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Consulting Paper Reflection

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Blake Osting

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Dr. Kay Keels

Apple Analysis

For the strategic analysis of Lowe's, the first section is the APPLE Analysis. APPLE analysis is an acronym for **A**reas of Operation, **P**resent Strategic Profile, **P**erformance Summary, **L**eadership & Governance Approach, and **E**ssential Challenges. Each section plays a crucial role by giving the analysis a foundation for the final report. For this section of the analysis, my responsibility dealt with the performance assessment evaluation of Lowe's. This evaluation combines findings from a quantitative and qualitative assessment to determine how well the firm has been performing over time.

From my research, I concluded that based on current data and information provided, Lowe's performance for the future looks promising compared to its current industry. The main obstacle presented is the hill to climb to catch Home Depot. However, the overall status of the industry favors Lowe's, as the industry is consistently relevant in today's society. Which can ultimately bridge the gap between them and their biggest competitor in Home Depot Inc. The industry generated \$169.9 billion, with 32.7% of the total coming from lumber and other building materials, 29.6% from household appliances and housewares, 23.3% in hardware, tools and plumbing supplies and the final 14.4% in lawn and farm equipment. Financially, Lowe's is a multi-billion-dollar company which enhances the value of the firm's industry and will provide future growth for the company. Especially with majority of the company's revenue coming from building and maintenance which makes up the largest portion of the industry's revenue.

Ultimately, this portion of the strategic analysis has given me the ability to analytically review data to determine trends. A skill that is helpful in my career field. The quantitative and qualitative assessments allow me to use objective and subjective measures to show how the firm is performing relative to competitors and in the industry as a whole.

External Analysis

The next section in the strategic analysis is an external analysis. The external analysis is a broader look into the industry and not a single firm. An extensive external analysis must include the following analytical tools: Current industry framework, Five Forces Analysis, Key Success Factors, Strategic Group Map, Closest Competitor Analysis and a PESTLE Analysis. These are needed to determine any potential opportunities or threats the firm needs for future success. The portion of the external analysis I conducted research on was the Closest Competitors Analysis.

From my research I concluded that the closest competitor is Home Depot, Inc. Based on The Home Depot's current position in the market, their strategy is one of the best in the industry. The One Home Depot experience that is followed from their core values has proven to be successful for many years. In a multi-billion industry, Home Depot has consistently been number one in market share, profit and customer service. Home Depot is a powerhouse due to the outstanding execution of connecting products and services to customer needs.

The key elements for Home Depot are having major financial growth and a diverse range of products and services stem from their strategy that is based around their core values. Their core values, which are excellent customer service, taking care of our people, giving back, doing the "right" thing, creating shareholder value, respect for all people, entrepreneurial spirit and building strong relationships, give them a huge advantage in the industry. It has allowed Home Depot to create a competitive advantage in the industry.

An external analysis is crucial to any field you enter. My current position involves an external analysis daily to identify competitive advantage and to determine new goals that must be made in order to compete year-to-year. Having the ability to examine the industry also enables you to creatively enhance your brand based on any data given from the external analysis to give yourself an edge over your competitors.

Internal Analysis

Unlike the external analysis, the internal analysis goes inside the firm to locate strengths and weaknesses and its competitive position relative to its rivals. This section consists of a Strategy Diamond, Balanced Scorecard, Resources and Capabilities, Value-Creating Activities, and a Summary of the Key Strengths and Weaknesses. A major part of the internal analysis is determining the resources and capabilities of the firm. This analysis was broken into two steps as each person can firmly grasp each analysis. My portion of the analysis was the capabilities.

Lowe's has numerous capabilities that, when you combine with its resources sets the company up for success. The size of Lowe's as a company allows for many capabilities that will project them to new heights in the industry once completely executed. The company's capabilities are: the ability to provide multi-use products, the ability to have a clear and efficient supply chain, the ability to analyze demographic and societal trends, the ability to sell private brands, the ability to offer installed sales, the ability to offer repair and protection services and the ability to offer a wide range of name brand products.

For the capabilities, Lowe's is one of the leaders in the industry. They have a few minor details to fix when it comes to their ability to offer installed sales and the ability to analyze demographic and societal trends. Overall, the company is thriving compared to the industry. Their top capabilities are the ability to provide multi-use products and the ability to offer a wide range of name brand products coincide well with the resources. These capabilities are also shown relative to the map as majority of the resources and capabilities are positioned on the upper portion of the map indicating key strengths and superfluous strengths.

Determining capabilities is an essential part of any brand or business. As someone who is heavily involved in the sports marketing industry, determining capabilities enhances the overall quality of content. This enables you to know the skills and abilities

of the team to produce and execute a quality content workflow. Ultimately, enabling you to grow the brand and image of any business.