



Analysis of WH Smith's Retailing Strategy

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Seminar paper from the year 2010 in the subject Business economics - Marketing, Corporate Communication, CRM, Market Research, Social Media, grade: 1,2, University of St Andrews, language: English, abstract: The retail industry in the UK, as a relatively mature and oligopolistic sector, can be characterised by overcapacity, price-driven marketing, and a high concentration of firms (Morschett, Swoboda, & Schramm-Klein, 2005, p. 275). WH Smith has a history of over 200 years of development dating back to 1792 (Figure 6, Appendix). However, WH Smith is one of Britain's leading retailers of today and known for its chain of High Street stores, travel outlets at airports, train stations, motorway service areas, hospitals, workplaces and bus stations selling books, stationery, magazines, newspapers, and entertainment products (WH Smith, 2009a). Most of WH Smith's business outside the UK (United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Singapore) was subsequently sold as financial targets were not met. For the year of 2010, WH Smith is planning to expand its business to non-European markets (i.e. India), were it plans to open six outlet stores at the Delphi airport in 2010 (WH Smith, 2009b).

This paper offers a case study of the UK retailer WH Smith. With regard to the structure of this essay, initially a short company overview will highlight WH Smith's areas of operations. Thereafter, the company's internal capabilities and its external environment will be examined in chapters two and three, respectively. This will then give the foundation for a substantial analysis of WH Smith's positioning strategy. Recommendations on how to ameliorate the company's strategy will be presented in chapter five. Finally, in a retrospective analysis of this paper the findings on the strategic development of WH Smith will be summarised and an outlook will be given in the concluding chapter six.



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