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Introduction

Strategic planning in business is the pattern of decisions that help any firm's activities to reveal the core purposes, objective & resources. The strategic planning also refers the choice of work the organisation is to follow, with the help of the work it purpose to be and the nature of the financial & non-financial involvement it intentions to develop its stakeholders & shareholders (Andrews, 1997). Strategic planning in any organisation also maps out a direction sense for an organisation's actions. Porter presented to these forces as the microenvironment, to compare it with the common term macro environment. They comprise of those powers near to a corporation that impact its capability to serve its consumers and make income. A modification in any of the forces generally needs an organisation to review the market. Michael Porter supposed to be one of the famous management gurus.

Discussion

Canon an electronic company began in Japan with a typical and traditional Japanese business firm having customer's satisfaction and profit as its centre of attention while specialising in the production of business machines, cameras, optical and other electronics. The company was founded by the first Chief executive officer Gerard in Japan and the father who later recruited a team of outstanding professionals to support its activities (Hill & Jones, 2007). In less than three decades of operation, the company assumed leadership role in the electronic market. Thanks to its innovative focus ideas, huge investment on research and development, good employee's retention, and differential focus strategies, Canon innovative ideas and the company's cost focus and differentiation strategy earned it that position. Canon case has been analysed using some

analytical models.

Canon and Porter's Five Forces

Porter five forces model was developed as a means assessing the attractiveness (Profit potential) of different industries. The researcher further stipulates that, with the model, an analyst can easily identify the sources of competition in an industry or sector. Overall, it has a strong worldwide base in its major product areas: photocopiers, computer peripherals, computer and Fax equipment, cameras, video recorders and optical products (Haberberg & Rieple, 2008). Its long term relationship, innovative ideas, product differentiation and cooperative behaviours entered into with its suppliers and customers. Its position in the industry sector was greatly enhanced by the company's ability to identify the photocopier's market as an area of growth that created its competitive position in the sixties with strategic planning and actions channelled through this direction. This vision was marked by its intentions to catch Xerox through technological differentiation.

An increase in Canon's brand equity within these periods acted as some form of insulation consequently consumer's propensity to substitute was almost zero; this was insulated by Canon's technological prowess innovation that added new product with new functionalities and features (Hill & Jones, 2007). This created core competences and core products that became cash cow given Canon a consistent ten years record of profitability. It will be noted that printing was only one of Canon's areas of competence by the 90s.

Strategic Planning has been on the business scene since 1960 and increasingly, business managers use it as a way to communicate their vision, maintain a flexible managerial approach

and predict future trends thereby creating a competitive edge over time. Haberberg & Rieple, (2008) argued that, “a well wrought strategic plan helps a business to set priorities and acquire and allocate the resources needed to achieve its goals”. Consequently, a Strategic Plan can give a business the opportunity to generate a new sense of purpose and direction. According to (Hill & Jones, 2007), the Five Forces set the approaches of competition in any industry and at the same time set pace for understanding a company’s success.

Canon strategic planning was not all about vision, but emphasis was on customer’s satisfaction, market share and core competencies. While acknowledging the assertion that having the right Strategic Plan can enable a business to realise its full potential, the assertion here is: How does Strategic Planning help a business to attain its objectives and consequently differentiate itself from competition (Haberberg & Rieple, 2008). Here, Canon management has not only used this to create and lay emphasis on its vision and objectives, but has capitalised on customer’s satisfaction, and gaining and maintaining market shares coupled with the needs for differentiation.

Canon and Porters Competitive Advantage

At the most fundamental level, it has repeatedly been argued by (Dobson et al, 2004) that firms create competitive advantage by doing things in a better way. Other researchers have referred to this as doing ordinary things in an extra ordinary way. To the researcher, “such an act pushes the firm to compete in an industry better which is ultimately an act of innovation. In this regard Porter assumes that, by being innovative, innovative firms are better placed to shift competition and gain a competitive advantage when rivals either fail to perceive the new way of competing or are unwilling or unable to respond” (Finlay, 2000). This situation explains Canon’s rise to

leadership position in the electronic industry in which their innovative ideas shifted it in to a generic focus and built its innovative resources and capabilities. Porter further argues that having control of the five forces in an industry is the beginning of assuming leadership position in the industry.

Cost leadership

- Low product system
- Low life cycle cost for Canon's product
- High reliability of Canons product and non intrusive serviceability for Canons electronics.
- Canons unique resources, trademarks, proprietary know-how, uninstalled and installed customer base

Differentiation

Adequate advanced functionality

Aesthetic product features

Integration capabilities and upgradeability, convenient product availability in terms of quantity, location acquisition and installation.

Confidence in the product

Equity of Canons brand

Cost focus

Differentiation focus

Competitive advantage is a situation where one firm has an advantage over the other to provide a particular service in an industry better thereby creating an opportunity to increase its market shares. Competitive advantage in an industry is dictated by the core competencies of the firm, which include the particular skills, techniques, as well as staff and suppliers achieved by the firm overtime and of which are absence to the industry mates (Hill & Jones, 2007). Canon through strategic planning lay emphasis on automated manufacturing, high technology products and sinkages and core competencies that provide linkages to a number of key product areas. This was further enhanced by emphasis on scenario and contingency planning.

Conclusion

To become a stronger and successful organisation, there are many different strategies Canon can implement. One powerful strategy is expanding to different places around the world. If Canon expand it can be more profitable. Or the company could even become a distributor as well to other small electronic outlets around the world. Making sure that they continue to keep inventive and advance technological equipments, unique service and reasonable prices will guarantee increase customers and retain loyal customers.

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