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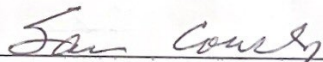
A MARKETING STRATEGY ANALYSIS ON DISNEY CRUISE LINE

by  
Erin Bradley

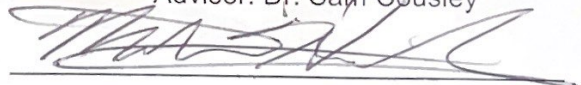
A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford  
May 2023

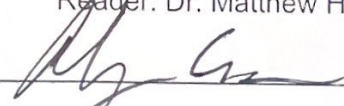
Approved by

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: Dr. Sam Cousley

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reader: Dr. Matthew Henriksson

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reader: Dr. Allyn Cascio

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## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank Dr. Sam Cousley for guiding me through this experience and working with me for the past year and a half. It has been such a long journey with many ups and downs, but his support has allowed me to thrive and accomplish something I never thought was possible.

I would also like to thank my mom for being my rock throughout this process. She never fails to support me no matter what and I would not be where I am today without her. No matter how far away I am from her I can constantly feel her in my corner cheering me on and watching me succeed.

Additionally, I want to thank all of my friends who have pushed me to keep going even when I thought I couldn't. Especially, Anna Reese Couhig, who has spent countless late nights working beside me.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge Mitchell Bowie. He has shown up for me in every possible way and has been the best personal cheerleader. He has taken away every doubt in my head and replaced it with confidence time after time. I couldn't have made it this far without him.

### **Abstract**

ERIN BRADLEY: A Marketing Strategy Analysis on Disney Cruise Line  
(Under the direction of Dr. Sam Cousley)

The objective of this thesis is to discuss the SWOT analysis and PEST analysis of Disney Cruise Line and to provide recommendations. The SWOT analysis involves identifying the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, while the PEST analysis focuses on analyzing external factors that could impact the company's success such as political economic, sociocultural, and technological factors. The SWOT analysis highlights the opportunities for the company to expand into new destinations, form partnerships and acquisitions, and capitalize on industry growth, while also identifying the threats of competition, changing consumer preferences, and economic downturns. The strengths of the company include its brand recognition, cruise options, and exceptional customer service, while its weaknesses are limited destinations, high prices, and being reliant on the cruise industry. The thesis provides recommendations for the company based on each of these factors, including expanding into new destinations, developing lower-priced packages, and using exceptional customer service to combat competition. The PEST analysis provides recommendations in four areas, including prioritizing safety and environmental protection, complying with labor laws, addressing geopolitical issues, and communicating effectively with guests for safety reasons. The thesis concludes that the most effective strategy will depend on the company's specific situation and goals.

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## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

The Walt Disney Company (TWDC) is a global media and entertainment conglomerate with a diverse portfolio of properties and businesses, including the Disney Cruise Line division. This thesis will analyze the marketing of Disney Cruise Line by using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and a PEST (Political, Economic, Social, and Technological) analysis.

The SWOT analysis will be used to evaluate the internal and external factors that influence the marketing of Disney Cruise Line. By identifying the company's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and threats it faces, there will be a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the cruise line. The strengths of the cruise line include its brand recognition, cruise options, and exceptional customer service, while its weaknesses are limited destinations and high prices. Disney Cruise Line is also faced with the opportunities for the company to expand into new destinations, form partnerships and acquisitions, and capitalize on industry growth, and the threats of competition, changing consumer preferences, and economic downturns. By combining strengths and weaknesses with opportunities and threats the company can develop strategies that are discussed further in this thesis.

The PEST analysis will provide a broader perspective on the external factors that impact Disney Cruise Line's marketing efforts. By examining the political, economic, social, and technological forces at play, the trends and forces that may influence the



company's marketing strategy will be identified. Disney Cruise Line can mitigate external influences that might have an impact on the company's success by putting a priority on safety and environmental protection, adhering to labor laws, addressing geopolitical issues, effectively communicating with passengers for safety reasons, and investing in new technology.

Together, the SWOT and PEST analyses will provide a comprehensive view of the marketing landscape for Disney Cruise Line. This will bring to light the key factors that are driving the company's marketing efforts and suggest potential strategies for future success.

## **Chapter 2 The History of the Cruise Line Industry in America**

This chapter explores the birth of the modern cruise line, the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigations Company (P&O), and puts into perspective different cruise ship classes, including how Disney Cruise Line fits into these categories.

### **The First Modern Cruise Line**

The first modern cruise line can be traced back to P&O which was founded in England in 1837. P&O started as a shipping company that primarily transported mail and cargo, but it eventually expanded to include passenger services, and in 1844, the company began offering regular cruises from England to the Mediterranean, which were advertised as "pleasure voyages" and were aimed at the upper class (Coulter, 2020). These cruises were the first to be marketed specifically as recreational travel, and they laid the foundation for the modern cruise industry.

P&O's cruises were a major innovation in the travel industry, as they offered a new type of vacation experience that was focused on leisure and luxury. Prior to the introduction of these cruises, most travels were either for business or for the purpose of visiting family and friends. P&O's cruises, on the other hand, were designed specifically for the purpose of relaxation and enjoyment, and they allowed travelers to visit a variety of destinations while still enjoying the comforts of a luxurious ship

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, other shipping companies also began offering passenger cruises, including the Hamburg America Line, the White Star Line,

and the Cunard Line (Jaques, 2019.). These companies operated a variety of ships, including luxury liners and ocean liners, that offered cruises to a wide range of destinations around the world.

Today, the cruise industry is a multi-billion dollar industry that serves millions of travelers every year. There are many different cruise lines that operate a variety of ships, and cruises are available to virtually every corner of the globe.

Another important advancement of the modern-day cruise line industry took place during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft (HAPAG), or Hamburg-America Line, was the world's largest shipping company. The line's director, Albert Ballin, had a vision for the future of luxury sea travel for upper-class citizens. He wanted to offset the low income of the winter months when the ships couldn't travel through the icy water to deliver cargo.

In January 1891, the Hamburg-America Line repurposed the *Augusta Victoria* into a passenger-focused luxury cruise liner. This ship was only a temporary liner as its accommodations could not live up to the expectations of the upper-class citizens Ballin hoped it would serve.

In 1899, Ballin hired shipbuilder Blohm & Voss to build a ship suited for luxury cruises. The *Prinzessin Victoria Luise*, named after Kaiser Wilhelm II's daughter, left on its maiden voyage on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1901 from Hamburg Germany traveling to New York. Its first passenger cruise voyaged to the West Indies (Austin, 2021).

## **Cruise Ship Classes**

Cruise ships can be classified into three different classes or categories based on various factors, such as their size, amenities, and intended audience. The three main classes of cruise ships are small ships, mid-sized ships, and mega-ships.

Small ships are the smallest class of cruise ships, with capacities of around 100 to 500 passengers. These ships offer a more personalized and intimate experience, with a focus on destinations and itineraries rather than amenities. They often visit more remote and exotic destinations, and may have specialized activities or themes, such as adventure cruises or luxury yacht experiences.

Mid-sized ships are larger than small ships, with capacities of around 1,000 to 2,000 passengers. These ships offer a more intimate and relaxed atmosphere than a mega-ship, with a wider range of cabin options and a lower passenger-to-space ratio. They also often have a more diverse range of itineraries, allowing passengers to visit a wider range of destinations.

Mega-ships are the largest and most luxurious class of cruise ships, with capacities of over 2,000 passengers. These ships offer a wide range of amenities, such as multiple dining options, theaters, casinos, swimming pools, and spas. They also typically have a higher staff-to-passenger ratio, providing a more personalized experience for guests (Sarna, n.d.).

In addition to these main classes, cruise ships can also be classified by their intended audience or market segment. For example, some cruise ships are designed for families, with children's programs and activities, while others are designed for luxury travelers, with high-end amenities and exclusive experiences. Still, others are designed for specific interests or hobbies, such as art, music, or sports.

Overall, the different classes of cruise ships offer a wide range of experiences and options for travelers, allowing them to choose the type of cruise that best suits their needs and preferences. Whether they are looking for a luxurious and indulgent experience, a more intimate and personalized adventure, or something in between, there is a cruise ship class that can provide it.

Disney Cruise Lines fits into the class size of mega-ship. The *Disney Magic* and *Disney Wonder* are both 2,700-passenger ships that were launched in 1998 and 1999 respectively. The *Disney Dream* and *Disney Fantasy* are both 4,000-passenger ships that were launched in 2011 and 2012 respectively. The newest of the cruise line's ships is the *Disney Wish* with a capacity of 4,000 passengers which had its maiden voyage in 2022. All of Disney's ships have a similar layout and design, with the main difference being the larger size of the *Disney Dream*, *Disney Fantasy*, and *Disney Wish*.

The amenities also play a large part in a ship's class. The more amenities the bigger the ship, and TWDC's ships have a lot to offer. These ships offer a wide range of amenities for passengers, including multiple dining options, a variety of entertainment options, and a wide range of activities for both children and adults. The ships also have a wide variety of staterooms, from standard inside and outside cabins to suites. All of the ships have a water park, a fitness center, and a spa. The *Disney Dream*, *Disney Fantasy*, and *Disney Wish* also have an adult-only pool and a private sun deck (Disney Cruise Line, n.d.).

Disney Cruise Lines is a major player in the mega-ship class, with five ships in its fleet that all have a capacity of at least over 2,000 passengers. The company's ships are designed to cater to families and offer a wide range of amenities and activities for both

children and adults. Disney's ships are known for their high-quality service and attention to detail, which has helped to establish the company as a leader in the cruise industry.

## **Chapter 3 The History of The Walt Disney Company**

### **1920s**

After Walt Disney's Laugh-O-Gram studio went bankrupt in 1923, he sold the short film "Alice in Wonderland" produced by the studio and signed a contract to produce six more films. To carry out the series, Walt Disney and his brother Roy Disney founded The Walt Disney Company (TWDC) on October 16, 1923 (History.com Editors, 2019).

In the 1920s, Walt Disney began producing a series of short, animated films featuring the character Oswald the Lucky Rabbit. These films were distributed by Universal Pictures and were well-received by audiences. However, in a dispute over contract negotiations, TWDC lost its rights to Oswald and was forced to come up with a new character.

In addition to producing short, animated films, Disney also ventured into other areas of entertainment in the 1920s. In 1928, he established the first-ever sound stage for animated films, which allowed him to experiment with synchronized sound in his films leading to the creation of "Steamboat Willie" (1928) (Finan, 2017). As a result, Mickey Mouse became an instant sensation and helped to establish Disney as a leader in the animation industry. Along with the presence of Mickey Mouse, the ability to produce

animated films with sound helped to further distinguish Disney's films from those of his competitors.

### **1930s**

In the early 1930s, the Walt Disney Company was primarily focused on producing short, animated films. After the success of “Steamboat Willie,” the company continued to produce successful short films throughout the decade.

In addition to producing animated shorts, the Walt Disney Company also began to branch out into other forms of media in the 1930s. The company released its first feature-length animated film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937). The film was a massive success, both critically and commercially, and marked a turning point for the company. It was the first full-length animated film ever made and set the precedent for future animated films.

The success of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* also helped to establish TWDC as a leader in the animation industry. This project went 400 percent over budget and called for a crew of over 300. Despite the challenges TWDC faced, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) grossed \$8 million in its first year (History.com Editors, 2009). Walt Disney took a more simplistic approach to animation compared to his rivals at the time as he framed *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* as one would frame a live-action film and the success of this feature film is not in question.

### **1940s**

The 1940s was a decade defined by works such as *Pinocchio* (1940), *Fantasia* (1940), *Dumbo* (1941), and the classic *Bambi* (1942). The decade also came with the first



strike for the animation studio. In 1941, workers united under the Screen Cartoonist Guild (SCG) and went on strike over promised profit-sharing from *Snow White* and conditions in general (The Animation Guild, n.d.). A federal mediator found in favor of SCG on every count and ever since TWDC has been amenable to workers and collaborators. The strike caused a decline in moral and TWDC did not produce feature films up to their previous standard and began to focus on short cartoons such as *Three Caballeros* (1945) and *Song of the South* (1946) (Walt Disney Animation Studios, n.d.).

### **1950s**

Other than producing classics like *Cinderella* (1950), *Alice and Wonderland* (1951), *Peter Pan* (1953), and *Lady and the Tramp* (1955), TWDC opened its first theme park in Anaheim, California in the 1950s. Disney's vision was to create an educational and amusement experience for children and adults. Special invitations were sent out for the opening of the theme park on July 17, 1955 but TWDC faced many challenges when the special passes were counterfeited and thousands of uninvited guests arrived at a theme park that was not ready for the public (History.com Editors, 2020). Disneyland did not have enough concessions to support the public and even the asphalt was still wet on Main Street. Despite these setbacks, Disneyland still experienced success in the coming years.

### **1960s**

The 1960s was a time of significant change and growth for the company. This decade marked a shift away from the company's roots in animation and towards a focus on live-action films, television programming, and theme parks. Some of the company's

most successful live-action films from this decade include "Mary Poppins" (1964) and "The Love Bug" (1968). These films were not only successful at the box office but also helped to establish the company as a major player in the live-action film industry.

Walt Disney was known to overspend on production to make quality features, and when he died on December 15, 1966, TWDC was in financial turmoil, but the company had planned to move forward, expanding into the theme park industry to ensure the enterprise's future (Britannica, 2022). The year prior he purchased 43 acres of land in Florida and Roy assumed supervision over the 'Florida Project' that would soon be known as Walt Disney World Resort.

In addition to films and theme parks, the company also expanded into television during the 1960s. The company's television programming, which included shows like "The Mickey Mouse Club" and "Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color," was very popular and helped to further solidify the company's reputation as a leader in entertainment.

### **1970s**

One of the key challenges for Disney in the 1970s was the changing media landscape. The rise of cable television and home video was disrupting traditional business models, and Disney had to adapt to these changes in order to stay relevant. To meet this challenge, the company focused on expanding its television operations, including the launch of the Disney Channel in 1983 (Lakis, 2016).

Another key challenge for Disney in the 1970s was the declining performance of its theme park division. Disneyland, the company's flagship theme park, was facing increased competition from other attractions and was struggling to attract visitors. In

response, the company began to focus on improving the guest experience and expanding its theme park offerings.

Disney World Resort opened its doors on October 1, 1971. Walt Disney's vision before his death was to attract residents east of the Mississippi river and he did just that. Walt Disney World Resort proved that the theme park business could transform into a vacation destination through vertical integration, by adding hotels and creating a community within a theme park resort creating a competitive advantage. (Allen, 2021)

Despite these challenges in the 1970s, TWDC was also able to capitalize on a number of opportunities in the 1970s. One key opportunity was the growing demand for animated films, which allowed the company to continue to produce successful movies such as "The Aristocats" (1970) and "Robin Hood" (1973). In addition, the company was able to expand its licensing and merchandising operations, which helped to generate additional revenue streams.

### **1980s**

Before his death in 1966, Disney had plans for a "Community of Tomorrow" and Roy Disney headed the opening of Epcot on October 1, 1982 (Britannica, 2020). The original attraction of Spaceship Earth still stands today which takes the rider through the evolution of the human race.

Not only did TWDC expand in the theme park business. American animator, Ron Miller, Founded Touchstone Productions, which was aimed at producing films for adult audiences. Famous features by Touchstone Productions include *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), *Dead Poets Society* (1989), and *Pretty Woman* (1990). In an effort to

maintain its brand as a family entertainment, TWDC chose not to attach its name to Touchstone (Britannica, 2022).

In 1984, Michael Eisner came into power as the CEO of TWDC. The company was on a downturn and Eisner made efforts to restore the success of TWDC (Bauer, 2021). He turned back to the roots of Disney's animation and produced classics like *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and *The Lion King* (1994).

On May 1, 1989, Disney-MGM Studios opened its doors and became the third theme park in Walt Disney World. The theme park was initially intended to function as both a theme park and a fully operational film and television production facility. TWDC later changed the name of the popular theme park in 2008 to Hollywood Studios to position the theme park in the mind of consumer by attaching it to Hollywood (History.com Editors, 2022)

### **1990s**

The 1990s was a time of growth and expansion for the popular theme park Walt Disney World which had been open since 1971 and quickly became a major tourist destination for families from around the world.

TWDC continued to add new attractions and experiences to its three theme parks: Magic Kingdom, Epcot, and Hollywood Studios. One of the most significant additions to the resort during this time was the opening of Disney's Animal Kingdom in 1998. The latest theme park was dedicated to showcasing the natural world and featured attractions such as the Kilimanjaro Safaris and the Tree of Life (The Walt Disney Company, n.d.)

In addition to the new theme park, the 1990s also saw the addition of several new attractions to the existing theme parks. In the Magic Kingdom, the "Haunted Mansion"

ride was updated with new special effects and a new character, the "Hatbox Ghost." Epcot received a major expansion with the addition of the "Test Track" attraction, which allowed guests to design and test their own virtual cars.

Disney's Hollywood Studios also saw several new attractions in the 1990s, including the "Twilight Zone Tower of Terror" and the "Rock 'n' Roller Coaster Starring Aerosmith." Both of these thrill rides were popular with guests and remain fan favorites to this day.

In 1994 TWDC took a giant business venture and announced that the company would create its own line of cruise ships. TWDC proudly unveiled the *Disney Magic*, the first vessel in its fleet. The *Disney Magic*, a ship that was wildly popular and sailed on three- and four-night voyages to the Bahamas from Port Canaveral, introduced what is now known as "family cruising" to a cruising industry that primarily catered to adults (Beall, 2018).

## **Chapter 4 The Walt Disney World Corporate Strategy**

### **Mission Statement**

TWDC's mission statement is "to entertain, inform and inspire people around the globe through the power of unparalleled storytelling, reflecting the iconic brands, creative minds and innovative technologies that make ours the world's premier entertainment company," (The Walt Disney Company, 2020). This statement reflects the company's commitment to using its storytelling abilities and wide range of popular brands to create entertainment experiences that engage and inspire audiences around the world.

TWDC also places a large emphasis on its customer service which includes The Four Keys, "Safety, Courtesy, Show, and Efficiency," (D'Amato, 2021). One of the first lessons cast members get when joining Disney Parks, Experiences, and Products is a review of the Four Keys, and this continues throughout their employment. Each cast member is expected to use The Four Keys as their guide while making decisions throughout the day and when interacting with others.

TWDC's iconic brands, such as Mickey Mouse and its popular theme parks, are known and loved by people of all ages. These brands, along with others such as Marvel, Pixar, and Lucasfilm, give TWDC a unique ability to create diverse and engaging entertainment experiences. The company's creative minds and innovative technologies, such as their use of cutting-edge animation and special effects, help to bring these stories to life and make them even more captivating.

In addition to entertaining audiences, the company's mission statement also emphasizes the company's commitment to informing and inspiring people. Through its various media platforms, including television networks, movies, and theme parks, TWDC is able to reach a wide audience and provide them with educational and uplifting content. For example, television networks, such as the Disney Channel and ESPN, offer programming that not only entertains but also informs and educates viewers on a variety of topics (The Walt Disney Company, 2020).

Furthermore, TWDC's theme parks, such as Disneyland and Walt Disney World, provide visitors with immersive entertainment experiences that can inspire them to imagine and dream. These parks offer a wide range of attractions, from thrilling rides and shows to educational exhibits and interactive experiences, all of which are designed to engage and inspire visitors of all ages. This storytelling is possible due to TWDC's use of its intellectual property that is seen throughout all its products and experiences, which is a key differentiator from its competitors.

Overall, TWDC's mission statement reflects the company's commitment to using its iconic brands, creative minds, and innovative technologies to entertain, inform, and inspire people around the globe. Through their diverse range of media platforms and entertainment experiences, Disney has established itself as the world's premier entertainment company.

### **Executive Leadership**

A key figure in TWDC's executive leadership history is Bob Iger, who served as the CEO of the company from 2005 to 2020. Iger was seen as a strong leader with a proven track record of success in the media industry. He had been with the company for

over 20 years and had held a number of key leadership positions within the company. Prior to becoming CEO, he was the President and Chief Operating Officer, and was responsible for overseeing the company's various divisions, including its theme parks, film studios, and television networks. Iger is credited with leading the company through a period of significant growth and expansion, including the acquisition of Pixar Animation Studios, Marvel Entertainment, and Lucasfilm. He also oversaw the development and launch of the streaming service Disney+, which has become a major player in the streaming industry (The Walt Disney Company, 2020).

Another important leader at Disney is Bob Chapek, who took over as CEO in 2020. Chapek has a long history with the company, having previously served as the head of Disney's theme park division and the CEO of consumer products. In his new role, Chapek was responsible for overseeing the company's various divisions and implementing strategic initiatives to drive growth (Leibacher, 2022).

Iger personally selected Chapek to succeed him when he left the position in 2020. During Chapek's tenure at TWDC, the parks were successfully led through the pandemic closures, and Disney+ saw millions of new subscribers, but then TWDC revealed a \$1.5 billion fourth-quarter loss, and the board's opinion of Chapek altered. This, however, did not serve as the catalyst for Chapek's failure. Instead, the board decided to seek his replacement due to his ambiguous response to Florida's Parental Rights in Education bill and his handling of Scarlett Johansson's salary for the movie "Black Widow." Employees participated in walkouts in opposition to the Parental Rights in Education law, and Chapek apologized in writing for failing to be a stronger ally. As a result, Chapek issued a statement denouncing the legislation, and Florida Governor DeSantis publicly opposed



TWDC by filing legislation to cancel the Reedy Creek Improvement District (Forbes, 2022). On November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Iger replaced Chapek as the CEO of TWDC.

In addition to Iger and Chapek, Disney's executive leadership team includes a diverse group of experienced professionals from various industries. This includes executives in charge of finance, legal affairs, human resources, and other areas of the business.

Disney has a strong track record of effective leadership, with a focus on innovation and diversification. The company's leadership team has consistently demonstrated the ability to adapt to changing market conditions and pursue new opportunities for growth. With a talented and experienced executive team in place, TWDC is well-positioned to continue its success in the media and entertainment industry.

## **Parks and Destination**

### ***Walt Disney World***

Walt Disney World, located in Florida, opened in 1971 and is the largest of the Disney theme parks. The resort includes four theme parks: Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney's Hollywood Studios, and Disney's Animal Kingdom. In addition to the theme parks, the resort also includes two water parks, several golf courses, and a wide variety of other entertainment options. Walt Disney World is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world and receives millions of visitors each year (The Walt Disney Company, 2020).

### ***Disneyland Resort***

Disneyland, the first Disney theme park, opened in 1955 in Anaheim, California. It was designed by Walt Disney himself and was based on his vision of a place where families could come together and enjoy a variety of entertainment options. The park was an instant success and helped to establish the Disney brand as a leader in the theme park industry. Today, Disneyland is one of the most visited tourist destinations in the world and continues to be a favorite among families and Disney fans.

Disneyland's California Adventure is a theme park that opened in 2001 as part of the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, California. The park is designed to celebrate the culture and history of California and features several popular attractions, including the popular "Soarin' Over California" and "California Screamin'" roller coasters (The Walt Disney Company, 2020)

### ***Adventures by Disney***

Adventures by Disney is a guided tour and vacation package offered by TWDC. These guided tours are designed to provide families and individuals with a unique and immersive travel experience. Adventures by Disney offers a wide range of destinations, including Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America, and Australia.

One of the main advantages of the vacation package is the high level of service and attention to detail provided by the tour guides. These guides are experts in the destinations they lead tours to and provide valuable insights and information to enhance the overall experience. They also handle all of the logistics and planning, allowing travelers to relax and enjoy their trip.

Adventures by Disney also offers a wide range of activities and experiences, from cultural and historical tours to outdoor adventures. These activities are designed to provide a well-rounded experience and give travelers a deeper understanding of the destination. For example, in Europe, travelers can visit historic landmarks such as the Roman Colosseum, or in Africa, they can go on a safari.

Another advantage of Adventures by Disney is that they are tailored to families and people of all ages. They offer age-specific activities and experiences, such as kid-friendly tours and adult-only options, to make sure that everyone has a great time. The program also ensures that the accommodations and meals are of high quality, so travelers don't have to worry about the details of their trip. The tours are all-inclusive, with meals, transportation, and activities included in the package.

However, Adventures by Disney is not for everyone and it does come with a premium price tag, which can be a deterrent for some travelers. It is also a more structured and less independent type of travel than other options available (Adventures By Disney, n.d.).

### ***Aulani Hawai'i Resort***

The Walt Disney Company's Aulani Hawai'i Resort is a luxury resort and spa located on the island of Oahu in Hawaii. The resort, which opened in 2011, was designed to provide guests with a unique and immersive Hawaiian experience, while also incorporating elements of Disney's storytelling and entertainment.

One of the main pull factors of Aulani is its location, which is situated on the beautiful beaches of Ko Olina on the island of Oahu. The resort features several outdoor pools, a lazy river, and water slides, as well as private cabanas, a white-sand beach, and a

full-service spa. The resort also offers a variety of dining options, including local Hawaiian cuisine. There are also a wide range of activities and experiences that are designed to provide guests with a deeper understanding of Hawaiian culture. For example, the resort offers traditional Hawaiian activities such as lei-making, hula lessons, and outrigger canoe rides, as well as cultural tours led by Hawaiian experts.

Another unique aspect of Aulani is the incorporation of Disney storytelling and entertainment into the resort. The resort features Disney characters and storytelling in the form of parades, shows, and activities. Additionally, Disney storytelling is also incorporated into the design of the resort, with elements such as Disney-inspired murals and sculptures throughout the property.

Aulani has received positive reviews from guests and travel experts, who praise the resort for its beautiful location, high-quality service, and unique blend of Hawaiian culture and Disney storytelling. However, like many luxury resorts, Aulani is not the most affordable option and the cost of vacationing there is quite high, which could be a deterrent for some travelers (Disney Aulani, n.d.).

### ***Disney's Beach Resort***

Disney's Beach Resorts are a collection of luxury resorts and hotels that are owned and operated by TWDC. These resorts are located in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina and Vero Beach, Florida and they offer guests a unique blend of Disney storytelling and entertainment, as well as luxurious amenities and services.

Disney's Beach Resorts also offer a wide range of amenities and services, including full-service spas, fitness centers, and multiple dining options. These resorts also feature Disney-inspired design, with elements such as Disney-inspired murals and

sculptures throughout the property. Much like the Aulani Resort, Disney's Beach Resorts incorporates Disney storytelling and entertainment into its resorts. These resorts feature Disney characters and storytelling in the form shows and activities. Many of the resorts also offer children's clubs and activities, making them a great option for families (Disney's Beach Resorts, n.d.).

### ***Disney Vacation Club***

The Walt Disney Company's Disney Vacation Club (DVC) is a vacation ownership program that allows members to purchase an interest in a Disney resort, and in return, they can use that interest to vacation at any of the Disney Vacation Club Resorts. DVC was created in 1991 and since then it has grown to become one of the largest and most popular vacation ownership programs in the world.

One of the main advantages of DVC is the flexibility it offers to its members. DVC members can choose from a wide range of Disney resort properties, including deluxe resorts, villas, and even Disney cruise ships. They also have the ability to vacation at any of the Disney Vacation Club Resorts, regardless of the time of year, as long as there is availability. DVC also offers a wide range of accommodation options, from studios to three-bedroom grand villas. These accommodations are equipped with full kitchens, living rooms, and laundry facilities, making them a great option for families and groups.

Another advantage of DVC is the ability to bank, borrow, or transfer points, which allows members to plan their vacations in advance and make reservations at any of the Disney Vacation Club Resorts. This feature also gives members the flexibility to plan

last-minute vacations or to use their points to stay at other non-Disney properties that are part of the network.

DVC also offers a wide range of activities and experiences, such as theme parks, water parks, and golf courses, which are designed to provide guests with a well-rounded vacation experience (Disney Vacation Club, n.d.).

### ***Disneyland Paris***

Disneyland Paris, also known as Euro Disney, is a theme park resort located in Marne-la-Vallée, France, about 20 miles east of the center of Paris. The resort includes two theme parks, Disneyland Park and Walt Disney Studios Park, as well as Disney Village, a shopping and entertainment complex. The resort opened in 1992 and is the most visited tourist destination in Europe, with over 15 million visitors annually (The Walt Disney Company, n.d.).

Disneyland Paris has been a success in terms of tourism, but it has faced financial challenges in the past. One of the main reasons for this is the high cost of building and maintaining the resort, as well as competition from other tourist destinations in the area.

The resort offers a wide range of attractions, including rides, parades, and shows based on Disney characters and stories. Some of the most popular attractions include Space Mountain, It's a Small World, and Big Thunder Mountain Railroad. The resort also offers a variety of dining and shopping options, as well as entertainment and nightlife in Disney Village.

Theme park has also been involved in various controversies, one of the most notable being the cultural differences between the American and European markets. The

resort faced criticism for its initial lack of attention to European cultural references and for its American-style management practices (Land, 2020).

### ***Tokyo Disney Resort***

Tokyo Disney Resort, also known as Tokyo Disneyland, is located in Urayasu, Chiba, Japan. The resort, which opened in 1983, is a joint venture between The Walt Disney Company and the Oriental Land Company, and it was the first Disney park to be built outside of the United States (The Walt Disney Company, 2019).

Tokyo Disney Resort consists of two theme parks, Tokyo Disneyland and Tokyo DisneySea. Both parks offer a wide range of attractions, shows, and parades based on Disney characters and stories, as well as unique attractions that are exclusive to the resort. For example, Tokyo DisneySea features an Arabian Coast area that is inspired by the tales of Aladdin, and a Mermaid Lagoon area that is based on the Little Mermaid. The resort also offers a wide range of dining and shopping options, as well as entertainment and nightlife in the Disney Ambassador Hotel. The several on-site hotels, such as the Disney's Hotel Miracosta, offer guests the opportunity to stay in the heart of the resort.

Another unique aspect of Tokyo Disney Resort is its incorporation of Japanese culture into the resort. For example, the resort features a unique version of the popular Disney attraction "It's a Small World", which is called "It's a Small World - Japan" and features scenes that highlight Japanese culture and landmarks.

Tokyo Disney Resort has been a major success since its opening, becoming one of the most visited tourist destinations in Japan and one of the most visited Disney parks in the world. It is praised for its unique attractions and the incorporation of Japanese culture into the park (Tokyo Disney Resort, n.d.).

### *Hong Kong Disneyland*

Hong Kong Disneyland, also known as Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, is a theme park located on Lantau Island in Hong Kong. The park opened in 2005 and is the first Disney theme park to be built in China. It is also the smallest theme park that TWDC has built in the world, but it has been consistently expanding and adding new attractions over the years (Leung, 2023)

One of the main reasons for building Hong Kong Disneyland was to boost tourism in Hong Kong. The park has been successful in attracting visitors from around the world and has become one of the top tourist destinations in Hong Kong. In addition to the main theme park, the resort also includes two hotels, a shopping and dining area, and a lake (Hong Kong Disneyland, n.d.).

Hong Kong Disneyland offers a wide range of attractions and shows based on Disney characters and stories, such as It's a Small World, Space Mountain, and the Festival of the Lion King. The park also features several themed lands, including Adventureland, Fantasyland, and Tomorrowland (Hong Kong Disneyland, n.d.).

One of the unique features of Hong Kong Disneyland is its incorporation of Chinese culture into the park. For example, there is a specific area of the park called Mystic Point, which is inspired by Chinese folklore and legends. This has helped to attract local visitors and make the park more appealing to the Chinese market.

Despite its success, Hong Kong Disneyland has faced some challenges. One of the main issues has been its small size compared to other Disney parks around the world. This has led to crowding and long wait times for popular attractions.



In recent years, Hong Kong Disneyland has been working to address these issues by expanding the park and adding new attractions. For example, the park has added a new area called Toy Story Land and is planning to open a new Marvel-themed area in the future. These developments are expected to help the park continue to grow and attract more visitors.

### ***Shanghai Disney Resort***

Shanghai Disney Resort is a themed resort that opened in 2016 in Shanghai, China. It is the first Disney resort in mainland China and features a theme park, two hotels, and a shopping and entertainment district. The resort is a joint venture between The Walt Disney Company and the Shanghai Shendi Group (Smith, 2016).

One of the main attractions of Shanghai Disney Resort is its theme park, Shanghai Disneyland, which offers a wide range of attractions, shows, and parades based on Disney characters and stories, as well as several unique attractions that are exclusive to the resort. For example, the resort features a version of the popular Disney attraction "Pirates of the Caribbean" that is set in China, and a version of the "TRON Lightcycle Power Run" attraction that is currently being duplicated in Florida at Walt Disney World (Shanghai Disney Resort, n.d.).

Shanghai Disney Resort also offers a wide range of dining and shopping options, as well as entertainment and nightlife in Disneytown, an entertainment district located adjacent to the theme park. The resort also features several on-site hotels, such as the Shanghai Disney Hotel and the Toy Story Hotel, which offer guests the opportunity to stay in the heart of the resort.

Another unique aspect of Shanghai Disney Resort is its incorporation of Chinese culture into the resort. For example, the resort features a Chinese zodiac-themed garden, a Chinese-inspired version of the popular Disney attraction "It's a Small World", and a Chinese-inspired version of the "Enchanted Storybook Castle" attraction.

### **Media and Entertainment Distribution**

With a diverse portfolio of properties and businesses, the company has a number of channels through which it distributes its media and entertainment products to audiences around the world.

One of the key channels for Disney's media and entertainment distribution is television. The company owns a number of popular television networks, including ABC, ESPN, and Freeform, as well as a number of cable channels and international networks. These channels air a variety of programming, including news, sports, dramas, comedies, and reality shows (The Walt Disney Company, n.d.). Disney also produces and distributes content for streaming platforms, such as Hulu and Disney+, which allow subscribers to watch shows and movies on demand.

In addition to television, Disney also distributes its media and entertainment products through other channels, such as film, home video, and digital media. The company's film studio, Walt Disney Studios, produces and releases a wide range of movies, including animated features, live-action films, and franchises such as Marvel and Star Wars. These films are released in theaters and on home video formats, such as DVD and Blu-ray. Disney also distributes its content through digital platforms, such as online streaming and digital downloads, which allow audiences to access movies and TV shows on their devices (The Walt Disney Company, 2020).

Disney's media and entertainment distribution is supported by a number of other businesses and divisions, including licensing and merchandising, music, and publishing. These divisions create additional revenue streams for the company and help to promote its media and entertainment products to a wider audience.

Overall, Disney's media and entertainment distribution is a key part of the company's success. With a strong presence across a range of channels and platforms, the company is able to reach a wide audience and generate significant revenue. As the media landscape continues to evolve, Disney is well-positioned to adapt and continue to thrive in this business.

## **Chapter 5 Disney Cruise Line**

The Walt Disney Company entered the cruise line industry in 1985 when the company created a partnership with Premier Cruise Lines. This allowed Disney characters to be aboard the ships for entertainment and the ability for Premier Cruise Lines to bundle cruise, hotel, and theme park tickets. After eight years and failed negotiations, TWDC left Premier Cruise Lines in 1993 (Beall, 2018). On May 3, 1994, TWDC announced their intentions to create their own cruise line along with the hiring of former Princess Cruise Line executive, Arthur Rodney, and a launch year of 1998. Its first ship, *Disney Magic*, featured Disney characters and entertainment as part of a one-week vacation package that includes a stay at the Walt Disney World Resorts (Bloomberg News, 1994).

### **Marketing Mix**

A company is able to make lucrative marketing decisions at every level by identifying and organizing the components of its marketing mix. These components include product, price, place, and promotion and they support a company's efforts to strengthen its assets and mitigate its shortcomings, increase its marketability and competitiveness, and foster more productive cross-departmental and partner engagement.

### ***Product***

The Disney Cruise Line's product is a unique, family-oriented cruise experience that combines the magic of Disney with the luxury of a cruise vacation. Each of the company's five ships, *Disney Magic*, *Disney Wonder*, *Disney Dream*, *Disney Fantasy*, and *Disney Wish*, offer a variety of activities, entertainment, and dining options that are designed to appeal to guests of all ages. From Broadway-style shows and live music to water parks, spas, and interactive play areas, the Disney Cruise Line provides a complete vacation experience that is both fun and relaxing.

Additionally, the company's staterooms are spacious and well-appointed, providing guests with the comfort and amenities they need to feel at home on the high seas. Lastly, the main appeal for many consumers opting for a Disney Cruise is the excellent childcare they provide free of charge and the family-friendly environment that is suitable for all ages.

### ***Price***

The Disney Cruise Line's pricing strategy is designed to provide its customers with a high-quality vacation experience at different price points. The company offers a range of pricing options to accommodate different budgets, from more affordable interior staterooms to luxurious suites with private balconies. The Disney Cruise Line also offers special promotions and discounts throughout the year, including early booking discounts, military discounts, and seasonal promotions, which allow customers to enjoy their vacation experience at lower than full price.

### ***Place***

The Disney Cruise Line operates five ships that sail to destinations around the world, including the Caribbean, Europe, Alaska, and the Mexican Riviera. The company has established a strong distribution network that allows it to reach its target market, both domestically and internationally. In addition to its website, Disney Cruise Line uses a variety of travel agents and tour operators to sell its products and reach customers who are looking for a unique and family-oriented vacation experience.

### ***Promotion***

The Disney Cruise Line uses a variety of marketing strategies to promote its product and reach its target market. The company's website is a primary source of information for customers, providing detailed information on its ships, destinations, activities, and pricing. Additionally, Disney Cruise Line uses social media, email marketing, and print advertisements to reach its target market. The company also participates in trade shows and events, which allows it to interact with potential customers and build brand awareness. Additionally, the Disney Cruise Line has established partnerships with leading travel agencies and tour operators, which allow it to reach a wider audience and increase its visibility in the market.

After indicating the four P's of the marketing mix and applying them to Disney Cruise Lines, one can see how the cruise line has established itself as a leader in the cruise industry. The company's product, a unique and family-oriented cruise experience, is designed to meet the needs and desires of its target market. The cruise line's pricing strategy is designed to provide customers with a high-quality vacation experience at different price points that can accommodate different types of families looking to take a

cruise vacation. Its distribution network allows it to reach its target market both domestically and internationally through different mediums such as its website, social media, and print advertisements, along with its partnerships with travel agencies and tour operators, which help to increase its visibility and reach its target market. Through its marketing mix, the Disney Cruise Line has established itself as a top choice for especially families, looking for a unique and magical vacation experience.

### **Disney Magic**

The *Disney Magic* set sail on its maiden voyage on July 30th, 1998, from Port Canaveral. It is equipped with 11 decks, a capacity of 2,700 passengers in 875 staterooms, and is serviced by a crew of around 950 (Saunders, 2013). The entertainment aboard the *Disney Magic* includes live shows with Disney characters at the Walt Disney Theater, movies screened at the Buena Vista Movie Theater, nightclubs, lounges, pools, and many themed celebrations throughout the cruise.

Along with entertainment opportunities, Disney Cruise Line introduced rotational dining as a centerpiece to its cruise experience and a testimony to its superior service. Rotational dining guarantees that all passengers get to experience all three themed dining experiences while on board. Diners, their tablemates, and the servers rotate through the different restaurants each night (Disney Cruise Line, n.d.).

The ship's first cruises were three- and four-night trips to Nassau, Bahamas, and Castaway Cay, an exclusive port for all Disney cruises in the Bahamas. (Beall, 2018) The birth of *Disney Magic* introduced a new aspect to the once adult-targeted industry, a family-oriented cruise experience. Depending on the season, *Disney Magic* now departs from a variety of ports. Its itineraries include departures from Miami, New York,

London, and Barcelona, among other ports, a marked improvement from its beginnings (Disney Cruise Line, n.d.).

### **Disney Wonder**

Like *Disney Magic*, the *Disney Wonder* had its designs drawn up in 1994 and then set sail on August 15, 1999. It shares many of the same amenities as its sister ship. The ship originally sailed three-to-four-night cruises to the Bahamas, but since 2011 it has sailed from stateside ports and even travels Alaska-based itineraries.

### **Disney Dream**

Disney did not follow up with another ship until 2011 with the birth of the *Disney Dream*. In 2007 Disney Cruise Line announced its plans to build two new cruise ships, one being the *Disney Dream* (The Walt Disney Company, n.d.). Its maiden voyage took place on January 26, 2011, sailing out of Port Canaveral to Nassau, The Bahamas, and Disney's private island, Castaway Cay, taking over the route of the *Disney Wonder*. To this day, the ship stays true to its original itinerary.

Aboard the *Disney Dream* are 14 decks, 1,200 staterooms, and the first waterpark at sea in the cruise line industry, the AquaDuck. Entertainment includes the Beauty and the Beast Stage Show, Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique, and dining experiences such as Animators Palate, Remy and more (Disney Cruise Line, n.d.).

### **Disney Fantasy**

*Disney Fantasy* is the fourth cruise ship owned and operated by Disney Cruise Line, which entered service in 2012. It is known as the sister ship to the *Disney Dream* and is almost identical in appearance and build and features most of the same



entertainment and dining experiences. Its home port remains in Port Canaveral, but this ship features a seven-night cruise to the Caribbean and Castaway Cay (Disney Cruise Line, n.d.).

### **Disney Wish**

The *Disney Wish* was revealed as the fifth ship of the Disney Cruise Line fleet on August 25, 2019, at the D23 Expo, and construction began in March of 2020. The *Disney Wish* officially began operations on July 14, 2022, and set sail on its inaugural journey, a five-night cruise through the Bahamas that included stops in Nassau and Castaway Cay.

It is the biggest of the five-ship fleet with 15 decks and 1,250 staterooms. On board one can find Arendelle, the world's first Frozen-themed theatrical dining experience, Worlds of Marvel, the world's first Marvel dining adventure, and the AquaMouse, the first Disney Attraction at sea (Disney Cruise Line, n.d.).

### **Key to the World Card**

The Key to the World Card is a crucial aspect of the cruising experience on Disney Cruise Lines. It is a multifunctional card that serves as a stateroom key, form of payment, identification, and ticket for various activities and services on the ship.

One of the most important functions of the Key to the World Card is its use as the key to one's stateroom. Similar to a key card in a hotel, the Key to the World Card is required to enter one's room, providing added security and convenience. With the card, there is no need to carry around a physical key or remember room numbers, making it easier to access one's stateroom throughout the cruise. Your key card contains

information on your stateroom making it easier to locate as Disney cruise ships fit into the class size of mega-ship.

Another key function of the Key to the World Card is its use as a form of payment. Guests can use the card to make purchases on board the ship, including items such as specialty food and beverages, photos, and services at the spa. This eliminates the need to carry cash or credit cards and provides a central location for tracking expenses.

The Key to the World Card also serves as a ticket for various activities and events on the ship. It is used for admission to shows and live performances, access to the pools and hot tubs, and even for the muster drill, which is a mandatory safety briefing that must be attended by all guests.

In addition to its many functions, the Key to the World Card provides a sense of added security for guests. It is required to be presented every time a guest boards or leaves the ship, ensuring that only authorized individuals are allowed on board (planDisney, 2021)

### **Castaway Cay**

The Disney Cruise Line ships dock exclusively at Disney's Castaway Cay, a private island in the Bahamas. It was once known as Gorda Cay and is near Great Abaco Island. The Bahamian government sold TWDC a 99-year land lease (until 2096) for the cay, giving the company significant influence over the island. Castaway Cay is the first private island that the ship can physically dock to in the cruise industry meaning that the guest will not have to be carried by smaller boats to the island (Beall, 2018). The cay has 12 restaurants/bars, 18 recreational opportunities, three stores, and even its own airport.

## **Chapter 6 Methodology**

By using both the SWOT analysis and the PEST analysis, the internal and external environments are considered giving a more holistic viewing of TWDC's internal and external environment for strategic analysts to investigate and decide the future of the company moving forward within an industry such as the cruise line industry.

The SWOT analysis identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for a company. Strengths and weaknesses being the internal environment and opportunities and threats being the external environment. This strategic analysis tool helps a company identify competitive opportunities for improvement. Adversely, the PEST analysis investigates more of the external environment by examining the political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological environment that could shape a company's operation and its mission to become more competitive in the industry.

### **SWOT Analysis**

The SWOT analysis is a great tool to explore the internal and external environment of a company to understand where they are and how to get where they want to be strategically. Examining the strengths and weaknesses of a company can provide insight into what they are doing right and how to implement that strategy into their weaknesses. Strengths in an organization represent past success while weaknesses can represent a gap between where an organization stands and where they wish to be within a specific category. While participating in the strategic management of an organization,

gap analysis can help a firm identify the distance of that gap. Closing the gap is important in keeping out external threats due to the vulnerability of a weakness (Parnell, 2014). Examples of strengths of TWDC include strong brand recognition, diverse cruise options, and exceptional customer service. Examples of weaknesses of TWDC include limited destinations and high prices.

A look into opportunities and threats provides an external approach to strategic analysis. A company's opportunities and threats tend to stem from its strengths and weaknesses. Opportunities can range from market gaps to a company's specific goals (Parnell, 2014). Examples of opportunities of TWDC include expansion into new destinations, partnerships and acquisitions, and growth in the cruise industry. Threats within the SWOT analysis are external areas of concern that are not typically in the control of the company. Examples of threats of TWDC include competition in the cruise line industry, changes in consumer preferences, economic downturns, and health crisis' such as the SARS CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic.

### **PEST Analysis**

While the SWOT analysis takes into consideration the internal environment and how it applies to the external environment, the PEST analysis gives insight on the external factors that affect the strategic decisions that a company should make. It's a strategic instrument for determining market growth or decrease, as well as the company's position, potential, and operational direction.

The political aspects of the PEST analysis are political factors that affect the economy such as tax policy, trade restrictions, tariffs, labor law, environmental law and political stability. The overall political environment greatly impacts the cruise line

industry due to the travel and relations with other countries. The economic element of the PEST analysis looks at external economic factors that can influence a company's success. Examples of economic factors that affect TWDC in the cruise line industry include the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic that caused restrictions on travel and capacity limitations.

A business can use the socio-culture factor to examine the socioeconomic environment of a certain industry's market to better understand how consumer requirements are formed and what drives them to make a purchase. Examples of sociocultural factors for the TWDC include lifestyle trends, how people chose to use their money and demographics.

Lastly, technology impacts any industry. A business's ability to respond to new products, technologies, and services might be difficult, therefore it's critical to evaluate technology within the PEST analysis. These factors can influence a company's decisions by determining barriers to entry, minimum efficient production levels, and more. Furthermore, technological changes would have an impact on pricing, quality, and innovation.

## **Chapter 7 Results**

### **SWOT Analysis**

A thorough examination of the internal strengths and weaknesses as well as the external opportunities and threats was done in order to address and emphasize the findings of the SWOT analysis. Areas, where the corporation can act strategically can be exposed through the results, as detailed in the next section.

#### ***Internal Strengths***

One of the primary strengths of Disney Cruise Line is its strong brand recognition and reputation. TWDC has established a brand that is associated with high-quality, family-friendly experiences. This is due in part to the company's successful theme parks and movies, which have created a loyal customer base that is likely to consider a Disney cruise. The cruise line uses this intellectual property aboard all of its ships and gains a competitive advantage in doing so. Furthermore, the company's attention to detail and commitment to creating a memorable experience for passengers reinforces the brand's reputation. This strong brand recognition and reputation help to establish trust with customers and can lead to increased bookings and customer loyalty.

Disney Cruise Line also offers a diverse range of cruise options, which allows the company to appeal to a wide range of customers. The company offers cruises to popular destinations, such as the Caribbean and Bahamas, as well as less common destinations, such as Alaska and Europe. This variety of cruise options means that customers can

choose the cruise that best fits their preferences and travel goals. Additionally, the company's commitment to providing onboard entertainment, such as Disney-themed shows and character meet-and-greets adds to the overall experience and helps to differentiate the company from other cruise lines.

Lastly, Disney Cruise Line is known for its exceptional customer service, which is a key strength of the company. From the moment passengers board the ship, they are greeted by friendly staff and provided with personalized attention throughout the duration of the cruise. The company's commitment to providing exceptional customer service by implementing The Four Keys: Safety, Courtesy, Show, and Efficiency, helps to create a positive experience for passengers and promotes customer loyalty. Additionally, the company offers a range of amenities, such as childcare services and onshore excursions, to ensure that passengers have a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

### ***Internal Weaknesses***

While mentioned above that Disney Cruise Line has a wide range of cruise offers, they have a limited number of destinations. The company primarily operates in the Caribbean, Bahamas, and Alaska, with limited offerings in other parts of the world. This limited range of destinations may limit the company's appeal to some potential customers who are looking for more variety in their cruise experience. Additionally, the company's limited itineraries may limit repeat business from customers who are looking for new and different cruise experiences.

Another weakness of Disney Cruise Line is its high prices. The company's cruises are generally more expensive than those offered by some of its competitors, which may limit its appeal to price-sensitive customers. While the company's commitment to

exceptional customer service and unique onboard experiences may justify the higher prices for some customers, it may be a barrier for others who are looking for a more affordable cruise option. This especially affects its target market of families with young children. A family at this stage of life may not be able to afford a cruise at this high of a ticket price but inversely, some families may opt to pay the premium price to get excellent childcare and a family-friendly environment.

### *Opportunities*

The first opportunity that Disney Cruise Line can take advantage of is expansion into new destinations. The company primarily operates in the Caribbean, Bahamas, and Alaska, with limited offerings in other parts of the world. Expanding into new destinations, such as Asia or South America, could help the company increase its customer base and appeal to a wider range of customers. Additionally, offering more varied itineraries may increase repeat business from customers who are looking for new and different cruise experiences.

Another opportunity for Disney Cruise Line is to pursue partnerships and acquisitions to expand its range of offerings and diversify its revenue streams. For example, the company could partner with other entertainment brands to offer themed cruises or acquire other cruise lines to expand its operations. Pursuing partnerships and acquisitions could help the company increase its market share and attract new customers who are looking for unique and innovative cruise experiences that could be offered at different price points and target new markets. An example of this could be partnering with or acquiring a river cruise line. This will allow Disney Cruise Line to expand into new locations and a new target market.



Lastly, the cruise industry has experienced steady growth in recent years before the COVID-19 pandemic, and there is potential for continued growth in the future. As more people around the world become interested in cruise vacations, Disney Cruise Line has the opportunity to capitalize on this growth by expanding its offerings and attracting new customers. Additionally, the company can leverage technological advancements and innovations that TWDC is known for, such as the interactive mobile app and rotational dining, to improve its operations and enhance the customer experience.

### *Threats*

One of the primary threats facing Disney Cruise Line is competition from other cruise lines. The cruise industry is highly competitive, with many players offering a wide range of cruise options and itineraries. Disney Cruise Line primarily competes with other family-friendly cruise lines, such as Royal Caribbean and Norwegian Cruise Line, as well as luxury cruise lines like Seabourn and Crystal Cruises. To address this threat, Disney Cruise Line must continue to differentiate itself by offering unique and innovative experiences, such as its themed cruises and exclusive onboard entertainment.

Another threat facing Disney Cruise Line are changes in consumer preferences. As the travel industry evolves, consumers may shift their preferences towards land-based vacations, alternative forms of travel, or other types of experiences. To address this threat, Disney Cruise Line must remain attuned to the changing needs and preferences of its target market and continue to innovate its offerings. This could include expanding its shore excursion options, introducing new onboard amenities, or exploring alternative forms of travel, such as river cruising or expedition cruising.

Finally, Disney Cruise Line faces a threat from economic downturns. The demand for travel is closely linked to the overall state of the economy, and a recession or economic downturn can impact the demand for cruises and travel in general. Again, we see an example of this in the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this threat, Disney Cruise Line must remain financially stable and agile, with a robust risk management strategy in place. The company can also explore cost-cutting measures during downturns, such as reducing fuel consumption or negotiating with suppliers to lower costs.

### **PEST Analysis**

Disney Cruise Line is a major player in the cruise industry, offering a variety of cruises to destinations around the world. In order to analyze the business environment of Disney Cruise Line, a PEST analysis can be performed. This analysis will look at the political, economic, sociocultural, and technological factors that impact the operations of Disney Cruise Line.

#### ***Political Environment***

Disney Cruise Line, as a major player in the cruise industry, is subject to a wide range of political factors that can have a significant impact on its operations including safety and environmental regulations, labor laws, and geopolitical issues.

As a heavily regulated industry, the cruise industry is subject to numerous safety and environmental regulations that are enforced by various governmental agencies. For example, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has developed numerous regulations and guidelines related to safety and environmental protection that must be followed by all cruise lines.

Disney Cruise Line has taken a proactive approach to safety and environmental protection, investing in state-of-the-art technology and equipment to ensure that its ships are safe and environmentally friendly. For example, the company has installed advanced wastewater treatment systems and has adopted energy-efficient technologies to reduce its carbon footprint.

Cruise lines are also subject to a range of labor laws that regulate working conditions, wages, and other employment-related issues. For example, the United States has established a number of laws and regulations that protect the rights of maritime workers.

Disney Cruise Line has been recognized for its commitment to providing a safe and fair work environment for its crew members. The company offers a range of benefits and support services to its crew members, such as medical care, counseling services, and training programs.

Geopolitical issues, such as political instability, terrorism, and travel restrictions, can also have a significant impact on the cruise industry. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a significant decline in travel and has forced cruise lines to cancel or postpone numerous sailings. The pandemic caused a mandatory vaccine status for all guests that travel on cruise ships. This inhibits many travelers from choosing to book vacations on cruise lines. This causes the guests to choose other means of travel and book vacations inside of the United States if they choose not to get vaccinated.

Disney Cruise Line has responded to these geopolitical issues by implementing stringent health and safety protocols to protect its guests and crew members. The

company has also introduced flexible booking and cancellation policies to provide its guests with more peace of mind when making travel plans.

### ***Economic Environment***

The cruise industry has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and Disney Cruise Line is no exception. Travel restrictions and capacity limitations have significantly impacted the bottom line of the cruise line. Due to the pandemic, cruise lines experienced a decline in revenue (including ship tickets, passenger spending aboard and ashore, terminal charging, etc.), which has had an impact on the stock price of the cruise industries (Yazir et al., 2020).

With many countries imposing travel restrictions and cruise ports closing down due to the pandemic, the cruise industry has suffered a major blow. In addition, fluctuations in fuel prices can affect the operational costs of the cruise line.

### ***Sociocultural Environment***

Disney Cruise Line is a leading provider of family-oriented cruise vacations. As a result, it must cater to a wide range of age groups and cultural backgrounds to ensure that its offerings are inclusive and appealing to a diverse customer base in three areas: cultural diversity, family-friendly environment, and accessibility and inclusion.

Disney Cruise Line is committed to offering a diverse range of experiences and activities that appeal to guests of all ages and cultural backgrounds. The company offers a wide range of onboard entertainment options, such as live performances, movies, and character meet and greets, that are designed to appeal to guests from different cultures.

One example of how Disney Cruise Line has adapted to cultural diversity is through its dining options. The company offers a range of dining experiences that cater to different dietary requirements that might be affected by their religion or culture.

Disney Cruise Line is known for its family-friendly environment and its commitment to providing a safe and enjoyable experience for guests of all ages. The company offers a range of activities and amenities that are designed to appeal to families, such as youth clubs, family-friendly entertainment, and adult-only areas.

The cruise line has also introduced a range of family-friendly shore excursions that allow guests to experience the local culture and attractions in a safe and enjoyable way. For example, the company offers guided tours of local museums and historical sites that are tailored to families with children in contrast to the adventure shore excursions that other cruise lines offer.

Finally, Disney Cruise Line is committed to making its cruises accessible and inclusive for guests with disabilities and special needs. The company offers a range of services and amenities that are designed to cater to guests with different needs, such as accessible staterooms, special dietary requirements, and mobility aids. In addition, the company has introduced a range of activities and experiences that are designed to cater to guests with special needs.

### ***Technological Environment***

The rapid development and widespread adoption of new technologies have had a big impact on the cruise industry, including Disney Cruise Line. This includes the use of key technology, mobile apps, and other innovations that enhance the guest experience.

One of the main technological innovations that Disney Cruise Line has implemented is the use of key technology, also known as the key to the world card. This technology allows guests to access their staterooms, dining options, excursions and more just using one key.

Disney Cruise Line has also developed a range of mobile apps that allow guests to access a wide range of services and information, including booking dining reservations, scheduling shore excursions, and accessing real-time information about their cruise itinerary.

These apps have become an integral part of the guest experience, allowing guests to easily plan and manage their cruise experience all in one space. By providing guests with access to these digital tools, Disney Cruise Line is able to offer a more seamless and personalized guest experience.

In addition to key technology and mobile apps, Disney Cruise Line has implemented a range of other technological innovations to enhance the guest experience. For example, the company has installed high-speed Wi-Fi on its ships, allowing guests to stay connected and access online content from anywhere on board.

The company has also invested in state-of-the-art entertainment technology, such as the Walt Disney Theatre and the Buena Vista Theatre, which offer guests an immersive and unforgettable entertainment experience.

## Chapter 8 Discussion and Recommendations

### SWOT Discussion and Recommendations

By building a SWOT matrix, a company can develop strategies across four different dimensions: strength-opportunity strategy, strength-threat strategy, weaknesses-opportunity strategy, and weaknesses-threats strategy.

<b>Table 8-1: SWOT Matrix</b>		
	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand into new destinations</li> <li>2. Partnerships and acquisitions</li> <li>3. Industry growth</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Competition</li> <li>2. Changing Consumer preferences</li> <li>3. Economic downturns</li> </ol>
<b>Strengths</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brand recognition</li> <li>2. Cruise Options</li> <li>3. Customer Service</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- S1xO2= Using strong brand recognition to easily conduct partnerships and acquisitions</li> <li>- S2xO1= Use the variety of cruise options to expand into new destinations</li> <li>- S3xO3= Use exceptional customer service to capitalize on the industry growth and require new customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- S3xT1= Use exceptional customer service to combat competition</li> <li>- S2xT2= Use the variety of cruise options to cater to changing consumer preferences</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limited destinations</li> <li>2. High prices</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- W1xO1= Overcome the weakness of limited destinations by capitalizing on the opportunity to expand into new destinations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- W1xT2= Expand into new cruise destinations to combat changing consumer preferences</li> </ul>

### ***Strength-Opportunity Strategy***

By combining strength one and opportunity two, Disney Cruise Line can use its strong brand recognition to capitalize on the opportunity to seek partnerships and acquisitions. Disney Cruise Line, as a subsidiary of TWDC, is a very well-known brand name and is known for their exceptional service while targeting families with young children. The cruise line has a great opportunity to expand by exploring partnerships and acquisitions to diversify and attract new customers and many brands would be open to partnering with a big-name brand with the reputation of TWDC, especially if the brand is looking to appeal to the target market that Disney Cruise Line operates in.

By combining strength two and opportunity one, Disney Cruise Line can use its variety of cruise options to expand into new cruise destinations. Disney Cruise Line offers cruises to the Caribbean, Bahamas, Europe, and Alaska. Customers can select the trip that best suits their preferences and vacation objectives thanks to the range of cruise alternatives. If the cruise line could use its different cruise options and formats to expand to more locations, it could attract a new market of customers.

By combining strength three with opportunity three, Disney Cruise Line can use its exceptional customer service to capitalize on the projected growth of the cruising industry. This strategy leverages the company's strength in customer service to take advantage of the opportunity presented by industry growth. This could help the company attract new customers and increase its market share.

### ***Strengths-Threats Strategy***

By combining strength three and threat 1, Disney Cruise Line can use its exceptional customer service to combat competition. This strategy leverages the company's strength



in customer service to address the threat of competition from other cruise lines and vacation options. Disney Cruise Line is known for its customer service, and if the cruise line can tap more into it and add packages that can emphasize its customer service, it can attract new customers from the competition. This could help the company differentiate itself from competitors and retain customers.

By combining strength two and threat two, Disney Cruise Line can use a variety of cruise options to cater to changing consumer preferences. This strategy leverages the company's strength in offering a variety of cruise options to address the threat of changing consumer preferences by constantly changing and updating its cruise options with themed cruises and using the plethora of TWDC intellectual property to customize cruise experience, Disney Cruise Line will be able to keep up with the changing preferences of consumers. This could help the company stay relevant and attract new customers.

#### ***Weaknesses-Opportunities Strategy***

By combining weakness one with opportunity one, Disney Cruise Line can overcome the weakness of limited destinations by capitalizing on the opportunity to expand into new destinations. This could help the company attract new customers and increase its market share.

#### ***Weaknesses-Threats Strategy***

By combining weakness one and threat two Disney Cruise Line can expand into new cruise destinations to combat changing consumer preferences. Since the cruise line has limited destinations, it can improve this weakness and expand to new destinations while also addressing the threat of changing consumer preferences by giving its consumers a

larger variety of destinations to cruise to. This could help the company stay relevant and attract new customers.

In conclusion, each strategy has its own strengths and weaknesses in terms of addressing the company's SWOT. The most effective strategy will depend on the company's specific situation and goals.

### **PEST Discussion and Recommendations**

When assessing the success of a company it is important to consider external factors such as political, economic, sociocultural, and technological that are outlined in the PEST analysis. In the following sections, each force will be discussed, and recommendations will be given to Disney Cruise Line.

#### ***Political Recommendations***

To protect Disney Cruise Line from external political factors, it has to consider recommendations in four areas by prioritizing safety and environmental protection, complying with labor laws, addressing geopolitical issues, and communicating effectively with guests for safety reasons.

As a major player in the cruise industry, Disney Cruise Line should continue to prioritize safety and environmental protection by investing in state-of-the-art technology and equipment. The company should also ensure that it complies with all safety and environmental regulations enforced by various governmental agencies. This is not only important legally but also has an effect on the way consumers view Disney Cruise Line. As a cruise line that caters specifically to families with young children, their target market will be concerned with the future of the environment as well as their family's well-being while they are aboard the ship.

Disney Cruise Line should continue to provide a safe and fair work environment for its crew members by complying with all labor laws that regulate working conditions, wages, and other employment-related issues. Not only should the cruise line comply with labor laws, it should also offer a range of benefits and support services to its crew members, such as medical care, counseling services, and training programs while being transparent with these benefits.

Disney Cruise Line should be proactive in addressing geopolitical issues that can have a significant impact on the cruise industry, such as political instability, terrorism, and travel restrictions. Since the cruise industry relies on the geopolitical landscape, the company should implement stringent health and safety protocols to protect its guests and crew members and introduce flexible booking and cancellation policies to provide its guests with more peace of mind when making travel plans. This will future the success of the cruise line.

Lastly, Disney Cruise Line should communicate effectively with its guests about the measures it is taking to ensure their safety and address any concerns they may have about traveling during geopolitical crises or pandemics. The company should also provide guests with accurate and up-to-date information about any changes to its policies or procedures that may affect their travel plans.

### ***Economic Recommendations***

One of the major economic factors that have impacted the cruise industry is the decline in revenue. Due to the pandemic, cruise lines have experienced a significant decline in revenue, which has had an impact on their bottom line. Disney Cruise Line should focus on ways to increase its revenue by exploring new markets or offering new

services. For example, the company could consider offering shorter cruises or themed cruises that appeal to different segments of the market.

Another economic factor that has impacted the cruise industry is the imposition of travel restrictions and the closure of cruise ports. To address this, Disney Cruise Line should explore ways to increase its flexibility and adaptability. The company could consider operating in different regions or ports to reduce its dependence on a few number of port locations.

Fluctuations in fuel prices can also affect the operational costs of the cruise line. Disney Cruise Line should focus on ways to reduce its operational costs and increase its efficiency. For example, the company could explore ways to reduce fuel consumption by adopting more energy-efficient technologies or by optimizing its routes and itineraries. In addition, Disney Cruise Line could explore partnerships with other companies to reduce costs and increase its purchasing power.

Finally, Disney Cruise Line should focus on building resilience and agility into its business model. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of being able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances. The company should consider investing in technology and infrastructure that enables it to respond quickly to changing market conditions or unexpected events. Additionally, Disney Cruise Line should focus on building a strong and diverse workforce that is capable of adapting to changing circumstances and embracing new opportunities.

### ***Sociocultural Recommendations***

Disney Cruise Line is subject to various sociocultural factors that impact its operations, including cultural diversity, family-friendly environment, and accessibility and inclusion.

As a provider of family-oriented cruise vacations, Disney Cruise Line must cater to guests from different cultural backgrounds. The company has recognized this and has taken measures to ensure inclusivity. One example is the dining options the company provides, which cater to different dietary requirements affected by religion or culture. This move shows the company's commitment to cultural diversity, and it is recommended that the cruise line continues to introduce more options that cater to guests from different cultural backgrounds. This can be achieved by partnering with local chefs and restaurants to provide local cuisines.

Disney Cruise Line is known for its family-friendly environment and commitment to providing a safe and enjoyable experience for guests of all ages. The cruise line has introduced a range of activities and amenities that cater to families, such as youth clubs, family-friendly entertainment, and adult-only areas. The cruise line's introduction of family-friendly shore excursions is also a good move, and it is recommended that Disney Cruise Line expands this further to include more destinations and attractions. This expansion will appeal to a diverse group of families, providing an opportunity for guests to experience local culture and attractions safely and enjoyably.

Finally, Disney Cruise Line has taken measures to make its cruises accessible and inclusive for guests with disabilities and special needs. The company provides accessible staterooms, special dietary requirements, and mobility aids. Additionally, the company

has introduced activities and experiences that cater to guests with special needs. To further improve accessibility and inclusion, it is recommended that the company invests in training its staff to handle guests with disabilities and special needs. This investment will improve the level of service offered to guests with disabilities and special needs, providing a comfortable and enjoyable experience. This will be beneficial to a cruise line that caters to a diverse target market of families with young children.

### ***Technological Recommendations***

While Disney Cruise Line enhanced its cruising experience by updating its key technology, mobile apps, high-speed Wi-Fi, and state-of-the-art entertainment technology, there are still further technological advances it can implement.

A major advancement Disney Cruise Line can make is implementing the magic band technology that TWDC utilizes in its parks. They are extremely popular, and waterproof, and TWDC consumers are already familiar with the technology (The Walt Disney Company, n.d.).

Disney Cruise Line has also developed a range of mobile apps that allow guests to access a wide range of services and information. These apps have become an integral part of the guest experience, allowing guests to easily plan and manage their cruise experience all in one space. However, further development is needed to ensure that these apps are user-friendly and accessible to all guests. Technology that could be utilized through these apps are virtual reality and augmented reality so that guests can have more personalized experiences while on the boat in between ports. This would enhance the guest experience and make the cruises more popular among its target market.

Lastly, Disney Cruise Line has also invested in state-of-the-art entertainment technology, such as the Walt Disney Theatre and the Buena Vista Theatre. These theaters offer guests an immersive and unforgettable entertainment experience. However, further development is recommended as entertainment technology is constantly changing.

## **Chapter 9 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this thesis has examined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Disney Cruise Line through a SWOT analysis and provided various strategies that the company can use to leverage its strengths and overcome its weaknesses and mitigate threats. The thesis has also discussed the external factors that may impact the success of Disney Cruise Line through a PEST analysis and recommended actions that the company can take to address these factors.

Disney Cruise Line has strong brand recognition and exceptional customer service that can be leveraged to attract new customers and expand into new markets. The company can use its strength in partnerships and acquisitions to diversify and attract new customers. It can also use its variety of cruise options to expand into new cruise destinations and appeal to changing consumer preferences. By prioritizing safety and environmental protection, complying with labor laws, addressing geopolitical issues, communicating effectively with guests for safety reasons, and expanding into new technology, Disney Cruise Line can mitigate external factors that may impact the success of the company.

The strategies discussed in this paper are not a one-size-fits-all solution for Disney Cruise Line, as the most effective strategy will depend on the company's specific situation and goals. However, by considering these strategies and external factors, Disney



Cruise Line can take a proactive approach towards improving its operations and remaining competitive in the cruise industry.

Overall, Disney Cruise Line has a strong foundation to build upon and has the potential to continue to grow and succeed in the industry. By continually assessing and addressing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, as well as external factors such as political, economic, sociocultural, and technological, the company can continue to provide exceptional experiences for its guests and maintain its position as a leading player in the cruise industry.

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