

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF AN ENTERPRISE IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

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The modern fitness services market is experiencing a steady rise, driven by growing public awareness of healthy lifestyles, expanding sports infrastructure, and innovative solutions in the world of fitness. In Ukraine, despite the difficulties caused by the war and economic fluctuations, the fitness sector shows impressive resilience and prospects for further development [1]. The Iron House sports club shows us an example of how a chain is adapting to the current conditions and intends to enter the international market, namely to open a sports club in Italy. Based on this, the development of a strategy for entering the international market is currently very relevant.

Strategy is a general plan to achieve one or more long-term or overall goals under conditions of uncertainty. Strategy is important because the resources available to achieve goals are usually limited. Strategy generally involves setting goals and priorities, determining actions to achieve the goals, and mobilizing resources to execute the actions [2]. In the service sector, the most important thing is the quality of services and customer focus, as well as how much you are in trend. The first impression is crucial when visiting a sports club. The main condition is to create a cool brand for the sports club so that people want to come and hear about it through word of mouth.

Nowadays, technology is at a high level. Technology helps both trainers and clients to personalize the training process, monitor performance, and much more [3]. Therefore, our task is to identify our strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats that we may face. In addition, an analysis of macroeconomic factors such as politics, economics, social issues, and technology will help in evaluating strategies and making the right decisions.

Iron House is an innovative fitness business based in Sumy that has been successfully evolving for over eight years. Today, the chain offers three full-fledged gyms located in different parts of the city, which provides an opportunity to attract a diverse audience of clients [4]. The main principles of Iron House's operations are a focus on achieving results for each client, a high level of professionalism of the team, an individual approach, impeccable cleanliness and order, regular equipment upgrades, and a willingness to take into account the wishes of clients. It is this philosophy that has contributed to the formation of a stable customer base and a positive image in the local market.

In order to achieve an objective view of the possibilities for the progress of the Iron House sports club, both in Ukraine and abroad, it is extremely important to

implement a comprehensive strategic analysis, including the study of both external and internal aspects of the organization's activities. One of the most popular tools in the world of strategic management is SWOT and PEST analysis. A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is a framework used to evaluate a company's competitive position and to develop strategic planning. A SWOT analysis assesses internal and external factors as well as current and future potential [5]. A PEST (political, economic, social, and technological) analysis is a management technique that enables an organization to evaluate key external elements that could impact its activities or performance. This helps an organization become more competitive in the market [6].

Italy boasts the oldest demographic in the European Union, having a median age that surpasses 48, as reported by Eurostat in 2025. Approximately 24% of Italians are aged 65 and older, which is around one in four. This aging demographic is a crucial factor influencing the fitness industry. Instead of avoiding physical activity, numerous older individuals are adopting organized exercise as a proactive method to preserve independence, control chronic illnesses, and improve overall health. This change is transforming the way fitness centers function. To cater to the demand of this expanding demographic, fitness centers are broadening their services to feature age-suitable group classes, low-impact cardio equipment, joint-friendly strength workouts, and initiatives focused on balance, mobility, and flexibility [7, 8]. More specifically, Italy ranked fifth among all European fitness markets, demonstrating total revenue of EUR 2.3 billion, 5.5 million customers, 0.9% growth rate and 9.5% penetration rate [8].

Thus, entering new markets, in particular international ones, can be an excellent opportunity to improve the development prospects of the enterprise. Therefore, within the framework of strategic management of the enterprise under study, attention should be paid to promising ways of increasing the volume of activities.

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