

## 4.7: Discussion- The Strategy Behind Your Favorite Product

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### Post 1: Initial Post

#### Instructions

This posting should be a minimum of one short paragraph and a maximum of two paragraphs. Word totals for this post should be in the 100–200-word range. Whether you agree or disagree, explain why with supporting evidence and concepts from the readings or a related experience. Include a reference, link, or citation when appropriate.

#### Preparation

Think about a product or service you really love—something that you’ve recommended to your friends or family, or that you’d get excited talking about to a stranger at the bus stop. Maybe it’s LaCroix soft drinks, your most comfortable pair of shoes, the double-chocolate muffin at your favorite bakery, or the convenient rides you get through your Lyft app. With that product or service in mind, think about the business strategy behind it. Conduct research on the business, gathering as much information about its strategy as possible: visit its website, search for news stories talking about the product or service, and search social media for mentions of the business. While you won’t be able to learn everything about a business’s strategy that an insider would know, you should be able to get a general idea of how the business operates and what the industry environment is like.

#### For Discussion

Choose ONE of the following questions to respond to in your initial post.

1. Identify the business’s main competitors. Explain how the business differentiates its product or service from those competitors’ offerings. Identify its competitive advantage. Do you think the advantage is sustainable? Why or why not?
2. Conduct a customer analysis on the business’s product or service. Your analysis should include ALL of the following:
  - Identify the target customer. Is this customer base growing or is it decreasing? What are the customer demographics (age, income, location, gender, politics, etc.)? What is the revenue of these customers? How much discretionary income do they have?
  - Understand the specific customer needs. Why do they buy certain brands? How do they make their purchasing decisions? Do they purchase in person or online?
  - Show if and how the product or service you chose meets those needs.
3. Evaluate the environment the business is operating in based on the four factors of change discussed in your text: stability, complexity, resource scarcity, and uncertainty. Based on your analysis of these factors, advise one or two areas where you believe the business should focus its strategy in the next two years.

### Posts 2 and 3: Respond to Classmates’ Posts

#### Instructions

After you have created your initial post, look over the discussion posts of your classmates and give at least two thoughtful responses to two different classmates (one per classmate).

A response posting should be a minimum of one short paragraph. Word totals for these posts should be in the 75–100-word range. Whether you agree or disagree, explain why with supporting evidence and concepts from the readings or a related experience. Include a reference, link, or citation when appropriate. The goal of your response posts is to extend discussions already taking place or pose new possibilities or opinions not previously voiced. Your goal should be to motivate the group discussion and present a creative approach to the topic.

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