



ORGANIZATION CULTURE OF EASYJET'S PLC AND ITS IMPACT ON ORGANIZATION EFFICIENCY

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Introduction to easyJet	2
The culture and Structure of EasyJet	3
Analysis of the external environment.....	5
PESTLE Analysis	5
Political	5
Economical	6
Social	6
Technological	6
Legal.....	7
Environmental.....	7
Porter's five forces.....	8
The bargaining power of suppliers	8
The bargaining power of customers	9
Threat of new entrants	9
Rivalry among existing competitors.....	9
Threat of substitute services	10
The ethical approaches.....	10
Recommendations	11
Conclusion	12
References	12

Executive Summary

This summary provides insights into EasyJet, a notable European budget airline. Established in 1995, it has gained popularity due to competitive pricing and expansion throughout Europe. EasyJet's strategy centers on developing an extensive European flight network, generating higher revenue, ensuring dependable services, and maintaining cost-effectiveness.

The company's organizational culture emphasizes shared objectives, integrity, and inclusivity, fostering employee commitment and drive. The article evaluates the external environment through the PESTLE and Porter's Five Forces frameworks. Changes related to Brexit impact ownership requirements, while post-COVID economic challenges affect the industry. Social trends such as gender pay equality influence inclusivity initiatives, and technological advancements enhance the customer experience. Legal obligations and environmental concerns drive strategic choices, with alternative transportation posing a substitute threat.

The Porter's Five Forces framework assesses competition, supplier and customer power, threats of new entrants, and substitutes. Customer power is magnified by online choices and low-cost carriers, while the dominance of Airbus and Boeing as suppliers affects the industry. Ethical practices are integrated into EasyJet's operations, with an emphasis on sustainability and employee well-being, enhancing its positive reputation.

Recommendations involve ongoing investments in fuel efficiency, digital innovation, employee growth, crisis readiness, and an inclusive culture. These steps aim to attract and satisfy customers, positioning EasyJet for continued success in the competitive aviation sector.

To conclude, EasyJet's adaptable strategies, environmental awareness, and ethical practices contribute to its significance. By understanding external factors and embracing customer-focused innovation, EasyJet can effectively navigate challenges and prosper in the competitive aviation field.

Introduction to easyJet

With flights getting cheaper every year (almost ten times cheaper than in 1960) (Houston, 2019), EasyJet has become a very popular alternative for people in Europe. Founded in 1995 in Luton by Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou, EasyJet started offering local flights for prices as low as £29. The company then had success and expanded their services across Europe. In 2010 the company was elected the best low fares airline for the 10th time in a row and released a higher priced option for business class (Singh, 2019). As of 2022, EasyJet employed around 14,400 (Statista Research Department, 2023).

EasyJet has improved its strategy to make inexpensive travel simpler for everyone. To achieve this strategy, they have planned to build the best flight network in Europe, increase their revenue, deliver an easy and reliable service, and maintain their lower cost model (easyJet PLC, n. d. a)

The culture and Structure of EasyJet

In today's fiercely competitive business environment, organizational culture plays a pivotal role in securing a competitive advantage (Harry, 2020). Understanding and nurturing this culture becomes crucial for businesses seeking long-term success. The essence of an organization's culture lies in the collective values, beliefs, attitudes, systems, and norms that influence and mold employee behavior within the company. It goes beyond mere policies and procedures; it is the very soul of the organization, shaping the way stakeholders, employees, clients, suppliers, and customers perceive and experience the company.

The influence of organizational culture is far-reaching, touching every aspect of a company's operations, from the intricacies of contract terms to the provision of employee perks and even punctuality. When a company's culture aligns with the preferences of its employees, they are more likely to feel at ease, supported, and valued, contributing to a positive and productive work environment. This, in turn, fosters loyalty, engagement, and a sense of purpose among the workforce, bolstering the company's resilience even during challenging times in the business landscape (Wong, 2023).

The significance of organizational culture is backed by concrete research findings. According to a study conducted by Deloitte, an overwhelming 94% of executives and 88% of employees believe that having a unique and distinctive culture is highly beneficial for an organization. This highlights the collective understanding that a strong and identifiable culture can be a driving force behind an organization's success. Moreover, the study found that 76% of employees consider having a clear business goal as a crucial factor in fostering a positive and vibrant culture around the company (Agarwal, 2018).

In essence, a well-crafted organizational culture not only defines how a company operates but also becomes the driving force behind its journey to success. By embracing and cultivating a positive culture, businesses can create a harmonious and motivated workforce, nurture innovation, and build a strong foundation to thrive in the competitive market. Understanding the significance of organizational culture is the first step towards leveraging

its power to elevate a company's performance and drive it towards sustained growth and prosperity.

EasyJet's organizational culture ensures that all employees have a shared purpose and that it is closely related to the larger organizational goal. Employees among the organization can aim their efforts in the correct direction, provide their best work, and assure a strong commitment to the company thanks to having behaviors, goals, and philosophies that align with the company culture. (Harry, 2020).

Regarding the structure of the company, easyJet presents a tall hierarchical structure, it presents a defined chain of command led by multiple officers and directors (easyJet PLC, n.d. c).

Hierarchical structures provide a defined chain of command, roles, and responsibility, benefiting well-organized companies. Still, they can block communication, flexibility, and employee happiness. Benefits include quicker decision-making and resource use. They also encourage specialization and stability. Yet, drawbacks include sluggish communication, inflexibility, and disinterest. Bureaucracy and miscommunication can limit independence and innovation. Flatter structures are emerging to combine clear roles with adaptability and employee engagement, reflecting the changing business needs (NI Business Info, n. d.).

Some of the characteristics introduced by EasyJet in their culture include:

- Introducing a model that highlights the significance of achieving the objectives of the company while also encouraging staff to take calculated risks.
- Strong commitment to integrate morality and integrity into all aspects of its operations, making it possible to the company to use its ethical brand image as a strategy to gain significant competitive advantage over rivals.
- Due to tall structure, managers make decisions for employees to follow and supervises their behavior at work. This leads to the company constraining empowerment and autonomy of their employees. With that put into perspective, the organization is trying to reward employees with incentives to encourage innovative and creative practices.
- Applying a diverse and flexible work environment, which guarantees a high variety of knowledge, skills, and capabilities from people with different backgrounds.
- Putting employee motivation and happiness first. Despite being given difficult goals to achieve, management avoids applying pressure that results in burnout. The following actions are taken to achieve balance between employee and task orientation.

(Harry, 2020)

Analysis of the external environment

PESTLE Analysis

The PESTLE analysis is a well-known method to assess the dynamic external business environment. It's used as a tool to evaluate a business situation. A business interacts with the outside world while lacking control over these factors (Perera, 2017, p.3). This model helps in understanding the tough and competitive business surroundings. It examines key factors directly and indirectly affecting the company's performance to develop strategies for addressing challenges and enhancing the company's market position. (Perera, 2017, p.4).

PESTLE stands for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental. These are the outside factors examined in this model. It can serve as a structure to look at factors outside the company, predict the future, and decide what needs more study. It ensures essential factors aren't overlooked when aligning people strategies with the overall organizational plan (CIPD, 2023).

The following steps will analyze the broader business environment that can affect EasyJet as a company:

Political

A complicated political climate can have a significant impact on the aviation sector, as it does on most industries. Airlines that operate in unstable political environments may see a substantial fall in revenue (Rahman, n.d.). Since EU regulations demand that airlines operating in their countries must be owned mostly by EU citizens, Brexit has shifted the environment for easyJet so that they had to manage to get more shareholders from the EU, since before Brexit, the number was 49% and had to be increased to 51% (easyJet PLC, 2019).

European air traffic controller strikes could disrupt the services of the company. Apart from that, due to the war in Ukraine, the traffic controlling of aircrafts has become more challenging (Xie, 2023). The war has also caused an increase in ticket prices for countries that border Ukraine. Due to the high demand, prices have increase up to 13 times (Bowers, 2022)

Economical

The airline businesses were among the most impacted during the COVID-19 outbreak. It quickly became clear that it would develop into an unforeseen crisis, forcing the business into survival mode while being hampered by the loss of customers and income. Businesses are still recovering from this phenomenon (ACI, 2021).

The escalating rate of inflation and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis are poised to impact the travel industry soon. Recent research indicates that the travel sector has already experienced a significant downturn, with a 40% decrease in spending since May 2021. Additionally, compared to pre-pandemic levels, reservations have plummeted by 57%, reflecting the cautious approach of travelers considering the economic challenges. As the cost of essentials rises and financial uncertainties persist, individuals may opt to cut back on travel expenses, leading to a potential slowdown in the industry's recovery. Businesses within the travel sector must remain vigilant and adapt their strategies to navigate these challenging times and regain consumer confidence amidst the economic uncertainties (Walker, 2022).

Social

Businesses must be aware of social trends around the world.

The gender pay gap among full-time employees showed improvement, declining from 9.0% in April 2019 to 7.7% in April 2021, and further to 8.3% in April 2022. However, to fully grasp the situation, analyzing the longer-term trend is crucial. Examining data over multiple years helps identify underlying patterns and measure the effectiveness of efforts to bridge the gap. This approach enables policymakers and organizations to devise targeted strategies for promoting gender pay equity. The goal is to foster a fair and inclusive workforce, where individuals are valued for their contributions, irrespective of gender. Sustained efforts and proactive policies are key to achieving this vision (White, 2022).

Technological

Digital technology's societal impact urges companies to prioritize profitability through adaptation. EasyJet exemplifies this by embracing digital innovation with mobile apps, smartwatch features, flight tracking, and passport recognition. These advancements enhance customer experience, strengthen competitiveness, and position the airline as a leader in the dynamic aviation industry. As technology continues to evolve, prioritizing digital initiatives becomes crucial for meeting customer expectations and securing market success. (easyJet, n. d.).

A new technology called Skywise, that was developed by Airbus, helps airline companies to get real-time analytics that predict the need for maintenance and failure of components (Airbus, n. d.).

Legal

Under the EU flight regulations, all European regulated airlines are obligated to provide compensation to passengers facing difficulties during their travels. This compensation applies to passengers who experience overbookings, delays, or flight cancellations. In these cases, affected passengers are entitled to receive appropriate compensation for the provisions outlined in the regulations. The goal of these regulations is to protect passengers' rights and ensure a fair and satisfactory travel experience within the European Union. Airlines are required to adhere to these guidelines, fostering better customer service and accountability within the aviation industry (Ifly, n. d.).

Environmental

The UK Civil Aviation Authority has taken the initiative to raise the average unit rate for traffic control services. This decision serves multiple purposes: enhancing the quality of their services, recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and promoting the sustainability of flights. The increased unit rate will act as an incentive for the National En Route Centre (NERL), the primary traffic control service, to develop more efficient flight paths. By encouraging the implementation of streamlined routes, this move aims to optimize air traffic management, reduce fuel consumption, and minimize environmental impact. Ultimately, the decision aligns with the broader goals of improving aviation services and ensuring a greener and more sustainable future for the industry (CAA, 2023).

Porter's five forces

Porter's Five Forces framework, conceived by Michael Porter, is a foundational tool for strategic analysis, designed to comprehend the competitive dynamics within industries. Rooted in the belief that effective organizational strategies must be informed by an acute awareness of external opportunities and threats, the framework evaluates five critical forces – rivalry among existing competitors, the threat of new entrants, the bargaining power of suppliers and buyers, and the presence of substitute products and services. By meticulously scrutinizing these aspects, businesses can discern the characteristics of their competitive landscapes and make well-informed strategic choices. While Porter's model has long served as a robust guide for developing competitive strategies, critics argue that its applicability might be limited in the context of modern strategic thinking. As technology rapidly advances and disruptive innovations blur industry boundaries, new markets emerge, necessitating a broader perspective in crafting strategies. Contemporary strategic thinking includes factors beyond the traditional five forces, emphasizing customer experience, sustainability, and digital transformation. Embracing innovation, shaping the future, and engaging customers are increasingly imperative for sustainable growth in the ever-evolving business world. As such, integrating Porter's Five Forces with forward-looking approaches becomes essential for businesses to adapt, thrive, and seize novel opportunities in the dynamic and competitive market landscape (Brujil, 2018).

The bargaining power of suppliers

Different types of suppliers exist, like manufacturers, distributors, independent craftspeople, importers, exporters, and drop shippers. The bargaining power of suppliers depends on factors such as the number of suppliers compared to buyers, how much buyers rely on them, switching costs, supplier availability, and the possibility of suppliers expanding their operations. To handle suppliers effectively, companies need to build strong relationships, evaluate their importance in the supply chain, use performance metrics, reduce reliance through innovation, and have backup plans. Powerful suppliers can influence industry dynamics, pricing, product availability, and quality, which might lead companies to leave the market. To tackle supplier power, companies can explore alternate production methods, redesign products, or diversify their offerings (AF Bureau, 2020).

The airline industry is heavily influenced by the strong bargaining power of its major suppliers, Airbus and Boeing, who have significant control over fuel prices. This high supplier power can profoundly impact the industry's profitability and product quality, leading to potential price hikes and restricted product availability. Porter's Five Forces Industry Analysis Framework recognizes supplier power as a critical force that evaluates the pressure suppliers can induce on companies (AF Bureau, 2020).

The bargaining power of customers

The airline industry has always been highly competitive. But now, with the availability of online ticketing and booking systems, customers can easily check schedules and prices, helping them make smarter and more economical decisions. This has given customers more power in dealing with airlines, affecting how competition works in the industry (Porter's five forces). Additionally, the rise of low-cost carriers has added to the competition, giving customers even more choices, and pushing airlines to offer better prices and services to win them over. To stay ahead, airlines are focusing on making customers happy, providing good service, and running operations efficiently in this customer-driven market (MSG, n. d.).

Threat of new entrants

In the aviation industry, there are significant limitations that can hinder growth, like high entry fees, restricted access to credit, cash flow management issues, and regulatory barriers. However, these obstacles do not seem to be the main reasons for the lack of development and expansion. Instead, they mainly affect long-term entry into the market. Competitors who enter the sector often resort to price reduction strategies to compete and decrease the revenues of their rivals. This intense price competition makes it difficult for new players to establish a dominant position in the market. Despite these challenges, entering the industry is still possible. The real challenge for airlines lies in sustaining profitability amidst fierce competition and price pressure (Paolo, 2016). In conclusion, the threat of new entrants that could become competitive with easyJet is low.

Rivalry among existing competitors

The airline industry experiences strong competition. The major airlines mostly offer similar routes from similar locations at similar prices. Regardless of the airline you have chosen, the amenities they provide, or the absence of them, are similar, and the coach seats are also crowded. Because of the high bargaining power of the customers, airlines are constantly at risk of losing their passengers to the competition because the experience customers have with other companies is similar (Depersio, 2022). According to ticket pricing services, the main competitors to easyJet are other low-cost airlines around Europe, like Ryanair, Flybe, Vueling airlines, Wizz Air, Norwegian Air Shuttle, and Pegasus Airlines (Craft, 2023).

Threat of substitute services

With an increased attention to environmental policies, airplanes have been considered the cause of 5.9% of global heating. Some alternatives to airplanes are Trains, Busses, Bicycles, Cruise Ships, Cars, and any other form of transport (Flight Free USA, n. d.).

The ethical approaches

EasyJet Plc, a well-known budget airline in Europe, has integrated ethical practices into its organizational culture, leading to various benefits. The company's commitment to environmental sustainability is evident through its investment in fuel-efficient aircraft and optimized flight routes, resulting in reduced carbon emissions and noise pollution (Ahlgren, 2022).

Employee welfare is a central focus for EasyJet, with fair remuneration, professional development opportunities, and a diverse and inclusive workforce. This approach has motivated employees, leading to increased productivity and improved customer service (easyJet PLC, n. d. b).

EasyJet also engages with local communities and supports social and environmental projects in the areas it operates, strengthening its reputation and relationships with customers and partners. The company ensures ethical supply chain management by selecting partners who uphold social and environmental responsibility, reducing the risk of negative publicity (easyJet, 2021).

EasyJet's ethical practices have brought substantial benefits, positioning the airline as a responsible and sustainable player in the aviation industry. By focusing on environmental

sustainability, employee welfare, customer satisfaction, community engagement, and ethical supply chain management, EasyJet serves as an exemplary model for other organizations looking to integrate ethics into their business practices.

Recommendations

According to the data presented in this report, a few recommendations that could be done regarding the ethical and environmental challenges faced by the company are:

- To reduce its carbon footprint, the company needs to continue investing in fuel-efficient airplanes and exploring sustainable aviation fuels. A recent survey by McKinsey (2023) indicates that many customers are currently interested in buying environmentally responsible products. This strategy can attract more customers due to the appeal of socially and environmentally responsible products.
- By improving their mobile apps, incorporating AI-powered chatbots, and providing personalized recommendations, easyJet can enhance the customer experience and make their operations more efficient. This will result in a smoother customer journey, leading to higher satisfaction and customer loyalty.
- To increase employee engagement and satisfaction, implementing training and development programs that enhance skills, motivation, and performance can be effective (Brooks, 2021). This will result in better customer service and reduced employee turnover.
- Adopting a proactive crisis management strategy could play a crucial role in maintaining customer trust and enabling quick recovery for easyJet after unexpected incidents.
- Developing a more inclusive culture. When employees feel included, they experience a sense of belonging and empowerment, as their opinions are recognized and valued. Being appreciated for their unique skills and talents has positive effects, fostering a constructive workplace. This inclusivity not only contributes to a better work atmosphere but also brings about improved results and decreased absenteeism rates (IOD, 2022). Promoting gender diversity and inclusion creates a dynamic and inclusive work environment, driving innovation and talent attraction.

Conclusion

Overall, as highlighted in this document's analysis, easyJet's operational approaches and strategies are significantly influenced by the needs of adaptability, smooth technological integration, sustainability, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. To sustain its achievements in the continually changing and competitive aviation field, the company should align its workforce strategies with the external factors impacting its business environment. By doing this, easyJet can successfully navigate challenges and capitalize on opportunities, securing its ongoing success and significance in the dynamic industry.

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