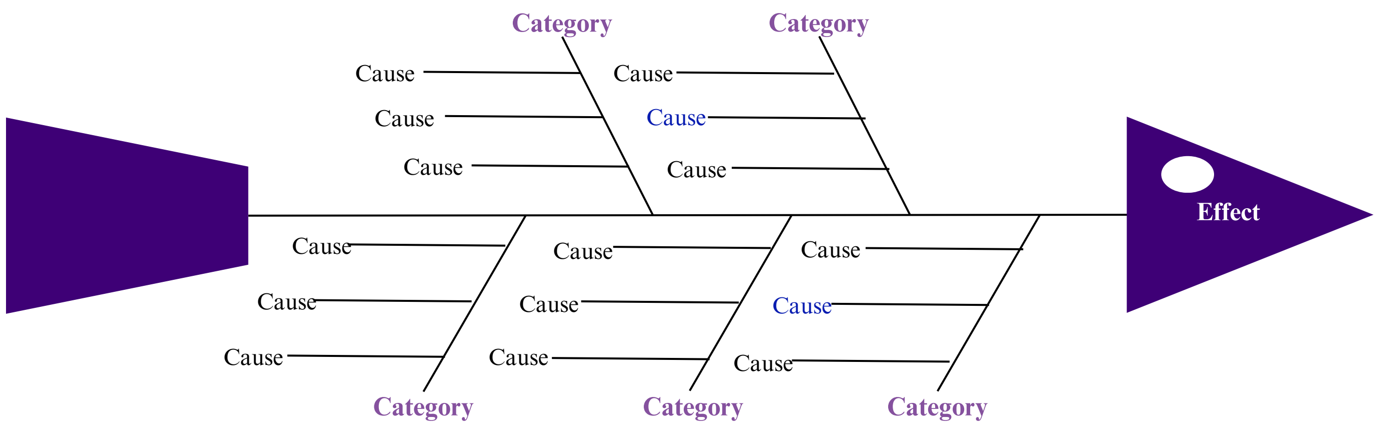
These provide valuable expertise, experience and information. There is no obligation for decision maker to act on advice.

DECIDE

Involves making the final decision- "Commit the organization to action"

Help organizations make better, faster decisions by clarifying roles and responsibilities, ensuring accountability

FISHBONE DIAGRAM



Explanation

Category: These are major types of causes that could contribute to the problem or effect being analysed. These branch off from the backbone. The following are the categories generally explored:-

Cause: These are factors which contribute to the problem or the effect being analysed. They are represented as bones branching off from the category bone

Effect: This refers to the issue or the outcome that is being analysed. The The causes listed in various categories listed in the diagram lead to the problem or effect.

Examples

Cause (examples under each category)

- People: Lack of training, clashing ideas and cultures, human errors
- Processes: IT system issues, Complicated organizational structure
- Policies: No return policy for customers, unclear employee conflict resolution policy
- Environment: Uncomfortable office, high temperatures at manufacturing unit
- Technology: Outdated IT systems, inefficient machinery, Software malfunctions
- Materials: Low availability of materials, rise in cost of raw materials.

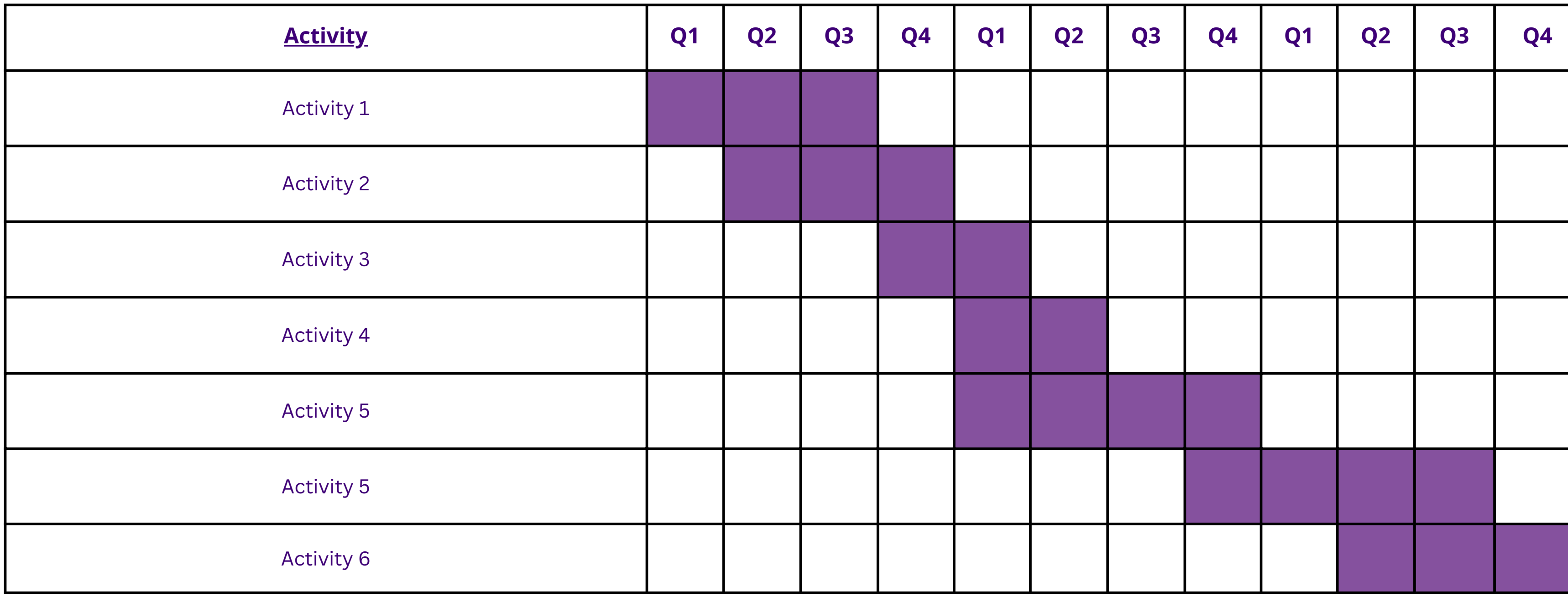
Effect

- Decrease in productivity
- Lower quality of products
- Higher customer complaints
- Increase in conflicts between employees
- Supply chain disruptions

Category (used in general)

- People
- Processes
- Policies
- Environment
- Technology
- Measurement
- Materials

GANTT CHART



The Gantt chart is a popular project management tool used in all industries to plan and schedule projects of various magnitudes.

This fundamental tool helps in creating and following a clear action plan, specifying all activities needed to be completed and the time frame in which they should be completed in.

The Gantt chart can be used for projects such as, introduction of a new product in the market, planning of the due diligence process activities during a merger, construction of a new factory, etc.

THE FINANCE & INVESTMENT CELL, ARSD

Industry Analysis

ASSET MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Inbound logistics
- Capital Inflow
- Regulatory Setup
- Custodian and Trustee setup
- Fund Structure designing

Operations
- Fund Management
- Research and Development
- Trade Execution
- NAV Calculation

Outbound Logistics
- Returns Distribution
- Regulatory Fillings
- Investor Communication

Marketing & Sales
- Segmentation
- Channel Management
- Branding & Advertising
- Digital Distribution

Service
- Investor Grievance handling
- Transaction assistance
- Portfolio based Advisory

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Management charges	Employee expenses	Growing fintech platforms
Profit sharing	Communication & IT infra	Increasing digitalization
Entry load & others	Branch Operation	Financial literacy

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- NET INFLOW / OUTFLOW
- REVENUE/AUM
- EXPENSE RATIO
- REDEMPTION RATE
- SIP BOOK SIZE

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
$18.2 billion USD	33% (2025–2030)	10-15%	HDFC MUTUAL FUND; ADITYA BIRLA CAPITAL LIFE INSURANCE; SBI MUTUAL FUND A PARTNER FOR LIFE; ICICI PRUDENTIAL MUTUAL FUN TARAKKI KARE

ASSET MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY

PORTER 5 FORCES ANALYSIS

Threat of New Entrants
High - Med
SEBI regulations, Low Entry barriers, Brand and trust are critical.

Bargaining power of suppliers
Low - moderate

Bargaining Power of Buyers
High
Wide choice availability, low switching cost

Threat of Substitutes
High
Substitutes available F.D., Insurance, Crypto etc.

Industry Rivalry
High
Competitive expense ratios, No. of AMCs, trust on Banks

MARKET & EMERGING TRENDS

Rising Mutual Fund Participation
Growing retail and SIP-based investments across the country.

Alternative Investments Growth
Increased interest in REITs, AIFs, and other non-traditional assets.

ESG Investing
More investors are choosing sustainable and socially responsible funds.

Customized High-Net-Worth Solutions
Growing demand for tailored products for affluent investors.

CHALLENGES FOR THE INDUSTRY

Regulatory Pressure
Frequent policy changes and complex compliance requirements.

Talent Gap
Shortage of skilled professionals, especially in advisory roles.

Tech Adoption
High costs and complexity in integrating advanced technologies.

Data Security
Growing concerns around data protection and cybersecurity.

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

R&D

- Basic research
- Drug discovery,
- Disease biology
- Similar disease pathways

Testing & Approval

- Pre-clinical and clinical trials
- Animal testing
- Focus group testing

Manufacturing

- API Synthesis
- Formulation development
- Manufacturing facilities for mass production

Distribution

- Wholesalers and distributors
- Drug stores
- Hospitals
- Online pharmacies

Marketing & After-Sales

- Samples (to doctors)
- Doctor referrals
- Promotional content

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Drug sales	R&D	Global Partnerships
Patents	Distribution	Aging Population
Insurance premiums	Promotion/Marketing	Growing stress related diseases

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Customer Order Accuracy
- Research and Development
- Regulatory Compliance
- Manufacturing Efficiency

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT
USD 50 billion (FY 2023-24)	10-12%	16-22%

KEY PLAYERS

SUN PHARMA

Cipla

Dr.Reddy's

Divis

PORTER 5 FORCES ANALYSIS

Bargaining Power of Buyers:
Moderate. With many companies offering similar products, buyers like hospitals have multiple options.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers:
Low. Numerous chemical suppliers allow pharma companies to switch easily and avoid high costs.

Competitive Rivalry:
High. Rising drug demand, low-to-moderate entry barriers, and a mix of large and small firms drive strong competition.

Threat of New Entrants:
Moderate to low. Regulatory hurdles and high R&D costs limit entry, but the market remains open, especially for generics.

Threat of Substitutes:
Moderate. Generics and alternative therapies are available, though branded drugs maintain an edge through proprietary formulas.

MARKET & EMERGING TRENDS

AI's Exponential Impact:
AI is transforming work and decision-making with better predictions, faster actions, and improved outcomes, powering future-ready organizations.

Constant Crisis Mode:
Ongoing global volatility—driven by cyberattacks, geopolitical tensions, disasters, and polarization—is becoming the norm.

Personalized Medicine:
Using genetic data, treatments are tailored to individuals, improving effectiveness and reducing side effects.

Regenerative Medicine:
Advances in stem cell therapy and tissue engineering offer hope for curing previously untreatable conditions.

CHALLENGES FOR THE INDUSTRY

Intellectual Property:
Patents are vital but costly to protect, with constant risks of infringement in a competitive industry.

Pricing Pressure:
Regulators and consumers push for lower drug prices, squeezing profits and limiting R&D investment.

Public Perception:
Concerns over pricing, access, and ethics put pharma companies under public scrutiny, making reputation management crucial.

Talent Shortages:
A lack of skilled professionals in R&D and biotech hampers innovation and advanced manufacturing.

CEMENT INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Raw materials
- Procurement of materials such as limestone, coal, fly ash, and slag.

Logistics
- Setup of plants nearby the suppliers of the raw materials.
- Efficient sourcing and transportation are crucial to minimize costs.

Manufacturing
- Limestone → Clinker → (grinding and additives) → Cement
- Manufacturing is majorly automative (machine based)

Distribution
- Distribution through road, rail, and sea. --
- Logistics optimization is vital due to the high cost and bulk nature of cement.

Sales & Marketing
- Managing dealer networks for sales
- Use of digital platforms and outdoor advertising

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Drug sales	R&D	Global Partnerships
Patents	Distribution	Aging Population
Insurance premiums	Promotion/Marketing	Growing stress related diseases

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Capacity Utilization: Currently around 70–75%, with potential for improvement.
- Energy Consumption per Tonne: Reflects operational efficiency and effectivity; lower consumption is preferable.
- CO_2 Emissions per Tonne: An environmental KPI; companies aim to reduce this through various methods.

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE
Estimated at USD 22.04 billion (FY 2023-24)

CAGR
CAGR of 7–8% during FY25E–FY27E

AVERAGE NET PROFIT
8.2-9%

KEY PLAYERS
- Top 20 companies account for around 70% of the total production in India; Regional Oligopoly
- Ultratech cement (31%), Ambuja cement (21%), ACC Ltd. (12%), Shree cement Ltd. (10%)

CEMENT INDUSTRY

PORTER 5 FORCES ANALYSIS

Competitive Rivalry: High, due to numerous players and price sensitivity.

Threat of New Entrants: Moderate, given the capital-intensive nature and regulatory requirements.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers: Moderate, as raw materials are region-specific but essential.

Bargaining Power of Buyers: High, with customers having multiple options and low switching costs.

Threat of Substitutes: Low, as there are limited alternatives to cement in construction.

MARKET & EMERGING TRENDS

- **Sustainability Focus:** Using supplementary cementitious materials (SCMs) such as slag and fly ash to lessen carbon emissions
- **Technological Advancements:** Automation and the Internet of Things are being used to improve operational efficiency and predictive maintenance. Greyforce
- **Alternative Fuels:** Utilizing renewable energy sources and fuels made from waste to reduce emissions and energy costs.

CHALLENGES FOR THE INDUSTRY

- Surplus capacity of approximately 150 million tonnes leads to underutilization.
- Highly competitive industry
- Stricter norms require investment in cleaner technologies, increasing costs.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Inbound logistics
- Raw material Procurement
- Inventory Management
- Supplier parks near OEMs

Operations
- Product designing and engineering
- Assembly line manufacturing
- Quality control and testing
- Compliance and certification

Outbound Logistics
- Inventory management
- Transportation to Dealers
- Dealer Distribution Network

Marketing and Sales
- Market Segmentation
- Advertising and Promotion
- Product launch events
- Financing and insurance tie ups

Service
- ·After sales service
- ·Service centre networks
- ·EV specific services

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Automobile sales	Raw Materials	Govt. support policy
After-sale service	Labour	Increasing exports
Financing services	Advertising	Expanding middle class population

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- MONTHLY/ANNUAL SALES VOLUME
- PRODUCTION TIME
- INVENTORY NOTES
- CAPACITY UTILIZATION
- DOWNTIME
- CAC
- ROI

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
$137.1 billion USD	8% (2025–2030)	4-5%	MARUTI SUZUKI, Mahindra (SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES), Hero, TATA MOTORS

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

PORTER 5 FORCES ANALYSIS

Threat of New Entrants
High - Med
High Capital Requirements, Technology disruption and Brand and trust are critical.

Bargaining power of suppliers
Med- low
Fragmented supplier base, OEM dominance

Bargaining Power of Buyers
High
Easy price comparison, Buyers sensitivity to price

Threat of Substitutes
Moderate
Like – Public transport, Ride sharing etc.

Industry Rivalry
High
Multiple players, Price wars and discounts, Rapid innovative developments

MARKET & EMERGING TRENDS

EV Growth:
Rapid rise in electric vehicle adoption driven by government incentives and environmental awareness.

Digital Transformation:
Increasing use of AI, IoT, and connected technologies in vehicles and manufacturing.

Shared Mobility:
Growth of ride-sharing and subscription-based models, especially in urban areas.

Localization & Exports:
Push for local manufacturing (Make in India) and rising export opportunities for components and vehicles.

CHALLENGES FOR THE INDUSTRY

Regulatory Compliance:
Navigating complex and evolving regulations requires significant investment in technology and infrastructure.

Infrastructure Limitations:
The lack of widespread EV charging stations and limited EV-ready service centers hinder the adoption of electric mobility.

Supply Chain Disruptions:
Global shortages of critical components impact production timelines and cost structures.

Skilled Workforce Shortage:
The rapid shift towards electric vehicles necessitates a workforce skilled in new technologies.

CABLE TV&OTT INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Logistics

·Involves accretion& creation of content.
·Technical infrastructure
·Licensing& Rights

Operations

· Content Encoding, Storage & Mgmt.
·Streaming technology

Distribution

· Multi-System Operators (MSOs),Local Cable Operators (LCOs) and OTT apps to distribute content.
· Involves Broadcasters like Star India, and Sony to deliver the content.

Sales & Promotion

·Advertisements
Sponsorships Campaigns
Platform Promotions

Sales & Marketing

· Managing dealer networks for sales.
· Use of digital platforms and outdoor advertising for increasing customer engagement.

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Drug sales	R&D	Global Partnerships
Patents	Distribution	Aging Population
Insurance premiums	Promotion/Marketing	Growing stress related diseases

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Engagement Metrics: Viewership hours, TRP and completion rates.

Exit rate:- Per hundred subscribers discontinuing the service.

Subscriber Growth Rate: Monthly or yearly increase in subscribers. (Mainly for OTT's)

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE

USD 21.97 billion
(FY 2023-24)

CAGR

Cable TV-.73%
OTT Industry-19.7%

AVERAGE NET PROFIT

8.2-9%

KEY PLAYERS

Top 20 companies account for around 70% of the total production in India; Regional Oligopoly Ultratech cement (31%), Ambuja cement (21%), ACC Ltd. (12%), Shree cement Ltd. (10%)

PORTER 5 FORCES ANALYSIS

Cable Industry

- Threat of New Entrants: Moderate; high capital investment and regulatory requirements pose barriers.
- Bargaining Power of Suppliers: High; limited content producers can demand premium pricing .
- Bargaining Power of Buyers: High; consumers have multiple alternatives, including OTT platforms.
- Threat of Substitutes: High; OTT platforms and streaming services offer flexible viewing options.
- Industry Rivalry: Intense; numerous players competing for market share.

OTT Industry

- Threat of New Entrants: High; low entry barriers but challenging to achieve scale.
- Bargaining Power of Suppliers: High; content creators can negotiate favorable terms .
- Bargaining Power of Buyers: Moderate; while switching costs are low, content exclusivity can retain users.
- Threat of Substitutes: Moderate; traditional TV and piracy remain alternatives.
- Industry Rivalry: Very High; numerous platforms vying for user attention and loyalty.

MARKET & EMERGING TRENDS

EV Growth:
Rapid rise in electric vehicle adoption driven by government incentives and environmental awareness.

Digital Transformation:
Increasing use of AI, IoT, and connected technologies in vehicles and manufacturing.

Shared Mobility:
Growth of ride-sharing and subscription-based models, especially in urban areas.

Localization & Exports:
Push for local manufacturing (Make in India) and rising export opportunities for components and vehicles.

CHALLENGES FOR THE INDUSTRY

Piracy:- Unauthorized distribution affecting revenues .

Monetization:-Dynamic pricing models for monetization that satisfy all user needs

Diversification:- Platforms need to produce content that satisfies a range of requirements and focus on localization (dubbing and subtitles)

FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Raw Material

Procuring materials like grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat

Inbound Logistics

Warehouses
Building infrastructure like cold storages

Processing

Processing through canning, freezing, and packaging.
Cleaning, sorting, grading, pulping, juicing, pasteurization, solidifying

Distribution

Supplying products to retailers, wholesalers, and food service providers.

Retail & Export:

Delivering products to end consumers via various channels.
.

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Drug sales	R&D	Global Partnerships
Patents	Distribution	Aging Population
Insurance premiums	Promotion/Marketing	Growing stress related diseases

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Food Wastage: The amount and worth of food that is lost during processing, handling, etc.

Cost of production:- Optimal range is 15-25% of the revenue

Inventory turnover:- It quantifies the frequency of sales and replacements of inventory.

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT
USD 143.51 billion (FY 2022-23)	5.7% (2024–2032)	5% to 10%

KEY PLAYERS

PORTER 5 FORCES ANALYSIS

Threat of New Entrants: Moderate; high capital requirements but government support eases entry.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers: Low to moderate; fragmented supplier base.

Bargaining Power of Buyers: High; numerous alternatives available to consumers.

Threat of Substitutes: High; unprocessed and home-cooked foods serve as alternatives.

Industry Rivalry: Intense; presence of numerous domestic and international players.

MARKET & EMERGING TRENDS

Health and Wellness: Growing interest in plant-based, organic, and functional foods.

Convenience Foods: A rise in the use of prepared foods and beverages.

Technological Advancements: Automation and digital technologies are being used in supply chain management and processing.

CHALLENGES FOR THE INDUSTRY

High import duties and complicated financing

Quality issues:- There are high chances of food getting contaminated

Lack of technological advancement

Lack of skilled labours

FMCG INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

R&D
- new products
- product differentiation
- refine formulations

Testing & Approval
- Sourcing of raw materials
- Quality testing
- Storage of raw materials

Manufacturing
- Production
- Packaging
- Quality/grammage testing
- Storage

Distribution
- Distribution Centres
- Invoicing
- Inventory Management

Marketing & After-Sales
- Branding and advertising
- Merchandising
- Order Fulfilment
- Consumer purchase

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Drug sales	R&D	Global Partnerships
Patents	Distribution	Aging Population
Insurance premiums	Promotion/ Marketing	Growing stress related diseases

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC)
- Out-of-Stock Rate
- Product Penetration Rate
- Throughput (Average Sales)

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
USD 245.39 Billion in 2024	17.33% from 2025-2033	15-18%	Hindustan Unilever Limited, Nestlé, Godrej, Varun Beverages Ltd

SEMICONDUCTOR INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Inbound logistics
- Silicon wafers
- High-purity gases
- Lithography tools
- etching machines
- Customs facilitation
- schemes

Operatins
- Fabrication
- Assembly & Packaging
- Testing
- Design & Verification

Service
- Techinical Assistance
- Warranty and maintenance
- Software Updates

Outbound Logistics
- Product Packaging & Labelling
- Distribution Channels like – D2OEM or through Distributors
- Centralized warehousing hubs near ports
- FTAs, Incentives – MEIS, RoDTEP

Marketing & After-Sales
- B2B partnerships
- Digital Marketing
- STP
- Expos like Semicon India, SEMICON SEA

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Government Support & favourable policies	R&D	Global Partnerships
China+1 Strategy	Distribution	Infrastructure -
Insurance premiums	Digitization & Tech Adoption -	

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Wafer Yield Rate
- Defect Density
- CapEx to Revenue Ratio
- Chip Power Efficiency

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
$30 billion USD	Over 20% (2024–2030)	8%–15%	· Tata Elxsi · Vedanta group · HCL · Dixon technologies · Sahasra Semiconductors

TELECOM INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Logistics

Installation and maintenance of towers
Setting up channels and band frequencies

Operations

·.

Content Encoding, Storage & Mgmt.
Streaming technology

Integrators

Provide 4G/5G software technicians;
integrate hardware and software for telecom firms.

Network Operator

Engaged in spectrum trading;
Own and manage radio wave spectrum access through auction

Service Providers

Purchase capacity from network operators to service general public
Offerings – Voice Call, messaging & internet

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Drug sales	R&D	Global Partnerships
Patents	Distribution	Aging Population
Insurance premiums	Promotion/Marketing	Growing stress related diseases

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

ARPU (Average Revenue Per User).:The amount of money telecommunications companies make every month per subscriber

Network supporters Score: The probability that a customer will recommend a service (1–10)

Churn Rate: Total Number of Lost Customers

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
US$28.7 billion (FY 2023-24)	Approximately 14%.	14%	airtel, Jio, Vi

FOOD DELIVERY INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Logistics
Procurement of raw materials/components like electronics, plastic, packaging, paper, etc., from suppliers or manufacturers.

Operations
Assembly or manufacturing of office equipment (printers, computers, copiers) or service execution (IT support, managed services).

Outbound Logistics
Distribution of products/services to corporate clients or retailers via physical or digital channels.

Marketing & Sales
Key client relationships
Corporate bidding/tenders
Digital marketing for B2B

Service
AMC (Annual Maintenance Contract) strength
Client satisfaction/NPS
Customer support tech (CRM, apps)

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Drug sales	R&D	Global Partnerships
Patents	Distribution	Aging Population
Insurance premiums	Promotion/Marketing	Growing stress related diseases

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Average Order Value (AOV): Average amount spent per order.
Customer acquisition cost (CAC):The cost-benefit analysis of increased market penetration.
Customer Retention Rate: Percentage of customers who continue to use the service over time

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
$3 billion in 2023	30% over the next five years	N/A	zomato, SWIGGY

VALUE CHAIN

Inbound Logistics
- Procurement of food, beverages & other supplies
- Storage and distribution within hotel's departments
- Inventory management

Operations
- preparing rooms
- serving meals
- providing housekeeping services
- other services

Outbound Logistics
- room service
- transportation arrangements.
- on-demand services

Marketing and Sales
- Promotional offers
- Advertisements
- Membership deals

Service
- ensuring a positive guest experience
- feedback
- support provided to guests

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Room Tariffs	Raw material and consumables	Rise of online booking platforms
Food & Beverages	Employee Salaries	Rising per-capita Incomes
Events, Conferences & Others	Maintenance cost	Government initiatives

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)
- Occupancy Rate
- Cost Per Occupied Room (CPOR)
- Average length of stay (ALOS)

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
US$ 24.61 billion in 2024	4.73% (2024-29)	10-15%	IHCL, OYO, ITC HOTELS RESPONSIBLE LUXURY

AVIATION INDUSTRY

VALUE CHAIN

Inbound Logistics

- Procurement of Aircraft and Parts
- Vendor Management & Supply Chain Coordination
- Inventory & Spare Parts Storage

Operations

- Flight Scheduling & Fleet Management
- Safety & Regulatory Compliance
- Ground Services Coordination

Outbound Logistics

- Passenger and Baggage Handling
- Cargo Transport

Marketing and Sales

- Dynamic Pricing and Yield Management
- Distribution Channels
- Digital Marketing & Loyalty Programs

Service

- Customer Support & Feedback Handling
- Loyalty Rewards and Upgrades
- Disruption Management

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Baggage fees	Aviation Fuel	Government policies
Ticket revenue	Employee cost	Rising middle and upper class
On-board food & services	Aircraft, facility lease	Infrastructure Development

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Revenue Passenger Kilometres (RPK)
- Cost per Available Seat Kilometre (CASK)
- On-Time Performance (OTP)
- Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
14.78 billion USD in 2025	12.03% (2025-2030)	2-3%	IndiGo, SpiceJet, AIR INDIA

VALUE CHAIN

Product Development
- Customer-Centric Innovation
- Digital Transformation

Customer Acquisition & Sales
- Omnichannel Strategy
- Targeted Marketing & Data Analytics

Product Offerings
- Diverse Financial Products:
- Customized Solutions:
- Value-Added Services:

Processing & Transactions
- Digital and Real-Time Processing
- Automated Clearing Systems
- Back-End Integration

Customer Service & Risk Management
- Customer Support
- Proactive Risk Assessment
- Compliance and Regulatory Adherence

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS

REVENUE DRIVERS	COST DRIVERS	GROWTH DRIVERS
Baggage fees	Aviation Fuel	Government policies
Ticket revenue	Employee cost	Rising middle and upper class
On-board food & services	Aircraft, facility lease	Infrastructure Development

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Cost to Income ratio
- Net Interest Margin (NIM)
- Non-Performing Assets
- Loan To deposit ratio

INDUSTRY METRICS

MARKET SIZE	CAGR	AVERAGE NET PROFIT	KEY PLAYERS
US$ 1861.72 billion (public banking) US$ 1264.28 billion (private banking)	17% (2025-2030)	3-5%	ICICI, kotak Kotak Mahindra Bank, HDFC BANK

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Unsolved Guesstimates

Unsolved Guesstimates

- **Approximate the revenue of all Indian roadside tea stalls in a year.**
- **How many debit card transactions are done in India on an average day?**
- **Approximate how many online grocery orders are done every day in Mumbai.**
- **How much could be the monthly sales of a small Kirana store in a metro city?**
- **Approximate how much revenue the Indian Railways gets every day from local (non-premium) trains.**

Unsolved Guesstimates

- Approximate number of toothpaste tubes sold in India per month.
- How much petrol is consumed by two-wheelers annually in India?
- Approximate number of Tinder swipes occurring in India per day.
- Number of mobile phones sold in India per year.
- Approximate number of plastic water bottles sold per day throughout urban India.

Unsolved Guesstimates

- **Estimate the government cost of supplying free electricity up to 100 units in a state like Delhi.**
- **Estimate the number of lives impacted every day by railway strikes or political agitations in India.**
- **How much e-waste is produced in Mumbai per day in kilograms?**
- **Guess the number of units of electricity lost through vampire devices in a city like Bangalore.**
- **Guess the amount of plastic dumped into the Ganga river per year.**

Unsolved Guesstimates

- Guess the number of new YouTube videos uploaded by Indian users per day.
- How many live or recorded online classes are held each day in India after COVID?
- Guess how many Indian students utilize ChatGPT or other similar AI tools to study each day.
- What's the yearly revenue of Kota, Rajasthan's tuition centers?
- Guess how much money is spent by Indian colleges annually on electricity and maintaining infrastructure.

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Consulting Keywords

CONSULTING KEYWORDS

- **80/20 Rule** – Derived from the Pareto Principle. In consulting, it refers to working smarter to avoid getting bogged down in the detail of a problem. Consultants believe that 80% of impact can usually be achieved by investing effort into the top 20% most important issues.

- **Back-of-the-Envelope** – a calculation done quickly to provide a rough estimate of the value of something (the return on an investment, potential cost savings) to decide if a course of action is worth investing additional time to pursue or not.

- **Boil the Ocean** – when a task or project has been incorrectly scoped so that it's impossible to complete, or loads the team with more work than they can handle because it demands an unnecessary level of precision or detail.

Further context: you don't always need to boil the ocean and get an exact number (for cost savings or the size of a market). An estimate is often sufficient, especially for a first pass to focus the team in the right direction for further work.

- **Bandwidth –** a way of describing how much capacity you have to take on additional work, both from a time and energy perspective.

- **CAGR** – an abbreviation for compound annual growth rate. It calculates the average annual growth rate of a financial variable (e.g. revenues, costs, the value of an investment) over time. The formula for CAGR is:

Compound Annual Growth Rate Formula

$$CAGR = \left(\frac{EV}{BV}\right)^{\frac{1}{n}} - 1 \times 100$$

Where:

EV = Ending value
BV = Beginning value
n = The number of years.

CONSULTING KEYWORDS

- **C-Suite** – the most senior-level executives of a corporation.
  Examples: Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Chief Marketing Officer.

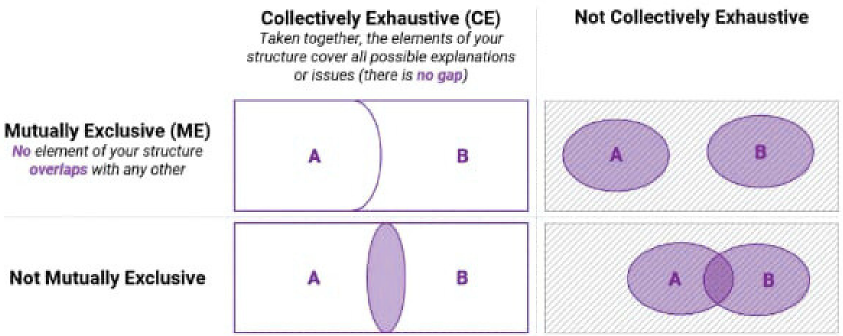
- **Drill Down** – after a project summary has been given, this describes the stage of digging into the detail.
  Example: you pitch your team on how the client can reduce the costs of their marketing strategy and the manager wants to drill down into the detail so a workable proposal can be developed.

- **Low-Hanging Fruit** – the quick wins, the easiest opportunities to address.
  Further context: low-hanging fruit for a struggling retailer might be offering discounts to current customers to gain more of their business.

- **On the Beach** – a term used to describe when you're in between engagements and, although you're being paid, you're not currently allocated to a project.

  Further context: when you're on the beach pending being assigned to your next project, you will frequently be asked to help develop pitches for future client work.

- **MECE** – an acronym for "Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive" which describes a way of organizing information into categories. The best way of breaking things into categories is to make the categories Mutually Exclusive – there is no overlap between the categories – and Collectively Exhaustive – the items each fit into one and only one category.



CONSULTING KEYWORDS

- **Peel the Onion (a.k.a. Next-level Thinking)** – to delve deeper into the detail or do further analysis to get to the root cause of the problem.
  Further context: you might need to listen in on some customer service calls to really understand what differentiates good customer service from poor customer service for an insurance client.

- **Pipeline** – the list of upcoming or potential projects for consultants.
  Further context: you're excited to learn that there's an eCommerce project in the pipeline as this is a sector you've been keen to learn more about.

- **Scope Creep** – describes how the requirements of a project can build over time and need to be managed carefully to maintain control of the timeline and budget.
  Further context: the project's manager is concerned about scope creep as the client has requested a meeting to talk about additional requirements which aren't currently part of the project.

- **Sniff Test (a.k.a. Smell Test)** – assessing whether something makes sense at a high level before accepting it as the truth or correct. The term comes from a way to check whether fruit is rotten – you don't need to slice and dice it to figure out it's gone bad, just sniff. Further context: your manager asks you to double-check your analysis before presenting it to the team because it doesn't pass the smell test (doesn't seem right).

- **Strawman** – a potential solution or course of action used, not because it is perfect, but just to generate discussion about its advantages and disadvantages so that it can be improved upon. Consultants often prefer to solicit reactions to a strawman than to start a discussion from a totally blank slate, because it is often more efficient.
  Further context: a client is experiencing decreasing profits and one strawman proposal may be to expand its product range. The team meets to discuss the benefits of and problems with this option and develops further iterations until a final, workable recommendation is reached.

- **The Weeds** – the details, as opposed to the high-level context.
  Further context: If you are building a financial model, the partner on the case is unlikely to get into the weeds of how it is built — she will just want the high-level conclusions you are reaching. But your direct manager might get into the weeds to ensure the two of you are aligned on methodology and key assumptions.

- **What's the So-what?** – the key implication or real-world usefulness of a piece of analysis. Consulting project managers and clients usually want this ahead of the supporting information on your analysis.
  Further context: you've discovered that the client sells more of its products in one particular geography, but what does that mean for the client's overall goal to increase its revenue?

NOTE OF THANKS

As we bring this casebook to a close, we would like to express our deep gratitude to everyone who made this journey possible.

To our mentors and professors – thank you for being our guiding light, constantly pushing us to think deeper and aim higher.

To our peers – your discussions, ideas, and support made this experience richer and more meaningful.

This casebook is not just a compilation of knowledge, but a reflection of teamwork, dedication, and a shared passion for learning.

We hope it sparks curiosity, inspires new ideas, and serves as a stepping stone for greater achievements ahead.

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