

Strategic Management

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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

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Executive Summary

Currently the positive global development has provided tremendous opportunity for the companies to expand their business to any part of the world. Cross border business opportunities are growing and also companies are capable of entering new markets. This report has analyzed the opportunity of Google enter the China market. China is a largest economy in the world were most of the companies trying to enter China and this report is analyzing the difficulties faced by the Google and also strategies to find growth in China market and also to analyze competition faced by company from China search engine Giant Baidu. And number of theories and models to support the direction of strategy developed by Google to reenter China market.

Introduction

This case study tries to find out the Google's performance in China by taking into account current state of industry, doing the portfolio analysis, critically analysing its strategy

Google started its operations in China in 2005 earlier to that it provided search engine to Chinese users through its servers based in US but in a very short span of time Chinese Government developed its own firewall in order to provide the censored information to the Chinese people by providing the cache copy of Google search results which resulted in slowing down of its web pages, this resulted in slowing down its search results upto 7 times as compared to its competitor Baidu. As a result of this, Google decided to open its operations in China in order to resolve these issues as Google considered that it's better to provide the information rather than providing no information at all. So, it provided the censored information to Chinese population but still it found difficult to extend its presence in the Chinese market in terms of developing products in the Chinese language and localizing them whereas Baidu's pay 4 performance model was much better which was based on the performance rather than the flat charges in the beginning itself which other search engines used

Google faced cyber-attacks in January 2010 which forced it to consider its exit from the China and named it as Aurora attack, moreover this decision

from Google was considered diplomatic one by internet security experts as this decision would make Chinese Government to reconsider its decision on the censorship which could help Google attain the same level of leadership in the Chinese market as it enjoys the world over (Einhorn, B 2002)

Description of the companies in context

Overview of Google Inc:

Google LLC is an American multinational technology company that specializes in Internet-related services and products, which include online advertising technologies, search engine, cloud computing, software, and hardware. It is considered one of the four technology companies, alongside Amazon, Apple and Facebook. Google.com is the most visited website in the world. Several other Google services also figure in the top 100 most visited websites, including YouTube and Blogger. Google is the most valuable brand in the world as of 2017.

Google was founded by Larry Page & Sergey Brin in the year 1998, 20 years back. Google is serving all over the world currently having 98,771 employees all over the world. Google's parent company is Alphabet Inc. since 2015.



Google's Official logo

Overview of Baidu.cn:

Baidu, Inc., incorporated on January 18, 2000, is a Chinese multinational technology company specializing in Internet-related services and products and artificial intelligence , headquartered at the Baidu Campus in Beijing's Haidian District. It is one of the largest AI and internet companies in the world. The holding company of the group is incorporated in the Cayman Islands. Baidu was established in 2000 by Robin Li and Eric Xu. Baidu is currently ranked 4th overall in the Alexa Internet rankings. Baidu has the 2nd largest

search engine in the world, and held a 76.05% market share in China's search engine market. In December 2007, Baidu became the first Chinese company to be included in the NASDAQ-100 index. As of May 2018, Baidu's market cap rose to US\$99 billion. In October 2018, Baidu became the first Chinese firm to join the United States-based computer ethics consortium Partnership on AI (Thompson, C. 2006)



Baidu's Official Logo

Current strategic goals of Google:

Google's current strategic move is to get back in to market of china and its working on the ground work of the initiative. Its main strategy is to get major market share and sustainability and providing quality services with following plans.

- Acquiring the china market which is second largest economy in the world by bringing in its cloud business.
- As the Google does not have any data centre in china to store digital information's it is looking for partnership with local players to get sustainability in china.
- Also its plan is to introduce a new version of search engine to china market which will block all controversial search terms as per the guidance of china government. (, B & Elgin, B 2007)

Current strategic goals of Baidu:

Currently Baidu is leading in china market and it is a giant in its land. Its main strategy is to concentrate on increase in market share and diversification of its business and to gain better advantages over its competitors.

- Majorly Baidu has upper hand in artificial intelligence over its competitors and its looking for acquiring market all over china and also different part of world
- Biggest challenge of Baidu is to maintain market share and maintain consistency in the market by introducing its own new products.
- As many competitors are trying to enter china market with advanced technology, Baidu's main aim is to maintain stability and sustainability in the market.(Qiang, X 2006)

Future strategic goals of Google:

Google has a strategy of introducing its business and acquire Chinese market and to maintain sustainability. Google thinks china is an interesting market and it need to enter the market with the high and strong strategy. Following are the few strategy listed below.

- Google has made a strategy of launching a search engine called dragonfly within 8-9 moths which will be modified according to the china market needs.
- Its major strategy is to gain sustainability in the market and grow its market share in china
- Google is also working towards the artificial intelligence to compete with Baidu in china and also introducing verity of products to gain competitive advantage over its competitor.
- Also creating policies to align its product's with Chinese needs and government regulations.

Main findings:

- This includes the detailed analysis of strategy used by Google and Baidu in the china market and analysis of the techniques and policies used by the Google and Baidu to acquire market share. Also the analysis of past events and current position and future plans of the companies, Brief explanation on

alliance strategy and effect of political and economic factors on the strategic alliance. Internal, external and competitive techniques of the Google. (, B & Elgin, B 2007)

Positioning and popularity of Google in China

Google china which is a subsidiary of Google Inc. was once a popular search engine. In 2006 Google started with the Chinese version of search engine and it served the internet users of china which was estimate at 338 million in 2009. Up from 45.8 million in 2002. The Google had 29% of market share in the year 2010. And it further declined to 1.7% 2013.

Google became the focus of controversy when the dispute of censorship became an issue in the year 2010 and also Google was severely affected by hacking which took place in Google china. At the end the far reaching hacking attach which was called as operation Aurora which targeted Google's Gmail account, that incident pushed Google in to the edge and it drove Google out of china. Google entered the china market during the usage of desktop and internet and it departed at the dawn of the mobile internet and now Google is trying to re-enter the china market in the artificial intelligence era. As the whole world including china which is expecting benefit from the artificial intelligence and china has a high hope in the artificial intelligence with respect to all sectors like military activity, economic activity and social activity. Google has major market share in the other part of the world but in the china Google has 9.49% desktop search engine market share in china in 2009 and 0.30% of Mobile search engine market share. Google's competitors in china are Sogou and Baidu.

Positioning and popularity of Baidu in china market:

Baidu, Inc. was incorporated on 18 January, 2000 and was created by Robin Li and Eric Xu. It is a Chinese multinational technology company, which provides internet-related services, products and artificial intelligence (AI). The company is based in Beijing's Haidian District. It is one of the largest AI and internet companies in the world.

China's search engine market is the second largest in the world after the US with a market size of U.S.\$14.9 billion. According to China Whisper, that market is expected to grow at a rate of over 32%, twice the average global growth rate by 2015.

Baidu offers a range of products including maps, news, video, encyclopaedia, anti-virus, and internet TV. Baidu has the 2nd largest search engine in the world and owns over 75% of the market share in China's search engine market. In December 2007, Baidu became the first Chinese company to be included in the NASDAQ-100 index. According to YCharts, the company had a market cap of close to U.S.\$90 billion in June 2018. Even though baidu has a higher market share in the country, it is facing competition from Yahoo china, Microsoft Bing Youdao, Tencent etc. Baidu's Apollo Project is one of the world's leading autonomous driving and AI programs, with one of the largest partner ecosystems and over 100 global partners as of 2018, including BYD, Dongfeng, Microsoft, Intel, Nvidia, Daimler AG, ZTE, Grab, Ford, Hyundai and Honda. Currently Baidu has 66.25% of market share in the china and it is highest among its competitors. Baidu is focusing on the advanced projects to gain advantage over its competitors. (Schumann, J. H., von Wangenheim, F., & Groene, N. 2014).

Analyzing the external environmental factors of internet search market in China to develop strategic alliances with the competitors of Baidu by Google:

Google is looking for re-entry in the china market with help of strategic alliance with the competitors of the Baidu which will help in long term sustainability and acquiring market share in the china market .Developing strategic alliance is the major technique used by the Google to acquire market share . Google also doesn't have information storage facility in china hence that can be done through creating alliance with local players to provide such required services. In other hand Baidu is also concentrating on the increasing of market share and also to create strong customer base in the country by using advance technology and people friendly policy. Hence it is necessary for both the companies to analyse the external factors

of china market. PESTLE analysis tool will provide clear picture about the external factors to achieve the growth.

Political Factors

The political external factors in china influencing Google to involve the activities of governments. In the PESTLE analysis model, political factors partly determine the effect that governments have on businesses. The following political factors are significant in Google's macro-environment:

1. Globalization policy in china which have become more strict for foreign players to enter the china market and also china government foreign policies are not liberal to enter the market
2. Stable political climate in china is a strength to the companies unlike in the year 2010 which was quite harsh
3. State-sponsored online companies are the threats to enter the china market as the local government is supporting local players with sponsorship and other local laws.

The political factors in Google's external environment are mainly opportunities. Globalization increases the demand for online advertising. The stable political climate in major markets minimizes obstacles to the firm's expansion. (Yuksel,I. 2012) However, state-sponsored online companies pose a threat against Google, as in the case of the Chinese government's control of large firms in China.

Economic Factors

Google's business is subject to economic changes. In the PESTLE analysis model, economic external factors can change the market opportunities available to businesses. In Google's case, the following economic external factors are the most significant:

1. Economic stability of China markets is a biggest opportunity for the Google as in the current situation China is growing economy and also stable economy. It is world's second largest economy with the GDP growth of 6.2%

2. Rapid growth of China market is also a biggest opportunity for companies to step in to the China market

These economic external factors present opportunities for Google. The economic stability of major markets and rapid growth of developing countries create new momentum that Google can exploit. (Goldfarb, A., & Tucker, C. E. 2011). The company can use these opportunities for global expansion.

Social/Sociocultural Factors

Social or sociocultural external factors affect the way customers respond to Google's products. The PESTLE analysis model shows that these factors can present threats and barriers to business. The following social/sociocultural external factors are the most significant in Google's macro environment:

1. Increasing use of social media is a threat for Google as the Facebook and other similar companies are taking entry in the China market which will affect the user of search engine and it will increase the user of social media .And also such social medias providing advertising facility which will affect the revenue of Google
2. Rising diversity of users is an opportunity for search engine companies as the population of the China covers eighteen percent of the world population, which obviously require diversity and it is considered as biggest opportunity
3. People of China slowly adopting the western culture and it will be biggest strength in the future for Google to raise its market.

The rise of social media usage is a threat to Google because it strengthens companies like Facebook, which also offers online advertising services. The increasing diversity of users is an opportunity for Google to improve its services to match individual preferences. (Hill, Charles W. L.; Jones, Gareth R.2012)

Ecological/Environmental Factors

Even though Google generates most of its revenues online, the firm is subject to ecological or environmental external factors. In the PESTLE analysis model,

ecological/environmental trends influence business strategic direction. The following are the ecological external factors significant in Google's remote environment:

1. Global spread of environmentalism in China (opportunity)
2. Growing interest in sustainable business in China market (opportunity)

Google has opportunities to address these ecological/environmental external factors. The main idea is to improve the firm's ecological/environmental impact. In this way, Google can expect improved customer responses based on positive perceptions of the firm's ecological/environmental contributions. (Rich, J. L. 2015)

Legal Factors

Google must operate within legal limits of China Government. In the PESTLE analysis model, legal requirements influence what firms can do. The following are the significant legal external factors in Google's remote/macro environment:

1. More regulations on online privacy is opportunity but also a threat, China government has introduced more strict regulation for foreign players and also local regulations affects the growth of the company
2. More regulations on intellectual property rights (opportunity)
3. China government policy to sponsor and support local players are the opportunity to local players like Baidu.

Google can exploit the opportunities based on these legal external factors. For example, the company can improve its privacy measures to protect individual users. Also, Google can develop innovative measures to discourage people from violating intellectual property rights (Ghemawat, Pankaj 2002)

Analyzing competitive forces of Google and Baidu in the Chinese internet search market:

It is important to analyse the competitive force in China market for Google to compete with local Giant like Baidu. For this purpose we can use the porter's five forces model analysis which will help to face the competition.

The Five Forces in Google's external/industry environment can be summarized as follows:

1. Strong competitive rivalry or competition
2. Weak bargaining power of buyers
3. Weak bargaining power of suppliers
4. Moderate threat of substitutes or substitution
5. Moderate threat of new entrants or new entry

Recommendations Based on the Porter's Five Forces analysis on Google's business, competitive rivalry or competition exerts the strongest force on the company. The external factors of the threat of substitutes (substitution) and the threat of new entrants (new entry) are only moderate considerations in Google's industry environment. The bargaining power of buyers and the bargaining power of suppliers are minimally significant external factors. This Five Forces analysis shows that Google should focus on addressing the strong force of competition.

Bargaining Power of customers- High

The bargaining power of buyers is high in influencing Google's business. In Porter's Five Forces analysis model, such a weak external force is only minimally considered in strategic decisions. The following external factors contribute to the weak bargaining power of buyers on Google:

1. Big size of individual buyers (High force) As the users of the internet in China is relatively high and also growing rapidly
2. High and increasing demand from buyers (weak force)
3. Moderate quality of information (moderate force)

Each buyer makes only a small contribution to the revenues of Google, thereby exerting only a weak force on the company. Because of the high and increasing demand for products from Google and other competing firms, individual buyers exert only minimal influence on the company. The moderate quality of information refers to the limited knowledge of customers (Lee, H., Kim, M. S., & Park, Y. 2012). For example, advertisers may access Google's analytics data but such data is still limited in informing the advertisers about the dynamics and complexity of the online advertising environment.

Competitive Rivalry or Competition

Google experiences the strong force of competitive rivalry or competition. Under Porter's Five Forces model, competitive rivalry limits the growth capabilities of firms. Google must consider the following external factors that contribute to such strong competitive rivalry:

1. Large number of firms (strong force)
2. High diversity of firms (strong force)
3. Low switching costs (strong force)

Google has many competitors, such as Yahoo, Bing, Apple, Comcast, and others. Because of the diversity of its products, Google also has a diverse set of competitors. The company now offers Google Glass, Google Fiber and Chromecast, while the Google driverless car is under development. This condition exerts a strong force on Google's business. Customers experience low switching costs because it is easy for them to move from Google to other companies. Thus, the low switching costs exert a strong force on the firm (Lee, H., Kim, M. S., & Park, Y. 2012).

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Google experiences the weak power of suppliers. In Porter's Five Forces analysis model, the bargaining power of suppliers is weak when there are many suppliers to choose from. The following external factors are the ones that contribute to the weak effect of suppliers on Google:

1. High availability of supply (weak force) as the company has numerous suppliers in China market and also from all over the globe.
2. Large population of suppliers (weak force) this factor is weak for Google and also for Baidu.

The high availability of supply in combination with the large population of suppliers minimizes the effect of the bargaining power of any single supplier on the business of Google. This means that it is relatively easy for the company to move from one supplier

to another Google's suppliers are diverse because the company has a diverse array of products, such as Google Search, Google Glass, and Google Fiber, among others (Schumann, J. H., von Wangenheim, F., & Groene, N. 2014).

Threat of Substitutes or Substitution

Google experiences the moderate threat of substitutes or substitution. These substitutes include other advertising channels, such as television, radio, and print media. Google must consider the following external factors that contribute to the moderate threat of substitutes/substitution:

1. Low switching costs (moderate force)
2. Moderate to high availability of substitutes (moderate force)

The low switching costs make it easy for customers to move from Google's advertising services to the substitute services. In Porter's Five Forces analysis model, this condition exerts a moderate force on the company's business. Also, the moderate to high availability of substitutes means that customers have considerable options in case they want to move away from Google. The overall impact of these external factors is the moderate threat of substitution against Google's products (Statista 2017).

Threat of New Entrants or New Entry

The threat of new entrants (new entry) is moderate in influencing Google's business. These new entrants can be new ventures or investments of large technology companies, as well as start-up companies offering products similar to Google's. In Porter's Five Forces analysis model, the following external factors contribute to the moderate threat of new entrants/new entry against Google:

1. Moderate cost of doing business (moderate force)
2. High cost of brand development (weak force)
3. Easily fulfilled regulatory requirements (strong force)

The moderate cost of doing business means that a considerable number of start-up companies and other firms can enter the market and directly compete against Google in China. Also, it is easy to satisfy regulatory requirements, thereby also making it easy for new entrants to get established and compete against Google (Lee, H., Kim, M. S., & Park, Y. (2012)). However, the cost of brand development is high. As a result, many start-up companies might find it difficult to sustain their operations in the long term, especially because Google already has one of the most valuable brands in the world.

SWOT analysis

The CAGE framework explains differences between countries, but it does not cover all factors. Although the failure of Google in China can be attributed mostly to insufficient understanding and adaptation, mainly due to cultural and administrative barriers, using a SWOT analysis it is possible to capture the role of its main competitors better, therefore understanding where Google went wrong. Acronym: SWOT stands for words Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Google, as the biggest search engine and leading Technology Company, had several strengths. Firstly, it had superior searching and indexing technology, not just in terms of algorithms, but also in terms of hardware and storage capacity. It could therefore offer better results faster than its competitors. Its size and good performance, including \$36 billion in cash in 2011, allowed Google to expand without the worry of capital investments. Other advantages included the prestigious name of Google within the IT world. This gave them access to some of the best engineers available. As the head of Google's Chinese operations was appointed Dr. Kai-Fu Lee, former vice-president of Microsoft with vast expertise in the Chinese market. It means that Google

could enter the market with the best people, experienced leader and massive stockpile of cash.

Weaknesses

were also present. The first of them was Google's global brand image that ruled out full adaptation. The company faced significant criticism for allowing censorship although it was one of the basic requirements stated by the Chinese regulators. A second weakness was the limited space for creating relationships with Chinese officials compared to its rivals. This was, in part, due to internal anti-bribery rules and, in addition, US laws. Another and the most important weakness was Google's global strategy, which was not sufficiently adjusted to the Chinese market and displayed an insufficient knowledge of the market in general. (Awais, M., & Samin, T. 2012)

Opportunities

were wide. The rapidly growing Internet market in China offered a new and potentially enormous source of revenue. The Chinese Internet population of online shoppers is currently the second biggest in the world: 140 million compared to 170 million in the US. With around 12% market shares in 2006, there was an obvious potential for growth. Moreover, as people in china were becoming richer, future prospects for Google were very optimistic. (Awais, M., & Samin, T. 2012)

Threats.

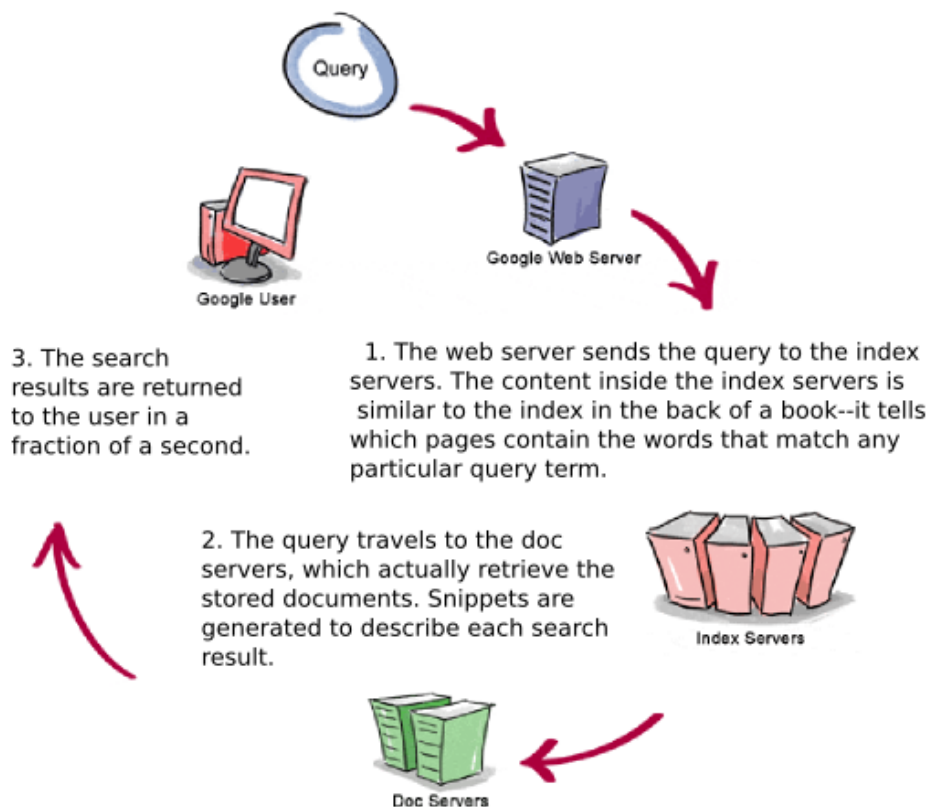
Operating in an authoritative regime without legal certainty is always risky. A sudden change in any regulation scan easily torpedo business strategies. Another threat was Google's competitors, namely Baidu, its Chinese counterpart holding a majority in the market. Advertising, main market where Google operates is two-sided. It means need to attract audience first in order to attract clients. If Google wouldn't be able to win significant market share, its revenues, based mainly on the number of users it could attract, would suffer heavily. (Schumann, J. H., von Wangenheim, F., & Groene, N. 2014)

Value Chain Analysis

In this part we are analysing the value chain process of Google . This will help to understand the Google's internal strength and usage of value chain analysis in competing with Baidu in china .

Google has a different value chain from the traditional model. To demonstrate how raw materials move to finished goods for sale as it gains value in transit we will make some assumptions. It has a nuanced value chain because most of its products aren't physical.

Value chain analysis is done to understand the internal process , and strength and weakness in the value chain. Strengths can be used for competitive advantage and poor process chains are to be improved and brought to the expected level. Following are the analysis explained in detail.



According to Larry Page, a perfect search engine is one that gets exactly what you mean and provides the exact information so that you do not need to type it again after rephrasing. (Shepard, C. 2013)

I. Inbound logistics

In the software application android, inbound logistic begins with cell phone apps created by developers. They have a sufficient number of Apps with more free Apps than competitors. This places their inbound logistic at a favourable spot. Let us make an assumption that Google users are raw materials. The company gathers its website users (raw materials) by encouraging the use of its stellar search services. They are the first step in the success of this model, when they place a search on their computer.

II. Operations

The operations logistics begin with the algorithms of functioning queries in the web server shown in figure 19. This is where the query comes from when it goes to the index server. The query moves further to the doc server to retrieve the document. At the doc server, snippets describe each search result. For Android, value chain operating activities include the continuous development and maintenance of cell phone Apps. They also update the Android operating system at a regular basis. They are very efficient in this respect. However, they lose control in the imitation of their OS and many people are able to hack and recreate software from their OS. They can improve in this area by decrypting it further. (Shepard, C. 2013)



Source : www.slideshare.net

III. Outbound Logistics

In their outbound logistics, using assorted signs “text advertising,” the search directs users to Google’s advertising partners as traffic. Advertisers transform them to conversions and sales which (as an assumption) are referred to as finished goods. Therefore, Google wants us many raw materials as possible in order to please as many advertisers as possible by them enjoying finished goods. The value chain would then be inferred as Google adding value by directing high quantity of web users to specific sites and sorting pre-qualified visitors for these sites using search history and keywords.

IV. Marketing

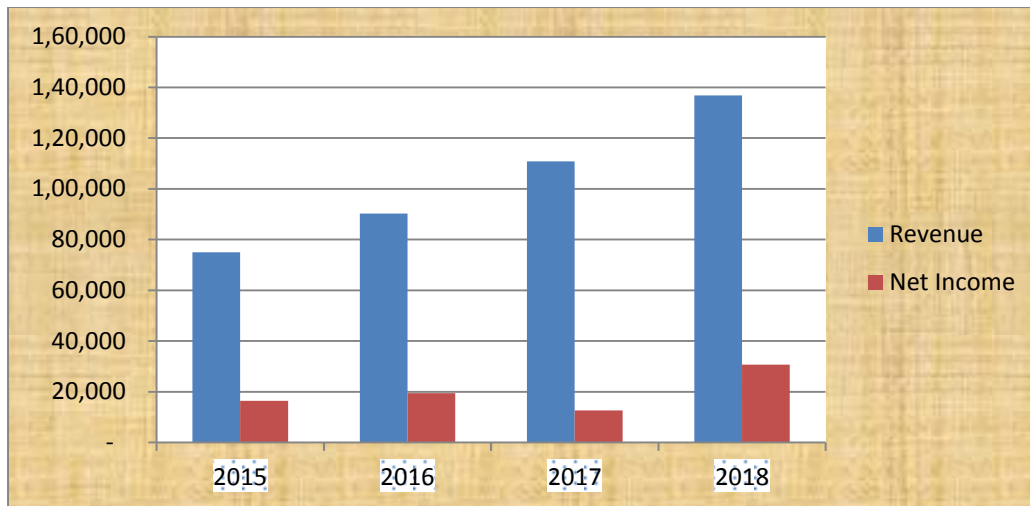
Google is a well-known brand and has products that self-advertise whenever someone logs in to their device and to the internet. They focus on making their products and services so good that they need not plan on marketing activities. This perpetual marketing is evidenced by the frequency in their product launch of exciting products and services. (Denning, S. 2014) They do not need to advertise to advertisers who are their buyers but to users because that is what advertiser’s would want to reach and know about. Every time they make a minor adjustment on their services or product and announce the new version that is their form of advertising. Therefore, all funds that would initially go to marketing go to research and development instead

II. Service After the Sale

Service after the sale in this case is above average because there is continuous collaboration between the user and the online platform and Google has a lot of instructional services to the public with access to Google support such as Google help desk. The value chain's most vital aspects are the technology, sales and marketing and system development. (Denning, S. 2014) Google's service is price competitive because of the quality and return on investment of online advertisements. Furthermore, being free enables free information and user guide from user generated content.

Financial analysis of Google

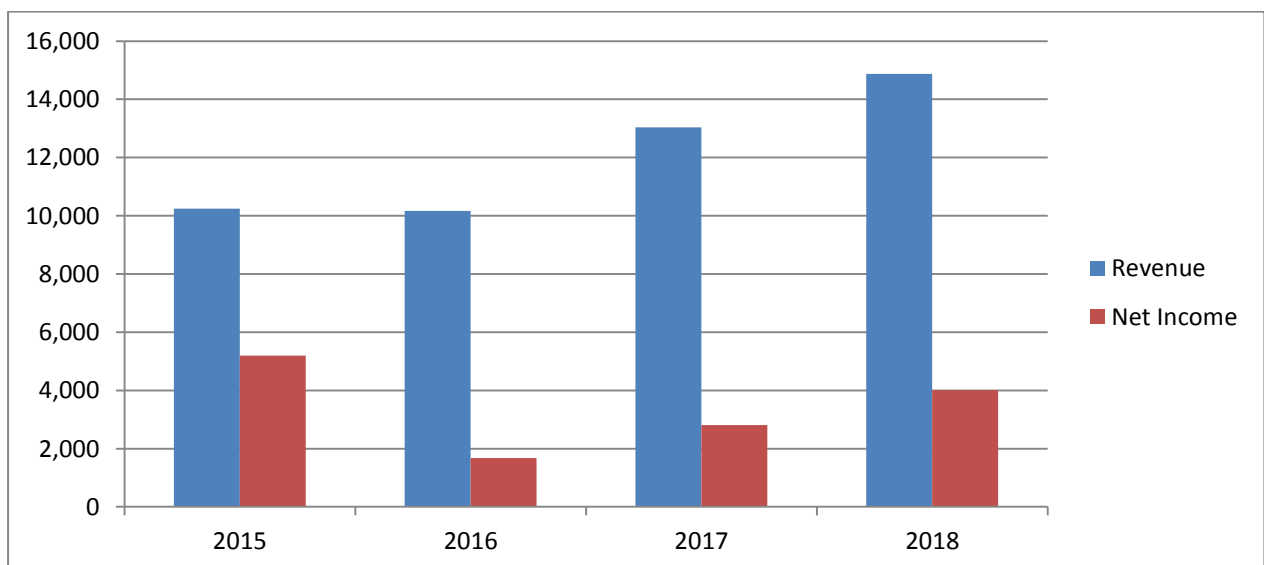
				\$
Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
Revenue	74,989	90,272	1,10,855	1,36,819
Gross Margin %	62	61	59	57
Net Income	16,348	19,478	12,662	30,736
Earnings Per Share	23	28	18	44



Financial Performance of Baidu

\$

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
Revenue	10,247	10,161	13,034	14,876
Gross Margin %	58	49	49	49
Net Income	5,196	1,675	2,812	4,010
Earnings Per Share	15	5	8	11



Google has the very Good track record of its financial performance if we can notice the performance of the Google it is conveying that in 2015 revenue was 74,989 M\$ and in 2018 revenue is 1,36,819 M\$.That shows tremendous increase in revenue. This shows the yearly regular and consistent growth rate has been maintained by

Google. If we look at the EPS of Google even it is Growing with the revenue Hence the Investors will be interested to invest more. But there is reduction in gross margin due to increase in operating expenses. Overall performance Google is good.

This financial performance shows that Google can use this as a competitive advantage in increasing its growth in China and also to acquire market share. This shows that investors will be looking for investing in Google. Investor will prefer to take risk in order to gain return, Investor will prefer risk looking at the growth opportunity.

Conclusion & Recommendation

From the above analysis and the facts of the cases it is evident and obvious that Google has strong and sustainability and competitiveness. In the global business Google has the strong position over its competitors. Google in china which was operative before 2010. And it was banned due to censorship issue raised during 2010. Now Google planning to reenter the china market. In order to manage the strategies effectively and to grow its business and brand in china, Its necessary to develop strategies and implement effectively adopting the market strategy with finding alliance with the competitors of the the Baidu. This strategic alliance with competitors will provide positive growth trend to the Google. Google can use its technology in china by sharing it with Google china. However as the Google's servers were hacked previously in china which affected Google negatively, Hence Google shall take the privacy policy in consideration and also local regulations to avoid the conflict with government. As analysed in our report we understand that Google has got all potentials to enter the market. Hence particular strategies may help Google to increase their market share and also to grow in market. Also artificial intelligence is a one particular area where Google must concentrate on , because Baidu is totally investing on AI and want to create monopoly .Hence Google shall consider all these facts to reenter the china market successfully .

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