

Introduction

Apple is a company that is based in Cupertino, California. The headquarter in California, America is best known for the development process, the design processes as well as the sales. Apple is known for selling computer software, online computer services, and also electronics. Some of the hardware products courtesy of Apple include iPad tablets, iPhones smartphones, Apple digital televisions, iPod media players among others. Some software produced by Apple includes iOS operating system and iTunes media player. Apple is widely known for their unique and functional designs that keep enhancing both existing and new customers. In fact, Apple is among the world's largest company in terms of information and technology. Also, it is among the leaders of phone manufacturers across the globe. This investigative report seeks to analyze and put into perspective the general characteristics of Apple as an industry. The report will also explain different demographic as well as technological factors that help Apple as a company to grow and maintain the revenue status that it has. There are various factors that affect the productivity and stability of Apple as a company. Those issues will be discussed, as well as the manner in which the company deals with the issues. Also, the report will feature the general environment of the company.

Body

Industry characteristics and planetary issues

Nature of Apple

Apple is well renowned company that is known for being technical in terms of innovation. Different innovators have come together to ensure that products are exceptional in the competitive market. The designs are made to suit the consumers' needs, so feedback and suggestions from customers are highly valued by Apple. According to (), Apple is a company that remains on top of the market because of the outstanding leadership as well as the creative brains that are formed by employers. For that reason, Apple stands as one of the most talked about company in the world. () explains that Apple has done so well as a company to the extent that it boosted of a revenue growth of about 8 billion U.S dollars in 2004, which has now projected to over 230 billion in the year 2015. Apple was started by Steve Jobs, Ronald Wayne and Steve Wozniak. They started small. The first product that the three individuals produced for the market was the Apple I. They went ahead to develop different features of the Apple I. Slowly, Jobs, Wozniak and Wayne developed Apple II, then Apple III. Over the years, Apple became more creative in terms of production. For instance, in 2007, iPhone was released into the market. That was the revolution of the smartphone market across the globe. The reason why the iPhones were different was because of the touch screen interface that had not yet been introduced to the market. According to (), the introduction of the iPhone was a major boost for Apple because it managed to generate millions and millions of sales. He further explains that the sale of iPhones still leads in terms of bringing high level revenues globally.

General characteristics of Apple

Apple is characterised by different situations. Apple as a company thrives because of the diversity and professionalism of the people working in the company. () explains that working with Apple is always a learning experience especially because all employees are trained and in turn expected to give their ultimate best in terms of work. In fact, there is no strict rule of working when you are employed at Apple. Employees are free to come to work or leave as they please as long as they reach their expected work goals. Apple Company is also known for providing a functional and friendly environment for work, so every employee is free to work

depending with their flexibility. According to (), Apple puts all its energy on the idea of production and innovation because it helps in providing constant flow of output. The idea helps the company to stay on track in terms of creativity. When it comes to issues like interpersonal relationships at work, the company puts its energy on providing the needs of the employee before that of Apple. The people at Apple have established a functional channel of communication at the workplace. Employees are free to communicate directly with their employers. That is put in place to encourage team work as well as free exchange of ideas and information. Customers are always given the first priority at Apple, because the expectations and demands of the clients are what keep the company running (). That is why the workers at Apple are always on top of their game, because anything less is not acceptable.

Competitors of Apple

Apple is a company that is highly rated in terms of revenue, profit and capitalization of the market. Apple is a company that has constantly improved over the years. It has been a threat to many companies that are in the same market. For instance, the introduction of the iPhone was the ultimate achievement because it contributes highly to the general success of the company. According to (), Apple competes with many companies that offer similar products, and the fact that it provides different products means that it also competes in many markets. For instance, Microsoft is one of the well known competitors of Apple when it comes to the market of operating systems. The smart tablet market is undeniably dominated by Apple, even though Microsoft and Amazon have their own smart tablets in the market. Samsung is also a well known competitor of Apple. Samsung is a well experienced electronics company that ships electronics like televisions, cameras and phones across the globe. That puts Samsung in a good position to compete with iPhone in the hardware market. For instance, phone specifications produced by Samsung can compete with the phone specifications of iPhone. () explains that the smartphone market is flooded with competition from phone companies like Motorola, Windows and even Android, but Apple remains on top. Google is also a major competitor of Apple. One area of competition is the storage of media like music, where Google produced Google Drive to compete with Apple's iCloud. Also, Google has constantly proved to be a competitor of Apple through the production of Android Operating System, which competes with Apple's iOS.

Apple's market strategy

Some people come across successful brands and wonder how they did it. Apple is one of the most successful brands. All the products from Apple always top the market, and become a success. () explains that Apple has enjoyed tremendous growth over the years, as they keep on producing different products. Clearly, Apple does not only concentrate on selling its products, or making massive products. Apple's market strategy is the secret behind all the success. The company keeps on changing the direction of the market by producing commodities that turn out to sell in the market. One market strategy that Apple has lived by over the years is creating brand loyalty and sustaining them. According to (), Apple is a company that comes up with portfolios that are different, which provide different experiences for various clients. The portfolios help to provide the much needed information that will enable new products to maintain the longevity of the company. For instance, an iPhone would not be the masterpiece it is without an application like iTunes. All Apple products maintain a certain sense of uniformity, creating familiarity for the customers. Another market strategy used by Apple is maintaining the brand image as well as the pricing. Even though the products of other manufacturers resemble those of Apple, they never match up to the prices of Apple. In most cases, Apple products are usually two times or three times the price of products from Android and others. The steady pricing of the

goods from Apple has continuously assured the loyal customers of the quality of their products as well as the promotion of the same products (). In the market, it is normal for clients to assume that expensive products maintain a high reputation for quality. The above mentioned market strategies applied by Apple are the main reasons why the company is outstanding. Apple easily puts high value on their products because they are popular and on demand

Apple's ecological and social responsibilities

Ecological responsibility

Apple Company prides itself in being responsible for the environment. According to (), Apple uses 100percent renewable materials, with its energy coming from sources that can be renewed. For instance, Apple in China has effectively added about 170 megawatts of solar energy, which is used for production. Also, about 99 percent of paper can be recycled and later reused. The move aims at protecting the forests that surround the factories. That would ensure that the trees around the factories are not affected in any way. () explains that Apple took it upon themselves to make sure that the company minimises the use of items or materials that are obtained from the soil, like making sure that water is reused rather than using fresh water. Ideally, Apple created Apple Renew, which is a means of recycling Apple devices from any Apple store. Apple has also taken the initiative of making sure that all toxins are removed from the environment. For example, Apple has successfully removed materials like mercury from the screens of the electronics and replaced them with friendly materials like solder. Recently, Apple went ahead to give a provision of all the material they use for making their products. Also, they started giving out the components of the materials used.

Social responsibility

Apple has a social responsibility to the people around their companies. For starters, the company supports the local community in various ways. A program called Global Volunteer Program was brought about by the company to make sure that the employees learned how to volunteer to the local communities. Apple also helps in providing much needed education for most of its workers. The offer is usually given to employees, free of charge. At least 280,000 workers have benefited from the program. According to an article on Apple Corporate Social Responsibility (2016), Apple ensures that all cases of abuse and discrimination of foreign workers or otherwise were followed carefully, and compensation was provided when there was need. Minimal to zero cases of harassment are reported because of the professionalism as well as the social responsibility that Apple owes its workers. One other social awareness practice that Apple offers is employee health and safety. The company takes care of the people around the company as well as the workers. Apple Corporate Social Responsibility (2016) explains that Apple has an academy called the Apple Supplier EHS Academy that helps to maintain the proper health of its workers across the globe. Lastly, there is gender equality in all the Apple companies; therefore everybody is protected from any form of harassment.

Transparency and disclosure

According to an article written by CNN about Apple releasing its transparency report (Apple releases its first transparency report, 2013), Apple opened up for the first time and provided their report upon the government's request. Apple was always known to be secretive thus not disclosing any information to the government. However, the company provided its first ever transparency report to the government back in 2013. Apple provided the needed information to the government as well as the authorities; some of what included bank and account statements of customers. Most of the transparency report included information belonging to individuals found on Game Center, iCloud and also iTunes (Apple releases its first transparency report, 2013). Law enforcement agencies are the firms that request the information compared to any other firms. One reason why that happens is because there is a constant need by the law enforcement agencies to track stolen computers, phones and also tablets.

The general business environment

Political and legal factors affecting Apple

Even though Apple stands as one of the leading companies in the world, there are certain issues that may threaten its stability. For that reason, Apple is expected to adhere to certain rules of play to maintain its position. () asserts that a company like Apple maintains its position on the market because of the discipline it has on dealing with both internal and external factors that may affect its standards. Various political factors affect the normal business of Apple. Trade policies are affected both negatively and positively by the political status quo. When trade policies like free trade are not promoted, then Apple stands to be threatened in terms of sales. Stability in politics in other countries also comes as an advantage for Apple, because there are better market opportunities. According to (), Apple thrives on stable political policies because it ensures that more products are sold in many countries. Various legal issues affect Apple. Companies like HTC and Nokia have been known to file law suits about infringement. For that reason, Apple ensures that it abides by the laws and regulations. For instance, the company ensures that there are properly installed health and safety gears to avoid some law suits.

Socio-cultural and technological issues affecting Apple

Technology is a factor that affects Apple directly.

(include demography)

Conclusion (300)

References

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- Apple releases its first transparency report(n.d.). Retrieved January 10, 2017, from <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/11/05/tech/social-media/apple-transparency-report/>