

Analysing Industry Competitiveness: A Case Study of Infosys Using Porter's Five Forces Framework

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Abstract: This research paper investigates the competitive landscape of the IT services industry, with a focus on Infosys, using Michael E. Porter's Five Forces framework. Infosys, as a prominent player in the information technology sector, provides a rich context for understanding how various forces shape industry dynamics. The study employs Porter's model to analyze the bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitute products or services, and the intensity of competitive rivalry within the IT services market. By delving into these forces, the research aims to unveil the key determinants influencing Infosys' competitive position and overall industry dynamics. The findings contribute valuable insights to strategic decision-making within Infosys and offer broader implications for businesses operating in similar sectors.

Keywords: Competitive landscape, Five Forces framework, Industry dynamics, Strategic decision-making

1. Introduction:

In the dynamic landscape of the information technology and consulting services industry, understanding and navigating the forces that shape competitiveness are imperative for strategic decision-making. This research delves into the intricacies of industry dynamics by employing Michael E. Porter's influential analytical tool, the Five Forces framework. The case study centers on Infosys, a global leader in the field, aiming to dissect the forces that govern its competitive environment. By applying Porter's Five Forces — examining the bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitute products or services, and the intensity of competitive rivalry — this research seeks to unravel the intricacies that define Infosys' competitive positioning and shed light on the broader dynamics within the IT services market. Through this analysis, the study endeavors to provide actionable insights for strategic planning, both for Infosys and for businesses navigating the competitive landscape in the IT services sector.

1.1 Background

Michael E. Porter's Five Forces framework is a seminal tool in strategic management that offers a structured analysis of the competitive forces shaping an industry's dynamics. Developed by renowned Harvard Business School professor Michael Porter, this framework provides a systematic approach to understanding the sources of competition within a specific market. The Five Forces include the bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, threat of new entrants, threat of substitute products or services, and the intensity of competitive rivalry. By assessing these forces, businesses can gain insights into the factors influencing industry profitability, competitiveness, and strategic positioning. This comprehensive analysis enables organizations to make informed decisions about resource allocation, market entry or exit, and the development of sustainable competitive advantages. Porter's Five Forces framework remains a fundamental tool for strategists and business leaders seeking to navigate complex competitive landscapes and formulate effective strategies for long-term success.

The application of Michael E. Porter's Five Forces framework holds particular significance within the Information Technology (IT) services industry due to its dynamic and competitive nature. In this fast-evolving sector, understanding the forces that shape competitive dynamics is crucial for strategic decision-making. The bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitute services or products, and the intensity of competitive rivalry are especially pertinent in an industry where innovation, technological advancements, and client relationships play pivotal roles. For IT service providers like Infosys, the model offers a structured lens through which to analyze the intricate web of relationships, potential disruptors, and areas of strategic advantage. Assessing these forces allows organizations to anticipate challenges, identify opportunities

for differentiation, and tailor strategies that enhance competitiveness. In a field where client demands, technological disruptions, and global competition are prevalent, the Five Forces framework becomes an invaluable tool for IT service providers aiming to navigate complexities and sustain a strategic edge in the ever-evolving IT landscape.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

To assess the competitiveness of the IT services industry, it is imperative to employ rigorous frameworks such as Michael E. Porter's Five Forces model. This industry is characterized by rapid technological advancements, evolving client expectations, and intense global competition. The Five Forces framework provides a systematic approach to understanding the dynamics that shape the industry's competitiveness. Examining the bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitute services or products, and the intensity of competitive rivalry allows for a comprehensive analysis of the forces at play. This assessment is crucial for stakeholders, including companies like Infosys, to strategically position themselves in the market, identify areas of vulnerability, and leverage opportunities for sustained growth. By scrutinizing these forces, businesses can make informed decisions, adapt to changing market conditions, and formulate strategies that enhance their competitive advantage within the dynamic landscape of the IT services industry.

Understanding how Porter's Five Forces impact Infosys and its industry positioning is essential for gaining insights into the company's competitive landscape. The bargaining power of buyers and suppliers influences Infosys's relationships with clients and partners, shaping its pricing strategies and resource allocation. The threat of new entrants and substitute services impacts the barriers to entry and the level of innovation required to maintain a distinctive market position. Additionally, the intensity of competitive rivalry within the IT services sector influences Infosys's market share and profitability. By applying Porter's framework to Infosys, stakeholders can discern the strategic implications of each force, enabling the company to proactively respond to challenges, capitalize on strengths, and maintain a resilient and competitive position in the ever-evolving IT services industry. This understanding serves as a foundation for strategic decision-making, helping Infosys navigate industry dynamics and formulate strategies that align with its long-term goals.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Overview of Porter's Five Forces

Michael E. Porter's Five Forces framework is a strategic analysis tool that systematically assesses the competitive forces shaping an industry. These forces, collectively, provide a comprehensive understanding of the industry's attractiveness, potential profitability, and the challenges faced by businesses within it. The first force, Bargaining Power of Buyers, examines the influence customers wield over pricing, product quality, and services, particularly in markets where they have numerous alternatives. The second force, Bargaining Power of Suppliers, evaluates the leverage suppliers hold due to factors such as the uniqueness of inputs and the presence of substitutes, impacting input costs for businesses. The third force, Threat of New Entrants, explores the barriers that determine the ease with which new competitors can enter the market, influencing competition and profitability. The fourth force, Threat of Substitute Products or Services, considers the availability and affordability of alternatives outside the industry that may impact customer choices and industry dynamics. Finally, Competitive Rivalry examines the intensity of competition among existing players, considering factors like the number of competitors, industry growth rate, and product differentiation. Through this comprehensive analysis, Porter's Five Forces provides businesses with a strategic lens to navigate and respond effectively to the complexities of their competitive environment.

2.2 Applications of Porter's Five Forces

In the context of IT services, previous research and case studies utilizing Michael E. Porter's Five Forces framework have been pivotal in unraveling the intricate dynamics of the industry. These applications have provided a structured and comprehensive analysis, offering valuable insights into the strategic landscape for IT service providers. Scholars and industry experts have leveraged the Five Forces model to scrutinize the bargaining power of clients, discerning how factors such as the standardization of services and technological advancements impact client relationships and pricing structures. A strategic plan of action based on this might include:

positioning the company so that its capabilities provide the best defense against the competitive forces; influencing the balance of forces through strategic moves; and anticipating shifts in the factors underlying competitive forces. **Porter, M. E. (1979).** Similarly, the analysis of the bargaining power of suppliers has shed light on the intricate network of relationships within the IT ecosystem, exploring how access to crucial resources and technologies influences the competitive positioning of service providers. Furthermore, the framework has been instrumental in assessing the threat of new entrants in an industry where innovation and agility are paramount. Case studies have delved into the impact of disruptive technologies and emerging players, providing crucial insights for businesses seeking to maintain a competitive edge. Additionally, researchers have explored the threat of substitute services or products, examining how rapidly evolving technologies and alternative solutions influence market dynamics. The intensity of competitive rivalry within the IT services sector has also been a focal point, with studies analyzing factors such as market concentration, differentiation strategies, and the role of innovation in shaping competitive forces. **Porter, M. E. (1980).** Overall, the applications of Porter's Five Forces in the realm of IT services have enriched our understanding of the industry's intricacies, providing a solid foundation for strategic decision-making and adaptation in an environment characterized by rapid technological advancements and dynamic market conditions.

3. Methodology:

Case study methodology is a qualitative research approach that involves a thorough and detailed examination of a specific instance or situation, referred to as a "case". The goal is to provide a holistic understanding of the case and the complex interplay of factors within its context. Case studies often employ triangulation, using multiple data sources or methods to enhance validity. The methodology allows for a nuanced exploration of the chosen phenomenon, considering historical, social, cultural, and environmental factors.

3.1 Case Selection

The choice of Infosys and the IT services industry as the subject of analysis for Porter's Five Forces framework is grounded in a strategic rationale. Infosys, being a prominent player in the information technology sector, serves as an exemplary case for examining the dynamics of the IT services industry. The company's global presence, diverse service offerings, and historical significance make it a rich and insightful case study. The IT services industry, characterized by rapid technological advancements and intense competition, provides a dynamic backdrop for applying Porter's framework. The model's five forces - bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, threat of new entrants, threat of substitute products or services, and competitive rivalry - align closely with the intricacies of the IT services landscape. Analyzing these forces within the context of Infosys allows for a comprehensive understanding of the competitive dynamics shaping the industry. The study aims to unveil the specific determinants influencing Infosys' competitive position, providing valuable insights for both the company and the broader IT services sector. Overall, the rationale for this choice lies in the strategic importance of Infosys as a representative player and the relevance of the IT services industry in the contemporary business environment.

4. Porter's Five Forces Analysis:

4.1 Bargaining Power of Buyers

Addressing the Bargaining Power of Buyers is essential for Infosys Limited to maintain a sustainable and profitable business model. Buyers' inclination to seek the best offerings at the lowest possible price exerts pressure on Infosys' profitability over time. To effectively tackle this challenge, Infosys is employing strategic initiatives:

- a. **Diversify and Expand Customer Base:** Infosys mitigates the Bargaining Power of Buyers by building a large and diversified customer base. A broader customer portfolio can reduce the impact of individual clients seeking extensive discounts, thereby diminishing the overall bargaining power of buyers. This approach not only ensures stability but also provides opportunities for streamlining sales and production processes.
- b. **Continuous Innovation:** To counter buyers' demand for discounts on established products, Infosys focuses on rapid and continuous innovation. By introducing new and cutting-edge products and services, Infosys creates a competitive advantage. This not only attracts new customers but also limits

the bargaining power of existing buyers as they are less likely to seek discounts on innovative offerings.

- c. **Customer Retention Through Innovation:** By consistently introducing new products, Infosys reduces the likelihood of existing customers defecting to competitors. This strategy not only addresses the bargaining power of buyers but also strengthens customer loyalty. Innovation becomes a key driver in retaining clients, making them less inclined to seek alternatives and reducing the overall threat of bargaining.

Infosys Limited strategically counters the Bargaining Power of Buyers by diversifying its customer base, consistently innovating its product offerings, and fostering customer retention through a continuous stream of new and advanced solutions. These initiatives collectively contribute to a more resilient market position, minimizing the impact of individual buyers seeking advantageous terms.

Examination of factors influencing Infosys' client power in the IT services industry:

In examining the factors influencing client power in the IT services industry, particularly concerning Infosys, several key elements come into play. The size and concentration of clients in Infosys' portfolio are critical factors; a higher concentration or dominance of large clients can amplify their bargaining power. Infosys must strategically diversify its client base to mitigate this risk. Switching costs represent another significant factor—lower switching costs empower clients to negotiate more favorable terms. To address this, Infosys can create proprietary solutions or offer unique services that enhance client loyalty. The availability of alternative IT service providers also shapes client power; Infosys must differentiate itself to reduce the attractiveness of competitors. The quality of service delivered by Infosys is paramount, influencing client satisfaction and, subsequently, bargaining power. Proactive communication and client education on industry trends and emerging technologies can position Infosys as a strategic partner. The company's industry reputation, contractual agreements, and staying abreast of technological advancements further contribute to its ability to navigate client negotiations effectively. By carefully managing these factors, Infosys can strengthen its competitive position and foster mutually beneficial relationships with clients in the dynamic IT services landscape.

4.2 Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Navigating the Bargaining Power of Suppliers is a pivotal task for Infosys Limited to sustain profitability within the competitive Technical & System Software industry. As numerous companies in this sector rely on multiple suppliers for raw materials, the influence of powerful suppliers negotiating higher prices poses a substantial threat to Infosys' profit margins. To adeptly address this challenge, Infosys can implement strategic measures:

- a. **Efficient Supply Chain Management:** Infosys builds an efficient and diversified supply chain by collaborating with multiple suppliers. This approach reduces dependency on individual suppliers, diluting their bargaining power and providing Infosys with more flexibility in negotiating favorable terms.
- b. **Product Design Experimentation:** To counteract potential price increases from suppliers, Infosys does experiment with product designs that incorporate different materials. This strategy enables the company to shift to alternative raw materials if prices surge for a particular input, thereby mitigating the impact on overall costs.
- c. **Development of Dedicated Suppliers:** Taking inspiration from successful models like Wal-Mart and Nike, Infosys can strategically develop relationships with dedicated suppliers whose business is heavily reliant on Infosys. By creating a scenario where these suppliers depend on Infosys for a significant portion of their business, the bargaining power of such suppliers diminishes, putting Infosys in a stronger negotiating position.

The implementation of these strategies not only broadens the spectrum of suppliers for Infosys but also fortifies its capacity to navigate swiftly through market fluctuations and mitigate the repercussions of cost pressures imposed by suppliers. Through proactive management of the Bargaining Power of Suppliers, Infosys is poised to bolster its competitive standing within the Technical & System Software industry, fostering sustained

profitability. This approach ensures that Infosys remains agile and adaptable in the face of evolving market dynamics, positioning the company for long-term success in a highly competitive industry.

Assessment of supplier power and its impact on Infosys

The assessment of supplier power holds significant implications for Infosys, particularly in the context of the dynamic Technical & System Software industry. Given that many companies in this sector rely on a multitude of suppliers for raw materials, the bargaining power of suppliers can profoundly impact Infosys. Powerful suppliers have the potential to negotiate higher prices, thereby affecting Infosys' profit margins. This influence necessitates a strategic approach by Infosys to mitigate supplier-induced cost pressures. The company's ability to diversify its supplier base, experiment with innovative product designs, and cultivate strategic relationships with dedicated suppliers becomes crucial. These strategies are essential not only for reducing dependency on individual suppliers but also for enhancing Infosys' adaptability to market dynamics. By proactively managing the Bargaining Power of Suppliers, Infosys aims to fortify its competitive position, ensuring sustained profitability in the face of supplier-related challenges within the highly competitive Technical & System Software industry.

4.3 Threat of New Entrants

To effectively counter the threat of new entrants in the dynamic Technical & System Software industry, Infosys Limited must proactively navigate challenges and construct formidable barriers to fortify its competitive standing. A pivotal strategy involves a continuous commitment to innovation in both products and services. By introducing distinctive offerings, Infosys not only allures new customers but also secures the loyalty of existing ones, presenting compelling reasons for sustained engagement. Additionally, the establishment of economies of scale assumes significance, allowing Infosys to curtail fixed costs per unit, thereby bolstering cost-effectiveness and presenting a formidable challenge for potential new entrants to match such economies. Strategic investments in research and development, coupled with an expansion of capacities, serve as supplementary measures to dissuade new players from entering the market. Infosys' steadfast dedication to setting industry standards and the consistent introduction of cutting-edge solutions further diminish the attractiveness of the market to potential competitors. This strategic posture not only fortifies Infosys' existing position but also acts as a deterrent against new entrants, mitigating the prospect of disruptive competition and ensuring Infosys' sustained leadership in the market.

Identification of barriers to entry and evaluation of the potential for new competitors in the IT services sector:

In the highly competitive IT services sector, the identification of barriers to entry is crucial for assessing the potential for new competitors, who could challenge Infosys' market position. Barriers to entry act as deterrents for new entrants, shaping the competitive landscape. For Infosys Limited, established brand recognition and reputation serve as formidable barriers. The company's long-standing presence in the industry has cultivated a strong client base and instilled trust, making it challenging for new entrants to quickly establish comparable credibility. Additionally, the significant investment in cutting-edge technology, research and development, and specialized talent creates a high entry threshold. Infosys' global scale and established client relationships further contribute to the complexity of entry. The dynamic nature of the IT services sector, characterized by rapidly evolving technologies and client demands, requires substantial expertise and resources for new entrants to navigate successfully. Regulatory compliance and adherence to industry standards represent additional barriers. Evaluating these barriers underscores the formidable position Infosys holds in the market and provides insights into the challenges that potential new competitors would face in attempting to penetrate the IT services sector.

4.4 Threat of Substitute Products or Services:

The presence of substitute products or services that cater to similar customer needs but in different ways poses a threat to industry profitability, as observed in services like Dropbox and Google Drive serving as substitutes for traditional storage hardware drives. The threat intensifies when a substitute product or service offers

a distinctive value proposition compared to existing industry offerings. To effectively tackle the threat of substitute products or services, Infosys Limited can adopt strategic measures:

- a. **Service-Oriented Approach:** Infosys can shift its focus from being solely product-oriented to a more service-oriented approach. By emphasizing comprehensive service solutions, Infosys can differentiate itself from substitute offerings and provide a unique value proposition to customers.
- b. **Understanding Core Customer Needs:** Instead of solely concentrating on what the customer is buying, Infosys should delve into understanding the core needs of the customer. By identifying and addressing these fundamental needs, Infosys can tailor its offerings to align closely with customer requirements, making substitutes less attractive.
- c. **Increasing Switching Costs:** Infosys can implement strategies to elevate the switching costs for customers. This could involve creating proprietary solutions, integrating with other systems, or establishing long-term partnerships. Higher switching costs make customers less inclined to explore substitute products or services, thus fostering loyalty.

By incorporating these strategic approaches, Infosys Limited can effectively mitigate the threat of substitute products or services. A service-oriented focus, a deep understanding of customer needs, and the elevation of switching costs collectively contribute to Infosys' ability to maintain a competitive edge in the face of evolving market dynamics and emerging substitutes.

Analysis of substitutes and their influence on Infosys and the broader industry:

The analysis of substitutes and their influence on Infosys and the broader IT services industry is crucial in understanding the dynamics that shape competitive forces. In the realm of IT services, substitutes can emerge in various forms, challenging traditional offerings and influencing industry profitability. Services like Dropbox and Google Drive, acting as substitutes to storage hardware drives, exemplify the potential impact of alternative solutions. For Infosys Limited, recognizing and responding to these substitutes is imperative for sustaining competitiveness. The influence of substitutes can alter customer preferences and market demands, necessitating strategic adaptation. Infosys must remain agile, adopting a service-oriented approach, understanding core customer needs, and actively managing switching costs to retain customer loyalty. Additionally, the analysis of substitutes provides insights into emerging trends and innovations that might shape the future landscape of the IT services industry. Infosys, with its proactive stance, can leverage this understanding to innovate and differentiate its offerings, ensuring resilience and continued relevance in the face of evolving substitute products and services.

4.5 Competitive Rivalry

In the fiercely competitive landscape of the Technical & System Software industry, intense rivalry among existing competitors can exert pressure on prices and diminish overall industry profitability, affecting companies like Infosys Limited. To navigate this competitive intensity, Infosys can employ strategic measures:

- a. **Sustainable Differentiation:** Infosys can focus on building sustainable differentiation in its products and services. By offering unique features, advanced technologies, or specialized solutions, Infosys can distinguish itself from competitors, reducing the direct impact of price-driven competition.
- b. **Building Scale for Competitive Edge:** Building scale is crucial for Infosys to enhance its competitiveness. By expanding its operations and client base, Infosys can achieve economies of scale, lowering its cost per unit and improving efficiency. This strategic move enables Infosys to compete more effectively and maintain profitability.
- c. **Collaboration with Competitors:** Rather than solely engaging in direct competition, Infosys can explore collaborative approaches with competitors. Collaborative efforts, such as strategic partnerships or joint ventures, can expand the overall market size and create opportunities for collective growth. This approach can contribute to a more cooperative industry environment.

By implementing these strategies, Infosys can not only withstand the challenges of intense rivalry but also position itself for sustainable success in the highly competitive Technical & System Software industry. Building a sustainable differentiation, achieving economies of scale, and exploring collaborative initiatives contribute to Infosys' ability to thrive amidst competitive pressures.

Examination of the intensity of competitive rivalry within the IT services market:

The IT services market, within which Infosys operates, is characterized by a high degree of competitive rivalry. Infosys faces intense competition from global and domestic players in the industry, each vying for market share and client contracts. The competitive landscape is further fueled by the rapid pace of technological advancements, prompting companies, including Infosys, to continually innovate and offer cutting-edge solutions. Client relationships play a pivotal role, with companies striving to provide superior service quality and maintain high levels of customer satisfaction to secure and retain clients in the fiercely contested market. Pricing strategies often become a focal point, leading to price wars as companies seek to offer competitive rates while maintaining profitability. Talent acquisition and retention also contribute to the competitive intensity, with a constant demand for skilled professionals in the IT services sector. Strategic alliances and partnerships, while beneficial, introduce an additional layer of competition as companies vie for advantageous collaborations. In navigating this competitive landscape, Infosys employs strategic measures to differentiate itself, focusing on innovation, client-centricity, and operational efficiency. The examination of competitive rivalry within the IT services market underscores the dynamic nature of the industry and the strategic imperative for Infosys to continuously adapt and innovate to maintain its competitive edge.

5. Case Study Findings:

The competitive landscape analysis of Infosys Limited within the IT services industry, utilizing Michael E. Porter's Five Forces framework, reveals a nuanced understanding of the company's position and strategic initiatives. The examination begins with a focus on the Bargaining Power of Buyers, emphasizing Infosys' proactive measures to diversify its customer base and continuously innovate to limit buyers' bargaining power. The strategies encompass building a broad customer portfolio, introducing new products, and fostering customer retention through innovation.

The assessment of factors influencing client power in the IT services industry further illuminates Infosys' strategic approach. Key considerations include client concentration, switching costs, and the availability of alternative providers. Infosys aims to mitigate client power by diversifying its client base, minimizing switching costs, differentiating its services, and maintaining a strong industry reputation.

Navigating the Bargaining Power of Suppliers is crucial for Infosys, given its reliance on multiple suppliers in the Technical & System Software industry. The company adopts strategies such as efficient supply chain management, product design experimentation, and the development of dedicated suppliers to mitigate supplier-induced cost pressures.

The examination of the Threat of New Entrants underscores Infosys' commitment to innovation, economies of scale, research and development, and strategic investments to deter potential competitors. The analysis acknowledges Infosys' role in setting industry standards and introducing cutting-edge solutions, creating barriers to entry.

The assessment of supplier power and its impact on Infosys underscores the significance of diversification, innovative product designs, and strategic relationships with dedicated suppliers. These strategies enhance Infosys' adaptability to market dynamics and fortify its competitive position within the Technical & System Software industry.

The evaluation of the Threat of Substitute Products or Services emphasizes Infosys' shift to a service-oriented approach, understanding core customer needs, and increasing switching costs. These strategic measures collectively contribute to Infosys' ability to maintain a competitive edge against substitute offerings.

The analysis of substitutes and their influence on Infosys and the broader IT services industry highlights the company's need for agility, a service-oriented focus, and the management of switching costs to retain customer loyalty. Understanding substitutes provides insights into emerging trends and innovations shaping the industry.

Addressing the intense Rivalry among Existing Competitors in the Technical & System Software industry, Infosys focuses on sustainable differentiation, building scale, and exploring collaborative approaches. These strategies position Infosys for sustainable success amidst competitive pressures.

In conclusion, the comprehensive presentation of results from Porter's Five Forces analysis provides valuable insights into Infosys' strategic initiatives and competitive positioning within the dynamic IT services

industry. The multifaceted approach encompasses client-centric strategies, supplier management, innovation, and collaboration, reflecting Infosys' commitment to maintaining a resilient and competitive market position.

6. Conclusion:

The emphasis on the Bargaining Power of Buyers underscores Infosys' proactive measures to diversify its customer base and foster innovation, strategically limiting the influence of buyers. By building a broad customer portfolio, introducing new products, and focusing on customer retention through innovation, Infosys aims to mitigate client power. Additionally, the assessment of factors influencing client power, such as client concentration and switching costs, further highlights Infosys' commitment to diversification, service differentiation, and maintaining a strong industry reputation. The analysis extends to the Bargaining Power of Suppliers, where Infosys employs supply chain management and strategic supplier relationships to navigate supplier-induced cost pressures. The evaluation of the Threat of New Entrants acknowledges Infosys' dedication to innovation and industry leadership, creating barriers to entry and setting industry standards. The focus on sustainable differentiation, scale-building, and collaboration addresses the intense rivalry among existing competitors, positioning Infosys for success in the Technical & System Software industry. In conclusion, this comprehensive analysis provides valuable insights into Infosys' strategic resilience and competitive positioning, showcasing its multifaceted approach spanning client-centric strategies, supplier management, innovation, and collaboration.

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