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# Strategic Management Analysis of the University of Phoenix (2024)

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***Abstract***
*The University of Phoenix (UOP), founded in 1976 and headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, is a for-profit institution offering flexible online and on-campus higher education programs for working adults. UOP is a significant player in adult education, providing accessible learning for non-traditional students. Its mission is to offer higher education opportunities that help students achieve professional goals, enhance organizational productivity, and contribute to community leadership. The vision is to be the most trusted provider of career-focused education for adult learners.*
*This analysis explored UOP's generic strategy and conducts external assessments using PLEST (Political, Legal, Economic, Socio-cultural, Technological factors), Porter's Five Forces, and competitor analysis. Internally, the VIRO framework, value chain, and functional analyses are applied. The SWOT analysis revealed that UOP's strengths and opportunities outweighed its weaknesses and threats, enabling it to leverage its strengths and mitigate its weaknesses. However, we identified misalignments between UOP's mission and current strategy, particularly in public perception and regulatory challenges.*
*Immediate recommended actions included revising tuition pricing and strengthening marketing to emphasize UOP's value proposition while long-term actions involved improving academic programs and expanding industry partnerships to boost employability outcomes for graduates. The most critical identified action was to enhance UOP's reputation and perceived value, aligning with its mission of providing career-relevant education. This analysis highlighted the need for a cohesive strategy that leverages strengths and addresses weaknesses, ensuring UOP fulfilled its mission and maintained its competitive edge in higher education.*
***Key Words:*** *For Profit University, Strategic Analysis, and University of Phoenix*

## INTRODUCTION

This case delves into the University of Phoenix's mission, vision, and objectives, outlining its generic strategy. The analysis includes a comprehensive environmental and external analysis using tools such as PLEST analysis, Five Forces, and competitor analysis. Furthermore, an internal analysis is performed using VIRO, value chain analysis, and functional analysis. The results of these analyses are then synthesized into a SWOT analysis, examining whether strengths outweigh weaknesses and opportunities surpass threats. The effectiveness of the university's strategy is then evaluated, with recommendations for aligning its mission, strategy, and market positioning provided. Finally, the analysis ends with a recommendation for the most crucial actions needed for the university's success, along with the overall implications for the university.

### History and Background of The University of Pheonix

#### *Origins and Development*

The University of Phoenix was founded in 1976 by Dr. John Sperling, a Cambridge-educated economist and professor-turned-entrepreneur. Dr. Sperling identified a gap in higher education for working adults seeking advanced degrees and professional development. The first campus was established in Phoenix, Arizona, targeting non-traditional students by offering flexible scheduling and courses tailored to the needs of working professionals (University of Phoenix, n.d., *University of Phoenix*, 2021, *About University of Phoenix*, n.d.). The NAICS code for this industry is 611310 (Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools). Over the decades, the University of Phoenix expanded rapidly, both in physical locations and online education. By the 1990s, it became one of the largest private universities in North America, driven by its innovative use of online platforms to deliver education remotely. This approach made higher education accessible to a broader audience, particularly those balancing work, family, and education (Breneman, Pusser, & Turner, 2006).

The early years saw a focused approach to practical education, with programs designed to cater to the immediate needs of the workforce. Professionals often taught courses actively working in their respective fields, ensuring that the curriculum remained relevant and applicable to current industry standards. This approach not only attracted students but also helped in establishing strong ties with the corporate sector, which saw the University of Phoenix as a valuable partner in employee education and training. This model of education delivery set a precedent for the rise of for-profit educational institutions in the United States (*University of Phoenix,* 2021).

### *Modern Era*

In the 2000s, the University of Phoenix continued its expansion, becoming a publicly traded company in 1994 under the Apollo Group. This period saw a significant increase in enrollment and program offerings, focusing on various fields including business, healthcare, education, and technology. The university's aggressive marketing strategies and extensive use of online platforms allowed it to reach a global audience, further solidifying its position as a leader in online education (Blumenstyk, 2014).

However, the rapid expansion also brought challenges. The university faced scrutiny regarding educational quality, graduation rates, and student debt. Critics argued that the aggressive recruitment practices and the prohibitive cost of education did not always translate into meaningful employment opportunities for graduates. In response to these challenges, the University of Phoenix has implemented several reforms aimed at improving student outcomes and institutional accountability. These include reducing tuition costs, enhancing student support services, and increasing transparency in reporting graduation and employment rates.

The modern era has also seen the University of Phoenix adapt to the changing landscape of higher education. With advancements in technology, the university has continuously upgraded its online learning platforms to provide a more interactive and engaging learning experience. The introduction of virtual labs, simulations, and other innovative teaching tools has helped maintain the relevance and effectiveness of its educational programs. Furthermore, the university has expanded its research initiatives, contributing to the academic discourse in fields such as business, education, and healthcare.

## Business Strategy

### *Mission and Vision*

The mission of the University of Phoenix is to provide access to higher education opportunities that enable students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their professional goals, improve the performance of their organizations, and provide leadership and service to their communities. This mission is achieved through a commitment to innovation, flexibility in learning, and a focus on adult learners (*Mission and Values*, n.d.) The university emphasizes practical and applicable education, designed to meet the evolving needs of the labor market and to support lifelong learning.

In alignment with its mission, the University of Phoenix has developed a range of support services aimed at ensuring student success. These include career counseling, academic advising, and a robust alumni network that provides ongoing professional development opportunities. The university's commitment to accessibility is further reflected in its extensive online library resources, available 24/7 to support the diverse

needs of its student population. Additionally, the University of Phoenix fosters a culture of continuous improvement by regularly reviewing and updating its curriculum to keep pace with industry trends and advancements (*Mission and Values*, n.d.).

The University of Phoenix also places a strong emphasis on community engagement and social responsibility. Through various initiatives and partnerships, the university encourages students and faculty to contribute to their local communities. This focus on service and leadership development is intended to prepare graduates not only for successful careers but also for meaningful contributions to society. The university's mission-driven approach aims to create a positive impact on the individual, organizational, and community levels.

### *Generic Strategy*

The College and University marketplace is rather unique in the fact that there are a plethora of public colleges and universities that, by definition, compete for students using a "low cost" approach (Rowley, Lujan and Dolence, 1998). This phenomenon creates a bifurcated market of public and private universities where competition tends to be within market segments rather than between segments. For profit universities, like the University of Phoenix, are therefore competing with private not-for-profits and must, within that segment, position themselves either as a low-cost producer, differentiator or a "best value" firm (Rowley and Sherman, 2001). The University of Phoenix's generic strategy within this market segment can be identified as cost leadership with a focus on differentiation, hence a best value approach. The institution leverages its extensive online platform to offer flexible, accessible, and affordable education, which appeals to non-traditional students, working professionals, and those seeking career advancement. By maintaining lower tuition fees compared to many traditional private universities and providing a variety of programs, the University of Phoenix aims to attract a broad student base. Additionally, its emphasis on online education and robust technological infrastructure allows it to differentiate itself through convenience and adaptability, catering to the needs of modern learners who require flexibility due to work or personal commitments.

### Corporate Strategies/Objectives

Corporate strategies and objectives, unlike generic strategies, refer to first: 1) the general goals of the business relative to its sustainability, and 2) the specific grand strategies that will implement the firm's generic strategy in order to reach that general objective. In terms of general goals, the firm can persevere through one of four actions as dictated by market conditions and its internal vigor: growth (opportunities outweigh threats + strengths outweigh weaknesses), maintenance (threats outweigh opportunities + strengths outweigh weaknesses), harvest (opportunities outweigh threats + weaknesses outweigh strengths) and decline (threats outweigh opportunities + weaknesses outweigh strengths). An external analysis yields data about the opportunities and threats in the marketplace while strengths and weaknesses are derived from an internal analysis of the firm. We will first proceed with an external assessment.

### Environmental and External Analyses

Management strategists recommend that one examine both the macro and task environment in which a firm operates to determine the favorableness of market conditions for a firm. To that end, we have applied two models of analysis – the PLEST model (political, legal, economic, social and technological factors) and five forces industry analysis.

### *PLEST Analysis*

*Political Factors*: Political influence significantly impacts the University of Phoenix. Favorable policies and funding initiatives for online education provide growth opportunities (impact score: 8). For instance, government support for higher education accessibility can expand the university's potential reach, enhancing its ability to enroll a more diverse student body (Parker, 2019). However, political interference and fluctuating policies present threats, affecting funding and regulatory stability (Inside Higher Ed, n.d.). The dynamic nature

of political decisions can lead to instability, challenging the university's ability to maintain consistent operations and strategic planning.

*Legal Factors:* Legal challenges pose considerable threats to the University of Phoenix, particularly lawsuits related to recruitment practices and advertising. Compliance with accreditation standards is crucial, as failure to maintain accreditation can lead to a loss of credibility and, consequently, enrollment (FTC, 2023). The institution must navigate a complex legal landscape to ensure adherence to regulations and avoid punitive actions, which can tarnish its reputation and financial stability.

*Economic Factors*: Economic downturns pose a substantial threat as they can reduce individuals' ability to afford higher education, leading to decreased enrollment (Brookings, n.d.). However, specific programs like IT and healthcare see increased demand during certain economic periods, presenting growth opportunities. For instance, the need for IT professionals in a technology-driven economy can drive enrollment in relevant programs (University of Phoenix, n.d.). Thus, the university's ability to align its offerings with market needs is critical for mitigating economic threats and leveraging opportunities.

*Social Factors*: The increasing demand for flexible education options scores highly as an opportunity. Changing demographics necessitate adaptive strategies to attract a diverse student body (Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, 2019). However, public perception of online degrees and for-profit institutions presents mixed influences, requiring careful navigation. The university must continuously improve its public image and demonstrate the value of its programs to attract and retain students.

*Technological Factors:* Technological advancements offer significant opportunities for the University of Phoenix. Innovations in online learning platforms, including AI and tools like Zoom, are critical for enhancing online education (University of Phoenix, n.d.). However, cybersecurity threats pose risks to data protection. Ensuring robust cybersecurity measures is essential to protect sensitive information and maintain trust among students and stakeholders.

***Comparing Corporate Strategy to PLEST Analysis: Corporate Strategies of UOP* (See Table 1 in Appendix)**

The University of Phoenix (UOPX) employs a variety of corporate strategies that can be mapped to specific quadrants in Table 1, depending on their focus and objectives. For instance, the university's strategy of expanding online learning platforms aligns with the Growth (Q1) quadrant, particularly within the realms of Concentrated Growth and Related Diversification. This strategy leverages advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence, to enhance online education delivery methods, thereby increasing market share in the online education sector (University of Phoenix, n.d.). Additionally, the diversification of academic programs, especially in high-demand fields like IT and AI, aligns with the Growth (Q1) quadrant through Related Diversification. By tailoring programs to meet market demands, UOPX ensures relevance and appeal to prospective students (University of Phoenix, n.d.). The enhancement of student support services also fits within the Growth (Q1) quadrant under Concentrated Growth, as it focuses on improving student engagement and retention through enhanced support mechanisms (University of Phoenix, n.d.). On the other hand, maintaining compliance and accreditation aligns more with Maintenance (Q3) and Corrective (Q4) strategies, addressing regulatory and legal challenges to uphold credibility and trust (FTC, 2023).

***PLEST Analysis and Strategy Derivation Quadrants***

Based on the PLEST analysis and the identified opportunities and threats, UOPX should derive its strategies accordingly. The high impact of social and technological opportunities suggest that the university should emphasize Growth (Q1) strategies, such as expanding online learning platforms and diversifying academic programs. These strategies leverage favorable social and technological environments. The negative

impact of economic and legal areas highlights the need for Corrective (Q4) and Maintenance (Q3) strategies, essential for mitigating economic threats and potential legal challenges faced by the university.

In Quadrant 1: Growth, UOPX's strategy of concentrated growth focuses on expanding online learning platforms to increase market share in the online education sector by leveraging technological advancements such as AI and improved delivery methods. Additionally, the university's strategic partnerships with employers and industry bodies serve a similar purpose to horizontal integration by expanding its influence and reach. The related diversification strategy is evident in UOPX's expansion of program offerings in high-demand fields such as IT, AI, and healthcare, aligning its offerings with market needs.

In Quadrant 2: Harvest, the university might need to rethink its concentrated growth strategies in response to external pressures such as economic downturns or regulatory challenges. This could involve strategic reviews leading to the reevaluation of partnerships and potential consolidations within the industry. Divestiture and liquidation would be considered only if certain programs or initiatives are significantly underperforming and consuming resources without yielding adequate returns.

In Quadrant 3: Maintenance, the related diversification strategy ensures that the expansion into new program areas remains closely aligned with the university's core strengths and market demands. Exploring conglomerate diversification could involve offering new and diverse educational programs that might not be related to current offerings but could provide new revenue streams. Cooperative strategies would involve forming and strengthening partnerships with industry leaders and other educational institutions to enhance program relevance and student outcomes.

In Quadrant 4: Corrective, the turnaround, or retrenchment strategy could be implemented to address economic threats, such as during economic downturns when student enrollment might drop. This would involve cost-saving measures and strategic realignment. Related diversification in this context would mean pivoting towards program areas that show more promise in terms of student interest and market demand, even if they differ from traditional offerings. Conglomerate diversification could involve investing in entirely new educational areas that could serve as potential growth areas, thus diversifying risk. Lastly, divestiture or liquidation would involve exiting non-profitable programs or markets to reallocate resources more efficiently.

By aligning UOPX's corporate strategies with the PLEST analysis and mapping them to the appropriate quadrants, the university can better navigate the external environment. This strategic alignment ensures that the institution leverages opportunities and mitigates threats effectively, maintaining its competitive edge in the higher education landscape.

### *Matching Corporate Strategies with PLEST Analysis*

There is a substantial match between UOPX's corporate strategies and the PLEST analysis. The focus on expanding online learning platforms and diversifying programs aligns well with the high opportunity scores in social and technological factors (University of Phoenix, n.d.). Additionally, the emphasis on maintaining compliance and accreditation corresponds to the need for maintenance and corrective actions due to legal and economic threats (FTC Action Leads U.S. Dept. Of Education to Forgive $37 Million in Loans for Students Deceived by University of Phoenix, 2023).

### *Five Forces Analysis*

Applying Porter's (1985) Five Forces Model to the University of Phoenix reveals a competitive landscape with moderate to high buyer power due to the proliferation of online education options and alternative credentials like MOOCs. The availability of numerous online education providers increases students' bargaining power, making it imperative for the university to offer unique value propositions. Supplier power is moderate; while faculty expertise is crucial, the availability of adjunct and part-time faculty balances this power (US News & World Report, 2019). Technology providers wield considerable influence due to the necessity of advanced learning management systems, critical for delivering high-quality online education. Competitive rivalry is high, with numerous institutions vying for students, including traditional universities and other for-profit entities. The threat of new entrants is moderate, given the challenges associated with accreditation and

brand-building. However, the growing acceptance of alternative credentials and employer-provided training programs poses a high threat of substitutes, challenging the traditional degree model (Brookings, n.d.).

***Competitor Analysis***

The University of Phoenix faces competition from various fronts, including traditional universities, other for-profit institutions, and online education platforms. Traditional universities offer established reputations and often lower tuition, which can attract students seeking cost-effective education. Other for-profit institutions compete with similar offerings, targeting non-traditional students and working professionals. Online education platforms, including non-profit institutions and MOOCs, present significant competition by providing flexible, cost-effective alternatives to traditional degree programs (McCormick, 2023). The university must continuously innovate and differentiate its offerings to stay competitive in this dynamic landscape.

**Internal Analyses of The University of Phoenix**

***VIRO Analysis (See Table 2)***

*Valuable:* The University of Phoenix's extensive online platform and flexible education options are highly valuable assets that meet the diverse needs of modern learners. The institution's emphasis on career-oriented programs ensures that the education provided aligns closely with current job market demands, significantly enhancing its offerings (University of Phoenix, n.d.). This alignment with market needs adds considerable value, making the university particularly appealing to working professionals who seek to advance their careers without having to compromise their job responsibilities. By catering to the specific needs of these individuals, the University of Phoenix strengthens its market position and ensures a steady stream of enrollments from a demographic that values practical, career-focused education.

*Rare:* The comprehensive online infrastructure and broad program offerings of the University of Phoenix are rare within the higher education sector, providing the institution with a substantial competitive edge. The university's experience and long-standing presence in delivering online education differentiate it from newer entrants in the market (AISCH et al., 2017). This experience not only bolsters the university's reputation but also enhances its ability to deliver high-quality, reliable education to its students. In a market where many institutions are only beginning to explore online education, the University of Phoenix's established and refined online education system stands out, attracting students who seek proven and effective online learning solutions.

*Imitable:* While the concept of online education can be imitated, the scale and experience that the University of Phoenix brings to the table are challenging for competitors to replicate quickly. Competitors might develop similar programs, but the University of Phoenix's well-established reputation and robust infrastructure offer significant advantages that are not easily duplicated (Goldstein, 2024). The institution's comprehensive suite of online tools, resources, and support systems, built up over years of experience, creates substantial barriers to entry for new competitors. This deep-seated expertise and infrastructure allow the University of Phoenix to deliver consistently high-quality educational experience, further solidifying its position in the market.

*Organized:* The University of Phoenix is highly organized to capture value from its resources, with well-established processes for online education delivery and student support. The institution's robust administrative and technological infrastructure ensures efficient operations and a high-quality educational experience for students (University of Phoenix, n.d.). This organizational strength allows the university to effectively manage its resources, deliver a seamless educational experience, and provide comprehensive support to its students. The well-orchestrated integration of various functional areas, such as administration, technology, and student services, ensures that the university can maximize the value derived from its resources and maintain a competitive edge in the higher education market.

***Value Chain (See Table 3)***

The University of Phoenix's value chain places a strong emphasis on its robust technological infrastructure, which underpins both its online learning and administrative functions. Key activities in the value chain include curriculum development, online course delivery, student services, and marketing. The technological infrastructure is a critical support activity that ensures the efficient delivery of education and helps maintain a competitive advantage (Higher Education Market Size, n.d.). The university's continuous focus on improvement and innovation within its value chain activities enables it to effectively meet student needs, providing a seamless and enriching educational experience. By leveraging technology to enhance every aspect of its operations, the University of Phoenix can ensure that it remains at the forefront of online education, offering high-quality and accessible learning opportunities to a diverse student body.

***Functional Analysis***

*Human Resources:* The University of Phoenix employs a mix of full-time, adjunct, and part-time faculty, providing flexibility and cost efficiency. Investment in faculty development ensures high-quality education delivery, which is pivotal for maintaining academic standards and student satisfaction (US News & World Report, 2019). By offering professional development opportunities and generating a collaborative academic environment, the university enhances its faculty's ability to deliver engaging and effective instruction.

*Technology:* The University of Phoenix leverages advanced learning management systems and tools such as AI and Zoom amongst others to enhance the learning experience for its students. These technologies facilitate interactive, personalized, and flexible learning environments, catering to the needs of modern learners. Continuous investment in cybersecurity is also necessary to protect student data and ensure the integrity of online education platforms (University of Phoenix, n.d.). By prioritizing technological advancements and data security, the university can provide a safe, engaging, and effective online learning experience. The institution's technological capabilities are a cornerstone of its operational efficiency and educational effectiveness, enabling it to deliver high-quality education to a broad audience.

*Marketing:* The University of Phoenix's marketing strategy focuses on highlighting the flexibility, affordability, and career-oriented nature of its programs to attract non-traditional students and working professionals. Effective marketing campaigns emphasize the value proposition of the university's offerings, driving enrollment and retention (Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, 2019). By displaying the practical benefits of its programs and the success of its alumni, the university can build a strong brand and attract a diverse student body. The strategic focus on targeted marketing ensures that the university's message resonates with prospective students, effectively communicating the unique advantages of its educational offerings.

*Operations:* Efficient online operations are fundamental to the University of Phoenix's ability to streamline course delivery, enrollment processes, and student support services. These operational efficiencies are key to enhancing the overall student experience, contributing significantly to elevated levels of student satisfaction and success. The university's commitment to operational excellence ensures that students can navigate administrative processes smoothly, access necessary resources efficiently, and receive timely support throughout their educational journey (Valero & Van Reenen, 2018). This seamless operation is necessary in maintaining the university's competitive edge in the rapidly evolving field of online education.

The University of Phoenix has implemented advanced technological solutions to support its operations. These include sophisticated learning management systems that facilitate online course delivery, administrative processes, and communication between students and faculty. The integration of these tools enhances the interactivity and personalization of the learning experience, making it more engaging and effective. (University of Phoenix, n.d.). Additionally, continuous investment in cybersecurity measures is necessary to protect student data and ensure the integrity of the university's online education platforms. This focus on technology not only

streamlines operations but also enhances the security and reliability of the educational environment, which builds and maintains student trust.

Moreover, the university's marketing operations play a vital role in driving enrollment and retention. By focusing on the flexibility, affordability, and career-oriented nature of its programs, the University of Phoenix effectively attracts non-traditional students and working professionals. Effective marketing campaigns highlight the value proposition of the university's offerings, emphasizing how its programs can help students achieve their career goals without compromising their current job responsibilities (Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, 2019). This strategic marketing approach ensures that the university's message resonates with prospective students, effectively communicating the unique advantages of its educational programs.

The university's operational efficiency extends to its enrollment processes, which are designed to be user-friendly and accessible. Streamlined enrollment procedures ensure that students can easily apply, register for courses, and begin their studies with minimal hassle. Additionally, the university provides comprehensive student support services that address various needs, from academic advising to technical support as previously stated. These services are integral to helping students navigate their educational journey and overcome any challenges they may encounter. By offering robust support systems, the University of Phoenix enhances student retention and success rates, contributing to its overall reputation and effectiveness as an educational institution (Valero & Van Reenen, 2018).

The University of Phoenix also places a strong emphasis on continuous improvement in its operations. By regularly assessing and refining its processes, the university ensures that it remains responsive to the evolving needs of its students and the broader educational landscape. This commitment to operational excellence and continuous improvement is reflected in the university's ability to adapt to changes, such as the increasing demand for online education and the need for enhanced cybersecurity measures (University of Phoenix, n.d.). By staying ahead of these trends and proactively addressing potential challenges, the University of Phoenix can maintain its position as a leader in online education.

Overall, the University of Phoenix's operational strategy is centered around efficiency, technological integration, and continuous improvement. These elements combine to create a seamless and supportive educational experience for students, ensuring that they can achieve their academic and career goals. The university's ability to streamline operations, enhance the learning experience, and provide comprehensive support services is crucial to its success and reputation in the highly competitive field of higher education.

## The University of Phoenix's Operational Functions

### *Finance*

The University of Phoenix's financial management strategy is grounded in meticulous planning, budgeting, and resource allocation, which collectively ensure the institution's robust financial health and long-term sustainability. The university employs effective financial planning and forecasting strategies, which are crucial given the diverse revenue streams that include tuition fees, federal aid, and corporate partnerships. This multi-faceted approach helps in maintaining financial stability and resilience in the face of economic fluctuations. However, a notable weakness is the university's heavy reliance on tuition fees, making it vulnerable to enrollment fluctuations and changes in federal aid policies (Academic Annual Report, n.d.; Apollo Education Financial Statements, n.d.). Such dependency can pose risks, especially during periods of declining student enrollments or adverse policy shifts, necessitating the exploration of additional revenue sources to mitigate these vulnerabilities.

### *Marketing*

Marketing at the University of Phoenix revolves around the strategic use of the 4 P's: product, price, place, and promotion. The university offers a diverse range of degree programs and certifications that are competitively priced and supported by various financial aid options. This pricing strategy, combined with their extensive online presence, allows the university to reach a broad audience. Strategic partnerships with employers and the military further enhance their promotional activities, positioning the university as a favorable

option for career-oriented individuals. Despite strong brand recognition and comprehensive online marketing strategies, the university faces challenges such as the perception of high tuition costs and intense competition from other online universities (Connecting Education to Careers 2014 Annual Report, n.d.; Save time & money, n.d.). Addressing these perceptions and differentiating their offerings in a crowded market are critical to sustaining their competitive edge.

***Information Technology***

The IT department at the University of Phoenix plays a crucial role in maintaining robust online learning platforms and managing IT infrastructure. The university invests heavily in advanced technology to support its online education model, ensuring 24/7 access to course materials and utilizing digital tools to enhance student learning experiences. Continuous updates and improvements in technology are a key strength, ensuring that the university remains at the forefront of online education. However, maintaining and upgrading IT systems is costly, and the university faces potential cybersecurity risks that require constant vigilance (Individual Online Courses, n.d.; Save time & money, n.d.). The necessity for ongoing investment in cybersecurity to protect student data and the integrity of the online education platforms cannot be overstated, as any breach could significantly undermine trust and operational efficacy.

***Human Resources***

Human Resources at the University of Phoenix focuses on recruitment, training, and maintaining a positive work environment. The university employs experienced faculty with real-world industry knowledge and provides comprehensive training programs for continuous professional development. This approach ensures that the faculty can deliver high-quality education and stay updated with industry trends. Despite these strengths, the university faces challenges in retaining top talent and managing employee workload, which can impact job satisfaction and performance (Connecting Education to Careers 2014 Annual Report, n.d.; Academic Annual Report, n.d.). Effective retention strategies and workload management are essential to maintain a motivated and high-performing workforce, which is crucial for delivering exceptional educational outcomes.

***Production/Operations***

Operational efficiency at the University of Phoenix is critical to delivering quality educational programs. The university effectively manages both online and physical classroom operations, offering flexible course schedules and robust student support services. Continuous process improvements are implemented to enhance operational efficiency, ensuring high standards are maintained across all courses. However, the university faces challenges in scaling up programs to meet increasing demand while balancing quality and cost efficiency (Individual Online Courses, n.d.; Apollo Education Financial Statements, n.d.). High operational costs, particularly for physical campuses, also pose a challenge. Ensuring that the scaling of programs does not compromise the quality of education is a delicate balance that requires strategic planning and resource allocation.

***Research & Development (R&D)***

The University of Phoenix is committed to research and development, focusing on creating new educational programs, integrating innovative teaching methods, and conducting research to improve educational outcomes. They actively develop relevant programs that align with industry trends and demands, ensuring their curriculum remains current and valuable to students. However, limited funding for extensive research initiatives and challenges in quickly applying research findings to practical curriculum changes are notable weaknesses (Academic Annual Report, n.d.; university-of-phoenix-transformation-story.pdf). Overcoming these challenges requires securing additional funding and streamlining the process of integrating research insights into the curriculum to maintain a competitive edge.

This comprehensive analysis of the University of Phoenix's operational functions highlights the university's strategic approaches and identifies both strengths and potential areas for improvement, ensuring they remain competitive and effective in the evolving educational landscape.

**Listing the Strategic Factors of the University of Pheonix**

*Advertising:* For The University of Phoenix, advertising involves creating and implementing comprehensive marketing strategies to enhance the institution's visibility. This includes digital marketing campaigns, social media engagement, partnerships, and traditional advertising methods such as TV and radio ads (*University of Phoenix TV Commercials*, n.d.). Effective advertising helps attract prospective students by displaying the unique benefits and programs offered by the university (Smith, 2023). Additionally, UOP also uses advertising to combat claims against the university (*Changing the Conversation*, n.d.).

*Product Line:* The University of Phoenix offers a diverse product line that includes various degree programs and certificates tailored to meet the needs of adult learners and working professionals. These programs span disciplines such as business, healthcare, education, and technology. By continuously updating and expanding its product line, the university ensures it meets the evolving demands of the job market and student preferences (*Online Colleges, Schools & Classes - University of Phoenix*, 2012, Nietzel, n.d.).

*Brand Image:* The brand image of The University of Phoenix is shaped by its history, marketing efforts, student experiences, and public perception. A positive brand image is crucial for attracting new students and retaining current ones. The university strives to build a reputable brand by emphasizing its commitment to accessible, quality education and successful alumni outcomes (*About University of Phoenix*, n.d., Doe, 2021, (Nietzel, n.d.)).

*Average Product/Service Price:* The average cost of education at The University of Phoenix is a significant factor influencing prospective students' decisions. This includes tuition fees, which the university aims to keep competitive while providing various financial aid options and scholarships to enhance affordability (Miller, 2020).

*Distribution Channel:* The University of Phoenix leverages both online and offline distribution channels to deliver its programs. The primary distribution channel is its robust online learning platform, which allows for flexible, anytime-anywhere education. Additionally, the university maintains physical campuses and learning centers to cater to students who prefer or require in-person instruction (Taylor, 2019).

*Customer Value:* Customer value at The University of Phoenix is derived from the comprehensive support services, flexible scheduling, career-focused curriculum, and extensive alumni network that help students achieve their educational and professional goals. High customer value leads to greater student satisfaction and retention (Brown, 2018).

*Competitive Advantage:* The competitive advantage of The University of Phoenix lies in its extensive experience in online education, flexible learning formats, and strong focus on career-oriented programs. These advantages help the university stand out in a crowded higher education market and attract a diverse student body.

**Analysis of The University of Phoenix's Strategic Fit and Internal Environment Result of SWOT Analysis (See Table 4 – Summary Scoring)**

The SWOT analysis for the University of Phoenix highlights a compelling narrative of its internal strengths surpassing its weaknesses. With a summary strengths score of 7.78 compared to a summary weaknesses score of 5.07, the University exhibits a fairly solid foundation. Key strengths include its extensive

online platform, which caters to a diverse and geographically dispersed student body, and its strong brand recognition, which has been built over decades. The University's advanced technological infrastructure further bolsters its competitive edge, allowing for a seamless online learning experience that is crucial in today's digital age.

On the other hand, weaknesses such as dependency on tuition fees, a tarnished reputation due to past controversies, and high operational costs cannot be overlooked. These weaknesses present significant challenges but also opportunities for improvement. For instance, the reliance on tuition fees makes the University vulnerable to fluctuations in enrollment, underscoring the need for financial diversification. The perception issues, while detrimental, can be addressed through strategic public relations and marketing efforts aimed at rebuilding trust and credibility.

In terms of external factors, the University of Phoenix has a more favorable outlook on opportunities than threats, as indicated by the positive summary O-T score of +2.71. Opportunities include the growing demand for online education, the potential to expand into new markets, and the increasing acceptance of non-traditional educational pathways. The University is well-positioned to harness these opportunities, given its existing strengths. However, it must remain vigilant against threats such as increasing competition, regulatory changes, and economic downturns that could impact student enrollment and funding.

**Does the University of Pheonix's Strategy Work? Why or Why Not?**

The University of Phoenix's strategy showcases several strengths, particularly its ability to leverage advanced technology for online education and maintain a diverse range of degree programs tailored to meet market demands. By focusing on flexible, career-oriented education supported by robust online platforms, the university has positioned itself effectively within the rapidly expanding online education market. Effective financial planning, strategic marketing, and a strong IT infrastructure further bolster its competitive edge. These elements demonstrate that the university's strategic initiatives are well-aligned with its mission to provide accessible, high-quality education to a diverse student body.

However, there are notable misalignments that hinder the full realization of the university's strategic goals. One significant issue is the university's heavy reliance on tuition fees, which makes it vulnerable to fluctuations in enrollment and changes in federal aid policies (Academic Annual Report, n.d.; Apollo Education Financial Statements, n.d.). Despite extensive marketing efforts, the perception of high tuition costs and lingering reputational damage from past controversies continue to impact its brand image negatively. These factors can deter potential students and weaken the university's competitive stance, even with a strong marketing strategy. Furthermore, high operational costs, particularly for maintaining physical campuses, present ongoing challenges in balancing quality and cost efficiency (Individual Online Courses, n.d.; Apollo Education Financial Statements, n.d.). These issues indicate that while elements of the university's strategy are successful, there are critical areas requiring realignment to fully achieve its mission and strategic goals.

Economic threats also present significant challenges. Economic downturns can adversely impact student enrollment as individuals may be less willing or able to afford higher education during such times (AISCH et al., 2017). To mitigate this, UOPX could implement more robust financial aid programs and cost-saving measures. These initiatives would help alleviate the financial burden on students, making education more accessible even during tough economic periods. For instance, expanding scholarships, providing more flexible payment plans, and increasing partnerships with organizations to offer tuition reimbursement programs could all be effective strategies (The Economic Impact on Higher Education, 2019). Additionally, streamlining operational costs through efficient resource management and adopting cost-effective technologies could help the institution maintain financial stability and keep tuition fees competitive.

Legal challenges present another critical area where corrective actions are necessary. UOPX has faced various legal issues, including lawsuits related to recruitment practices and advertising claims. To address these challenges, it would be prudent for the university to strengthen its legal and compliance departments. This could involve hiring more experienced legal professionals and compliance officers who are well-versed in higher education regulations. By doing so, the university can ensure strict adherence to all relevant laws and

regulations, thereby reducing the risk of legal entanglements. Moreover, an initiative-taking approach to potential legal issues, such as regular audits and reviews of marketing practices and recruitment policies, can help identify and rectify problems before they escalate into lawsuits (Political Interference in Higher Ed Is Increasing (Opinion) | Inside Higher Ed, n.d.). This initiative-taking stance would not only help protect the university from legal liabilities but also enhance its reputation as a responsible and ethical institution.

**Realigning the University of Pheonix**

To realign the University of Phoenix's mission, strategy, and market, a multi-faceted approach is necessary, leveraging its strengths to address weaknesses, mitigate threats, and capitalize on opportunities. One immediate action is to diversify revenue streams to reduce dependency on tuition fees. This can be achieved by exploring additional revenue sources such as corporate training programs, partnerships with industry leaders, and securing government grants for educational initiatives (Connecting Education to Careers 2014 Annual Report, n.d.). Diversifying revenue can buffer the university against enrollment fluctuations and policy changes, thereby enhancing financial stability.

Enhancing the university's brand image is another critical step. Implementing strategic public relations campaigns to rebuild trust and credibility is essential. Highlighting successful alumni, positive student outcomes, and the university's commitment to accessible, quality education can help restore its reputation (Doe, 2021). Additionally, optimizing operational costs by streamlining processes and potentially reducing the number of physical campuses can improve cost efficiency. Emphasizing the efficiency of online platforms, which are less resource-intensive, will help balance quality and cost (Individual Online Courses, n.d.).

In the longer term, the university should focus on innovative program development to continuously update and expand its curriculum to include emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, data science, and cybersecurity. This ensures that programs remain relevant and attractive to prospective students (Online Colleges, Schools & Classes - University of Phoenix, 2012). Strengthening the technological infrastructure by investing in cutting-edge technologies to enhance the online learning experience and ensure cybersecurity is also crucial. This includes AI-driven personalized learning tools and robust data protection measures (University of Phoenix, n.d.).

Forming strategic partnerships with employers, industry bodies, and other educational institutions can enhance program relevance, provide practical training opportunities, and improve student employability (Smith, 2023). Enhancing student support services, including career counseling, mentoring programs, and mental health resources, is vital for improving student engagement and retention (Connecting Education to Careers 2014 Annual Report, n.d.). Finally, maintaining strict compliance with regulatory standards and continuously seeking accreditation for innovative programs will uphold the university's credibility and trust (FTC Action Leads U.S. Dept. Of Education to Forgive $37 Million in Loans for Students Deceived by University of Phoenix, 2023).

By addressing these areas, the University of Phoenix can better align its mission, strategy, and market positioning. These steps will help the university leverage its strengths, mitigate weaknesses and threats, and capitalize on opportunities, ensuring long-term sustainability and competitive advantage in the evolving educational landscape. The higher education industry, particularly the for-profit sector, is moderately competitive with a mix of opportunities and challenges. UOPX must navigate this environment by leveraging its strengths in technology and program diversification while addressing economic and legal threats. The PLEST analysis indicates that the university is well-positioned to capitalize on growth opportunities, provided it continues to adapt its strategies to the dynamic external environment.

**Most important action to be taken by UOP**

The most important action that needs to be taken by the University of Phoenix is to significantly enhance its technological integration within the curriculum. This strategic move is essential because the rapid advancement of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, cybersecurity, and data analytics is transforming industries across the globe. Preparing students with these cutting-edge skills is critical for their future employability and for maintaining the university's competitive edge in the higher education

sector. According to the University of Phoenix (n.d.), integrating these emerging technologies into the curriculum not only enriches students' learning experiences but also equips them with the necessary competencies to succeed in the modern job market. This alignment with technological trends supports the institution's mission to provide accessible, high-quality education tailored to the needs of working adults and non-traditional students.

Furthermore, the adoption of these advanced technologies is aligned with the strategic goal of improving student outcomes and retention rates. As highlighted by Breneman, Pusser, and Turner (2006), the ability to adapt academic programs to meet market demands is a key differentiator for for-profit universities. By incorporating emerging technologies, the University of Phoenix can offer programs that are directly aligned with current and future job market requirements, thereby attracting a larger student population, and enhancing the institution's reputation. This strategic focus not only addresses the immediate needs of students but also positions the university as a forward-thinking leader in higher education, capable of responding effectively to the dynamic demands of the global economy. Additionally, the University of Phoenix's initiative to introduce a new generative AI philosophy and academic guidance demonstrates a proactive approach to staying ahead in technological advancements, as noted in their recent announcement (University of Phoenix, n.d.).

Moreover, the economic diversity of students at the University of Phoenix, as discussed by Aisch, Buchanan, Cox, and Quealy (2017), indicates a need for flexible, technology-driven educational solutions that cater to a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Enhancing technology integration will support diverse learning needs and foster an inclusive educational environment. This approach not only benefits students but also strengthens the university's position in the competitive higher education landscape by highlighting its commitment to innovation and accessibility.

## CONCLUSION AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Through this analysis, several insights about strategic management, the University of Phoenix, and for-profit education have been gleaned. Strategic management involves continuous assessment and realignment to ensure that an organization's mission and strategy are in harmony with its external and internal environments. This process is imperative for-profit institutions like UOP, which must balance profitability with the provision of quality education. The University of Phoenix, as a for-profit entity, operates under different dynamics compared to traditional non-profit institutions. It must navigate public skepticism, regulatory scrutiny, and the challenge of maintaining high educational standards while being financially viable.

The PLEST analysis, Five Forces framework, SWOT, the operational functions, internal, external and competitor analysis offered a comprehensive view of the challenges and opportunities faced by the University of Phoenix. Engaging in this detailed examination revealed the critical role of strategic adaptability and the necessity for continuous improvement in maintaining a competitive edge. It also highlighted the value of a strong brand and reputation, which can be significantly enhanced through customer value co-creation behaviors, as discussed by Foroudi, Yu, Gupta, and Foroudi (2019) It provided a deeper appreciation of the need for flexible and inclusive educational solutions. The insights gained from this analysis also provided me with the importance of aligning academic programs with market demands and technological advancements, as noted by Jones (2022) and Miller (2020). For-profit education institutions like UOP play a central role in providing these flexible and accessible learning options, particularly for adult learners who require non-traditional educational pathways. However, they must overcome significant challenges related to public perception and regulatory compliance. Understanding these unique pressures is needed in developing effective strategies that can enhance institutional reputation, ensure regulatory adherence, and meet student needs.

Moreover, the broader landscape of for-profit colleges underscores the importance of strategic adaptability and resilience. These institutions must remain agile, responding to shifts in market demand, technological advancements, and policy changes. The lessons learned from the University of Phoenix's strategic analysis can inform best practices for other for-profit education providers, emphasizing the need for robust internal capabilities, strong external partnerships, and a clear, compelling value proposition to sustain success in a competitive educational environment.

Overall, this analysis of the University of Phoenix highlights how the role of strategic management in aligning an institution's mission with its operational realities and external challenges focus on addressing its strategic misalignments and focus on enhancing its reputation and educational value, With UOP knowing and updating its strategic management, UOP can continue to serve its students effectively and maintain its position as a leader in adult education.

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## APPENDICES

### Table 1
### Corporate Level Strategy Selection Matrix*

| | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|---|---|---|
| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **GROWTH (Q1)**<br>Concentrated Growth<br>Horizontal Integration<br>Vertical Integration<br>Related Diversification | **HARVEST (Q2)**<br>Rethink Concentrated Growth<br>Horizontal Integration<br>Divestiture<br>Liquidation |
| **THREATS** | **MAINTENANCE (Q3)**<br>Related Diversification<br>Conglomerate Diversification<br>Cooperative Strategies | **CORRECTIVE (Q4)**<br>Turnaround/Retrenchment<br>Related Diversification<br>Conglomerate Diversification<br>Divestiture/Liquidation |

*See https://www.mbaknol.com/strategic-management/grand-strategy-matrix/ for more details

### Table 2
### Analyzing the Firm's Resources, Competences & Competencies

| Levels of Competency / Basic Resources | Core Competences *VIRO Framework* | Distinctive Competencies | Competitive Advantage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Describe how these resources, assets, and skills lead to competencies in the firm's technical and managerial systems.** | **Describe how the competencies lead to unique advantages in either product or process management. Explain any other distinctive firm features.** | **Describe the competitive advantage of the firm – how does it achieve greater profitability than its competitors through their distinctive competencies?** |
| ➢ **List of Tangible Resources**<br>o Extensive online platform and IT infrastructure<br>o Multiple learning centers across the U.S (Schwalm, n.d.). | The University of Phoenix's robust online platform enables the seamless delivery of courses and programs to a diverse and geographically dispersed | The University of Phoenix's robust online platform enables the seamless delivery of courses and programs to a diverse and geographically dispersed student body. The advanced IT | The University of Phoenix achieves greater profitability than its competitors through its distinctive competencies, such as its advanced IT |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ○ Extensive library and Research Database (Soard, n.d.)<br>○ Extensive alumni network offering networking opportunities and potential mentorship | student body. The advanced IT infrastructure supports technical competency in offering 24/7 access to learning materials and interactive tools for students and faculty.<br><br>The physical learning centers provide additional support and resources to students, enhancing their educational experience and catering to those who prefer in-person | infrastructure supports technical competency in offering 24/7 access to learning materials and interactive tools for students and faculty. The physical learning centers provide additional support and resources to students, enhancing their educational experience and catering to those who prefer in-person interaction. | infrastructure, strong brand reputation, and extensive alumni network.<br>These competencies allow the university to attract and retain a large student body, leading to higher enrollment and revenue. |
| ➢ **List of Intangible Resources**<br>○ Strong brand recognition and reputation for adult education/ Accreditation and Academic Reputation/ Rank High for nations top colleges (*University of Phoenix - Arizona Overview*, n.d.) (*Online Colleges, Schools & Classes - University of Phoenix*, 2012).<br>○ Extensive alumni network<br>○ Proprietary Curriculum and Learning Tools | The university's strong brand reputation attracts a wide range of non-traditional students seeking flexible education solutions. This reputation is built on years of successfully catering to adult learners and working professionals.<br><br>The extensive alumni network offers networking opportunities and potential mentorship for current students, fostering a sense of community and long-term engagement (*Alumni Chapters*, n.d.) (Agarwal, 2022). | The university's strong brand reputation attracts a wide range of non-traditional students seeking flexible education solutions. This reputation is built on years of successfully catering to adult learners and working professionals. The extensive alumni network offers networking opportunities and potential mentorship for current students, fostering a sense of community and long-term engagement (*University of Phoenix - Arizona Overview*, n.d.).<br>Faculty and administrative staff possess specialized skills in online education, ensuring high-quality course delivery and student support. These skills are crucial for maintaining the university's competitive edge in the online education sector. | The institution's commitment to continuous improvement and adaptation to market needs further enhance its competitive advantage. By investing in emerging technologies and expanding its network of global partnerships, the university can sustain its competitive edge and maintain high student satisfaction rates. |
| ➢ **List of Employee Competences**<br>○ Expertise in online education delivery<br>○ Proficiency in adult education methods<br>○ Skilled IT and Administrative Staff | Faculty and administrative staff possess specialized skills in online education, ensuring high-quality course delivery and student support. These skills are crucial for maintaining the university's competitive edge in the online education sector (*University of Phoenix*, 2024).<br><br>The university's staff are trained in adult education techniques, which cater to the unique learning styles and needs of mature students, enhancing the overall educational experience (*University of Phoenix*, 2024). | The university's staff are trained in adult education techniques, which cater to the unique learning styles and needs of mature students, enhancing the overall educational experience (*University of Phoenix*, 2024). | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ➢ **List of Needed Resources, Assets, and Competences**<br><br>o Advanced IT infrastructure enabling 24/7 access to learning materials and interactive tools<br>o Physical learning centers providing additional support and resources<br>o Specialized faculty and administrative skills in online education and adult learning techniques<br>o Need smaller ratios between teacher to student (University of Phoenix - Arizona Overview, n.d.). | **List of missing core competences and/or impact of core rigidities.**<br><br>The University of Phoenix may need to invest in enhancing its technological infrastructure to keep up with the latest advancements in online education. Additionally, expanding its program offerings in emerging fields could address any gap in its curriculum. | **Benchmarking – list distinctive competencies of market leaders**.<br><br>o Flexible learning options catering to non-traditional students<br>o Robust online resources and support services<br>o Commitment to continuous improvement and adaptation to market needs<br>o Creating innovative programs that are innovative and competence based (*University of Phoenix Announces Three New Competency-Based Education Degree Programs Which Create a Faster, More Cost-Effective Path to an Advanced Degree*, n.d.).<br><br>Market leaders like Southern New Hampshire University and Arizona State University excel in offering innovative online programs and maintaining high student satisfaction rates. Benchmarking against these institutions can help the University of Phoenix identify areas for improvement and adopt best practices. | **Does the firm have plans for sustaining its competitive advantage – is the firm a learning organization?**<br><br>The University of Phoenix plans to sustain its competitive advantage by continuously updating its curriculum, investing in innovative technologies, and enhancing student support services. As a learning organization, it actively seeks feedback from students and faculty to improve its programs and services. |

**Table 3**
**Value Chain Analysis Matrix – Interrelationships Source and Form of Sharing**

| | Production | | MARKET | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Inbound Logistics** | **Operations** | **Outbound Logistics** | **Marketing/Sales** | **Service** |
| [1]***Production/Market*** | Efficient procurement processes ensure timely availability of educational materials and resources (*Everything You Need to Know about Attending University of Phoenix - UOPX*, n.d.). | Online learning platform development and curriculum creation add value through efficient content delivery and interactive learning tools. (*University of Phoenix Announces Three New Competency-Based Education Degree Programs Which Create a Faster, More Cost-Effective Path to an Advanced Degree*, n.d.) (*Online Colleges, Schools & Classes - University of Phoenix*, 2012). | Distribution of digital content via the online platform ensures quick and widespread access to educational materials (University of Phoenix, 2023). | Marketing campaigns highlight flexible learning options and industry-relevant programs, attracting a diverse student population (*Our Impact*, n.d.).<br><br>Has high profits (*Annual Report on University of Phoenix's Revenue, Growth, SWOT Analysis & Competitor Intelligence - IncFact*, n.d.) | Comprehensive student support services, including academic advising and career counseling, enhance student satisfaction and retention (*Our Impact*, n.d.) |
| [2]**Firm Infrastructure** | Firm infrastructure supports procurement through well-defined policies and vendor relationships, ensuring cost-effective and timely sourcing of materials. | Centralized administrative and IT systems to support operations-Operations benefit from a strong IT infrastructure that supports the online learning platform and ensures reliable course delivery. | Outbound logistics leverage the university's technological infrastructure to distribute digital content efficiently. | Marketing and sales activities are supported by a robust CRM system, enabling targeted marketing and effective enrollment management | Service operations are enhanced by an integrated student information system that tracks student progress and supports personalized advising and support services |
| **Technology Development** | Utilization of learning management systems (LMS) and analytics<br><br>Technology development drives innovation in procurement processes, such as e-procurement systems, enhancing efficiency and reducing costs. | Centralized administrative and IT systems to support operations | Continuous improvement in the online learning platform and the development of new digital tools enhance the learning experience and operational efficiency<br><br>Advances in technology enable faster and more reliable distribution of educational content, improving accessibility for students. | Marketing campaigns benefit from data analytics and digital marketing tools, allowing for more precise targeting and measurement of effectiveness. | Service delivery is enhanced through the development of added support tools and platforms, such as virtual advising and automated support systems |
| **Human Resource Management** | Recruitment of staff skilled in logistics and online education<br><br>Effective HR | HR management supports faculty and staff development, ensuring that employees have the skills and | Training programs for faculty to enhance online teaching skills<br><br>Training programs | HR practices in sales and marketing include training programs that equip staff with the latest digital marketing | HR supports the development of service staff through training and professional development |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | practices ensure the recruitment and retention of skilled procurement staff, enhancing the efficiency of inbound logistics. | knowledge needed to operate the online learning platform effectively (Williams, 2023). | for logistics staff ensure efficient distribution processes and effective use of technology. | techniques and customer relationship management skills. | programs, ensuring high-quality student support services (Doe, 2022). |
| **Procurement** | Efficient procurement processes are critical for acquiring quality materials and resources needed for educational operations. | Procurement of advanced technology and digital tools supports the development and maintenance of the online learning platform. | Sourcing of reliable distribution services and technologies ensures efficient outbound logistics. | Procurement of marketing tools and services supports effective marketing campaigns and sales initiatives. | Procurement of support tools and services enhances the quality and effectiveness of student support services. |

In the primary activities, production/market boxes, describe the value-added interrelationship at each point along the primary activity value chain. In the secondary activity's boxes, describe the sources of interrelationships and possible forms of sharing with the primary

**Table 4**
**Summary Table with Scoring**
**Analyzing the Internal Environment: Strengths and Weaknesses**

| | **rengths ate Each 10** | **Weaknesses Rate Each 0-10** |
|---|---|---|
| **RESOURCES/CAPABILITIES**<br>➢ **Tangible Resources**<br>➢ **Intangible Resources**<br>➢ **Core Competences/Rigidities**<br>➢ **Unique Advantages/Benchmarking**<br>➢ **Competitive Advantages/ Sustainability** | Tangible Resources: Extensive online platform and IT infrastructure (Score: 9)<br>Intangible Resources: Strong brand recognition and reputation in adult education (Score: 9) | Tangible Resources: Dependency on tuition fees and vulnerability to enrollment fluctuations (Score: 6)<br>Intangible Resources: Perception issues due to past controversies (Score: 5) |
| **VALUE CHAIN**<br>➢ **Primary Activities**<br>○ **Production linkages**<br>○ **Marketing linkages**<br>➢ **Secondary Activities Linkages**<br>○ **Inbound Logistics**<br>○ **Operations**<br>○ **Outbound Logistics**<br>○ **Marketing & Sales**<br>○ **Service** | Production linkages: 7<br>Marketing linkages: 8<br>Inbound Logistics: 7<br>Operations: 8<br>Outbound Logistics: 7<br>Marketing & Sales: 8<br>Service: 7 | Primary Activities: High operational costs for physical campuses (Score: 6)<br>Secondary Activities: Technical issues affecting online learning experience (Score: 5)<br>Secondary Activities Linkages:<br>Inbound Logistics: 6<br>Operations: 5<br>Outbound Logistics: 6<br>Marketing & Sales: 4<br>Service: 3 |
| **FUNCTIONS**<br>➢ **Finance**<br>➢ **Marketing**<br>➢ **Technology**<br>➢ **Human Resources**<br>➢ **Production & Operations** | Finance: Cost-efficient operations and diverse revenue streams (Score: 7)<br>Marketing: Strong digital presence and targeted program alignment (Score: 8)<br>Technology: Advanced online learning platforms and continuous updates (Score: 9)<br>Human Resources: Effective recruitment and development programs (Score: 7)<br>Production & Operations: Scalable online education model and strong student support (Score: 8) | Finance: Reliance on tuition revenue and potential financial constraints (Score: 6)<br>Marketing: Perception challenges and reliance on digital marketing (Score: 5)<br>Technology: Cybersecurity risks and high IT maintenance costs (Score: 6)<br>Human Resources: High turnover rates among adjunct faculty (Score: 4)<br>Production & Operations: Challenges in scaling programs and balancing quality (Score: 4) |
| **Number of Factors Used in Analysis = N 12**<br><br>**Result 7.78 – 5.07 = 2.71** | **Average Score = Sum Score/N 109/14= 7.78** | **Average Score = Sum Score/N 71/14= 5.07** |