

How To Handle Competition In Business

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Abstract

Handling competition in business requires strategic planning, innovation, and a clear understanding of market dynamics. Companies must first analyze their competitors to identify strengths and weaknesses. Effective strategies include focusing on differentiation by offering unique products or services, providing exceptional customer service, and continuously improving operational efficiency. Staying adaptable to market trends and fostering innovation are key to maintaining a competitive edge. Building strong relationships with customers through loyalty programs and personalized experiences can further enhance business positioning. Additionally, leveraging digital marketing and data analytics helps businesses target specific customer segments more effectively. By embracing competition as a motivator for growth, businesses can refine their strategies and find new opportunities for success.



1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, competition is an inevitable and crucial aspect of the market. Whether a startup or an established enterprise, businesses constantly face competitors vying for the same customer base. Effectively handling competition is essential not only for survival but for sustained growth and innovation. It pushes businesses to enhance their offerings, optimize operations, and engage with customers in more meaningful ways. Understanding how to navigate this competitive environment can make the difference between thriving in the marketplace or being overshadowed. This

introduction explores key strategies that businesses can implement to stay ahead of the competition and capitalize on opportunities for long-term success.

2. The Pros And Cons Of Ignoring Your Competition



To ignore or not to ignore your competition. Let's look at both sides of the argument and understand where the entrepreneur should stand on what is both an important but often divisive issue. Is there a middle path through all this, and if so what does it look like in practical terms?

Three reasons to ignore your competition

Here are your reasons to look the other way entirely when it comes to the competition.

1. Your resources are limited, so why waste them on others?

Thinking about competitors, endlessly researching them, making spreadsheet after spreadsheet takes up a lot of time, especially when there are a lot of them.

Take marketing technology as an example. If your startup is looking to bag some market share here, then you probably can't even keep up with the number of competitors given the phenomenal pace at which landscape is growing. The 2017 Marketing Technology Landscape Supergraphic really highlights this. In 2011, there were around 150 marketing technology companies. Fast forward six years and there are now over 5,000. In the last year alone there has been a 40% growth in available solutions. You would need to hire someone full-time just to keep up.

All that time spent monitoring your foes could be better spent elsewhere, such as on the things any competitive analysis will probably tell you to improve anyway. Make your product more reliable. Diversify your brand. Train your team. Improve your customer service, or produce a new marketing and advertising campaign that really talks the talk.

2. Focus on customers not competitors

This is intrinsically linked to having limited resources, but it's worth making the distinction. The bulk of an entrepreneur's focus should be on the target customer base. If you're not sure who that is, make researching it a top priority. If the market is already so saturated that you're struggling to be heard, focus on what your customers want, or will want, as well as how and where they are accessing their information. By putting your limited time and resources into your customer base, you're automatically focusing on your product and learning about competitors on the sly anyway.

The founders of Deliveroo, the London-based food delivery app that has now spread to the Middle East, knew there were lots of competitors. After all, food delivery is nothing new. But they also recognized that customers were finding it impossible to get quality food delivered—which inadvertently told them a lot about their competitors. Team Deliveroo concentrated on getting as many well-known and well-respected restaurants on board as possible. Add fast delivery and easy ordering, and they were instantly ahead of the competition.

3. Copycat problems



Startups are meant to be innovative. By definition that means creating something different, something new— something that reshapes the market landscape. But too many times I see startups that simply refine another company's product. In an over-crowded market this problem could get even worse. Suddenly you're trying to improve on everyone's offering, causing your product to become a mishmash of ideas.

Imagine you started this app. You decide to focus your opening research on the potential competition. You find no one does this— great. But the more you dig, the more you realize that many banks do offer a more general investing platform that helps migrants anyway. Maybe you're missing out by not including other populations? Maybe you decide there's no point, because it kind of already exists.

But the entrepreneur who created Rise put much more time into understanding the target audience instead. She polled them, finding that 95% of nannies didn't even have a bank account, 43% were dealing with debt, and many had no idea how to become better at their job. The insight was clear: not only do nannies struggle with money, they do so because they don't know how to save or where to save- which meant competitors clearly weren't doing a great job. On top of this, nannies also struggled with building vital career skills. The second phase of the app is introducing online courses to help out with just that.

So create new demand. Hold on to that original big idea, because by coming up with it, you saw that gap in the market and probably analyzed the competition anyway.

Ignore them at your peril

Now let's flip it, and look at why you shouldn't take your eyes off your competition.

1. You may need to react

Imagine you ignore the competition because of the reasons above. But a month before you're about to launch that new app, a competitor beats you to it. Disaster.

The reality is that times have changed. Maybe ignoring the competition was fine advice a decade ago, but with technology driving change at a pace never seen before in human history, entrepreneurs can't afford not to follow their competitors, at least to some extent. Earlier, we saw how quickly new businesses were entering the marketing technology landscape in Brisbane, and how this could be used as an argument for ignoring the competition. But it can easily be spun another way: If you don't pay attention, you could inadvertently become a copycat.

By keeping a fleeting eye on your direct competitors, you can react before they do, or at the very least be ready to respond.

Who are your direct competitors? Well, when starting out they are unlikely to be on a par with Apple and Microsoft. Whatever you may have heard, thinking too big at the beginning is a mistake. Airbnb didn't start out trying to take market share from hotels: Joe Gebbia and Brian Chesky started by giving designers a chance to rent a sleeping mat in their loft and threw breakfast in as part of the deal. It spiralled because the idea was innovative and competitors limited. According to the Macrothink Institute, market share of Airbnb in the UAE is predicted to have dented takings for budget hotels by 10% in 2016.

So, keep an eye on those competitors solving the same problem or vying for the same dollar as you. Don't obsess about them, just be aware.

2. Learn from their mistakes



Even if your product is set to reshape the marketplace and has no immediate rivals, there are still some overlaps between your business and indirect competitors in Brisbane. You both probably have a website, maybe an app, for example. Learn from the failures and successes of others. What keywords do they use to be top of an internet search (Google Alerts is a great tool for keeping on top of this)? What content do they have that attracts a lot of internet traffic?

And perhaps more importantly, learn from their failures too— because the risk of this happening in our globalized marketplace is only increasing. A 2015 report from the Boston Consulting Group, *Die Another Day: What Leaders Can Do About the Shrinking Life*

Expectancy of Corporations, found that the "five-year exit risk" for public companies traded in the US now stands at 32%, compared with 5% back 50 years ago. So, have a look at some of the more recent failures in your sector. Where did they go wrong? Did they grow too fast? Did they try to diversify too much and forget their core audience? Whatever their mistakes, take heed of them so you can avoid the same pitfalls.

3. Your competitors are on the inside



At more and more tech startup businesses, it's becoming increasingly common that new companies (and potential competitors) are formed by employees who think they can do a job better than the in-house team. It's hard to ignore these rivals, and there is a strong chance of having to work with them at some point down the line.

Then there's the guy on the desk next to you or down the corridor. Co-working spaces or tech hubs, such as Astrolabs Dubai and Impact Hub Dubai, frequently operate out of free zones and bunch startup businesses together in Brisbane. What are the chances that a competitor is sharing the same coffee machine? Or that you'll bump into them at conference? In all these cases, it's important to understand whether they are a threat to your business or in fact a potential future collaborator that could add real value.

Finding the balance

Ultimately, your situation is unique, so start by knowing your business inside out; that way you'll be aware whether a bit of competitor knowledge will be a help or hindrance. This is especially true if the market is already crowded. No business can operate in a bubble, but don't let the competition dominate your vision or relationship to customers. Just put your

head up every so often to take in that bigger picture. And after all, finding this sweet spot will put you a long way ahead of –you guessed it– your competitors.

3. Competitive Analysis Is Essential



You take on a new client: an ice cream brand that isn't quite on the level of Ben & Jerry's, but it's on the rise and has serious potential to disrupt the industry. But, before you can start thinking big, you need to get a better picture of the landscape for the product to find how similar products in your industry are doing — and more importantly, what they're doing. You need to do a competitive analysis.

A competitive analysis needs to go much deeper than looking at your competitors' social media or advertising efforts for comparison. Take a look into their history, who they consider their closest competitor and where they're succeeding and falling short on selling their products.

Putting together a good competitive analysis demands a good understanding of industry hierarchy — for instance, still using the up-and-coming frozen treat brands as an example, who is the competition you're measuring against? It isn't the big leagues of ice cream but brands of a similar size and awareness as your client's.

The strategic advantage behind compiling a competitive analysis is that it helps you get a better picture of the competition so you can try to emulate their success but also recognize

and avoid their failure. They take some effort to put together, so here are three reasons why it's worth the time.

They help to establish benchmarks.

Benchmarking is the process of building points of reference against which you can measure growth. Say you do an analysis of ice cream or frozen dairy treat companies similar to your client. To form a benchmark, take the metrics for how well their Facebook posts do, combine them for an average and set that as your benchmark to surpass.

Set benchmarks for things like engagement, social media reach, impressions and return visitors to keep the pace — and eventually set the pace — in your client's corner of the industry.

You can use them to identify and fill crucial gaps in your client's business.



I know plenty of marketers who've worked on campaigns for brand new companies and would agree that the Wright Brothers had an easier time getting off the ground than most startups do. This is because running a business in Brisbane — especially for the first time with no guidance — can be, in general, a quagmire.

Take a look at the kind of roles your competitors are looking to bring on. What gaps are they filling that your client also has?

Hiring is about so much more than bringing on new staff. When your competition brings on someone for a totally new role, they're doing it because they sense a change in the industry and want someone on their team who will ensure smooth sailing and a successful campaign.

They help you determine your 'why.'

When a potential customer has your client's product and a similar product side by side, the "why?" of your client's brand is often going to be the determining factor in closing that sale. I'll tell you something that most clients are too precious and protective of their brands to accept: most similarly priced products in an industry are pretty much the same.

If your client's gallon of ice cream costs \$10 and the competition's cost \$11, there's unlikely to be any meaningful difference between the two products. The difference is the "why." Why should a customer buy your client's brand over the other? Having an appealing "why" will be arbitrary to some customers, but it will be a deal-sealer to others. For instance, if the competition supports some political causes that a lot of people might find unsavory, standing in opposition to those could become the basis of your "why."

Data is what greases the wheels of a campaign and helps your agency make the tactical decisions that ensure winning campaigns. The more insight into your client's field that you have, the better position you put yourself in to help them dominate it. For all these reasons and more, a competitive analysis is an essential part of the onboarding process for all clients. Because, as they say, know thy enemy.

But remember, if you want to keep a client long-term, no resource that you create for a campaign should be considered a one-and-done project. As your marketing strategy succeeds and your client ascends within their industry, the landscape will rise to meet them. It's important, then, that your competitive analysis be constantly evolving to keep updated on potential threats.

4. Understand Customer Needs

A business cannot survive without conducting ongoing efforts to better understand customer needs. To discover if your product or service is having a positive effect and creating customer loyalty, take time to ascertain your customer's emotional and material needs, then offer valuable incentives for remaining loyal to your company. Acquiring customer feedback doesn't have to be expensive; from creating simple email surveys to taking an extra minute to engage on the sales floor, you can learn a lot about what customers want just by asking and listening. Also to learn more, you could even ask them for a little bit of time just to fill out a questionnaire.

Listen to your customers. Whether talking on the phone with a customer or conducting business in person in Brisbane, take a minute to ask your customer why they purchased your product.



Empathize with customers. When your customer offers feedback about your company, take time to put yourself in their place. Customers want to be acknowledged for taking the time to comment and do not want to be unfairly judged if they have issues with your service.

Offer free product demonstrations. If you're a manufacturer, interacting with current or future customers through product demos is the ideal way to find out if your products are meeting customer expectations.

Learn about your competitors. If your target market isn't buying your products, research the competition. Conduct a phone or email survey of your potential customers to uncover the most outstanding qualities of other vendors. Then, attempt to replicate those qualities in your daily business practices in Brisbane.

Give customers options. Whether you're dealing with a long-term project or an on-site product sale, always make it clear to customers that other options exist to help them meet and enhance their needs.

Reassure customers that your services will meet their expectations. A no-questions-asked exchange policy, money-back guarantee or other monetary compensation can instill consumer confidence.

4.1. What is Customer Experience and How to Improve It?



Customer experiences (CX) are the emotions buyers feel while interacting with brands through different touchpoints during their customer journeys. It is the way the support team makes them feel or the ease they experience while finding the right product in the store. CX can range from delightful to disgusting, depending on the effort the business puts into making the customer comfortable. With the advent of technology, customers' expectations have evolved, and brands are leaving no stone unturned in offering outstanding experiences.

Customer experience has become pivotal in attracting, engaging, and retaining customers through different platforms in the digital age. Businesses in Brisbane must step up their game to stay ahead of the competition and offer valuable experiences to customers that stay etched in their hearts. This helps to increase brand loyalty and boosts word-of-mouth publicity, which is beneficial in boosting sales. Thus, business owners must understand customer experience and ways to improve it. Here is a list to help them leverage this powerful tool to build a stable entity.

1. Understanding Customer Experience

Customer experience is the interactions between brands and customers through all channels and the brand perceptions it helps to develop. Buyers lay as much emphasis on experiences as the products and services. Brands must offer excellent engagement levels during communications to win customers over and make them return for more such exchanges. A positive experience makes the target audience feel satisfied and perceive the brand as credible.

Conversely, a bad experience does not allow the leads to convert and makes them shun the brand forever. Dissatisfied customers can further impact the business by posting negative reviews and comments online, discouraging interested buyers and affecting the brand image. Thus, extending a great CX at every touchpoint becomes necessary for start-ups and individuals who purchase a business for sale Brisbane. It ensures the business makes every effort to woo customers with superior experiences for growth and success.

2. Importance of Customer Experience

While customers can enjoy seamless interactions and smooth transactions with good customer experiences, businesses gain much more. They create a win-win situation for both parties because entrepreneurs can nurture leads, generate conversions, increase customer loyalty, boost brand image, and enhance the bottom line. An exceptional CX can make even an average product sell like hotcakes because of the accompanying services.

Also, customers are well aware of the offerings of competitors through marketing initiatives and can easily switch. They will place their trust in brands that showcase consistency, understand their needs, offer excellent interactions and make them feel valued. For example, virtual try-ons while buying apparel online can help customers make the right decision and offer a delightful shopping experience. It will make them return for more orders and bring referrals, increasing revenue.

3. Ways to Improve Customer Experience



Improving CX must be a constant endeavour of entrepreneurs who start a venture or purchase a Brisbane business for sale in Brisbane because of its significance. Let us identify the best ways of achieving this objective:

Technology Enabled Experiences

In the digital era, businesses must take advantage of tech to stay ahead and relevant. For example, retail businesses use immersive technologies to create virtual storefronts with endless aisles and virtual assistants. AI-powered chatbots are helping customers solve problems and answer queries while engaging websites are helping boost traffic and conversions.

Consistent Omni-Channel Interactions

Business owners must realise that customers use various channels to interact with brands, such as social media, emails, blogs, websites, mobile apps, etc. They should not feel any disconnect in the communication while switching channels. For example, customers can put a product in the cart on the mobile app and then visit the store to collect it. The transition must be seamless across channels, and communication must be consistent at every touchpoint.

Empathising and Listening to Customers

Entrepreneurs who purchase a business for sale in Brisbane must know they need customer feedback to improve their CX. The business must use the data collected through interactions to understand the needs of the buyer and listen to their suggestions and opinions to serve them better. They must empathise with the customer's situation and offer support to build long-term relations.

Emphasising Customisation

Personalisation has been replaced with hyper-personalisation, with businesses using AI and machine learning to identify customer needs in Brisbane. For example, brands can now use a customer's buying history to make product recommendations that match their size, product type, and choice of colour. It helps increase sales and amplify brand loyalty.

Following Up With Customers

Customers do not like to be left alone after the purchase. They appreciate brands that try to follow up and continue to communicate. It makes the customers feel valued and builds strong connections that boost upselling and cross-selling.

4. Measuring Customer Experience

Since businesses value CX, they must constantly measure it to determine their performance. It can be measured by conducting customer satisfaction surveys to check the success of CX initiatives across channels. In addition, it is vital to identify the customer churn rate and reasons for churning to determine the problem areas.

Feedback from customers about products and services can help entrepreneur who purchase a Brisbane business for sale make improvements to CX. Also, they must pay attention to the customer complaints and support requests to enhance their services and CX offerings.

5. Customer Experience Management

Customer experience management (CXM) is the process of evaluating and improving customer experiences to make a lasting impact on the target audience. It involves checking all the touchpoints and identifying the position of the customer in the sales funnel. Managing CX ensures the business is catering to the needs of customers effectively and reducing churn. Entrepreneurs must adopt the latest trends and tech tools to offer the best experiences and eliminate points of friction.

They must anticipate customer queries and problems and provide solutions proactively to delight them. In addition, they must use AI to provide self-service solutions that make the customers feel in control of the situation. The support team must be friendly and empathetic and focus on offering unique experiences that stay with the customers.

5. Innovation In Your Business



Understand how innovation can contribute to your business, where you can find help to be innovative and how to connect with the right resources.

Innovation means coming up with new ways to do things. You can change processes or create more effective products and ideas.

Innovation can help you save time and money. It's also key to your business developing a competitive advantage and creating a culture of innovative thinking and problem solving.

Innovate in your business

Your business can be innovative without actually inventing something new.

Innovation can be:

- changing your business model
- adapting to changes in the environment to deliver better products or services
- experimenting with marketing.

Resources to help your business be innovative

When you build something new and innovative, you want to connect your idea with the right customers and audiences.

6. Understand The Role of Technology in Modern Business



Modern technology allows small businesses to operate in ways that were impossible only a generation ago. Technology allows staff members to communicate better, enables business owners to manage costs more efficiently and sell products and services in new and different ways. Small businesses benefit in Brisbane from simplified and less expensive manufacturing processes and can grow without affecting the quality service they offer their customers. Regardless of the size or nature of a small business, technology has opened new and exciting doors to success.

Communication

Never before has it been easier for employees to communicate among themselves or with clients. Email has become the communications vehicle of choice within most organizations, enabling collaboration between staff members, regardless of where they are geographically located. Mobile phones allow field staff to remain in contact with their office support network at all times, and wireless laptop modems permit data to be accessed, transferred and shared from anywhere. Technology enables every small business to communicate in any ways they wish.

Financial Management



It used to be that business owners spent hours entering bookkeeping information, tallying journal entries and manually creating business reports. Today, accounting systems automate most of the processes, reducing the time spent on keeping accounts current. While simplifying the bookkeeping process is important, the real power of computerized accounting systems is their ability to pull ad-hoc reports instantly. Business owners in Brisbane can immediately see how they are performing compared to previous years,

discover who their most profitable customers are and identify problems before they become insurmountable.

Transport

For manufacturers, technology greatly simplifies the procurement of materials and the delivery of those materials to the factory on an as-needed basis. Once a product is developed, technology manages inventory, automatically reordering items as stock is depleted. Companies can sell their products anywhere in the world using the Internet, placing global markets within reach of any organization. When an item is sold, technology completes the process by assisting in the delivery of the item to the consumer, tracking it while in transit.

Manufacturing

Preparing a product for manufacture used to require teams of professionals to create bespoke manufacturing tools used to create a factory assembly line. The expense of setting up an order required that huge quantities of each item be manufactured to achieve economies of scale. Today, advanced manufacturing tools permit engineers to control machinery using computers. The expense to manufacture an item is greatly reduced, and even low quantities can be manufactured in an affordable manner. The result is that even a small company can manufacture their product efficiently and inexpensively.

Customer Relations



As companies grow, the way they treat their customers evolves. Historically, larger companies faced difficulty offering the same type personal service you could expect from a smaller organization. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems change that dynamic. CRM systems track every customer interaction, creating a database of information that can be used by the company to provide improved service. If a customer calls with a question, the CRM system will already know what products they own and when they were acquired, so the customer service representative can immediately provide better service and ask fewer questions. If the issue requires more than one contact, the CRM system ensures that a follow-up is made and that a resolution is found. Similarly, the system can suggest appropriate upgrades and options that can add value to the customer and drive revenue for the company.

Conclusion

In conclusion, competition in business should be viewed as an opportunity for growth and innovation rather than a threat. By understanding the strengths and weaknesses of competitors, businesses can refine their own strategies to stand out in the marketplace. Differentiation, customer-centric approaches, and a commitment to continuous improvement are essential to maintaining a competitive edge. Moreover, leveraging technology and data-driven insights allows companies to adapt to market changes swiftly and efficiently. Ultimately, businesses that embrace competition and use it as a catalyst for innovation are more likely to achieve sustained success and drive long-term growth.

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