SBMA7103: Strategic Management

Word count 4337

Executive summary

This report has presented the case of Google Inc following the information released by Marketline (2013), which focussed on Google's diversification plan. The report has firstly identified the main strategic issues facing Google in maintaining their current global competitive position using tools such as SWOT, PESTEL and Porter's forces framework. Secondly, the report has evaluated the corporate level strategic directions that Google has utilised to date in order to sustain and develop their global competitive position, which was found to be both related and unrelated diversification strategies. Thereafter, using Ansoff's (1957) matrix, the report has also noted that Google's choice of strategies has huge impacts on its operations which are both positive and negative. The positive implications include superior internal governance, transfer of competencies, economies of scope, whereas the negative impacts include the difficulty of meeting Porter's three essential tests of attractiveness, cost of entry and the better-off-test. As a recommendation, the author posits that the company ought to carry on with its implementation strategy as it creates more value than costs in the long run.

Contents

Executive summary i
1. Introduction 1
2. Company overview 1
3. Main strategic issues facing Google 2
3.1. PESTEL 2
3.1.1. Legal 3
3.1.2. Environmental 3
3.1.3. Scio-cultural 4
3.1.4. Economic 4
3.1.5. Political 5
3.1.6. Technological 5
3.2. SWOT 5
3.2.1. Strengths 6
3.2.2. Weaknesses 6
3.2.3. Opportunities 7
3.2.4. Threats 7
3.3. Porter's five forces 7
3.3.1. New entrants 8
3.3.2. Substitutes 8
3.3.3. Buyer power 8
3.3.4. Suppler power 8
3.3.5. Competitive rivalry 9
4. Corporate level strategic directions that Google has utilised 9
5. Implications 11
5.1. Negative implications 12
5.2. Positive implications 13
6. Recommendations 15
7. Conclusion 16
References 18

1. Introduction

This report analyses the case of Google Inc following the information released by Marketline (2013), which focussed on Google's diversification plan. The aim of the paper is to identify the main strategic issues facing Google in maintaining their current global competitive position take and evaluate the corporate level strategic directions that Google has utilised to date in order to sustain and develop their global competitive position. The report also aims to discuss the implications of these options for the strategic management decisions of the organisation. To achieve these core objectives, the report proceeds in three major sections as company overview; strategic issues and directions using PESTEL, SWOT, and Porter's five forces frameworks; and implications and recommendations using Ansoff's matrix. The last section is a conclusion of the report

2. Company overview

Google is a publicly traded company in USA that has specialised in the manufacture, processing and retailing of internet-based services ranging from online advertisement to cloud computing technology, and much recently, hardware production (Google, 2014). The company was founded in 1998 and had its first Initial Public Offering in 2004, with the mission of organising the world's information and making it useful and universally available (Google, 2014). The company currently operates from its headquarters in California. Financially, acceding to data released by the company (Google, 2014), Google recorded \$55.5 billion, a 21% increase in its revenues from \$46.0 billion in 2012. This increase in percentage is similar to that recorded between 2012 and 2011. Additionally, the company reported an operating income of \$15.4 billion up from \$13.8 billion in 2012, which marked a 28% increase in profitability. On the other hand, the net income as of 2013 was \$13.4 billion, with basic and diluted Earnings per Share (EPS) of \$20.0 and \$19.0 respectively. The company also recorded $111 billion worth of assets up from $94 billion the previous year, making it the 55th best company in Fortune 500 list 2013 (Forbes, 2013).

Google is an example of companies that have experienced rapid growth and development, which is evident from the company's numerous partnerships and acquisitions that led to its expansion beyond search engine provision (Brennan, 2009). The company has increased its range of products and services over the years and some of the most utilised include email services (Gmail), cloud computing services (Google Drive) and online social platforms (Google+), among others. It also offers desktop applications such as Google Chat and Picasa for photo editing and sharing (Helft, 2009). Moreover, the company recently integrated its services and products to include Operating System (OS) development of Chrome and Android development, the mobile application software which is used by smartphone manufacturers (Android, 2008). The other significant development in the company is its development of hardware devices like Nexus, which follows its acquisition of Motorola Mobility in 2012 (Topolsky, 2010). It is these latest developments that form the basis of this discussion.

3. Main strategic issues facing Google

In order to underscore the main strategic issues facing Google, this section examines the external environment based on PESTLE framework with SWOT used to summarise its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and internal environment using Porter's five forces, as shown in figures 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

3.1. PESTEL

Designed to analyse the microenvironment of a business for purposes of strategic management of an organisation, PESTEL framework captures factors that mostly affect Google in its global strategy (DeToni and Tonchia, 2005).

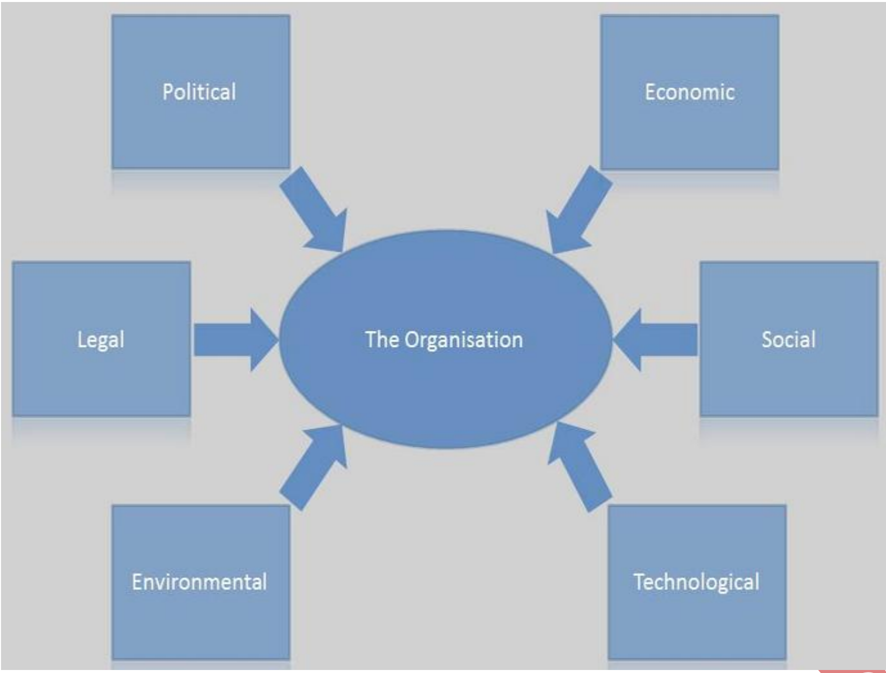

Figure 1: A generic PESTEL framework

3.1.1. Legal

Legal issues that are affecting Google's global strategy include restrictions from government legislation, trade policies, and lawsuits from other organisations (Porter, 2008). According to Porter (2008), Google is restricted by laws in UK such as Companies Act (2006) and laws in the US such as US Securities Exchange Act (1934). Such laws contain directives on how corporate entities may carry out their trade, which limits Google's operations as the company is known for its unfair trade practices (Johnson and Whitting, 2006). Policies such as antitrust and international trade policies also limit Google's operations with other companies and in other countries, which limits its growth rate. Finally, the recent issues raised by other organisations such as Big Brother Watch and Privacy international ultimately damage the reputation and brand image of the company (Morrison and Sweet, 2010).

3.1.2. Environmental

Strict environmental legislations in most regions in the developed world, coupled with environmental lobbyists, are some of the notable factors affecting Google (Porter, 2008). Laws such as Environmental Protection Act of 1990 spell out practices that constitute environmental pollution and ways in which they can be avoided, such as emission of Carbon based gases. To operate in these regions, Google must abide by the law, which leads to increased expenses, thus reducing the profit margin (Brennan, 2009). Environmental organisations such as Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) also watch multinational organisations and report their malpractices to the public, and such reports may create a bad public image for Google (Johnson and Whitting, 2006).

3.1.3. Scio-cultural

Socio-cultural factors are issues such as demographics, culture and social trends of a society, all of which have seen rapid changes over the recent past. Notably, According to the US Census Bureau (2014), the world has more than 7 billion people, with China, India and the US having the leading population. On average, the percentage population of people aged between 15 and 64 is 66%, with 26% and 8% being children and the aged respectively. Additionally, the global outlook of the world shows that the youth are aggressively adopting popular culture, the most notable of which are smartphone ownership, online social interaction and online shopping (USCB, 2014). These statistics determine where Google can base its operations due to human labour factors; what regions, and segments of the population to target in the market; as well as what kinds of products to produce.

3.1.4. Economic

Economic factors that affect Google globally are exchange rates, taxes, competition, government support and, unemployment, among others (Porter, 2008). Most regions of the world including USA, UK, South Korea and China have a partly free economy, though government interference from time to time ensures fairness in competition among business, which limits Google's aggressive partnerships and acquisitions (DeToni and Tonchia, 2005). Similarly, Google faces stiff competition both directly and indirectly from players like Microsoft and Amazon respectively. Lastly as Helft (2009) rightly put it, most countries are experiencing increasing unemployment levels leading to competition for few available jobs, which make it easier for Google to find employees.

3.1.5. Political

Global political factors that affect Google' operations include political stability, foreign relationships among countries and military interference in politics especially in some regions of the Middle East (Porter, 2008). According to Porter (2008), most countries in the developing and the developed world enjoy a stable government and amicable political relationship with each other, which encourage smooth internal and foreign direct investments (FDI) for Google. On the other hand, military interference, which has been seen in regions like North Korea, discourages FDI due to uncertainties, making it less appealing for companies like Google (Helft, 2009).

3.1.6. Technological

The world has seen rapid rise in technology, including third and fourth generation broadband, smartphones, and cloud computing, as well as networking technologies that support video conferencing (Porter, 2009). According to Porter (2009), this provides the company with cheaper, faster and more reliable means of communication between its branches and affiliates, but also gives it a platform to explore new service provisions such as social networking and software development.

3.2. SWOT

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and strengths framework is a tool that can be used to examine an organisation's internal and external environment as follows.

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Open source products and services	1. Relies on one source of income
2. Quality and customer experience are the primary objects	2. Unprofitable products
3. Financial situation	3. Patent litigations
4. Access to the widest group of internet users worldwide	
5. Strong patents portfolio	
6. Product integration	
7. Culture of innovation	

Opportunities	Threats
1. Growing number of mobile internet users	1. Growing number of mobile internet users
2. Obtaining patents through acquisitions	2. Unprofitable products
3. Driverless electronic cars	3. EU antitrust laws
4. Growing into electronics industry	4. Competition from Microsoft
5. Google fiber cables	

Figure 2: Google SWOT framework source: developed by author

3.2.1. Strengths

The major strengths that Google boasts include strong financial predicament which is evidence in its financial records at the beginning of this report, coupled with a strong patent portfolio and a wide range of products for integration (Google, 2014). Google also enjoys high quality customer service provision as well as offering of open source software which allow people to anonymously improve their products at little or no cost to the company (Google, 2014).

3.2.2. Weaknesses

Some major weaknesses that have greatly impacted negatively on the company is overreliance on one line of service provision, which is its online advertisement coupled with unprofitable products and patent litigations (Ramaswamy and Namakumari, 2009). All these factors have seen the company lose decline in revenue and profit margin percentage.

3.2.3. Opportunities

Despite its weaknesses, Regoff and Bezos (2007) suggest that Google has the opportunity to exploit the growing number of mobile and smartphone users in USA, China, and India, among other regions of the world. It can also take advantage of the developing technology to venture into more direct diversified product and service provision, including hardware and software manufacturing, as well as indirect diversification into the automobile industry.

3.2.4. Threats

The major threats that the company ought to be weary of include stiff competition from other organisations such as Microsoft, Amazon, and Apple among others (Porter, 2009). Similarly, unprofitable products are a financial liability to the company, whereas antitrust laws may stain the brand name and image of the company (Ramaswamy and Namakumari, 2009).

3.3. Porter's five forces

The Porter's five forces that affect Google are threat of new entrants, threats of suppliers and buyers, substitutes as well as competitive rivalry as pictured in figure 3.

	New Entrants **Low threat due to high start up capital and acquisition of potential threats by giants.**	
Suppliers **Low threat due to lack of power as suppliers are billions of people using the internet for individual reasons.**	Competitive Rivalry Medium contestation from rivals as there are only three major Search Engine providers battling in the UK, with others being significantly ignored.	Buyers Low threat to the company as buyers do not have powers, Google being a brand that big companies want to associate with for bigger market exposure.
	Substitutes Presence of substitute products like Yahoo!, among others leads to delivery of high quality services.	

Figure 3: Google's Porter's five forces framework Source: Developed by author

3.3.1. New entrants

The threat of new entrants for Google is low because of factors such as high start-up costs in both in the search engine development and software or hardware development (Porter, 2008). Secondly, the industry is dominated by giants who quickly merge with or acquire start-ups that threaten to be rivals in the competitive market (Porter, 2009).

3.3.2. Substitutes

The threat of substitutes is very high in the industry for all product and service line that Google offers, which has been ensured by the existence of archrivals like Microsoft, Yahoo!, Amazon, Apple, Samsung and Facebook (Johnson and Whitting, 2006). These companies offer different services that can replace Google's online search, Gmail, Google chat, Andorid and Nexus.

3.3.3. Buyer power

The buyer bargaining power in the industry is very low, firstly because of the existence of very many customers for the products and services and, secondly, because of Google's dominance in the market (Helft, 2009). The first reason makes the demand for Google products too high in the market, whereas the second reason makes Google a preferred choice by most customers, thus in both cases their bargaining power is limited. Moreover, according to Helft (2009), the quality of services offered by Google is of high standards compared to those of its rivals.

3.3.4. Suppler power

The bargaining power of suppliers is low according to Helft (2009) as Google has a myriad of suppliers for their products and services. Secondly, the switching costs for the suppliers would be expensive as it demands much time to build trust and fair trade between individuals and organisations (Helft, 2009). Both of these factors limit the bargaining power of Google's suppliers.

3.3.5. Competitive rivalry

The competitive rivalry between Google and it rival companies can be classified as medium because, whereas it has very stiff competition from MSN (Microsoft Network) and Yahoo!, the high quality of products offered by Google makes it a preferred choice for many users, thanks to innovative technologies like Google Earth and Street View (Helft, 2009). Secondly, Zinkan (2012) argues that Google's smartphone software, Andorid, is actively being rivalled by Windows and Symbian mobile OS, though it is the most preferred choice by smartphone giants like Samsung and Tecno.

4. Corporate level strategic directions that Google has utilised

According to the case provided for this report (Marketline, 2013), and data from the company's website (Google, 2014), the most recent direction that Google has chosen for its strategic development is diversification. It has done this in two different ways, which are related and unrelated diversification of both its products and services. Hill and Jones (2011) define diversification as the process of entering one or more industries that are distinct from a company's core or original industry in order to find ways to use its distinctive competences to increase the value to customers of products in those industries. From this definition, it is deducible that, for a company to be diverse it has to operate essentially in more than one industry and the goal is often long-term. The major impetus for diversification for most companies is always the search for a new product line that allows for cheaper industrial processes or low cost production, and the need to increase the company's differentiation mechanism (Zinkan, 2012). This second reason allows the company to increase the prices of its products to allow it raise more capital, thus increasing its profit margin.

In the case of Google, related diversification has been pursued by launching new products and services, the most notable of which were Andorid Operating System for mobile devices, and Nexus devices, which are mobile devices that run on Andorid Operating System. Related diversification is the act of an organisation to start up a new business unit with the condition that there exists some form of a relationship between the new business unit and the rest of the company in form of technology, or manufacturing and processing (Hill and Jones, 2012). In this case, the relationship is brought about by technology as all of these products are in the broader telecommunication industry and mobility technology.

The Android Operating System is a technology developed by Google to run on smartphones, with an orientation towards touchscreen devices like tablets and smartphones (Android, 2008). This OS was debuted in the HTC series of smartphones in 2008 and it has provided users with unique capabilities such as swiping, pinching, reverse pinching, as well as tapping in order to give commands to the machine (Android, 2008). Additionally, the OS has widgets, which are applications that allows for the display of emails, and other notifications in real time on the homescreen. This new product was received with much sensation, which attracted a high market demand that saw it rise to become the most widely used OS (Marketline, 2013). This has motivated its developers, who in turn, have made Android to be the mobile OS with the largest number of user applications available in Google store (Android, 2008). Similarly, Google diversified it production to include Nexus Android Smartphone, which is a device manufactured for Google by different companies, such as High Tech Computer (HTC) Corporation and Life's Good (LG) (Bray, 2010). The initial smartphone under this trademark was unveiled commercially by Google in 2010 bringing with it differentiated offerings to the public domain. The most notable of such applications included noise suppression, voice-to-text conversion and Wi-Fi connectivity (Volpe, 2011). According to Purdy (2010), the hardware was received in the market with a low zeal, which was partly because of what critics considered as lack of enough differentiation to outdo rival smartphones. Additionally, some experts associated the lukewarm reception of Nexus in the market to insufficient efforts by the marketing team to market the product (Purdy, 2010). However, the company has shown relentless efforts to improve Nexus, which is seen with its continuous release of smartphones under the same trademark, the latest in point being Nexus 5 released on October 2013 (Google, 2014).

Thirdly, unrelated technology is pursued in Google, which follows from the company's venture into automobile technology, which is unrelated to the smartphone and internet technology (Kendrick, 2011). Though the company has made it clear that it has no intention of commercially producing driverless cars (Markoff, 2010), it has stated that it intends to partner with automobile manufacturers to develop driverless cars, with its role being that of creating the driverless program. The extent of seriousness with which Google is pursuing this project is evidence in its employing of Artificial intelligence expert and in its winning numerous prizes for the project that has been termed as "ahead of time" (Markoff, 2010; Sharma and Delaney, 2007).

5. Implications

Various implications exist for the diversification strategy that Google has implemented over the past decade and they are both positive and negative. According to Hill and Jones (2012), the positive implications of the diversification strategy include superior internal governance, transfer of competencies to different businesses, as well as the realisation of economies of scope. According to Ansoff (1957), diversification presents a unique strategy for the business because it lies at the very extreme of increasing newness of both market and technology as shown in figure 4.

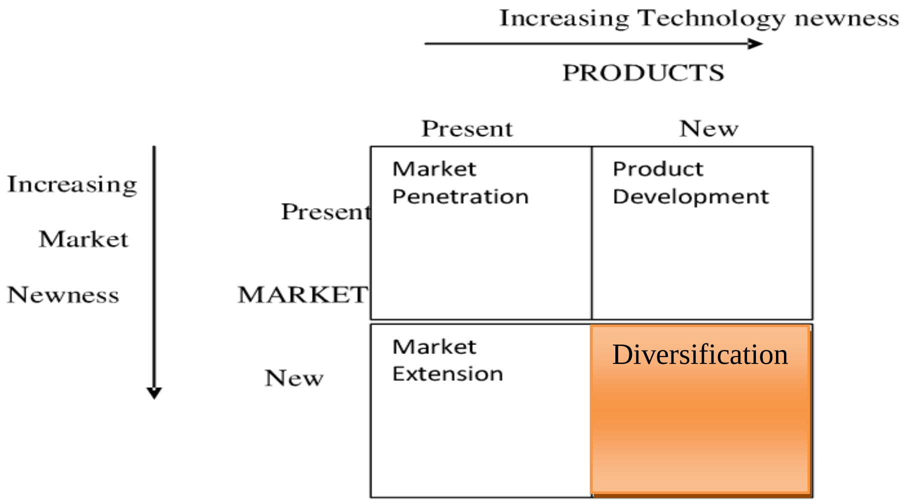

Figure 4: Ansoff framework showing the strategy adopted by Google. Source (Ansoff, 1957)

5.1. Negative implications

From Ansoff's (1957) deductions, the negative implication of diversification to the organisation include the need to acquire a new set of skills, technology and facilities. This presents huge risks to the company as the company will have to strategise very carefully in order to understand the unfamiliar market as well as to have knowledge about the unusual product. This is because the company undoubtedly lacks the much needed capacity of techniques and skills that they require in order to pursue its new product line. For Google, this is evident in its launch of Nexus line of smartphones that failed to be a strong competitor in the market against giants like Samsung, HTC, and Apple companies. The company will have to invest heavily in research and development to understand its market further as well as produce higher differentiation with its future hardware releases in the Nexus line.

Secondly, diversification presents a negative implication for Google as it demands that the company expand its financial and human resources (Zinkan, 2012). Though Google can be termed as financially muscular, the huge investment costs may destruct the organisation's commitment into its main online advertising industry, as well as interfere with employee focus (Porter, 1987). Google must consider assigning more capital to support the proposed research in the Nexus line, as well as employ more personnel and infrastructure in the same capacity.

Thirdly, according to Porter (1987), the only time any firm should opt for this method is when it has correctly established that its current products and services are not offering avenues for growth, and that the new products and services will be a reverse of the case. This is usually achieved through three main tests proposed by Porter (1987), which are the cost of entry test, the attractiveness test and the better off test. Of note here is that these tests are additional costs to the company, though the end results may lead to successful diversification, as is the case of Canon, Walt Disney and the Virgin Group.

5.2. Positive implications

Though various negative implications exist for the diversification of products and services as a strategy adopted by Google, the positive implications there are also evidences of positive implications. Firstly, as proposed by Hill and Jones (2012), diversification permits superior internal governance. This implies the processes that are involved in the management of Single Business Units (SBUs), as well as its other functions and divisions. This involves the development of strategies to give the company a competitive advantage, and its value is realised if it is effective enough to make the new product lines perform better than they would have as independent entities. The ability of Google to diversify as it did shows that the company has managers with high capabilities of internal governance, which is an advantage to Google (Helft, 2009). Superior internal governance also allows for the linkage of processes such as incentive pay systems and monitoring mechanism, which allows for easier identification and rewarding of excellent performance (Hill and Jones, 2012). Such implications are evident in other companies across different industries, such as International Business Machine (IBM) and Textron (Brennan, 2009).

Secondly, diversification in Google has given the company an opportunity to transfer its core competencies to new industries, such as its research and development, as well as manufacturing and marketing departments. Google has transferred personnel from one industry to another in order to realise product development and improvement (Google, 2014). An evidence of this is when Google assigned one of its chief engineers and co-founder of street view technology to head the development of driverless car technology (Fisher, 2013). The advantages of transferring competencies transcend cost reduction to higher differentiation as well as better value for products (Hill and Jones, 2012).

Lastly, another positive significance of diversification for Google is economies of scope, which Hill and Jones (2012) define as the sharing of resources such as distribution channels, manufacturing facilities, research and development platforms as well as advertising campaigns by two or more business units. The benefits of economies of scope are profound, including reduced operational costs, which ultimately increases the chances of increasing the profit of margin for the business. In the case of Google, diversification into the Nexus line of products allowed it to utilise its existing resource (Android OS) to widen its customer base as well as provide further differentiation. This is largely because Nexus smartphone uses Android OS, which had been developed two years earlier, to run its hardware (Android, 2008). This allows Google to benefit more from the Android OS by furthering its eelier revenues emanating from its retail to companies like Samsung, Tecno and HTC. Similarly, the diversification also allowed Google to exploit its research and development facilities that have always focused on browser-related content experiments in the previous years. Sharma and Delaney (2007) further note that, similarly, it allowed Google to use the existing marketing platform of Google Ads to market its new products. This also expanded the company's use of its Ad World, which was previously dominated by the marketing of products from other companies than Google (Sharma, 2007).

6. Recommendations

Thus far, the report has tackled important aspects of the strategy deployed by Google a few years ago to increase its performance, in bid to remain in its dominant position or advance even further. As a recommendation, the following activities are part of the steps the author suggests the company needs to take in order to ensure that its objectives are met. Firstly, the Company must appreciate that it has at its disposal large sums of capital compared other companies within the same industry as well as in different sectors. This should then allow Google to finance various divisions and SBUs that need further development, the most notable of which is Nexus line of products. Though the case and evidence from the company report shows that Google has registered poor performance from Nexus, there is high potential for the product to compete in the smartphone market because of the large population as well as because of the new interactive culture. However, it is worthy to note that such spending must be done very discreetly in order to prevent overhead expenditures, which will reduce the profit margin as well as exhaust the company's resources.

Secondly, Google's management should consider reducing their rate of acquisitions and mergers, though this has been instrumental to the company's growth in the past. This is because, while it was beneficial for Google to acquire and merge with several companies during its growth process to provide new resources and find new ideas, it currently has too many projects at hand to acquire more. Indiscriminate acquisition and mergers not only present the organisation with higher risks of project failure and decline of revenues, but also leads to reduced quality of products and services (Porter, 2009). As experts have correctly argued (Johnson and Whitting, 2006), the company now need to focus on providing value to its customers, rather than on the range of products that it can offer. The best case in point is Nexus, which failed to meet Google's long streak of high quality products by receiving negative critical appraisal. Specific to this case, the company ought to deploy more financial and human resources to improve its services in the subsequent Nexus series as this will make the smartphone more competitive with Apple and Samsung.

Finally, Google should realise that its competitors are developing rapidly to provide stiff competition both directly and indirectly. With this realisation, the company should devise ways of ensuring that they maintain high customer loyalty levels for their current customers, as well as attract new customers. One way in which it can realise this is through aggressive marketing of its existing products, as well as by using its strong brand image to launch new products. Additionally, this can also be done by enhancing customer satisfaction, which they have previously done satisfactorily by ensuring that they render high customer service provision. Specific to their Android OS and other application software, Google should continue implementing their Open-source Community Project, which allows end-users to modify and improve various software programmes developed by Google (McFerran, 2012). This not only makes the end users feel part of the developers of famous software, but also increases customer loyalty. Such moves will keep Google's customers closer and more committed to purchasing product from the company, which is a necessary step in the highly competitive telecommunication industry.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this report has identified the main strategic issues facing Google in maintaining their current global competitive position take and evaluated the corporate level strategic directions that Google has utilised to date in order to sustain and develop their global competitive position. The report has also discussed the implications of these options for the strategic management decisions of the organisation. Using PESTEL, SWOT, and Porter's five forces frameworks and data from primary and secondary sources, the paper has found that the positive implications include superior internal governance, transfer of competencies, economies of scope, whereas the negative impacts include the difficulty of meeting Porter's three essential tests of attractiveness, cost of entry and the better-off-test. As a recommendation, the author suggests that the company ought to carry on with its implementation strategy as it creates more value than costs in the long run.

References

Android (2008) *Building for devices: Android Open Source Project* [Online.] Available at: http://source.android.com/source/building-devices.html (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Ansoff, I. (1957) “Strategies for Diversification”, *Harvard Business Review,* 35(5), pp. 113-124.

Bray, T. (2010) *It’s not "rooting", it’s openness* [Online.] Available at: http://android-developers.blogspot.com/2010/12/its-not-rooting-its-openness.html (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Brennan, K. (2009) *A Guide to the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge.* Toronto: IBA.

DeToni, A, and Tonchia, S. (2005) ‘Definitions and linkages between operational and strategic flexibilities’, *Omega, 33(6),* pp.525.

Fisher, A. (2013) *Inside Google's Quest To Popularize Self-Driving Cars* [Online.] Available at: http://www.popsci.com/cars/article/2013-09/google-self-driving-car (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Forbes. (2013) *World’s 500 largest Crprations in 2013: the Chinese are rising* [Online.] Available at: http://www.forbes.com/sites/panosmourdoukoutas/2013/07/17/worlds-500-largest-corporations-in-2013-the-chinese-are-rising/ (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Google.com (2014) About. [Online] available from www.google.com (Accessed 7th February, 2014)

Helft, M. (2009) *The rise of Google*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Hill, W and Jones, G. (2012) *Essentials of strategic management 3rd Edition.* Washington: Cengage Learning.

Johnson, G, S and Whitting, R. (2006) *Exploring Corporate Strategy.* Birmingham: Pearson.

Kendrick, J. (2011) *Don't diss my phone: Nexus S to get Ice Cream Sandwich within weeks* [Online.] Available at: http://www.zdnet.com/blog/mobile-news/dont-diss-my-phone-nexus-s-to-get-ice-cream-sandwich-within-weeks/5214 (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Markoff, J. (2010) *Google Cars Drive Themselves, in Traffic* [Online.] Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/10/science/10google.html (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

McFerran, D. (2012). *Best custom ROMs for the Samsung Galaxy S2* [Online.] Available at: http://reviews.cnet.co.uk/mobile-apps/best-custom-roms-for-the-samsung-galaxy-s2-50007658/ (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Morrison, K. (2006) Google to buy headquarters building from Silicon Graphics". *Silicon Valley/San Jose Business Journal* 6(16), pp. 134-139

Morrison, S., Sweet, C. (2010) 'Google Invests in Two Wind Farms', *Journal of Business and Technology 8*(24), pp. 312-327

Porter, M. (1987) "From Competitive Advantage to Corporate Strategy", *Harvard Business Review*, 5(3), pp. 43–59.

Porter, M. (2008) 'The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy', Harvard Business Review, 2(1), p. 86-104.

Porter, M. (2009) *Exploring Corporate Strategy*. New York: FT Prentice Hall.

Purdy, K. (2010) *Google Launches Android 2.3 Gingerbread and Nexus S Flagship Phone* [Online.] Available at: http://lifehacker.com/5707214/google-launches-android-23-gingerbread-and-nexus-s-flagship-phone (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Ramaswamy, V &Namakumari, S, (2009) *Marketing Management*. Punjab: Macmillan

Regoff, E. G. & Bezos, J. (2007) *Bankable business plans*. New York: Rowhouse Publishing.

Sharma, A. and Delaney, J. (2007) *Google Pushes Tailored Phones To Win Lucrative Ad Market*. [Online.] Available at: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB118602176520985718.html (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Topolsky, J. (2010) *Nexus S review* [Online.] Available at: http://www.engadget.com/2010/12/10/nexus-s-review/ (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

US Census Bureau (2014) U.S. and World Population Clock [Online.] Available at: https://www.census.gov/popclock/ (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Volpe, J.(2011) *Galaxy Nexus gets rooted, forums burst into* [Online.] Available at: *applause* http://www.engadget.com/2011/11/03/galaxy-nexus-gets-rooted-forums-burst-into-applause/ (Accessed: 23 April 2014).

Zinkan, E. (2012) *Advertising Research: The Internet, Consumer Behaviour and Strategy.* London: Marketing Classics Press.