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LEVEL 5 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

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Submission Method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark: Work which is submitted up to 1 week late will be capped at 40% for the first attempt and will be awarded a mark of 0% for re-assessment. Late submission penalties may be lifted only if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim. Work submitted more than 1 week late will be considered as a non-submission and will not be marked. The work may be considered as a submission for reassessment if offered by an Examining Board or if there is an approved extenuating circumstances claim.		
Academic Honesty / Referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission, you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

This section details the *extent* to which the assessment criteria are demonstrated by you, which in turn determines your mark. The marks available for each category of skill are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills		
	25	
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills		
	35	
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
	10	
4. Practical Application Skills		
	15	
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice		
	15	

Assessment Mark (Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)

Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)

Up to 1 week late (40% Max)

Over 1 week late (0%)

%

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1. Executive Summary

This study thoroughly analyses Boots the Chemist's internal and external marketing environments to assist in formulating a new marketing strategy. This study examines Boots' current position in the market using several theoretical frameworks, including PESTEL and SWOT analysis, and Porter's Five Forces. The external research emphasizes significant market shifts, including the growth of online shopping, the emergence of sustainable products and the constraints faced by both physical retail outlets and their online equivalents. Boots' operations are influenced by regulatory changes and technological advancements. The business has challenges such as elevated operational costs and reliance on physical locations, however it also enjoys advantages from robust brand equity, an extensive product range and a substantial retail footprint.

According to a SWOT analysis, Boots has notable strengths such as brand recognition and market penetration. Nevertheless, it also exhibits significant weaknesses, including sluggish digital transformation and operational inefficiencies. Growth may be attained via the diversification of digital services, enhancement of sustainability efforts, and the development of a more personalized client experience. They must confront the problems presented by increasing competition and evolving client expectations. Boots can strengthen its industry position by executing the report's essential recommendations. These strategies include enhancing customer engagement via customized services, prioritizing sustainability and investing in digital transformation. Boots can adapt to the changing environment and maintain its dominance in the beauty and wellness sector by using these strategies. This report presents actionable suggestions for Boots derived from secondary research, relevant marketing theories and insights.

2. Introduction

Boots UK, formerly referred to as Boots the Chemist, employs around 52,000 individuals and has about 1,900 stores throughout the UK, hence commanding a significant presence in the health and beauty retail sector (Boots UK, 2024). Boots is a renowned and esteemed brand in the healthcare and beauty retail sectors, founded in 1849 by John Boot as a little herbalist store in Nottingham. It became part of the Walgreens Boots Alliance in 2014, which enhanced its industry position by incorporating global experts and optimizing operations (Walgreens Boots Alliance, 2024).

Boots UK articulates its goal as “More joyful lives through better health”, reflecting its commitment to innovation and client welfare. The company offers a diverse range of health and beauty products, including exclusive brands such as No7, Soap & Glory and Liz Earle Beauty. The recent success of Boots has been propelled by digital change. Online sales surged by 30% after the company’s enhancement of its website and mobile application (UK Global Invest, 2024).

As reported by UK Global Invest (2024), Boots’ loyalty program, enhanced healthcare services and key partnerships have resulted in 13 consecutive quarters of market share growth. In the dynamic retail sector, same-day delivery services and digital health solutions exemplify how Boots is maintaining its competitive edge while commemorating its 175th anniversary.

3. PESTEL Analysis

Substantial changes are occurring in the UK pharmaceutical industry due to several external influences. The industry comprises 5,655 firms, with a predicted market value exceeding £14.1 billion by 2025 (IBISWorld, 2025). Despite an anticipated 4.9% CAGR from 2022 to 2030 (Insights10, 2022), the industry faces challenges such as pharmaceutical shortages and changing market dynamics. The first PESTEL Analysis of Boots is political. Substantial pharmaceutical shortages have arisen due to trade restrictions resulting from the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union. In 2024, epilepsy and cystic fibrosis drugs had 1,938 documented supply disruptions (The Guardian, 2025). The government intends to provide up to £520 million to enhance the production of local pharmaceuticals and to streamline regulations.

Secondly, economic. Restrictions on commerce with the European Union and other countries are hindering the growth of the pharmaceutical business. A 20% decline in pharmaceutical imports to the United Kingdom from 2015 to 2024 impacted supply chains and operational costs (The Guardian, 2025). Third is social. Pharmaceutical services are under heightened demand owing to an aging demographic and the rising prevalence of chronic diseases. In 2023, 436 retail pharmacies permanently ceased operations, hence restricting patient access (Roots Analysis, 2023).

Next is technological. Online pharmacies are transforming the manner in which individuals get medicine. The Guardian (2025) reported that 500 pharmacies had daily prescription dispensing issues due to supply shortages in 2023. This underscores the need of integrating technology to enhance inventory management and service delivery. Fifth is environment. The pharmaceutical industry is increasingly emphasizing sustainable practices, despite its relatively little environmental impact compared to other sectors. The PESTLE Analysis (n.d.) indicates that an increasing number of organizations are adopting waste reduction and sustainable packaging practices. Lastly, legal. Operations and supply chains have been affected by the evolving compliance mandates resulting from legislative alterations post-Brexit. To maintain efficiency and compliance, pharmacists must familiarize themselves with the

intricacies of newly established legislation regarding employment, data protection and commerce.

4. Porter's Five Forces

The health and beauty retail sector in the United Kingdom is very competitive, and Boots the Chemist is no exception. The competitive forces affecting the company may be more effectively analysed using Porter's Five Forces model. The first force is competitive rivalry. Competition within the health and cosmetics sector is moderate. The expansion of e-commerce platforms has reduced the barriers to entry for new enterprises, but establishing a physical retail shop necessitates a significant financial investment. Nonetheless, new entrants have considerable obstacles in comparison to established rivals like as Boots regarding customer loyalty and brand recognition.

Supplier power is the second force. Owing to the multitude of manufacturers and brands, providers in this sector often possess little negotiation power. Due to their scale and buying power, large retail chains such as Boots may get more favourable rates and terms. However, premium or exclusive brands may possess more leverage in negotiations. The third force is buyer power. Consumers have significant power due to the plethora of available alternatives. The possibilities include supermarkets, online retailers and specialist enterprises. To retain customers, firms must provide competitive pricing and distinctive products, since individuals are price-sensitive and may readily change brands.

The fourth force is threat of substitution. A significant competitor is the presence of replacement products and services, including online pharmacies and brands that market directly to consumers. In the future, customers may need fewer visits to physical pharmacies due to advancements in telemedicine and wellness programs, which expand their options for providers. Lastly, threat of new entry. The UK cosmetics and health sector is very competitive. Supermarkets and specialist retailers such as Superdrug are significant competitors, as are diverse supermarkets like Tesco and Sainsbury's in the health and beauty sector. Examine Tesco, a grocery store business that has been diversifying into non-food goods and commands a significant market share. Superdrug and Boots are formidable rivals since they provide similar items at competitive prices. Boots commands the health and beauty retail sector in the United Kingdom, generating annual sales of around £6 billion and representing almost 40% of the market share.

5. Internal Analysis

Boots the Chemist's robust market position is bolstered by its comprehensive array of assets, resources and skills. One of the assets is principal asset. Boots has a diverse clientele due to its 1,800 outlets throughout the United Kingdom, including both small-town convenience stores and large health and beauty retail centres (Boots UK, 2024). The company's Support Office, demonstrating a commitment to sustainable operations, is situated on a 279-acre estate in Beeston, Nottingham. The facility includes distribution and manufacturing operations fuelled by an on-site Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plant (Association for Decentralised Energy, n.d.).

Human resources represent one of the resources. Boots prioritizes customer service and professional expertise in the pharmacy and healthcare sectors, employing over 51,000 individuals (Boots UK, 2024). A proficient and knowledgeable workforce capable of adapting to evolving market demands is the outcome of sustained investment in employee development. One of the skills is technological expertise. To enhance customer service and optimize operations, Boots has used new technologies. Every day, eight million individuals use the Boots app, facilitating digital engagement and targeted marketing (Boots UK, 2024). Additionally, to foster innovation inside the organization, the company has partnered with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to promote the use of new technologies (Boots UK, 2022).

The provision of a diverse range of exclusive products confers a competitive edge in product distinctiveness. Prominent brands include No7, the leading skincare brand in the UK, Soap & Glory, Liz Earle Beauty and Sleek MakeUP (Boots UK, 2024). In collaboration with the British Retail Consortium, Boots aspires to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040, underscoring its commitment to environmental stewardship. Boots UK (2023) indicates that the company began efforts towards sustainability in 2022/23 by assessing its baseline carbon footprint and initiating the formulation of a plan to mitigate emissions.

6. SWOT Analysis

Boots the Chemist's new marketing strategy will be influenced by significant internal and external factors identified via a SWOT analysis. Boots have a loyal customer base among British customers and is a prominent brand in the nation. The company is a leader in the health and beauty sector due to its comprehensive product range, including renowned brands such as No7 and Soap & Glory (Boots UK, 2024). The integration of Boots' vast physical retail network with its robust e-commerce infrastructure enables more customer engagement and precise advertising (Boots UK, 2024). Boots UK (2023) asserts that the brand's commitment to sustainability and environmental initiatives enhances its attractiveness to environmentally conscious consumers.

The increasing competition in the UK health and beauty sector, particularly from cheap supermarkets and online retailers, is a weakness for Boots. Moreover, Deloitte (2024) indicates that Boots is vulnerable to local economic fluctuations and changing consumer preferences due to its reliance on the UK market. Leveraging the increasing demand for online shopping offers Boots significant growth opportunities as it enhances its digital and e-commerce capabilities. Moreover, by improving its sustainability initiatives, Boots might attract environmentally conscious consumers. New revenue streams may arise from a company's international expansion, particularly in emerging markets (Mckinsey & Company, 2024). Conventional stores and emerging competitors, including direct-to-consumer brands and e-commerce giants, provide an increasing threat to Boots. Boots' core goods and services face competition from analogous offerings, including health monitoring software and online medical services (Deloitte, 2024).

7. Conclusion

This study employs relevant theoretical frameworks to critically analyse Boots the Chemist's internal and external marketing environments, therefore ascertaining the company's strategic position. Boots encounters significant rivalry in a dynamic market, as shown by external evaluations such as PESTEL Analysis, Porter's Five Forces and SWOT Analysis. The expansion of digitalization, modifications in pharmaceutical legislation and shifting consumer expectations for health and sustainability bring both opportunities and difficulties (Kotler & Keller, 2022). Notwithstanding its prominent brand and extensive retail presence, Boots is encountering competition from online competitors and economic recessions that affect consumer purchasing behaviour (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2021).

Barney (1991) asserts that Boots' innovative marketing strategies, robust supply chain and varied product assortment are competitive advantages identified in the company's internal study, which employs the resource-based perspective and SWOT framework. Nonetheless, in an increasingly digital marketplace, there are strategic concerns linked to operational expenditures and reliance on physical retail establishments. Boots may continue its market leadership by using its renowned brand, enhancing its e-commerce skills and investing in sustainable product offerings (Grant, 2016).

Digital transformation and customer-centric innovations must be the foundational elements of Boots' future marketing strategy. The company may position itself for sustained success by strengthening its partnerships with healthcare providers, enhancing customization via data analytics and broadening its omnichannel commerce (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). In summary, Boots can maintain a competitive edge in the dynamic health and beauty sector by using its strengths, addressing its weaknesses and proactively adapting to market developments.

8. Recommendations

Boots the Chemist must emphasize digital transformation, sustainability and enhancement of customer experience to maintain its competitive advantage and adapt to the evolving market. Initially, Boots must continue investing in its digital transformation by enhancing its online shop and implementing customization strategies driven by artificial intelligence (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). To compete with digital-first entities such as Amazon and online pharmacies, Boots must enhance its omnichannel commerce and digital footprint (Kotler & Keller, 2022). Artificial intelligence-driven chatbots and mobile applications may boost user engagement and convenience.

Furthermore, Boots' long-term objectives should focus on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and societal accountability. Boots should reduce its environmental impact and expand its range of sustainable products in response to increasing consumer demand for these things (Grant, 2016). To enhance the brand's reputation and comply with regulatory standards, it is advisable to collaborate with ethical suppliers and implement a circular economy plan for packaging (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2021). Ultimately, enhancing the user experience and cultivating brand loyalty is essential. Barney (1991) suggests that Boots may use consumer data analytics to create more focused advertising campaigns and improve their loyalty program. Wellness consultations and digital prescription services are two instances of in-store healthcare provisions that might differentiate Boots from its competitors and strengthen customer relationships (Porter, 2008). Boots may achieve sustained success in the competitive health and beauty sector by focusing on these strategic initiatives, which will also strengthen its market position and adapt to evolving consumer habits.

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